



#AccelerateEquality



WORLD BANK GROUP  
Gender

## FORMAL CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSED 2024-2030 WORLD BANK GROUP GENDER STRATEGY

### Consultation with philanthropy and private sector stakeholders

November 9, 2023

World Bank Office, Washington DC

#### OVERVIEW

On November 9, 2023, the World Bank Group (WBG) held a consultation on the proposed gender strategy 2024-2030 with representatives from the private sector and philanthropies. The aim of the discussion was to engage, learn, get feedback, better understand opportunities and challenges for gender equality and empowerment, and identify potential areas for collaboration. Key inputs are summarized below and will be considered in developing the strategy.

#### KEY THEMES AND FEEDBACK

- A participant shared that while the definition of gender is clearly laid out, the targets for specific approaches and activities could be clarified. They also queried about any major targets or commitments being made by the proposed strategy.
- A question was raised about whether striking a balance between equality and equity was a consideration in the proposed gender strategy.
- Another discussant called for more attention to demand side investments to create dignified and meaningful jobs for women.
- A participant added that while other groups are considered, the strategy rightly speaks largely to status of women and the need to increase their access to level the playing field and enhance economic growth. A suggestion was made to add more content on trade, as it is a critical growth sector for women entrepreneurs.
- Participants added that while headways have been made on education, many girls in Africa still don't finish high school and seldom make it to tertiary education. This significantly lowers their opportunities for higher level paying jobs and increases their propensity to operate in the informal sector. It was suggested that in the field of education, skills for the future above and beyond STEM could be considered for young women to improve women's economic participation.
- It was mentioned that the strategy seems to portray women as a homogeneous group and could consider a lifecycle approach to have more targeted interventions at different lifecycle stages.
- A query was raised about risk protection and coverage for women as they are found to be the most vulnerable when shocks occur, especially in the informal sector and in rural areas. Participants also queried about the alignment of the strategy with [International Development Association \(IDA\) replenishment](#) and the WBG's [evolution roadmap](#).



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- Discussants appreciated the shift in the framing of care work beyond childcare to include elder care and care for persons with disabilities. This is seen as a core social service and part of essential social infrastructure. A suggestion was made to emphasize the lack of care services and women's time poverty as core binding constraints that hinder women's productivity, labor force participation and advancement.
- Questions were raised about how WBG partnerships will be pursued with peer institutions, particularly the International Monetary Fund (IMF), who have come up with their first gender strategy.
- The policy approach was strongly appreciated, and a query raised about partnering with IMF to accelerate the integration of gender within macroeconomic decisions. It was added that if human capital is considered wealth as it is the case for Africa, it needed to consider the gender dimension.
- Participants also inquired how outcomes measurement will change from the previous iteration of the strategy.
- Discussants expressed appreciation for the extensive consultation efforts being made to develop the gender strategy. They added that the strategy is very ambitious and fulfillment of all the proposed changes will take a long time. Hence, the strategy could instead focus on filling basic gaps like equality of opportunity, girls' access to education, control over their fertility and number of children they want to have and generating income to take care of oneself.
- It was suggested that the WBG could elevate ambition to secure procurement from women owned businesses beyond the proposed 10 percent by 2030. Another discussant added that supporting supplier diversity could unlock economic opportunities. A suggested way of going beyond the 10 percent mark was to focus on gender-balanced businesses (at all levels) in addition to women-owned, led, and managed businesses. An [article](#) about achieving gender parity at all levels was shared to substantiate a recommendation that the proposed strategy could consider gender-balanced businesses, in addition to women-owned businesses.
- Lauding the progress of strategy design and its ambition regarding outcomes and interventions, a few queries were raised: What approaches will be used to measure norms change at scale? What strategies will be deployed to create meaningful, inclusive jobs for women? What was the agenda and ambition for mainstreaming gender equality across the WBG's broader work? and What were some successful strategies to address child marriage?
- Responding to a point about all consultations on [country partnership frameworks \(CPFs\)](#) including women's groups, a participant inquired if there any accountability tied to this recommendation.
- Discussants appreciated the thoroughness of the proposed strategy and raised a few questions regarding private sector engagement: How can private sector partnerships be pursued, and their voice leveraged to drive advocacy and approaches for ending gender-based violence? Could the private sector be engaged in shifting social norms through brand advertising? How can the private sector keep pushing for gender equality in partnership with the WBG?



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## PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

- Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF)
  - Children's Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF)
  - The Dangote Foundation
- William & Flora Hewlett Foundation
  - HP Inc.
  - The Mastercard Foundation
  - Unilever