

## Human Capital Investment Operational Programme (2007- 2013)

### Progress Report Template

*Each **Intermediate Body (IB)** in the HCI OP is required to submit a progress report at Activity Implementation Plan level to the Managing Authority twice a year as follows:*

*Spring: relating to the entire preceding calendar year*

*Autumn: relating to the period January-June of the current year.*

*This template sets out the reporting requirements for each Monitoring Committee meeting. The Progress Reports to be completed by each IB should be brief and relate only to activity within the reporting period itself. An entry must be made under each heading, even if only to formally record no change.*

**FOR THE REPORTING PERIOD:** January to December 2011

**PRIORITY:** No. 2 INCREASING PARTICIPATION AND REDUCING INEQUALITY IN THE LABOUR FORCE

**ACTIVITY NAME:** Positive Actions to Promote Gender Equality ESF 2.8

#### 1. Activity description

The Equality for Women Measure (EWM) is a positive action programme for women which aims to foster gender equality to promote the economic engagement of women in accordance with the National Women's Strategy 2007-2016.

The programme is delivered through a range of projects largely delivered by community based not for profit groups selected following a competitive process.

Pobal Ltd administer the Measure on behalf of the Department of Justice and Equality

To-date the EWM has addressed areas of gender inequality across three strands:

- Strand 1 - Access to Employment - this aimed to provide women who were currently outside the labour market with the social skills and/or education and/or training to enable them to enter or return to the labour market;
- Strand 2 - Developing Female Entrepreneurship - aimed to support the efforts of women who wanted to become entrepreneurs; and
- Strand 3 - Career Development in Employment - aimed to support the provision of training and education to enable women who were in employment to advance their careers.

The Measure has been delivered in a series of phases. Phase 1 was completed in 2010 and replaced with offers of somewhat higher grants of up to €50,000 per project, on a staggered annual basis, under Phase 2. (The maximum grant under phase 1 had been €30,000 in most circumstances)

While the Measure originally had a budget of €31.5 million, including €15.75 in ESF funding, the public financial downturn led to a transfer of €10million of ESF from the Measure due to the scarcity of match funding and the budget is now €11.5 million.

## 2. Significant Changes in the Operating Environment

The economic downturn continues to impact on progression opportunities for many learners due to the contracting of employment opportunities and rising female unemployment. Entry level jobs within the service industry and retail sector for example have become increasingly unavailable. As a result of rising unemployment project providers report that many EWM training/education courses are now oversubscribed with long waiting lists.

The Department of Justice and Equality continued to support EWM projects in 2011 although the identification of matching funding remains a challenge with the Department's annual financial allocation largely required to address the State's security services.

The EWM remains a very important initiative in the context of the Programme for Government and the National Women's Strategy, which include commitments to enabling the full participation of women in society, including in employment. Moreover, the EWM satisfies Ireland's commitment to the European Commission's Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2012-2015 and the Europe 2020 Strategy, in particular the need to encourage the economic engagement of women through increasing their labour market participation and thereby boosting economic growth.

## 3. Commentary on Activity-related progress

A new phase of the EWM was advertised and launched in mid 2010. A total of 200 project proposals were received from all parts of the country and post evaluation, saw 41 projects across Ireland receiving funding of up to €50,000 each for the period mid 2010 to mid 2011.

Projects were offered a roll over of the 2010/2011 grant in Spring 2011 and 40 projects availed of this offer of further funding of up to €50,000 each for the period mid 2011 to April 2012. The breakdown by strand is as follows:

Strand	No. Of Projects 2010/2011	Grants 2010/2011	No. Of Projects 2011/2012	Grants 2010/2011
Access to Employment	31	€1,352,354	29	€1,298,761
Entrepreneurship	9	€367,756	10	€393,756
Career Development	1	€44,500	1	€48,804

Since 2009, over 7,000 women have participated on the programme, with 2011 EWM projects alone revealing a total of 3,299 women participants.

Activities provided by projects include a accredited and non-accredited skills-based training and one to one mentoring, together with a range of other support interventions relevant to the target client base. This may include personal development, CV and interview skills preparation, work placements, career guidance, and life coaching for labour market activities under Strand 1 and business development, marketing, and financial management for budding entrepreneurs under Strand 2.

As table 4 below, shows

- In 2011, 31 courses were delivered under Strand 1 (Access to Employment), bringing the cumulative total to 224 since the start of the programme
- In 2011, 2,142 women took part in initiatives under Strand 1, bringing the cumulative total to 6,976. The Regional breakdown is 31.5% from BMW and 68.5% from the S&E. A new indicator shows that 1,404 of the 2011 participants received accredited training.
- By the end of 2011, it is reported that 1,704 previous participants had moved into employment or into further mainstream training or educational courses
- In 2011, 891 women availed of training under the Entrepreneurship Strand, bringing the cumulative total to 1001.

While declared expenditure under the Measure is slower than anticipated, due largely to the issues of uncertainty relating to matching Exchequer funding, when commitments to year end are taken into consideration, the total level of commitments at time of writing approaches €7.5 million. It is planned to launch a final phase of the Measure in late Summer/early Autumn 2012, to attract projects to be delivered over the period from either late 2012 to end 2014 or from January 2013 to end 2014.

A EWM Networking and Support event was organised by Pobal in October 2011, which brought the EWM projects together for the first time to reflect on their work in the broader EU and national policy context. Over 80 finance and development staff from 40 projects attended.

Projects from each of the Strands also presented their work highlighting a range of different methodologies in relation to educational and developmental supports for course participants. Pobal staff presented important information in relation to operational, finance, governance, reporting and evaluation requirements.

### **Publications/Written Resources**

The following resources were produced in 2011 as part of the Equality for Women Measure:

1. EWM Programme Guidelines for Funded Groups were developed by the EWM Team in Pobal and issued to all projects. The Guidelines outline the finance, development and information & publicity requirements.
2. A Directory of Projects was developed by Pobal to facilitate informal networking and exchange of practice. The Directory was issued to all projects.
3. In order to profile the EWM in terms of its impact on addressing barriers to women's participation and progression in employment, Pobal carried out research on the issues and difficulties arising for project participants and their strategies to address them. The following issues were identified:
  - Lack of confidence/ Poor self esteem / Fear of failure;
  - Caring Responsibilities - women carry an unequal share of care work/ household tasks;
  - Financial Barriers (cost of childcare, social welfare trap, transport); and
  - External Impact of the economic downturn.

The Report will be available in early 2012.

#### 4. Progress in relation to physical performance indicators and targets

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:							
Annual and Cumulative Indicators							
A. OUTPUT <sup>1</sup>							
	Region	Current period/Year: (e.g.) Jan. – Dec. 2011 as applicable			Cumulative totals 2007-2011		
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1. Number of full (part) time courses Aimed at labour market activation Delivered under Equality for Women Measure	BMW		7	7		55	55
	SAE		24	24		169	169
	NAT		31	31		224	224
	Region	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2. Number of participants in full (part) time courses Aimed at labour market activation delivered under Equality for Women Measure each year	BMW		564	564		2197	2197
	SAE		1578	1578	4	4779	4783
	NAT		2142	2142	4	6976	6980
	Region	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
3. Number of women availing of training for entrepreneurship under Equality for Women Measure	BMW		365	365		378	378
	SAE		526	526		623	623
	NAT		891	891		1001	1001
B. RESULT <sup>2</sup>							
	Region	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1. Number of participants under Positive Action Programmes taking up Employment or advancing to further education	BMW		189	189		475	475
	SAE		474	474	2	1229	1231
	NAT		663	663	2	1704	1706
	Region	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2. Number of participants <sup>3</sup> achieving certification / accreditation	BMW		362	362		362	362
	SAE		1042	1042		1042	1042
	NAT		1404	1404		1404	1404
C. IMPACT							
	Region	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1. Number of participants in labour Market Activation course who were Still in employment or further education a year later	BMW		576	576		576	576
	SAE		1262	1262		1262	1262
	NAT		1838	1838		1838	1838

<sup>1</sup> Output indicators for EWM also included 196 female participants who availed of in service development training

<sup>2</sup> Result indicators in 2011 also reveal that a total of 182 women moved to early stage entrepreneurship after completing the entrepreneurship strand

<sup>3</sup> This data relates to the number of participants who achieved accreditation – Strand 1 (1,318) and Strand 2 (86) projects

## **Performance Indicators**

The project outputs refer to the 41 projects that were initially funded for the period 2010/2011 and subsequently rolled over for a second year ending in April 2012. This resulted in the number of project participants on EWM projects in 2011 totalling 3,229. The number of participants per strand is as follows:

- Strand 1      Access to employment      2,142
- Strand 2      Entrepreneurship      891
- Strand 3      Career Development      196

### **EWM Strand 1**

**In relation to the 2,142 participants under EWM Strand 1 (below) who participated in labour market interventions this is broken down according to the following regions: 564 in the BMW region and 1,578 in the SAE region.** This can also be broken down into the numbers of women who participated in accredited training and non/accredited training or other supports.

	<b>BMW Region</b>	<b>SAE Region</b>	<b>Total</b>
Accredited Training	348	970	<b>1,318</b>
Non-Accredited Training & other associated supports	216	608	<b>824</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>1,578</b>	<b>2,142</b>

**A total of 663 participants who participated in Labour Market Activation courses (EWM Strand 1) moved to employment or advanced to another educational/training programme at the end of the EWM project.** This result is significant, taking into account the current economic climate and the limited employment opportunities for learners post EWM, even within low paid sectors and those sectors which have traditionally been the domain of women. Moreover, organisations have also indicated greater competition for places on training and educational programmes due to increased demand from people on the live register.

Progression can be seen from a social capital perspective, particularly in respect of women who are marginalised and experience social exclusion. As well as tangible outcomes (i.e. the 663 participants advancing to employment or further training), many of the projects have indicated other positive outcomes. These include participants gaining benefits in terms of developing life skills, increased social and workplace skills and enhanced quality of life. Projects have indicated that getting some participants to the point of undertaking a non-accredited skills-based course or developing a CV would be a huge achievement and a good outcome, in preparation for possible employment further down the line. Moreover, these outcomes in time provide a springboard to labour market engagement and progression as well as intergenerational outcomes in terms of labour market participation of vulnerable groups.

### **EWM Strand 2**

**In relation to the 891 participants who participated in training for entrepreneurship: 365 were located in the BMW region and 526 in the SAE**

**region.** The numbers of women who participated in accredited training and non/accredited training or other supports were:

	<b>BMW Region</b>	<b>SAE Region</b>	<b>Total</b>
Accredited Training	14	72	<b>86</b>
Non-Accredited Training & other associated supports	351	454	<b>805</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>365</b>	<b>526</b>	<b>891</b>

**A total of 182 participants who participated in entrepreneurship development have moved to early stage entrepreneurship.** This represents considerable achievement in recessionary times and also in light of the fact that a small but not insignificant number of participants on Strand 2 projects are from vulnerable groups such as migrants, Travellers and disadvantaged rural women. One project reported that:

*Despite the economic barriers such as the demise of the Celtic Tiger, both mentors and mentees showed considerable resilience in terms of ensuring the success of their businesses. Many participants referred to changes they had made to the operations of their business as well as their own personal development, as a result of participating in the [EWM] programme. <sup>4</sup>*

A key element of Strand 2 was the development of networks among participants that enabled women to move to later stage entrepreneurship.

### EWM Strand 3

**All 196 participants under EWM Strand 3 were based in the SAE region and all availed of non-accredited training and other associated supports.**

### **NUTS III Activity Indicator Report for reporting period (Jan – Dec. 2011)**

<i>Activity: Number of women engaged in the EWM project</i>			
<i>Indicator Used: Number of women engaged in the EWM project</i>			
<b>Region</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Gender break-down</b>	
		Male	Female
<i>Border Region</i>	337	0	337
<i>Midland Region</i>	109	0	109
<i>West Region</i>	483	0	483
<b>BMW Total</b>	<b>929</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>929</b>
<i>South East Region</i>	282	0	282
<i>Mid East Region</i>	364	0	364
<i>Dublin Region</i>	774	0	774
<i>South West Region</i>	783	0	783
<i>Mid West Region</i>	97	0	97
<b>SAE Total</b>	<b>2,300</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,300</b>
<b>National (BMW + SAE)</b>	<b>3,229</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,229</b>

<sup>4</sup> Midlands Female Entrepreneur Mentor (FEM) Programme – Longford Women's Link

## 5. Progress with regard to expenditure

Total HCIOP expenditure on the Equality for Women Measure to December 2011 totalled €4.669m representing 39.77% of €11.75m available from the programme for positive action measures to support gender equality. During 2011, the MA successfully transferred €673,795 of ESF funding to Priority 3 Technical Assistance to fund the administration costs of ESF 2.8 Positive actions to Promote Gender Equality. This amount along with EWM project plans for 2012-2014 will ensure that all HCIOP programme funds will be expended before programme completion.

**Table 1 – Expenditure for the Reporting Period Jan. to December 2011 (€m)**

<b>HCI OP €m</b>	<i>Total Programme Forecast*</i>	<i>Total Programme spend</i>	<i>Expenditure as % of forecast</i>	<i>Total co- financed spend</i>	<i>EU Social Funds</i>	<i>National Public Co- financed</i>	<i>Private Co-financed</i>
<b>Region</b>							
<i>Dublin</i>		0.635		0.635	0.317	0.317	
<i>South East</i>		0.236		0.236	0.118	0.118	
<i>Mid East</i>		0.134		0.134	0.067	0.067	
<i>Mid West</i>		0.139		0.139	0.070	0.070	
<i>South West</i>		0.285		0.285	0.142	0.142	
<b>SAE Total</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>1.430</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>1.430</b>	<b>0.715</b>	<b>0.715</b>	
<i>Border</i>		0.155		0.155	0.078	0.078	
<i>Midland</i>		0.160		0.160	0.080	0.080	
<i>West</i>		0.318		0.318	0.159	0.159	
<b>BMW Total</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>0.633</b>	<b>70.3%</b>	<b>0.633</b>	<b>0.317</b>	<b>0.317</b>	
<b>National (BMW + SAE)</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>2.063</b>	<b>67.5%</b>	<b>2.063</b>	<b>1.032</b>	<b>1.032</b>	

**Table 2 – Cumulative Expenditure since January 2007 (€m)**

<b>HCI OP €m</b>	<i>Total Programme Forecast*</i>	<i>Total Programme spend</i>	<i>Expenditure as % of forecast</i>	<i>Total co- financed spend</i>	<i>EU Structura l Funds</i>	<i>National Public Co- financed</i>	<i>Private Co-financed</i>
<b>Region</b>							
<i>Dublin</i>		2.081		2.081	1.040	1.042	
<i>South East</i>		0.349		0.349	0.1745	0.1745	
<i>Mid East</i>		0.239		0.239	0.1195	0.1195	
<i>Mid West</i>		0.416		0.416	0.208	0.208	
<i>South West</i>		0.396		0.396	0.198	0.198	
<b>SAE Total</b>	<b>8.70</b>	<b>3.481</b>	<b>40.01%</b>	<b>3.481</b>	<b>1.8525</b>	<b>1.8525</b>	
<i>Border</i>		0.396		0.396	0.198	0.198	
<i>Midland</i>		0.323		0.323	0.1615	0.1615	
<i>West</i>		0.469		0.469	0.2345	0.2345	
<b>BMW Total</b>	<b>3.04</b>	<b>1.188</b>	<b>39.07%</b>	<b>1.188</b>	<b>0.594</b>	<b>0.594</b>	
<b>National (BMW + SAE)</b>	<b>11.74</b>	<b>4.669</b>	<b>39.77%</b>	<b>4.669</b>	<b>2.334</b>	<b>2.334</b>	

## 6. Data On Participants In Programme Activity Implementation Plan (Commission Implementing Regulation 1828/2006 - Annex XXIII)

### 6.1 NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS PER YEAR

(People entering, those leaving, carry-over from one year to the next)

	Male:	Female:	Total:
Entrants: (a)	0	3,229	3,229
Leaving: (b)	0	1,603	1,603
Carry-over to next year [ (a) less (b) ]	0	1,626	1,626
<b>Total:</b>	0	3,229	3,229

### 6.2 BREAKDOWN OF PARTICIPANTS BY GENDER

	Male:	Female:	Total:
Participants:	0	3,229	3,229

### 6.3 BREAKDOWN OF PARTICIPANTS ACCORDING TO STATUS IN THE LABOUR MARKET

	Male:	Female:	Total:
<b>Employed</b> (Total number of employed, including self-employed)	0	1,037	1,037
Self-employed	0	477	477
<b>Unemployed</b> (Total number of unemployed including long-term unemployed)	0	1,341	1,341
Long-term unemployed	0	880	880
<b>Inactive persons</b> (Total number of inactive persons, including those in education, training or retirement, those having given up business, the permanently disabled, those fulfilling domestic tasks or other)	0	851	851
<b>Other</b> persons in education or training	0	243	243
<b>Note: Employed + Unemployed + Inactive/Other = Total number of Participants (by Gender)</b>	0	3,229	3,229



#### 6.4 BREAKDOWN OF PARTICIPANTS BY AGE

	Male:	Female:	Total:
Young people (15-24)	0	274	274
Older workers (55-64)	0	395	395

#### 6.5 BREAKDOWN OF PARTICIPANTS BY VULNERABLE GROUPS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH NATIONAL RULES

	Male:	Female:	Total:
Minorities: (Member of the Travelling Community)	0	101	101
Migrants:	0	500	500
Disabled:	0	81	81
Other disadvantaged people: e.g. this includes lone parents, women with substance misuse, domestic violence, mental health difficulties, LGBT community, offenders and ex-offenders.	0	923	923

#### 6.6 BREAKDOWN OF PARTICIPANTS BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

	Male:	Female:	Total:
Primary or lower secondary education (ISCED 1 and 2)	0	776	776
Upper secondary education (ISCED 3)	0	780	780
Post-secondary non-tertiary education (ISCED 4)	0	397	397
Tertiary education (ISCED 5 AND 6)	0	1,276	1,276

### 7. Horizontal issues

. SEE SEPARATE TEMPLATES

## **8. Compliance with EU and National policy**

The Gender Equality Division of the Department of Justice and Equality, as Public Beneficiary Body and Pobal/EWM projects, as beneficiaries, comply with financial management and control responsibilities relating to the implementation of the EU Structural Funds Programme 2007-2013. Conformity with Circular 12/2008 on Eligibility Rules for the European Social Fund and with the relevant EU Regulations is guaranteed for the EWM (Exchequer/ESF co-financed HCIOP). National and EU rules are adhered to in the operation of EWM and are identified in the procedures manual for all EWM projects. Pobal as administrator of the EWM regularly update projects on their compliance obligations including public procurement, information and publicity, audit checks and retention of records.

During 2011 one verification check under Article 13 (2) of Regulation (EC) No 1828/2006 took place on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2011 at the site of the Administrator of the programme (Pobal) who provide technical and administration support for the Equality for Women Measure for the Gender Equality Division, Department of Justice and Equality. This verification check covered the technical and administration support for 2010.

## **9. Added Value of ESF Interventions**

The objectives of the Equality for Women Measure (comprising of three strands) are to make funding available to support positive actions which:

- Improve women's access to education, training and personal development in preparation for employment;
- Support women who are undertaking entrepreneurial activity; and
- Support women's advancement in their employment.

These goals are set to bring benefits and added value in terms of the improvement of the socio-economic status of marginalised and disadvantaged women by enhancing the quality of their lives and well-being.

The continued economic downturn in 2011 was reflected in the scarcity of Exchequer funding. The 41 projects who participated in EWM activity in 2011 would not have taken place without the availability of ESF funding. The latter source of funding enabled the projects to proceed and enabled participants to fulfill their potential by giving them better skills and enhancing their opportunities for employment or further education/training. These opportunities enabled a total 3,229 women to take the first steps towards the labour market and entrepreneurship and would not have arisen if not for ESF source funding. In addition to these tangible outcomes, many projects have indicated added value via:

- Participants gaining benefits in terms of developing life skills, increased social and workplace skills and enhanced quality of life;
- Projects creating an environment where women could share ideas and experiences, develop confidence and self-esteem, as well as developing strong links among participants, thereby creating peer support;

- ESF promoting equal opportunities of disadvantaged and discriminated women via the EWM brings benefits in terms of mobility in the labour market and social inclusion; and
- EWM Projects were enabled to develop their capacities and engage communities of disadvantaged women through the support of ESF funding.

## 10. Publicity

Pobal, the administrator of the EWM developed *Programme Guidelines for Funded Groups* in 2011 which included a section on information and publicity requirements. In 2011, the said guidelines were disseminated to all EWM groups.

At the end of 2011, ESF and the HCIOP publicity materials were included in all notification materials in the preparation work prior to the event.

All visits to projects include an inspection of compliance with the publicity requirements

## 11. Proposals for re-profiling of expenditure (where applicable)

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REPLY: None

## 2. Proposals to amend Programme Activity Implementation Plans (where applicable)

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REPLY: None