LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION: IMPACT RECOMMENDATION REPORT

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Current Resources/Strengths</th>
<th>Gaps/Challenges</th>
<th>Potential Interventions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Financial incentives and support | • SBA funds for organizations to train business owners.  
  • Micro-enterprise loans to start businesses. | • Many women are stuck because of childcare and transportation challenges.  
  • There are structured gaps with paid leave policies. | • Incentivize paid leave and other interventions that support work and family.  
  • Explore incentives, if any, from GOED; for example, if companies provide support/benefits, are there incentives through GOED/state? |
| 2. Technology Infrastructure | • Utah Futures portal/website: great potential but many challenges | | • Transportation (see below).  
  • Explore incentives with affordable housing; for example, is there transit-oriented development close to childcare or elder care? |
| 3. Creation of economic opportunity | • Ethnic chambers: intentionality behind their work (Hispanic, Pacific Islanders, African Americans, Asian, etc.)  
  • Women’s Business Center  
  • ElevateHER  
  • SBAs/BRC’s at universities  
  • Other events that focus on starting businesses or professional development (UWLP, UWHEN, other). | • There is conflict with creating economic impact when women are forced to work.  
  • Tension between values of work and those of family are common.  
  • Many women are working but feel forced to change jobs often because of life complexities; we need to understand this dynamic more.  
  • Utah is lacking in work-family supports in workplaces.  
  • There are risky dynamics with MLMs recruiting women in Utah—pros/cons. | • Explore intergenerational communal living.  
  • Support the expansion of existing programs and resources.  
  • Partner most closely with nonprofits who engage in this space. |
| 4. Capacity building | • Momentum and energy behind STEM for girls  
  • DWS employment counselors—help women promote themselves, re-enter the workforce, etc.  
  • YWCA partners with DWS | • Women disconnect in the workforce as jobs are not connected to a career.  
  • There is a narrow focus on women and career (lots of STEM).  
  • Lack of resources to help women re-enter the workforce; current resources are | • Provide support for job retention; understand reasons for instability more deeply and provide workshops for employers/employees on these issues.  
  • Provide more workshops for women looking for jobs and re-entering the |
| 5. Advocacy and shaping attitudes | Legislation passed last session (Aren’t) on school counselor training | Misperceptions abound: most women in Utah who work are married; women can have a job but not a career. | Provide outreach to girls and young women to see possibilities, expand thinking, and help them understand conflicting messages. |
| | HECHO: helping young Hispanic women explore outdoors, science, etc. (potential career exploration) | Women shame other women for working or going to school if they have children. | Challenge LDS myths regarding women and careers (difference between doctrine and culture). |
| | ElevateHER | Not enough school counselor training on expanding pathways for girls; counselors are already overloaded so career counseling is low priority. | Offer training on unconscious bias. |
| | YWCA now has Policy Director | Not enough programing for girls/YW that discusses careers that can pay well; they currently focus on what they would enjoy. | Continue to provide messaging specifically for women about the importance of attending and completing college. |
| | UWLP releasing research snapshots on a set of related societal issues | Occupation segregation is strong in Utah; women don’t know all of their options. | |
| | | There are complex attitudes about encouraging preparation for careers, working outside the home, and seeking non-traditional occupations. | |
| | | The worth of paid employment is elevated above the worth of unpaid work in the home or the worth of professional careers that pay less (e.g., teacher, social worker). | |
| | | Mixed messages are sent to girls and women about careers; conflicts with Utah culture abound. | |
| | | There is a perception that working mothers are not engaged with their children and families. | |
## Strategies to Strengthen Women’s Impact in Utah

### 6. Laws, policies, and regulations

- WIEC has no sunset clause now, so it will continue.
- DWS Office of Childcare; benefits, federal match, drawdown?
- Laws have changed regarding interior design, birthing centers, etc.
- There are still childcare and transportation challenges; transportation issues more of a challenge in rural areas and tribal lands.
- There are still gaps with the childcare match with having to spend enough to get full match.
- There are still issues with industry specific laws, but WIEC wants to study other professions to see if there are other blocks.
- Options for work-family support are still very limited.
- Still issues with comparable pay in state agencies; need research; may be a pilot study though.
- Explore renters’ rights as they impact staying in the same job for many women.
- Explore issues around wages/salary for having and keeping benefits.
- Consider legislation around leave and other support policies.
- Strengthen child care policies like simplifying DWS vouchers and seeing if UESP funds be used for childcare while going to college.
- Audit state jobs; how can they be restructured for optimal work-family or work-life results.
- Consider elder care as part of work-family support.
- Explore comparable pay in state agencies (pilot study).
- WIEC can explore options related to continuing to decrease barriers in female dominated professions (e.g., interior design).
- Consider transportation access for all who are challenged to get them to work, physicians, childcare, etc.
- Consider state support for some of the solutions.

### 7. Research and data

- Current WIEC research with focus groups and hopefully phone surveys.
- Some quantitative data on workforce participation for women.
- New UWLP snapshots on labor force participation, poverty, and other elements related to strengthening the impact of women. Also briefs on women’s leadership in four sectors.
- Lack of data on many aspects of women’s labor force participation.
- Lack of qualitative data on workforce participation for women.
- No research yet on what drives job changes for women in Utah.
- Lack of research on the economic value and contributions of work not normally included in other studies.
- Study reasons for job stability more deeply.
- Study the effect of access to transportation, healthcare, and housing on workforce: what are the barriers, who is struggling, and why?
- Study Utah data on the effect of no family planning.
- Study the multiple dimensions of opportunity to employment and education.
- Study the recession recovery and how it is not equal across populations and communities within Utah.
- Study more broadly the complexity of women’s labor force participation.
Because of the complexity, for all future research context is critical; we need to understand the full picture. Utah women have such different experiences, and understanding perceptions and complexity is critical.