



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

The consultation meeting with government representatives was held on July 7th, 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: 35.

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

In developing the strategy the WBG should consider as priority the following:

- The importance of **contextualization**: the renewed WBG gender strategy should be flexible enough to allow its adaptation to the different country contexts. In the case of Kenya, it is important to frame gender issues in the context of **decentralization** and **devolution of powers** to the counties. In a decentralized government structure is important to ensure engagement with the government at the national and at the county level. In Kenya, the WBG should aim at integrating gender issues in the decentralization agenda currently in place.
- Issues of **gender-based violence** (GBV) and **sexual violence** (SGBV), addressing them through a multi-dimensional lens by looking at the triggers violence (from social issues to intra-household power dynamics); the cost of violence for the society and the

economy; public and private attitudes towards GBV; prevailing stereotypes and need for new role models; and the effectiveness of existing prevention, response and recuperation programs. When promoting women economic empowerment, the WBG should also consider its unintended consequences like an increase in intra-household violence and consider ways to mitigate those negative externalities.

- **Transport corridors**, which provide great economic potential but that at the same time are a major cause of GBV. The WBG should help untap the potential for transport corridors to become development corridors by addressing the safety issues but also promoting greater access to health care services, security services, etc., along the corridors.
- **Education**, understood not only as **building skills** to increase the employability of women and favor entrepreneurship through formal education systems, but also as **raising awareness about** updates in the **legal framework**, new regulations, policies, **rights** and protections provided by law. In Kenya, many people are unaware of the new laws, regulations and provisions established under the 2010 Constitution and keep functioning following old practices – as recognized in the old legal framework (of 1969) -, thus increasing the disconnect between what the legal and policy texts and the practice. The WBG could help increase the **access to information**, especially in rural areas.

Other issues that should be taken into consideration include:

- **Land ownership**: women have higher entry barriers to land ownership. The low rates of women's access to land in Kenya are not simply the result of the legal framework but also a mix of power dynamics –i.e. men's resistance to women's ownership- and lack of knowledge on the side of women about the legal procedures in place to access land. Given that **small-scale farming** is mainly done by women, it is especially important to make the case for the introduction of gender-informed policies that reduce these barriers to entry – the Ministry of Agriculture already has a policy to mainstream gender across agricultural programs; the implementation, however, results a challenge.
- **Access to housing** is a major challenge for women.
- **HIV care treatment costs and impact in the health sector** should be factored in when addressing gender equality, as women are more vulnerable to new infections. According to data provided by the participants, in 2014, 31% of all new registered infections where women under 24 years old, and 30% were children.

2. EXAMPLES OF POLICIES AND PROGRAMS THAT HAVE CREATED ACCESS TO BETTER JOBS FOR BOTH WOMEN AND MEN. ELEMENTS THAT HAVE MADE THESE WORK.

- The government of Kenya has introduced a **procurement policy** that makes it easier for women entrepreneurs to compete in public biddings. The directive, establishes up to 30% of set-aside contracts for women, youth and people with disabilities. This measure is increasing women’s participation in national bidding procedures but its application across ministries is uneven and there is room for improvement. For example, there is a tendency for ministries to apply the 30% but targeting it for small things like for procurement of stationary, telephone cards, etc. It would be interesting to open up the contracts to other sectors and not just the small things. In addition, the 30% is not only for women but for women, youth and people with disabilities.
- **Women in technical ministries:** the Gender Desks Officers need to be part of the technical teams and empower them to educate and influence all program officers to take up gender mainstreaming in all projects. Gender Desk Officers don’t have a budget so cannot do sensitization work.
- Women enterprise Fund, Youth Enterprise Fund and the UWEZO Fund could be replicated by the WB in other countries. These funds provide a holistic way to address economic empowerment as issues of economic empowerment in development affect across the board of sectors.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS ON HOW THE WORLD BANK GROUP CAN BETTER SUPPORT COUNTRIES AND COMPANIES IN THEIR EFFORTS TO STRENGTHEN THEIR SYSTEMS AND INSTITUTIONS WITH RESPECT TO GENDER EQUALITY TO YIELD MORE SUSTAINABLE RESULTS

- The WBG Gender Strategy should be contextualized and factor in the urban-rural divide.

4. IMPORTANT KNOWLEDGE GAPS – AREAS WHERE WE DON’T KNOW ENOUGH AND THE WORLD BANK GROUP SHOULD PRIORITIZE IN ITS WORK TO HELP CLOSE GENDER GAPS

- The WBG, through the renewed gender strategy, could help make the case for greater multi-sectoral interventions by studying the cost of GBV/SGBV and its overall impact in the economy.
- The WBG could help by increasing knowledge about the socio-economic structures that impede successful implementation of new policies. For example, the recently introduced minimum wage for house work can have unintended consequences and create a disincentive for women to access the work force as it is considered too high – in relation to the average salary of female workers. Many working women will not be able to afford those salaries and will end up dropping from the labor force to take care of their families while maids will lose their jobs.