

# An Evidence and Gap Map of interventions shaping economic agency for women in Sub-Saharan Africa



The International Centre for Evaluation and Development



## What is this all about?

This summary presents findings from a regional Evidence and Gap Map (EGM) of large-scale policy efforts to support women's economic empowerment across Sub-Saharan Africa. It identifies the areas where strong evidence exists, where gaps remain, and what this means for different stakeholders.

## Our process

The EGM pulled together studies from across the region, covering seven key areas where policies can shape women's economic agency:

Policy areas in focus	Where the Data Came From
Macroeconomic Policies Social Protection Informal Economy Policies Unpaid Care Work Policies Domestic Work Policies Decent Work Policies WEE Advocacy	<b>Sources:</b> Peer-reviewed journal articles, grey literature and working papers, dissertations and protocols <b>Study types:</b> Experimental studies, Systematic and scoping reviews <b>Scope:</b> Sub-Saharan Africa; 2000–2024

## Our key findings

-  Fiscal reforms and gender budgeting initiatives have improved social service delivery to women.
-  Unpaid care policies, such as public childcare or time-saving infrastructure, positively affect women's labor force participation.
-  Access to finance and land rights initiatives are associated with increased business ownership among women.
-  Advocacy and public awareness campaigns are key in shifting policy narratives and enabling reforms.

## Policy recommendations

- Expand investments in care-supportive infrastructure to reduce women's time burdens.
- Institutionalize gender budgeting and ensure fiscal transparency and accountability.
- Strengthen labor protections, particularly for informal and domestic workers.
- Increase support for WEE-focused advocacy to influence structural policy change.
- Promote better data systems and disaggregated research to guide inclusive economic policy.

## How can you use this EGM ?

-  **Policymakers and Government Officials:** Use to identify where gender-focused reforms are showing results, and where new policy direction or stronger funding is needed.
-  **Civil Society and Advocacy Groups:** Target your pressure points more strategically by using the evidence to back advocacy and push for better accountability.
-  **Media:** Use the highlights to tell stories that enable deeper understanding and reflections on women's economic lived experiences.

## About Us

The International Centre for Evaluation and Development (ICED) is an independent, Africa-based and African-led not-for-profit think-tank that applies innovative research, monitoring, and evaluation (M&E) in the development sector. ICED uses the outputs of research and evaluation to contribute to and enhance development outcomes and impacts, concentrating on Africa, where the need for its expertise is greatest.