

[Win-Win Strategies](#) is a ‘brand’ within [Women Win](#) and was founded on the belief that corporate women’s economic empowerment (WEE) programmes will be far more effective if companies implemented an integrated approach in partnership with local women’s groups. Over the past two years, WWS has invested in cross-sector partnerships and the promotion of a building block approach for the corporate sector to engage in sustainable WEE.

The Building Bridges for Women’s Economic Empowerment programme is a 5-year program funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It aims to increase the understanding and adoption of women’s rights based approaches to WEE by companies across their value chains, and to increase cross-sector engagement between the private sector and WRO/WFs. This will hopefully result in both business and social impact, all the while ensuring alignment with international standards on RBC and moving towards achieving the SDGs.

What efforts have been undertaken to encourage private firms and institutions to mainstream gender equality considerations in policies and practices?

In March 2021, Women Win launched the [Gender Responsive Due Diligence platform](#). This was developed in alignment with Plan International, The Netherlands as part of the [Girls Advocacy Alliance](#) program. Part of this program (also funded by the Dutch Foreign Ministry) Plan Intl. NL sought to influence the private sector to play a more active role in supporting women’s empowerment in value chains.

An increasing number of companies recognise the importance of responsible business conduct and are starting, or have started, to conduct human rights due diligence. Although these efforts can only be applauded for, human rights risks and their adverse impacts are not gender-neutral. In order to ensure that violations of human rights, labour rights, and the environment, are identified and addressed adequately, it is key that the due diligence process is conducted in a gender-responsive way.

Multiple resources have been developed over the years to support companies to make their human rights due diligence more gender-responsive. This platform brings many of these resources together. Some are specific to one of the steps in the due diligence process, while others focus on the process as a whole. Some also support companies to understand and transform underlying power structures and relations, going beyond preventing and mitigating women’s rights risks to making significant contributions to gender equality.

The platform has primarily been designed and developed for multinational companies with international value chains. However, the guidance provided on this platform is largely relevant for suppliers and lower tier buyers as well. While the case studies focus more on commodity-specific sectors, the platform can be used by any company that has started, or is going to start, implementing human rights due diligence and is keen to ensure that gender is deliberately considered throughout.

Since the launch, Women Win has delivered one-on-one webinars to a number of companies including, ABL Investments (Primark, Twinings) & CBL (Albert Heijn, Jumbo, Aldi, Lidl, Plus, SuperUnie, etc.). Moreover, as participant in the RBC Agreement Floriculture, Women Win has introduced the GRDD platform to its members and adapted the code of conduct to be more gender responsive. In the near future (Oct 12th) Women Win will contribute to an

inspirational due diligence workshop for all RBC members, sharing best practices and learnings from our efforts in the floriculture sector in Kenya.

In addition to the platform, Women Win has partnered with [Equileap](#) to encourage the Dutch private sector to take a harder stance on gender equality and women’s empowerment throughout their value chains. Alongside Equileap’s standard assessment, WWS incorporated a value chain lens to apply to the research. The [first report](#) was launched in October 2020 and the second soon in October 2021. Following this year’s launch, Women Win will host follow-up engagement sessions to foster a more supportive process for companies interested in applying a gender-lens to their value chain.

Women Win has established a set of **partnerships with flower farms in Kenya** with the support of and in alignment with Kenya Flower Council. One of the key activities of Year 2 of the programme has been to support the flower farms in their gender mainstreaming efforts by working with a gender expert to review key policies and practices and ensure a gender lens is integrated. Each farm has received individual support and they have jointly participated in peer-learning activities to encourage each other and share best practices.

What action has been taken to increase investment and support for women entrepreneurs?

In 2020 (Year 1 of the programme), Women Win learned that there is very little information available on women-owned businesses in Kenya’s flower sector despite their huge potential. In an effort to increase investment in women-owned farms in Year 2, Women Win and partner organisations investigated the main drivers and barriers for women-owned businesses in Kenya’s floriculture sector in order to identify strategies that can ultimately support and increase their access to market. In the coming year (Year 3), Women Win will aim to address some of the key barriers by facilitating & creating space for collaborative discussions to take place.

Women Win is also promoting our [gender-responsive procurement playbook/course](#) which provides insight and practical tools to support companies to integrate women-owned businesses into their corporate value chains. We know this helps to expand and diversity markets, and by increasing the number of women-owned businesses in value chains, companies are likely to be fostering greater product innovation.