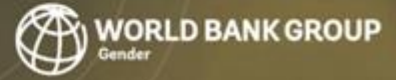




#AccelerateEquality



# WORLD BANK GROUP 2024-2030 GENDER STRATEGY CONSULTATION MISSION FEEDBACK SUMMARY

**December 14, 2023**

**Nairobi, Kenya**

**Private Sector**

## MISSION OVERVIEW

On December 14, 2023, the International Finance Corporation (IFC) held a consultation with stakeholders from the private sector in Kenya on the proposed World Bank Group Gender Strategy 2024-2030. The discussion aimed to engage with IFC clients and partners, better understand opportunities and challenges for gender equality and empowerment, get feedback on the proposed strategy, and identify potential areas for collaboration. Key inputs from the consultation are summarized below and will be considered in developing the strategy.

## KEY MESSAGES AND FEEDBACK

- **Digitalization:** Despite the digitization of services, fewer women (compared to men) are accessing the internet or utilizing digital banking channels, creating a digital gap that hinders women's ability to access opportunities and actively participate in the economy. Increased private sector investment is essential to reduce this gap and help women overcome these barriers.
- **Engaging men:** It is necessary to involve more men in discussions and programs related to gender issues. Doing so can not only help ensure the sustainability of interventions but also dispel the notion that gender is solely a women's issue, particularly among men.
- **Gender-based violence (GBV):** Bullying and sexual harassment are prevalent in workplaces. An IFC fund shared an example of intervening in an investee company to support and protect women, allowing them to speak up without fear. Practical steps should be taken to create safer workplaces, free from sexual harassment and gender-based violence.
- **Women's agency:** Efforts to empower women in the informal sector and facilitate their ability to advocate for themselves and pursue opportunities confidently could benefit from increased investment in this area.
- **Climate:** Women are being left out of conversations on climate change. Ensuring that gender and climate change are seen as interconnected subjects is crucial for fostering inclusivity in these discussions.

- **Non-financial services:** Addressing sensitive non-financial issues that affect women in the workplace, especially young women, is crucial. This includes issues such as childcare and marriage. Investing in the overall growth and development of women, both personally and professionally, is essential. Women should be provided with information on investment opportunities and platforms and encouraged to explore non-traditional investment choices.
- **Financing women-owned businesses:** Middle to large women-owned businesses are facing constraints in accessing funding, exacerbated by high-interest rates. Providing support tailored to the needs of businesses of all sizes is important, and exploring ways to support more women-led enterprises in the missing middle is essential.
- **Impact of training:** Many programs have been developed to train women, but little attention is given to holding individuals accountable after the training is complete. It is important to evaluate the effectiveness of these training programs in today's markets and offer mentorship support to achieve better outcomes.
- **Access to markets:** There is a need to increase women's participation in procurement opportunities and ensure data is collected on this to create a business case.