

Gender and Equality in Public Procurement

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Access to public procurement and the private sector perspective

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WHAT IS WOMEN-OWNED SMES PERSPECTIVE ON PUBLIC PROCUREMENT? SENEGAL CASE

- ❑ The Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (WeFi) multi-donor fund aims to overcome the financial and non-financial constraints faced by women-led small and medium enterprises (SMEs)
- ❑ In Senegal, WeFi is financing the project 'Facilitating Access to Public Procurement for Women-owned SMEs'
- ❑ The project supports, on the one hand, the integration of the gender dimension in procurement (in close collaboration with the regulator) and, on the other hand, the capacity building of women-led SMEs in public procurement and managerial skills.
- ❑ The project conducted a survey between February and July 2020 among a representative sample of 1,200 companies eligible for public procurement contracts
- ❑ The objective was to understand the characteristics of the companies, their knowledge of and participation in public procurement, the constraints they face and their needs for support.

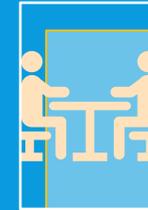
4 KEY AREAS OF DATA COLLECTED

Key Characteristics of WSMEs in Senegal

- **Very Small** (80% - individual entrepreneurs)
- **Relatively young** (48% - less than 10 years, 20% - between 10 and 15 years old)
- Concentrated in **large urban locations** (more than 70% of WSMEs are in Dakar and Thiens)
- More than 40% of WSMEs operate in **trade**, then **manufacturing** (20%) and **personal services**(15%), followed by lodging, agriculture and ICTs.



Knowledge of public procurement



Participation in public procurement



Procurement Challenges



Characteristics of public contracts

KEY FINDINGS



Knowledge of public procurement is lower among women's firms compared to men's firms
It is also lower among smaller entrepreneurs and in sectors where majority of WSMEs operate (i.e. trade, personal services).



Most WSMEs have never applied to public procurement due to a lack of information, notably in the newspapers, their primary source of information before the internet and their networks
Another key challenge is low access to finance, where WSMEs are again lagging their male counterparts



Corruption, long procedural and payment delays as well as inadequate regulatory framework are considered as key obstacles to the participation, and more so by WSMEs
The application procedure is less well known among WSMEs



Goods and services contracts are the most common among companies that have already applied for or won public contracts,
although these contracts are less significant in terms of contract value than works.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The governments should make the regulatory framework for public procurement more adequate in relation to the needs and characteristics of SMEs, and to ensure the efficiency and transparency of the procurement system and management of public contracts.
- However, regulatory reform alone is not enough!
- Inclusive public procurement system will also depend on building the access to information and capacities of WSMEs to facilitate their competitiveness and productivity
- Raising the awareness of WSMEs of traditionally male-dominated sectors is also important to enable WSMEs access to more profitable market opportunities (eg works).
- The partnerships with business associations and civil society organizations are critical for outreach and engagement with WSMEs and their families, such as campaigns aimed at sensitization of their husbands, who often play a role in business decision-making.