

# Open contracting for gender responsive procurement

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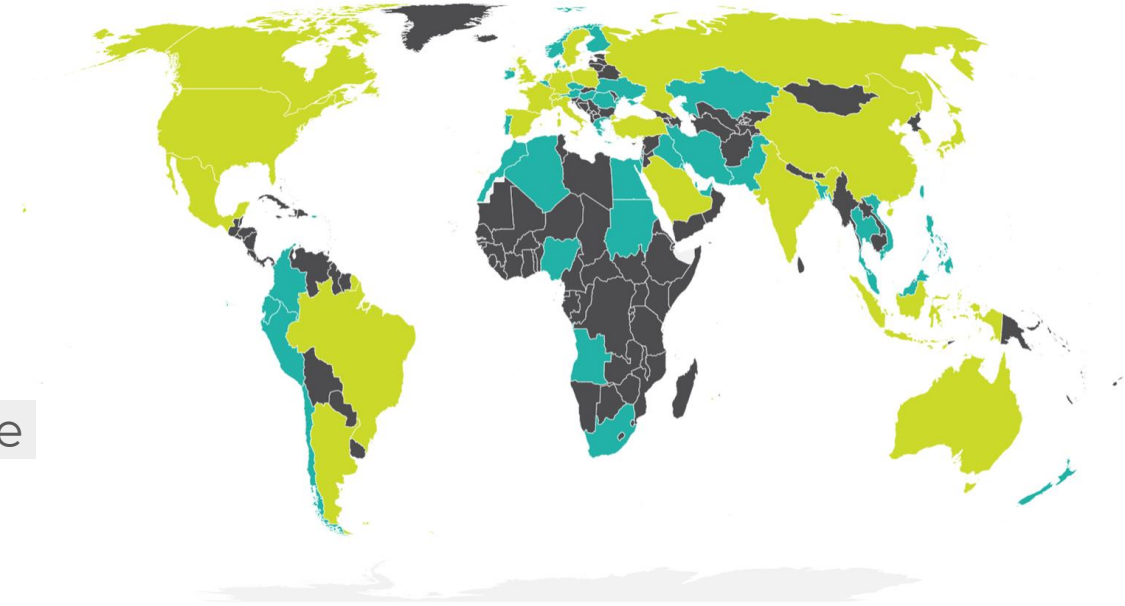
[www.open-contracting.org/gender](http://www.open-contracting.org/gender)

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# US\$ 13 trillion globally

Governments spend **one fifth of GDP** in public procurement

Women-owned small and medium enterprises (SMEs) **contribute 20%** to the global GDP (WB, 2012)





... Women-led  
businesses  
only get  
between  
**5%** and  
less than  
**20%**  
of this market.

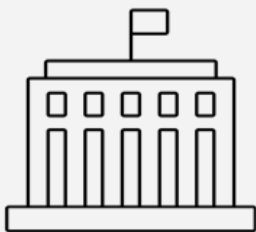
# How can Open Contracting help?

Open contracting is about **publishing and using open, accessible and timely information** on public contracting to engage citizens and businesses **to fix problems and deliver results.**

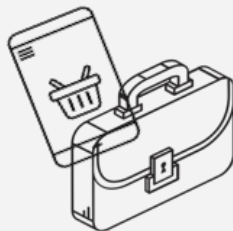
We help partners  
**think different**  
about procurement  
using an **open**  
**government** and  
**an open data**  
approach to drive  
**impactful,**  
**sustainable**  
**reforms**



# Open Contracting connects



Government



Business



Civil society

## to open up and monitor public contracting

*Better value for money*

*Fairness of accessing the market of public tenders*

*Detection of corruption*

*Monitoring on effectiveness of delivery*

*Internal efficiency*

The image features a central text box with a semi-transparent blue background. The text is white and reads: "A gender-inclusive open contracting approach throughout the stages of procurement can shift power dynamics in favour of gender equality and inclusive growth." Surrounding the text are seven circular portraits of women with diverse features and colors. The portraits are arranged in two rows: four in the top row and three in the bottom row. The background is a dark grey color. A large, bright yellow ring is positioned in the bottom right corner of the image.

**A gender-inclusive open contracting approach throughout the stages of procurement can shift power dynamics in favour of gender equality and inclusive growth.**

# Challenge

## Difficult to identify women-led businesses.

In most procurement regimes there is no clear definition of a women-led business and a dearth of gender-disaggregated bidder and supplier data.

*New research provides some innovative ideas on how to build these datasets.*

# How OC can help

## **Gender disaggregated procurement data**

identify women-led businesses in data from procurement systems and/or company registers

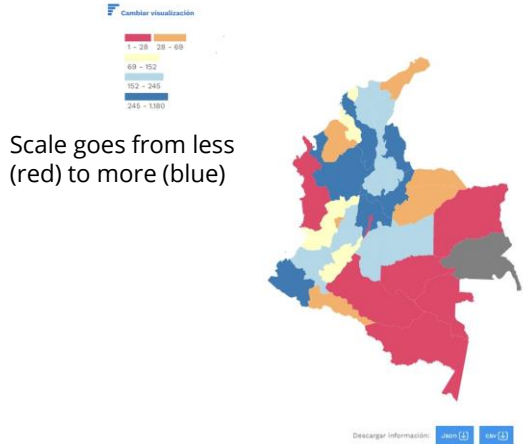
## **Clear definition of WLB**

Define what a women-led business means in your context



# Example from Colombia

Number of contracts awarded to WOB by region



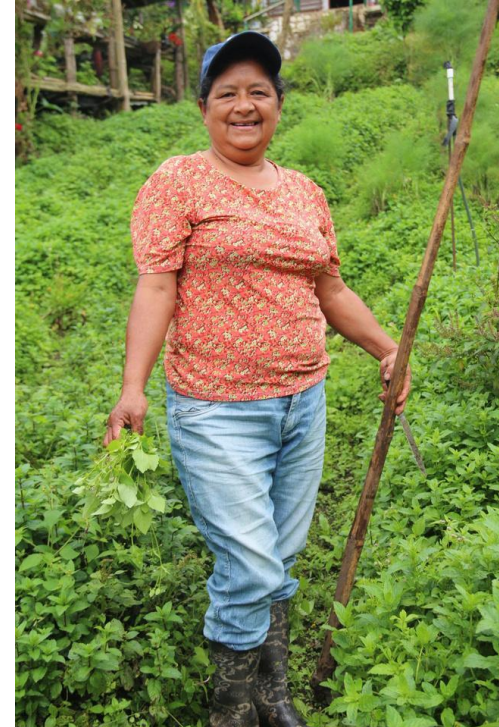
OCP supported the work on a [new regulation](#) for an “[Entrepreneurship Law](#)” that

- Defined what women-owned and women-run businesses/entrepreneurships/SMEs and
- Created differential criteria to assign points to promote the participation of women in the public market.
- Designed a gender-balanced procurement guide.

A **gender marker was added in the e-procurement system** for data analysis

# .. and the progress documented

- New [legal instruments](#) provide a clear definition of 'women-led' & 'women-owned businesses' & promote the inclusion of differential criteria to incentivize their participation in public tenders.
- The proportion of [gender-tagged contracts](#) has increased from 4% in 2020 to 37% in 2022.
- Local governments are piloting the new policies. In Palmira, Valle del Cauca, [30% of the school meals program is delivered by women-led rural producer associations \(USD 75K\).](#)



# Challenge

## **Complex & onerous procedures.**

Smaller size hinders their capacity to meet requirements of large government contracts.

## **Lack of knowledge of tender opportunities**

## **Perceptions of corruption or bias**

Experts interviewed said women entrepreneurs believed corruption and bias impaired the fairness of public procurement processes.

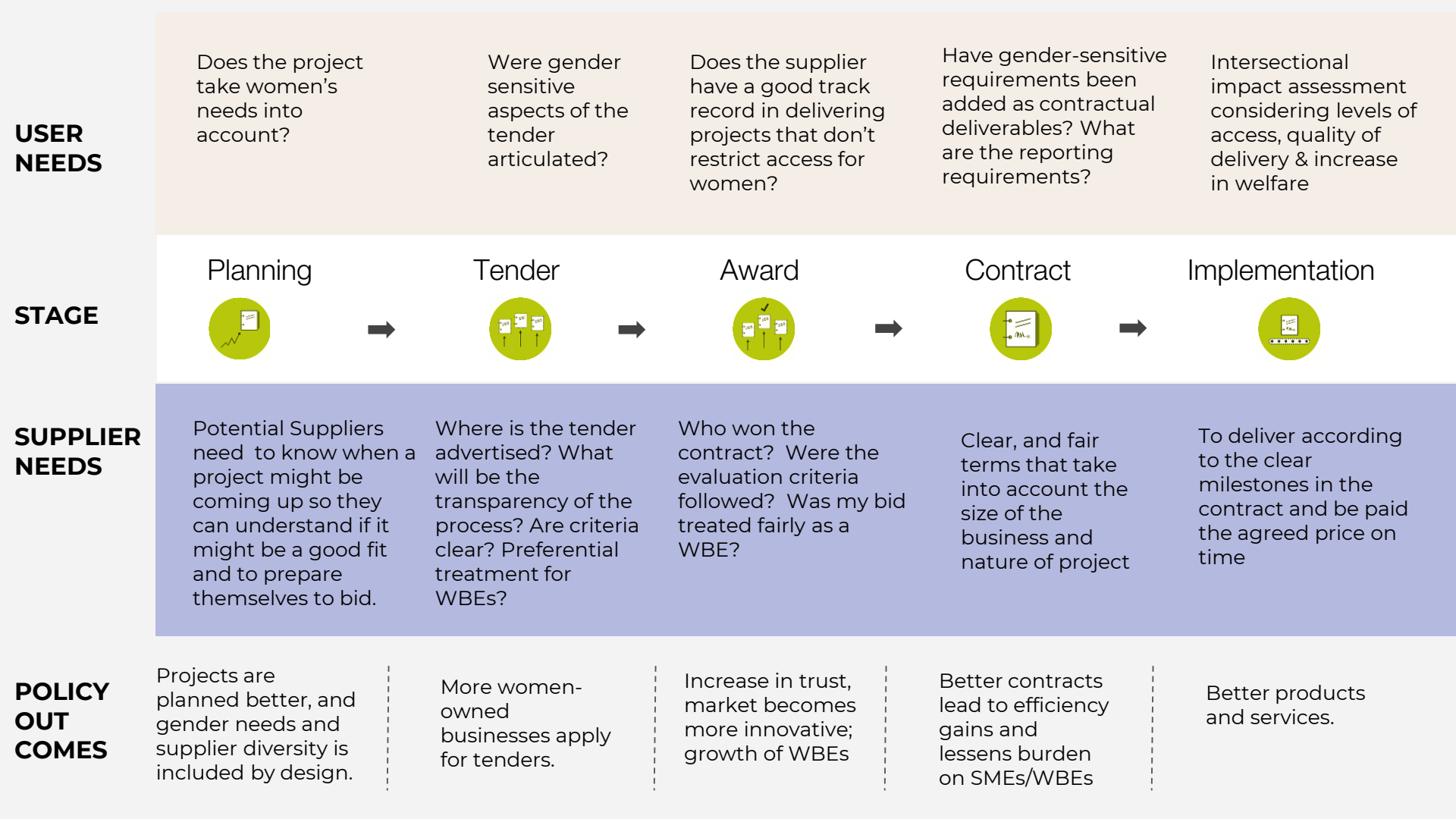
# How OC can help

## **Make contracts open by design.**

Publish information about the planning, tender, award, contract and implementation of public contracts to demystify the process and empower businesses with access to information.

## **Simplify the contracting process.**

Simplify the application procedures and tender documentation, reducing the size of the contracts, have appropriate award criteria



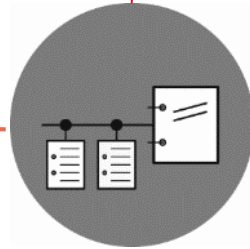
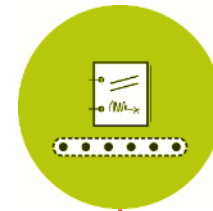
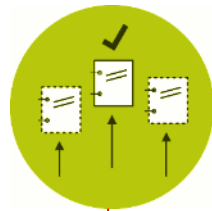
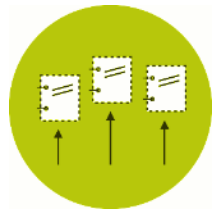
# Open Contracting Data Standard (OCDS)

Planning

Bidding

Award

Contract Implementation



Unique identifiers &  
archiving

# Challenge

**Negative perceptions impact bids (on both sides).**

## **Gender biases and norms**

Gender norms and assigned roles, translate into greater time restrictions for women.

## **Weak feedback loops**

Many procurement officials lack formal and informal mechanisms to inform, engage, and act on the feedback of diverse business communities.

# How OC can help

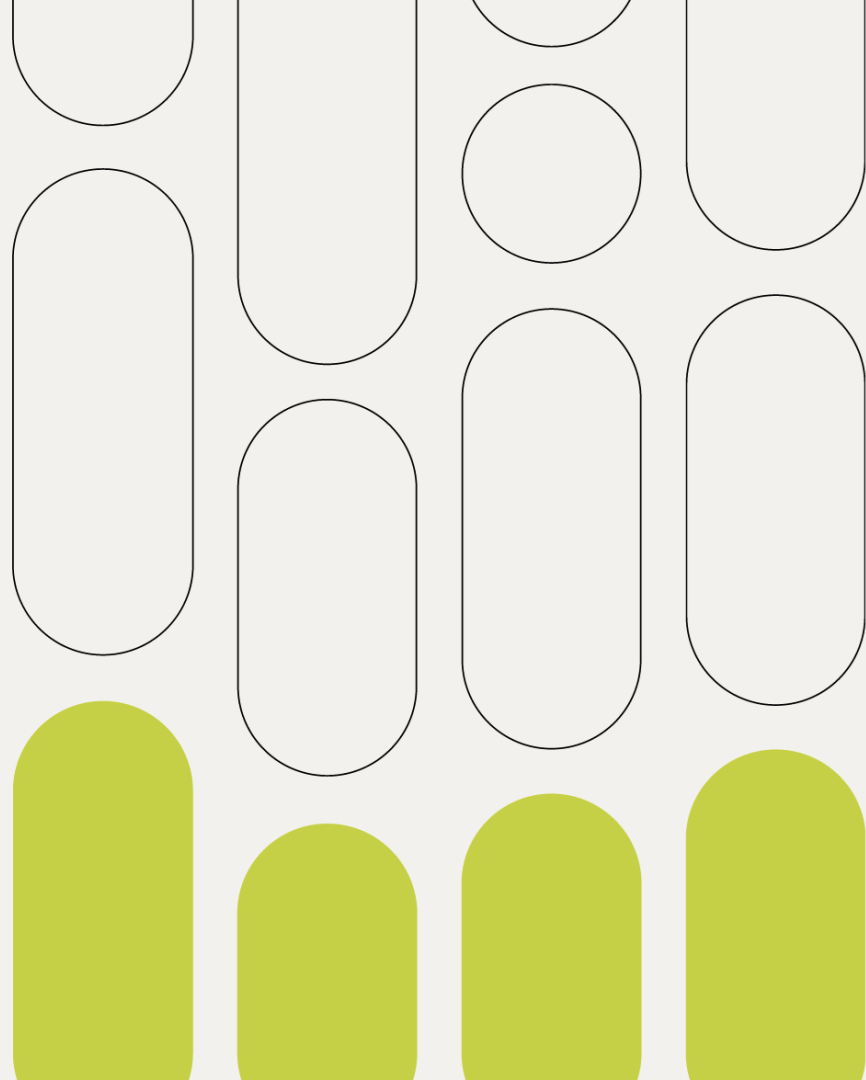
## **Understand gender gaps and challenges.**

This can be done through workshops, user research and data analysis with key stakeholders within the government, entrepreneurs and civil society.

## **Develop engagement and feedback mechanisms for women-led businesses.**

## **Plan a gender-responsive procurement strategy**

**Lift**, our impact accelerator program, aims to foster more **inclusive and just** communities through public procurement reforms – with projects on gender-responsive procurement in **Sénégal** and **Uganda** (among 10 teams worldwide.)



# Example from Senegal

## Project success indicators

- Number of women-led businesses bidding on public contracts
- Number of public contracts awarded to women-led businesses
- Value of public contracts awarded to women-led businesses.
- Increased diversification of WLB bids, especially on work and intellectual contracts where men are traditionally more represented



# Example from Ekiti, Nigeria

## Key actions so far:

- Understand and **engage key stakeholders**: Surveys, capacity building  
→ registration of women-led businesses has gone up by about 50% following an awareness raising campaign
- Developing procurement **policy guidelines** and a manual for gender responsive procurement.
- Increasing **capacity of procurement officers**.
- Procurement **portal with open data**.

# Challenge

## **Lack of access to finance.**

Women entrepreneurs' lack of access to finance due to discriminatory practices, which limits their ability to acquire the working capital needed to apply for government contracts.

# How OC can help

**Develop prompt payment guidelines and regulations** Some governments have addressed the issue by enacting laws or policies requiring the procuring entities to make prompt payments and to pay interest penalties if they do not.

**Provide business support services** for women-led businesses so that they have the right tools, capacity, and skills to become suppliers. Activities can include business advisory services, bid training, and supplier credit initiatives.



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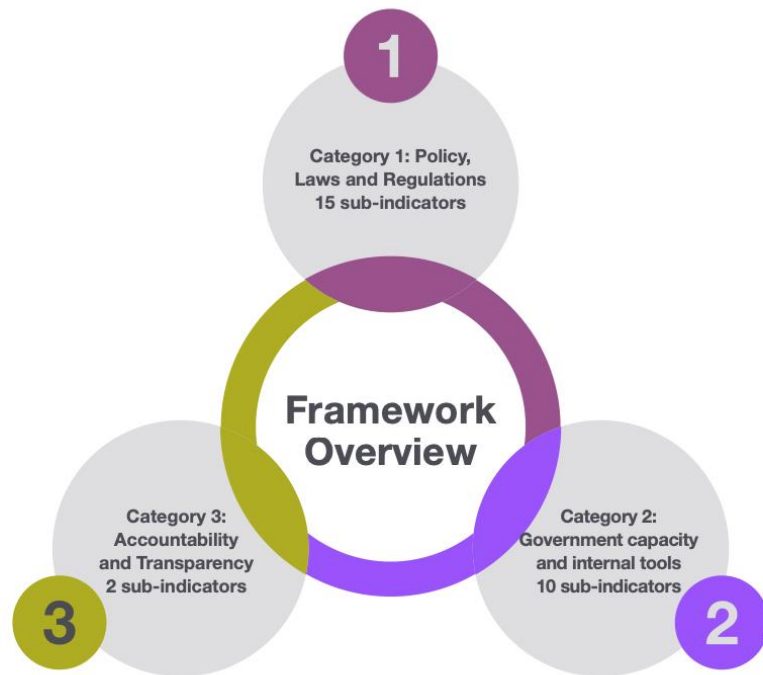
**CREDERE**

**FACILITANDO EL ACCESO AL CRÉDITO  
PARA EL ÉXITO EN CONTRATOS  
PÚBLICOS**

# Other resources: GESI framework

OCP supported the creation of the [GESI](#) by Oxford Insights to to assess the inclusivity of procurement practices, policies, regulations and laws within a country or region.

## Framework Overview





# Other resources: SPP Guide

OCP has developed an [Open and Sustainable Public Procurement toolkit](#), that provides practical insights for day-to-day needs at different levels of where governments are.



# Want to learn more?

Entraves et résolutions pour l'inclusion des entreprises dirigées par des femmes dans la commande publique

Une synthèse des rapports nationaux de l'Éthiopie, du Kenya, du Rwanda, de la Tanzanie et de l'Ouganda.



East Africa



NOTE DE POLITIQUE

AMÉLIORER L'ACCÈS AUX MARCHÉS PUBLICS POUR LES PETITES ET MOYENNES ENTREPRISES DÉTENUES ET DIRIGÉES PAR DES FEMMES EN AFRIQUE DE L'OUEST



West Africa

Equity and Inclusion of Women-Owned Businesses in Public Procurement in South Africa

Research Report  
Prof Sope Williams-Elegbe

DECEMBER 2021



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South Africa



# Want to learn more?

**Open contracting reforms boost civic engagement and participation**  
THE EXPERIENCE OF NINE REGIONS IN COLOMBIA

[Colombia](#)

**EMPOWERING WOMEN THROUGH PUBLIC PROCUREMENT & ENABLING INCLUSIVE GROWTH**

**OPEN CONTRACTING PARTNERSHIP** **UN WOMEN**

[Policy Brief](#)

**REPORT**  
**A Procurement Path to Equity**  
Strategies for Government and the Business Ecosystem

**OPEN CONTRACTING PARTNERSHIP** **CENTER FOR URBAN INNOVATION**

[Equity Report](#)

# Want to learn more?

## Gender-responsive procurement – entry points and recommendations

### Understand users & stakeholders

- 1 Define and identify women-led businesses
- 2 Develop feedback and engagement mechanisms with women entrepreneurs and business-people

### Plan a Gender-Responsive Procurement Strategy

- 3 Make a commitment to gender equality and develop a strategy for gender-responsive procurement
- 4 Build capacity to implement gender-responsive procurement

### Make contracts open by design

- 5 Publish information about public contracting from planning to implementation
- 6 Use standardized open data to publish contracting information to enable analytics and reuse

### Simplify contracting processes

- 7 Apply a gender lens to contracting requirements and payments

### Ensure prompt Payment




- 8 Ensure suppliers are paid promptly, reducing the need for access to finance

### Increase supplier capacity

- 9 Provide business support services for WLBs

### Nurture an inclusive public procurement market

- 10 Link procurement policies with social and gender policy objectives

Effort:  Medium  Medium - Long  Quick win

[Blog post](#)

## Towards Gender Balance in Public Procurement

### Understanding the Barriers and Solutions to Include Women-Led Businesses



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VALUE  
FOR  
WOMEN

RESEARCH REPORT

[Report](#)

OPEN CONTRACTING PARTNERSHIP Data Standard Resources Worldwide

What is open contracting Impact Implement Data About Latest

Empowering communities and enabling inclusive growth: Our focus on Gender

One in three small and medium enterprises are owned by women. Why aren't they getting their fair share of government contracts?

Women are excelling in business. According to the World Bank, women-owned small and medium enterprises (SMEs) contribute 20% to the global gross domestic product. Despite the growth of women's entrepreneurship, the number of businesses getting government contracts is much lower. Women-owned companies get only 5% of federal contracts in the US. In Albania, women-run 27% of all businesses but only a tiny 5% of companies awarded municipal contracts.

This just isn't good enough. Women's participation in public procurement as users, planners, and suppliers is critical for the creation and monitoring of effective public services. Boosting women's businesses can create jobs, and inject the market with new ideas and competition.

Lack of access to information on bids, understanding complex procedures and bias can create barriers for women entrepreneurs. We must also take into account the different factors which may render policies less effective for further marginalized groups, such as women of color and/or with disabilities.

Governments must

1. **Monitor gender-disaggregated procurement data:** This could be done by applying the Open Contracting Global Principles and Data Standard to monitor competition and gaps, quality of implementation, and understanding and addressing complaints of structural discrimination.
2. **Increase women-owned suppliers winning government contracts:** By proactively seeking out and engaging women-owned business groups, establishing a fair complaint and redress procedure and simplifying contracts to reduce preparation time for tenders, authorities can open opportunities for women-owned suppliers.
3. **Plan for gender-responsive procurement:** An integrated gender-responsive procurement strategy will ensure that the goods and services procured take into account how they impact women, often the poorest and most vulnerable group in society.
4. **Tackle gendered corruption through gender-responsive anti-corruption policies:** Recognizing the gendered aspects to corruption from sextortion to modern slavery in the supply chain and creating

[Insights Report](#)  
[Research report](#)  
[Blog](#)

[Website](#)



Thank you!

[bit.ly/ocgender](https://bit.ly/ocgender)

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