

WE-Check

Women's Entrepreneurship Self-Check

Women's Entrepreneurship Development Programme (ILO-WED), SME Unit

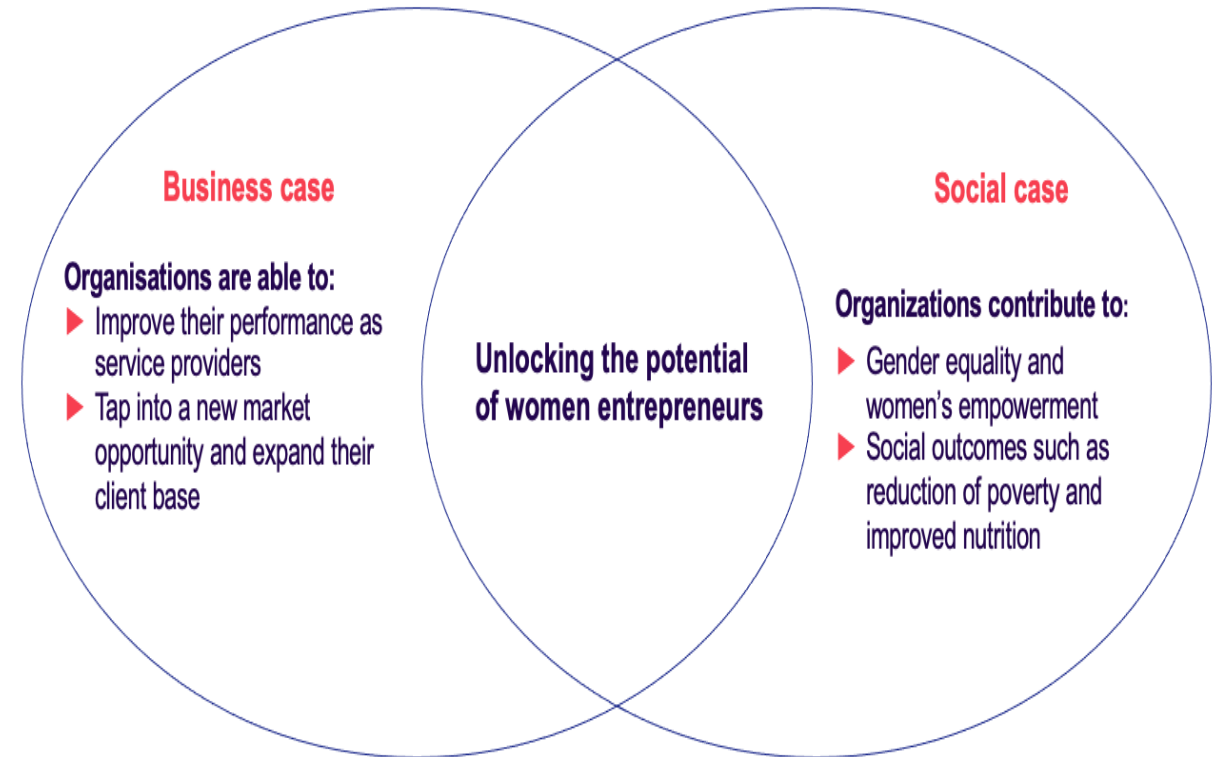


Why WE-Check?

Women entrepreneurs in many countries play an important role in **employment creation** and **income generation**. However, their contributions and specific business needs and challenges are often overlooked. By providing targeted and **gender-sensitive services** and support, organisations can contribute to unlocking the potential of women entrepreneurs and improving their own business performance, while at the same time generating positive development outcomes.



Business and Development Case of supporting women entrepreneurs



Why WE-Check?



Women entrepreneurs have specific needs that need to be addressed for them to unleash their full potential.

Service providers believe that their services are adapted to both male and female entrepreneurs.



«Our services are open to everyone. We don't discriminate between men and women» - An anonymous service provider

How do we address the gap between women entrepreneurs' needs and the services offered by business support organizations?

▶ What is WE-Check?

WE-Check is an organisational self assessment for gender-responsive business development support.

The WE-Check process is:

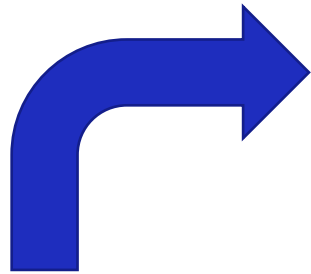
- ▶ A set of 15 Key Assessment Questions.
- ▶ Carried out by an internal team comprised of a diverse group of staff and management members of the organisations
- ▶ A facilitated process with the support of an external facilitator during a 6-12 month process
- ▶ With the findings of the assessment, the facilitator supports the organisation to develop and pilot an evidence-based action plan towards greater gender-sensitive service provision.



CLIENTS &
OUTREACH

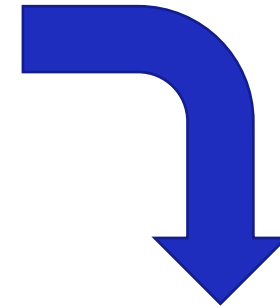
PRODUCTS &
SERVICES

STRATEGY &
OPERATIONS



Step 2: Self Assessment

- Collect data
- Analyse data
- Data Analysis Workshop
- Develop WE Check Action Report
- Validation Workshop



Step 1: Preparation

- Engage senior management
- Define objectives
- Select team and facilitator
- Team Training Workshop
- Develop WE Check Plan
- Communicate WE Check Plan



Step 3: Pilot and Evaluation

- Implement pilot activities
- Monitor pilot activities
- Compile lessons learned
- Review WE Check Action Report

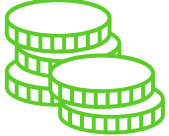


▶ What will organisations gain from the WE-Check Process?

- ▶ Understand the **extent to which their strategies, policies, products and services are positioned to serve women entrepreneurs** in their market.
- ▶ Take action by adapting products and services to fit women entrepreneurs' needs:
 - Allow organisations to: **broaden their client base**
 - Contribute to **positive business and development outcomes** and
 - Achieve greater **institutional sustainability**.
- ▶ Obtain a **certificate** from the ILO recognizing the organization as **committed to providing financial and/or business development services that are gender-sensitive**.

▶ **66%** 

of SME full-time employment in emerging markets can achieve larger economic growth by better integrating women entrepreneurs.

▶ **1.7** 

USD Trillions of unmet demand for finance in emerging markets is for women entrepreneurs

▶ Pilot Programme

Somalia: Zamzam Foundation

Zamzam Foundation carried out the WE-Check process in 2020. Key findings:

- ▶ The absence of a clear definition of women entrepreneurs was hindering efforts and outreach to this category of beneficiaries.
- ▶ A lack of coordination and linkages between the different programmes serving women in strategic areas (Education and Social Development, Health and WASH, Sustainable Livelihoods and Economic Development and Peacebuilding and Governance), was diluting impact.
- ▶ There was scope to improve Zamzam's capacity to advance women's entrepreneurship through the development of women's skills in business.
- ▶ Sex-disaggregated data was not being systematically drawn into the wider management information and/or M&E systems
- ▶ A need to reinforce sections addressing gender equity within internal human resources and programming policies, and to address the disparity between the number of females (21%) and male (79%) employees at its main office.



▶ Pilot Programme

Somalia: Zamzam Foundation

A few months after establishing their WE-Check action plan, the organization had made strides towards greater gender equality, visibility, accountability and better serving women entrepreneurs by:

- ▶ Adopting a clear definition of women entrepreneurs which included criteria on women's decision-making within their business.
- ▶ Initiating a centralized data management system for women's entrepreneurship programmes and systematically collecting and recording gender-disaggregated data from all departments.
- ▶ Committing to increasing the number of women employees by 30%-50% by the end of 2024, with seven new women hired just in 2021. New employees included a person to address issues such as harassment complaints for both beneficiaries and staff.



WE-Check Online Self-guided Training of Facilitators

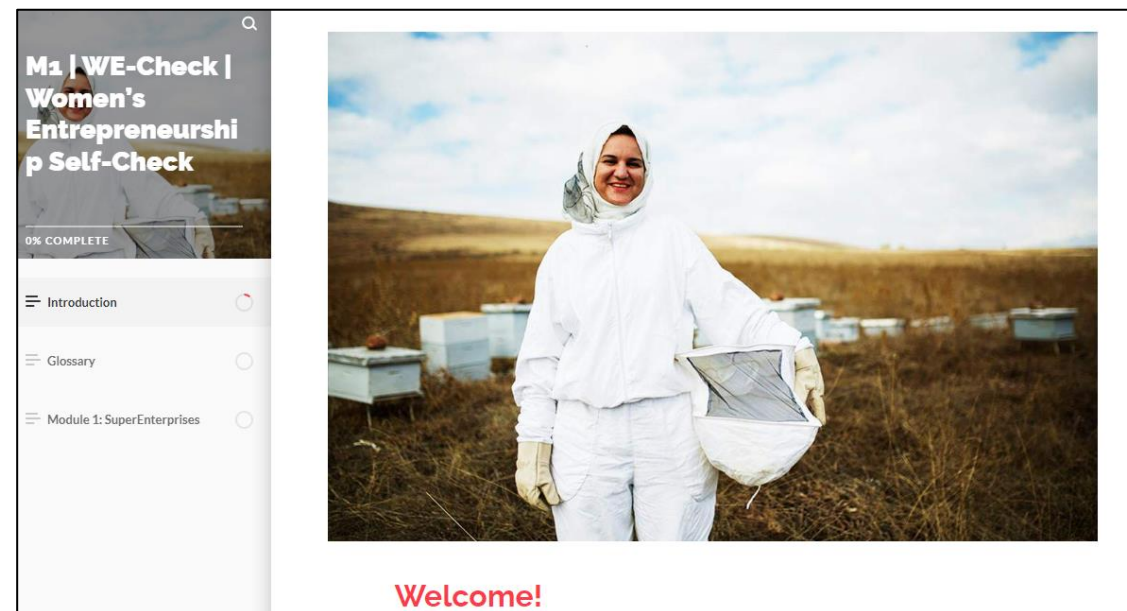
Aim of the course

- ▶ To train external facilitators and equip them with the necessary tools and competencies to support organisations in conducting a WE-Check.

Who is this course for?

- ▶ Those interested in guiding business support organisations to adopt more gender-sensitive approaches by becoming a certified WE-Check facilitator

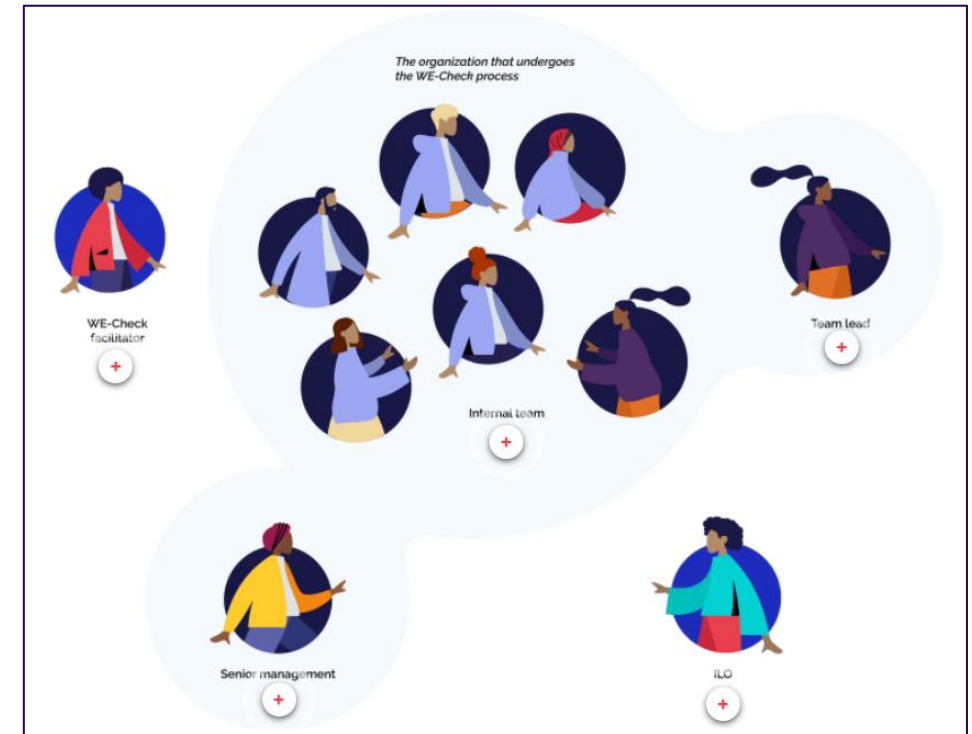
* It was designed for participants with experience with financial and/or non-financial support services for entrepreneurs and with a commitment to advancing gender equality.



WE-Check Online Self-guided Training of Facilitators

4 Modules

- ▶ **Module 1.** Introduction to the WE-Check process through the SuperEnterprises case study
- ▶ **Module 2.** Overview of three steps of the WE-Check process, Key Assessment Questions and three areas of the self-assessment
- ▶ **Module 3.** Supporting organizations in conducting the self-assessment based on KAQs (how to develop a plan; prepare desk and field research etc.)
- ▶ **Module 4.** Transforming the findings into an action plan.
Participation in forum discussions + three virtual webinars over period of three weeks. **Estimated time: 20-22 hours.**



▶ For more information contact:

Women's Entrepreneurship Development Programme

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