

Umbrella Facility for Gender Equality: Investing for Impact

Concept Note for UFGE Partner Donors (2024 to 2030)

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Acronyms

AFD: Agence Française de Développement (French Development Agency)

AFR GIL: Africa Gender Innovation Lab

AIDOS: Italian Association for Women in Development

BMGF: Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

BMZ: Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Germany)

BRAC: Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee

CCDR: Country Climate and Development Report

CEM: Country Economic Memorandum

CEPAL: Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean)

CGD: Center for Global Development

CGIAR: Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research

CPF: Country Partnership Framework

CPSDR: Country Partnership Strategy Diagnostic Report

CSE: Comprehensive Sexual Education

CSO: Civil Society Organization

DAC: Development Assistance Committee

DPO: Development Policy Operation

EAP GIL: East Asia and Pacific Gender Innovation Lab

ECA GIL: East and Central Asia Gender Innovation Lab

ECLAC: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (same as CEPAL)

FCDO: Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (UK)

G2LM/LIC: Gender, Growth and Labor Markets in Low Income Countries

GAC: Global Affairs Canada

GP: Global Practice

HRIE: Human Rights, Inclusion and Empowerment Trust Fund

IBRD: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development

IDA: International Development Association

IDB: Inter-American Development Bank

IFC: International Finance Corporation

IFPRI: International Food Policy Research Institute

ILO: International Labor Organization

IPA: Innovations for Poverty Action

IRC: International Rescue Committee

IUCN: International Union for Conservation of Nature

J-PAL: Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab

LACGIL: Latin America and the Caribbean Gender Innovation Lab

LSMS: Living Standards Measurement Survey

MCC: Millennium Challenge Corporation

MGF: Mashreq Gender Facility

MIGA: Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency

MENAGIL: Middle East and North Africa Gender Innovation Lab

MTI: Macro Trade and Investment

MTR: Mid-Term Review

NSF: National Science Foundation

OECD: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

ONDH: Observatoire National du Développement Humain (National Observatory for Human Development)

PEA: Poverty and Equity Assessments

PFR: Public Financial Review

POV: Poverty and Equity Global Practice at the World Bank Group

PSE: Programme de Soutien à l'Éducation (Education Support Program)

RGAP: Regional Gender Action Plan

SARGIL: South Asia Region Gender Innovation Lab

SDG: Sustainable Development Goals

SEA/SH: Sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment

SEWA: Self-Employed Women's Association

SGS: Strengthening Gender Statistics

UNCDF: United Nations Capital Development Fund

UNGA: United Nations General Assembly

UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund

USAID: United States Agency for International Development

WBL: Women Business and the Law

We-Fi: Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative

Yale EGC: Yale Economic Growth Center

\$: United States

Umbrella Facility for Gender Equality | Investing for Impact

1. The Case for Investing in Gender-Smart Solutions

Progress towards gender equality is essential, urgent, and challenging. Gender equality is a moral imperative and a fundamental principle of international law recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It is also vital for development, contributing to sustainability, resilience, economic growth, productivity, and poverty reduction.

The world is experiencing crises, conflicts, and megatrends with disproportionately negative impacts on women, girls, sexual and gender minorities, and other marginalized groups. Despite its intrinsic value, gender equality risks being overshadowed by crises, backlash, and traditional power dynamics. **At the current rate, achieving gender parity would take over 100 years.**

The proposed [World Bank Group \(WBG\) Gender Strategy 2024-2030: Accelerate Gender Equality to End Poverty on a Livable Planet \(the strategy\)](#) responds to the global urgency, fundamentality, and complexity of achieving gender equality. Building on the implementation of the WBG Gender Strategy 2016-23 and feedback from a wide range of stakeholders including the Umbrella Facility for Gender Equality (UFGE) partners, the strategy proposes to engage with greater ambition to: (1) End gender-based violence and elevate human capital; (2) Expand and enable economic opportunities for women; and (3) Engage women as leaders. Each strategic objective is linked to specific outcomes that reflect the intrinsic value of gender equality and its contribution to poverty reduction and development¹.

The [Gender Strategy Implementation Plan](#) translates the 2024–2030 Gender Strategy objectives into actions to support implementation and measure outcomes. The plan lays out specific measures to enhance strategic country engagement, deliver results at scale, engage differently through collective action, innovation, and financing, and mobilize for impact.

To assist countries to achieve better gender equality outcomes at scale, the WBG will set gender strategy targets, plan for ambitious results, and monitor gender equality indicators. Implementation will be monitored through the World Bank Group Gender Strategy Results Framework which introduces new indicators that collectively capture the scale, inclusiveness, ambition, and effectiveness of outcomes of WBG support to accelerate gender equality. Three targets on digital inclusion, access to capital and social protection — with transformational impact for women’s economic participation—were announced at the [2024 WBG Annual Meetings](#). The WBG is also planning for ambitious results in advancing gender equality in five areas: financial inclusion, education, childcare, gender-based violence and women’s leadership.

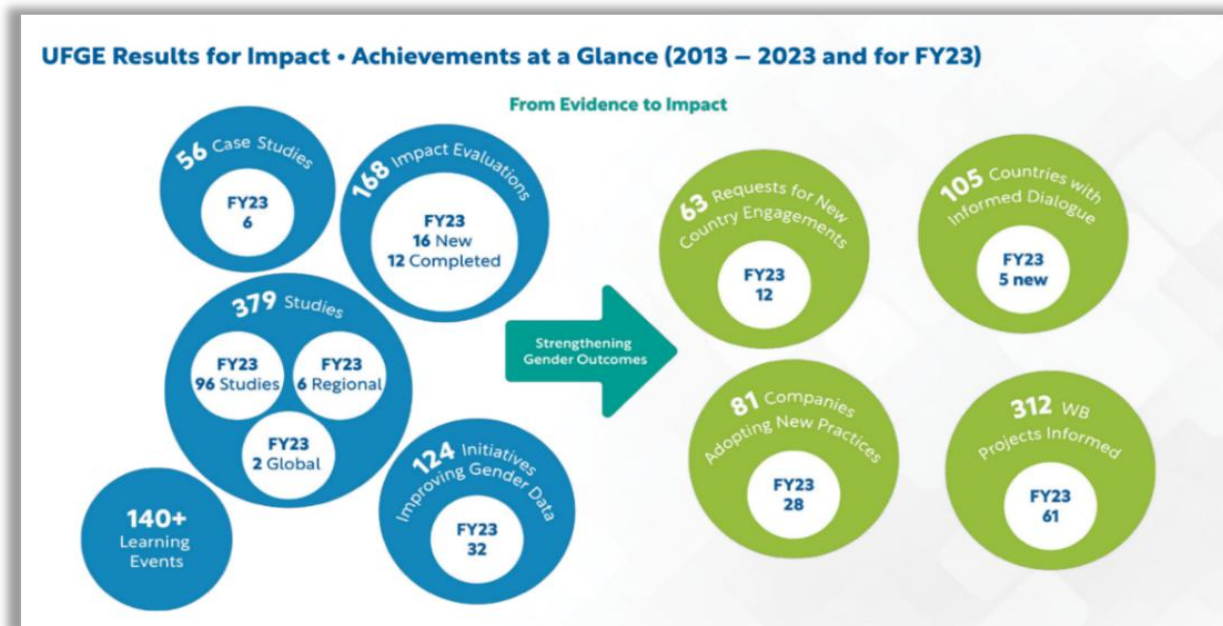
Impactful Investments to Advance Gender Equality at Scale

Since 2013, [UFGE](#), with \$175.6 million pledged by its partners, has played a pivotal role in fostering country-driven solutions in low-income countries. UFGE is able to leverage a broad network of implementing partners to deliver customized country-driven innovative solutions. It brings together 15 donor countries, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Wellspring Foundation and the Millenium Challenge Corporation as well as leveraging the WBG's global knowledge bank. UFGE mobilizes support to cutting-edge research and knowledge sharing on gender-smart operations worldwide.

¹ As a part of the strategy’s implementation, a gender focus will be integrated in the [WBG Global Challenge Programs](#) and across the [World Bank’s five verticals](#): people, prosperity, planet, infrastructure, and digital.

Key Achievements

- **239 operational grants in 101 countries, with 88% in low-income or fragile situations.**
- Direct influence on **over 300 World Bank projects** and **policy dialogues in 105 countries.**
- Stimulated gender-smart initiatives in **over 80 private sector companies.**



Through grants, UFGE funds foundational information crucial for transformative solutions. UFGE's knowledge products effectively advocate for policy change, influencing World Bank (WB) operations and reform.

As the only WBG multidonor trust fund dedicated to strengthening knowledge and evidence for transformative gender solutions, the UFGE is uniquely positioned to address the urgent need for progress toward gender equality. The UFGE has shown itself to be a powerful catalyst for innovative solutions to accelerate change through new knowledge and data. The evidence generated is a valuable global public good that has helped finetune operational approaches across countries. The latest [2023 UFGE Annual Report: Accelerate Equality for Impact](#) spotlights stories of its impact across the world.

Supported by 18 donor partners, UFGE advances innovation, knowledge generation, and partnerships to drive tangible outcomes, at scale, for gender equality. As the new Gender Strategy reinforces: *“Partnerships will drive action; the partnership with the UFGE is essential to activities in the innovation, curation, and knowledge sharing spaces.”* UFGE exemplifies collaborative action bringing together donor and recipient countries, implementing partners, and the WBG, scaling up successful gender-responsive approaches and fostering collaborations in over 170 countries (Box 1).

UFGE's comparative value lies in its ability to fund gender initiatives overlooked by other sources that leverage WBG investments and policy dialogue. UFGE actively generates knowledge and evidence shaping policy discussions, improving program development, and fostering demand for gender-smart approaches.

Box 1: The UFGE 2023 Midterm Evaluation underscores its strategic value.

“UFGE is an integral part of the WBG’s efforts to implement its Gender Strategy, with a unique mandate to provide evidence and data related to gender equality. It is clear that were it not for the Facility, the WBG would have much less foundational and practical information and evidence, which is required for achieving its objectives as outlined in the WBG Gender Strategy.”

“UFGE knowledge products have proven to be effective in advocating for policy change ... have proven to be very useful for influencing WB operations in providing evidence on what works; and UFGE funds data collection and innovative solutions that would otherwise be unfinanced.”

Source: Midterm Evaluation of UFGE’s 2015–22 Performance, KPMG Norway.

The UFGE Value Proposition

UFGE complements WBG-funded activities by supporting the generation and dissemination of new knowledge and data for evidence-informed projects, policies, and programs to accelerate gender equality.

UFGE funding is used to expand gender data generation, use and dissemination; design and evaluate innovative solutions; expand the evidence-base, support knowledge sharing across regions, and provide capacity building to countries and teams. Collectively this contributes to two main outcomes: **1. Stronger, evidence-informed WBG projects, investments and country policies** and **2. Increased awareness, demand and scaling of gender solutions.** Investments in UFGE leverage significant returns in development spending. For example, every \$1 invested by the Africa Gender Innovation Lab (AFR GIL), the first established and longest running GIL, leverages \$188 of spending in World Bank (WB) projects. Over the last decade, the AFR GIL has generated evidence that has influenced over \$12 billion in development spending.

Stronger projects, investments and country policies through evidence and data: UFGE supports the production and analysis of better gender data and rigorous analytical work, including by piloting and testing innovative interventions to advance gender equality. UFGE-funded impact evaluations and studies are often integrated in WBG projects, capitalizing on WBG project-funded activities to design and assess the effectiveness of development interventions. This evidence serves as a valuable global public good, providing essential information for the design of operations, policies and programs. Impact evaluations supported by UFGE yield innovations to address inequalities, influence client and user demand, and inform WB operations with evidence on effective solutions. Such innovations include programs that provide women and girls with digital identification cards, extend girls’ education, equip girls with socioemotional and life-skills, employ women as agricultural extension agents, improve women’s livelihoods by bundling cash transfers with information and services, and involve schools and communities in ending harmful practices such as child marriage and adolescent pregnancy.

- In the Republic of Congo, UFGE supported the design and evaluation of a low-cost pilot intervention that provided women with information on trade-specific earnings to encourage them to cross-over to more lucrative male-dominated trades. The pilot was conducted with applicants to a government-sponsored vocational training program under the [Skills Development for Employability Project](#), financed with a \$15 million investment by the International Development Association (IDA) and the government. The evaluation showed that young women exposed to videos with information on trade-specific earnings prior to applying to vocational training were almost 30 percent more likely to apply to training in male-dominated

sectors. As a result, the information intervention was scaled up in two operations, including the project's [Additional Financing](#), providing information on sector-specific earnings to approximately 7,500 more young women. It was also featured in the [Breaking Barriers: Female Entrepreneurs Who Cross Over to Male Dominated Sectors](#) report, which brings together evidence from studies conducted by the Regional GILs in 10 countries to offer insights on the characteristics of women who cross-over to more profitable male-dominated sectors. The report consolidated policy and programmatic recommendations to help female entrepreneurs join these sectors. By June 2023, report recommendations and findings influenced the design of more than 14 WB operations.

- Led by IFC with UFGE support, the 2020 [Her Home](#) study showed that there was significant untapped market potential for housing finance for women in Colombia, India, and Kenya. The study helped build the business case for investing in women's finance and served as a pioneering global resource, offering insights on the barriers and solutions to increase women's access to housing finance. It influenced IFC's Financial Institutions Group to direct 80 percent of lending to gender-flagged financial institutions, particularly those supporting businesses growth and housing finance. IFC's Housing Finance for Women initiative has since raised \$1 billion in funding for mortgages for women.

Increased awareness, demand, and scaling of gender solutions through knowledge dissemination, capacity building, and technical support: In addition, UFGE supports knowledge sharing, capacity building, and technical assistance activities to promote the adoption and application of its new evidence and data, enhancing in-country ability to address gender-related challenges and meet national priorities. It leverages its global presence and strategic position to consolidate insights on gender from different WBG units and regions, framing them in a manner conducive to inform policy decision-making and facilitating their broad distribution and access.

- The [Strengthening Gender Statistics Project](#) (SGS) leverages ongoing WB Statistical Capacity Building projects in IDA-eligible countries, building on existing investments in improved statistical infrastructure to focus on specific and targeted gender-relevant guidance. It provides technical assistance to National Statistic Offices in 12 partner countries (Bangladesh, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Djibouti, Ghana, Lao PDR, Madagascar, Mali, Republic of Congo, Somalia, and Tanzania) to strengthen the production, analysis, and dissemination of gender data. SGS also supports the production of guidance materials to help scale good practices across different regions and has received additional requests for technical assistance from countries like Central African Republic, Sudan, Togo, Iraq and Vietnam. It has informed the design and activities of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and IDA-financed Statistical Capacity operations in [Angola](#), [Republic of Congo](#) and [Lao PDR](#), as well as a series of operations on [Harmonizing and Improving Statistics in West and Central Africa](#). A supported gender data gap assessment also influenced the design of the [Benin Economic Governance for Service Delivery Program for Results](#), financed with a \$500+ million investment by IDA and the government. SGS's impact extends globally. Improved gender data is made available through the WBG's [Gender Data Portal](#), the premier global resource on gender data. This one-stop shop for accessible gender data is used widely by WBG partners including civil society networks and local academic institutions.
- The [Mashreq Gender Facility](#) (MGF) provides evidence and technical assistance to Iraq, Jordan, and Lebanon to strengthen the enabling environment for women's economic participation and enhance their access to economic opportunities. It brings together the public and private sectors for greater on-the-ground impact. In Lebanon, MGF partnered with multiple public agencies to

identify legal gaps related to women’s access to the workforce and provide recommendations to address these gaps based on international best practices. MGF technical assistance contributed to the adoption of a landmark law criminalizing sexual harassment which consolidated several existing draft laws into one. The facility is also supporting the government in the implementation of the law through a Sexual Harassment Code of Conduct for the public and private sectors drafted in partnership with the National Commission for Lebanese Women (NCLW), the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), and the United Nations Population’s Fund (UNFPA).

In sum, UFGE leverages the WBG’s in-country activities, technical expertise, and convening power to produce evidence in innovative areas and better gender data for stronger WBG operations, country policies and programs. It fosters increased knowledge, demand, and capacity for gender-smart solutions, enabling the replication and scaling of successful interventions within countries and across regions. UFGE funding, while complementing much larger WBG and client investments, has a multiplier effect, contributing to gender solutions at scale.

Through its focus on advancing **knowledge**, **innovation**, and **partnerships** to achieve tangible gender outcomes, UFGE has also contributed amply to the foundations of the new gender strategy and is an integral part of the WBG’s efforts to implement it.

- **Knowledge generation:** UFGE-supported knowledge and evidence across regions provided an analytical foundation for the new strategy, including through [thematic policy notes](#), summarizing evidence on promising solutions and operational good practices to advance gender equality across 16 different topics, and a [causal evidence brief series](#) synthesizing evidence and lessons from GIL impact evaluations in nine key areas. Both series were disseminated at the 28 in-country consultations on the strategy, and shared widely with civil society, government representatives, parliamentarians, academia, private sector, and development partners.
 - Rigorous analytical work supported by the MGF, including [the Second State of the Mashreq Women Report: “Who Cares?” Care Work and Women’s Labor Market Outcomes in Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon](#) and the [Formal Childcare in Jordan: Limited Services and Unmet Demand](#) reports, have facilitated policy dialogue on childcare in Jordan and paved the way for the US\$226 million [Jordan Enhancing Women’s Economic Opportunities Program for Results](#) (PforR), the first Middle East and North Africa region operation with a development objective that focuses fully on women.
- **Innovation:** UFGE supports GILs in six regions and their efforts to pilot and test innovative solutions. These have included psychology-based personal initiative trainings to help women entrepreneurs increase their profits, embedded and piloted by AFR GIL under a \$13-million IDA-financed WB [project](#) in Togo and scaled across more than 45 WBG operations. Further, under the \$12.5-million Ethiopia’s Innovations in Financing Women’s Entrepreneurs (IFWE) project (and its additional financing), to increase women’s access to finance, AFR GIL helped pilot and scale innovative credit scoring methods such as psychometric testing as a substitute for fixed-asset collateral requirements for loans.
 - IFC, with UFGE support, has contributed to pioneering research on how to expand women’s employment in online platforms, particularly ride-hailing and e-commerce platforms. Based on UFGE-supported analysis, more than three ride-hailing companies in 11 countries adopted gender-segregated services. UFGE also helped build the business case for the inclusion of women in e-commerce platforms in Africa and Southeast Asia and identified key actions that e-commerce platforms in these regions can adopt to recruit female vendors and

help boost their sales and profits. Jumia, one of the largest e-commerce platforms in Africa, has partnered with IFC to provide online training for women entrepreneurs based on these recommendations.

- **Partnerships:** UFGE catalyzes partnerships with donors, academia, civil society organizations (CSOs), policy makers and the private sector, mobilizing collective action to advance gender equality. In Bangladesh, for example, SARGIL partnered with the Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence (GAGE) to test and evaluate an innovative Growth Mindset curriculum delivered virtually during COVID-19-related school closures. The evaluation showed an increase in the likelihood of adolescents re-enrolling in schools and gender equitable attitudes about girls' education, galvanizing programmatic and policy action. Based on preliminary data and results, stipends and tuition fees were provided to 2.5 million secondary students (900,000 boys and 1.6 million girls) under a \$2-billion Program for Results [Project](#) (financed largely by the government and IDA) and the adoption of Mental Health and School-Related Gender-Based Violence (SRGBV) prevention components in the government's new secondary education program.

2. UFGE's Pivotal Role in the World Bank Group Gender Strategy 2024–2030

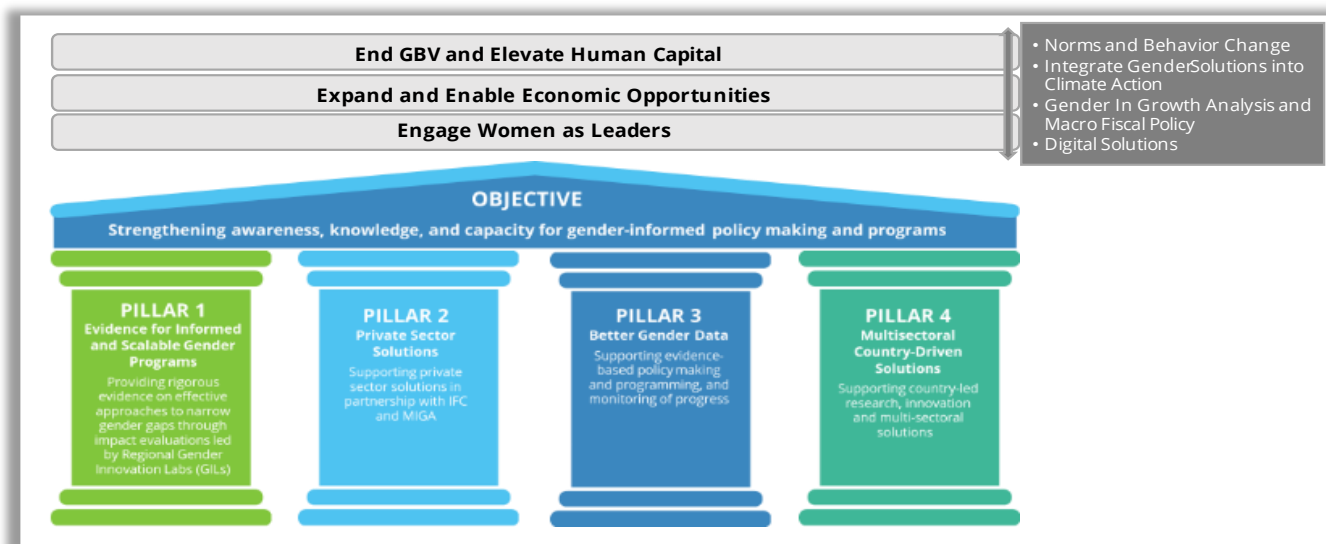
An investment in UFGE is an investment in the new [WBG Gender Strategy 2024-2030](#) and [the Gender Strategy Implementation Plan](#) and its vision to accelerate gender equality and end poverty on a livable planet that nourishes, provides, and is safe for future generations. The previous phases of the UFGE have demonstrated its ability to generate scale and transformative change. This new ambition calls for stronger partnerships to collectively address the challenges of our time and help make gender equality a reality.

To achieve its objectives, the strategy calls for innovation, financing, and collective action, with a focus on replicating and scaling impactful gender solutions. It identifies cross-cutting solution areas for action, including social norms and behavioral changes, the gender and climate nexus, integrating gender in growth analysis and macro-fiscal policies, and harnessing digital solutions.

The strategy acknowledges the centrality of investing in women and girls while recognizing the disadvantages facing men and boys and the vulnerabilities arising from the intersection of gender with poverty, ethnicity, disability, and other characteristics. It reaffirms the WBG's commitment to nondiscrimination, inclusion, and equality of opportunity, encompassing sexual and gender minorities. The Implementation Plan translates the Strategy into action by enhancing strategic country engagement as One WBG, delivering results at scale, engaging differently, and mobilizing for impact.

To support implementation of the strategy, UFGE will continue to take a holistic approach that works across its four pillars to uphold the strategy's overarching goals (Figure 1). In line with the strategy, UFGE champions a country-driven approach and emphasizes accountability through outcome-based metrics. Efforts will contribute to the WBG's Global Vision, by tracking the impact of gender equality actions and maintaining a sharp focus on the ultimate goal of benefiting millions of people (Figure 2).

Figure 1: Working across UFGE’s four pillars to implement the strategic objectives of the new Gender Strategy.

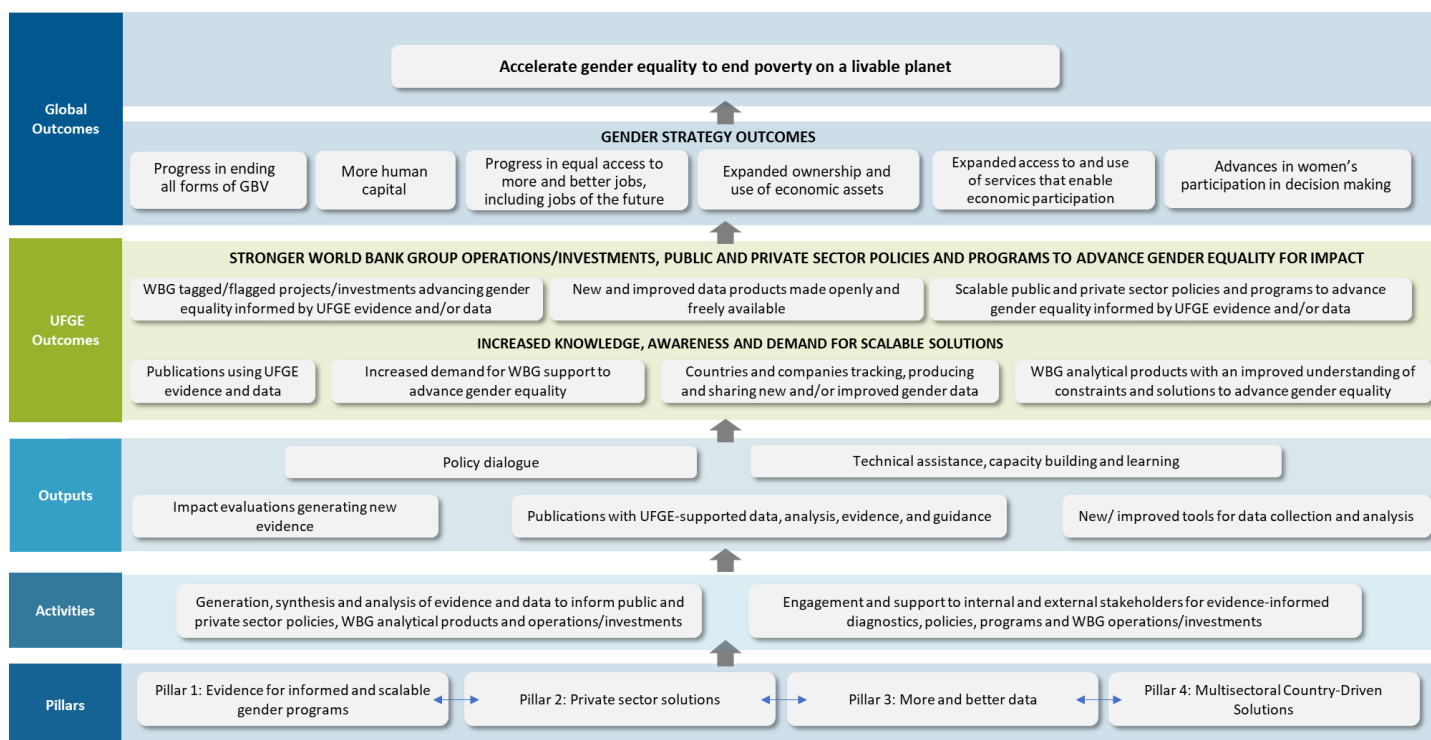


Source: World Bank Group

- Pillar 1: Evidence for Informed and Scalable Gender Programs | Federation of Gender Innovation Labs**
Leveraging the GILs to support the design of innovative interventions and conduct rigorous research through impact evaluations that build evidence on what works and what does not in increasing the speed and scale of gender equality.
- Pillar 2: Private Sector Solutions**
Fostering private sector solutions to accelerate and scale gender equality.
- Pillar 3: Better Gender Data**
Filling critical country data gaps and improving quality and access to gender data to enable evidence-based policy making and programming and monitoring of progress.
- Pillar 4: Multisectoral Country-Driven Solutions**
Investing in frontier engagements under the strategy’s cross-cutting solutions areas (e.g., social norms and behavioral changes, the gender and climate nexus, integrating gender in growth analysis and macro-fiscal policies) and supporting cross-sectoral country-driven engagement to accelerate gender equality (e.g., the MGF and the Flagship/Fast Track Country Programs).

Together, these activities and outputs are expected to **result in stronger development outcomes to advance gender equality at scale**, as illustrated by the UFGE Theory of Change (Figure 2). Annex A further details the Theory of Change.

Figure 2: UFGE Theory of Change | UFGE’s activities and outputs are expected to result in stronger development outcomes to advance gender equality at scale.



Source: World Bank Group

In line with the UFGE Mid Term Review and donor partners’ recommendations, the UFGE will be updating its Results Framework in consultation with UFGE partners and implementing teams to align it with the new Gender Strategy framework. The proposed Results Framework will incorporate the relevant draft gender strategy indicators as well as key results indicators from UFGE’s implementing partners (e.g., the consolidated GILs Results Framework). It will also introduce baselines and targets for each indicator to enable better monitoring of progress.

UFGE’s Governing Structure

UFGE harnesses its influential convening capabilities to assemble the **Gender Leadership Council**, comprising of WBG Senior Management, representatives from the Global Practices and Regions, the IFC and MIGA. Additionally, UFGE collaborates closely with World Bank **Country Directors to form the Gender Impact Coalition**, fostering partnerships with external stakeholders. These concerted efforts are directed toward maximizing impact under the **strategic guidance of the UFGE Partnership Council**, which advocates for amplified awareness and alliances to foster gender equality.

3. Proposed Activity Pillars, Outcomes, and Funding Estimates

This section describes the proposed activities and funding needs for each UFGE pillar during the FY2025–30 implementation period of the WBG Gender Strategy 2024–2030. Table 1 summarizes the indicative allocation of replenished UFGE funds. Annex A provides more background on the updated Theory of Change that underpins these pillars. Annex B describes the internal and external partnerships that UFGE implementation teams call on to strengthen the quality of knowledge and evidence generated and to promote their effective use and uptake for policy making, programming, and operational impact.

To unleash the full potential of the strategy and turn bold ambitions into reality, an investment in UFGE of **\$145 million** over the next six years, translating to \$24 million on average annually, is essential. This will enable UFGE to roll out a robust work program, as outlined in the following sections, including new activities and workstreams under each pillar.

Table 1: Summary of Estimated UFGE Funding, FY2025–30 (US\$ million).

Pillar 1: Evidence for Informed and Scalable Solutions							
Federation of Gender Innovation Labs	7.0	6.6	6.6	6.6	6.6	6.6	40.0
Pillar 2 Private Sector Solutions							
IFC	3.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	13.0
MIGA	0.35	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	2.0
Pillar 3 Better Gender Data							
Strengthening Gender Statistics	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	6.0
Women Business and the Law	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	18.0
Gender Data Portal	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	3.0
Pillar 4 Multisectoral Country- Driven Solutions							
Social Norms	5.0	5.0	2.5	1.0	1.0	0.5	15.0
Gender and Climate	1.8	1.8	1.9	1.9	1.0	0.6	9.0
Macro-fiscal	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	9.0
Mashreq Gender Facility	2.5	2.5	2.0	1.5	1.0	0.5	10.0
Fast Track Countries	3.0	3.0	3.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	13.0
UFGE Program Management, KM, Comms	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	7.2
TOTAL	29.85	28.43	24.53	22.53	21.13	18.73	145.2

Pillar 1: Evidence for Informed and Scalable Gender Programs | Federation of Gender Innovation Labs

The proposed funding for Pillar 1 will support the World Bank’s GILs, which help the WBG, development practitioners, country clients, and policy makers improve outcomes for gender equality by producing, synthesizing, and sharing rigorous evidence on what works to promote gender equality

and piloting innovative solutions. The labs operate regionally in East and Central Asia (ECAGIL), East Asia and Pacific (EAPGIL), Latin America and the Caribbean (LACGIL), Middle East and North Africa (MNAGIL), South Asia (SARGIL), and Sub-Saharan Africa (AFRGIL). To date, the GILs have partnered with 47 country governments, shaped more than 200 operations, and their evidence has been crucial in developing the WBG's gender strategies from 2016 to 2030.

The GILs' return on investment is clear. Every \$1 invested by AFR GIL, the first established and longest running GIL, leverages \$188 of development spending. Over the last decade, AFR GIL has generated evidence that has influenced over \$12 billion in development spending.

In Afghanistan, SAR GIL's research provided evidence that the *Targeting the Ultra Poor Program*, aiming to lifting the poorest out of poverty, also had a positive effect on women's empowerment. This evidence persuaded decision makers to widen the program's reach to two additional regions, demonstrating its effectiveness in improving women's lives and its potential for broader impact across the country. In Peru, an impact evaluation conducted by LACGIL shed light on the root causes of GBV, helping policy makers better target efforts to combat this issue. By understanding the specific challenges faced by vulnerable populations, such as women experiencing violence, the government tailored its flagship program, Leaders in Action, to provide more effective support and assistance where it was most needed.

Proposed Use of UFGE Funds

Building on a proven track record of transformative change, the GILs will use UFGE resources to achieve the following:

- Support the integration of evidence-based gender responsive and transformative approaches through the WBG projects and policies, in alignment with the [WBG Gender Strategy 2024–30 \(Table 2\)](#).
- Contribute to global development initiatives that deliver replicable and scalable approaches to critical global challenges like the [World Bank Group's Global Challenge Programs](#).
- Fill gender data gaps that support research and innovation in countries. This will be done under the [World Bank Group's new Knowledge Compact](#) by improving knowledge quality and relevance in projects and providing better support to clients through training, data analysis, and sharing.

The GILs' full set of proposed activities, outputs, and projected outcomes are available in Annexes A and C. Evidence gathered through these activity streams will support work being done in other pillars, by informing priorities for private sector solutions, identifying gender data gaps, and supporting country-led research and innovation.

Table 2: Alignment of GIL priorities under the three objectives of the WBG Gender Strategy 2024–2030.

1) End gender-based violence and elevate human capital
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate interventions that aim to reduce GBV and shift social norms related to GBV and gender roles more broadly. • Investigate how to maximize protective effects and minimize risks of backlash of economic empowerment interventions. • Understand how social sectors with broad reach, such as social protection, education, and health, could be leveraged for widespread reductions in violence against women. • Address women’s safety at work, en route to work, and in public spaces, and assess how the risk of GBV constrains women’s employment. • Reduce early pregnancy, child marriage, and forced marriage, which often curtail girls’ and young women’s schooling and employment opportunities. • Advance adolescent girls’ and women’s empowerment around sexual and reproductive health. • Increase understanding of the prevalence, determinants, and impacts of harassment, including through improving measurement of it.
2) Expand and enable women’s economic opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote access to skills, inputs, assets, and capital in productivity, earnings, and profits. • Challenge and shift norms that govern women’s and men’s engagement in paid and unpaid work, norms around unpaid care and domestic work, and norms around property rights. • Foster women’s labor force participation (both paid employment and entrepreneurship) through demand and supply-side interventions. • Advance policy dialogue on and provision of childcare services to enable women to pursue good jobs with adequate care support.
3) Engage women as leaders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate evidence on what works to promote women’s leadership and equal participation in decision making in households, communities, producer organizations, governments, and the private sector. • Test the impact of interventions aimed at increasing women’s leadership on policies, resource allocation, programmatic decisions, attitudes around women in leadership, and other potential outcomes.

Resource Allocation and Funding Requirements

The GILs rely on funding from UFGE and its partners to operate. **An investment of \$40 million for Pillar 1 would empower the six GILs to carry out their work programs and meet rising demand**, which surpasses current financial and staffing capabilities. This new funding would enable immediate expansion of GIL activities (Box 2). The primary needs include personnel time and funds for data collection to estimate the impacts and effectiveness of WB interventions, with a focus on estimating the gender equality gains, drivers of change, and lessons for scale. Staff time is crucial for research, designing interventions, disseminating findings, engaging with policy makers, and developing impactful programs. Funding is also required for data collection and analysis, covering activities like field surveys, designing questionnaires, supervising fieldwork, analyzing data, and drafting reports. A small innovation fund would support minor adjustments to existing programs or pilot new approaches. Other expenses include government learning and capacity building, including documenting and disseminating intervention designs and producing public goods, such as briefs and reports, on both impact evidence and type of approach.

Challenges and Mitigation Plan

The GILs manage risk through a portfolio approach, recognizing that not all research findings will have equal impact and not all discussions will lead to policy change. Operating in multiple countries, GILs can face interruptions due to political or economic shocks, prompting adjustments to research activities. While randomized controlled trials are often resilient to such shocks, the GILs' targets and plans accommodate these challenges.

Knowledge Dissemination

The GILs prioritize the prompt and broad dissemination of the knowledge and data produced, including through strategic engagement with policy makers. The results from all research and impact evaluations carried out under this investment will be made available openly and freely to the public through the publication of policy briefs, working papers, and academic journal articles in peer-reviewed publications. Datasets will also be made freely available online, per the guidelines of the World Bank Open Access Policy. All publications and datasets will be made publicly available through the GILs websites. All policy briefs and working papers will be published in the World Bank's official online repository of public documents (Documents & Reports) and the official World Bank open access repository for research

Box 2: Examples of ongoing GIL activities to be expanded with additional funding.

- Conducting an impact evaluation of an innovative program in Central Asia addressing GBV through digital awareness campaigns, educational workshops, mobile support services, and community engagement.
- Partnering with Pacific Island governments to design and assess social protection programs that help girls transition from school to work and reduce exposure to GBV.
- Conducting inferential research in Latin America and the Caribbean on the impact of violence on women's economic opportunities and testing interventions to address violent crime.
- Designing and testing innovative childcare interventions in Indonesia and Africa to make childcare accessible for marginalized households and support mothers' entry or re-entry into labor markets.
- Conducting impact evaluations of interventions in the Middle East and North Africa region that provide business training, flexible financing, and childcare to women entrepreneurs.
- Evaluating interventions to enhance women's decision making in rural producer groups in South Asia.
- Collaborating with clients to design and test strategies ensuring Latin American women benefit from nearshoring activities which are expected to increase in the coming years.
- Assessing interventions in the Pacific Islands that provide capacity building to women's groups to enhance their involvement and empowerment in community decision making.

outputs and knowledge products (Open Knowledge Repository). Datasets (stripped of any household or individual identifying information) will be published in the publicly accessible World Bank Microdata Library. Knowledge and information gained through this investment will also be actively shared with policy makers through national-level discussions, private consultations with government officials, events where findings are discussed, social media and other electronic outreach and engagement, and workshops.

Pillar 2: Private Sector Solutions | IFC and MIGA

The proposed funding for Pillar 2 will foster solutions for advancing gender equality that come from the private sector. This pillar will design, deliver, and evaluate holistic gender and inclusion solutions leveraging expertise and resources across the WBG, while addressing urgent priorities tailored to country, region, and market-specific contexts. IFC, WBG's private sector arm, and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA), the WBG's political risk insurance and credit enhancement arm, play key roles.

Three priority areas offer high potential for gender and inclusion impact in and through the private sector: allocating capital, delivering goods and services, and employing people. These areas provide clear entry points for driving and scaling gender equality and economic inclusion within the private sector and can accelerate financial inclusion, make supply chains inclusive; and remove barriers to employment, entrepreneurship, and leadership.

Equally important are two cross-cutting areas that are foundational to achieving sustainable results: bridging the digital divide and accelerating inclusive and gender-smart climate action. Concerted action across these priority areas will enable IFC and MIGA to contribute to the goals of the WBG Gender Strategy.

Over the last decade, IFC has developed, expanded, evaluated, and adapted gender-specific investment and advisory solutions with clients to respond to evolving market needs and increased private sector demand. IFC's gender and inclusion work involves investing in private sector companies, providing them with firm-level advisory services and conducting sectoral market research to inform business practices and drive change. IFC also establishes peer learning platforms to catalyze the spread of good practice and collaborates with other multilateral development banks (MDBs) and development finance institutions (DFIs) to advance sector reform and policy. Notable IFC gender programs that have benefited from UFGE support include:

- **IFC's Housing Finance for Women Initiative, a dedicated business line that focuses on increasing access to finance for women's home ownership.** In less than four years, this initiative has mobilized and invested over \$1 billion in financial institutions, enabling women to purchase, build, or upgrade their homes. Through 11 investment projects in six countries, [IFC's Her Home study](#), funded by UFGE, provides valuable insights into the barriers women face in obtaining housing finance, highlighting the size and nature of women's housing finance markets. It offers recommendations for policy makers and financial institutions to improve access to finance for women and enhance the lives of millions of women and their families.
- **IFC's Women's Insurance Program, advises clients and staff on developing a robust women's insurance market.** Working in Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka, the program supports insurance companies in understanding the women's market, developing targeted approaches to address women's needs, and training their distribution force to effectively engage with women customers. With grant funding from UFGE, the program further expanded the evidence needed by insurers to develop and offer gender-inclusive

insurance products and services to women, and published [Driving Better Business Results with Women's Insurance](#). This guide provides insurers with a six-step roadmap to building their women's market strategy and customer value propositions. It has led to several insurance companies increasing women's access to financial services, specifically insurance.

Through its political risk insurance and credit enhancement guarantees, MIGA supports private capital mobilization in developing countries and leverages these guarantees to reduce gender disparities. To date, MIGA clients have committed over \$1.2 billion in lending to women and women-owned businesses, and an increasing share of MIGA private sector clients across sectors have committed to actions for narrowing gender gaps in the countries and regions in which they invest.

Anchored in the WBG Gender Strategy 2024–2030, [MIGA's Gender Strategy Implementation Plan 2024–2026](#) emphasizes close collaboration with private sector clients to develop, implement, and scale innovative approaches to bridge gender gaps. This also includes sharing lessons learned with the political risk insurance and guarantees community, as, currently there is little research on how to leverage and adapt guarantees to provide opportunities for women in emerging markets. By developing and disseminating knowledge on how to use guarantees to support gender outcomes, MIGA can, over time, encourage more private insurance providers to take up similar approaches. This would help to scale the private capital available for gender-equitable investments.

Proposed Use of UFGE Funds

IFC will use UFGE funding to:

- **Fill private sector gender data gaps** that support research and gender-focused investments and innovation in the private sector, considering unique contexts of industries and countries. This will involve the establishment of a first-of-its-kind, publicly accessible data hub specifically focused on gender and inclusion in the private sector. The data hub will enhance systematic gender data collection, enabling researchers, partners, and private sector stakeholders to analyze gender-focused data. This will improve the quality of knowledge, facilitate consensus on reporting definitions and gender-lens investing standards, and enable IFC and MIGA to provide better support to the private sector through data analysis and sharing.
- **Establish a private sector-focused program for research and evaluation** that addresses key evidence gaps on gender and inclusion and generates insights to inform the design and impact of IFC operations across the aforementioned priority areas and cross-cutting themes. The new program will collaborate with the GILs, WBG operational teams, leading think tanks and universities, and private sector stakeholders.
- **Enhance knowledge products and sector-level initiatives** by developing business cases and conducting applied research to raise market awareness about the business and economic benefits of private sector adoption and implementation of policies, practices, and operations that prioritize the poor and underserved, and promote gender equality and economic inclusion. This will inform the development of new gender financing investment opportunities for private sector investors, development finance institutions, and IFC, with the aim of advancing gender equality and inclusion. Additionally, the establishment of partnerships and peer learning platforms will facilitate upstream efforts to stimulate positive conditions, such as raising market standards and influencing the allocation of capital toward gender equality, through the amplification of best practices and the creation of supportive legal frameworks.

MIGA will use UFGE funding to:

- **Develop and disseminate knowledge products related to political risk insurance, credit enhancement, and other guarantees.** By creating and sharing knowledge on the use of guarantees to support gender equality, MIGA will leverage its knowledge and learning to provide practical insights for its peers to build their gender programs. This has the potential to scale effective approaches to engaging clients on gender. MIGA also plans to work with other parts of the WBG to share knowledge and expand gender solutions as part of a [new one-stop WBG guarantee platform](#).
- **Develop and disseminate knowledge products for thematic areas aligned with the objectives of the WBG Gender Strategy.** MIGA recognizes the opportunities to continue to build the knowledge base on emerging and cross-cutting topics identified by the WBG Gender Strategy, and to fill identified gaps among clients and other guarantee providers in the market. MIGA will share knowledge and expand solutions through the new one-stop WBG guarantee platform.

Resource Allocation and Funding Requirements

IFC and MIGA activities under Pillar 2 will require an estimated \$15 million.

The bulk, \$13 million, will enable IFC to carry out knowledge programs and establish new data-driven work programs. These resources are essential to expand the knowledge base on private sector models for driving gender and economic inclusion outcomes and to move beyond fragmented and, often, proprietary implementation of practices. At present, field-level insights are often not effectively extracted from IFC and others, which limits comparison of approaches and uptake of practices by the private sector with rigor and data. This funding of \$13 million will enable immediate expansion of activities:

- Establish the Private Sector Data Hub (\$6 million)
- Initiate private sector-focused research and evaluation program across the three themes (\$4 million)
- Expand knowledge products and sector-level work (\$ 3 million)

The remaining \$2 million will support MIGA’s activities under Pillar 2. MIGA will detail deliverables, outcomes, indicators, and budgets for UFGE activities, phased over 2024–2030. The plan spans three two-year phases, with up to three activities per phase. Each activity will have clear deliverables and aim for completion within one to two years. MIGA will partner with UFGE implementing partners to assess needs continuously, allocate resources, and engage external consultants as needed to:

- Develop and disseminate knowledge products for political risk insurance, credit enhancement and guarantee providers (\$1 million)
- Develop and disseminate knowledge products on cross-cutting themes (\$1 million)

Challenges and Mitigation Plan

The scarcity of gender data is a challenge that can be overcome by capturing evidence and data through implementation and building a knowledge base. This enables better recognition of trends and design of solutions that promote women’s economic empowerment across sectors. Evidence on the potential productivity and output gains of enabling services, like safe transport, mobile internet, agriculture extension services, and childcare, can motivate private sector actors to mobilize innovation, financing, and action to address gender barriers. IFC and MIGA propose activities to mitigate this risk through more knowledge creation. UFGE plays a critical role in bridging this gender data gap.

MIGA may face resource constraints and limited capacity to implement the planned activities, with MIGA’s client engagement on gender taking precedence. This emphasizes the importance of doing more

to support, strengthen, and expand MIGA's work on gender with clients. As a mitigation measure, MIGA will use external consultants, hire extra staff as necessary, and continue to foster collaboration with IFC, external partners, and WBG initiatives.

Knowledge Dissemination

Disseminating knowledge internally and externally is crucial for the WBG to drive positive change and promote gender equality in its operations and in and through the private sector. Internally, sharing this knowledge (through internal communication channels, such as newsletters, intranet platforms, and staff meetings) helps to raise awareness among WBG staff to enable mainstreaming gender considerations into projects. It enables staff to understand the importance of gender equality and equips them with the tools and information needed to effectively incorporate gender perspectives into their work.

Externally, sharing knowledge on gender equality allows the WBG to contribute to the broader global discourse on gender equality, influencing policies, practices, investments and operations in the private sector. By disseminating knowledge, the WBG can influence and learn from other organizations, governments, and private sector stakeholders on actions toward achieving gender equality, leading to more inclusive and sustainable development outcomes. Thought leadership and knowledge dissemination are priorities, along with enhancing the rigor of knowledge products with data, insights, and evidence from private sector operations.

Given MIGA's unique business model, a primary objective for MIGA's UFGE program is to pioneer gender and guarantee knowledge products, including external dissemination of knowledge products, toolkits, and case studies. Therefore, an important part of MIGA's effort will be to develop a knowledge and communications strategy to raise awareness of its gender work.

Pillar 3: Better Gender Data

Gender data plays a critical role in shaping policies and driving transformative changes within countries, but insufficient and outdated information persist. The success of the WBG's Gender Strategy hinges on the availability of reliable data, particularly in areas where significant data gaps exist, such as childcare and disaster risk management. UFGE responds to these challenges in the data infrastructure by investing in projects aimed at improving the quality and availability of gender data at the country-level to inform policies and programs and track results. Pillar 3 activities focus on three WBG flagship programs, each addressed in turn: the Strengthening Gender Statistics project, the Women, Business and the Law (WBL) program, and the Gender Data Portal.

The Strengthening Gender Statistics Project (SGS)

The SGS project provides technical assistance to National Statistical Offices, aiding them in narrowing gender data gaps across various dimensions within national statistical systems and improving data production, focusing on economic indicators. In its second phase, the project will broaden its scope to encompass new thematic areas relevant to the implementation of the WBG Gender Strategy 2024–2030.

Proposed Use of UFGE Funds

UFGE funding stands at the forefront of investments to amplify the availability of sex-disaggregated data, including essential gender indicators aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). By strategically leveraging UFGE resources, the WBG aims to bolster the use of gender data both internally and externally through the SGS project (Table 3). This data is vital for tackling global challenges, notably climate change and fragility.

Table 3: SGS project proposed activities, outputs, and outcomes.

Activities	Outputs	Outcome
Production and dissemination of gender data statistical abstracts and publications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender data statistical abstracts and publications produced and disseminated as a standalone or addition to routine publications. • New or strengthened survey design • Number of dissemination and learning events with country stakeholder participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New or improved gender data openly and freely available • Better gender informed policy making at the country level • Heightened awareness and demand for gender equality interventions
Strategically feeding gender data into World Bank projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World Bank analytical work and lending operations receiving support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stronger analytics and improved design of operations and programs

Resource Allocation and Funding Requirements

Funding for the SGS project under Pillar 3 is estimated at \$6 million, at \$1 million per year for the FY2025–30 implementation period. The next phase of the SGS project aims to expand coverage and deepen partnerships to address critical data gaps, leveraging the WB's expertise and existing collaborations with UN agencies. The project is currently engaged in 12 countries, and it seeks to expand to at least 20 countries in response to country demand. This expansion aims to address monitoring gaps identified by the global community, including indicators from the [UN's Minimum Set of Gender Indicators](#) and the [SDG](#) framework. Additionally, the project seeks to facilitate the integration of gender data into policy making in partner countries and the design of WB operations. The major cost drivers include:

- **Compilation of guidance materials and global knowledge products:** This involves team members and technical advisors compiling recommendations on survey and questionnaire design.
- **Technical assistance and in-country activities:** This segment accounts for the largest share of the project cost, covering staff time for delivering technical assistance, conducting stakeholder consultations, and providing just-in-time support. Approximately 60 percent of funds will support these activities, including travel and workshops.
- **Dissemination to increase the use of gender data:** This involves aggregating findings, producing guidance notes, organizing dissemination workshops, and promoting policy uptake. Around 25 percent of funds will be allocated to these activities, including travel and dissemination events.

Challenges and Mitigation Plan

Poor implementation of surveys poses a risk to the quality and availability of gender data. To mitigate this risk, the SGS project team will collaborate closely with country poverty economists and their teams and provide technical assistance to National Statistical Offices and other stakeholders in the national statistical system.

Knowledge Dissemination

The SGS team will continue to craft and distribute guidance materials and resources, drawing from the insights gained in various countries and facilitating replication of this work elsewhere. It will also conduct ongoing lessons learned exercises. Working with WBG communications teams, the SGS team will pinpoint key events for engagement and refine messaging to underscore the significance of

integrating gender into statistical systems. Additionally, it will collaborate with WBG colleagues to ensure the utilization of gender data in WBG analytics and operations.

Women, Business and the Law (WBL) Program

WBL assesses the impact of laws, policies, and practice on women’s economic opportunity in 190 economies. As of 2024, WBL assesses the implementation gap (de facto) to complement its de jure indicators. It evaluates 10 areas relevant to women's economic participation: Safety, Mobility, Workplace, Pay, Marriage, Parenthood, Childcare, Entrepreneurship, Assets, and Pensions. WBL 2.0 represents a significant milestone in the project's heightened ambition to drive policy dialogue and inform WBG operational and knowledge initiatives, by offering objective and measurable benchmarks for global progress toward gender equality. World Bank teams and external organizations increasingly rely on the WBL to identify entry points for operations on women’s empowerment. WBL is working to enhance its research underpinnings to better understand the economic consequences of reforming gender-discriminatory laws, policies, and practices.

Proposed Use of UFGE Funds

WBL proposes to build on its work program with the following main components: data, reports, research, and engagement (Table 4). WBL seeks funding from donors who share its vision and mission of advancing legal gender equality and women's economic empowerment across the world. WBL’s increased scope and ambition requires investment in the refinement of the methodology, validation of data, production of high-quality research, and engagement through a systematic strategy to help reach different audiences and catalyze momentum for reforms.

Resource Allocation and Funding Requirements

Funding for WBL under Pillar 3 is estimated at \$18 million for the FY2025–30 implementation period. WBL proposes an ambitious work program for the period of FY2025–30, which includes updating the WBL 2.0 data on laws, supportive frameworks, and expert opinions introduced in the WBL 2024 report. The data will feed into the annual flagship WBL reports produced annually in March. To increase the uptake and impact of the WBL findings, the team plans to undertake an ambitious research and engagement agenda.

Table 4: WBL project proposed activities, outputs, and outcomes.

Activity	Output	Outcome
<p>Data: WBL will update its flagship indicator set, covering around 850,000 data points on legal differences between men and women in areas of safety, mobility, workplace, pay, marriage, parenthood, childcare, entrepreneurship, assets, and pensions. WBL will also develop and implement a subnational methodology to capture legal variations within countries, and pilot new data collection on emerging topics such as climate, digital, health, and tax. Moreover, WBL will leverage the Gallup World Poll data to measure the outcomes of legal reforms on women's perceptions and experiences in three countries, with the potential to scale up to 140 countries.</p>	<p>Data for 190 economies on WBL indicators, general population data in select countries (up to 140); subnational WBL data in selected countries; new indicators data</p>	<p>Better gender-informed policy making at the country level; improved design of operations and programs; heightened awareness and demand for gender equality interventions</p>

<p>Reports: WBL will publish its annual report, which presents the latest data and analysis on legal gender equality, as well as highlights good practices and reform examples from around the world. WBL will also produce 190 country profiles that provide detailed information on the legal framework and indicators for each country, and regional profiles that summarize the regional trends and challenges.</p>	<p>Annual flagship report, 190 country profiles</p>	<p>Better gender-informed policy making at the country level; improved design of operations and programs; heightened awareness and demand for gender equality interventions</p>
<p>Research: WBL will conduct foundation research papers that make the economic case for legal gender equality and connect WBL index performance with various outcomes and drivers, such as political leadership, social norms, access to capital, climate change, and other subjects. WBL will also collaborate with external researchers and partners to produce and disseminate high-quality research that uses WBL data and methodology.</p>	<p>Research papers and policy briefs, case studies of reform</p>	<p>Better gender-informed policy making at the country level; improved design of operations and programs; heightened awareness and demand for gender equality interventions</p>
<p>Engagement: WBL will organize regional workshops to disseminate the data, as well as peer-to-peer conferences where countries can present their reform agendas and learn from each other.</p>	<p>Events</p>	<p>Better gender-informed policy making at the country level; improved design of operations and programs; heightened awareness and demand for gender equality interventions</p>

Challenges and Mitigation Plan

The program relies on funding from donors, and any shortfall in funding could impact the scope and scale of the program's activities. To mitigate this risk, WBL may explore alternative funding sources and modalities, such as partnerships with the private sector or contributions from WB Country Management Unit budgets for country-specific work.

The program collects data from 190 countries, and ensuring the quality and comparability of the data can be challenging. To address this challenge, WBL plans to invest in enhancing its data collection, validation, and analysis processes, as well as in training and supporting the team.

Proper interpretation and understanding of the evidence provided by WBL indicators is central to governments' response and uptake of it. Based on lessons learned from WBL previous experience in data collection and analysis, a commonly identified risk faced when conducting benchmarking exercises is a misunderstanding over what the indicators do and do not measure. As a mitigation measure, WBL continually communicates the scope and limits of its data. WBL methodology is published on the WBL website, along with the WBL Manual and Guide, which describes the production process of WBL reports and serves as an official source of information for interested stakeholders. In addition, to ensure fairness and transparency in the data collection process, WBL team has created a Government Engagement Portal through which government officials and WBG colleagues may request meetings and methodology training and provide information regarding potential reforms or data corrections.

Risks also may include a negative reaction from governments, especially from countries that are unhappy with the research findings or those that oppose the WBG examining issues of gender equality and scoring countries based on an index of laws. WBL communications and outreach strategies apply risk mitigation tactics where needed to enable the strategic spread of messages, keeping in mind

potential reactions. Dialogue with governments who may contest WBL research is also important, and a rapid response rate has been developed for queries from governments about their data.

Knowledge Dissemination

WBL will promote the uptake of its knowledge and information through its website and engagements, including the annual WBL launch events, gatherings during WBG Annual and Spring meetings, as well as CSW, UNGA, and other regional conferences. Just two days after the launch, WBL 2024 garnered more than 1,000 media stories around the world, with nearly 30 in top tier outlets. The WBL 2024 launch event has over 49,000 views on YouTube in English, 31,000 in French, and 33,000 views in Spanish. WBL reports (2010–2023) have over 1 million downloads combined, and the reports have been cited in the media 400 times per year, on average, since 2016. Each year, the WBL team complements the annual global study with country, regional, and thematic analysis to drive the uptake and increase the relevance of the findings.

WBG Gender Data Portal

The [Gender Data Portal](#) is the premier global resource on gender data. It is a one-stop shop for global gender data with over 1,000 indicators and resources for collecting and analyzing sex-disaggregated data. It attracts an average of 15,000 new users each month and reaches users who may not be gender or data specialists, such as journalists, civil society and advocacy groups, and policy makers. The portal makes the latest gender statistics accessible through compelling narratives and data visualizations to improve the understanding of gender data and facilitate analyses that inform policy choices.

The Gender Data Portal is intended to reinforce existing linkages between researchers/analysts and WBG internal users and build new bridges connecting gender data directly to new users. Enriched data access may lower the barrier of entry to kickstart research on gender equality and expand the community working with gender data, which includes academics, students, think tanks, and data journalists with data analysis skills.

Proposed Use of UFGE Funds

UFGE funding will support the next phase of the Data Portal. It plans to add new indicators and evidence on intersectionality through data, demonstrating how gender data can be used for analyzing gender's intersections with poverty and other factors. This expansion aims to support key WBG diagnostics, such as Country Climate and Development Reports, and to strengthen the quality and usefulness of data for external stakeholders. UFGE funding will also be instrumental in developing a Gender Statistical Performance Index, focusing on gender data production and dissemination. This index is an adaptation of the World Bank Statistical Performance Indicators framework and will serve as a vital tool for assessing and improving national statistical systems' handling of gender data, guiding interventions, and fostering open data policies.

Resource Allocation and Funding Requirements

Funding requirement for the Gender Data Portal under Pillar 3 is estimated at \$3 million for the FY2025–30 implementation period, or \$500,000 per fiscal year. This covers gender database updates (including additional indicators), developing user-friendly outputs (such as the [Country Gender Landscape](#) briefs), and new compelling data stories to increase data uptake and use.

Challenges and Mitigation Plan

Translating insights from the Gender Data Portal into policy action is a multistep process. Uptake of gender data in terms of policy impact can be challenged by capacity constraints in interpreting data at the country level. Decision makers may have insufficient capacity to interpret (gender) data and turn it

into policy. Where this is the case, further support should be provided through channels, such as the SGS project, to build awareness and demand among government officials.

Knowledge Dissemination

The Gender Data Portal provides both internal and external users with curated data insights, customizable visualizations, and a one-stop resource for content on gender data. It is a best-in-class example of innovative data use, demonstrated through blogs, storytelling feature stories, interactive data visualizations, and country profile reports, as well as an in-site option to explore indicators, countries, and topics from the gender statistics database in a more accessible fashion. As such, the portal can support knowledge dissemination efforts across the entire UFGE portfolio.

Pillar 4: Multisectoral Country-Driven Solutions

UFGE promotes the adaptation and testing of innovative and scalable approaches in operations that can help countries address the most pervasive underlying determinants of gender inequality. Activities under Pillar 4 include generating new knowledge, evidence, and data in the cross-cutting solutions areas of the WBG Gender Strategy 2024–2030, namely, social norms and behavioral changes, integrating gender solutions in climate action, and integrating gender in growth analysis and macro-fiscal policies to drive transformative change. This pillar also encompasses support to cross-sectoral country-driven engagement through the MGF and the Flagship/Fast Track Country Programs. Each of these activities is addressed in turn.

Behavioral Science and Social Norms

The WBG Gender Strategy 2024–2030 identifies innovation, financing, and collective action as drivers of change toward gender equality. Behavioral approaches and interventions designed to transform harmful social norms are among the innovative policy tools proposed by the strategy to support and sustain gender equality gains.

Proposed Use of UFGE Funds

With support from UFGE, the behavioral science and social norms work program will enable WBG operational and country teams to proactively identify and incorporate behaviorally informed activities in WBG-financed interventions, with a view toward shifting mindsets and addressing social norms for improved gender impact. The work program is organized in four workstreams: identification, operational support, evaluation, knowledge and learning, and data. These workstreams will be carried out in close engagement with task teams of ongoing activities partnering with the program, and in collaboration with WBG research and innovation teams, such as the Mind, Behavioral and Development team (eMBeD), GILs, Development Impact Evaluation (DIME), WBL, and the broader research and policy community.

Workstream 1 (identification) has already started by identifying active (early stage) and pipeline projects that have potential for using behavioral insights or addressing social norms. These project teams have been invited to participate in a series of tailored social norms intervention clinics to receive training and technical assistance on their projects' social norms design. Five such clinics have already been held at the sector, region, and country level, providing teams with concrete tools for designing interventions. Additional clinics are planned for the next two years, covering GBV and social norms, private sector biases and stereotypes, and social norms and legal reforms. A similar process is planned to focus specifically on behavioral science and systems approaches.

Workstream 2 (operational support) has also kicked off with a call for proposals from WBG operational teams to further improve social norms interventions design, innovation, implementation, and results

tracking. The call received 144 applications for a total of \$29 million. The available UFGE funding envelope is \$2.2 million, which means only 13 proposals will receive funding after a competitive peer-reviewed selection process. All teams were required to identify funding for their interventions and match UFGE funds on a 2:1 basis. The selected teams will receive ongoing technical support and will form the first community of practice on social norms transformations to foster collaboration and learning across the WBG.

Workstreams 3 and 4 (evaluation, knowledge and learning, and data) are at earlier stages, but include the production of a thematic policy note on social norms and investments in the development of measurement tools and indicators for projects' results frameworks and impact evaluations. For all operational teams, possible top-up funding is considered to implement regular measurement of outcomes at intermediate stages using Implicit Bias Measurement tools and other tools to measure norm change in the short/medium term.

Resource Allocation and Funding Requirements

Estimated funding is a total of \$15 million for FY2025–30. For FY2025 and FY2026, this includes three additional calls for proposals for \$3 million each (total of \$9 million) in the first two years to respond to the high demand for operational interventions, and \$1 million for core social norms/behavioral science team expertise to support projects, production of public goods, and training. Decreased amounts for the remaining years assume some economies of scale on public goods and expanding demand for proposals.

The program will also support interventions with the following goals: improve women's economic participation in nontraditional sectors; address masculinity norms and increase men's involvement in home production and care; understand and address demand-side barriers to women's employment and barriers to women's participation in decision making and leadership; and address systems biases in policy design and implementation. The team plans to have another two calls for proposals: one focused on men and masculinity and one on behavioral science tools for systems and policy maker change. Funds permitting, further calls could be considered, including scale-up calls.

Challenges and Mitigation Plan

The main challenges to the program are the inability to meet the growing demand for expertise and support (technical and financial) for quality and informed social norms and behavioral interventions. While expertise inside the WBG is small but growing, it remains insufficient to meet demand. Clinics and training, as well as partnerships with external experts and the availability of funds, are critical to offset such risks.

Knowledge Dissemination

The ongoing clinics and planned community of practice are a core element of a continuous engagement with the lessons arising from the work program. These lessons will be integrated into the World Bank Academy learning efforts for external audiences, as well as the eMBED Academy training for policy makers. Specific how-to lessons, including reporting of failed efforts and cost assessments, will be made available to teams considering similar approaches. Other activities may include developing analytical and technical products, for example, collaborating with the World Bank Gender Group to produce a multiregion report on social and gender norms measurement (including lessons from the Middle East and North Africa, South Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa regions) with guidance on measuring social and gender norms for operational work.

Integrating Gender Solutions into Climate Action

Gender and climate change are fundamentally connected. Climate change affects men and women differently, impacting how they learn, work, and earn. Droughts, floods, and other shocks cause men and women to die at different rates, increase women’s time poverty, lead boys and girls to leave schooling at different rates, and contribute to higher male out-migration. In these and other ways, climate change increases poverty and vulnerability across WBG client countries, disproportionately affecting women and other disadvantaged groups.

Integrating gender solutions into climate action is central to the WBG’s mission of creating a world free of poverty on a livable planet. The WBG is ramping up efforts to help countries integrate gender into climate investments for key transitions in energy; agriculture, food, water, and land; cities; transport; and manufacturing so that both women and men can benefit equally. The effort also requires placing women and their leadership at the heart of climate action through institutional reforms and innovation.

Proposed Use of UFGE Funds

To ensure that the WBG commitment to climate action incorporates gender equality as an integrated objective, the Gender Group has developed a WBG Gender and Climate Program 2025–30, which launched in 2024 with UFGE support (Table 5). This WBG-wide effort seeks to strengthen the evidence base on the gender-climate nexus and develop a portfolio of tools and options for operational design and policy, while supporting WBG and client capacity in this area. The program is organized around four key topics and associated aims:

1. **Climate finance:** Accelerate gender-inclusive climate finance.
2. **Climate governance:** Ensure climate governance, policies and institutional practices are gender-inclusive.
3. **Assets for resilience:** Strengthen women’s assets and economic empowerment to boost resilience and adaptive capacity.
4. **Just transition and inclusive decarbonization:** Advance gender-transformative designs in just transitions; decarbonization policy and investments; and resilience systems.

Table 5: UFGE Gender and Climate Program proposed activities, outputs, and outcomes

Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
Gender-Climate Competitive Grants Program - Phase 1	World Bank, IFC, and MIGA teams selected for UFGE window support (including cross-country peer learning workshop)	Expanded evidence base on gender-climate nexus for operational application
Just-in-time funding support for WBG CCDR gender analysis and implementation*	CCDR gender analyses and assessments by task teams	CCDRs and follow-on pipeline informed by dedicated gender-climate analytics
Gender-Climate Competitive Grants Program – Phase 2	Scale-up of Phase 1 to include a larger number of grantees and emphasis on in-country policy support and capacity-building with clients	Enhanced knowledge and country capacity on the gender-climate nexus and its formal integration in national decarbonization and resilience pathways
Select reports on gender-poverty-climate nexus and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Companion report to World Bank study on poverty and climate 	Evidence-based guidance for WBG staff use in further analyses,

other priorities (e.g., adaptive social protection, migration and resilience, green jobs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional commissioned reports 	operational design, and policy dialogue
External partnerships on gender-climate data, women’s climate leadership, and gender-transformative climate finance*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced data portals in collaboration with WBG data teams, UNWomen, and others • Leadership and finance partnership activities with UNFCCC, climate funds, private sector platforms, and select countries and CSOs 	Enhanced internal and external data resources on gender-climate nexus for use in public and private climate action decision making

Notes: * Other core country diagnostics such as CEMs and CPFs may be included here.
 **To include both public and private finance.

Competitive grant programs for new analytics, as well as global reports on such topics as “Gender, Poverty and Climate,” are planned under the program. The latter aims to model distributional outcomes across the main elements of the gender-climate nexus, with cross-country comparisons and identification of effective policy, institutional, and investment options. Region-specific annexes providing a summary of issues, key policy priorities, and descriptive statistics will also be prepared, as will synthesis reports on key lessons from the competitive grants program and further guidance notes for gender integration in WBG Climate Change and Development Reports (CCDRs)². Staff and client capacity-building activities are planned as part of the overall program and in the context of individual grant activities.

Resource Allocation and Funding Requirements

The Gender and Climate Program requires funding of \$9 million for the period FY2025–30. This financial support will help deepen WBG-wide analytical and operational integration, capacity, and partnership with country clients and other actors on the gender-climate nexus. However, initial program activities and stakeholder engagements reveal even greater demand and opportunities for gender-responsive climate action.

The launch of the \$2-million UFGE call for proposals³ in 2024, coupled with pilot just-in-time efforts at the level of \$100,000, revealed strong WBG demand, both internally and from clients, for analytical and operational programming efforts that can meet the challenges of gender-transformative climate action across country strategies and investments. Engagement with UN, CSO, private sector, and development partners also revealed a shared need for enhanced analytical, tool development, and capacity-building efforts on the gender-climate nexus—one in which the WBG is expected to play a significant role.

² A Country Climate and Development Report (CCDR) is a new country analytics product designed to highlight the intersection between climate and development to inform WBG engagement. The CCDR aims to support a country’s strategic vision and identifies a set of priorities for the most impactful and cost-effective actions to boost adaptation, build resilience, and foster low-carbon growth, while delivering on broader development goals.

³ Analytical activities were invited under the headings of i. Gender, Poverty and Climate (including macro-fiscal perspective); ii. Skills, Green Jobs, and Just Transition (including energy, landscapes, and manufacturing); iii. Inclusive Climate Planning and Budgeting; iv. Gender and Climate-Resilient Livelihoods (including Adaptive Social Protection and Health); v. Gender and Climate-induced Migration; vi. Gender and Climate-Smart Finance and Enterprise Solutions; vii. Gender, Transport and the Built Environment in Decarbonizing Cities and Regions; and viii. Gender and Disaster Risk Reduction.

Internally, analysis of CCDR modeling employed to date has revealed that while there have been initial efforts in quantitative gender analyses (particularly on labor model projections amid decarbonization, including the potential for green jobs), this can be improved through use of sociospatial considerations. More standardized tools for analysis should be developed and deployed across CCDRs and their follow-on agendas.

Separately, efforts under **the program on women's climate leadership** will support inclusive institutional development, such as gender-climate budgeting and planning. Across all regions and institutions of the WBG, there is widespread demand for comprehensive approaches to gender and green jobs, with links variously to area-based development in coal phase-out contexts, as well as sustainable landscape approaches. Interest is also high in the areas of norms, school-to-work, skilling investments, women's climate entrepreneurship, and dedicated financing and policy streams.

Challenges and Mitigation Plan

While there has been huge internal and external demand for the rapid scale-up of the WBG's work on gender and climate, both funding and staff strength (in terms of number of people) for the program have been modest. There may be potential for donor-funded positions or potential secondments to the WBG to support this ambitious program.

Integrating Gender into Growth Analysis and Macro-fiscal Policies

The macro-fiscal space is a key area where the WBG supports client countries in designing effective fiscal policies and identifying sources of growth. However, gender considerations are often overlooked in fiscal policy analysis and growth strategies. Establishing a strong link between gender, growth, and fiscal policy is essential for achieving gender equality. Integrating gender analysis into fiscal policy enables governments to make informed decisions, allocate resources for gender-focused policies, and address market inefficiencies that disadvantage women. This can lead to increased female labor force participation and reduced gender-based labor market distortions, which are crucial for economic growth.

Proposed Use of UFGE Funds

Public Financial Reviews (PFRs), Growth and Jobs Reports (CEMs 3.0), and Poverty and Equity Assessments (PEAs) are key tools for integrating gender considerations into the macro-fiscal space and aligning recommendations accordingly. These diagnostics help demonstrate the impact of gender considerations on fiscal policies and growth strategies and are central to the proposed UFGE work program in this area (Table 6).

Table 6: Proposed activities, outputs, and outcomes for integrating gender into growth analysis and macro-fiscal policies.

Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
Select countries that will benefit from the UFGE macro-fiscal support	List of selected countries and proposals that will receive funding from UFGE	
Support countries doing gender analysis in the macro-fiscal space	CEMs, PFRs, and PEAs with gender angle	Bank analytical products in which an understanding of gender equality has been deepened by drawing on UFGE-supported evidence and analytical work
Support dissemination	Learning events and dissemination strategies implemented	Projects that apply UFGE-funded CEMs, PFRs, and PEAs, analytical work, or approaches
Ensure evidence influences CPFs, DPOs	CPF and DPOs informed by analytical work funded by UFGE	Country requests for new or expanded engagement with the WBG resulting from UFGE work

Resource Allocation and Funding Requirements

Total funding of \$9 million, \$1.5 million per year, for FY2025–30, is needed to sustain and expand the WB Gender Group’s collaborative efforts with the Macro Trade and Investment (MTI) and Poverty and Equity (POV) Global Practices, to integrate gender into macro-fiscal analysis.

UFGE piloted support in the amount of \$1 million to this initiative in FY2024 which was insufficient to meet demand from WBG country teams. The additional funding would enable continuity of this important work and help embed a gender lens in country policy dialogues. The initiative would also provide guidance, tools, and support to country teams, focusing on growth modeling and fiscal systems. Pilot countries selected by MTI will receive assistance to embed gender considerations into Country Economic Memorandums (CEMs) and PFRs. This work program seeks to influence key metrics, such as producing analytical reports and enhancing policy dialogues, to advance gender-focused fiscal policies.

Challenges and Mitigation Plan

Initially, there was concern about low interest from country teams in conducting gender analyses, potentially leading to underutilization of funds. However, this concern was unfounded as interest surpassed available resources, with over half of the informed countries expressing interest. To manage this, the Gender Group will need to be selective in project funding and seek additional resources.

Another challenge is the scarcity of experts with specialized skills in gender analysis. To address this, teams will be encouraged to connect with country-specific experts and seek professionals outside the Bank, enhancing the skill sets of country teams. Lastly, ensuring that findings influence decision-making poses a challenge. To address this, teams will be required to secure endorsement from Country Managers and engage with governmental counterparts at the onset, organizing progress workshops to steer the analysis in alignment with government priorities.

Knowledge Dissemination

Internally, MTI and POV will promote uptake through workshops, building on a successful recent session, in which pilot countries learned how to integrate gender into the macro space. During this session, the Gender Group presented a framework and various entry points for gender analysis.

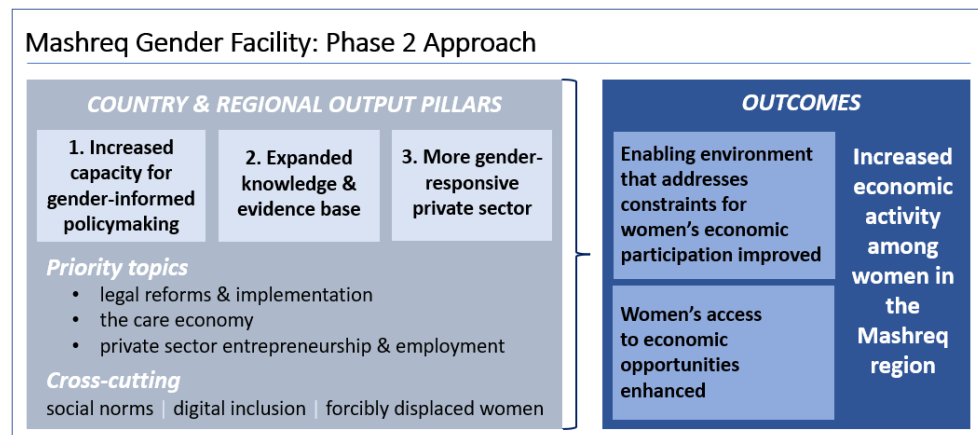
Additionally, country teams shared their experiences of integrating gender into macro analysis. The Global Practices plan to replicate these workshops in selected countries to advance their work.

Externally, the Global Practices will assist countries in disseminating their results to key counterparts, ensuring that the gender perspective is highlighted during presentations. Part of the funding allocated to countries will support events and dissemination activities with government counterparts and experts.

Mashreq Gender Facility

The MGF was established by the WBG to address key constraints hindering women’s economic activity in Iraq, Jordan, and Lebanon, with a focus on increasing female labor force participation (Annex D). Aligned with the WBG Gender Strategy’s objective to expand and enable economic opportunities, the MGF received positive feedback from an independent midterm learning evaluation in early 2023, recognizing its relevance and performance. Despite challenges, the MGF effectively provided technical assistance, sectoral expertise, and evidence-based policies, leading to tangible impact on the ground.

While the first phase of the program supported a wide range of activities aligned with government priorities across sectors, the second phase proposes a more focused approach. Building on the results of the initial phase and in



alignment with the new WBG Gender Strategy, the second phase of the MGF project will concentrate on legal reforms and implementation, the care economy, and private sector entrepreneurship and employment. The second phase will also prioritize addressing social norms, promoting digital inclusion, and supporting forcibly displaced women.

The combination of country-level presence, technical expertise, and support from a regional secretariat focusing on regional interests proved effective during the first phase of the project. With sufficient funding, they can be leveraged for the second phase, especially as there is a strong team in place for this next phase. With adequate funding, other options include considering Recipient Executed activities⁴ alongside Bank Executed ones and establishing a specific window for IFC to manage private sector engagements. The MGF can also serve as a channel for additional resources for increasing female labor force participation, such as those from other WB Trust Funds.

Proposed Use of UFGE Funds

Going forward, with support from UFGE funds, the MGF plans to continue its operations and impact over the next five years, focusing on continuous engagement and support across sectors to improve the legal, social, and workplace environment for women in the Mashreq region. The second phase of

⁴ A Recipient-executed Grant is a Trust Fund Grant that is provided to a third party under a grant agreement, and for which the Bank plays an operational role, i.e., the Bank normally appraises and supervises activities financed by these funds.

the initiative, from 2025 to 2030, will prioritize increased capacity for gender-informed policy making, expanded knowledge and evidence, and fostering a more gender-responsive private sector. Table 7 outlines activities envisioned for the MGF’s second phase (FY2025 and FY2027) with UFGE support.

Table 7: MGF proposed activities, outputs, and outcomes (FY2025 and FY2027).

Activities	Outputs	Outcomes*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagements with policy makers across countries for peer learning on specific topics • Technical assistance (TA) provided to governments of Iraq, Lebanon, and Jordan to identify and address legal restrictions and to support implementation to enhance women’s economic opportunities • TA provided to increase institutional and civil servants’ capacity on gender issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of events that include policy makers for more than one Mashreq country • Number of new legislative changes to advance gender equality • Number of reform implementation-related documents produced (guidance notes, manuals, best-practice briefs etc.) • Number of capacity-building events • Number of learning materials (used beyond a specific event) produced 	<p>UFGE: Better gender informed policy making at the country level</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just-in-time support to project teams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share of new projects supported by the MGF gender-tagged 	<p>UFGE: Improved design of operations, programs</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional data collection and analysis • Knowledge curation and dissemination • Country-level data collection and analysis • Design and implement pilot interventions, setting up for evaluation of impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of new regional gender data collected • Number of new <i>State of the Mashreq Women</i> flagship reports produced and disseminated • Number of new knowledge products (blogs, feature stories, newsletters, press releases, knowledge briefs, thematic deep dives) produced and published • Number of country-specific analytical reports on frontier issues and persistent gaps produced and disseminated • Number of pilot interventions to enhance forcibly displaced women’s economic empowerment • Number of pilot interventions (including campaigns) to address social norms that restrict women’s economic opportunities 	<p>UFGE: Heightened awareness and demand for gender equality interventions</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity building and technical assistance to advance safe childcare and responsible investing in the early childcare service sector (Care Arabia) • Capacity building and technical assistance to women-led micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) on access to financial and non-financial services • Capacity building and technical assistance to private firms to improve gender equitable practices • Skills development for women in emerging areas linking to labor market needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of private sector firms (employers) reached by engagement reporting improved knowledge/practices about supporting childcare - (Peer Learning Platform) • Number of nurseries reporting improved knowledge/practices about financial skills, child safeguarding • Number of entities accessing investment/financing • Number of women MSME leaders or owners benefiting from MGF training, including nurseries • Number of firms benefiting from gender diversity-related training that introduce policy changes to attract, retain and promote women (including childcare) • Number of women trained on skills for the labor market 	<p>UFGE: Improved design of operations and programs (private sector companies incorporating scalable/ replicable models to advance gender equality)</p>
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Resource Allocation and Funding Requirements

Seed funding from internal WB resources has been secured for the MGF’s next phase, but the team is currently fundraising for an additional \$10 million to cover the required resources.

Over the initial two-year period, approximately \$5 million would be needed to fund the activities outlined in Table 7. This funding could be allocated to the overarching MGF program or directed toward specific country programs.

The combination of country-level presence, technical expertise, and support from a regional secretariat focusing on regional interests proved effective during the first phase of the project. With sufficient funding, they can be leveraged for the second phase. Adequate funding can also help establish a specific window for IFC to manage private sector engagements. The MGF can also serve as a channel for additional resources for increasing female labor force participation, such as those from other WB trust funds.

Challenges and Mitigation Plan

The MGF operates in a region with diverse challenges, including economic, social, and political instability. Despite these obstacles, the facility focuses on providing targeted technical assistance to activities with the potential for significant impact, collaborating closely with national partners. In its second phase, the MGF will concentrate on topics where the WBG’s involvement is most beneficial and has country-level support, while maintaining engagement with both public and private sectors. The MGF aims to strengthen partnerships with civil society and donors and leverage country-specific expertise to deliver high-quality outputs adapted to local contexts.

Knowledge Dissemination

To further strengthen the MGF’s visibility and expand its reach, communication and knowledge dissemination efforts will continue, building on content generated across various workstreams. This will involve promoting visibility for both country-level activities and regional reports, while also fostering engagement in broader discussions on women’s economic opportunities. Using social media and traditional channels, the MGF will actively engage with a diverse range of stakeholders. Additionally, the

[MGF website](#) will remain a key platform for sharing updated content in both [Arabic](#) and [English](#), featuring essential information, success stories, quarterly newsletters, and publications.

Building on the MGF model and experience, the Maghreb Facility for Women’s Economic and Social Inclusion (MFW) was formed in 2022 covering Algeria, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia. The MFW aims to support country level efforts to enhance women’s access to economic opportunities and to facilitate their social inclusion in the Maghreb subregion. Similar to the MGF, it counts on seed funding from the Bank, and additional fundraising is underway to support activities that: (i) strengthen the generation and sharing of evidence and knowledge on constraints and solutions; (ii) build a broad engagement around gender issues internally, within the WB, and externally in the Maghreb countries; and, (iii) identify and support policy reforms and programmatic actions, leveraging innovation.

Flagship/Fast Track Country Activities

UFGE’s pilot Flagship Country Program supports country teams in strengthening gender outcomes through strategic and coherent country engagement. In FY2023, Flagship countries were selected in every region and they received UFGE grants to address critical gender constraints and pursue promising opportunities in frontier areas, including innovations in gathering and using gender data and evidence, adapting policies to rapid demographic changes, empowering adolescent girls, and addressing climate change. Examples of Flagship Country Program initiatives include strengthening access to elder care services in Indonesia, shifting gender norms about women working in Bangladesh, and conducting gender impact assessments in coal communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The program’s next phase, the Gender Strategy Fast Track Country Program, will help support the implementation of the WBG Gender Strategy 2024–30, by leveraging analytics, strategic country engagement, and cross-sector collaboration to improve outcomes and ensure a gender-inclusive approach to development. The first cohort of **Gender Strategy Fast Track countries** were selected based on client country demand and in collaboration with WBG country offices. Additional countries are expected to be selected over the course of the implementation of the new strategy.

Resource Allocation and Funding Requirements

Funding for the Gender Strategy Fast Track Program under Pillar 4 is estimated at \$13 for the FY2025–30 implementation period.

The Fast Track country projects chosen for funding will have a clear upstream need to customize knowledge to advance an operation; the potential for transformative change; a strong public good dimension; and opportunities to generate knowledge that can contribute to WBG technical support for client countries. The projects will need to contribute to one or more of strategic objectives of the strategy and activities/outcomes, such as supporting a country-driven approach that leverages existing and potentially new analytical work; better informed policy making at the country level by increasing the availability and use of gender data and evidence; improved design of operations and programs by supporting research uptake and translating new evidence into results on the ground; and building client capacity and promoting innovations and learning for gender-smart interventions.

Challenges and Mitigation Plan

There is a risk of insufficient resources to meet the demand from Fast Track country teams to advance progress on the WBG Gender Strategy objectives. Operating in multiple countries, the program may experience interruptions or delays due to political or economic shocks, prompting adjustments to activities and potential changes in the country context. A portfolio approach will be used to monitor activities and ensure adjustments are made in a timely manner.

Knowledge Dissemination

All activities will produce specific how-to lessons, including reporting failed efforts and cost assessments, which will be made available to operational teams in other countries that are considering similar approaches. Learning and dissemination events will also communicate shared experiences, challenges, and entry points for implementing the WBG Gender Strategy 2024–30.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

UFGE is committed to scaling up its impact through the establishment of a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework aligned with the WBG Gender Strategy 2024–2030. This framework will include clear baselines and targets to systematically track the progress and outcomes of activities specified in Pillars 1-4. Key indicators will focus on measuring the influence of UFGE-supported evidence and data on country-level policy and institutional reforms at both the public and private sector levels, as well as the integration of gender considerations in WBG operations. Twice annually, the UFGE Secretariat will check in with country grant teams and task teams working on specific activities to discuss progress, including implementation challenges, and ensure activities remain on track. The UFGE Secretariat will be available throughout the grant lifecycle to troubleshoot and support teams as needed.

5. Conclusion

UFGE is a vital contributor to the advancement of gender equality and can play a key role in the implementation of the WBG Gender Strategy 2024–2030. Replenishing UFGE is essential to sustain innovation, generate knowledge, and promote gender equality at the country level. Flexibility will also be important, as highlighted by the UFGE Mid-Term Review. Funding needs could shift between pillars or UFGE may consider reallocating across workstreams to take advantage of opportunities that arise.

With the requested funding of \$145 million over six years, UFGE will help activate the new WBG Gender Strategy, supporting transformative gender solutions for policy makers and investments while strengthening program and project designs at scale. Thank you for your support in replenishing the UFGE and investing in advancing gender equality worldwide.

Annexes

Annex A: UFGE's Theory of Change

Based on recommendations of the 2023 UFGE Mid-Term Review (MTR) and guidance from the UFGE Partnership Council, UFGE is updating its Theory of Change (Figure 1) and its Results Framework, **aligning them to the [World Bank Group \(WBG\) Gender Strategy 2024–2030: Accelerate Gender Equality for a Sustainable, Resilient and Inclusive Future](#)** to contribute to its implementation, strategic objectives, and ambition to accelerate gender equality. The Results Framework is also aligned with **the new [WBG's Corporate Scorecard](#)**. The update underlines UFGE's outcome orientation for stronger WBG operation results and client country outcomes. The proposed Results Framework will incorporate the relevant draft **gender strategy indicators** as well as key results indicators from UFGE's implementing partners (e.g., the consolidated Gender Innovation Labs (GILs) Results Framework). **It will also introduce baselines and targets for each indicator to enable better monitoring of progress.** A timeline for consultations and finalization of the new UFGE Results Framework is provided in the accompanying UFGE FY25 workplan and budget document.

The proposed Results Framework will differ from UFGE's current Results Framework in that it will be structured around UFGE's four pillars.

- Pillar 1: Evidence for Informed and Scalable Gender Programs | The Federation of Gender Innovation Labs
- Pillar 2: Private Sector Solutions
- Pillar 3: Better Gender Data
- Pillar 4: Multisectoral Country-Driven Solutions

Activities supported under the four pillars broadly fall under two categories:

Producing, analyzing, and synthesizing rigorous evidence and data to contribute to the strategic objectives in the new WBG Gender Strategy: ending GBV and elevate human capital, expand, and enable economic opportunities, and engage women as leaders, including by leveraging cross-cutting solutions: social norms and behavioral change, integrating gender into growth analysis and macro fiscal policies, gender and climate nexus, and leveraging digital solutions. Examples of outputs through these activities include impact evaluations and knowledge on what works to advance gender equality; publications sharing new evidence, analysis, data, or recommendations (e.g., journal articles, synthesis reports, policy briefs); and practical tools and case studies with good practices to, for instance, promote women's access to better jobs and services or prevent and respond to sexual harassment.

Sharing evidence and/or data generated to promote uptake and use, and to provide training and technical support for improved capacity and informed WBG operations/investments, WBG analytics, and public/private sector policies. Examples of outputs from these activities include policy dialogue, engagements or presentations of new evidence/data and tested solutions and capacity-building workshops for public or private sector institutions (e.g., National Statistic Offices, Ministries of Gender or Finance, companies or financial institutions), learning events (e.g., with WBG task teams, policy makers, and CSOs), and technical assistance/direct input to WBG operations, investments and guarantees or policy design and implementation.

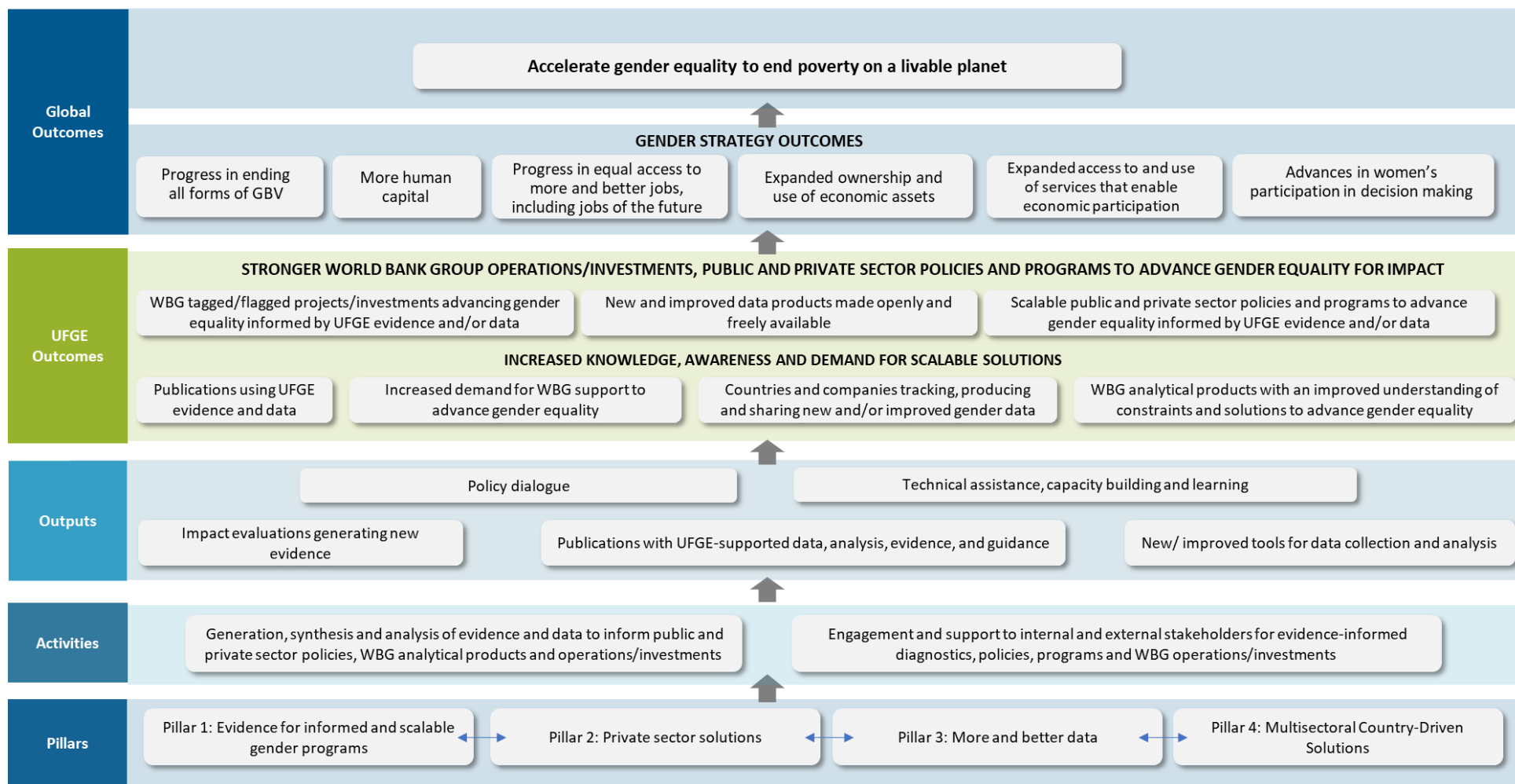
The Theory of Change embeds an **inclusive and intersectional approach** and leverages interlinkages between the UFGE pillars. For example, selected new activities on social norms and GBV under Pillar 4: Multi-sectoral Country-Driven Solutions will include the GILs (Pillar 1) and IFC (Pillar 2). Collaboration with key partners, such as women networks and CSOs, UN agencies, and MDBs, will be integral to collectively facilitating transformative change.

Together these sets of activities and outputs are expected to **result in stronger development outcomes to advance gender equality**, including increased awareness, knowledge, and demand for gender-smart solutions among WBG internal and external stakeholders and informing and influencing WBG projects, investments, and analytics and public and private sector policies. The following examples illustrate this Theory of Change for earlier UFGE grant investments:

- In Togo, a pilot intervention providing Personal Initiative (PI) training to women entrepreneurs and an impact evaluation by the Africa Gender Innovation Lab (AFR GIL) showed that PI training helped increase women’s earnings more than traditional business training alone. Findings from this intervention were featured in AFR GIL’s most downloaded flagship report, [Profiting from Parity: Unlocking the Potential of Women’s Business](#) (close to 20,000 downloads), and were widely disseminated. AFRGIL has helped operational teams adapt and scale the PI intervention across sectors and regions. For example, under the \$300 million IDA operation, Empowering Women Entrepreneurs and Upgrading Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises for Economic Transformation and Jobs in the Democratic Republic of Congo (TRANSFORME DRC), PI training is being offered to 25,000 women. By June 2023, PI training was scaled up across 45 projects in 30 countries, mobilizing more than \$1.3 billion in development spending.
- In Colombia, India, and Kenya, a pioneering IFC study, [Her Home](#), highlighted the untapped market potential of housing finance for women. The study became a global resource on housing finance for women, influencing IFC’s Financial Institutions Group to direct 80 percent of lending to gender-flagged financial institutions, particularly those supporting business growth and housing finance. Since its launch, IFC’s Housing Finance for Women Initiative has reached \$1 billion in funding to 11 financial institutions for mortgages for women. These financial institutions estimate that by 2030, they could reach 500,000 women with mortgage loans.

As demonstrated by these examples, UFGE’s evidence has informed decisions to scale up tested gender solutions through WBG operations, IFC investments, MIGA guarantees and public and private sector policies and programs. With the support of UFGE partners, these investments will help to realize goals under the new WBG Corporate Scorecard: millions of people benefiting from gender equality and countries supported to achieve greater gender equality in high-level country outcomes.

Figure 1: UFGE Updated Theory of Change



Annex B: UFGE Implementing Teams and Partners to Advance Gender Equality at Scale

UFGE Implementing Team	Internal WBG Partners	External Partners
Pillar 1: Evidence for Informed and Scalable Gender Programs		
<p>The Regional Gender Innovation Labs (GILs)</p>	<p>The GILs work closely with regional gender coordination teams, ensuring alignment with regional needs and promoting the uptake of their work in policy dialogues. They also contribute to the Gender Group and over 11 Global Practices (GPs), influencing country engagement products, country diagnostic and analytical work, country gender assessments, and the development of Regional Gender Action Plans (RGAPs).</p>	<p>The GILs engage with a wide network of partners, including governments, donors, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), think tanks, private sector firms, and leading global research institutions. Collaborations with local researchers at institutions, such as the University of Ghana’s Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research; Addis Ababa University; and the Centre for Economic Research in Pakistan, amplify their research and policy impact. Notable partners include the Agence Française de Développement, Associazione Italiana Donne per lo Sviluppo, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung, BRAC, Care, Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe, Center for Global Development, Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, Concern, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, G2LM LIC, Global Affairs Canada, Inter-American Development Bank, ideas42, International Food Policy Research Institute, International Labor Organization, International Rescue Committee, Innovations for Poverty Action, The Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab, Millennium Challenge Corporation, National Science Foundation, Observatoire National du Développement Humain, Oxfam, Population Council, Private Sector Education, Save the Children, United States Agency for International Development, Technoserve, Wellspring, United Nations Capital Development Fund, United Nations Children’s Fund, and UN Women.</p>
Pillar 2: Private Sector Solutions		
<p>IFC</p>	<p>IFC will continue to collaborate on advancing gender in the private sector across the WBG, such as with the GILs, MIGA, WBL, WEFI, among others.</p>	<p>IFC has accelerated gender equality efforts by engaging in impactful partnerships that can introduce a gender focus to sectors and markets that previously did not have one. These partnerships range from joint research and co-financing platforms to convening, setting standards, influencing capital markets, and advocating for the collection of</p>

		<p>harmonized sex-disaggregated data. Examples include partnering with the International Labor Organization, co-financing with the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Women program, and influencing capital markets by working with stock exchanges, among others. IFC will continue to develop and foster external partnership and act as a convener to advance gender equality in and through the private sector.</p>
MIGA	<p>MIGA will continue to seek collaboration with other units within the WBG, such as the GILs, Global Practices, and IFC.</p>	<p>MIGA will continue deepening its engagement within the guarantees community to work together to achieve MIGA’s UFGE objectives. It will continue strategic partnerships with the Financial Alliance for Women and 2X Global, among others. MIGA’s partnerships are pivotal to support research and encourage the integration of gender considerations into its clients’ investment decisions and operations. Enhancing MIGA’s capacity to create and disseminate knowledge products will help foster the adoption of gender equality practices in the private sector.</p>
<p>Pillar 3: Better Gender Data</p>		
Strengthening Gender Statistics (SGS)	<p>The SGS project leverages expertise from the Gender Group, Poverty and Equity Global Practice, and the Development Data Group’s Living Standards Measurement Study program, all with extensive experience in improving gender statistics. Key internal partners include poverty economists, who lead dialogues with National Statistical Offices and support statistical capacity building and will benefit from project learnings to apply in other contexts. Country management units and in-country communication teams facilitate high-level dialogues with governments, particularly Ministries of Finance, crucial for long-term financial backing of gender statistics activities. The SGS team also collaborates with various WB units and sectoral colleagues to ensure active use of newly available gender data in projects.</p>	<p>Partnerships with National Statistical Offices, policymakers, gender observatories, and women’s institutes ensure the use of gender data in policy design and monitoring. The project also aims to strengthen global partnerships with other actors working on gender data, such as UN Women, data2x, and paris21, to further enhance data quality and dissemination efforts.</p>
Women, Business, and the Law (WBL)	<p>WBL collaborates with Regional Chief Economist teams, particularly the GILs, to amplify data and evidence that</p>	<p>WBL has recently signed MOUs with Equality Now, Women Political Leaders, and Oliver Wyman Forum. The team has established</p>

	make the case for reforms. The WBL team works closely with regional gender focal points and country teams to increase the uptake of the data and clarify understanding of the WBL data and methodology.	partnerships with UN Women, the OECD, Arizona State University, and others are in development. WBL also has a network of 10,000 legal experts around the world who contribute their expertise to the project.
Gender Data Portal	The Gender Data Portal draws on expertise from the Gender Group and the Development Data Group, as well as inputs and insights from gender focal points across the entire WBG.	The Gender Data Portal maintains active relationships with other actors working on gender data, such as UN Women, data2x, and paris21, and remains engaged in user feedback from academia, CSOs, and others.
Pillar 4: Multisectoral Country-driven Solutions		
Behavioral Science and Social Norms	The team has ongoing collaborations with the Gender Innovation Labs, the Mind, Behavior, and Development Unit (eMBeD) within the Bank, and the DIME Narrating Behavior Change program (DIME-NBC).	External partners include Ideas42, Yale-SOM, and UN Women.
Integrating Gender Solutions into Climate Action	The proposed Gender and Climate Program is a WBG-wide effort, comprising ongoing collaboration among the World Bank, IFC, and MIGA. A key output has been the preparation of the Gender-Climate Thematic Note, Placing Gender Equality at the Center of Action , which served as an input to the WBG Gender Strategy 2024-30, as well as a community of practice for WBG staff on the gender-climate theme. There is close coordination among the Gender Group, Human Development, and Social Development Practice Groups, as well as Infrastructure, and such Global Practices as Social Sustainability and Inclusion, Poverty, Social Protection, Environment, and Agriculture, as well as the cross-cutting Climate Group. Competitive grant applications have been received from across the WBG, revealing widespread engagement on the topic.	A networked approach is planned to ensure cross-learning within the WBG and among clients, as well as for the development of effective partnership activities with UN, CSO, and private sector actors, including for Conference of the Parties (COP) meetings under the UNFCCC. Other activities will encompass shared priorities on gender and climate data, just transition, women’s climate leadership, and expansion of private sector solutions, including for women’s climate entrepreneurship. The WBG Gender Group is leveraging existing partnerships and identifying new opportunities with a range of partners, from other MDBs to UN agencies including UN Women and UNFCCC, to regional bodies, such as OECD DAC, and leading CSOs, such as IUCN, SEWA, and others, to ensure a range of perspectives and opportunities for institutionalizing the gender-climate agenda are brought to the fore.
Integrating Gender into Growth Analysis and Macro Fiscal Policies	Gender integration into core diagnostics will be a collaborative effort involving the Macro Trade and Investment (MTI) and Poverty and Equity (POV) Global Practices. Workshops have already been conducted jointly, and this partnership will continue to develop by	The macro-fiscal domain attracts significant interest from development partners and civil society organizations. Initial efforts in gender-inclusive growth models have led to fruitful interactions with the Yale Economic Growth Center (Yale EGC), contributing to this field through a white paper. This collaboration is expected to deepen over time. Additionally,

	co-authoring guidance notes, coordinating support for countries, and organizing dissemination events to ensure a cohesive approach to gender analysis.	<p>for budgeting aspects of fiscal policy analysis, further collaboration with the IMF is anticipated, as they have developed tools for gender budgeting assessment.</p> <p>Highlighting the importance of external partnerships, collaborations with women's organizations like Nawi in Africa and SEWA in South Asia will be crucial. These partnerships go beyond disseminating work; they contribute to refining the Bank's approaches by integrating unique perspectives and insights on growth and fiscal policy. Recognizing past instances where growth and fiscal policies have disadvantaged gender equality, and understanding their disproportionate impact on women, will lead to the design of better policies ensuring gender equality. These partnerships also play a pivotal role in gaining legitimacy in this field.</p>
Mashreq Gender Facility (MGF)	In the proposed second phase of its work, the MGF will maintain and build on existing partnerships across the three countries while placing a stronger emphasis on collaborating with relevant civil society stakeholders. Since its inception in 2019, the facility has engaged a Steering Committee comprising regional directors from the World Bank and IFC, a UN Women representative for the MENA region, key donors, and two government representatives per country. This forum has been instrumental in sharing information and fostering strategic synergies and collaboration. Additionally, maintaining coordination among stakeholders at the country level remains crucial for success, but with a more targeted focus on specific topics or sectors outlined in the proposed outputs. While broad engagement allows for strategic flexibility, it also requires significant coordination efforts, and the impact often hinges on factors beyond the team's control.	
Fast Track Country Activities	Close collaboration with the country offices, Country Directors and management, Global Practices, and client country engagement are preconditions to selection as a Fast Track country.	Partnerships with local CSOs, research institutions, UN agencies, other MDBs, and public and private sector are critical to achieving early implementation of the WBG Gender Strategy objectives.