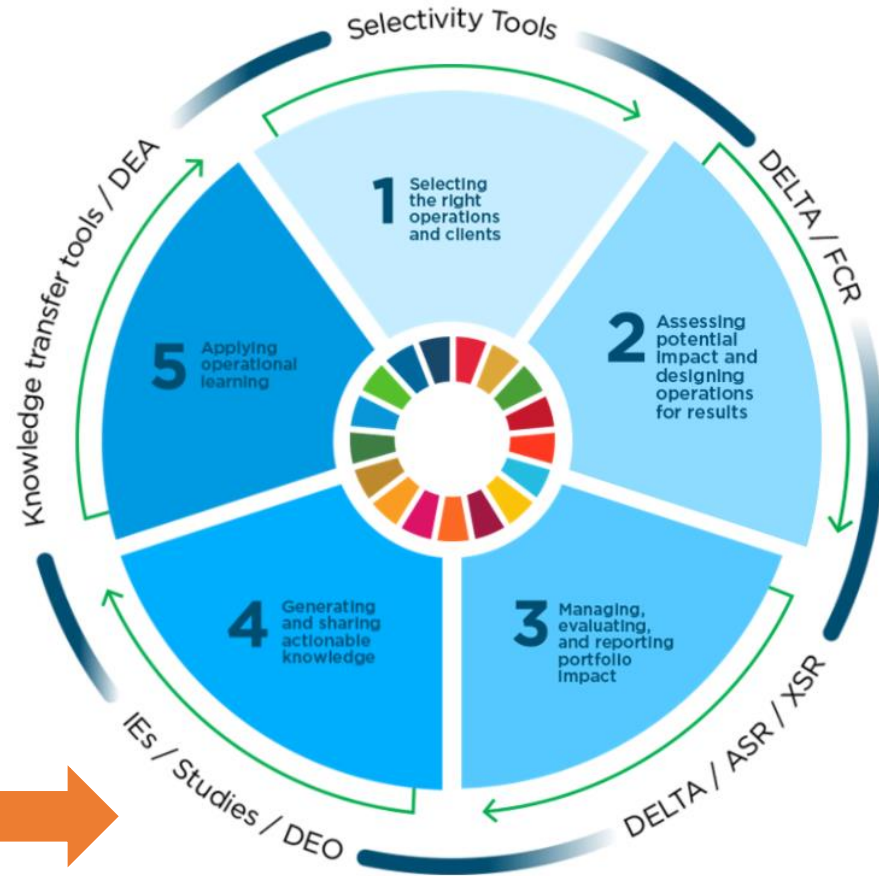# Knowledge agenda connected to women-led SMEs

Patricia Yañez-Pagans

Accelerating the Growth of Women-led SMEs Research Conference

October 30th, 2024

Impact Evaluations and Studies are one key piece in IDB Invest's Impact Management Framework

- **IDB Invest works through the private sector to promote positive social, economic and environmental impact.**

- Our **Impact Evaluation Framework** sets the criteria to select projects/área for rigorous studies.

- For women-led SMEs, **work and research priority lines** are:
  - Access to finance
  - Access to markets
  - Access to skills and networks

- Today, provide some **few examples of the work we are doing through WeFi and potential areas of collaboration.**

Impacts of access to credit on women-led SMEs

Overview:
- Most literature is focused on microenterprises less is known about impacts on SMEs.

Existing analysis:
- Leverage on COVID relief programs to better understand what the **impacts of access to credit of MSMEs and gender differences.**
- Run **two RCTs** in collaboration with two large private banks in **Chile and Colombia** executing large government-backed guaranteed loan programs.
- Two key firm **outcomes: (i) liquidity and (ii) earnings**.
- Focus on short-term effects (6-12 months after RCT concluded observed)

Data
- **Administrative data** on debt from regulators or credit bureau obtained by banks.
- Administrative data from banks on deposits.
- Monthly sales from IRS (Chile).

Moving forward:

- Impacts of different **types of credit** (e.g. reverse factoring).
- Impacts of **access to credit at scale** (administrative data at country level). Guided by a first research paper we did in Mexico in collaboration with a Fintech (Konfio).

Measuring gender biases in credit officers

Overview:

• Gender biases (conscious or unconscious) in credit officers can be one of the drivers of gender gaps observed in credit access.

• An **online tool was designed by IDB Invest and IDB** to measures biases based on **implicit association tests** and **hypothetical cases**.

• Tool also includes **impulse control tests** and questions to capture **explicit gender perceptions**.

Current analysis:

• Tool has been **applied to 8 FIs in 3 LAC countries** so far and more than **1.3K credit officers** have been screened.

• **Conditional analysis** looking at gender gaps in terms and conditions. Also, how are biases distributed.

Data:

• **Data coming out from the tool.**
• **Administrative data from banks** on actual loans is also analyzed to confirm the presence of biases.

Moving forward:

• **Designing interventions** to reduce biases (information versus monetary incentives versus).
• **Measure other biase**s (e.g. racial/skin tone).

Business mobility observatory Colombia

Overview:

- Business growth is a particularly important issue for **women-led/owned businesses (WSMEs), they tend to start and stay small.**

- Need to generate more evidence to **understand the drivers of business survival and business growt**h and gender gaps.

- Launch a **Business Mobility Observatory** that will regularly collect and report data in collaboration with **Confecámaras.**

Current analysis:

- Modeling probability of business survival to better understand determinants and gender gaps.

Data:

- Administrative data from the National Registry of Businesses (RUES) (~2 million).
- Collecting specific survey data.

Moving forward:

- Produce a **set of rigorous/causal studies** to better understand business mobility.
- **Run and evaluate interventions** to boost business mobility, **at scale**.

The impacts of Performance Based Incentives

Overview:

- Performance Based Incentives (PBIs) are monetary incentives provided to companies (e.g. reduction in interest rates, lump sum transfers) against the achievement of certain sustainable targets.

- **Little evidence on the impacts of PBIs** in general, none with gender focus.

Current analysis:

- [First study published](#) is descriptive and mostly based on qualitative evidence, including **case studies with IDB Invest clients**).

Data:

- IDB Invest administrative portfolio data. Yearly data on performance on companies that receive and did not receive a PBI.

Moving forward:

- **Preliminary causal analysis** using IDB Invest portfolio data, exploiting baseline and follow-up information for a subset of comparable projects. **Seeking collaboration with other MDBs to expand the dataset.**

- **Evaluation of specific programs and impacts on final beneficiaries: For example, Elcatex Honduras**, a company that adopted more inclusive procurement practices as part of a PBI.

Building skills on women-led businesses

Overview:

- There is not a definitive answer on whether training programs work or not. Diverse results based on country and content.

Our existing analysis:

- [Experimental study in Ecuador](#) with non-bank correspondents of a Bank showed that using rule of thumb versus traditional business training can have differential impacts for women-led businnneses.

- [Experimental study in Guatemala](#) looking at the impacts of digital training programs. Designed with a company that wanted to strengthen its chain of intermediaries.

Data:

- Survey data.
- Administrative data drawn from companies on their distributors.

Moving forward:

- Designing experimental study in Peru with **agricultural businesses.**
  - Besides businesses practices change **leadership skills and social norms to support women's enrolment in a cooperative.**
  - **Spillovers (targeting businesses managed by couples and randomize who receives training men, women or both)**

- **Explore other learning opportunities with FIs providing training with a funneling approach.**
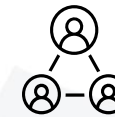
Other future work

- Work with IPA and IDB to design a **learning agenda on how to facilitate access to markets for women-led SMEs and what the impacts are**.
  - Lit review + interviews with companies, government and academics.
  - Identify impact evaluation proposals that can be funded.

- Designing **Call for Proposals with GDLab to support cutting edge research on women businesses**

GDLab
GENDER AND DIVERSITY
KNOWLEDGE INITIATIVE

NEXT CALL?: Women Entrepreneurship

Launch indicative date: Feb-March 2025

THE TWO PILLARS OF GDLAB

Fostering Cutting-Edge Knowledge Addressing Gender and Diversity Issues

Bringing G&D Knowledge Closer to Our Operations and Policy Makers

Thanks!