Improving public transport for women and men

The EBRD is helping transport companies to better accommodate the specific needs of all passengers so that women, girls, men and boys find it easier to get to work, educational institutions and access essential services. In many countries around the world, women, girls and boys suffer harassment on public transport as a result of inadequate lighting, poor security, crowded carriages and unsuitable infrastructure such as narrow subways. In Egypt, for example, nearly 82 per cent of women respondents to a UN Women study in Cairo said they had been frequently harassed on public transport.

The EBRD, as part of its pipeline development, is gathering data on public transport usage in a range of locations and benchmarking existing services against transport that is women and family-friendly in other parts of the world. Tailored recommendations are then provided to transport companies or operators on how to include the needs of women and men in the design, delivery and management of their services, including identifying related training needs. A project is under way in Egypt as part of this programme and more are expected to follow in other parts of the EBRD region.

Partnerships to promote equality

In addition to project work, the EBRD commissions research on gender issues related to its mandate and engages in policy dialogue with governments and other stakeholders. It also takes an active part in the global promotion of gender equality by hosting and attending leading conferences on the subject. It regularly interacts with international partners including fellow multilateral development banks, United Nations agencies, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, as well as other regional partners and foundations.

Technical cooperation (TC) funds provided by donors support the design and implementation of EBRD projects with a gender focus or component. Through the donor-funded Gender Advisory Services programme, the EBRD offers clients expert guidance on improving access to finance, employment and services. The Shareholder Special Fund, SEMED Multi-Donor Account, Taiwan Business-EBRD TC Fund and Climate Investment Funds are the main sources of donor funding for the EBRD’s gender-related activities.

Helping women entrepreneurs

The EBRD’s Women in Business programme aims to help women manage and grow their own small and medium-sized enterprises. It provides dedicated credit lines for women and offers tailored advice and training to transfer know-how and increase networking opportunities for women entrepreneurs.

The programme also links with partner banks and local financial institutions to reach out to more potential borrowers among women entrepreneurs through improved marketing and product development, and often by introducing a risk-mitigation scheme for credit line beneficiaries. Women in Business programmes are under way in Turkey and the Western Balkans, and are being developed across a wider range of countries.

Promoting equal opportunities in the workplace

With more than 20,000 employees, Petrom is Romania’s largest corporation and the biggest gas and oil producer in eastern Europe. In 2011 the EBRD funded a project that focused on promoting equal opportunities and reinforcing HR best practices within Petrom. As a result, the company took steps to improve its recruitment, mentoring and career management policies in a way that benefits work prospects for women and men. In addition, Petrom revised its business strategy to integrate a focus on diversity.

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The EBRD and Gender Equality

The EBRD’s Strategic Gender Initiative, adopted in 2013, sets out how the Bank can economically empower women through investments, policy dialogue and the mobilisation of technical cooperation funds. As a result, the EBRD screens all projects at an early stage to see how they can play a role in promoting access to employment and skills, services and finance for women and men. The EBRD’s Gender team works with bankers, other experts within the Bank and EBRD clients on enhancing investments by including a gender focus or component.

Contact

If you are interested in working with the EBRD in this area, or need more information, please contact the Gender team.

Email: gender@ebrd.com
Website: www.ebrd.com

Watch the video at:
youtu.be/misYmpr925o

Gender Matters

Gender equality is essential to a modern, well-functioning economy and society. Countries that provide women and men with equal opportunities enjoy stronger growth and their companies compete better on the world stage. At the individual level, measures aimed at creating a fair, diverse and flexible workplace benefit men and women alike.

The EBRD, which was set up to promote economic growth in the countries where it invests, believes supporting gender equality is an important means of achieving this goal. Through projects, policy dialogue and other activities, the Bank seeks to increase the economic opportunities available to women, especially in those countries that have the greatest levels of gender inequality.

The EBRD works closely with clients to create tailored solutions that respond to their business needs while also improving women’s access to employment and skills, finance and services.

Good for the Economy, Good for Business

Equality of economic opportunity allows women and men to reach their full potential and to maximise their contribution to society, while barriers that prevent people from gaining employment, training, finance or essential services based on their gender are an obstacle to economic growth.

The business case for individual companies to support gender equality is also very strong. Firms with gender-diverse management teams tend to be more successful and employers who offer family-friendly work environments enjoy higher levels of staff satisfaction, loyalty and productivity.

When it comes to working with customers, businesses that respond equally to the needs of women and men have a wider client base, enjoy increased profits and emerge as market leaders.