



Terms of Reference
Progress, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning (PEAL) framework
Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) Strategy

July 2022

Background

Ensuring that women have equal access to economic opportunities and control over economic decisions is essential to their agency and wellbeing. In addition to the intrinsic nature of economic equality as a fundamental right, when women prosper, so do their families, communities, and societies, making women's economic empowerment (WEE) an essential component of social and economic development.

In 2015, the Hewlett Foundation expanded its efforts to help women gain control over crucial decisions affecting their lives by launching a strategy to advance women's economic opportunities. We sought to do this by giving greater visibility to women's work in labor statistics and data, bringing to light gender-specific implications of economic policies via research and enhancing the capacity of advocacy organizations to inform and influence economic policies on women's behalf. Between 2015 and 2020, the foundation made 70 grants totaling more than \$54 million in the WEE portfolio. In 2020, we launched a strategy refresh process to retrospectively [evaluate](#) our progress and reassess our approach.

Over the next five years, our [Women's Economic Empowerment strategy](#) will seek this goal: *to promote the adoption, funding, and implementation in East and West Africa of improved gender-responsive macro-level economic policies¹ that supports all women's opportunities, wellbeing, and agency.* We seek to advance our goal through four distinct but interrelated and mutually reinforcing efforts. One overarching effort focuses on strengthening the field of actors working toward gender-responsive macro-level policy change. The other three focus on activities critical to achieving our goal: expanding the gender-responsive macro-level solution set via evidence generation and use, strengthening WEE advocates, and leveraging international and bilateral organizations to influence domestic macro-level policies. In addition, a crosscutting theme involves shifting funding, decision making, and priority setting to African organizations that are closer to national policymaking.

The four outcomes we will be pursuing for this strategy are:

1. ***Strengthening the WEE Field: A well-resourced and effective WEE field positioned to influence gender-responsive macro-level economic policy in East and West Africa.*** While the WEE field has grown and evolved, actors supporting women's economic empowerment still do not significantly

¹ The feminist economist Stephanie Seguino coined the term “macro-level economic decisions” to encompass macro-level policies beyond the traditionally narrower definition of macroeconomics. In our use of “macro-level” policy here, we mean economic development efforts broad enough to have important aggregate or economywide distributional and welfare implications (e.g., taxation, transfers including social protection, public spending, and infrastructure including child care).

influence macro-level economic policymaking. The macro-level WEE field remains relatively nascent. To begin changing this, particularly given our limited resources, we will aim to attract additional funders to support macro-level economic policy change.

2. ***Expanding the WEE Macro-Level Economic Solution Set: Research institutions and think tanks in East and West Africa generate contextually relevant, gender-responsive solutions for macro-economic policy formulation and implementation.*** We will support and amplify evidence-based macro-policies that are responsive to the actual needs of advocates and policymakers in East and West Africa. These solutions will initially focus on unpaid care, informal work, social protection, and tax justice; they may shift or grow to include other areas of opportunity that emerge over time.
3. ***Strengthening WEE Advocates: Women’s rights organizations, advocates, and feminist movements in East and West Africa advocate effectively for improved macro-level economic policymaking and implementation.*** We will support African WEE advocates, women’s rights organizations, and feminist movements to strengthen their efforts to promote macro-level economic policy using an intersectional feminist lens, including supporting them to partner with researchers to generate policy solutions. As we move into the feminist funding environment, we will do so in a learning mode.
4. ***Leveraging the Influence of IFIs, Multilaterals, and Bilateral: Select IFIs, multilaterals, and bilaterals provide resources and gender-aware advice and guidance to national governments in East and West Africa on gender-responsive macro-level economic policy that aligns with national and regional priorities.*** International financial institutions (IFIs) and multilateral and bilateral agencies are vital influencers of country-level economic policy in Africa. But many of these organizations, especially IFIs, undervalue the need for systemic macro-level policy change supporting women's economic opportunities. We plan to work with a select group of these institutions to increase their understanding and willingness to invest in gender-responsive approaches to macro-level economic policy.

Cross-cutting Theme: Shifting power. As our goal is to promote gender-responsive macro-level economic policy in East and West Africa, an important underlying theme concerns shifting WEE priority-setting and decision-making power from global actors to local, national, and regional actors in Africa who are better attuned to and guided by the wants and needs of the women we ultimately seek to serve. This includes directly funding more organizations in East and West Africa; supporting and strengthening African think tanks and



research institutions; and supporting African women’s rights organizations and feminist movements working on macro-level WEE issues.

Our Values

1. We value feminist funding principles. In our grantmaking, we will work to address power imbalances, apply an intersectional lens, exhibit trust and respect for our grantee partners, and prioritize equity.
2. We are solutions-oriented and impact-focused. Our strategy will contribute to impact if there is an increase in improved, adequately funded, and well-implemented macro-level economic policies that advance women's wellbeing in Africa.
3. We are flexible and will use learning to course correct. We will use “SMART” indicators to track progress and exploratory grantmaking to learn what works, what doesn’t, and why.
4. We must prioritize our limited financial and human resources. To make the best use of our resources, we will focus on East and West Africa and our identified thematic areas (unpaid care, informal work, social protection, and tax justice) to the extent possible.

Developing A Progress, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning (PEAL) framework for the New WEE Strategy (2022 – 2027)

Goal and Outcomes	Learning Questions
<p>Goal: To promote the adoption, funding, and implementation in East and West Africa of improved gender-responsive macro-level economic policy that supports all women's opportunities, wellbeing, and agency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there synergies among our investments across outcomes, and are they mutually reinforcing? • Are these the “right” pathways to achieve our overarching goal? What might be missing? • Are there early signs that opportunities for macro-level economic policy change are emerging? Can we identify and use these to better understand and accelerate the change process and identify the actors best positioned to move it forward? • When and how does collaboration pay off between different types of organizations? What does success look like in a collaboration?
<p>Outcome 1: A well-resourced and effective WEE field positioned to influence gender-responsive macro-level economic policy in East and West Africa.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do general field strengthening efforts contribute to more or better policy solutions? • How can achieving short- or medium-term policy wins accelerate or motivate progress toward our goal?
<p>Outcome 2: Research institutions and think tanks in East and West Africa generate contextually relevant, gender-responsive solutions for macro-level economic</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are forms of collaboration between evidence generators and users most effective in generating gender-responsive, contextually relevant solutions for use in macro-level economic policy? • What kinds of organizations and collaborations develop macroeconomic solutions with the

policy formulation and implementation.	<p>potential to improve the well-being of significant numbers of women with a plausible path to use?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do we see more traction in specific sectors or countries? Why or why not?
Outcome 3: Women’s rights organizations, advocates, and feminist movements in East and West Africa advocate effectively for improved macro-level economic policymaking and implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do women’s rights organizations, feminist movements, and WEE advocates work to influence policy change? How can we resource women’s rights organizations, feminist movements, and WEE advocates to increase their capacity for economic and political influence
Outcome 4: Select IFIs, multilaterals, and bilateral provide resources and gender-aware advice and guidance to national governments in East and West Africa on gender-responsive macro-level economic policy aligned with national and regional priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What methods, strategies, and tactics work to influence IFIs from the inside? From the outside? What strategies and tactics are most effective in influencing the multilateral and bilateral institutions identified as the most promising partners?

PEAL Plan Purpose

The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation invites interested individual consultant(s) or firms to help develop concrete action plans, collect baseline data, and organize annual reflection event(s) for the Progress, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning (PEAL) component of the new WEE strategy, a subcomponent of the foundation’s [Gender Equity and Governance program](#).

The primary audience for this work will be the foundation staff and grantee partners of the WEE team. The secondary audience for this PEAL framework includes the WEE field and peer funders. The purpose of the PEAL plan will be to guide the WEE team and our grantee partners as we implement this new strategy: to develop a set of systems, practices, and possibly frameworks that can help us assess whether we are on track to achieve our objectives; to hold ourselves accountable to our grantee partners and to the shifts we will need to make to implement our new strategy; to help us to gather the information required to make informed decisions and adjust course as needed; and to help us prioritize sharing what we learn with grantee partners, peer funders, and the field. Specifically, this plan will include guidance in the following areas.

Progress Monitoring: With a PEAL partner, we seek to defining with our grantees how to measure success and understand how grantees expected and achieved outcomes map against the outcomes and goal of the WEE strategy. We are committed to co-creating indicators of progress with the field and need a PEAL partner with experience in this type of inclusive approach. We will also collect baseline data on grantee priorities, trends, and changes in the field of gender-responsive macro-level policies including but not limited to unpaid care,



informal work, social protection, and tax justice in East and West Africa at the activity level for our grantees and the overall gender-responsive macroeconomic field.

1. **Evaluation:** With a PEAL partner, we will craft an evaluation plan that is built upon our theory of change and implementation markers, designed with extensive input from our grantee partners and other key stakeholders. Evaluation frameworks should offer timelines, processes, and clear indicators of the progress we hope to see at multiple levels: WEE field strengthening, gender-responsive macro policies in East and West Africa, and better resourced and impactful grantee partners. We will supplement and revise our implementation markers with additional indicators as part of the PEAL framework.
2. **Accountability:** We will strive to uncover any unintended consequences of our work on our grantee partners and the communities we hope to impact, including leveraging the GEG Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice (DEIJ) principles as a guiding principle to grantees and the fields where we work.
3. **Learning:** Define, share, and receive feedback on the WEE PEAL approach, processes, and framework from grantee partners and peer funders. We will share what we learn openly and transparently on a regular basis.

Our PEAL Values and Approach

As we develop our PEAL plan, we are eager to ensure that we are living into the Hewlett Foundation's [guiding principles](#) and that our efforts to track progress are made in a way that values, respects, and prioritizes our grantee partners and their work. We approach this work in service of equity and with an eye toward expanding notions of validity, objectivity, and rigor, as framed by the [Equitable Evaluation Initiative](#). We are committed to acknowledging our humility and embracing the complex geographies, identities, lived experiences, and power dynamics of our grantees and the communities in which they work. With that in mind, we will work with the Consultant to develop a PEAL plan that is:

1. **Inclusive.** We will seek to connect, learn from, and share with existing and potential WEE stakeholders, grantee partners, and peer funders.
2. **Relevant.** Information gathered will be meaningful to our grantee partners and us. We expect that our learnings will be applicable across the foundation's Gender Equity and Governance program but will prioritize the needs of the WEE team and our grantee partners.
3. **Practical.** Data collection, feedback opportunities, learning events, and other elements of the plan will be feasible for our grantee partners and us. We will seek to minimize any additional burdens on our and our grantee partners' time. Where appropriate, we will seek to compensate participants (not peer funders) fairly for sharing their time and expertise as part of this process.
4. **Adaptive.** The plan will build opportunities to remain flexible and adjust as needed.
5. **Transparent.** We will communicate early and often with grantee partners and the field about our PEAL plan, activities, and asks and will build feedback loops throughout the duration of the plan.

Scope of work



The Consultant's objective would be to develop a concrete action plan for the implementation of the proposed WEE PEAL framework. Consultants will provide insights on how to implement PEAL at the strategy level and incorporate inputs from our grantee partners that enable us to test our assumptions, answer evaluation questions, and assess how our grantee partners' progress maps against our strategy's goal and outcomes.

Key Deliverables (*indicative*): to be confirmed with team and Consultant once onboard

1. PEAL plan development and collection of baseline data
2. Support PEAL plan implementation for the strategy (2022 – 2027)
3. Facilitate team reflection and adaptation sessions at least once a year.
3. Potentially helping to identify opportunities to strengthen grantee partners' PEAL capacity.

Duration

We anticipated two phases to this work; **Phase 1:** (PEAL plan development and collection of baseline data, approximately January 2023 – May 2024) will include the development of, and some iteration on, a PEAL framework and action plan for the new WEE strategy. Phase 1 will also include development of power shifting outcomes and indicators to assess influence on policy change. We seek strategy-level indicators that are informed by the real-world experiences of our partners in policy influencing.

We anticipate a **Phase 2:** (PEAL plan implementation, approximately February 2024 – December 2027) that will include periodic consultant collaboration with the WEE team to put the new PEAL plan into practice. This will likely include gathering and synthesizing data and information and facilitating learning events and processes for the WEE team and grantee partners over the lifetime of the five-year strategy.

Key Dates and Contact Information

July 25, 2022	Release of call for proposals
September 10, 2022	Submission of Expression of Interest (EoI) to WEEStrategy@hewlett.org . A 3-page submission of organizational profile and qualifications for the consultancy. Interested consultants can also submit any questions about this solicitation to the email address above. We will respond on a rolling basis.
September 30, 2022	Proposal submission invites to prequalified consultants selected through the EoI process
October 13, 2022	Information session for prequalified consultants.
November 15, 2022	Final proposal submission to WEEStrategy@hewlett.org .
December 10, 2022	Consultants selected; all applicants notified
January 30, 2023	Contract in place; consultants and foundation staff kick-off PEAL planning process



February 10, 2023	The consultant begins work with the WEE team to develop and begin testing the new PEAL plan; complete the draft PEAL plan by April 30, 2023.
June 30, 2023	Draft PEAL plan tested; team and Consultant begin to implement the plan and adjust as needed.
July 1 – September 30, 2023	Collection of Baseline Data

Roles

We expect to work highly collaboratively with our Consultant to execute this scope of work. In terms of roles, the Consultant should own the bulk of the project management, meeting facilitation & agenda-setting, and conducting the background research. The foundation team will participate actively in decision-making and provide detailed feedback and input.

Desired Qualifications

The following criteria are *essential* for the Consultant:

- A strong background and experience developing PEAL frameworks and systems
- Experience working on PEAL projects for portfolio-based organizations with WEE as a focus area
- Proven record in data collection and analysis for PEAL, particularly for WEE
- Experience working on WEE in East and West Africa

The following criteria are *preferred* for the Consultant:

- Prior experience working on issues related to macro-level policies and WEE in Sub-Saharan Africa
- Experience working with private foundations or other philanthropic organizations.

Available budget

We anticipate the budget for this consultancy to be up to \$300,000 for Phase 1. If during our review process we notice that the average costs are higher than the anticipated, an internal reevaluation of our budget will be conducted.

Please share your actual estimated cost with your rationale.

Submission guidelines

Expression of Interest (EoI) submission is due on **September 10, 2022**. We will have an informational call for pre-qualified consultants and firms on **October 13, 2022**, at 7 am PST (3pm WAT, 5pm EAT, 10am EST). Translation services for the informational call will be available in English and French. Please send any questions to WEEStrategy@hewlett.org. Proposals are due by **November 15, 2022**, to WEEStrategy@hewlett.org. We request that final proposals not exceed ten pages and limit appendices to five pages.