



## Towards a World Bank Group Gender Strategy Consultation Meeting on July 7th, 2015 Feedback Summary Nairobi, Kenya

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The consultation meeting with civil society representatives was held on July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2015 in Nairobi, Kenya. After a presentation by the World Bank Group Gender Team on the background, intended scope and process for the strategy, the floor was open for participants' comments and recommendations. The summary below captures the main points and recommendations raised during the meeting.

**Total Number of Participants: 12**

### Feedback from Stakeholders

#### 1. KEY GENDER GAPS THE WORLD BANK GROUP SHOULD TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION AS PRIORITY TO HELP COUNTRIES REDUCE POVERTY AND PROMOTE MORE EQUITABLE SOCIETIES

- **Political participation** of women should also be a priority issue for the WBG as a way to improve governance. Participation of women in Kenya's political life is very low, there are no women represented in parliament nor in the senate and only have 6% women participating in the National Assembly. Kenyan politics could benefit from an increase in the number of women vying for office. Not many women postulate for elective positions in part due to stereotypes and social norms that impede women to take leadership positions. Women's political careers and candidacies are also constrained by lack of financing as political campaigns cost a lot of money – despite being forbidden by law, there is allegedly a lot of informal funding going into campaigns but women are, reportedly, not that good at moving cash. Furthermore, a perceived culture of hostility and intimidation for women that are in public office and that is leaving a lot of credible women out.

- **The importance of changing public stereotypes about women in the media.** In Kenya, the public narrative on women and the way they are portrayed in the media is very negative and anchored in old traditional beliefs, undercutting women's empowerment and economic opportunities.
- **Need more data on results.** In the case of Kenya, it would be useful to have more data about the impact the procurement law has had on the participation rates of female-owned enterprises in national biddings; disaggregated data on the type of business that are profiting of the set-aside contracts provision; and information on the constraints women face to participate of the quota. It is important as well to gather more data about the transaction costs and the impact that delays in payments have in small companies, which are often owned by women.
- Need to increase the **access to information** and raise awareness about the new policies, programs and benefits available for women. This is especially relevant in rural areas, where the lack of information is greater.
- The WBG should **work more closely on the ground with civil society organizations** and not just with the government.
- **Need to target the youth.** To get transformative results it would be important to target teenagers, provide specific banking opportunities for them to promote early entrepreneurialism.
- **Need to engage with men and boys.** It is important to create new role models for the boys, not just the girls, in order to have greater gender equality. Need to have affirmative action for both men and women, the Bank Group should help empower both genders; it is important to emphasize that to give more power to women does not mean disempower or marginalize men.
- The WBG strategy should address issues of **safety and security.**