EconoWin’s Gender Sensitive Value Chain Approach
A Short Guide for Practitioners
WHY THIS HANDBOOK
After developing the EconoWin approach on Gender Sensitive Value Chains and testing it in seven different projects across the MENA region, we wanted to share our experiences and lessons learned. The idea was born to develop an easy to read practical handbook.

FOR WHOM
This handbook is devised as a step-by-step guide for practitioners who want to develop and implement a Gender Sensitive Value Chain project or who want to make an existing value chain more gender sensitive. At the same time this guide is also for policy makers to illustrate what Gender Sensitive Value Chains look like, the value of the approach and how to support its integration.

HOW TO READ THIS BOOK
The handbook is divided into four sections. The INTRODUCTION outlines the EconoWin initiative and the seven projects. The second section, CONCEPTS, lays the theoretical foundations for the rest to come: what is the difference between sex and gender? What is a value chain?

The METHOD section forms the heart of the handbook. It instructs the reader to carry out a Gender Sensitive Value Chains analysis in eleven practical steps. The final section, POLICY, discusses how the findings can be used by decision makers to support the Gender Sensitive Value Chain approach at the policy level. At the end of each section, the reader finds real-life case studies from the EconoWin projects illustrating examples, pointing out lessons learned, and show-casing tangible results. To help with the implementation, the reader is further provided with checklists and instructions for interactive exercises.
Dear Reader,

According to a World Bank statistic from 2011, almost one in two women in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA region) works in the agricultural sector. In comparison, one fifth of all men in the MENA region are employed in the field of agriculture. Thus, it makes sense to include gender specific aspects when one wants to work on the improvement of the livelihood and economic status of the population in rural areas. A special instrument to follow this objective is the Gender Sensitive Value Chain (GSVC) approach.

The tool was first developed by the regional GIZ programme “Economic Integration of Women in the MENA region (EconoWin)” in cooperation with Oxfam Quebec’s Regional Economic Empowerment of Women Project (REEWP) in 2012. From 2012 to 2013 seven partner organizations applied the approach as pioneers: Zaghouan’s association for dog rose promotion (APEZ); Tunisian Association for Leadership, Self-development and Solidarity (ATLAS); Moroccan Association for the Promotion of Small Enterprises (AMAPPE); International Association for the Economic and Social Development (AIDES) in Morocco; Microfund for Women in Jordan, Jordanian Royal Scientific Society; Jordan River Foundation (JRF); SEKEM/ NatureTex Egypt.

The pilot phase culminated in a regional conference in Tunis in December 2014 where over 100 participants from the private sector, civil society and governments came together to share best practices. The great interest shown at the conference exemplified necessity and significance of the topic. This encouraged five of the partners coming from the four countries to act as co-publishers and produce the manual you have in hand. The goal was to summarize knowledge and lessons learned in a guide that not only describes the approach but also gives step-by-step instructions on how to conduct a GSVC analysis and set up GSVC projects.

We hope you enjoy reading the book, and you will be inspired to incorporate the GSVC approach into your own work!

The Publishers
CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

EconoWin - Economic Integration of Women - MENA / GIZ 11
EconoWin's Gender Sensitive Value Chain Approach 13
Results of Seven Projects in Four MENA Countries 15

CONCEPTS

Economies Win when Women Work 22
Definition of Value Chains and Value Chain Analysis 24
Upgrading Value Chains 27
The Difference between Sex and Gender 28
Integrating Women into the Economy: Common Misconceptions 31
Men as Integral Part of the GSVC Approach 32
Challenges Faced by Female Actors in the Value Chain 34

METHOD

The Uniqueness of EconoWin's GSVC Approach 43
Overview of EconoWin's GSVC Approach: 44
Step 1 Recruitment of Experienced Facilitators 46
Step 2 Identifying the Right Sector 47
Step 3 Identifying the Right Partner 48
Step 4 Kick-Off Workshop 49

POLICY

Taking it to the Policy Level: Towards an Inclusive Growth Strategy 78
Gender Sensitive Policies Can Make a Difference 78
What Governments Can Do to Support the GSVC Approach 79

CASE STUDIES

Figs in Morocco 16
A Garment Factory in Egypt 36
Dairy Products in Jordan 72
Myrtle in Tunisia 80

ANNEX

Glossary of Terms 84
Bibliography 86
EconoWin – ECONOMIC INTEGRATION OF WOMEN – MENA / GIZ

The MENA countries have the lowest proportion of women in employment in the world (below 25%). Supported by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), EconoWin contributes to improving the conditions for the integration of women in business and employment in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia.

One of the areas of cooperation is the improvement of women’s economic position in selected sectors. There, EconoWin’s focus has been women’s economic empowerment in value chains, particularly in the agricultural sector, due to the high percentage of women working in this field. Applying the GSVC approach to the agricultural sector has the triple effect of women’s economic empowerment, poverty reduction and rural development.

My family is proud of me for being a productive woman and benefiting my village.

A woman benefiting from the GSVC project in Ajloun governorate, Jordan
ECONOWIN’S GENDER SENSITIVE VALUE CHAIN APPROACH

Economic Development through Successful Bottom-up Projects in Four MENA Countries

From 2012 to 2013 EconoWin’s Gender Sensitive Value Chain (GSVC) approach was applied in seven pilot projects in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia focusing on selected industries and agricultural sectors with potential for growth and for integration into international markets as well as a high number of female workers.

It included the training of national consultants, the identification of project partners and agricultural subsectors as well as a rapid value chain appraisal in seven locations. A one-year facilitation of value chain initiatives focused on various agricultural sub-sectors like dairies, pickled vegetables, fruit processing, aromatic oils and organic cotton for textiles.

The seven pilot projects became excellent examples of bottom-up value chain development. Value chain stakeholders in the project regions gathered together and discussed the strengths and weaknesses of the respective value chain, linking those to the participation and position of women in the chain.

As a result, the initiatives outlined contributed both to boosting the competitiveness and performance of value chain players and enhancing the economic situation of women.
The work I do increased my self-confidence and the self-confidence of other women in my village, where the community now trusts our work.

A woman benefiting from the GSVC project in Ajloun Governorate, Jordan

"The pilot projects illustrated that the GSVC approach has great potential to make a difference in the economic and social development of the region.

A short-term evaluation a year after the start of activities found that:

- 20% of women producers had increased their earnings.
- 23% had improved the quality of their products.
- 27% were selling more products.
- 63% had been able to gain access to supporting services.
- 65% of women entrepreneurs had significantly extended their business networks to other producers and enterprises.
- 77% felt that their status within the communities had been significantly enhanced.
- 85% of the women involved had seen a rise in their levels of self-confidence with regard to their production activities.
FIGS IN MOROCCO

Women Cooperatives in the Dry Fig Value Chain. Upgrading Products through Training

Selection of Sector
Agriculture represents the largest economic sector in Morocco, employing more than 40% of the workforce, and about 57% of women. Morocco is the world’s fifth largest fig producer with annual yields of 108,000 tons of fresh figs and 4,060 tons of dry figs.

Opportunities
Two emerging trends indicate potential for the value chain: the rising of the so-called “sophisticated” national demand for dry figs with the corresponding requirements on quality norms on the one hand, and the national policy on the “social and solidarity economy” on the other, which encourages adding value to traditional products.

Challenges
The main challenges facing the dry fig value chain relate to the poor quality of the final product mainly due to shortcomings in processing, packaging and transport. Up to four layers of intermediaries unnecessarily increase consumer prices while putting price pressure on the producers. Women are traditionally in charge of dry fig production and very active in the dry fig cooperatives. However, there tends to be few opportunities for them to upgrade and diversify their products. Sales opportunities are often hampered by poor infrastructure and social norms restricting women’s mobility.

Project Outline
The project focused on strengthening the technical and managerial capacities of cooperatives, and supporting the advancement of women’s economic activities in the chain, thereby increasing their income. The main project implementation partner was the Moroccan Association for the Promotion of Small Enterprises (AMAPPE - Association marocaine pour la promotion des petites entreprises). Further partners were the regional and provincial delegation of the Ministry of Agriculture as well as the regional branch in Tangier of the Agency for Social Development (ADS - Agence pour le développement social).

Country / Region
Morocco / Province of Chefchaouen and Province of Ouazzane

Beneficiaries
5 cooperatives: Ennajah, Messdakia, Ikhlass, Chmaala and Jnane Rif

Partner
Moroccan Association for the Promotion of Small Enterprises (AMAPPE)

Project Duration
June 2012 - June 2014

Project Title
Gender Sensitive Value Chain of Figs
More than 40% of working women noticed an improvement in their position in the dry fig value chain.

Benefits were four women cooperatives and one mixed cooperative encompassing a total number of 62 dry fig producers, of which 55 were women.

**Short-Term Initiatives**

Four short-term initiatives were proposed and implemented with the support of AMAPPE: increasing market information for producers through a practical guide and seminars. Establishing a strategic committee composed of stakeholders led by ADS to support the framework conditions for value chain development. Raising the level of professionalism within cooperatives regarding sales by increasing product attractiveness and quality. Developing measures for addressing social perceptions of working women.

**Medium-Term Initiatives**

Three strategic initiatives were endorsed by the stakeholders: the support system of the dry fig value chain was boosted by a joint programme between ADS and the provincial delegation of the Ministry of Agriculture. Additional funding from the GIZ Poverty Alleviation Sector Programme was invested in enhancing production techniques, sales methods and cooperative management to upgrade products and businesses. Local development associations supported measures to raise the profile of women in the communities.

**Results and Impact**

Within a year, more than one quarter of women working in the cooperatives were able to increase their income thanks to either a growth in sales or a reduction in production costs. More than 40% of working women noticed an improvement in their position in the dry fig value chain. Business links of 80% of women producers were improved. Approximately one third of women producers are diversifying and enhancing product quality as well as seeking accreditation. Finally, as a result of their economic activities, 80% of women have become more aware of their importance and an increased sense of self confidence towards future activities has been observed.

**Sustainability and Upscaling**

Three new partners were found in the process carrying the project forward: the provincial delegation of the Ministry of Agriculture, the GIZ Poverty Alleviation Sector Programme and local development associations.

80% of women producers of dry figs improved their business links.
CONCEPTS
To integrate women economically on an equal level is an inclusive approach making efficient use of all members of society. Disregarding women’s work in the economy is like playing a team sport and not using half of the team’s players, or using them but not fully training them and losing to a team that both fully trains and makes use of all its players.

If female employment rates were to match male rates, it is estimated that the Egyptian economy would grow by 34%.

(Source: Booz & Company, 2012)

**ECONOMIES WIN WHEN WOMEN WORK**

Integrating women better in the economy makes sense from an economic as well as a social point of view:

**Economic Benefits of Including More Women in the Labour Market**

**Increased competitiveness:** Including women means twice as much talent in the workforce at a time of skilled labour shortage.

**Higher productivity:** Women are in many cases already contributing to economy but better access to resources can increase their productivity.

**Increased domestic demand:** Families invest and spend more due to higher disposable incomes of female members of the household.

**Healthier families:** Women re-invest 90% of their income back into the family improving health and education also benefiting future generations.

**Correlation between Gender Inequality and GDP-Growth**

The Gender Sensitive Value Chain approach provides development actors, governments and international organizations with an instrument through which market forces can be harnessed to benefit women and men as well as the economy.
Why Link Gender with Value Chain Analysis?

Looking through a gender lens at value chains provides deeper insight into the role of women in the production process, about their power and their position in value chains as well as their access to and control over resources and services. Gender inequalities result in inefficiencies in value chains that hinder upgrading quality and growth potential. Women’s lack of access to resources means less efficiency and innovation for the whole chain.

The aim is to identify key factors for improving women’s contribution to the economy to increase overall economic productivity and competitiveness.
UPGRADING VALUE CHAINS

Upgrading
Improving the skill-set of a producer, increasing the value of a product or making its production more efficient to increase profits

There are different ways an actor in the value chain can upgrade and increase competitiveness and hence profits.

Different Forms of Upgrading
- Channel upgrading: increasing market share in existing markets or finding new markets
- Process upgrading: re-organizing the process of production or introducing superior technology to increase efficiency
- Product upgrading: improving the product itself or moving into more sophisticated product lines
- Functional upgrading: moving into new functions in the chain to increase the overall skill content of activities (i.e. processing raw materials themselves rather than selling to middle-man)

The aim of the GSVC approach is for women and men working at the bottom of the value chain to upgrade and move up the value chain.
THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SEX AND GENDER

**Gender**
Refers to the social differences between men and women that are learned, changeable overtime and have wide variations between cultures. Gender is a socio-economic variable used to analyze roles, responsibilities, constraints, opportunities and the needs of women and men in any context.

**Sex**
Refers to the biological characteristics of men and women.

Eye-Opening Exercise:
What is Given, What Can Change?
Collect perceived male and female characteristics on separate flip charts. Afterwards in a group discussion go through and highlight in one colour those characteristics that are due to gender roles and in a different colour those that cannot be changed due to biological differences (sex).
Have a discussion on what differences are given due to biological dissimilarities and what are due to societal factors and could change or have already started to change. The group is likely to come to the conclusion that the socially constructed category is significantly bigger.

The multiple roles of women and men in society
Women and men perform multiple roles in society, however, women often play a larger reproductive role, shouldering more of the household and care work, which is in most cases unpaid, leaving women with less time to carry out remunerated productive work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Productive Role</th>
<th>Reproductive Role</th>
<th>Community Roles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Production of goods and services</td>
<td>Child care</td>
<td>Tasks and responsibilities for the benefit of the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid</td>
<td>Household</td>
<td>Often unpaid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care of the elderly</td>
<td>Unpaid, no pension</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No recognition in society</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The unremunerated work done in the home and in communities from preparing food to cleaning and taking care of children, the ill and the elderly is disproportionately done by women.
Women in many instances are already working but their contribution is invisible to society. Their work gets little attention and even less support which leads to low productivity. Therefore, it is about giving them access to extension services and making their work more productive and efficient, which is a productivity gain for the whole economy.

The fruits of investing in women’s education will be lost with no economic return for public investment in their education.

No, men’s involvement is very important in the GSVC process as co-beneficiaries and partners.

No, innovation and greater efficiency saves resources and benefits all of society. Male members of the family also benefit when the female members can contribute more to the family income. The GSVC targets segments of the value chain primarily occupied by women, not pitching women against men but having them complement each other.

No, the resources used for the GSVC approach are additional resources. The training for women fills the training gap between men and women due to female lack of opportunity. No existing training, funds and programmes, open to men and women, are reduced.

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INTEGRATING WOMEN INTO THE ECONOMY: COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

**Misconception**

Women should not steal men’s jobs in times of high unemployment.

**Reply**

Women in many instances are already working but their contribution is invisible to society. Their work gets little attention and even less support which leads to low productivity. Therefore, it is about giving them access to extension services and making their work more productive and efficient, which is a productivity gain for the whole economy.

Women should stay at home and fulfil their female role as housewife and mother.

**Reply**

The fruits of investing in women’s education will be lost with no economic return for public investment in their education.

The GSVC process only involves women.

**Reply**

No, men’s involvement is very important in the GSVC process as co-beneficiaries and partners.

Men only have to lose from GSVC projects.

**Reply**

No, innovation and greater efficiency saves resources and benefits all of society. Male members of the family also benefit when the female members can contribute more to the family income. The GSVC targets segments of the value chain primarily occupied by women, not pitching women against men but having them complement each other.

The GSVC approach takes resources away from men.

**Reply**

No, the resources used for the GSVC approach are additional resources. The training for women fills the training gap between men and women due to female lack of opportunity. No existing training, funds and programmes, open to men and women, are reduced.
Since the project started, I am able to save some money and today I have built my own house; I hope to buy a car very soon.

Beneficiary of the GSV project with the cooperative Ennajah, Chefchaouen, Morroco

**MEN AS INTEGRAL PART OF THE GSV Approach**

Central to EconoWin’s Gender Sensitive Value Chain (GSVC) approach is the inclusion of women and men. The activities are directed at reducing poverty at the base of the value chain. The aim is to equip producers with the necessary skills, information and access – in areas where they have been disadvantaged and lagging behind – to participate in the market equally. In many cases these happen to be women, but not exclusively.

**Community Involvement**

It is important to carry out awareness raising activities in the communities to increase the acceptance of women’s strengthened economic role. This helps to avoid a negative backlash against the project and the beneficiaries. This should already be an integrated part of the participatory analysis at the start of the project.

Across its different GSVC projects, EconoWin’s approach has experienced strong support from men in the communities, realizing the benefits they gain when female family members contribute more to the family income.

**Men’s Taskforce Supporting Women at NatureTex Factory**

As a result of the GSVC analysis, a taskforce of male workers was founded at the NatureTex factory (Sharquiyah, Egypt) to support women’s economic integration. This taskforce talks to future husbands of female workers, to convince them to allow their wives to continue working in the factory after marriage.
**CHALLENGES FACED BY FEMALE ACTORS IN THE VALUE CHAIN**

Part of the Gender Sensitive Value Chain approach is the recognition that female members of the value chain often face additional obstacles. In addition to societal constraints and the burden of unpaid care work, it is also a question of access. A study on female entrepreneurship in Egypt showed that among business owners interviewed 46% of men had obtained loans from banks whereas this applied to only 15% of female business owners (Source: Euromed, 2006).

The GSVC approach seeks to identify main economic and relevant societal bottlenecks faced by female entrepreneurs, enterprises and employees in the MENA region in order to strengthen their role as economic actors. This approach aims to encourage a more inclusive and participatory way of increasing the competitiveness of the MENA region in the long term.

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**The Challenge of Access to Resources**

**to credit:**
Many female small producers or cooperatives do not know how to access bank credit. In addition, women are often unable to raise the collateral needed to secure the necessary funds given that land titles are usually held by male rather than female members of the family.

**to market:**
Businesses run by women tend to be small and this often limits opportunities to access markets directly without middlemen. Lack of experience renders the task both complex and costly.

**to information:**
Illiteracy is often higher among women. Illiteracy or lack of access to information technology limits women’s access to information that could assist them in promoting or improving their businesses.

**to training:**
Women often work in the informal, invisible part of the economy and hence, are less likely to be reached by extension services. In many cases they have not had the benefit of much schooling. Training on the basics of planning and financing a business is often missing.

**to policymakers:**
Women tend to be less represented in government and higher levels of administration. Women have less access to policymakers and fewer chances to be elected to posts in which policy formulation takes place. Hence women have less of a lobby to represent their interests and cater to their specific needs.

(Source: Adapted from Troiani, 2003)
A GARMENT FACTORY IN EGYPT

Textile Production from Organic Grown Cotton.
Integrating and Retaining Female Workers

Selection of Sector
NatureTex, a SEKEM company, produces garments and toys, mainly for export, using organic cotton grown by independent farmers in Egypt’s Delta region. Seventy people, making up around 30% of NatureTex’s staff, are women and at the time of the project, women were also working at around ten home-based workshops in surrounding villages for assembling and embroidery work. This field enjoys high social acceptance regarding female economic activity.

Challenges
Women are less likely than men to work outside their home in a factory. In addition, out of those female workers the retention rate tends to be lower because many women stop working after getting married or at the latest after having children. This means a loss for the factory in terms of skills and human resources.

Opportunities
Recent quality research shows potential growth in national and even MENA wide market demand for organic textiles if promoted with adapted product lines. Thus, women’s working opportunities would increase in this field.

Project Outline
The main objectives of the GSVC project were to improve women’s self esteem as textile workers, to boost their career prospects within the company and to increase women’s income generating opportunities in independent textile workshops. The implementation partner was NatureTex with its management staff taking on a facilitating role by providing meeting space, access to the beneficiaries and technical support for implementation. The main supporting stakeholders were NatureTex’s managers responsible for market development, social activities and external communication as well as some independent workshop owners.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Gender Sensitive Value Chain of Organic Cotton</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Country / Region</td>
<td>Egypt / Sharquiyah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiaries</td>
<td>Women employed in NatureTex and home-based subcontracted women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>SEKEM / NatureTex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Duration</td>
<td>June 2012 - June 2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Short-Term Initiatives
To improve formal communication channels between male and female workers and management the use of the company’s “complaint box” was restored and to highlight workers’ performance the “Worker of the Month Award” was re-in-stated. As a special measure for female economic empowerment a women only sewing line in the clothes section was agreed upon. In order to start improving working conditions, better access to toilet facilities for women within the factory were planned as well as a separate entrance for female workers to avoid the rush and long queues at the main entrance.

Medium-Term Initiatives
At NatureTex, an Awareness and Leadership Programme to improve the self-esteem of female workers has started in parallel with a Career Opportunity and Capacity Building Programme for women. A Marketing Task Force to develop a new marketing strategy for organic cotton textiles and toys has also been established and the way of communicating with external workshops further developed.

Results and Impact
Lines of communication between workers and management have been improved as a result of the first career development training sessions. Self-awareness of women definitely rose within NatureTex as shown by the short-term evaluation. The company’s management has become fully aware of the potential benefits of nurturing the female workforce. NatureTex’s gender sensitive approach has become a model for other companies operated by SEKEM.

Sustainability and Up Scaling
An externally financed development worker was placed at SEKEM’s Development Foundation to continue the work of the GSVC project and has supported SEKEM in devising an overall gender strategy.
METHOD
The Gender Sensitive Value Chain (GSVC) approach of EconoWin is unique because ...

... it aims at making women’s work visible and upgrading it.

... it aims at improving women’s access to resources.

... it is uniquely participatory, transparent and inclusive across hierarchies involving representatives from individual producers, cooperatives, companies and public entities.

... it involves men as important partners to show that men and the whole society gain when women are better integrated in the economy.

... it involves policy makers from the administrative level to facilitate systemic change.

... it results in concrete initiatives that are implemented in a short period of time to foster the feeling of agency among local actors.

... it ensures sustainability and scaling up through longer and more strategic interventions based on the success of the short-term initiatives.
Overview of EconoWin’s GSVC Approach

Take it to the Policy Level

1 year

INCLUSIVE GROWTH STRATEGY

Final Workshop

Medium-Term Initiatives

Viability check and M&E
Mid-Term Strategic Review Workshop

START

Step 1

Identify sector

Find facilitators

Step 2

Identify partners

Step 3

Kick-Off Workshop

Step 4

Focus group discussions

Step 5

Analysis Results Workshop

Step 6

Synthesis of findings

Step 7

Planning initiatives

Step 8

Short-Term Initiatives

Step 9

Step 10

Step 11

GOAL
RECRUITMENT OF EXPERIENCED FACILITATORS

Unless the know-how is available within the partner organization, it is advisable to hire experienced consultants for the GSVC analysis to guide the process. If experienced consultants are not available, a pool should be set up through training.

It is important that the diversity of facilitators reflects the inclusiveness of EconoWin’s GSVC approach: ideally a tandem of one female and one male facilitator - one being a gender specialist and one being a value chain expert - work together.

IDENTIFYING THE RIGHT SECTOR

The second step is to identify the right sector and partner organization. The following guidelines are useful to keep in mind:

Criteria for Selecting a Sector for a GSVC Project:

- Sector in which women’s participation is already culturally accepted or has the potential to become accepted
- Sector part of the government’s growth priority
- Sector with business growth potential and growth opportunities for women
- Sector in need of improved competitiveness
- Allowance for innovative activities
- Several chain nodes * in one geographic area
- Not highly vulnerable to external shocks (drought, high price fluctuations)
- Existence of strong and motivated potential partner organizations already working in the sector

* NODES: represent the different value-adding steps forming the value chain
IDENTIFYING THE RIGHT PARTNER

A motivated and capable partner organization is a key success factor for the whole GSVC analysis. The partner is responsible for raising interest among stakeholders, collecting and sharing information and organizing workshops and meetings. Secondly, the partner organization becomes a process manager and facilitator for the completion of the GSVC analysis itself, as well as for the implementation of the selected future initiatives. Therefore, the partner organization needs not only to have the ability, willingness and commitment to organize the analysis, but also to stay involved in the longer term. By monitoring and encouraging the implementation of the selected initiatives, it becomes the main driver for change within the GSVC project. The selected consultants work together with the partner organization.

Criteria for Partner Selection

Partners can be all kinds of entities: public bodies, civil society organizations, companies or business associations. But they need to have:

✔ An institutional structure with a technical and organizational capacity to organize and facilitate the analysis and inform stakeholders on a regular basis

✔ A strong existing network with access to key stakeholders of the chain and local community, with staff and directors who are respected locally

✔ A high interest and intrinsic motivation to realize the project, a certain flexibility and openness towards the GSVC approach and innovative activities

✔ A committed management body; to support the process and the promotion of the identified GSVC initiatives (starting initiatives does not require financial input as much as it does manpower and overall facilitation of the process)

KICK-OFF WORKSHOP

Who is Involved?

The Kick-Off Workshop brings together representatives of all stakeholders of the value chain, irrespective of hierarchical position or sex; it encompasses all economic actors that are part of the selected value chain in a region.

Stakeholders can be:

- Entrepreneurs
- Employees
- Home based producers
- Business associations
- Retailers
- Cooperatives
- Salespersons
- Local government offices
- NGOs
- Extension services
- Educational and scientific institutions
**Setting the Scene**

The Kick-Off Workshop brings together all the different stakeholders, gives an overview of the coming process and gets everyone engaged and excited.

The facilitator should introduce the concepts explained in the theory section at the beginning of this handbook. This ensures all participants are on the same page with regards to what a value chain analysis consists of and why it makes sense to link it with gender and why economies win when women work.

The workshop should also introduce the difference between sex and gender and open up the discussion about the obstacles women face in terms of access to resources.

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**Value Chain Analysis**

At the start of the Kick-Off Workshop it is important for all actors to map out the value chain they are working on:

**Value Chain Example of Rose Water Cosmetics**

This is a simplified illustration of a value chain, which in real life would branch off in different nodes and multiple end products besides soap. As a next step, the participants add all the different stakeholders and their roles and cluster them according to operators and supporters:

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**Important Concepts**

- Differentiation between sex and gender (p. 28)
- Multiple roles of women and men (p. 29)
- Unpaid care work (p. 29)
- Women & resources: the challenge of access (p. 35)
Where are the Women?

Then the participants are asked to identify the roles of women in the value chain:

- Where in the value chain are women involved?
- Is their work hidden and not part of the formal economy?
- What is their estimated % among actors?
- What is their estimated representation in leadership positions among those actors?
The Kick-Off Workshop is followed by a 1-2 week long fieldwork phase, where the different actors, especially the female actors, are visited in their home setting. This is important to verify and deepen the findings of the Kick-Off Workshop, since due to power relations not all aspects might have been discussed openly.

In addition to interviews, focus group discussions are a useful tool, especially to observe the dynamics between different actors and hear different perspectives.

Focus Group

A qualitative research tool where a group of interacting individuals having some common interest or characteristics are brought together by a moderator for a discussion, who uses the group and its interaction as a way to gain information about a specific issue.

The more homogenous the group, the more likely participants are to share openly. However, focus groups can also be deliberately mixed, to observe the interaction between different groups, such as male and female producers.
SYNTHESIS OF FINDINGS

The facilitation team, consisting of the partner organization and the GSVC consultants team, gathers all the findings from the Kick-Off Workshop and the fieldwork to present it at a solution oriented Analysis Results Workshop.

WORKSHOP: PRESENTING RESULTS OF THE GSVC ANALYSIS

At the Analysis Results Workshop the facilitators present the findings of the analysis to the same wide range of actors invited for the Kick-Off Workshop. The floor is open to discuss, validate and if needed, adjust the findings.
PLANNING INITIATIVES

The second half of the Analysis Results Workshop is dedicated to brainstorming solutions.

The aim is to identify potential initiatives that could boost both competitiveness and enhance the economic situation of women and men at the bottom of the value chain.

The facilitators introduce the concept of upgrading value chains: increasing the value of a product or making its production more efficient to increase profits.

Initiatives

Initiatives are likely to fall in four categories:

self-organization of sector, legal knowledge, personal development, and economic empowerment.

Self-Organization of Sector
- Setting up associations
- Support for cooperatives
- Engagement of entrepreneurs and governorates for sector and local economic development

Personal Development
- Training to boost communication skills and self-confidence
- Training in basic literacy and numeracy
- Training in specific technical knowledge like accounting

Legal Knowledge
- Knowledge dissemination on health laws for food production
- Knowledge dissemination on access to finance: what is available and how to obtain it
- Knowledge dissemination on how to register as a formal enterprise

Economic Empowerment
- Training in quality management, product diversification and packaging
- Initiatives to access new markets e.g. attending trade fairs
- Initiatives to increase demand for locally produced products through common branding
The Difference between Short and Medium-Term Initiatives

EconoWin’s GSVC approach deliberately uses two different forms of initiatives:

**Short-Term Initiatives (2-4 months):**

Planned at the Analysis Results Workshop. Implementation of quick-win GSVC initiatives aims to show tangible results quickly and bring about a certain amount of “wow” factor to keep stakeholders motivated.

No external funding, to increase the feeling of local agency and self-empowerment.

**Medium-Term Initiatives (3-6 months):**

Implementation after the short-term initiatives and following the Strategic Workshop. Strategic initiatives to improve the role of women in the value chain in the long run and ensure sustainability and up-scaling.

Can include external funding.

**LESSON LEARNED**

Differentiation between short and medium-term initiatives can at times be challenging since participants often want to think big right from the start. However, it has proven successful to make a clear distinction between the two phases.

The idea of the short-term initiatives is to encourage stakeholders to work together and draw on the existing resources to see what they can do immediately without major funds just with better cooperation, coordination and communication.

Once this feeling of agency, self-organization and self-empowerment has been experienced, the medium-term initiatives are likely to be more sustainable because they have a strong foundation to stand on.
Criteria for the Selection of Initiatives

During the Analysis Results and Mid-Term Strategic Review Workshops, while brainstorming and selecting the initiatives in a participatory way with the help of the stakeholders, it is important to keep the following criteria in mind:

**Checklist for the Selection of Short-Term Initiatives**

- Is the initiative realistic and viable?
- Is the initiative socially acceptable?
- Can this initiative be implemented with the resources available locally (motivation, know-how, institutions, funds, access to and control over resources, existence of growth-oriented female entrepreneurs, etc.)?
- Does the initiative offer tangible, innovative upgrading possibilities?
- Does the initiative have potential for quick, visible effects?
- Can you expect a visible effect within 4 months?

**Checklist for the Selection of Medium-Term Initiatives**

- Does the initiative improve agency and internal organization of women producers in the chain?
- Is the initiative socially acceptable?
- Does this initiative improve the long-term position of women in the chain and strengthen their role as important players in the chain?
- Can this initiative lead to an improvement of the process, the product or the function of female producers and employees in the chain that will also lead to better market opportunities or increased salaries?

Those initiatives that tick all the boxes and received the most votes can be brought forward.

It is important that one actor or a group of actors feel responsible and form a working group, taking over the role of facilitator, to implement the initiative together.

**Example of a Short-Term Initiative: Better Working Conditions, Egypt**

The Egyptian garment factory NatureTex planned improving the access to sanitary facilities within the factory for better working conditions for female factory workers.

**Example of a Medium-Term Initiative: Training and Trade Fair, Jordan**

Training: home-based producers receive a training in health standards from the local health authorities. Fair: after the training the women get access to a trade fair in Amman to sell their improved products.
**MID-TERM STRATEGIC REVIEW WORKSHOP**

The Mid-Term Strategic Review Workshop should be held after 4 months, after the end of the implementation phase of the short-term initiatives and before the start of the implementation phase of the medium-term initiatives. The aim of the 2-day Strategic Review Workshop is to review what has been achieved so far in the short-term initiatives and plan the next steps for implementing the medium-term initiatives.

All activities mentioned hereunder should be repeated as often as needed during the planning and implementation of the initiatives!

The following section forms part of the Analysis Results Workshop, when planning the short-term initiatives (Step 8) and should again be repeated at the Strategic Review Workshop (Step 9), when planning the medium-term initiatives.

**VIABILITY CHECK AND M&E**

**Allies and Enablers**

Part of planning the short-term and medium-term initiatives is revisiting the value chain analysis from the Kick-Off Workshop and identifying the key actors who could help with the initiatives, or in the worst case, might oppose and block them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Allies &amp; Enablers</th>
<th>Blockers</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initiative #1</td>
<td>Names of actors / organizations</td>
<td>Names of actors / organizations</td>
<td>Names of actors / organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiative #2</td>
<td>Names of actors / organizations</td>
<td>Names of actors / organizations</td>
<td>Names of actors / organizations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As a second step, strategize how to win the support of the other actors:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actor</th>
<th>Advantages of cooperation for them</th>
<th>Disadvantages of cooperation for them</th>
<th>Their likely expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actor #1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actor #2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

65
Measuring Success: Monitoring and Evaluation

Already before the start of the initiatives, it is important for the stakeholders to agree on what they hope to achieve with the intervention, how they will know it has been successful and how success can be measured.

For POSSIBLE INDICATORS see the table on the next page.
Plan evaluation before the start of the project: in order to have baseline figures to compare the situation before and after the intervention, make sure to plan and start the evaluation activities before the project is launched.

Lack of Continuity: it is advisable to use the same evaluators at the start and at the end of the project to ensure consistency, observe changes over time and reduce the time it takes to become familiar with the project.

Time lag: the final evaluation should not be carried out too long after the end of the project because some of the interviewed women might find it difficult to remember.

Problem of illiteracy: some beneficiaries might be illiterate; hence the evaluation tools have to be adapted.

Lack of bookkeeping: women with home businesses often do not keep track of their business in a way that allows them to monitor an increase in sales or income in measurable ways. Training in bookkeeping should be given at the start of the project or at least the method of estimation used by the evaluators should be the same at the start and at the end of the project.

Seasonality: the seasonality of some of the activities can make it difficult to keep track of employment or increase or decrease in income.

Gaming: the beneficiaries sometimes fear to report income increase as they think this would lead to them receiving less support.
FINAL WORKSHOP – EVALUATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

The concluding step of EconoWin’s GSVC process is a Final Workshop to which all the stakeholders, who participated in the process over the past year, are invited. The Final Workshop is divided into three parts.

In the first part of the workshop the stakeholders evaluate the process and the implemented initiatives in a participatory way:

- What did the stakeholders think about the process?
- What were the lessons learned from the GSVC implementation?
- Which projects became success stories and why?
- What are some of the best practices to take home?

Self-Initiated Activities
The second part of the workshop is dedicated to planning the future post-GSVC process.

- Do the stakeholders want to continue to work together?
- In what form?
- Who takes over the facilitators’ role of coordinating?
- What initiatives do the stakeholders want to continue?
- Shall new initiatives be started and if yes, what form should they take?
- What could be new sources of funding?

It is important that this part of the workshop is already owned and moderated by the stakeholders themselves. After the implementation of the short and medium-term initiatives, the hope is that the project will enter into a third phase of self-initiated activities.

Show-Casing
The third and final part of the workshop is a presentation event where beneficiaries can show-case their products and stakeholders present the projects to potential partners, funders and policy makers. The aim is to ensure sustainability of the initiatives in the long run and to diversify sources of funding as well as to lobby decision makers to make systemic changes to improve conditions for female producers and employees.
DAIRY PRODUCTS IN JORDAN

Diversifying and Up Scaling Dairy Products. An Opportunity for Women to Enter the Formal Sector

Selection of Sector
The agricultural sector in Jordan accounts for a substantial share of national GNP, providing income for approximately 20% of the population yet employing only 7%. High unemployment rates and gender disparities, particularly in rural agricultural areas, often make women’s contribution go unrecognized, especially as men usually handle the marketing and selling of the produce.

Jerash is the smallest of Jordan’s twelve governorates. This governorate is famous for its traditionally made dairy products. There are around fifty formal enterprises, and a hundred informal workshops, usually run by women, processing and selling traditional dairy products. These products in high demand contribute to the livelihoods of hundreds of families.

Challenges
However, the subsector is largely unregulated and lacks proper standardization and marketing interventions. Seasonal production often prevents producers from developing lasting contracts with retailers, so the products remain confined to local retail outlets.

Opportunities
There is potential for increasing not only the product quality by applying hygiene and health standards, but also the quantity of sales through up scaling production and developing markets. Due to high literacy rates, the likelihood that women will be able to acquire and apply new knowledge is high.

Project Outline
The GSVC project in Jerash aimed to increase job opportunities and income generation for women. Project implementation partners were the Microfund for Women (MFW) and the Royal Scientific Society (RSS). Main stakeholders included the governorate of Jerash, the directorates of agriculture, health and labour and the Jordan Hashemite Fund for Human Development (JoHUD). Beneficiaries were 170 rural women from Jerash who mostly already had experience in dairy production, whether in the informal sector or small formal businesses. Also, three cooperatives and three non-governmental organizations were involved.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Gender Sensitive Value Chain of Dairy Products</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Country / Region</td>
<td>Jordan / Jerash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiaries</td>
<td>Low-income women working in the informal and small formal businesses sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>Microfund for Women, Royal Scientific Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Duration</td>
<td>June 2012 - June 2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Medium-Term Initiatives
Medium-term initiatives included an additional capacity-building programme for the producers, the finalization of a health self-checklist, as well as the organization of and participation in a product fair in Amman.

Results and Impact
The difference in total revenue of women’s businesses before and after the project witnessed an average rise of 127%. Participating women improved their production know-how and, in particular, their hygiene and storage knowledge to meet national and international standards. New equipment resulted in greater productivity, efficiency and product variety per female producer. Women producers demonstrated understanding of key barriers and started to provide suggestions on how they could overcome such obstacles. Furthermore, contacts with markets in Amman widened networks, strengthened business links and increased sales.

Sustainability and Up Scaling
The GIZ Poverty Reduction Sector Programme started supporting the initiative in 2014 by investing in the capacity development of a group of women producers in the district of Burma, the poorest in Jerash.

Short-Term Initiatives
The MfW provided logistical and outreach support to the local beneficiaries. The governorate of Jerash provided meeting facilities and followed up on progress. The RSS provided training and scientific sample testing for the beneficiaries, as well as advanced equipment installation and training. Representatives from the directorates of agriculture, health and labour facilitated access to information and policies, and JoHUD helped to reach local community networks. The enhanced productivity programme, IRADA, provided training in production and marketing strategies as well as conducting participatory research into informal businesses and awareness campaigns on compliance with governmental regulations and standards. The establishment of Quality Circles was also supported.
TAKING IT TO THE POLICY LEVEL: TOWARDS AN INCLUSIVE GROWTH STRATEGY

EconoWin’s GSVC approach aims at forging a link between grass root initiatives making a difference on the ground and governments advising them on how to make structural changes at the policy level to improve the economic environment for women and achieve inclusive growth.

GENRE SENSITIVE POLICIES CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The Case of Jerash in Jordan

Before the GSVC pilot project, licences for dairy production were not given to private households. However, in rural Jordan, many women stay at home due to family commitments so this regulation prevented female home-based dairy producers from entering the formal economy and increasing their profits. The Jerash governorate was a local partner in the GSVC project. Realising that this regulation is an obstacle to women’s economic empowerment in this region of Jordan, the local governorate has in some cases granted licences to home-producers, who comply with health regulations. This small policy change has made a big difference to women’s lives, allowing them to become part of the formal economy.

WHAT GOVERNMENTS CAN DO TO SUPPORT THE GSVC APPROACH

**Political Strategies**
- Include budget for GSVC projects in governmental planning
- Integrate supportive measures into governmental development plans
- Make government institutions run gender sensitive value chain projects
- Make progress monitoring of value chain projects gender sensitive

**Finding Allies**
- Look for partners among civil society and private sector entities.
- Look for partners among other governments in the region, international networks and donors
- Ask development actors to adopt the GSVC approach when implementing projects in cooperation with the government

**Provision of Services**
- Design extension and financial services tailored to women
- Provide training programmes for women
- Subsidise childcare services
MYRTLE IN TUNISIA

Myrtle’s Value Chain. An Opportunity to be Competitive on the Market

Selection of Sector
The myrtle plant is renowned for its numerous therapeutic properties. The national market is growing for the so-called “noble” myrtle essential oil, which is sold in specialty stores in Tunisia’s major cities. Myrtle essential oil is regarded by the state as a “strategic product” – its production is subject to tendering procedures and to an imperative of natural resources preservation.

Challenges
Large-volume picking and the processing of myrtle derivatives are managed exclusively by a small number of entrepreneurs located outside the region. Therefore, the region does not profit from the added value of these myrtle-derived products. Women are mainly involved as manual labourers in the harvest of myrtle and to a lesser extent in the distillation, either individually or as Agricultural Development Groupings (GDAs – Groupements de développement agricole). The key challenges of this value chain are the producers’ lack of organization, the insufficient collaboration between existing GDAs as well as the low return on derivatives (with the exception of myrtle essential oil).

Opportunities
The formal organization of women producers into GDAs is an opportunity to ensure sufficient production volume, making it possible for women to position themselves on the market. The potential for upgrading the myrtle value chain involves improving the distillation process and adding value to myrtle-derived products, which would grant women more exposure and an improved access to markets.

Project Outline
The goal of the project was to provide support to women producers in the myrtle value chain to improve their market access by encouraging the establishment of formal groupings. The main implementation partner was the ATLAS association. The project’s main stakeholders were the Regional Commission for Agricultural Development (CRDA - Commissariat régional au développement agricole) in the Governorate of Jendouba and the National Office for Crafts (ONA – Office national de l’artisanat). The project targeted approximately 20 women beneficiaries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Gender Sensitive Value Chain of Myrtle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Country / Region</td>
<td>Tunisia / Ain Drahem - Tbainia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiaries</td>
<td>Cooperatives and rural women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>Tunisian Association for Leadership, Self-development and Solidarity (ATLAS - Association tunisienne pour le leadership, l’auto-développement et la solidarité)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Duration</td>
<td>October 2012 - December 2013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Short-term Initiatives
Short-term initiatives involved the creation of a new women’s grouping for agricultural development in Tbainia. The intention was to strengthen production, marketing and women’s skills in improved distillation and saponification techniques, as well as strengthening their advocacy and lobbying skills on issues of access to forest resources.

Medium-term Initiatives
Medium-term strategic activities were geared towards strengthening women’s capacities and honing training courses for the GDAs, particularly in accounting and basic management. The marketing component included packaging and label modelling activities in line with market standards and granting GDA-made products under the existing local seal of quality called “Kroumirie”.

Results and Impact
75% of women beneficiaries succeeded in enhancing the marketing of their products and in increasing their sales. Creating and maintaining Tbainia’s women GDAs is the project’s main outcome. It allows for easier product diversification, finding new markets and more unified lobbying for access to forest resources. GDAs are beginning to develop several innovative activities to diversify their services. Tourism is one of them with the support of young women graduates from the region and in line with national efforts to promote responsible and sustainable tourism.

Sustainability and Up Scaling
Several national and international organizations have shown interest in collaborating with the GDAs in Tbainia.

75% of women beneficiaries succeeded in enhancing their products’ marketing and in growing their sales.
ANNEX

Glossary of Terms

Focus Group Discussion
A qualitative research tool where a group of interacting individuals having some common interest or characteristics are brought together by a moderator for a discussion, who uses the group and its interaction as a way to gain information about a specific issue.

Gender
Refers to the social differences between men and women that are learned, changeable over time and have wide variations between cultures. Gender is a socio-economic variable used to analyse roles, responsibilities, constraints, opportunities and the needs of women and men in any context.

Gender Sensitive Value Chain (GSVC)
A Gender Sensitive Value Chain ensures the inclusion of women in the value chain and ensures their equal access to resources (such as capital, information and training) as well as their mobility to move up the value chain.

Gender Sensitive Value Chain Analysis
While the aim is still to make the value chain more profitable, the GSVC analysis also looks at the different roles women and men play in the value chain and the relationships between them, aiming to improve the role of women in the value chain at the same time as increasing profitability.

Gender Sensitive Value Chain Approach
A gender sensitive way to identify and carry out value chain projects. It encompasses the Gender Sensitive Value Chain analysis as well as the resulting projects, sustainability and policy measures.

Gender Sensitive Value Chain Project
The short and medium-term initiatives resulting from a gender sensitive value chain analysis

Node
Each node of a value chain represents the different value-adding steps forming the value chain.

Value Chain
A value chain is the full range of activities a product or service goes through before it is bought by the consumer – such as design, primary production, transformation, marketing and distribution.

Value Chain Analysis
A process whereby the primary and support activities that add value to a final product or service are analysed to reduce costs or increase the value of the product, making the value chain more profitable.

Value Chain Stakeholders
All actors involved in the value chain, including supporting services. Stakeholders can include: home based producers, entrepreneurs, employees, cooperatives, business associations, retailers, salespersons, local government offices, NGOs, extension services providers, educational and scientific institutions, the local community.

Sex
Refers to the biological characteristics of men and women.

Unpaid Care Work
The unremunerated work done in the home and in communities from preparing food, cleaning, to taking care of children, the ill and the elderly. Disproportionally done by women.

Upgrading
Improving the skill-set of a producer, increasing the value of a product or making its production more efficient to increase profits.
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