

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM EXTERNAL INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS

INFORMING THE DRAFT
WORLD BANK GROUP GENDER STRATEGY 2024-30



WORLD BANK GROUP



ACCELERATE
EQUALITY

OVERVIEW

This document summarizes key takeaways from informal discussions with external stakeholders that informed development of the draft World Bank Group (WBG) [Gender Strategy 2024-2030 'Accelerate Gender Equality for a Sustainable, Resilient and Inclusive Future'](#). Informal discussions include engagements during the yearlong [Accelerate Equality](#) initiative in 2022, and over [forty discussions](#) between January and July 2023.

These discussions engaged representatives from civil society, governments, indigenous groups, parliamentarians, academia, private sector, UN agencies, feminist organizations, multilateral development banks (MDBs), bilateral and multilateral development partners, and others. Participants expressed broad support and appreciation for the proposed direction of the strategy and highlighted several key themes which have been summarized in this report. Detailed [discussion summaries](#) have been published online for transparency and accountability. The inputs below are organized by sections of the draft strategy.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

Strategic Objective I - Foundational wellbeing: End Gender-based Violence & Elevate Human Capital

Outcome 1: Accelerate progress in eliminating all forms of gender-based violence

Gender-based violence (GBV): Participants recommended that the WBG could play a valuable role in facilitating coordinated, cross-sectoral approaches and use its technical expertise in mitigating GBV, including engaging male and female youth and elders. They emphasized the role of technology and social norms in perpetuating GBV. It was mentioned that girls, those living with disabilities and those living in fragile, conflict and violent (FCV) contexts need tailored approaches.

Outcome 2: Build and protect human capital

Gender equality in contexts of fragility, conflict, and violence (FCV): Discussants suggested that more efforts be made to ensure the safety of women and girls in FCV settings, alongside social protection benefits and economic empowerment measures. This could be done by working with governments, civil society, the private sector and supporting women as leaders and entrepreneurs.

Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR): Participants suggested improving the availability, access and affordability of SRHR information and services, and to generate more and better data to quantify economic losses if these are not provided.

Lifecycle approach: Participants highlighted the heterogeneity of needs and experiences across the lifecycle, and suggested having different approaches for women and girls, particularly adolescent girls.

Strategic Objective II - Economic Participation: Expand and Enable Economic Opportunities

Outcome 3: Improve equal access to more and better jobs, including jobs of the future

Female labor force participation: Discussants suggested promoting science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education. For economic opportunities they recommended skilling, market access, ownership and control of productive assets, digital and financial inclusion and credit access. Suggested measures to create an enabling environment included supporting female entrepreneurs, mentorship, role models, entry into male dominated fields, safe and accommodating workspaces. It was also suggested that the WBG plan for including more women in the green transition and jobs of the future.

Informal sector: Discussants brought up challenges in accessing social support and services for informal sector workers and suggested that research conducted directly with informal sector workers, particularly in the global south, be used to strategize for their wellbeing.

Outcome 4: Expand ownership and use of economic assets

Asset ownership: Participants highlighted challenges faced by women due to lack of land ownership, particularly for the poor, informal workers and indigenous women. It was suggested to promote women's ownership and control of productive assets, including through legal measures.

Outcome 5: Expand access to and use of services that enable economic participation

Care: A critical recurring theme was redistribution of care work. It was emphasized to recognize care work beyond childcare, including care for the sick, people with disabilities and the elderly. It was suggested that investments in the care economy could be made through data, financing, social protection, legislative reforms, addressing social norms, workplace policies, especially around leave and flexible work, and community-based approaches. It was underscored that strategizing and programming for care could consider catalyzing an enabling environment that considers the needs, rights, and voice of both the provider and recipient of care.

Strategic Objective III - Leadership: Engage Women as Leaders

Outcome 6: Advance women's participation, decision-making and leadership

Leadership: Discussants emphasized a need for capacity building to create leadership opportunities for women and girls. Suggested pathways included trainings and mentorship for fostering leadership alongside promoting more women into leadership positions. It was also mentioned that stronger evidence on impacts of women's leadership be gathered and disseminated.

Climate Change: Discussants suggested more focus on climate action, emphasizing gendered aspects of climate change, the importance of engaging more women in climate action, and bringing due credit to climate adaptation and mitigation work already being done by women.

DRIVERS OF CHANGE FOR GENDER EQUALITY: INNOVATION, FINANCING, AND COLLECTIVE ACTION

Innovation can improve policies and practices related to gender outcomes

Digital and Financial inclusion: Participants highlighted the gender digital divide and suggested integrating technology across the strategy to ensure affordable and safe access to services, particularly for education, financial inclusion, and market access.

In addressing barriers to gender equality, the World Bank Group is applying innovative approaches based on behavioral insights

Social norms and backlash against gender equality: Participants emphasized the importance of targeted evidence-based approaches and best practices for appropriately engaging men and boys, developing healthy masculinities and changing harmful norms, with attention to the role of technology in shaping norms. Suggested pathways to change social norms included awareness, education, organizing women for collective action, role models, positive messages and representation in mass and social media, policy change, and inclusively working with local leaders, educators, communities, families and the private sector.

Fiscal policy and public finance: Some discussants mentioned that macroeconomic policies could better consider gender. It was suggested that the WBG engage with governments to prioritize and direct more resources towards gender equality. Key priorities highlighted included universal social protection, and gender responsive budgeting and taxation.

Debt related austerity measures and fiscal constraints reduce public services, disproportionately affecting women: Some participants shared concerns about shrinking public financing for core services including health and education, debt induced fiscal constraints and privatization.

Collective action calls for engaging key actors to better align formal institutions, policies, attitudes, norms, and practices

Partnerships: Aiming for knowledge exchange and accountability, participants suggested fostering more multi-level, multi-sector and deeper partnerships, especially with gender focal points within ministries in client countries, UN agencies, donors, civil society organizations (CSOs), technical experts and the private sector. The WBG's convening power was repeatedly highlighted.

IMPLEMENTING THE GENDER STRATEGY

The World Bank Group will help clients in the public and private sector to generate and use gender data and knowledge to develop innovative solutions

Data, measurement and results: Participants underscored the importance of the WBG's contributions in generating and using data for sharing lessons, best practices, tracking progress, transparency, accountability, identifying intersectional gender data gaps, building country capacity, providing financing to fill data gaps and creating evidence-based policies. It was suggested that the WBG engage end beneficiaries in technology-aided real time data collection and use for better decision making. Another suggestion was to disseminate results in plain language for wider uptake.

CROSS CUTTING INPUTS

Intersectionality: Participants highlighted the importance of taking into account situations where gender intersects with other characteristics to exacerbate marginalization and vulnerability and amplify gender inequalities. Many discussants urged more specificity in defining, addressing, and measuring intersectionality. This could include ethnicity, religion, displacement, and age-specific elements particularly with respect to adolescents.

Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI): Participants highlighted the marginalization and unrealized potential of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex (LGBTQI) people. They suggested more data, partnerships, resources, and policy action to measure, protect and promote their rights and opportunities.

Legal reforms: Alongside strengthening institutions, frameworks and legal reforms, participants highlighted the need to build awareness about rights and resources and to bridge the 'implementation gap' between policy and practice.

NEXT STEPS

The feedback and input received informed the [draft Gender Strategy](#), which was released for formal consultations from mid-July 2023 to November 30, 2023. The final strategy, incorporating feedback from the formal consultations process, will be launched in early 2024.

The World Bank Group Gender Strategy 2024-2030 is a joint One World Bank Group product which includes the International Development Association (IDA), International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), International Finance Corporation (IFC), and Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA).

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