



Discussion on Gender Strategy with The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation 18 April 2023, Virtual Roundtable

On April 18, 2023, the World Bank Group (WBG) held a virtual discussion with **The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation**, an organization dedicated to promoting women's rights in conflict-affected areas, on the WBG Gender Strategy 2024-2030. The aim of this discussion was to engage with and learn from civil society representatives to better understand opportunities and challenges for gender equality and empowerment. Key takeaways are summarized below and will be considered in the development of the Strategy. Additional recommendations shared by The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation can be found [here](#).

Key Takeaways

Conceptual Framework and Operationalization:

- It was suggested that the Strategy could draw on **feminist economic approaches** for its framework and shift the narrative from "empowerment" to "gender equality."
- Participants also mentioned that gender equality would be enhanced if the WBG could ensure that **gender analysis** is obligatory for states and informs all WBG funding.
- Another recommendation was that the WBG could consider **gender responsive budgeting** in all interventions.
- Discussants suggested that the WBG could consider actively protecting and expanding civic space by **engaging with women's rights organizations** through new funding modalities for civil society organizations, recognizing their expertise, quality, core support, key partnerships and holding meaningful independent consultations.
- The WBG could also **define parameters** of relationships with civil society for meaningful action and engagement. Sharing information on government engagement can avoid miscommunication and further enable civil society to act meaningfully in countries.
- Participants suggested that the WBG could take steps to ensure that policy reforms are informed by **structural risk assessments**.
- To strengthen decision making, participants suggested that the WBG could partner with local civil society organizations for more **data and transparency**. It was suggested that the Strategy be accompanied by a robust, multi-dimensional results framework with clear anticipated results, indicators and targets at country and global levels, and also address macro-economic policies.

Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity:

- Discussants suggested that the Strategy could include definitions of gender beyond a **binary concept**.

- The WBG could consider intersecting identities-- including age, rural-urban location, class, gender identity, sexual orientation, indigenoussness, ethnicity, disability, and refugee or internally displaced status. Disregarding **intersectionality** can result in ineffective and harmful policies, especially for those who face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.

Country-specific inputs shared by participants

Corruption

- It was perceived that for women politicians the impact of corruption could be particularly damaging. Corruption can create an environment where women may be excluded from decision-making or face discrimination in accessing resources or opportunities.
- Participants suggested the following anti-corruption measures that the WBG could consider for better outcomes for women:
 - Enable measures to build the **capacity of women leaders** to address corruption. This could involve training programs or mentorship initiatives that provide women with the skills and knowledge needed to identify and address corruption in their communities.
 - Support measures that **strengthen legal frameworks and institutions** to effectively investigate and prosecute corruption. This could include efforts to increase transparency, accountability, and oversight in public institutions, and to ensure that laws and regulations are gender-sensitive and promote gender equality.
 - In anti-corruption efforts, consider the **specific experiences and needs of women**, who are often disproportionately affected by corruption.
 - Support efforts to promote **women's participation in decision-making** processes related to anti-corruption activities through initiatives that encourage women's participation in oversight bodies, and measures that increase women's representation in government and public institutions.
 - Directly address **gender-based corruption**. This includes corruption that specifically targets women, such as bribery or sexual harassment in the workplace.

Economic empowerment for women in the mining sector

- Participants shared that a majority of the population in some mining provinces depend on mines for livelihoods, social protection is limited, gender inequalities persist, and youth unemployment is high. Participants further shared that most women working in these mining sites are sex workers.
- The WBG could consider supporting women to increase their income-generating activities by:
 - supporting women to create specific women's cooperatives in the mining sector;
 - supporting women to become part of the leadership in mining cooperatives;
 - encouraging women to create social protection mechanisms among themselves;
 - enabling vocational education for women and local communities to have higher-level positions in mining;
 - supporting small enterprises such as shops and restaurants that provide important sources of income;
 - offering women economic empowerment initiatives and training women's organizations to ensure the sustainability of their economic initiatives; and
 - supporting women's organizations in the creation of Village Savings and Credit Associations, allowing them to have access to low-interest loans.
- It was highlighted that access to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights is needed for women working in mining sector, especially sex workers. This can be done by:

- raising awareness among women about SRHR services,
- training peer educators, and
- collaboration with health services around mining sites.

Structural reform

- Challenges with respect to the economy, fragility and governance disproportionately affect women's lives. Therefore, institutional mechanisms for ensuring women's rights and gender equality are crucial.
- Discussants highlighted Gender Focal Points in various ministries as potent means for advancing gender equality.
- Provided with the mandate and resources, Gender Focal points in ministries have the potential to sustain and strengthen gender mainstreaming initiatives, especially in the ministries of health, social affairs, education, and economics.
- Participants suggested that the WBG could strengthen the Gender Focal Points by promoting gender mainstreaming projects through special funds linked with the World Bank package and providing incentives to relevant ministries.