Insights from recent FAD work on gender

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1. The connections between Revenue Administration (RA) and Gender Equality

2. How RAs can contribute to gender equality
   • Building a gender balanced workforce
   • Applying a gender lens to administering tax laws and facilitating trade

3. Gates Project: Gender, Fiscal Policy and Institutions
   • Digitalization and Gender in Revenue Administration
1. The connections between Revenue Administration (RA) and Gender Equality
How are gender equality and revenue administration (RA) connected?

Source: Forthcoming FAD Technical Note
Revenue administrations have important levers for contributing to gender equality:

• By administering pro-gender tax laws effectively and applying a gender lens when administering the tax or trade laws to minimize or eliminate barriers for women’s employment, entrepreneurship, and trade. Providing unbiased information and support may affect whether, or not, a woman will seek employment, start a business, or be successful in that business.

• By collecting tax revenue effectively and efficiently thereby enabling the government to finance public programs including vital social programs like those that directly support women and girls.
Revenue administrations have important levers for contributing to gender equality:

• Through a **gender balanced workforce** with workforce policies and procedures that ensure equal employment opportunities within the RA for all genders.
2. How RAs can contribute to gender equality

• Building a gender balanced workforce
Gender balance in revenue administrations: current picture (1)

- Most tax administrations employ more women than men…

- The reverse is true for customs administrations: customs dominated by male employees

- Women are under-represented at executive/senior management levels (percent female executives < percent female staff)
  - Country data (where available) show progressively fewer women at more senior levels in the organization

Sources:
- International Survey on Revenue Administration (ISORA) for FY 2019 – ADB, CIAT, IMF, IOTA, OECD; WCO Annual Report 2020;
- data from SA, Rwanda, Uganda;
- WCO Annual Survey
Gender balance in revenue administrations: current picture (2)

Female Staff and Executives in Tax and Customs Administrations 2019

- **Tax**
  - Female Staff: 55%
  - Female Executives: 41%
- **Tax & Customs**
  - Female Staff: 49%
  - Female Executives: 38%
- **Customs**
  - Female Staff: 37%
  - Female Executives: 26%

*Source: ISORA and WCO*
There are distinct regional differences

Factors contributing to better gender balance

ISORA 2018 data for Fiscal year 2017 ISORA 2020 data for Fiscal year 2019
Building a revenue administration gender balanced workforce * (1)

Gender equality planning
- Setting organization-wide targets in the RA's strategic and business plans
- Establishing KPIs
- Monitoring and reporting against KPIs

Policies promoting workplace equality
- Anti-discrimination, Harassment and Parental Leave Policies

Flexible work arrangements
- Remote work
- Flexible hours
- Job sharing

Examples of KPIs:
- Pay gaps by gender
- Proportion of women in each function or business area
- Proportion of women at each level of management
- Women as percent of new recruits
- Ratio of women promoted to those eligible for promotions
- Attrition rates for all genders

* As discussed in detail in forthcoming Technical Note
Building a revenue administration gender balanced workforce* (2)

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<th>Providing women-friendly workplace facilities</th>
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<td>• Child-care facilities</td>
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<td>• Safe, clean bathrooms</td>
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<td>• Safe transportation</td>
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<th>Continuing career development during career breaks</th>
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<th>Mentoring programs</th>
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<th>Promoting a culture of gender equality – dealing with unconscious bias</th>
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*Virtual collaboration platforms* have been used widely during COVID-19 pandemic. These tools can facilitate continuing career development, through e.g.

- Online training
- Maintaining contact with supervisors/peers

*As discussed in detail in forthcoming Technical Note*
Building female leadership*

- Talent management
  - Identify women staff with high potential
  - Proactively foster their career development
- Spotlighting women leaders as role models
- Developing networks for women to share experiences within administrations
- Developing networks within the revenue administration community
  - Example: African Tax Administrators Forum Women In Tax (ATAF Women in Tax: Everything you need to know about the network (ataftax.org))

Podcasts by women leaders in revenue administrations:
- Ecuador, Jamaica
- Maldives, Romania
- Uganda, Australia

*As discussed in detail in forthcoming Technical Note
2. How RAs can contribute to gender equality

- Applying a gender lens to administering tax laws and facilitating trade
Applying a gender lens to taxpayers and traders

- There is a well-established practice within revenue administrations of identifying taxpayers and trader segments, to customize services for relevant taxpayer and trader groupings, and thereby facilitate voluntary compliance. For example:

  - 90 percent of tax administrations have a unit/program devoted to large taxpayers
  - 25 percent have a unit/program dedicated to High Net Wealth Individuals

Source: ISORA, FY 2020
Points to consider for more effective engagement with women taxpayers and traders (1)*

- There may be **barriers** to women’s economic participation and to accessing the tax system:
  - Low literacy levels, including financial, tax and digital literacy.
  - Complex tax and trade policy.
  - Tax systems may disadvantage women explicitly or implicitly.
  - Lack of access to credit or a bank account.
  - Limited access to technology, mobile and smart phones.

*Discussed in detail in forthcoming Technical Note*
Points to consider for more effective engagement with women taxpayers and traders (2)*

- How services can be tailored to accommodate women, particularly women entering the tax system for the first time:
  - Using communication products and service targeting women taxpayers and traders and their industry groups.
  - Reviewing administrative approaches to ensure there is no explicit or implicit gender bias.
  - Recognizing that gender-neutral intentions may actually be gender blind.
  - Consider gender in setting case allocation priorities.

*Discussed in detail in forthcoming Technical Note
Building gender perspectives into revenue administrations’ reform plans*

- Recovery from the COVID pandemic requires revenue administrations to revisit reform plans.

- Components should include
  - Addressing gender equality issues in the RA workplace and
  - Expanding women’s inclusion in the tax system.

*Discussed in detail in forthcoming Technical Note
Gender, Fiscal Policy and Institutions

- Digitalization and Gender in Revenue Administration
Fiscal policies, institutions and gender: Gender and digitalization in Revenue Administration

- **Why digitalization?**
  - Administrations encouraged to digitalize for increased effectiveness and efficiency, and reducing taxpayer compliance burden
  - There has been rapid growth in e-filing and e-payment uptake

- **Why apply a gender lens?**
  - Gender gap in access to and use of digital technologies

Sources: ISORA, ITU World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators database
Source: The Mobile Gender Gap Report 2022 Global System for Mobile Communications (GSMA)
Gender and digitalization in Revenue Administration: broad approach to study

Approach:

- Given lack of gender-disaggregated data - go to case studies to examine two questions:

  • *Is there evidence that digitalization of revenue administration has meant ‘better’ service from Revenue Administrations for women, and to the same extent as men?*

  • *Is there evidence that the digitalization of revenue administration has had unintended consequences, making it more difficult for women taxpayers and traders to interact with revenue administrations, because of the digital divide?*
Gender and digitalization in Revenue Administration: progress-to-date

- Requested country partnerships from around 20 countries
- Some challenges to obtaining pre- and post- gender-disaggregated data on individual taxpayers:
  - Legal obstacles to using data on the gender of taxpayers
  - Some administrations do not have access to taxpayer gender data
  - Taxpayer gender recorded in register, but not in transactional records
  - Data not available prior to introduction of digital Integrated Tax Administration System
  - Gender-disaggregated data received to date from Jamaica, Kenya, Uganda and Zambia, with Kenya and Jamaica completed.
Preliminary observation: It appears that digitalization has enabled/encouraged greater growth in the number of women who are active in the tax system.
Jamaica: Impact of Digitalization

Preliminary observation:

It appears that digitalization has enabled/encouraged greater growth in the number of women who are active in the tax system.

Source: Data from TAJ
Recommendations to revenue administrations arising from this study (1)

- Promoting the use of digital platforms by women and measure the participation by gender in digital service offerings.

- Conducting research on tax compliance levels by gender. As an example, specifically discuss with non/late-filers and late/non-payers the barriers to filing and payment and develop strategies to address systemic issues where possible and specifically address any gender-based issues.

- Undertaking research to gain an understanding of gender differences in tax awareness and incorporate any findings into the RA’s general tax awareness programs.

- Once undertaken, disseminate the findings from research to RA officials and undertake awareness and training on those issues.
Recommendations to revenue administrations arising from this study (2)

- Inclusion of topics related to gender and revenue administration in training courses for tax officials.

- In accordance with a segmented approach to taxpayer assistance, where appropriate, undertake targeted assistance and education programs for female taxpayers and segments such as female-dominant economic sectors. This could also include seeking feedback from female taxpayers on their specific needs in relation to their tax obligations and on RA products and services.

- Consider whether there is a role for the RA, either alone or in partnership with other government agencies, in improving digital literacy – such as assisting women who don’t know how to access the internet on their mobile phone (e.g. partner with other government agencies using tax as a use case).
Thank you!