



***The Economic Empowerment of Women:  
Examples of Partnerships  
Between Researchers and Agencies***

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***Biancamaria Pomeranzi - Senior Gender Advisor  
DGCS-MAECI***



**THE PARTNERSHIP  
BETWEEN DGCS AND  
RESEARCHERS  
ON  
WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT :  
THE PASNEEG PROGRAM IN  
SENEGAL**

This presentation is not a case of evaluation, but illustrates the experience of a “partnership” between the General Directorate for Development Cooperation, UNWomen Senegal and the Italian research center CESPI (member of the evaluation group of the European Network of Universities and Research Institutes EADI), to support the Senegalese Government in the field of Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment according the new SDG 5 of the Agenda 2030.

- In Senegal, since 2010, Italy has supported the institutionalization of gender equality at all levels and in all sectors by providing resources and technical expertise to the Ministry of Family, Women and Childhood (MFWC). In particular Italy is partner of the Senegalese Government for the implementation of the Integrated Program for Economic and Social Development (PIDES) in the regions of Dakar and Kaolack whose main objective is to reduce “vulnerability” and improve social protection through the economic empowerment of women and young people.
- In addition Italy is the lead donor for “gender equality and women’s empowerment” among EU members and it represents the European Union in the political dialogue with the Senegalese Government on these issues.
- Consequently the partnership was finalized to strengthening the capacity of the national system on the promotion of the empowerment of women as a cross cutting issue of the development strategy in order to improve the dialogue with the international donors, particularly the EU Member States, through a common framework.



Cooperazione Italiana  
allo Sviluppo  
Ministero degli Affari Esteri  
e della Cooperazione Internazionale



# THE PASNEEG PROGRAM AND THE PARTNERSHIP

The partnership with CESPI is a small component of the **PASNEEG program which aims to support the implementation of the National Equity and Gender Equality Strategy of Senegal (SNEEG).**

PASNEEG is part of the Italy-Senegal Country Program and is included in the Joint Programming exercise between Senegal and the European Union Member States.

**The project consists of two components:**

One bilateral with the sectoral contribution to the budget of the Ministry for Family, Women and Childhood for the implementation of SNEEG in selected areas of the country;

One multilateral, managed by UN Women, to provide international technical assistance to the Ministry, for data collection and evaluation of policies.

The applied - research work with CESPI , still in progress, has the main objective to develop a system of indicators for measuring women's empowerment, and in perspective for evaluating public policies that captures:

- the complexity of the definition of the empowerment of women, chosen by DGCS, based on both the key concepts of agency and capabilities;
- the multidimensionality of this concept of empowerment (not only in the economic, but also in political and social sphere);
- the involvement of various social institutions (meaning the set of rules and behaviors that determine social relations) which contribute to different levels of inequality and empowerment and to their relative change;
- the variations in the elements that structure the logical sequence of change:
  - resources available for change,
  - process of change,
  - results of the change;
- the challenges of cultural environmental and geographic context.

This “system of indicators” intends to be useful and adaptable to different evaluation needs as:

- institutional levels and areas of intervention: policies, plans, programs, projects, campaign, changes in law, etc.;
- three dimensions by which to measure change:
  - legal-normative framework (de jure level);
  - factual variables (de facto level);
  - aptitudes and attitudes toward women’s empowerment (de habitu level);
- territorial level (national, sub-national, local);
- temporal reference plane (short, medium and long term);
- size of the resources (human, financial) to be mobilized for the measurement and evaluation of the empowerment of women



The work done to date the has produced:

- The epistemological definition of the system of indicators that takes into account the co-existence and mutual relationship between three different levels of reality (narrative, perceptual and factual) and considers three parallel plans for the analysis of change (the rules, their factual application, the attitudes and mentality). This epistemological definition is based on the human rights approach to development because is rooted in the application of the CEDAW framework as it has been considered in the SIGI system developed by OECD/DAC Development Center.
- A multidimensional framework based on set of indicators which take into account the abovementioned perspective of evaluation (ex ante, ongoing and ex-post) for the political decision . The set of indicators has been defined with the involvement of national stakeholders that includes: institutional partners; civil society national statistical institutions; national scientific community engaged on empowerment issues.
- A field test to verify its application in the areas of the PIDES program.

### The final outputs will be:

- The definition of a measurement system with the analysis of the statistical shortages and the evidence to the data obtainable from already completed surveys and databases in the country, which can enable the activation of an institutional process for measuring the empowerment of women through the harmonization and possible adaptation with the existing statistics chains.
- The gradual transition to the use of the system or parts of it with the involvement of the decision-making structures of the partner institutions as points of reference for the use and testing of the framework for the evaluation of policies and actions at national and local level.
- The involvement of the various donors which - in a spirit of coherence, coordination and complementarity with the national ownership - should refer to the national evaluation system .

- The strengthening of the capacity of the national system for the evaluation of public policies (ie at the meso level) is the challenge against which we measure the pilot experience between Italian Cooperation and CeSPI in Senegal.
- The experience recovers the useful techniques of Randomized Controlled Trials and quasi-experimental methods within the different techniques - qualitative and quantitative, multi-disciplinary and focused on the effects on all three planes of reality taken into account.
- The added value of the experience to date is that it allows a data collection system based on a multi-dimensional definition of the empowerment of women anchored to the concept of “agency”.

- Any given national policy is not just the sum of various projects and in different ways it simultaneously affects the rules, their factual application, the attitudes and mentality. To plan and evaluate policies means recognizing all this complexity, in particular in the field of gender equality and women's empowerment where there is still a long way to go. Indeed while there is a wealth of information on the underlying causes of gender inequalities in development, our collective knowledge base on promising practices to address these inequalities remains fragmented, under-researched and under-documented.
- A strong indicator on women's economic empowerment should track transformative change in the underlying drivers of discrimination and illustrate the real changes in attitudes and prevalence, and how these open (or close) empowerment pathways for women. A sound indicator or set of indicators are, therefore, ones that show changed practice, changed attitudes and empowerment
- Using applied research for the evaluation of women's economic empowerment in the context of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development should help to define an evaluation system to be “universally” applied. The new framework presents a critical window of opportunity for the international community for the harmonization of methodologies and approaches to ensure cross-country comparability.