Recognizing the importance of incorporating gender equality and women’s economic empowerment into Revenue Administration

Gender equality leads to significant improvements in social outcomes and economic development. In 2019, IMF estimated that closing the gender employment gap for countries with low gender equality could increase GDP by an average of 35 percent—with 7–8 percentage points being productivity gains due to gender diversity.\(^2\) With the disproportionate impact of COVID on women, gender-focused tax policy changes are even more topical and tax and customs administrations (RAs)\(^4\) need to consider how they can best realize revenue gains needed for social and economic development while applying a gender lens in their organizational design, policies and practices.

RAs support gender equality objectives by effectively and efficiently collecting revenue, implementing tax policies, streamlining supply chains, and facilitating trade. Revenue collected is critically important to the financing of, and successful implementation of social and economic development programs that enable women participation and economic empowerment.

\(^1\) This short note was produced by the Revenue Administration Gender Working Group, of the IMF’s Fiscal Affairs Department in November 2021. The views expressed in this note are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the IMF, its Executive Board, or IMF management. It is intended to be used as a quick reference document to help promote understanding of this emerging topic. A more in-depth technical note on this topic is forthcoming and will provide significantly more information.

\(^2\) Gender Equality is a United Nation’s sustainable development goal. Gender Equity is the right to freedom from bias or favoritism, treating people in a fair and just way through programs and policies, paving the way for equality. To minimize confusion, the word equality is used throughout this note.


\(^4\) Revenue Administrations refers to both tax and customs administrations
• Applying a gender lens when administering the RA laws to minimize barriers for women's employment, entrepreneurship, and trade. RAs already segment the taxpayer base to properly target products, services, and interventions to the needs of distinguishable taxpayer segments. Women employees and women-led and owned businesses are segments that should also be distinguished for tailored compliance treatments and service offerings. More attention is needed in this area.

**Gender Equality Supports Stronger RA Outcomes by...**

• Recognizing the unique needs of female taxpayers to expand their economic participation, contributing to growth in the tax base, increasing trust in the RAs, and facilitating trade and revenue collection. Likewise, addressing the compliance and service needs of women taxpayers helps reduce the cost of collection for the RA and the compliance costs for women taxpayers, likely leading to increased voluntary compliance.

### Additional resources

**These additional resources may enrich your understanding of the role of gender in RA**

1. **Gender and Revenue Administration Podcast Series**

   We invite you to listen to impactful leaders from different administrations who have made a difference in gender equality by understanding its importance, and through innovative programs and policies:

   - Episode 1: Ecuador, Jamaica
   - Episode 2: Maldives, Romania
   - Episode 3: Uganda, Australia

2. **Some key considerations for RAs on gender.**

   *Having a detailed breakup of gender by position/level of staff*
   *Recruitment policy with gender priorities identified.*
   *Establishing services (information seminars, business mentorship programs, after-hours call-back service) geared to women.*
   *Thinking about compliance treatment by gender.*

3. **The IMF Exchange. No Women Left Behind: A conversation between Kristalina Georgieva and Chrystia Freeland (Canada’s Deputy PM)**