



Towards a World Bank Group Gender Strategy Consultation Meeting with the Private Sector Feedback Summary Kingston, Jamaica

The consultation meeting with **private sector leaders** was held on **July 10, 2015** in **Kingston, Jamaica**. After a presentation by the World Bank Group’s strategy development 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: 8. A participant list is available [here](#).

Feedback from Stakeholders

1. TYPES OF CONSTRAINTS/ BARRIERS THAT WOMEN AND MEN FACE WHEN IT COMES TO OPPORTUNITIES IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

- The World Bank Group (WBG) should consider the following constraints that limit opportunities in the private sector:
 - **Women’s leadership and decision-making.** Girls are outperforming and outpacing boys in school at all levels, yet they still face challenges in accessing high levels of leadership in the private sector. Lack of **growth opportunities** and **perceptions about women’s leadership** are some constraints. Regarding the latter, the perception that men are better, “less emotional” leaders still persists. Additionally, the lack of **women’s networks** also poses a challenge; more are needed to offset the “old boys’ club”.
 - **Care.** Care constraints limit women’s opportunities in the private sector. Often, women exit the workforce when they are building their careers. Upon re-entering the workforce, they need to accelerate their trajectories to catch up. Therefore, care should be a consideration for the WBG. **Norms related to care**, more specifically parental leave, are also

a challenge. Currently, the majority of companies do not offer paternity leave, therefore, this perpetuates stereotypes about women’s responsibility for care.

- **Education.** Better alignment is needed overall between the type of education that both women and men pursue and the needs of the labour market. In addition, women tend to prioritize formal education over experience, which often limits their opportunities in the Jamaican context.
- **Flexible work policies.** Lack of flexible work is a major constraint in the private sector.

2. BEST EXAMPLES OF POLICIES AND PRACTICES THAT COMPANIES HAVE PUT IN PLACE TO ADDRESS QUALITY OF EMPLOYMENT FOR MEN AND WOMEN

- **Red Stripe/Diageo’s mentoring program.** Red Stripe/Diageo has implemented a “future leaders” mentoring program, which provides hands-on career guidance and long-term planning for young employees (20-25 years). This is done in coordination with the company’s multi-year talent plan in which human resource needs are anticipated. The program aims to have equal participation between men and women.

3. TYPE OF WORK WITH OTHER PARTNERS IN DEVELOPING INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO GENERATING EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEN AND WOMEN IN THEIR BUSINESS

- **Digicel’s “Respect Jamaica” Campaign.** Digicel Jamaica has initiated a “multi-corporate initiative promoting the value of showing respect and good manners to all people as essential components of making Jamaica the place of choice to live, work, raise families and do business.” The campaign promotes inclusion regardless of class, sex, race and sexual orientation among other areas and engages business leaders in shifting mind-sets regarding various forms of discrimination.

4. COMPANIES INITIATIVES ABOUT CARE RESPONSIBILITIES OF EMPLOYEES

- **Jamaica Money Market Brokers’ (JMMB) care program.** JMMB provides on-site care services for employees located in its Kingston branch. These nurseries have increased peace of mind for parents due to the proximity of the nurseries; improved productivity, due to the reduction of time spent in traffic picking up children at farther care locations; and has boosted the discretionary work of its employees. Moreover, it was enabled fathers to take a more active role in their children’s care. For employees in other locations, JMMB provides a childcare stipend. The company has also had paternity leave (2 weeks) in place for over two decades.
- **Unicomer Caribbean’s flexible work and care policies.** Unicomer, an international retail company, incorporates flexibility in many aspects of its work. For example, the company provides online, self-paced learning opportunities, which has worked particularly well in creating flexibility growth opportunities for women. Additionally, virtual on-boarding and tele-meetings are facilitated. The company not only focuses on job mobility, but also job enlargement, in a way that can drive their employees’ interests and passions. Unicomer also provides day-care services, care stipends and homework centres.

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

- To help companies yield more sustainable results in the area of gender equality, the WBG should:
 - **Work on norms.** The Bank Group should partner with Jamaican organizations to shift norms around crime and violence. In addition, interventions should take place at the elementary level with a special focus on social transformation around gender biases.
 - **Focus on the school-to-work transition.** Start the conversation about career choices and job options at the university level or earlier. Also, help to improve the quality of career counselling.
 - **Focus on entrepreneurship.** The WBG should increase its focus in this area and expand existing support to incubator programs.
 - **Increase support for literacy programs.** Many companies back “learning for life” programs, especially for unattached youth. The WBG can help to fund such programs and boosts its engagement in this area.
- The WBG should also:
 - **Communicate best practices for public and private sectors.** More specifically, share successful case studies based on global knowledge in a succinct and useable manner. Speak specifically to decision-makers.
 - Engage with new companies early to establish robust policy frameworks that promote gender equality.

6. ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS.

- The WBG should also ensure that it creates a **formal monitoring mechanism for stakeholder feedback** and share how recommendations were used.