



pep partnership for economic policy

2017 Annual Conference



Policy Forum - June 14

Promoting youth and female entrepreneurship: Evidence-based policy options

In developing countries, both youth and women face particular challenges in participating in labour markets, including entry barriers such as lack of access to credit and other productive assets, education, discrimination, etc. On the other hand, while the importance of youth participation to enhance a country's prospects for the future of its economy is clear, a significant body of evidence also shows that economic development and female empowerment are closely related.

Labour market rigidities tend to exclude many low-skilled individuals, especially women and youth, throwing them into self-employment income strategies and restricting growth options for the corresponding economies¹. Inclusive growth strategies should therefore comprise policies aimed at supporting and/or facilitating entrepreneurial activities of those marginalized groups.

Looking back on the list and outcomes of the sixty-five (65) projects supported under PEP program for "Policy Analysis on Growth and Employment", between 2013 and 2016, we find that not only had a great number of research teams, based in all regions, chosen to focus on issues and policies related to youth and/or female entrepreneurship, but in most cases their findings² have already been used to inform policy decisions in their home countries. From Bangladesh to Senegal, Cameroon to Nigeria, these numerous accounts of immediate research uptake testify to the importance of this particular issue for development policy worldwide.

Context: PAGE II agenda and selection of new grant recipients

In June 2017, the next cohort of grant applicants will be invited to attend the PEP Annual Conference in Nairobi, Kenya, to present their project proposals for support under PAGE II. As under the initial phase of the PAGE program, those issues (youth employment, gender and women's economic empowerment, entrepreneurship and financial inclusion) continue to be identified as especially relevant in addressing knowledge gaps and policy needs in terms of evidence base.

In the context of its 2017 Annual Conference, PEP will invite a panel of researchers, experts and policy makers to share their experience and findings regarding the various policy options

¹ Perry, G., Maloney, W., Arias, O., Fajnzylber, P., Mason, A. and S-Chanduvi, J. (2007). Informality Exit and Exclusion. The World Bank.

² For example, refer to this special PEP article comparing findings from several of these PAGE projects and other (non-PEP) research work on the issue of credit constraints faced by female entrepreneurs: <https://www.pep-net.org/female-entrepreneurship-hindered-social-cultural-constraints>

for promoting youth and female entrepreneurship, as well as to identify key knowledge gaps and approaches for research to serve to inform such policies.

Objectives: Linking research to policy needs and action

Through its unique « Grant plus » mechanism, PEP puts strong emphasis on the need for grantees to consult with key policy actors and stakeholders and assimilate their inputs while designing their research proposal, in order to maximize the potential usefulness of their findings as evidence base for policy decisions. The event will thus be an opportunity to raise awareness, amongst a group of young and promising researchers, of the importance to learn from the experience of policy, and for research to be responsive to actual policy needs in order to maximize its impact.

Meanwhile, attending policy actors and stakeholders will also benefit from the presentation and discussion of evidence regarding a variety of policy interventions and experience in other countries.

PROGRAMME

9:00 – 9:30 Intro/welcome speeches

9:30 – 10:30 **Keynote**
What works and what do we not know concerning policies for youth and female entrepreneurship?

10:30 – 11:00 Coffee break + group pic

11:00 – 13:00 **Policy forum**
Evidence-based policy options to promote female and youth entrepreneurship

A dialogue involving academics and policy actors to discuss issues and lessons learnt from both research and experience in implementing policy for promoting youth and female entrepreneurship as a strategy to reduce poverty and unemployment.

Key topics/issues to be discussed:

- Q#1: What are the key policy lessons emerging from PEP research on youth and female entrepreneurship
- Q#2: What are the key knowledge gaps and issues related to entrepreneurship policies for youth and women?
- Q#3: What should researchers do/take into account to make sure their research is useful to entrepreneurship policies for youth and women?

The session will be completed by a Q&A period with the audience

13:00 – 14:30 Lunch break

14:30 – 16:30 **Research forum**
Gender analysis in economic policy research
See concept note below

Research Forum – June 14

Gender analysis in economic policy research

Equality between men and women is more than a matter of social justice, it's a fundamental human right. It also makes good economic sense; when women have equal access to education and participate fully in business and economic decision-making, they are a key driving force against poverty. Meanwhile, women represent about 70 percent of the world's poor, comprise two-thirds of the global illiterate population, are more likely to hold vulnerable jobs, and almost systematically earn lower wages than men. To be effective, any agenda aimed at promoting socioeconomic development should endeavour to promote gender equity.

What gender analysis entails

Gender analysis examines the differences in women's and men's lives, including those which lead to social and economic inequity for women. But beyond the simple comparison of outcomes for men and women, it is also concerned with the underlying causes of these inequities. Gender analysis seeks to explore the processes of differential social roles or variance in social treatment that explain the results, such as gender-related social inequalities, cultural and other discriminatory practices and unjust power relations, as well as the motivations behind these trends.

Why gender analysis matter in economic policy research

For development efforts to achieve both general welfare improvement and positive change for women, local and national authorities, as well as and policy advocates need to be provided with evidence based on analysis that does not only account for differentiated outcomes between men and women, but also highlights the gendered dynamics at work behind these outcomes.

Key challenges in gender analysis and how it can be strengthened

Gender analysis involves a broader approach to policy research, one that includes aspects of the economy that are frequently ignored or oversimplified. Gender analysis adds depth to research by incorporating a broader range of distributive dynamics and by enriching the ways well-being is assessed.

However, when it comes to issues of interest for gender analysis, social scientists often face the challenge of limited national census data, especially when conducting quantitative research. While some advocate for more gender-responsive data analysis, others promote the value of a mixed-method approach, integrating qualitative and quantitative approaches to enhance gender analysis.

Discussion on June 14, 2017

In line with PEP's commitment to integrate stronger gender analysis in the work it supports, and as part of its 2017 Annual Conference, PEP is organizing a special session during which experts will share their views and experience related to gender analysis in development research. In particular, the session will guide researchers presenting proposals for PEP funding on integrating gender considerations into their proposed research.

The session will address the following issues:

- Why does gender analysis matter in policy research?
- What is a good gender analysis and what are the key challenges?
- How can we improve gender analysis in quantitative research using existing databases?
- The value of a mixed-method approach and how best to integrate qualitative and quantitative approaches to enhance gender analysis
- Lessons from good gender analysis and from missed opportunities for integrating gender analysis in research.