

To facilitate the transition from career break to re-entry into science, technology, engineering and mathematics careers, in 2011 the Ministry of Finance and Economics in Germany established a pilot project called “WING”, which seeks to assist women engineers and scientists who have taken a family-related career break through a programme involving training, networking and certification. WING offers various courses to women to enhance their competence for future job applications, including courses on project management. Alongside courses, the programme sets up round tables with companies to enable women to interact with practitioners in the field and to network. The women participating in WING have an opportunity to meet with representatives in the German Association of Women Engineers. Upon completing the programme, the German Aerospace Academy presents the participants with a certificate which, for instance, certifies them as project managers in the field of engineering. The Government bears the bulk of the €260,000 fee for the re-entry program, while the participants each pay €750 (German Aerospace Academy, 2013).

Similarly, in the United Kingdom, the Daphne Jackson Trust offers fellowships to science, technology, engineering and mathematics professionals who have taken a break of two years or more to return to a career in research. The fellowship combines mentoring and retraining to enable women and men to obtain the skills and confidence that they need to return to their careers or to compete for positions. The retraining entails lectures in undergraduate and postgraduate courses, participation in training workshops, attending research meetings and conferences and learning new analytical techniques. In addition, the fellowship offers training courses in work-life balance, presentation skills, media and public relations and professional skills. The fellowship offers part-time options for returning scientists who may have family responsibilities, through a two-year part-time fellowship. The fellowship has made it possible for many women and men who have taken career breaks to return to work, as seven out of ten fellows remained in research for at least two years after their fellowship (Daphne Jackson Trust, 2015).

From the above outline of the main issues and policy measures required to achieve gender equality at work, and the focus on three key dimensions: sectoral and occupational segregation, the gender wage gap and the global care deficits, it is clear that there is a need to set up a comprehensive framework to address the root causes of gender inequality at work. In particular, cultural and gendered norms, which fail to value unpaid care and household work and mostly consider it a women's responsibility, result in barriers to women's access to more and quality jobs. The principles and measures set out in ILO international labour standards and the country examples discussed above, in Part Two of the report, provide guidance on how to promote equality of opportunity and treatment at work between women and men, guarantee social protection for all, and harmonize work and family responsibilities as key policy drivers to make gender equality at work a reality.