

Women's Economic Empowerment in IORA

Empowering women is one of IORA's highest priorities. This reflects a growing recognition in the Indian Ocean Rim region and globally that providing greater opportunities for women to participate in the economy and take leadership roles stimulates economic growth and is crucial for sustainable development. IORA's focus is on economically empowering women, led by a dedicated Working Group. Our milestones include:



2015 baseline survey published

In 2015 IORA engaged UN Women to publish the first-ever baseline survey of women's empowerment in the Indian Ocean Rim region, with support from Australia. To find it, google '*Enabling Women's Contributions to Indian Ocean Rim Economies*'.

2016 ministers commit to gender equality

In October 2016 IORA Foreign Ministers issued the IORA Declaration on Gender Equality and Women's Economic Empowerment in Bali, Indonesia, which formalised Member States' commitment to empowering women and girls as central to a prosperous Indian Ocean Rim region.

2017 Action Plan adopted

IORA Leaders met in Indonesia in March 2017 to launch the IORA Action Plan 2017-21 and the Jakarta Concord. These documents place WEE as a core cross-cutting issue for all of IORA's work.

2017 dedicated journal issue

The March 2017 Journal of the Indian Ocean Region (JIOR) had a special issue on women's economic empowerment in the Region. Look for JIOR, Volume 13, 2017.

2018 working group launched

In August 2018, IORA Gender Ministers launched a dedicated Working Group on WEE. Through it, officials are cooperating to promote gender equality across the region.

2014-2018 ongoing knowledge sharing

There have been six IORA capacity building events on WEE, held in India (2014, 2017), Indonesia (2016), Malaysia (2014), Seychelles (2016) and Mauritius (2018). They have focused on tourism, textiles, poverty, markets, and entrepreneurship.

Where to next?

The Action Plan sets the vision for IORA's future gender equality work: supporting women entrepreneurs, building capacity of officials, conducting research to improve policymaking. Dialogue Partners including the UK and US are supporting IORA Member States implement this vision and empower women across the region.

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