



**Asia-Pacific
Economic Cooperation**

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Empowering Change: APEC's Web-based Gender Analysis Tool

APEC Policy on Women and the Economy

March 2022



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APEC Project: PPWE 04 2020A – Gender Data project

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I. Introduction

The Ministry for Women (Manatū Wāhine), New Zealand, put forward a project proposal to develop a gender analysis tool for APEC economies, hosted on the APEC site. By building on New Zealand's experience in implementing its own gender analysis tool, the Ministry for Women proposed the new tool incorporate a multi-disciplinary approach with perspectives from APEC sectoral experts, institutions and other sectors.

The project's aim was to adapt New Zealand's '*Bringing Gender In*' tool for use by APEC economies, expanding it with illustrative case studies, and making it applicable for a wide range of policy professionals. The tool would encourage an holistic and transparent approach to understand the gender implications of decisions for each particular economy, and support policy makers to identify new and targeted solutions — particularly as economies develop policies to respond to the economic effects of COVID-19.

Purpose of this report

This report is a summary of the approach and design of the gender analysis tool, led by the Ministry for Women; and supported by Fernhill Solutions and Sparks Interactive, New Zealand.

This report outlines the:

- Background to APEC's gender analysis tool
- Design process for Empowering Change
- APEC webinar and survey feedback

II. Background to APEC's gender analysis tool

APEC is committed to advancing gender equality

APEC is committed to advancing gender equality and women's economic empowerment across its member economies.¹ This is particularly important as economies emerge from COVID-19, with its significant and disproportionate impact on women and girls, and as APEC looks to strengthen women's economic engagement and growth.²

Gender-responsive approaches to policy, programmes and initiatives - in accordance with applicable domestic laws and policies – support inclusive, sustainable and equitable economic growth and long-term development across the Asia Pacific. By promoting the collection and analysis gender data across APEC economies, APEC can grow inclusive approaches to policy development, and support robust and evidence-driven outcomes for all citizens, particularly women, and groups of women who are experiencing multiple forms of discrimination and barriers to joining the labour market.

Progress is being made but gender outcomes remain inequitable

The APEC Policy Partnership on Women in the Economy (PPWE)³ supports women's economic empowerment across five pillars as outlined in La Serena Roadmap for Women and Inclusive Growth (2019 – 2030). These include,

- Empowering women through access to capital and markets
- Strengthening women's labour force participation
- Supporting women's education, training and skills development, and access
- Improving access of women to leadership positions in all levels of decision making
- Advancing women's economic empowerment through data collection and analysis

¹ This commitment reflects the aims of the APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040¹, the United Nation's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and APEC's La Serena Roadmap for Women and Inclusive Growth (2019–2030).

² APEC women and the economy forum statement, 2021

³ The PPWE, established in 2011, advances the economic integration of women in the APEC region for the benefit of all members, and coordinates gender activities across other APEC working groups.

The 2021 APEC Women and the Economy Dashboard shows continued but variable progress across the five pillars.⁴ Both the dashboard and other reports show structural barriers continue to weaken efforts to advance women's economic empowerment and gender equality. These include:

- Socio-cultural norms, values and biases that ascribe certain roles and participation in society based on gender, including leadership roles, and limit choice and equal access to resources⁵
- Gender stereotypes, prejudice and discriminatory legislation that create barriers to participation and access⁶
- Inequitable access to technology, including internet and mobile, and digital literacy
- Violence in the workplace and at home that threatens, intimidates, and endangers the lives of women and non-binary people⁷

Gender data and analysis supports change

There are no quick fixes to persistent gender inequalities. However, by supporting sound public policy, integrated approaches across government and economies, good data collection and analysis, strong partnerships, opportunities for diverse leadership, and long-term political and legal commitment, women's economic outcomes can be transformed.⁸

Gender analysis typically involves policy makers using various "tools" to help clarify and understand how their policy may impact different genders. A gender analysis helps policy professionals to systematically consider the different priorities, needs, and situations of women and girls, and men and boys when developing policy, and its impact.

Gender analysis can include:

- Examining the impact of gender on people in different contexts

⁴ The APEC Women and the Economy Dashboard, 2021, provides a snapshot of the status of women across the APEC region by monitoring annual trends via set of indicators. See APEC, 2021b.

⁵ VicHealth, 2017.

⁶ APEC Economic Policy Report, 2020

⁷ UN Women, 2018

⁸ Kring 2017, p.10

- Looking at the different gender roles and responsibilities in different places, such as in the home and at work
- Assessing the position of women and men relative to each other in wider society

Collecting and using good data, including sex-disaggregated data and intersectional analysis, exposes gaps and opportunities in policy and helps support and build targeted solutions.

Adopting gender analysis will ensure policy better reflects the needs of an economy's population, particularly those with least access to resources. This includes supporting policy makers to consider challenges of,

| | |
|------------|--|
| ACCESS | Who has access to and control over resources? |
| IMPACT | Who is likely to benefit or lose from a policy? |
| COMPLEXITY | What barriers and opportunities exist for different groups? |
| EQUALITY | What roles and responsibilities exist that shape equality? |
| STRATEGY | What strategies will have the biggest impact on gender equality? |

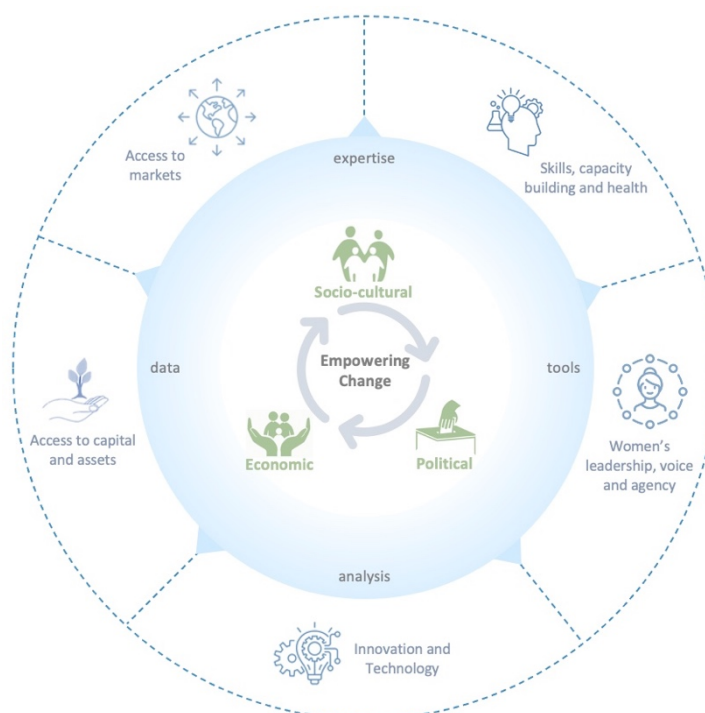
III. Design process for Empowering Change

Conceptual framework underpinning Empowering Change

APEC's gender analysis tool has been designed for use across APEC economies, particularly those economies that are new or emerging in the field of gender analysis. The tool has been named Empowering Change to emphasize its focus on building the skills and capability of policy professionals to empower change across their region – in particular, advancing APEC's goal to improve women's economic empowerment, and deliver on its commitment to gender equality.

Empowering Change helps policy professionals challenge "what has always been done" by using a way of thinking about gender across all stages of the policy process. It helps focus thinking across APEC's five pillars of economic empowerment and deliver practical activities to support policy makers to explore and analyze how gender impacts and is influenced by,

- sociocultural norms, roles and power structures,
- economic participation and access to resources,
- political leadership and ability to advocate for change⁹.



⁹ Conceptual framework based on work by Oxfam's Women's Economic Empowerment conceptual framework; and APEC's 5 pillars key pillars of economic empowerment. See also Rao and Kelleher and their Gender at Work Analytical framework which divides into four quadrants. Formal and Informal; individual to Systemic. (2010)

Design methodology

The design methodology for Empowering Change was collaborative and iterative, with five overlapping stages prior to design finalization,

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| RESEARCH | Background research including existing gender analysis approaches across APEC economies, existing online tools, and academic expertise. |
| CONCEPTUALISATION | Presentation of design options to MfW for feedback and evaluation. Repeatable and iterative. |
| ENGAGEMENT | Opportunities for APEC economies to provide feedback on early design and content, and contribute case studies. |
| ADAPTATION | Web-based design adaptation including layout, navigation, web copy word count, web copy tone and language choices, and images. |
| CONSULTATION | APEC webinar presentation with survey consultation and feedback. |

Key questions underpinned all stages of the concept design process including:

- What existing gender analysis tools were available across APEC economies?
- What levels of gender expertise and skill levels needed to be considered?
- Who were primary and secondary target audience and end users of the tool?
- What level of language and functionality was required?
- What resource and time constraints existed?

Empowering Change needed to be both useful and accessible to a broad range of users. Whereas some policy makers would be new to gender analysis, others would have significant experience. This includes familiarity with core concepts and practices, levels of gender analysis required for policy, and organizational support and influence that vary both across and within APEC economies.

Therefore, a key focus of the design methodology was how to cater for this broad range of users. The final web-based design offers two “streams” of activities: core and growth. Core activities offer all policy makers core gender analysis activities and skills, whereas growth activities support those who are more experienced, working on more complex policy, or wanting to explore broader aspects of gender analysis.

Engagement and collaboration

The design methodology was iterative incorporating feedback from member economies, particularly co-sponsoring economies, individual expertise, policy professionals and the design team. In addition, many economies already had significant experience in developing their own specific gender analysis tools, and their expertise was highly valued.

Changes to the tool's original concepts were incorporated after feedback to ensure the final design was useful and targeted to policy professionals across APEC economies. These changes included,

- Simplification of the layout and design
- Streamlining individual activities and text
- Clarification of the gender analysis stages, and core and growth activities
- Illustrative case studies, and third-party links
- Clarification of language and concepts, including addition of glossary

Case studies and links to third-party sites

Given the range of gender analysis practice, both across APEC member economies and other organizations, a key feature of the final tool includes illustrative case studies of gender analysis in action from both APEC and non-APEC economies, and links to third-party sites. These sites have been carefully selected for their expertise, clarity and availability.

IV. APEC webinar and survey feedback

The Ministry for Women held a webinar on 16 December 2021 for APEC economies to introduce Empowering Change. The webinar was followed by a discussion on gender analysis in practice. The webinar was opened by PPWE Chair Renee Graham, who highlighted work underway across APEC on women's economic empowerment and the potential for the Empowering Change Tool to be a practical aid in building the quality and depth of activities across APEC.

Session 1: Gender analysis in practice – perspectives from member economies.

Denise Gareau of Canada shared the Canadian experience of embedding equity analyses in policy processes, in particular Canada's Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus) which was adopted in which has been in use in Canada since 1995 to deliver on Canada's commitments as part of the Beijing Platform of Action. Canada's approach to mainstreaming has been a process of continuous improvement becoming increasingly intersectional in its design and implementation over the past 27 years. The application of the analysis to decision-making within the federal government as expanded over the years, with it now being mandatory in all major decision-making processes for new and existing programs, policies, services, legislation, regulation and budgeting. Gareau shared lessons learned in the application of GBA Plus, noting that, to be sustainable, the analysis needs to be decentralised (e.g., across federal departments, different functional areas). All public servants need to be responsible for its implementation. It is also important to have diversity of perspectives, and to engage people with lived experience in undertaking the analysis, to better inform decisions.

Eric Liao of Chinese Taipei outlined the commitment to use gender analysis in policy making in Chinese Taipei, sharing a case study of gender analysis being used to in amendments made to the Employment Service Act. Data showed that female labour force participation peaked at age 25-29 before falling, indicating that family and fertility were influencing participation. In response, policy makers developed targeted options based on consultation with stakeholders. These included childcare support, re-employment for displaced women and vocational training with allowances. In 2020, data showed that participation rates had lifted significantly.

Carlos Kuryama of the APEC Policy Support Unit (PSU) emphasised the importance of gender analysis, as well as the importance of collecting disaggregated data. There is potential for the tool to help build capacity in both of these areas.

Session 2: Using Empowering Change – gender analysis in practice.

Following a demonstration of the tool by Fernhill Solutions and Sparks Interactive, the floor was opened for questions and discussion.

A central question and challenge facing all economies, is sourcing quality data to be able to produce targeted policy options. Attendees of the webinar shared some of the successes and challenges in their own economies. Common themes included,

- variability in the level of detail, or granularity, of gender and/or sex disaggregated data,
- challenges in applying intersectional analysis to data that may only be recorded for one factor. For example, where a person identifies as more than one ethnicity, in some cases data is not collected to reflect this,
- balancing political will and focus on data and high quality analysis,
- having supportive organizational processes and the importance of mainstreaming gender analysis, and embedding it in the 'DNA' of organizations. Particularly in times of crisis.

Attendees indicated that Empowering Change would be a useful way to assist with some of these challenges and encourage gender mainstreaming.

Survey findings: Feedback from member economies

After the webinar a link to the draft website and a short survey was issued to all participating economies for comment and feedback. This was resent early 2022, and included all PPWE members. The survey allowed participants to comment on the use of gender analysis tools in their economy, and how Empowering Change could assist. It also enquired how economies have adjusted policy responses since COVID-19 to support women and other key populations.

Respondents indicated Empowering Change would be used alongside their existing tools, and used to explore new areas of policy practice, or specific areas of gender analysis.

Themes emerging from early survey findings align with those in the webinar.

Respondents noted that to support and direct post-COVID recovery, their economies

were using data, including sex-disaggregated and intersectional analysis, to understand the impact of COVID on not only the economy, but health, gender-based violence, and other social disparities. In particular, one economy noted that investments made post-COVID were significant and targeted to support those disproportionately impacted, with the ultimate aim of making their economy more equitable for everyone. Transparency and accountability in using gender-based tools and applying findings was critical to ensure that recovery policies are based on good gender and intersectional data analysis.

Feedback and recommendations on Empowering Change from respondents included,

- the glossary as a valuable tool for growing economies to identify relevant terms.
- differentiations between core activities, and growth activities as useful especially as economies with existing gender-analysis tools seek value in the tool.
- recommendations for policies within organization as a useful tool for reflexivity
- future recommendations to include intersectional considerations in all gender equity-based tools.

V. Conclusion and moving forward

Empowering Change is a key tool in APEC's commitment to advance gender equality and women's economic empowerment across its member economies. It has been designed to be useful, simple and adaptable. Being publicly available online means the tool will be accessible by both APEC and other economies and organizations to add to existing tools, and explore new areas of using gender analysis in their policy practice.

Moving forward, the Ministry for Women is looking to track update and report back to PPWE in late 2022 on the use of Empowering Change across economies. It is hoped the tool is used and adapted by each economy for its own purposes, and continuing contributions maintain its relevance and success in encouraging gender mainstreaming across all APEC economies.

VI. Glossary

APEC – Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation

MfW – Ministry for Women, New Zealand

PPWE – APEC Policy Partnership on Women and the Economy