As the risk of long-term low growth rates persists, the G20 should strive towards a gender-balanced economy as a fresh policy alternative to return to growth. The following are a series of short recommendations to be presented to the G20 as they consider alternative policies to encourage economic growth; they will act as fundamental stepping-stones towards achieving this objective.

These recommendations have been informed by a series of consultations that Chatham House has undertaken throughout 2015 with a number of think-tanks, women’s organisations, policy-makers, business leaders across select G20 countries.

These recommendations have been extracted from a forthcoming Chatham House paper which is part of a research initiative piloted by the International Economics Department at Chatham House entitled, ‘Putting Gender Equality on the G20 Agenda’. A working draft can be found here.

Promoting concrete political and policy commitments by governments

To buttress the overall commitment of governments to increase labour force participation by 25 per cent by 2025, concrete steps are needed. While what is appropriate will depend on the country context, G20 governments should commit to the following steps:

• Eliminating all legal discrimination against women;
• Reviewing measures to support participation, including investment in social infrastructure for childcare and the elderly;
• Increasing the share of public procurement sourced to companies that meet specified gender criteria such as share of senior leadership or specific relevant labour standards; and
• Undertaking a gender audit of public-sector employees – starting with finance ministry and central banks – and G20 delegations.

There are critical links to other G20 engagement groups. The L(abour)20 is already integrating gender dimensions into its recommended strategies and proposals. Further important commitments could be underpinned by work in other G20 engagement groups to mainstream gender equality – such as ensuring the integration of women and girls in efforts associated with the B(usiness)20’s Global Skills Accelerator. Members of the B20 could commit to tracking and increasing the share of women in corporate management, for example.

Peer monitoring and exchange of good practices

Accountability and support mechanisms need to be in place to regularly monitor country-level progress towards targets, and tracking implementation of commitments. Progress should be part of peer discussion at W20 policy forums. Links to ongoing and new monitoring initiatives should be
encouraged – notably, the APEC Women and the Economy Dashboard provides ‘a snapshot of the status of women in APEC’, using indicators to measure their ‘participation in economic-related activities’ and ‘inclusion in several aspects of life’. Country-level efforts should be informed and supported by the exchange of good practices in a range of areas, including through the following:

- G20 ministers of finance should exchange good practices on public procurement.
- G20 ministers for women should meet to share good practices on transparency, quotas and targets on boards, the public sector and listed companies.
- G20 education ministers should review good practice encouraging women and girls into STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) careers – an issue also emphasized by the L20 and B20.
- Leading G20 companies should exchange good practices in combating sexual harassment and gender discrimination in the workplace.

It is critical that the monitoring include countries where policies and outcomes are presently lagging, given the acceleration in progress needed to meet agreed G20 target.

**Selected action research**

The third front relates to the need for action research in specific areas that are less well understood, focused on specific countries where progress is lagging as well as on cases of innovation warranting attention. The overall goal of this research should be to identify how key constraints have been addressed in practical and coherent ways to provide useful examples for the G20 leadership. Possible areas of focus include the investigation of links between laws, legal reform, informal institutions and social norms to provide insights into how norms change over time. It is also important to keep abreast of rigorous evidence emerging from evaluations about what works to close gaps, using the best rigorous evidence available.

**Further information**

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