



Discussion on the proposed World Bank Group Gender Strategy 2024-2030 with Nordic and Baltic Capitals

March 1, 2023

Participants

Denmark, MFA; Norway, MFA and NORAD; Finland, MFA; Sweden, MFA and SIDA; Iceland, MFA; Latvia, MoF

Presentation

- World Bank Group's 2024-2030 Gender Strategy, which is currently at the concept-note stage. The gender strategy draws on the analysis of the evidence, data, and insights collected over the last 10 years.
- Objectives of the current FY 2016-23 Gender Strategy remain valid; the four pillars of the Strategy remain relevant with proposed changes and refinements. The Strategy seeks to expand the current WBG Gender Strategy by
 - adding a focus on empowerment,
 - seeking greater synergies across development priorities,
 - adopting a more intersectional and non-binary approach to issues of inequality,
 - emphasizing the need for women in leadership positions,
 - rethinking the conceptual framework, with a special emphasis on norms & beliefs.
- Questions for the audience focused on the scope and focus of the strategy, its intersection with regional and country priorities and operationalizing the strategy for results.

Questions and Comments

- **Gender and the Evolution Roadmap**
 - How can gender be protected as an important policy area within the World Bank, while continuing to support the country-driven model and Evolution Roadmap?
 - The Gender group is working to ensure that gender is considered in the Evolution Roadmap. The strategy will highlight the critical role that gender plays in global solutions and addressing crises—framing gender equality as a global public good.
- **Norms and intersectionality**
 - Partners support the strategy's strengthened transformative and intersectional approach, and the focus on norms, structures, and root causes.
- **FCV context and GBV**
 - The strategy highlights FCV settings, drawing on FCV and GBV expertise and experience within the Bank.

- The biggest shift in the strategy is taking the issue of GBV out of the voice and agency realm and promoting its integration across all WBG practices, encouraging the Bank to identify entry points to address GBV in all operations and to identify stand-alone operations to address GBV, as it affects outcomes in all sectors.
- The strategy's call to action is to tie the lens of GBV across all GPs and across all types of GBV—to identify what type is most prevalent and related to a given sector and then formulate actions at the policy and community level to address.
- As to the gender group's assessment and involvement in the MTR of the FCV strategy, while the gender group is not involved in this process but welcomes the MTR's focus on questions of gender in FCV settings in its evaluation.
- **Gender and climate, CCDRs**
 - The Strategy recognizes the importance of the differential impacts and gender dimensions of climate change, and that women need opportunities to be part of solutions, especially within the green transition (avoiding occupational segregation.)
 - As to the gender team's involvement in the CCDRs, the team noted the climate team within the gender group, and the increasing recognition of gender elements in CCDRs, which it does review. Having a gender element of CCDRs is key, but it is not yet mainstreamed and there could be more examples. The gender group is developing a suite of engagement around gender and climate, including the upcoming flagship.
 - The gender group is in the unique position to influence and make bridges to operational teams at the country level—has seen some examples of projects with climate co-benefits and gender tags, which is an opportunity to build knowledge and evidence to support. There are also several examples of climate DPOs which represent the innovative work that can hopefully push the agenda forward.
- **Gender tagging in trust funds**
 - While the gender tag is not used in trust funds as it is in investments and projects, there is a need to include gender equality in each trust fund that partners support and work with. To what extent can thinking about trust funds be included in the strategy?
 - The gender group has learned a lot from the tag, and the process has served to focus project teams on how to advance gender outcomes. Valuable lessons here could be applied to other areas.
 - Trust funds have their own gender mechanisms, but the gender group has consulted and at times used a gender framework for them. If projects are partially funded by TFs, then the tags are used.
 - One example of how the gender group is using trust funds in a complementary and strategic manner is the way the Gender team has leveraged the Global Financing Facility (GFF) to support the SRHR aspects of the strategy.
 - SIDA also expressed their availability to further discuss increasing gender equality in trust funds, drawing on examples of past collaboration with WBG.
- **Implementation**
 - Questions about strategy implementation were raised. What is the plan for motivating country teams to make this happen? For changing mindsets and norms within the World Bank system, especially in sectors where there is less clear overlap with gender?

- While there has been some tracking from implementation through to results, there is more to be done at the country and project level, and the team is open to suggestions on how to strengthen accountability. The focus on outcomes looks beyond closing gender gaps, and this will need to be reflected in the shaping of the strategy.
- From using the gender tag, the gender group has found that the combination of merging concrete targets with dedicated support for teams works well. They are trying to better understand how to bring this incentive and support model to bear to motivate staff through the implementation phase.
- UFGE grants at the country level are going to help country teams get the analytical underpinnings that are foundational to the tagging process. This analytical foundation is then translated into design, and then outcomes to track on the ground.
- Partners stressed the importance of strategy taking a clear approach to integrating gender into all work of the WBG, with the rationale that gender cannot be sidelined to a stand-alone topic but needs to be part and parcel of all discussions, analysis (country-level and thematic), at all levels of policy dialogue.
- **Human rights approach**
 - The question was raised about how the strategy will frame a human rights-based approach. Recognizing the World Bank's mandate, participants stressed the necessity of a human rights thinking foundation as the basis of development work.
 - Partners expressed strong preference for having an explicit human rights-based approach in the strategy, as it provides an important foundation for any work in the development field and solidifies risk analysis (in terms of potential or real risks for the realization of women's and girls' rights, gender-based violence, etc.).
 - There was appreciation of the inclusion of the human rights-based approach in the internal, widely endorsed concept note on the strategy, drawing on the CEDAW Convention and the broader human rights framework.