

GRUNDTVIG PROJECT

MEETING IN VIENNA, 11TH NOVEMBER 2013

Poster WIDE SWITZERLAND

1 KEY ASPECTS OF THE ORGANIZATION

WIDE Switzerland is a national (inter- and transdisciplinary) network of NGO representatives, activists, academics and practitioners of various professions working in the field of gender and development.

Objectives

- **Critical feminist lenses to analyze and understand national economic, social and development policies, public finances, decision making processes, to reframe concepts**
- **Participate in public debates, challenge dominant discourses and definitions, strive for different agenda settings in critical domains of gender relations.**
- **Enhance sensibility for contexts, raise awareness, share and transfer knowledge**

Structure

- **Website: www.wide-network.ch**
- **Thematic working groups, a debate club, working group for a feminist learning strategy, coordination group, assembly**
- **Low organizational density with little time capacity and budget, secretariat of 20%**

Members

- **Total of 170 members, 78 paying members, 6 sponsors, ca active 20 members)**

2 GRUNDTVIG PROJECT:

Mobilities 2013: Lina Gafner, Jelena Lenggenhager, Theres Blöchlinger, Annemarie Sancar

Coordination and contact to Grundtvig Switzerland: Franziska Müller

4 ECONOMIC LITERACY

A) The concept

As developed after Women's conference in Nairobi, a key instrument of economic empowerment through analysis with a feminist perspective

Explanation (not written on the poster, but only to say): The concept and terminology of economic literacy in feminist economic thinking was first developed and used by women's networks following the third UN-Women's Conference in Nairobi 1985. Encouraged by their collaborators from the South, such as DAWN, CAFRA, IWRAW and IGTN, WIDE has supported EL as an instrument of economic empowerment through analysis with a feminist perspective.

critical feminist approach is essential to our understanding of economic literacy:

approach, analyze and implement economics
make decisions about earning, saving, spending, and sharing money
influence decision making processes at all levels of society
raise awareness of the lion's share of women's unpaid work
necessity of instruments like gender budgeting

Explanation: For WIDE Switzerland economic literacy EL is a tool to empower women to critically approach, analyze and implement economics, looking at all its elements and processes through the lenses of their own realities. EL is a process of economic learning which puts women's economic expertise into the center of attention. It is a means to understand and use economic concepts in order to make decisions about earning, saving, spending, and sharing money An important aspect is raising awareness of the place and size of the unpaid work.

WIDE Switzerland conceives EL also as an instrument to elaborate and articulate positions in decision making processes at all levels of society in order to enhance gender justice through economic and social policies. This critical feminist approach is essential to our understanding of economic literacy.

B) EL Activities

Workshops with trade unions and NGOs served as important occasions to exchange with members and staff on economic issues related to the care economy. Such workshops of "Economic Literacy" start with the introduction of the analytical tool "5-Sector model of the economy"

developed by Luise Gubitzer. The model places the household as one sector of the national economy, along with other sectors. The focus on the analysis of household activities allows participants to better understand the concept of care economy, which links all sectors. This approach has been used to create linkages between different sectors with regard to specific topics of interest, such as care of the elderly or the provision of food both in Switzerland and related to development issues:

Other related activities

Public Conferences (Care economy 2009, Gender, Power and Work 2012, Feminist perspectives on Sustainability Planned for 2014), Panels (Minimal Basic Income, Pension schemes and Provisions, Development Cooperation, Sustainability Goals etc.), Hearings with experts on Care Economy, publications (Switzerland care-free?!, “widerspruch”, Discussion paper on “Unconditional Basic Income”).

Furthermore, WIDE Switzerland organizes regular training modules in feminist economy focusing on critical issues of public policies such as “The Euro-Crises from a feminist perspective “, giving insights into the controversial debates after the crisis of the financial market 2008 and the relevance of the Swiss financial center, or “The strategic “silence about Care” (Isabella Bakker). In the training “Feminist Critiques of political economy”, the limitation of the common economic theories is explained using as an example the GDP as an indicator for wellbeing. Approaches of a feminist critique of political economy were then elaborated together.

C) Our experience with economic literacy

There are two fields of application of economic literacy:

- Within a short workshop and along with inputs by economists, economic literacy may serve as a tool to allow interested women to apply this knowledge in their own field of activity.
- As a long-term process, a group of women (and men) can work on an economic issue of their interest, bring together their own knowledge and seek expertise as required.

Both happens within WIDE-Switzerland within the EL working group and as part of the outreach, in the form of the activities described above.