



**Towards a World Bank Group Gender Strategy
Consultation Meeting with Government and Development Partners: 26 June 2015
Feedback Summary
Stockholm, Sweden**

The consultation meeting with **government and development partners** was held on June 26, 2015 in Stockholm, Sweden. 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. A participant list is available [here](#):

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

The World Bank Group (WBG) should consider the following areas as priority:

- **Jobs and assets.** These suggested areas resonated with the group as priority areas and were endorsed. These topics were thought to build on the Bank Group's comparative advantage.
- **Women in fragile states.** The WBG is an important player on fragile states but it should further engage on the topic of women in fragile states and how to promote gender equality in conflict-affected environments.
- **Climate change and environmental issues.** WBG should focus on the linkages between gender and the environment and climate, such as the unique role of women as users of natural resources but also their particular vulnerability to environmental degradation, climate change and disaster.

- **Norms and values.** The WBG should not only focus on changing laws and regulations but also on how to change norms and values. This can help achieve effective long-term impact. Changing norms would entail engaging in dialogue with agents of change, such as religious leaders.
- **Young women and girls.** In order to break intergenerational cycles of poverty, WBG should focus on investing in young women and girls in the areas of education and sexual and reproductive health, with specific efforts to tackle early marriage. Otherwise development opportunities will be limited from an early stage.
- Other suggested areas of focus include:
 - Gender as a **human rights** issue.
 - **Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).**

2. 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

In order to better support countries in yielding more sustainable results, the WBG should:

- **Demonstrate leadership on gender equality.** A loud and effective tone from the top can help translate commitment to action, as has been experienced by members of the Nordic-Baltic constituency. If top-level leadership at an organization is persistently vocal about the importance of gender equality, this can trickle down to the field and create change.
- **Focus on the economic cost of inaction on gender equality.** WBG is known and respected for its solid analysis and reliable data. WBG should continue to assess the economic costs of inaction on gender equality and thus make the economic case for gender equality when approaching countries, as this will spur them to action.
- **Flexibility.** WBG needs to be flexible and able to adapt to change. This is particularly key in contexts that are continuously changing and will require differentiated approaches.
- On the topic of **strategic mainstreaming**, several participants highlighted their own struggles in trying to discern a link between gender mainstreaming in their own organizations and actual results on the ground. The following recommendations were made:
 - **Communicate effectively.** The WBG should clearly communicate (internally and externally) that a focus and attention on certain areas does not mean other areas will be removed from its work. When an organization decides to focus on certain areas, the risk is that other areas are dropped. Therefore, a more selective approach has its pros and cons.
 - **Broad diagnostics and action.** Participants suggested that from their own experience, instead of having special interventions on gender or a special fund, everything that is done should be screened for possible gender entry points. If advancing gender equality is essential for poverty eradication, then gender equality should be prioritized in all WBG activities and should be based on a gender analysis.

3. ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS.

- Other suggested areas for inclusion in the strategy were:
 - A WBG **internal human resources policy** on gender equality.
 - Timeline for the WBG's **EDGE certification**.
 - A description of how gender equality will be treated in the WBG project cycle. More specifically, what are the specific **mechanics** of doing gender in the Bank? Additionally, reflections featuring on **Internal Evaluation Group (IEG)**'s recommendations regarding gender equality were requested.

- Participants highlighted that a solid **monitoring and evaluation framework** to complement the new strategy will be key.