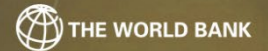




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# FORMAL CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSED 2024-2030 WORLD BANK GENDER STRATEGY

## Youth Consultation with Plan International

July 17, 2023

Kigali, Rwanda

### OVERVIEW

The World Bank and Plan International collaborated to hold a consultation with young people on the proposed World Bank Gender Strategy 2024-2030. The consultation took place on July 17, 2023, in Kigali, Rwanda as part of the Women Deliver conference (WD2023) with some of the youth cohort attending within the Plan International delegation. The diverse consultation group comprised of youth advocates representing all regions including Middle East, South East Asia, Africa, and Latin America. They brought diverse experiences as advocates as well as members and leaders of youth-led organizations.

The consultation was jointly planned between the World Bank and Plan International teams. A representative from Plan provided opening remarks on the importance of the collaboration between Plan International and the World Bank and the need for young voices, especially those of adolescent girls and youth in contexts of crisis, within key policies and strategies. A youth delegate from Nepal then spoke on behalf of the group, emphasizing the need for meaningful youth engagement in all types of programs and to promote youth networking and catalyze young peoples' engagement in development opportunities.

A World Bank representative presented an overview of the World Bank and its proposed gender strategy, with a focus on the ambition to introduce new drivers of change within the new gender strategy framework. Following these introductions and a short question and answer session, the young people were divided into three break-out discussion groups, on the topics of: "Women as Leaders", "Economic Opportunities" and "Ending Gender-based Violence and Investing in Human Capital". Within these groups, they discussed the role of young people in delivering the gender strategy, what they would require to carry out this role, and how they might engage further with the World Bank and involve other youth.



## KEY THEMES AND FEEDBACK

### Q&A: Key Themes

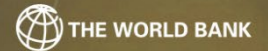
- **School to work transition:** Gender disparities in the school-to-work transition were highlighted by youth as a major issue. They shared that while there has been progress on increasing access to education and the enabling environment, this has not translated into gains in women's employment.
- **Gender-based violence (GBV):** Participants inquired, given the cross-sectoral nature of GBV for governments, how the World Bank can help ensure it is given adequate attention and is addressed adequately. The World Bank noted the progress from a safeguarding perspective in tackling GBV, as well as its work in supporting national strategies on GBV. They also stressed the increase in the number of World Bank projects addressing GBV.
- **Engagement with youth organizations:** In response to a question on how the World Bank is strategizing to work more with youth organizations, the World Bank representatives noted that opportunities to work with the organization are expanding, and there is a desire to do more in this area.

### Break out groups: Key Themes and Feedback

- **Engaging women as leaders:** Youth highlighted the importance of focusing on girl-led initiatives, and of engaging with girls as they made the transition to becoming women leaders. They further underlined the importance of engaging with youth and girls in policy development, and of focusing on education as a vital element of women's leadership. They called for better understanding of the systemic barriers that prevent women from accessing leadership spaces.
- **Ending gender-based violence (GBV):** The young people stressed the critical role that youth can play in social norms change around GBV, through engagement with stakeholders at the grassroots level, the creation of safe spaces for dialogue, and through advocacy and activism (both digital and offline). Discussants underscored the wealth of data and experience that young people can bring to policy discussions, based on their lived realities, and the importance of recognizing and engaging with youth in all of their diversity, including youth with disabilities and LGBTQI+ youth.
- **Economic opportunities:** Young people can help localize thoughts and strategies, provide necessary context, and socialize the strategy at the local level. They can disseminate information within their networks, and get the engagement of youth start-ups and entrepreneurs. In order to carry out this role, participants stressed the need for investments in women's talents and inclusive investment pathways, mentorship for startups, and building climate-smart skills.



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- **Youth needs:** Several groups highlighted the need for further capacity-building for young people to support their engagement with groups like the World Bank, especially around advocacy, strengthening networks, building technical skills, and entrepreneurship. Opportunities for mentorship were also highlighted as a key need, as was financial support for youth-led organizations.
- **World Bank’s youth engagement:** Several youth suggested that the World Bank consider formally structuring youth networks or advisory groups, both at the global and country level, in addition to working directly with youth-led CSOs. The group also underscored the need for capacity building, both for youth and for WB staff and decision-makers on meaningful youth engagement. Youth noted the importance of involving youth in policy and program design, and engaging youth in the whole cycle of project and strategy development, with transparency on where and how their inputs were being used. Participants stressed that youth voices should be considered on a consistent basis, not brought in ad-hoc (e.g., during strategy development).

## PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

- Plan International