

IN BRIEF



WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT IN MALE-DOMINATED AREAS OF THE LABOUR MARKET

EXPERIENCE FROM TU OPORTUNIDAD – SECOND CHANCE EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN CHILE

Photograph: UN Women Chile / Pablo Sanhueza

CONTEXT

A higher level of women's participation in the labour market has the potential to improve countries' economies. Women's access to job positions and reducing gender gaps in the labour market is key to growth, equality, and poverty reduction (ECLAC and ILO, 2019). Several studies have demonstrated that incorporating women in all work areas improves overall productivity because they adapt better to changes and stay in their positions longer (World Bank, 2015, ILO, 2018).

Achieving gender equality requires the participation of women in all areas and sectors of the economy, especially in those historically dominated by men. The areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) have been identified as necessary for a country to continue being economically competitive and to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Several sources anticipate that up to 75% of job positions will be related to the STEM field by 2050 (UNESCO, 2018).

With increased job positions in these areas, it becomes vital for women to become part of them. However, STEM jobs related to construction, computing, mining, telecommunications, and electricity have been historically and culturally dominated by men. In them, women are underrepresented, have fewer opportunities, and must overcome higher barriers than men.

Gender stereotypes increase these gaps making women lose interest in STEM from an early age. In Chile, a wide gap

is observed; although women account for 52% of higher education enrolment, this number drops to 22% in STEM programmes. Moreover, out of all female graduates, only 7% graduated from a STEM programme, the lowest number of the OECD countries in 2019 (Ministry of Science, Technology, Knowledge, and Innovation, 2022.)

16%

Of the people that work in positions related to information technology (IT) are **women** (SENCE, 2021).

Women's labour participation rate is:

4%

in the **information technology industry** (IDB, 2018).

12,6%

is the percentage of women that work in mining, which increased 2.2% since 2020. (COCHILCO-Ministry of Mining, 2022).

35%

of the people that work in R+D in Chile are **women** (Ministry of Science, Technology, Knowledge, and Innovation, 2022).



Photograph: UN Women Chile / Pablo Sanhueza

YOUNG WOMEN'S EMPLOYABILITY IN MALE-DOMINATED SECTORS

Incorporating women in STEM areas is a line of work that UN Women promotes through programmes, partnerships, and knowledge generation to reduce the gap and move towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Tu Oportunidad- Second Chance Education Programme provides labour intermediation and support to young women (between 18 and 32 years old) interested in non-traditional economic sector areas. The duration of the intervention process is between 5 weeks to 3 months, according to the needs of each participant.

Personalized diagnosis and group workshops

The programme considers the first stage of social and labour diagnosis to assist and support participants in a personalized way. Afterwards, group workshops are conducted addressing the topics of gender stereotypes in the labour market. Catalina, who obtained her diploma from the programme, states that women ***“are as capable as men of doing any kind of job; we cannot consider the comments of wrong-thinking men.”***

Individual Orientation

The third stage consists of individual orientation, where empowerment is promoted, life and work experiences are resignified, and women's self-confidence is reinforced to face labour-related issues. One of the participants in this stage states that ***“It helped me solve many questions that I had, and I did not know anyone that could guide me; it also helped me realize some things that I did not take into account before (when applying for a new job).”***

Job placement

Finally, there is a labour management process where a job-hunting plan is developed to promote autonomy by signing up to job portals. Once women start their new jobs in male-dominated areas, they are guided and motivated by a job coach.

The programme has the following success rate:

46%

This means that out of the 112 women that completed the process, **51 found a job.**

The areas in which they were employed were mainly technology, transportation, and construction.

In the case of women that have still not obtained a job, they valued the tools provided by the programme ***“I have a CV, and now I can keep on looking for a job but with greater knowledge.”***

Inclusion of women in astronomy and large observatories

Thanks to a partnership with the European Southern Observatory (ESO), a plan was implemented to include women in sciences related to large astronomical observatories. Within the activities, a technical training course was conducted to include women in the observatories' value chain. Obtain more information about the initiative [here](#).



Generating evidence

The study **“Overview of women in the technology sector in Chile; diagnosis and recommendations”** provides evidence of women’s participation in the technology sector and identifies the required capacities, considering the economic crisis context caused by COVID-19. Access the publication [here](#).



Photograph: UN Women Chile/CVA

TU OPORTUNIDAD - SECOND CHANCE EDUCATION PROGRAMME

UN Women Tu Oportunidad - Second Chance Education provides a comprehensive solution for women who, due to different reasons, have not been able to complete their formal education and are in a vulnerable situation regarding employment and work opportunities. In partnership with BHP Foundation, UN Women implements this initiative in 6 countries simultaneously: Cameroon, Jordan, India, Mexico, Australia, and Chile. It develops a sustainable system of women’s empowerment that promotes returning to formal education, access to work, and the development of small businesses through multi-sectorial partnerships at a local, national, and global level.

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