

AFRICA GENDER INNOVATION LAB INFLUENCE

The World Bank's Africa Gender Innovation Lab (GIL) conducts impact evaluations of development interventions and leads policy research to generate evidence on how to close gender gaps in earnings, productivity, assets, and agency. With these findings, GIL equips project teams and policymakers to design innovative and scalable interventions to address gender inequality.

THE GIL PORTFOLIO INCLUDES

76
impact
evaluations

in

29
African
countries

37%
of evaluations
are of external
projects
(28 impact
evaluations)



63%
of evaluations
are of **World
Bank projects**
(48 impact
evaluations)

GIL INFLUENCE SCORECARD

**\$2.17
billion**

GIL's Direct Influence

The monetary value of the specific project component(s) that GIL influenced

**\$1 spent/
\$94 directly
influenced**

Value for Money

The value of project dollars GIL influenced for every dollar we spent

**\$4.57
billion**

Total Value of Operations That GIL has Influenced

EXAMPLES OF GIL'S \$2.17 BILLION IN INFLUENCE ACROSS THREE CONTINENTS

GIL INFLUENCES PROJECTS IN THREE WAYS*



Results from a GIL impact evaluation or policy research study influence the design of a project (74%)



GIL influences a project's design by introducing an innovative approach through the process of doing an impact evaluation (24%)



Project teams copy a GIL innovation currently being tested on another project (4.5%)

*The percentages reflect GIL influence within that category by value of interventions influenced. The total count exceeds 100% as a few projects have been influenced in more than one way.



Establishing Partnerships in Nine Countries to Scale up Training for Women Entrepreneurs

GIL helped scale up a successful personal initiative training program in nine countries—including Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mauritania, Jamaica, and Nicaragua—after showing that it resulted in a 40% increase in profits for female entrepreneurs in Togo, compared to those who followed a traditional business training. GIL initially influenced the World Bank Togo Private Sector Development Support Project to add the personal initiative training, enabling the collection of key evidence on the training's impact. GIL has also worked with partners to adapt this curriculum for women farmers and is now testing its effectiveness in Mozambique.



Introducing Innovative Psychometric Tests to Ease Women's Access to Larger Business Loans

GIL and the World Bank's Finance, Competitiveness, and Innovation (FCI) Global Practice developed a pilot on psychometric testing as an alternative to traditional collateral in Ethiopia. This innovation, a psychometric screening tool that predicts the likelihood that an entrepreneur will be able to

repay a loan, is now being scaled up in Zimbabwe and Madagascar, with more to follow in Nigeria, Zambia, and Côte d'Ivoire. In the absence of collateral, and with limited information available on the creditworthiness of women borrowers, psychometric testing is a promising solution. Customers who scored at a high threshold on the test were seven times more likely to repay their loans compared to lower-performing customers.



Influencing Land Rights Programs for Nation-wide Impact

GIL provided advice for the design of a pilot that became one of the first initiatives in Africa to address tenure security on a national level. One of the factors contributing to women's lower productivity as farmers is their weaker access to and ownership of land, which reduces their incentives to make productive investments. Responding to this constraint, GIL partnered with the Government of Rwanda to evaluate the pilot of Rwanda's Land Tenure Regularization program. GIL evidence uncovered a 19-percentage point increase in the likelihood of women making soil conservation investments—twice the increase seen for men. With this evidence in hand, the pilot was scaled up nationally.



Scaling Evidence to Empower Adolescent Girls and Young Women Across Two Continents

GIL evidence helped shape two projects that will reach 700,000 girls and women across India and six countries in Sub-Saharan Africa over five years. The design of the Sahel Women Empowerment and Demographic Dividend Regional Project (SWEDD) and the India Tejaswini Socioeconomic Empowerment of Adolescent Girls & Young Women project were influenced by GIL findings from Uganda and Liberia. In Uganda, GIL worked with BRAC to document

the impacts of a vocational and life skills training program through ‘safe space’ clubs for adolescent girls. Findings showed that the clubs raised the likelihood of girls engaging in income-generating activities by 72% and decreased teen pregnancy by 26%. At a cost of under \$100 US per girl per year, the program not only worked but was also cost-effective. In Liberia, GIL found that the Economic Empowerment of Adolescent Girls and Young Women (EPAG) program, which provided six months of classroom-based technical and life skills training, followed by six months of follow-up support, led to a 50% increase in employment among trainees.

“PRICELESS INFLUENCE”: FOR SOME INSTANCES OF GIL INFLUENCE, WE CANNOT ASSIGN A MONETARY VALUE

Examples include changing government policy, scaling down ineffective interventions, improving the ways companies work, and shaping World Bank Group policy.



Leveraging Evidence on Firm Formalization to Change Government Policy

GIL’s analysis of firm informality in Malawi influenced the Government’s policy discussion on the turnover threshold for firm registration. GIL developed an effective and replicable design—at a much lower cost than the typical private sector development intervention—to offer informal firms support to formalize. As a

result of the intervention, take-up of business registration was extremely high for both men- and women-owned firms, with about 75 percent of those offered assistance obtaining a business registration certificate. The study findings on the importance of combining support for business registration with other complementary interventions, such as linking with commercial banks, was additionally integrated by the World Bank’s Investment Climate teams as a core part of their business operations.



GIL findings have influenced over 100 projects in 29 countries throughout Africa, but our reach is global. For instance, we helped shape a personal initiative training program across five states in Mexico, a World Bank project on adolescent girls in India which will reach 400,000 beneficiaries, and a women’s entrepreneurship development program in Indonesia.



Scaling Down Ineffective Matching Grant Programs

Fewer matching grants programs on business development services are in existence compared to a few years ago after a paper co-written by GIL highlighted important issues with the design and implementation of these types of programs.



Changing the Way Banks Work to Alleviate Barriers to Saving

GIL helped a private bank in Ghana design and launch new product lines aimed at helping women overcome barriers to saving. A number of these innovations were subsequently adopted by one of the largest banks in the Ghanaian market. Product features included automated savings deposits, self-imposed liquidity constraints on saved funds, deposit collection, and savings accounts linked to mobile money.



Influencing World Bank Group Policy

GLOBAL UPTAKE OF THE GIL MODEL

The success of the Africa Region Gender Innovation Lab has inspired the creation of Gender Innovation Labs in other regions of the World Bank, namely East Asia and Pacific, Latin America and Caribbean, the Middle East and North Africa, and South Asia. By the end of 2017, more than 100 Impact Evaluations had been launched in close to 40 countries across these Labs.

INFLUENCING COUNTRY-LEVEL STRATEGIES

GIL has partnered with World Bank teams in over 10 African countries to draft strategic

country diagnostics and advise on country program planning. For instance, GIL's inputs led to substantial coverage of gender gaps in employment, agricultural productivity, and education in the Zambia Systematic Country Diagnostic (SCD). In Niger, GIL's involvement in the SCD contributed to the strong focus on fertility and demographics, and to the inclusion of a highlight on the agricultural productivity gap, drawing on GIL's *Levelling the Field* report.

SHIFTING THE AGENDA AT A REGIONAL LEVEL

GIL brings together a body of evidence on a particular issue to help change the policy conversation at a regional level. GIL's first synthesis report, *Levelling the Field*, was launched in partnership with the ONE Campaign in 2014. This report measured the gender gap in agricultural productivity in six countries, provided detailed analyses of the factors that account for the gap, and sets a list of policy priorities to address these gaps and improve opportunities for women farmers in Africa. Over thirty news sources from around the world published articles about the report and it has been cited in writings by Kofi Annan, Melinda Gates, and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. The *Levelling the Field* report has also influenced World Bank policy priorities, with multiple strategy documents and flagship reports drawing on its findings, such as the WBG Gender Strategy (2015) the Africa Region Gender Action Plan (2018), the *World Development Report 2016: Digital Dividends* and *Enabling the Business of Agriculture 2017*. At the national level, the report influenced the design of strategic diagnostics and strategy documents of several countries, including Ethiopia, Uganda, Mozambique, Niger, and Madagascar. It has additionally influenced the design of projects across the African continent.



For more information, visit the Gender Innovation Lab's website: www.worldbank.org/africa/gil

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