

# eVALUatiOn Matters

A Quarterly Knowledge Publication  
of the Operations Evaluation Department  
of the African Development Bank Group

March 2014

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AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK GROUP  
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DE DEVELOPPEMENT

*“Today there is growing recognition that gender equality is not only a critical human rights issue for women and girls, it is a prerequisite for the achievement of broader development goals, effective humanitarian response and sustainable peace and security.”*

*Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women, Page 52*

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The **mission of the Operations Evaluation Department** is to enhance the development effectiveness of the AfDB in its regional member countries through independent and instrumental evaluations and partnerships for sharing knowledge

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# FROM THE DIRECTOR'S IPAD *Run the Talk.....*

Rakesh Nangia, Director,  
Operations Evaluation Department, AfDB



At 17 years of age, I was a freshman at college filled with hope, idealism and a desire to change the world. The classes were in full swing and meetings with new dorm-mates and debating everything from engineering math to philosophy was the order of the day (and night). Life was exciting and it was indeed a wonderful world full of promise.

The news came with a deafening roar. One of our mates lost his sister. It was not the death as such, but the cause of the death. The claim was an accident in the kitchen, but the discussion focused on “dowry-death” or bride burning. It was not my first encounter with unfairness or injustice, but certainly one that shook us all. The idealism in us came to the fore and the desire to change the world took shape in earnest. As we saw it, this was murder in the first degree and disguise would not deter us from justice. We organized



*Gender inequality begins before birth at female feticide and moves to early girl’s education (access and preferences), female genital mutilation, sexual abuse, trafficking, domestic violence and wage discrimination. Is this for real?*

ourselves and for several weeks protested outside the house or the “site of the murder”. The protests grew larger and police presence became necessary even though we remained peaceful. But we were loud. The media took notice and we all came away feeling a sense of victory.

But it was a pyrrhic victory. We went back to our classes, a few weeks later the media moved on and focused on other stories and the judicial wheels creaked on for eternity. No one took notice of the fact that the capital punishment we sought during our protests did not even translate to community service. “Dowry deaths” were hardly uncommon and this became yet another statistic.

I think back on the incident and feel a sense of failure. Despondency sets in deeper as I hear (and read) of countless tales of injustice. Gender inequality begins before birth at female feticide and moves

to early girl's education (access and preferences), female genital mutilation, sexual abuse, trafficking, domestic violence and wage discrimination. Is this for real?

As development professionals there is intractable evidence on the importance of gender equity. The facts are clear: Gender equality is smart economics and gender equity is the right thing to do. Our special envoy on gender, Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, underscores these points quite clearly in her compelling article. Many other contributors in this issue point to data that demonstrates progress. The number of women parliamentarians, sharp increase in education enrollment for girls, declines in maternal mortality, changes to legal frameworks and "affirmative action". The list is endless. Yet real progress is scant.

I do not doubt the statistics and the positive moves. I question the pace. It is not only a question of development but more importantly human rights and morality. As noted in several articles in this issue the development community is using a range of instruments to bring about positive change. The details of the "Evaluation Community of Practice"

discussion notes many good actions the development practitioners can undertake. But this is tantamount to pushing on a string. After generations of abuse we have run out of time. We need to shift our mindset and all of us need to be champions for this cause. We need leaders – political, religious, economic, civic – to help accelerate this mindshift. Else, it will be another 1,000 years of abuse. We do not have the time to "Walk the Talk" for now we must "Run the Talk". Over this marathon many will look at the numbers to declare victory. But it will be another pyrrhic victory and one we can least afford. Gender Inequality and You. Where do you stand? Please Run the Talk for a better world. It's time.



*We do not have the time to "Walk the Talk" for now we must "Run the Talk". Over this marathon, many will look at the numbers to declare victory. But it will be another pyrrhic victory and one we can least afford.*

### Profile of the Author

Rakesh Nangia is the Director of the Operations Evaluation Department of the African Development Bank. Prior to joining the AfDB, he spent 25 years at the World Bank, where he held several positions including Director of Strategy and Operations for the Human Development Network and Acting Vice-President for the World Bank Institute.

He attended the Indian Institute of Technology in Delhi and Harvard University and holds degrees in business administration and engineering.



# THE STATE OF GENDER EQUALITY IN AFRICA: *Trends, Challenges and Opportunities*

*Quality Assurance and Results Department, Gender and Social Development  
Monitoring Division of the African Development Bank*

## Summary

The African Development Bank (AfDB) vision for Africa for the coming ten years (2013-2022) focuses on an inclusive and green growth that is not just environmentally sustainable but also empowering. While Africa has been growing, economic performance has been mixed and the benefits not evenly distributed. The importance of growth for poverty reduction is undisputed. But for growth to have a positive impact on poverty reduction, it must contribute to lowering inequality. Addressing gender differences to “level the playing field” and enable women as well as men to contribute to and benefit from, social and economic development is at the core of inclusive and sustainable growth in Africa.

To achieve gender-inclusive and gender-equitable growth, actions are required in two critical and mutually reinforcing areas. These are:

- Ensuring that economic opportunity is gender-inclusive (thereby enabling gender equitable contributions to growth); and
- Ensuring that participation in decision-making – at the household, community, and national levels – is gender-inclusive (thereby enabling gender-equitable benefits from growth).

This report aims to identify key challenges that exist in these areas in Africa and provide a foundation for articulating key priorities to achieve results. Based on this analysis, the report [proposes] major action areas.

The review and analysis of available databases and of Bank and other reports, confirm the interrelationship and complexity of factors hindering gender equality in Africa. The report shows that gender differences continue to exist in:

- Market and domestic work: labor force participation (primarily in North Africa), gender-based segmentation of the labor market, entrepreneurship, family responsibilities and unpaid care work;
- Legal status and rights: legal capacity, access to and control of assets and resources including property;
- Health status: maternal mortality and exposure to health risks; and
- Participation in decision-making and civic life: gender-based violence, exposure to media, political representation decision-making at all levels.

The report reveals that these differences constitute important obstacles to the achievement of the dual objectives identified at the outset, namely: ensuring gender-inclusiveness in contributing to growth and poverty reduction and ensuring gender-inclusiveness in participation in decision-making, aimed at enabling both women and men to benefit equitably from growth and poverty reduction.

Addressing these areas in policy formulation and programs is paramount for the achievement of promoting equitable growth and poverty reduction in Africa. The findings concur with other analyses which show that some of the key constraints to women’s empowerment and gender equality are not related to economic growth and do not necessarily improve in line with development. Growth alone is not sufficient to ensure that women’s legal status and rights are better protected by the justice system or that gender-based violence is reduced.

The report recommends four intersecting priority areas to address gender equality in Africa:

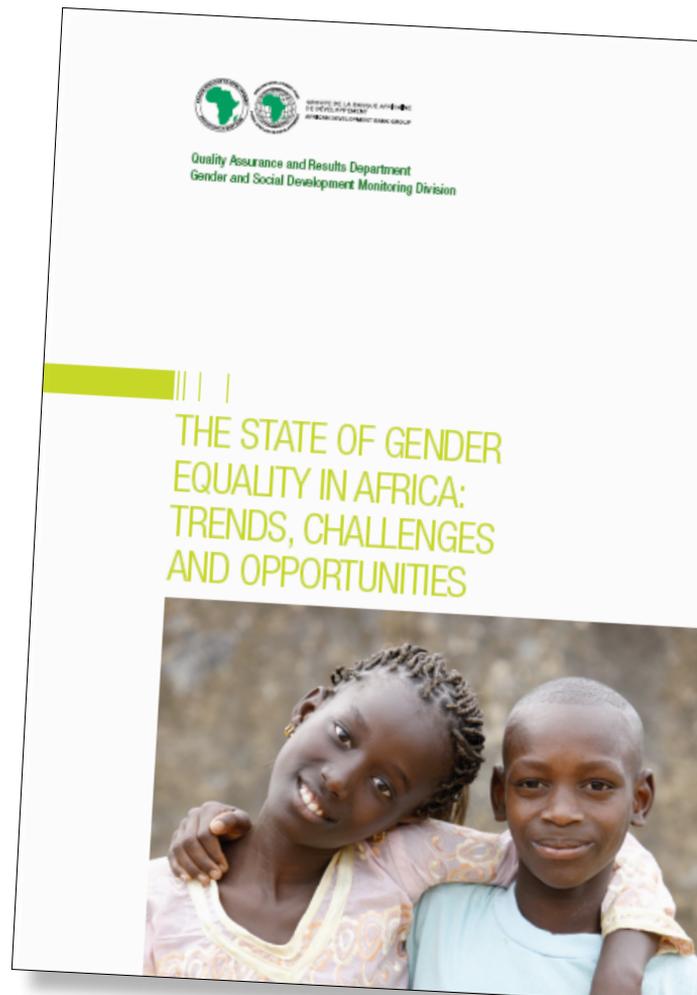
- Strengthen women’s legal status and property rights;
- Reduce women’s overall work burden (time savings);

- Reduce maternal mortality;
- Address gender-based violence (GBV).

For each of the four priority areas, entry points are as follows:

### ***Strengthen Women’s Legal Status and Rights***

- **Justice Sector Reform.** Work with partners to promote justice sector reform with a view to strengthening women’s legal status and property rights and improving effective access to legal services.
- **Private Sector Development and Entrepreneurship.** It is critical to work proactively with African countries to improve the business climate, to expand business opportunities for both men and women entrepreneurs, and to strengthen the gender



responsiveness of its own investments in the private sector.

- **Agriculture.** Policy and programs need to recognize the markedly gender differentiated roles of men and women in agriculture explicitly, and address these differences in sector analysis and strategies, especially food security strategies, and in the design and delivery of agricultural services.

### ***Reduce Women’s Overall Work Burden (Time Savings)***

- Promote productive uses of energy that capture the different needs and opportunities of women and men for energy services. Access to electricity at the household level is vital to reducing women’s overall work burdens, especially by focusing on energy needs required to accomplish domestic tasks.
- Prioritize Access to clean cooking fuels and improved use of biomass. The MDG “voluntary cooking target” should be supported by investing additional resources aimed at increasing access to clean cooking fuels and making better use of existing biomass. This will make a significant contribution to the lives of the more than 620 million people in SSA who continue to rely on solid fuels for cooking.

### ***Reduce Maternal Mortality***

- Focus on health services, and provision of other Infrastructure (electricity, water, transport) to reduce maternal mortality. A cross-sectoral approach should be adopted in which the specific contributions of all relevant sectors to the reduction of maternal mortality can be clearly identified and mobilized.

- **Population Issues.** Demographic dynamics will play a substantial if often unrecognized role in shaping. Reproductive health information and services to address high rates of maternal mortality can also help to address demographic challenges such as high fertility rates, especially in rural areas and among the urban poor.

### ***Address Gender-Based Violence***

Gender-Based Violence (GBV). Expand and deepen support to comprehensive efforts to address GBV, and to provision of the full range of services required, including care/ treatment, trauma counseling, and measures aimed at prevention and behavior change. It is equally essential to link the GBV response to the wider task of empowering women and raising their status in society by addressing root causes of gender discrimination and women’s subordination. The report suggests that the African Development Bank take other pro-active measures to promote gender-inclusive participation in economic opportunity and decision-making through its policies and investments and in dialogue with its regional member countries (RMCs). AfDB can support RMCs in promoting gender equality and Women’s Empowerment as an explicit goal of policy and programs, consistent with commitments made under CEDAW, the Maputo Protocol, and the MDGs. The Bank, which is rightly concerned about addressing the impacts of climate change in Africa, can help strengthen the focus on gender-inclusion and responsiveness in supporting the climate change mitigation and adaptation agenda in RMCs as set out in its ten year strategy.

WHEN GENDER MAINSTREAMING AND INDEPENDENT  
EVALUATION AT THE AfDB FIRST MET

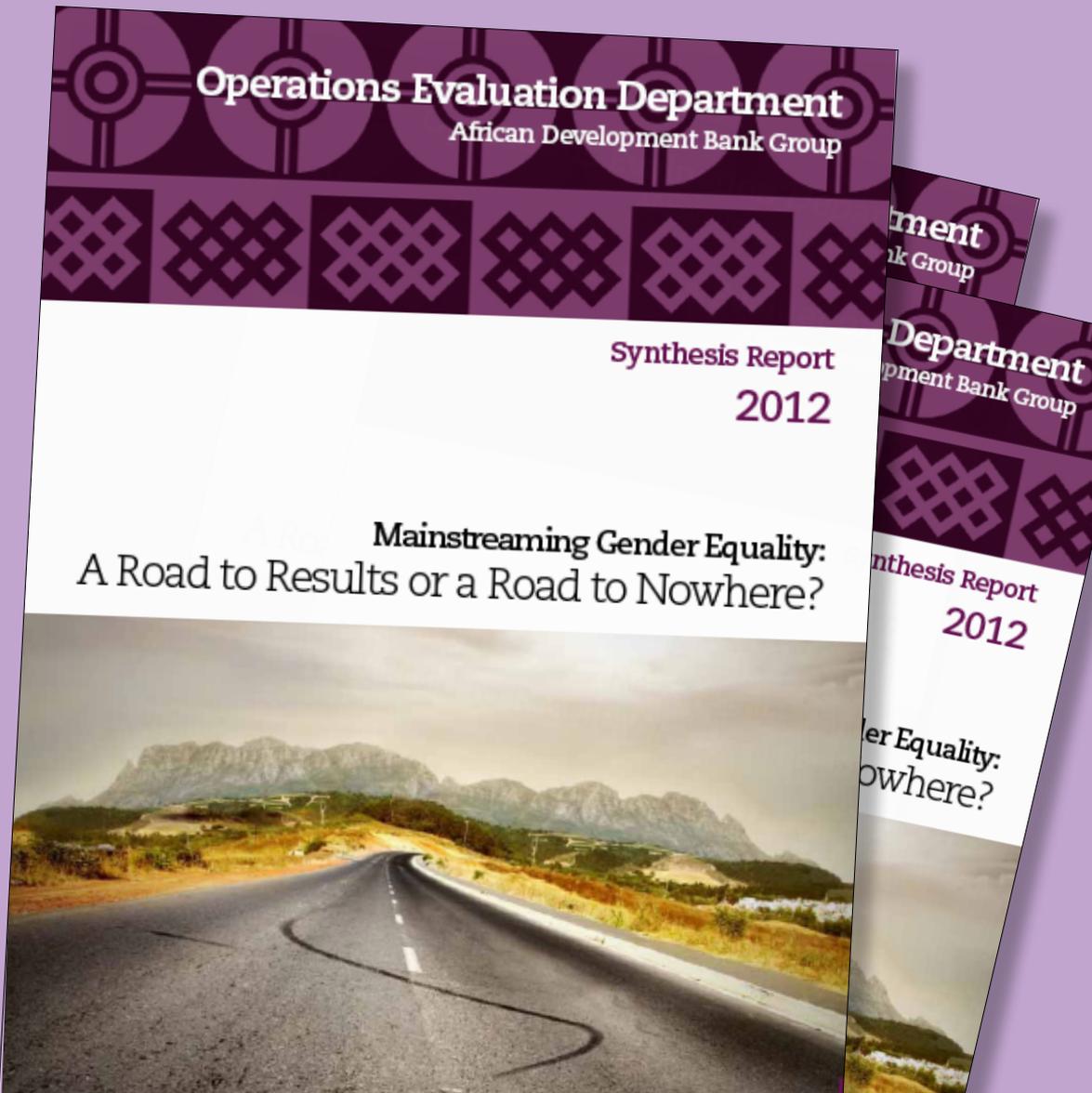
# MAINSTREAMING GENDER EQUALITY:

## *A Road to Results or a Road to Nowhere?*

*Operations Evaluation Department, African Development Bank*

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Main Conclusion and Options



Synthesis Report  
2012

Mainstreaming Gender Equality:  
A Road to Results or a Road to Nowhere?

Synthesis Report  
2012

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## 1.1 Introduction

Since the Beijing Fourth World Conference on Gender and Development in 1995, the majority of multilateral and bilateral donors have put in place gender policies and/or strategies to promote equality in the design and delivery of development assistance to partner countries. Mainstreaming has become the ubiquitous process through which donor organizations have attempted to integrate gender into development analysis, country dialogue, sectors and operations, with the aim of making gender “everyone’s business,” and therefore leading to improved gender equality results and more equitable and sustainable development. The conceptual heart of gender mainstreaming is:

*“...that questions of gender must be taken seriously in central, mainstream, ‘normal’ institutional activities and not simply left in a marginalised, peripheral backwater of specialist women’s institutions.”*

*(Charlesworth 2005)*

From the mid to late 1990s until 2010, gender policies and mainstreaming processes were the subject of more than 25 thematic and country evaluations by multilateral and bilateral agencies. Some organizations, such as the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Norwegian Agency for International Cooperation (Norad), the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Bank have conducted multiple evaluations of gender over the last decade, allowing for opportunities to assess trends in evaluation findings and in management responsiveness to evaluation. Individual evaluations have shown that mainstreaming has not succeeded in making gender everyone’s business, and that gender equality results have been fragmented and not scaled up. Furthermore, many of the evaluations have been conducted in isolation, and with the exception of the Norad synthesis of eight organizational evaluations completed in 2006 have lacked a broader comparative assessment of findings across organizations (Norad 2006). Currently, there is a strong informal perception that mainstreaming gender equality is consistently underperforming across the majority of donor organizations.



*...there is a strong informal perception that mainstreaming gender equality is consistently underperforming across the majority of donor organizations*

However, in the absence of a comprehensive synthesis review, such perceptions are not sufficient to establish general root causes and thus to influence policy or operational change strategies. This gap in evaluative knowledge needs to be filled.

In response to the evaluative gap, this synthesis intends to build on overview provided in the Norad (2006) study, by making a comprehensive assessment of gender evaluations conducted by donor agencies between 1990 and 2010. The results of the synthesis will provide the Bank and other stakeholders with a clear overview of the challenges and good practices at an organizational level; as well as future options for gender mainstreaming.

This analysis comes at a time when multilateral interest in gender equality is rising again with the creation of UN Women in 2010, and with the forthcoming World Development Report 2012: Gender Equality and Development.

## 1.2 Conclusions

➔ **CONCLUSION 1: Leadership has not consistently supported the implementation of gender mainstreaming policy, resulting in what has been widely described as “policy evaporation.”**

Mainstreaming requires change. Organizational culture must break with old ways of thinking and acting, and accept and act on new concepts. Importantly, mainstreaming also needs to resonate sufficiently with the past and present organizational *raison d’être* to be accepted. Senior management must demonstrate leadership and commitment over time for a policy or strategy to be mainstreamed; and this commitment must be supported by the necessary resources, incentives, and accountability systems. A key challenge to mainstreaming gender equality in donor organizations has proved to be the failure of senior management to move beyond policy rhetoric and to actively commit to the concept, to put in place organization-wide systems and resources necessary to make gender “everyone’s business”.

The underlying reasons for failure are often related to competing leadership priorities. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), aid effectiveness, and governance agendas, to name a few, have crowded out gender mainstreaming. Furthermore, senior management are often most responsive to those priorities that receive the most international attention and resources, and so offer rewards and career enhancement.

➔ **CONCLUSION 2: The absence of accountability and incentive systems to systematize the integration of gender equality across organizations and interventions has limited the achievement of results.**

The evaluations strongly emphasized the absence of accountability and incentives systems at the organization-wide level as a key factor limiting the integration of gender equality into organizational processes and interventions, and therefore inhibiting the attainment of results (see 4.4).

However, it is important to note that discussion about the effects of such systems is almost entirely hypothetical. In practice, these systems do not seem to exist in a coherent form, and for this reason the status they have acquired as a solution to the broad failure of gender mainstreaming should be approached with caution, until such systems are put in place and can be evaluated.

➔ **CONCLUSION 3: Financial and human resources have not been sufficient to enable effective mainstreaming of gender equality within donor organizations and interventions.**

Evaluations show that mainstreaming is not a financial or resource-free process. Donor organizations have not devoted sufficient resources to support gender mainstreaming. The lack of resources is largely a symptom of the inconsistent or absent leadership focus on gender equality (see 4.3). Human resources, in terms of the numbers of gender specialists, have been cut or remained at a low level within many donor organizations. Responsibility for gender equality has often been relegated to consultants, or junior or part-time staff, who lack the ability to influence either policy dialogue or operational staff in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of interventions. Many evaluations were unable to identify financial/ budgetary allocations for gender mainstreaming at either the headquarters or intervention level, as such information was not available or tracked. Frequently, budgetary allocations for monitoring gender equality components in project interventions were lacking, contributing to lack of results reporting and learning.



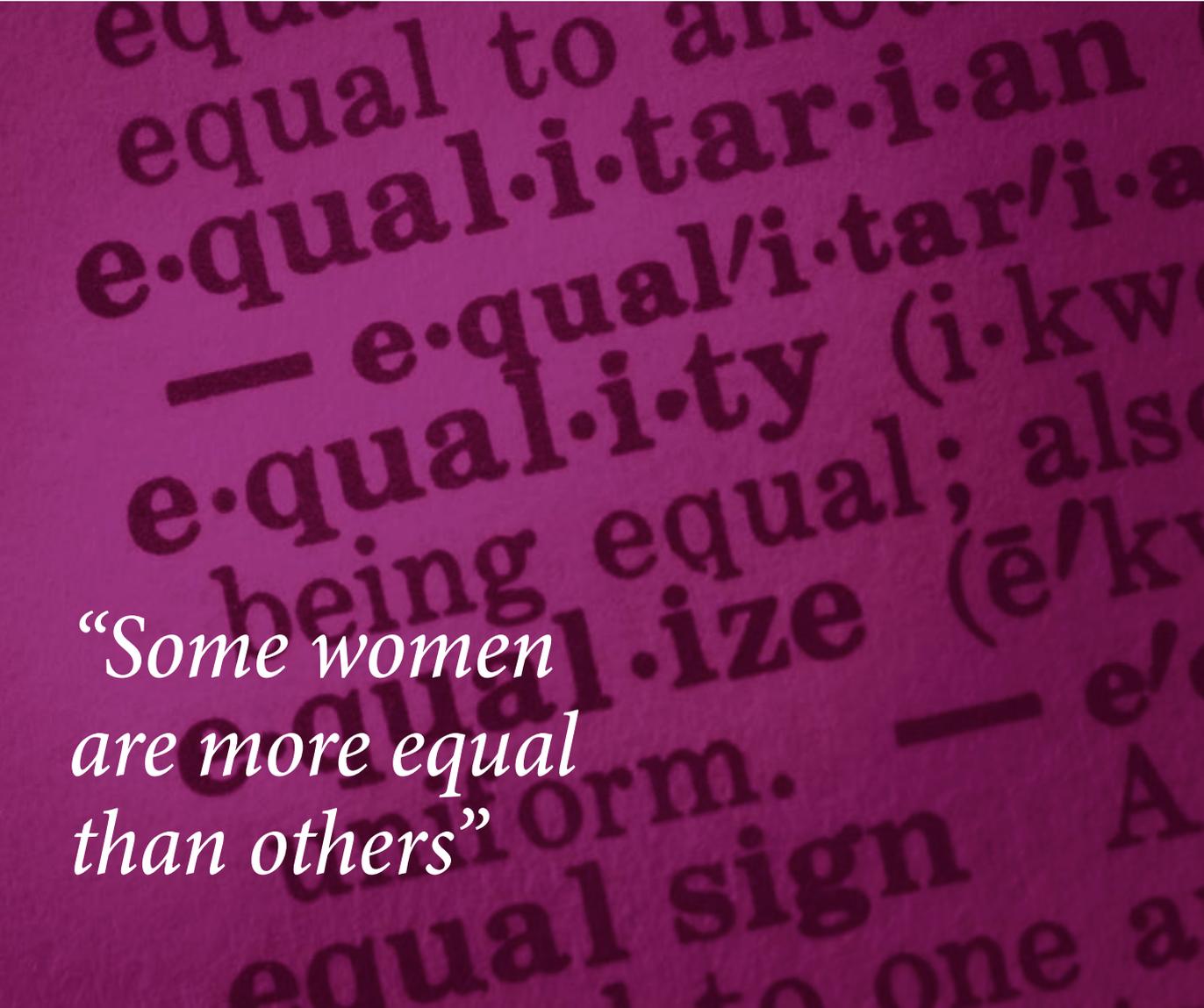
*Mainstreaming requires change. Organizational culture must break with old ways of thinking and acting, and accept and act on new concepts*

➔ **CONCLUSION 4: Many procedures and practices have been introduced following the adoption of new gender policies or strategies, but have been actively pursued for only a short period before gradually declining in use.**

The most common organizational approach to supporting gender mainstreaming has been to develop procedures and practices such as Gender Action Plans (GAPs), gender analysis, toolkits, manuals, checklists, and staff training. Evaluations found, however, that few of these are used systematically, because of the lack of incentives or rules mandating their use. Hence, the use of gender mainstreaming procedures and practices often depends on individual country and sectoral contexts and the choices of operational staff.

Experience and derived good practice show that procedures such as GAPs and gender analysis can be effective if they are integrated throughout the design, implementation, and monitoring of the intervention. Presently, these procedures tend to be confined to particular sectors such as education and health, where opportunities for gender-sensitive approaches are more self-evident to operations and partner governments. Cross-sectoral learning and organization-wide adoption have been limited, and this has been attributed to the lack of supporting organizational systems, particularly accountability and incentive mechanisms.

Training has been largely reported to be ineffective in raising awareness and improving the knowledge necessary for gender-sensitive approaches. This is because training has been delivered using a



*“Some women  
are more equal  
than others”*

“one-size-one-shot fits all” approach, with little tailoring to local country or sectoral contexts. Further, resources have not been consistently targeted at providing training; the few gender specialists are overburdened with responsibilities; senior management and non-gender specialist operational staff often avoid gender training, citing heavy workloads and other priorities. Earlier evaluations of organizational responses to women in development (WID) initiatives in the 1980s and early 1990s indicated that similar sets of procedures and practices were developed, and that they encountered similar challenges.

➔ **CONCLUSION 5: Results reporting and learning have been seriously challenged by inconsistent approaches to monitoring and evaluation of gender mainstreaming.**

One of the most common findings reported by the evaluations has been the lack of M&E and supervision systems within donor organizations to track progress, allow for adaptive management, record gender equality results, and document good practices (see 4.5). Even when gender equality and analysis are integrated at the design stage of interventions, the focus on gender is often not continued into implementation and monitoring because of lack of financial and/or human resources. Gender is often included in project design to satisfy bureaucratic requirements for approval and then dropped during implementation, as operational staff focus on the main priorities of the intervention. This situation often creates a vicious cycle—lack of monitoring leads to invisibility of gender results, which feeds back into a lack of awareness and interest in promoting gender equality in future interventions.

Many evaluation findings show that where results are reported, they tend to be focused on: (a) women and not on gender, indicating that in practice a gender equality approach is reduced to women in development (WID); and (b) the education and health sectors, because it is easier to monitor and evaluate effects on women and gender in these areas. However, with regard to (b), the transfer of these operational experiences to other sectors has

generally not taken place. Instead of being mainstreamed, gender equality has become focused on specific sectors. The evaluations also found that evaluations themselves often have failed to systematically incorporate gender into the body of evidence. Outside of specific thematic gender evaluations, evaluation offices have tended to place gender on their list of topics for occasional coverage rather than systematically integrating it into all their streams of work (see 5.1).

➔ **CONCLUSION 6: Integrating gender equality into new aid modalities presents many new challenges to donor organizations.**

The emerging evaluative data on integrating gender equality into new aid modalities such as policy-based lending (PBL), general budget support (GBS), and sector-wide approaches (SWAs) indicates that gender is not being mainstreamed systematically into these types of interventions. SWAs focused on education, health, and social safety net sectors report better integration of gender concerns than other sectors and types of modalities, for the same reasons as traditional project-based interventions in these sectors (see 5.1).

The emerging challenges in gender mainstreaming relate to (a) inconsistent ownership of gender within partner governments, which results in it being given a low priority in poverty reduction strategies and country policy dialogue; (b) lack of donor harmonization around gender issues, resulting in inconsistencies in policy discussions and the design of PBL, GBS, and SWAp operations; and (c) lack of in-country gender expertise and tools to mainstream gender in policy dialogue and interventions, which makes it difficult for gender issues to gain “a place at the table.”

### ***1.3 Options for Gender?***

As substantial challenges have prevented gender equality from entering the mainstream, the evaluation evidence suggests that it may be time to consider different options (see Chapter 5).

➔ **OPTION 1: Gender focusing**

This approach would focus on those sectors where gender equality appears to be sufficiently embedded and has made some progress, and attempt to create linkages with related sectors. This approach largely would continue business as usual for most donor organizations and partner governments, as it would emphasize education and health projects or SWAps focused on women's empowerment and gender equality. Donors could then work with partner governments to add additional entry points for gender in other sectors, such as improvement of labor market policies and the enabling environment for investment, to break down gender-based discrimination in private sector development. This may enhance partner government support, as it would be part of a policy dialogue and intervention strategy designed to increase market competitiveness and economic development. Furthermore, increasing the emphasis on developing women's involvement and leadership in the corporate world would resonate strongly with debates and experiences in developed countries.

➔ **OPTION 2: WID plus**

Many evaluations have found that, in practice, when gender equality is integrated into country-level interventions, it is boiled down to a women-centered or women's empowerment approach. This option would make this approach strategically explicit, building on the experiences that have delivered results. However, it would incorporate more fundamental analysis of gender power structures, and seek to position interventions to empower women economically and politically. This would entail a return to a concentration on interventions that empower

women (and men where appropriate) and facilitate incremental social change over time.

➔ **OPTION 3: Policy dialogue on gender equality in new aid modalities**

Gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment have been aimed, at the operational level, at traditional project-based modalities. However, the increasing use of new aid modalities has created an additional set of challenges for integrating gender equality into interventions. Within the context of option 1, donor organizations and partner governments could enhance the consideration of gender equality and women's empowerment through focused policy dialogue and development in key sectors, such as education and health, private sector development, and the investment enabling environment. Policy-based lending could be used to enhance gender dialogue around reforms in specific sectors such as finance and extractive industries. SWAps could continue to build from a position of strength in the education and health sectors to support longer-term enhancements in human capital and equitable economic development.

➔ **OPTION 4: Improving results reporting and learning through more systematic integration of monitoring and evaluation**

Improving results and learning within organizations depends on enhanced M&E within the context of the options outlined above. Gender monitoring would be strengthened in those sectors where gender equality and women's empowerment are the focus. Gender could be integrated more broadly across all evaluative activities to uncover unintended results, enhance cross-sectoral learning, and reduce blindness.

This report was prepared by Lee Alexander Risby, then Principal Evaluation Officer in OPEV, and David Todd, consultant, under the supervision of Colin Kirk, Director of OPEV, and Odile Keller, Division Manager. Gender experts and focal points in the African Development Bank contributed to the report, which is accompanied by a summary report with the same title.

Full report available at: <http://www.operationsevaluation.afdb.org>

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# GENDER EQUALITY AND DEVELOPMENT EVALUATION UNITS: *Lessons from Evaluations of Development Support of Selected Multilateral and Bilateral Agencies*

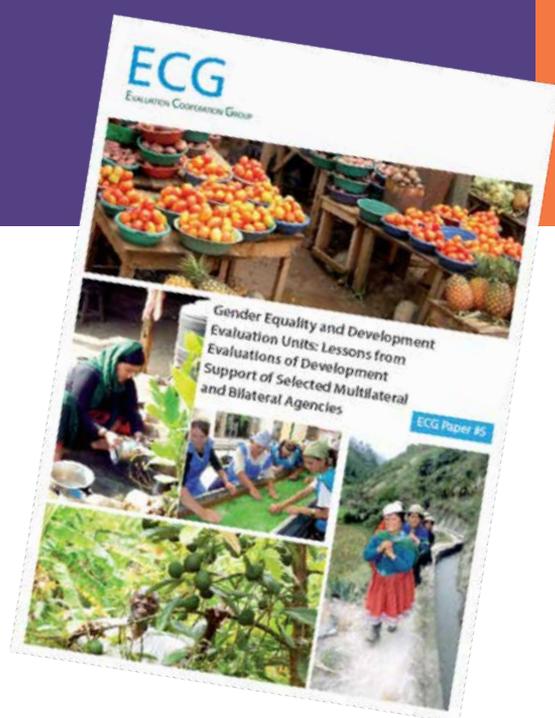
ECG Paper #5

*“Assessing progress in the mainstreaming of a gender equality perspective is a bit like picking up mercury. It all too quickly slips through your fingers. There is often no agreement on what to look for, how to measure progress, how ‘high the bar’ should be. Until organizations have clear objectives and targets of what they hope to achieve and how they will monitor and measure those achievements, it will be up to evaluators to sort out what they are looking for.”*

(United Kingdom Department for International Development Synthesis Report, 2006, page 5)

## Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of an examination of recent evaluative work on gender equality undertaken by selected multilateral and bilateral organizations commissioned by the Evaluation Cooperation Group of the multilateral development banks. This report presents the findings of an examination of recent evaluative work undertaken by selected multilateral and bilateral organizations. It examines 11 thematic gender evaluations to share findings about what works well in supporting gender equality and what does not, at the level of outputs and outcomes and also at the level of organizational systems and infrastructure. The report was commissioned to share knowledge and learning from a series of recent corporate-level gender evaluations. Most of the organizations evaluated now have 15 or more years of experience in using a gender mainstreaming approach to contribute to gender equality. Boards of Directors have asked for these evaluations to assess



the success of the approach, as well as to provide evidence of agency contributions to gender equality, for purposes of accountability and for improving guidance and practice. This report also examines these evaluations to better understand the strengths and weaknesses of their evaluation methodologies. In addition, the report presents the findings of a review of 59 evaluations undertaken by evaluation units of 6 multilateral agencies to better understand how evaluation units are integrating gender into their work. The main added value of this report is to examine these evaluations to better understand the strengths and weaknesses of their evaluation approaches and methodologies.

There is an important link between the gender equality work that is being evaluated and the evaluation methodology. This link is the ‘theory of change’ that is implicit or explicit in agency policies or directives on gender equality – and therefore affects the outcomes and mainstreaming strategy - and the theory of change expressed in the evaluation approach and methodology. To explore this link, the paper examines 11 thematic gender evaluations to briefly synthesize findings about what works well in supporting gender equality and what does not, at the level of outcomes and also at the level of organizational systems and infrastructure. The paper then explores the theory of change about gender equality underlying the evaluations and their methodologies. While the African Development Bank review of gender equality focused mainly on improvements for gender mainstreaming,

and the World Development Report focused on impact, this report links those two areas to evaluation and how this can be strengthened. In addition, the report presents the findings of a review of 59 evaluations undertaken by evaluation units of 6 multilateral agencies to better understand how evaluation units are integrating gender into their work.

Examining reported outcomes, the assessment finds that while the evaluations indicate that the agencies have made some important contributions to gender equality, particularly in education, in the integration of women in economic activities, and in addressing inequalities in access to economic opportunities and resources, there remains much room for improvement. Particularly weak are supporting advances in women’s reproductive health, replicating successful community-level efforts at economically empowering women, increasing voice of women in decision-making, and redistributing household work more equitably.

The evaluations found that performance was not as strong as it could be for a number of reasons. In particular, there was weakness in the policy and associated results frameworks or action plans that set objectives, targets, or measures that could be used to assess progress. This weakness was exacerbated by weak institutional systems (planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation), lack of leadership and accountability, and inadequate investment in capacity and training, which were found to hamper translating institutional gender policies or action plans into support for gender equality.

These weaknesses then affect the evaluations themselves. Methodologically, the evaluations assess achievements against the stated objectives of the agencies, which for most agencies is “gender equality” and/ or “women’s empowerment”. Without a clear results framework, it is highly challenging to design and implement a strong and useful evaluation because it is unclear what these terms mean. Lack of understanding of the desired outcomes results in all actions related to women, and subsequent results considered as sufficient to support gender equality



*The evaluations found that performance was not as strong as it could be for a number of reasons. In particular, there was weakness in the policy and associated results frameworks or action plans that set objectives, targets, or measures that could be used to assess progress.*

or women's empowerment. There is some evidence that agencies with more robust policies and results frameworks are able to capture results better and potentially use this information for learning and improvement. While most evaluations examined 'gender mainstreaming' as the strategy of choice used by the agency, the evaluations had widely differing interpretations of what gender mainstreaming is, (in some cases reflecting agency interpretations). This further diminishes comparability and learning across evaluations. Furthermore, the multiple interpretations of "gender mainstreaming" create a potential source of confusion for their common client.

In addition, many in the sample of 59 non-gender evaluations reviewed are not strong in incorporating support for gender equality in the social and economic sectors. Although the sample is small, evaluation units that give clear directives for integrating gender considerations in all evaluations perform better.

In conclusion, what stands out sharply when these evaluations are reviewed for results and through the lens of good evaluation methodology are two interlinking aspects. The first is the weakness in results frameworks (namely, lack of clarity in gender equality objectives) – this affects both results on the ground as well as evaluation methodologies. The second is the weakness in evaluation frameworks caused by confusion about the theory of change at the level of outcomes and the understanding of gender mainstreaming, as well as lack of targets and clear indicators with transparent rating scales. This also diminishes the ability of evaluative work to generate strong and credible lessons that can ultimately enhance the quality of support for gender equality and the results thereof.

There is currently considerable work being done to sharpen the policy and results frameworks for gender equality and women's empowerment (International Fund for Agricultural Development, United States Agency for International Development with the International Food Policy Research Institute and the Oxford Policy Group, Cooperative for Assistance

and Relief Everywhere [CARE], UN Women, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Asian Development Bank, World Bank) and Evaluation Cooperation Group members can build on this work to harmonize their own evaluative practice and to encourage agency management to adopt more robust results frameworks and indicators in their ongoing portfolio management.

### ***Lessons Learned***

Several lessons that emerge from these evaluations are worth noting. Multilateral and bilateral agencies need to take steps to strengthen the clarity of their gender policies based on the findings of the evaluations. They also need to strengthen the implementation of their respective gender policies through developing clear statements of expected results (including targets and indicators) at output and outcome levels, implementation plans and processes, ensuring availability of adequate resources, and enhancing staff skills. Most importantly, monitoring and evaluation systems need strengthening – and this includes systematic monitoring of inputs, outputs, and at least intermediate outcomes, as well as monitoring that activity completion reports integrate gender considerations. Such reporting will help to increase accountability as well as to facilitate fine-tuning of support to enhance development effectiveness. Dissemination of good practices and recognition of staff performance are also needed to demonstrate management commitment to gender equality. The lessons in this section draw particularly on the findings of the AfDB synthesis and are corroborated by similar findings in the Office of Internal Oversight Services Inspection and Evaluation Division's gender thematic evaluations in the UN Secretariat.

Other lessons obtained from these evaluations are organized around the following dimensions: (i) Gender Policies and Policy implementation, and (ii) Results of Agency Support.

## Lessons about policies and policy implementation

### *Policies*

**The evaluations indicate that only 8 of the agencies have a gender policy.**

Three of the agencies have a gender action plan. Approaches of all but one of the 11 agencies continue to give priority to gender mainstreaming – an approach enshrined in 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and subsequent UN policies, although a number of agencies also support women-specific programming.<sup>5</sup> In 2010, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) went a step further and treats gender as a safeguard policy. This means that in addition to “proactive action, which actively promotes gender equality and the empowerment of women through all the Bank’s development interventions”, the policy also requires staff to take “preventive action, which introduces safeguards to prevent or mitigate adverse impacts on women or men due to gender resulting from the Bank’s actions through its financial operations”. On the other hand, WB has narrowed its broader gender mainstreaming policy to a country-level mainstreaming requirement in 2003. This approach requires diagnosis of gender issues at the country level, identification of priority sectors and areas for gender equality in the country, and selective gender integration at the sector or project level only in sectors and areas identified as priorities in the country assistance strategy.<sup>6</sup> Thus, among these 11 agencies, IDB has the broadest and most rigorous gender approach, while the World Bank has the most selective approach.

Some evaluations examined the relevance of gender equality and women’s empowerment for effective poverty reduction and economic growth. They indicate a need for stronger evidence to explain the observed correlations among gender equality or women’s empowerment, poverty reduction, and economic growth, since the availability and quality of existing data is inadequate to explain the dynamics and the causality of these correlations. A literature

review undertaken for the IEG evaluation finds that the evidence on the extent to which gender inequality is linked to growth outcomes is tentative at best. The reliance on cross-country regressions in some of the analyses during the late 1990s is problematic for many reasons. The evaluation notes that recent reviews highlight the conceptual, methodological, and data challenges faced in seeking to establish empirical—let alone causal—relationships among gender inequality, poverty, and growth. However, the evaluation concludes that despite the methodological challenges, the literature suggests that gender-based differences in health, education, access to economic assets, and voice affect overall economic choices and opportunities for both men and women. They affect the labour productivity of men and women, the performance and potential of their businesses, and the incentives they face as economic agents. These differences also have longer-term, intergenerational effects, influencing the education, welfare, and future economic potential of children. All these factors can affect the nature, pace, sustainability, and impact of economic growth and poverty reduction— and thereby the effectiveness of development interventions in achieving their goals.

Some evaluations also find that demand for gender projects was low in client countries. For example, both IFAD and FAO evaluations found that progress on gender equality was more difficult in the Middle East/North Africa and in countries of the former Soviet Union. The AfDB evaluation finds that “inconsistent ownership of gender within partner governments, which results in it being given a low priority in poverty reduction strategies and country policy dialogue” is a significant barrier. The IEG evaluation finds that despite the formal acceptance of gender equality or women’s empowerment by client countries, 87 percent of 167 Bank staff respondents to an IEG survey identified the lack of demand in client countries as the most important constraint in addressing gender issues in their work. However, it also notes that several client stakeholders pointed out that this demand depends on whom Bank staff consult in countries. They stressed the need to ensure wider participation (outside the

Ministry of Finance and other line ministries) in this dialogue (IOE, OED and SDC had similar findings). Additionally in other agencies, lack of client demand did not completely absolve staff from integrating gender into their support, because gender mainstreaming is considered an integral element of development support and gender policies mandated such integration. More recently, a few countries have been pressing donors to conform to their agenda for gender equality. Nicaragua, Ethiopia, and Rwanda are most often cited as examples of countries where central planning ministries insist on attention to gender equality in donor and ministry initiatives.

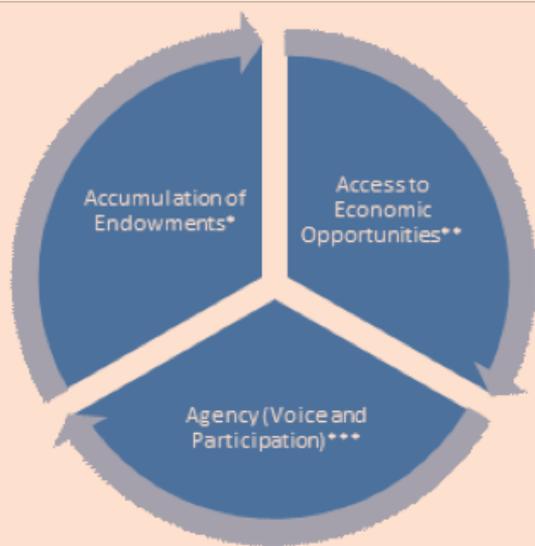
One key lesson observed by several evaluations (ADB, IFAD, FAO, UNDP, WB) is the importance of a clear results framework<sup>8</sup> if gender policies are to be effectively implemented. Only a few of the gender policies include or are linked to a results framework. As the ADB evaluation notes, because of this gap policy implementation is input-cum-process oriented and lacks defined outputs and outcomes that could be monitored and measured against targets. The UNDP evaluation finds that the lack of a clear results framework (objectives, indicators, and targets) makes it difficult to assess results. The CIDA evaluation finds that while the gender equality policy sets out clear and focused objectives and provides a conceptual blueprint for action, there is not an explicit contemporary Agency-wide gender equality strategy or action plan for implementing the policy. The IEG evaluation finds that the absence of a results framework in the Gender Strategy weakened country level results or outcomes. Interventions were focused on outputs rather than on outcomes, and the lack of a considered framework resulted in inconsistent attention to gender issues, particularly outside the human development sectors. Therefore, in many cases, any result or work associated with women is considered to have contributed to gender equality, although a few evaluations draw out examples where work associated with women either did not contribute to gender equality or had perverse effects (IFAD, SDC, WB). IOE notes that recent country-level strategies (country strategic opportunities programmes) tend

to have stronger gender dimensions in their results frameworks.

Although there has been no interagency comparison of relative success in contributing to gender equality, there is some evidence, based on practitioner perceptions of who is 'leading' on gender equality among donor agencies, and based on systematic client-disaggregated monitoring of gender in design by FAO's Investment Centre, that agencies with clearer policies and results frameworks are better able to capture results and are therefore perceived to be better able to learn from and refine their programmes. As a consequence of these findings, a number of the organizations evaluated are revising and updating their gender policies and associated results frameworks and implementation plans (WB, FAO, IFAD, ADB). Although beyond the scope of this review, a more detailed comparative analysis of the old and new (post-evaluation) policies and linked results frameworks/action plans would be very useful for an organization aiming to revise and strengthen its gender policy.

The WDR, drawing on a wide range of research, proposes a 'theory of change' that describes the dimensions and levels of gender equality, and how these dimensions and levels interact to create change (see figure 1). The report presents this framework as one example to illustrate that this level of articulation is very useful for explaining and clarifying the assumptions in gender policies and results frameworks, and for testing the adequacy of policies during implementation. Most of the policies and results frameworks, however, fell short of this standard. In analysing results in the three dimensions, the WDR's analytical framework enhances understanding of where the constraints lie (some of them may lie across dimensions and/or levels) and how policies can influence changes in and across the three dimensions to strengthen progress towards gender equality and women's economic empowerment. Gender equality cannot be achieved by addressing only one or two of these dimensions. Inequalities need to be addressed in all dimensions.

## WDR analytical framework to analyse dimensions of gender equality



\*Accumulation of endowments relates to ensuring that women obtain support to exercise fully their human and physical endowments with special reference to education, health, land and financial assets. Access to sexual and reproductive health services is part of health. (Some frameworks describe land and financial assets under 'access to economic opportunities' [Harvard, Moser]. Freedom from violence and recognition of human rights is also sometimes described under endowments, sometimes listed separately [e.g. UN rights-based approaches].)

\*\*Access to economic opportunities relates to how men and women are able to utilize the endowments and whether or not there are systematic differences by gender in economic opportunities and returns to these endowments, focusing on how individuals allocate time and resources to reap returns on their endowments, mostly in labour and asset markets. (Some frameworks include constraints on time [work burden] and mobility in this dimension [Harvard, Moser]. Some frameworks explicitly consider the trade-offs between the productive economy and the care economy [Harvard, Moser].)

\*\*\*Agency (voice and participation) is about the final dimension relating to the differential agency of men and women—their abilities to make choices and take actions, focusing on voice, political participation and mobility. [Molyneux, Moser].

The WDR identifies these dimensions interacting within the household, in the community, and at a systemic/institutional level. [cf. Gender@Work framework (See [www.genderatwork.org/gender-work-framework](http://www.genderatwork.org/gender-work-framework).)]

## Policy Implementation

Several evaluations (ADB, FAO, IFAD and WB) find that the policy commitments of agencies towards gender equality were not reflected in their institutional arrangements, which needed substantial strengthening in a number of areas, if gender equality is to be supported. All but one of the 11 agency policies have adopted gender mainstreaming as the main method to achieve gender equality.<sup>9</sup> The AfDB review of 26 evaluations finds that all evaluations point to a similar finding: gender mainstreaming is a complex undertaking that has not been widely carried out by the development community. This assessment also finds that gender mainstreaming has in general not been very successful in delivering results, and that there has not been a serious effort at implementing gender mainstreaming appears in the respective agencies. These findings are grouped under the headings of Accountability, Institutional Arrangements, Performance Monitoring and Partnerships.

Most evaluations continue to value gender mainstreaming as a means to contribute to gender equality. The IEG evaluation takes the view that the WB must return to a position of gender mainstreaming at the project level, although given the limited resources, it finds some merit in focusing on countries where gender inequalities are high. Several other evaluations note that gender mainstreaming does not work because of the lack of adequate human and financial resources to make gender mainstreaming effective (UNHABITAT, IED, SDC, UNICEF). On the other hand, the AfDB evaluation suggests four options for consideration in lieu of gender mainstreaming, given the lack of effective implementation. The four options presented by the evaluation are as follows:

- Gender focusing: This approach would focus on those sectors where gender equality appears to be sufficiently embedded and has made some progress, and attempt to create linkages with related sectors.

- **Women in development plus:** Many of evaluations have found that, in practice, when gender equality is integrated into country-level interventions, it is boiled down to a women-centred or women's empowerment approach. This option would make this approach strategically explicit, building on the experiences that did deliver results, but would incorporate more fundamental analysis of gender power structures, and seek to position interventions to empower women economically and politically. This would entail a return to a concentration on interventions that empower women (and men where appropriate) and facilitate incremental social change over time.
- **Policy dialogue on gender equality in new aid modalities:** Gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment have been aimed, at the operational level, at traditional project-based modalities. However, the increasing use of new aid modalities has created an additional set of challenges for integrating gender equality into interventions. Within the context of option 1, donor organizations and partner governments could enhance the consideration of gender equality and women's empowerment by focused policy dialogue and development in key sectors, such as education and health, private sector development, and the investment enabling environment. Policy-based lending could be used to enhance gender dialogue around reforms in specific sectors such as finance and extractive industries. SWAPs could continue to build from a position of strength in the education and health sectors to support longer-term enhancements in human capital and equitable economic development.
- **Improving results reporting and learning through more systematic integration of monitoring and evaluation:** Gender monitoring would be strengthened in those sectors where gender equality and women's empowerment are the focus. Gender could be integrated more broadly across all evaluative activities to uncover unintended results, enhance cross-sectoral learning, and reduce blindness.

## Accountability

Greater commitment and leadership of senior management to gender equality is seen as necessary. Several evaluations (FAO, IFAD, SDC, WB) as well as the benchmarking exercise in the IOE evaluation and the AfDB evaluation synthesis<sup>10</sup> found that a common lesson across evaluations is that consistent leadership and follow-up by senior management and executive boards is important in ensuring support for gender equality. Most evaluations suggest that one effective way of ensuring such accountability is to establish a systematic review process to assess progress in policy implementation and achievement of desired outcomes. While most gender policies recommend such oversight, almost all evaluations found that this is lacking. Neither senior management nor governance bodies systematically review efforts or results (CIDA, SDC, WB). Evaluations recommend tightening accountability of senior managers for policy implementation. The IEG evaluation compared the processes required for implementation of safeguard policies and its gender policies demonstrating the weakness in the latter case. Since gender equality, like environmental sustainability or knowledge management and policy dialogue is a cross-cutting issue, and such issues are not consistently the main focus of leadership, periodic review at the most senior level is seen as necessary to ensure adequate attention is regularly devoted to progress on gender equality by mid-level managers and staff. FAO, as a follow up to evaluation recommendations, ensured that action on gender equality was part of each senior manager's performance contract.



*Most evaluations suggest that one effective way of ensuring such accountability is to establish a systematic review process to assess progress in policy implementation and achievement of desired outcomes.*

In addition to senior leadership commitment, stronger accountability at the managerial and staff levels is necessary to strengthen the implementation of support for gender equality. The need to shift from a 'permissive' environment or a personal commitment to gender equality is stressed by many evaluations. Staff who see the importance of mainstreaming gender equality in their programming are permitted or encouraged to do so, although strong performers report that they are seldom recognized for their efforts. At the same time, those who do not make any efforts to integrate gender dimensions in their work do not face any negative consequences (AfDB, IFAD, SDC, WB). Strengthening accountability by developing gender-related programming frameworks (at the country level or the sector level), and requiring gender-related objectives and tasks in individual performance agreements, especially for managers, are seen as measures to strengthen performance (FAO, IFAD, SDC, CIDA). Where agencies set targets (ADB, IFAD, CIDA) they are found to be useful and the evaluations encouraged their refinement and expansion. Examples of targets included quality-at-entry for attention to gender equality (percentage of proposals meeting quality targets) as well as at subsequent milestones in the project cycle, and programme expenditure targets. The DFID evaluation notes the importance of internal gender champions, and the SDC evaluation finds that effective implementation of the gender policy depends on leadership of departmental, divisional, and other managers.

### ***Institutional arrangements***

Institutional arrangements for implementation are different among agencies, but evaluations do not have adequate data to determine what type of arrangements worked better. Most agencies have gone through different stages and models in institutionalizing gender integration, according to the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) evaluation. Some institutions have a more centralized arrangement, with a central gender unit that classifies projects according to a gender classification and monitors results. Others have a very decentralized arrangement with a central unit

more focused on policy issues, gleaning lessons at a corporate level, and collating the results for senior Management. The UN-HABITAT evaluation notes that high-level political commitment appears to be the variable that makes these varied institutional arrangements effective in making gender equality and mainstreaming most visible and critical. The UNICEF evaluation also makes the point that for gender mainstreaming to work effectively, there is a need for significant transformation in the way an institutional works and a major allocation of human and financial resources.

There is no agreement on adequate staffing levels to support effective contributions to gender equality. The evaluations generally recommend increased gender-specialized human resources for planning and design, quality assurance, monitoring [10. Many of the findings reported in this chapter are documented in greater depth in AfDB's evaluation synthesis of 26 gender evaluations, *Mainstreaming Gender Equality: A Road to Results or a Road to Nowhere? An Evaluation Synthesis*, May 2011, OPEV, African Development Bank.] and evaluation, and for support during programme implementation. However, a number of evaluations report that when task managers and programme staff are convinced of the usefulness of integrating gender equality dimensions, allocating human and financial resources is not a constraint (SDC, CIDA, IFAD, FAO), especially if this can be done at country or regional level. There is a risk in over-emphasis on the use of casual or consultant resources, with the consequence that the knowledge and experience gained may not be well integrated into the organization's ongoing practice and systems.

Agencies also varied widely in their investment in specialist gender resources, in terms of quantity, seniority, location, and investment in learning. There is inadequate data to assess what is 'sufficient' to resource good results. Nor is there guidance in the evaluations for the level of programmatic resources required to deliver gender equality outcomes (for example, additional design costs, or implementation and monitoring costs, which are often coded

differently by different units). CIDA designated a budgeted amount for 'gender funds', and the IOE evaluation recommended that the Finance Department undertake an analysis to develop some 'rule of thumb' guidance on the additional costs of programme or project/level investments required to achieve credible gender equality results. Better benchmarking in both of these areas (organizational infrastructure and programmatic investment) would be helpful.

Some evaluations point out the need for clear guidance to, and training of staff, on how to mainstream gender into development support. A number of evaluations report confusion around gender-related concepts (people using the same terms with widely different understanding in the same institution) and difficulty in moving from understanding concepts to applying them to programme design and implementation at various stages. A number of evaluations find that managers rarely attend gender training and that gender is not integrated into orientation training of new staff appointed by the agency. The IED evaluation made the important point that as agencies shift focus in terms of sectors (a shift to large infrastructure and private sector development in the case of ADB), traditional approaches are likely to be insufficient. The evaluation of CIDA support notes different levels or types of staff may need different levels of awareness and

expertise. As the AfDB synthesis notes, there is little assessment of what 'training needs' are, and there is a tendency to deliver one-time, one-size-fits-all, one-shot supply-based training. The evaluations do not discuss or assess the comparative cost-benefit of coaching or 'just-in-time' training, or attention to gender in other types of training (for example, training on results). There is little assessment available of what type of training has been most effective for what purpose. Without a stronger evidence base of training needs assessment, or evidence on the effectiveness of different types of training, it is difficult to design or justify a significant investment in training, despite the findings of the confusion in concepts and inability to apply them.

Some evaluations find that a combination of factors, if adhered to by task teams, appear to enhance policy implementation as well as achievement of gender equality objectives. These are: (i) an initial gender analysis, (ii) clear gender equality objectives/outcomes and associated resources; (iii) planning or a road map around outcome focused activities; and (iv) specific and relevant sex-disaggregated or gender-related indicators (SDC and WB). Quality-at-entry reviews that include a meaningful review of attention to gender equality, particularly when done early in the design process, are also seen as useful (IFAD).

### Measuring gender balance in staffing

1. Gender balance by level in the organization, by location, and by department (including the use of consultants or other non-permanent staffing where relevant)
2. Gender disparities in staff satisfaction by level, location and department
3. Existence of clear policies in favour of gender equality, against harassment, and in support of work-life balance.
4. Gender disparities in the use of anti-harassment and work-life balance policies and procedures.
5. Gender disparities in promotion, professional development opportunities, or salary levels for women and men in similar positions.
6. Systematic tracking and review of gender ratios in the recruitment process (gender balance of applicants, of long lists, short lists, interview panels, recommendations, decisions).
7. Use, timeliness and perceived fairness of harassment resolution processes.
8. Gender balance in resignations or other departures.

Although there is no proven relationship between gender balance in staffing and greater contribution to gender equality,<sup>11</sup> such a focus within the institution reiterates commitment by the agency. As the CGIAR notes, on its gender and diversity website, “We cannot achieve on the outside what we do not practice on the inside.” The evaluations deal with the issue of gender balance in staffing differently. Some evaluations do not discuss this issue since it is related to civil service staffing policies (CIDA) and extrinsic to the evaluation. Other evaluations see gender balance in staffing as a major pillar of the agency’s commitment to gender equality (SDC).

Gender balance in staffing is one of the easiest issues to track, and considerable work has been done in the leading organizations on HR data that allows managers not only to track progress, but also to diagnose where problems exist. This type of tracking can be done by department or unit, as well as by stage in the process. Figure 2 below sets out some of the good practice found in the evaluations. When the ratios are not balanced (i.e. close to 50/50) there may be a need for remedial action.

### ***Performance Monitoring***

The need for systematic and effective monitoring systems is an important lesson across evaluations. As the SDC evaluation notes: “if gender equality is not measured, then it will not change.” The lack of effective and relevant monitoring constrains evaluation of results and, thus constrains accountability. Self-assessments, such as project completion reports, were also not effective in integrating gender dimensions in analysing results.

Several evaluations report the need to monitor that the emphasis on gender during the start-up of the programme cycle (programme and project frameworks and design) is sustained through project implementation (ADB, AfDB, CIDA, WB). Proposals for funding may require the inclusion of a social/gender analysis to meet quality-at-entry requirements, but there may be no further systematic requirements relating to implementing, monitoring or evaluating gender equality dimensions throughout the project/

programme cycle. The quality of the results orientation in general, and with regard to gender dimensions in particular, influenced the agency’s ability to track progress and achieve intended results. The AfDB evaluation notes that one of the most common findings reported by the evaluations has been the lack of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and supervision systems within donor organizations to track progress, allow for adaptive management, record gender equality results, and document good practices. A noteworthy exception in this regard is IFAD’s Results and Impact Management System (RIMS), which includes a compendium of indicators at the output, outcome and impact level that serve as a starting point for developing results, and includes measures for progress in gender equality.

### ***Partnerships***

Both gender-related advocacy and partnerships (with government institutions, with other development cooperation agencies, and with civil society organizations) need strengthening (AfDB, FAO, IFAD, SDC, UN-HABITAT, WB). Related to this are concerns that newer aid modalities (SWAPs and budget support) could further weaken attention to gender equality. An exception seems to be in countries where the government itself is taking a strong position in favour of gender equality through

#### **Good Practice in Partnerships**

UN-HABITAT’s partnership with the Gender Water Alliance (GWA) is noted as a good practice in that it helped to provide specialist advice in water and sanitation in 17 sites across 14 countries. Through GWA, the UN-HABITAT program benefitted from a network of specialists across Africa. Recognizing that gender mainstreaming needed strengthened in all program cities, the GWA hired a water and sanitation specialist in each country to provide support and advice in programme implementation.

its planning and finance Ministries and tracking donor inclusion of gender dimensions.

Some good practices are reported on how partnerships have led to generation of sex-disaggregated or gender-related data at the global level. Some donors are promoting a global collaboration in producing and using data on women. These efforts have increased the availability of data during this evaluation period relative to the earlier evaluation period. Some partnerships are also noted among the multilaterals in relying on each other's gender diagnostics. Thus, in East Asia for example, there is an understanding between ADB and the WB on the countries where each would be responsible for gender diagnostics. In Nepal, DFID undertook a country gender assessment that has been widely used by other donors.

Another emerging pattern that could be adopted more widely is collaboration among agencies with different mandates. For example, in IFAD projects where illiteracy is a major constraint to women's economic empowerment, collaboration with education ministries or literacy training through NGO partnerships provides needed complementary support. The same collaboration is found among some SDC partners.

### **Lessons on results**

These lessons on results are organized around the following framework: (i) strengthened human development; (ii) increased access to and ownership of economic resources; and (iii) improved voice and decision-making. In addition, some lessons that span areas of synergy between the three sets of outcomes are also provided. The evaluations show that (with the exception of IFAD and FAO, because of their specialization, and the bilaterals, whose contribution to human development tends to be through multilateral institutions), the gender focus is on human development, and that areas like infrastructure investment and transport, which are also shown to be able to contribute to gender equality, receive much less attention. The IEG evaluation finds, however, that there is significant improvement both in

quality and quantity in addressing gender issues in the infrastructure sectors during this decade when compared to that in the previous decade.

### ***Strengthened Human Development***

The evaluations find the greatest success in diminishing the gap between women and men in access to education. The increased number of women in primary, secondary and tertiary education reflects a large social change in a relatively short period of time. (WB, ADB, WDR). This change, as noted in earlier research by the WB and others, leads to improved family wellbeing (health, nutrition, education of children, income). In some countries, the success of keeping girls in school has been such that boys are now falling behind in taking up tertiary education. However, several evaluations found that while access had increased, the quality of services was not keeping pace. Completion and dropout rates were not improving in all cases.

A related success is that when countries decide to adopt family planning, it has resulted in a rapid decrease in family sizes: a decline that took over 100 years to achieve in the USA took 20 years or less in countries as varied as Morocco, Bangladesh, Zimbabwe and Iran (WDR). The IEG evaluation finds that narrowly focusing Bank support on interventions in the health sector has in many cases limited the achievement of desired health outcomes. As an example of the benefit of a broader focus, increased transportation resulted in larger numbers of women seeking medical help in Peru. Training local women as health attendants may help, owing to the high likelihood that they will go back to their communities to provide services (as in the Republic of Yemen). It also finds that costs are not always the only reason that health services are used too little. Lack of awareness of the need for women to use services can also be a problem in some countries, and there is some evidence that a door-to-door awareness-raising programme may be necessary, in combination with the provision of facilities, trained female personnel, and supplies.

## ***Increased Access to and Ownership of Economic Resources***

The evaluations find that while there had been some gains in increasing women's agricultural productivity (IFAD, FAO) there remains significant room for improvement. FAO's flagship publication, *The State of Food and Agriculture*,<sup>12</sup> in 2011 focused on gender disparities and reported that women farmers' productivity would increase by 20% if they had equal access to agricultural resources, increasing food production by 2-4% -enough to free an additional 150 million people from hunger.

Many evaluations focus on measuring poverty reduction (the economic opportunities dimension), although there is little systematic evidence about the distribution of the additional income, partly due to the lack of data in the agency records. This focus is particularly prominent for agencies that did not give priority to human endowment investments. The evaluations do not look systematically at evidence of workload reduction (or increase or transfer to other family members), although this is tracked in some instances by IFAD, especially in the provision of household water supply and rural transport.

Skills development and new technology for women is successful when aligned with economic opportunity and relevant for women. For example, women adopt new agricultural technology when they are in paid agricultural employment, and the development of processing skills to meet quality standards in value chain improvements have

been successful (IFAD). On the contrary, the first IEG evaluation found that fewer women than men trained in aquaculture farming could benefit from the skills gained due to lack of land and access to water resources needed to establish such activities. Evaluations therefore find that it is important to design interventions for economic empowerment that take into account women's existing realities and perceptions, with regard to time, space in the house, health, other obligations and responsibilities, and constraints in movement, although the clear intent is to reduce these constraints. This approach to design would require the participation of beneficiaries in the planning of activities. (SDC, FAO, WB, IFAD).

The UNDP evaluation found an assumption in many activities that mere provision of microfinance for women would lead to gender equality; this was not true without additional technical and business support. The IEG evaluation found that while microfinance may increase the social empowerment of women, it is difficult to establish income-generating activities without other support, especially in remote areas where markets are inoperative. In a similar vein, the UN-HABITAT evaluation found that women from poor households do not have incomes for most housing finance schemes, but that despite their problems women tend to be more reliable borrowers than men.

## ***Improved Voice and Decision-Making***

All agencies attempt to enhance women's voice and decision-making in development activities, but with only modest levels success. The evaluations provided limited evidence of good indicators or systematic monitoring of more gender-equitable decision-making, whether at the household level, the community level (where most of the data that is available is collected) or in formal government bodies. While UN agencies also focus on parliaments and legislatures, the development banks and bilaterals tend to focus on participation in decision making at the community level. However, the WDR



*The UNDP evaluation found an assumption in many activities that mere provision of microfinance for women would lead to gender equality; this was not true without additional technical and business support.*

does note that the influence of quotas for women in Indian local government structures has been to increase investment in long-term community improvements like water, schools and roads, since women give priority to such investments. IFAD measures whether local institutions like farmer organizations improve the balance between women and men in their leadership structure throughout the life of their programmes, but in many organizations, the information was collected only during the evaluation phase and therefore relies on beneficiary memory.

A few evaluations find that women's participation in community committees improved their participation as beneficiaries and provided them a space for participation outside their households. This is seen as a very important first step in more conservative communities such as in Afghanistan or Yemen or in part of India or Pakistan. The evaluation of SDC support also found that often women's participation in such fora is constrained by men especially when the public spaces for participation are far away from where women live and work and also result in high transportation and time costs. To sustainably influence gender relations and empower women, long-term support is needed, as well as carefully designed mechanisms that will address gender imbalances in participation, rather than strengthen existing gender stereotypes, for example by assigning toilet cleaning to women. There are two recent initiatives that provide systematic measures of changes in women's voice and decision-making. CARE has developed and tested measures of women's household-level empowerment in Bangladesh, and USAID/IFPRI/Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative have piloted measures of women's empowerment in agriculture in several countries. These measures could usefully be considered by ECG members and their agencies.<sup>13</sup> The UN-HABITAT evaluation found that making changes at the local level is challenging because this is the "level most associated with prejudices and conservative culture." Domination by local elites also makes it difficult for poor people. The first IEG evaluation found



*A few evaluations find that women's participation in community committees improved their participation as beneficiaries and provided them a space for participation outside their households.*

that this was an issue not only for women, but also for men from socially disadvantaged backgrounds. The UN-HABITAT evaluation, therefore, cautions against the assumption that a decentralization agenda is a positive step for gender equality or for women's empowerment without adequate safeguards in place.<sup>14</sup>

### ***Synergies Between the Three Dimensions***

The WDR shows that there are multiple linkages among these major dimensions. Increased education can influence economic success, and, conversely, the availability of jobs for young women can influence the decision to invest in education for girls, as can very modest levels of conditional educational or health care subsidy. Similarly, economic success can increase participation in community and family decision-making, but the converse is also true. Policy and programming decisions can impede or support more equitable distribution of opportunity among women and men.

Several evaluations, however, found that gender integration, even at a country level, is fragmented and sectoral at best. Additionally, the lack of a common results framework meant that synergies between sectors (which is very important to achieve gender equality) were totally lost, and interventions remained ad hoc at a project level. For example, the UNDP evaluation found that despite the devastating effect of HIV/AIDS, the UNDP policy and practice had not developed an inter-sectoral approach. The IEG evaluation found that without sufficient

transport facilities and some all-weather roads, provision of health facilities in remote areas could not contribute to reducing maternal mortality.

Gender equality and development evaluation units  
Several evaluations find that not taking gender into account undermines the effectiveness and sustainability of many projects and initiatives (FAO, WB). The evaluations and the WDR research increasingly show a correlation between prosperity and gender equality, although there is no evidence of a causal relationship. Similarly, several of the evaluations (WB, IFAD) have noted a correlation between overall project success and better results in promoting gender equality. The WDR notes that progress in some areas meets greater resistance. Areas such as

women's reproductive health, gender-based wage differentials, voice in decision-making, and the unequal sharing of household work remain 'sticky' – resistant to change - while in others, such as education and labour force participation, the gap between women and men is shrinking rapidly. Some of this resistance to change may be the result of neglect, or of institutional systems and procedures that do not give adequate attention to defining clear results or tracking progress. Issues relating to the latter are discussed in the following section.

*Read the full report at [http://www.ifad.org/evaluation/public\\_html/eksyst/doc/syn/2013/gender/Gender%20Paper.pdf](http://www.ifad.org/evaluation/public_html/eksyst/doc/syn/2013/gender/Gender%20Paper.pdf)*

# BEYOND REPETITIVE EVALUATIONS OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING

Ria Brouwers



## Introduction

Gender mainstreaming entered the lexicon of the international development community at a time of high optimism. Support for this strategy to advance gender equality gained ground during the decade between the UN World Conferences on Women in Nairobi in 1985 and in Beijing in 1995. The term was formally coined and embraced in the Beijing Platform for Action (UN Women 1995, pp. 79–229). It is a transnational strategy, not rooted within a national or country framework (Walby 2005, pp. 453–54), and the aim is to advance gender equality by amending all mainstream policy arenas.

Optimism in world development—especially among the Western countries that saw the victory of their system over that of the Soviet Union—was combined with a high level of ambition. The strategy to redress women’s unequal position in 12 critical policy areas was proposed in a uniform way in every context (Charlesworth 2005), bringing a gender perspective into any planned action so that the effects for women and men are known in advance and can be addressed accordingly.

Twenty years later, the tone is quite different. “Overall ‘fatigue’ in gender mainstreaming” calls for meetings to reverse the tide (UN Women 2013). There is an “elephant in the room, and dragons at the gate”— and a revision of the strategy to deal with gender discrimination is urgently needed (Sandler and Rao 2012).

In this article I analyze and compare the findings of evaluation studies on gender equality over the past 20 years. Not one study has reported positively about the gender mainstreaming policy. The majority of the evaluations have been preoccupied with corporate policies, institutional processes, and procedures, while results for women have been scantily addressed. I will argue that this is both

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due to the framing of the strategy of gender mainstreaming and to the failure to properly apply the instrument of evaluation. It is time to say goodbye to gender mainstreaming, and to move to focused actions toward equality for women, supported by evaluations that matter.

### ***Evaluation as a tool in gender mainstreaming***

After Beijing, gender mainstreaming was adopted and applied by nearly every multilateral and bilateral donor agency, government, and nongovernmental organization. Their policy documents on gender equality quote or reflect the definition of gender mainstreaming adopted by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) high-level panel discussion in 1997:

Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality (UN General Assembly 1997).

By presenting monitoring and evaluation as a key aspect of the interventions, the ECOSOC definition acknowledges the potential contribution of evaluation studies "to achieve gender equality." Over the years, evaluations have been forthcoming, and the reports offer material to research what their contribution has been.

### ***Gender mainstreaming in evaluations around 2000***

**Early 2000s.** I coauthored the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development/Development Assistance Committee (OECD/

DAC)<sup>1</sup> *Review of Gender and Evaluation* (Hunt and Brouwers 2003), a meta-study undertaken to find out how the gender perspective and results for women are addressed in evaluations of development policy and practice. It is the third review conducted by the OECD/DAC; earlier studies were done in 1994 and 1999.

A main conclusion of the 2003 review was that "overall progress in incorporating gender perspectives into general evaluations<sup>2</sup> of development assistance has been slow and uneven" (Hunt and Brouwers 2003, p. 10). The major findings of the thematic-type evaluations were that: (i) gender mainstreaming is treated as a goal rather than as a means to the long-term objective of gender equality; (ii) the assumption that gender mainstreaming leads to gender equality outcomes prevails, but is untested; (iii) the word "gender" is generally applied as a synonym for "women," with little or no focus on gender relations or on the impact of development activities on gender equality; and (iv) most of the gender benefits identified deal with women's practical needs, not their strategic interests.

The quality of both types of evaluations is disappointing. Lack of sex-disaggregated baseline data, limited monitoring information, and lack of gender-sensitive indicators have hindered the task of proper research. Many evaluations are conducted with little attention to and involvement of stakeholders in the programs and projects. Two-thirds of the general evaluations lack the required gender expertise on the evaluation team. Compared with the studies of 1994 and 1999, there is not much progress in the depth

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1 The reviews had been initiated by the OECD/DAC Working Party on Aid Evaluation in collaboration with the Working Party on Gender.

2 The OECD/DAC review of 2003 distinguishes between i) *general evaluations*, evaluations of regular development interventions, which include some gender analysis or references to gender issues but are not specifically designed to evaluate gender equality policy or initiatives; ii) *thematic evaluations*, evaluations of gender / women-specific policy or interventions, designed to evaluate gender equality, gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment efforts.

and relevance of discussions on gender issues in the newer evaluation reports, and the recommendations of these studies have rarely been followed up (Hunt and Brouwers 2003, pp. 11–12).

The nature of the 2003 review makes it possible to use part of the findings as a baseline for the performance of bilateral and multilateral donors on gender equality. So, 10 years after the publication of the review, I have identified 21 studies conducted between 2005 and 2012 to examine what changes have taken place (Brouwers 2013).<sup>3</sup> My main interests are to understand how the evaluations have been conducted, if the instrument has succeeded as a key aspect of the gender mainstreaming strategy, what the studies tell us about gender mainstreaming interventions, and about the benefits for women and for gender equality.

### ***Revisiting gender mainstreaming in evaluations in 2012***

In the decade following the DAC review, bilateral and multilateral agencies continued to conduct gender evaluations; the 21 included in my sample are the major ones. Ten studies deal with the gender policy of bilateral agencies, six look at the gender policy of multilateral agencies, two are on gender funds, there is one monitoring report of gender performance, and there are two meta-studies of gender evaluations.<sup>4</sup> The two meta-studies were conducted with an interval of five years, in 2006 and 2011 (Norad 2006).

Norad's review of donor evaluations, often referred to as "the Norad report," compiles the experiences in promoting gender equality in international development in eight agencies. The idea for the meta-study was born in 2005, when the evaluation of Norad's bilateral gender policy found that other donors may have experiences similar to those of Norad. Confirming that presumption, the Norad report concludes that "the mainstreaming strategy has been unsuccessful." The evaluation synthesis of the African Development Bank (AfDB) in 2011 was triggered by the alarming message of the Norad report and builds on it.

### ***The design of the studies***

The 21 evaluation studies hinge on gender mainstreaming, the policy adopted by all agencies in line with the agreements of the Beijing Conference. All studies have been conducted by or under the auspices of the agency's official evaluation department, and they essentially apply the conventional approach of documentary study and interviews. Their focus is on the relevance of the policy, the commitment by the agency's management and staff, and the implementation of the strategy. The last refers to the extent to which gender has become part and parcel of the mainstream policy, programs, and procedures. Although most evaluations include country case studies, these deal primarily with the question of whether gender issues are reflected in strategies and project design.

The most common interpretation of the gender mainstreaming strategy is the twin-track approach or dual strategy, meaning, on the one hand, that a gender focus should be mainstreamed in all aspects of the organization: themes, sectors, activities, and institutions (ECOSOC definition of 1997), and, on the other hand, that women should be supported directly by stand-alone projects. Not one of the evaluations was designed to differentiate between the results of interventions on these two very different tracks.

With a few exceptions, the evaluations have not investigated money flows. Money is frequently mentioned in terms of "lack of," "decreased," or "woefully inadequate," but it is seldom studied. The few evaluations that deal properly with finances

3 For the identification of evaluations, I consulted the Websites of the OECD/DAC and of the donor agencies, and compared my list of studies with the list of the 2011 meta-analysis of gender evaluations by the African Development Bank. While I may have missed one or two evaluations, I'm confident to have found the most important ones.

4 The bilateral studies are by Norad (three studies), DfID, BMZ, CIDA, SDC, Irish Aid, Sida, ADC; the multilateral studies are by UNDP, UNICEF, WFP, ADB (two studies), WorldBank; the studies of the funds are from Unifem, Danida; AusAid produced the monitoring report; the meta studies are from Norad and AfDB. For a full overview see ISS Working Paper 556 (Brouwers 2013)..

provide the percentages of total official development assistance (ODA) that can be attributed to gender equality programs, noting that the figures are not very reliable. Their basis is usually the gender marker system developed by the OECD/DAC.<sup>5</sup> Any failure or inconsistency in financial recording by the responsible units makes the ultimate report unreliable. The UK's Department for International Development (DFID) evaluation (2006), the most elaborate on finances of all the evaluations in the sample, explains the problem: financial figures concern the whole project in which gender will be mainstreamed, the figures are registered at the design stage, but how much of the budget is actually spent for the promotion of gender equality is never separated out. Gender equality activities in smaller projects may not be included at all. This clarifies the wide range reported—that overall spending increased “consistently over the period from 5 percent in 1995/1996 to 32 percent in 2004/2005” (DFID 2006, annex 4).

A major methodological flaw is that results go unreported. The evaluations offer no insight into what has changed, how women and girls have benefited, or if gender relations have become more equal. Reports may announce a focus on program results, but

  
*For two decades, international development agencies have conducted the same kind of evaluation studies, resulting in identical conclusions, and leading to identical recommendations. How much repetition is needed?*

hardly go beyond assessing the integration of gender dimensions in country programs, project design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. Various studies acknowledge this shortcoming and explain the nature of the problems encountered: absence of data, unprocessed data, or meaningless data.<sup>6</sup>

Overall, the evaluations fall short in

their design: the focus is confined to policy, strategies, and procedures, no differentiation is made between the two tracks of the mainstreaming policy, there is limited interest in money flows, and there are few efforts to investigate results and benefits.

### ***What do the evaluations tell us?***

The emerging picture can be summarized by a quote from the most recent evaluation in the sample: “The concept of gender mainstreaming may not require lobbying anymore, walking the talk does” (ADC 2012, p. 4). A main conclusion of every report is the gap between policy and implementation. The policy is found to be inconsistent, ambiguous, and confusing; invisible and unclear; not implemented systematically. Not one of the agencies observed the ECOSOC definition of gender mainstreaming in “all policies and programs, all areas and levels.” Gender performance is best in the areas of education, health, nutrition, water supply and sanitation, population, agriculture, and rural development, and worst in the sectors of infrastructure, transport, energy, program loans, and private sector development.

The required institutional reforms have not taken place, there are no accountability mechanisms, there is lack of authority behind the policy, and staff has little appreciation for the policy, do not know it, or do not know how to apply it. In the mainstreaming philosophy, gender is everybody's task, but in practice, it has become nobody's responsibility.

5 An activity can either target gender equality as its “principal objective” or as a “significant objective.” A “principal” score (2) is assigned if gender equality was an explicit objective of the activity and fundamental to its design—that is, the activity would not have been undertaken without this objective. A “significant” score (1) is assigned if gender equality was an important, but secondary, objective of the activity—meaning it was not the principal reason for undertaking the activity. A “not targeted” score (0) is assigned if an activity is not found to target gender equality. See OECD/DAC (2012), *Aid in Support of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, Statistical Overview*, [www.oecd.org/dac/stats/gender](http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/gender)

6 For instance, the only programmatic result on gender equality reported in relation to the roads program in the 2006 Mid-Term Review of the Sida Country Strategy (Kenya) was that the quota for women's participation had been mainstreamed and incorporated into the program's Logical Framework.” (Sida 2010:33)

On a more positive note, the gender analysis needed for an informed practice has increased in country strategies. However, due to low quality or lack of focus, an analysis at the country level seldom affects programmatic choices. The experiences at the project level are better. Due to a proper analysis and incorporation of gender issues, two-thirds of the World Bank's gender-integrated projects deliver substantial or high outcomes, against 22 percent of the nonintegrated projects (IEG 2010).

A unanimous finding concerns the weakness of documentation, monitoring, and evaluation. There are no baseline data and few sex-disaggregated data, monitoring forms may be filled out but not used, and the quality of the files is low. Less than half of the completion reports deal meaningfully with gender outcomes, so the benefits remain largely unknown. Most of the good gender results encountered are of an anecdotal nature. The better studies about project achievements are the evaluations of DFID, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), but these also leave the progress toward gender equality largely untouched.

For a summary of the findings of the current study, we can simply go back to those of the 2003 OECD/DAC review, as summarized above: i) gender mainstreaming is still treated as a goal rather than as a means to the long-term objective of gender equality; ii) the assumption that gender mainstreaming leads to gender equality outcomes still prevails and remains unproven; iii) the word "gender" continues to be applied as a synonym for "women," and there is little or no focus on gender relations or on the impact of development activities on gender equality; and iv) most of the gender benefits identified deal with women's practical needs, not their strategic interests.

### ***The double failure: the mainstreaming strategy and its evaluation***

With not one example of success in the evaluations produced over the past two decades, the unequivocal message is that gender mainstreaming has failed.

The strategy remains a promise of how gender discrimination can be ended, but it exists in theory only. "Too much theory to practice," notes the AfDB in its evaluation synthesis (AfDB 2011, p. 72). In a comparison between the Women in Development theory and the more encompassing Gender and Development theory, which calls for detailed social analysis and fundamental changes in power structures, the AfDB study concludes that donor organizations have exacerbated the situation. The theory of Gender and Development, notably that once power changes become entrenched in the thinking and actions of all stakeholders, the change of social, political, and economic processes would follow in due course, is void, since "the theory has not been widely adopted in the development field" (AfDB 2011, p. 74).

Ironically, the paradigms of gender and gender mainstreaming itself have hindered its implementation. The factors of failure include: the mystifying language of gender, often not understood in other languages; the inherent ambition that a proper application of the approach will transform fundamental power relations between the sexes; and the all-encompassing definition of gender mainstreaming to cover "all areas and at all levels."

My study confirms the AfDB's conclusion that evaluation has also failed. Not only has evaluation been remiss in the failure to evaluate and the failure to respond to evaluation findings (AfDB 2011, p. 76), but the preoccupation with corporate policy and strategy of all evaluations has prevented the generation of knowledge about what is happening in the real world. That is where the failure of evaluation hits hardest. For two decades, international development agencies have conducted the same kind of evaluation studies, resulting in identical conclusions, and leading to identical recommendations. How



*The concept of gender mainstreaming may not require lobbying anymore, walking the talk does*

much repetition is needed? By failing to address the strategy in practice, the evaluation studies have not contributed to knowledge about what works and what doesn't work. The failure of the evaluation studies and the failure of gender mainstreaming are two sides of the same coin: the result of the corporate approach to gender equality. The failure of evaluations is inherent to the concept of gender mainstreaming.

### ***What next?***

A contested strategy that has not been able to evoke results for women's equality and that has reached a state of "overall fatigue" should be waved goodbye. UN Women clearly states the case: "The danger going forward is that the window of opportunity to achieve gender equality is closing as a result of mainstreaming fatigue (UN Women 2013).

Ideas of gender mainstreaming are the product of the 1990s. The concept reflects not only the optimism of the time, but also the political, economic, and social forces of that era. More than a decade into the twenty-first century, conditions have changed. Some changes have been for the better, with progress in female education, life expectancy, labor force participation, and formal rights (World Bank 2012), and with the idea of equality for women a more widely accepted concept. But other changes have been for the worse, like the persistence of high levels of violence against women, the alarming levels of maternal mortality in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, and the increase in fundamentalism denying women fundamental human rights. Elephants and dragons abound.

The world has also changed with respect to institutions—their centrality is fading, and they matter less to people. Nowadays, people are making their way around institutions that have so often let them down, be they financial (the banks), political (politicians and parties), economic (corporations), or religious (churches). This mood will have its impact on institutions for international development and implies that the potential of the institutions to change people's

lives (as through gender mainstreaming) is not the same as it was two decades ago.

Future international development efforts for women's equality can improve by:

- A change in terminology: The very term gender mainstreaming implies an institutional focus, which has failed and is outdated. Why not replace it with a term that points to what is to be attained—such as *equal rights for women*—and that is less difficult to translate into other languages than gender mainstreaming, and better understood worldwide.
- A change in focus: support direct action in context. Local involvement and locally formulated priorities are crucial. The evidence in the review that the best progress is made in countries with sympathy for women's equality and that the "type of aid matters," with best results in sectors such as education, calls on donors to be selective in their choice of countries and sectors.
- Priority to areas that matter most: areas that are key for women's empowerment such as education, income, and voice, or that affect women specifically, such as reproductive health and rights, violence against women, and women in conflict areas. The areas selected for the Goal 2 (Empower girls and women and achieve gender equality) of the post-2015 agenda are promising: a) prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against girls and women, b) end child marriage, c) ensure the equal right of women to own and inherit property, and d) eliminate discrimination against women in political, economic, and public life (UN 2013—The report does not once mention the term gender mainstreaming!).
- Results-oriented evaluations: based on concrete data, applying theories of change, seeking evidence. The 21 evaluations should be the last ones that complain about lack of data. This is an archaic statement in a digital age, where most of our personal data and doings are registered and, if so

# “Some women are more equal than others”

desired, controlled. The current data revolution can, if properly applied, be of immense support to future evaluations (UN Global Pulse 2012).<sup>7</sup> For a subject such as women’s equality, which evokes such strong emotions, it is all the more important to have good data about performance, progress, and failure. The challenge has been issued to collect these data and to find methods that go beyond the measurements of efforts, activities, and outputs, and that substantiate what has been achieved and what is working. It is time to go ahead with evaluations for women’s equality that deal with real life issues instead of corporate misunderstandings.

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<sup>7</sup> See, for example, UN Global Pulse, *Big Data for Development Challenges and Opportunities*, May 2012. The term big data refers to digitally generated data of various sources that may be turned into actionable information, and maybe relevant to supplement limited and often unreliable traditional data like official statistics and survey data.

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*A complete list of the 21 studies reviewed by the author can be found in Table 1 of Working paper 556, April 2013.*

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### Profile of the Author

Ria Brouwers has been involved in the Netherlands' policy for women's rights and gender equality in international development since the policy started in the 1980s. She worked as researcher, advisor and evaluator for the Netherlands government and for Dutch private development organizations; and assisted other bilateral donors, the OECD/DAC and various multilateral agencies. As senior lecturer, International Development Policy at the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS) in The Hague, she combined such external assignments with teaching, making the practical experiences beneficial for teaching in evaluation of development policy and programmes. Besides women's rights and gender equality, her areas of interest are international development policy, research in development, civil society and theory and practice of evaluation. Ria retired from the ISS in 2012 but pursues here interest in these fields through her firm Bravo.



# Women, Business and the Law



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# Women, Business and the Law 2014

Removing Restrictions to Enhance Gender Equality

## Key Findings



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# Key Findings

In the past 50 years women's legal status has improved all over the world. But many laws still make it difficult for women to fully participate in economic life—whether by getting jobs or starting businesses. Discriminatory rules bar women from certain jobs, restrict access to capital for women-owned firms and limit women's capacity to make legal decisions. Gender differences in laws affect both developing and developed economies, and women in all regions.

## Highlights from *Women, Business and the Law 2014*

- Almost 90% of the 143 economies covered by *Women, Business and the Law 2014* have at least one legal difference restricting women's economic opportunities.
- Twenty-eight economies have 10 or more legal differences for men and women in the areas covered by *Women, Business and the Law*. Among these, 25 are in the Middle East and North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa.
- The *50 Years of Women's Legal Rights* database has made it possible to take two *Women, Business and the Law* indicators (Accessing institutions and Using property) backward in time for 100 economies for 50 years. The results are striking: more than half of the restrictions in these two indicators in place in 1960 had been removed by 2010.
- Over the past 50 years, economies in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean have reformed the most in Accessing Institutions and Using property.
- Over the past two years the most reforms have occurred in Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, the Philippines and the Slovak Republic for the six indicators measured by *Women, Business and the Law*.
- But many restrictions remain. In 15 economies husbands can object to their wives working and prevent them from accepting jobs.
- In 79 economies laws restrict the types of jobs that women can do. The most extensive restrictions on women's employment are in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. And some benefits, when taken to a certain threshold, can undermine women's labor force participation. For example, in economies where the cumulative duration of paid maternity and parental leave available for mothers exceeds two years female labor force participation is lower.
- Policies encouraging women to join and remain in the labor force are associated with less income inequality.
- Women are more likely to have accounts at formal financial institutions in economies with a default full community of property or partial community of property marital regime than in economies with a default separation of property marital regime.
- New data explore legal quotas on the share of women on corporate boards, in parliaments and local governments, and serving as judges on constitutional courts. The data find that 6 economies have quotas for women on boards of publicly listed companies and 12 have legal quotas for women in parliaments. Among the 123 economies covered by *Women, Business and the Law* that have constitutional courts or court-like bodies, women are represented on all but 19.
- Of the economies measured, 76 have established explicit legislation addressing domestic violence but only 32 have specific provisions on sexual harassment in schools. Even less prevalent is legislation on sexual harassment in public spaces—only 8 of the 100 economies examined have enacted such laws.

## How common are gender differences in laws?

*Women, Business and the Law* measures restrictions on women's employment and entrepreneurship as well as incentives for women's employment in 143 economies. The dataset captures 21 legal differences for unmarried women and 26 for married women that affect women's economic opportunities, for a total of 47 differences across five indicators (box 2.1).

Of the 143 economies covered by *Women, Business and the Law*, 128 have at least one difference between women and men according to this simple measure (figure 2.1). The 28 economies with 10 or more legal differences are in the Middle East and North Africa (14 economies), Sub-Saharan Africa (11), East Asia and the Pacific (2) and South Asia (1).

The 15 economies with no legal differences between women and men in the areas measured are Armenia, Canada, the

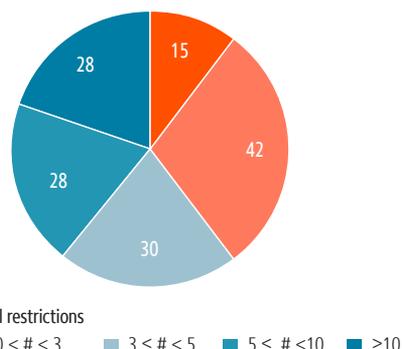
Dominican Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Kosovo, Mexico, Namibia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Peru, Puerto Rico (U.S.), the Slovak Republic, South Africa and Spain.

## Some methodological considerations

The measure of legal gender differences is constructed by adding the restrictions on married and unmarried women together. Five restrictions that only apply to married women are counted once, while 21 restrictions that apply to married or unmarried women are counted twice, for a total of 47 restrictions. For example, only married women can be legally required to obey their husbands, while both married and unmarried women may be legally prohibited from working in certain jobs. The measure of legal gender differences can sum to a whole number or a decimal for any economy because the question on job restrictions has eight sub-questions that examine specific restrictions on women’s work. Thus each sub-question is equal to one-eighth.

Of all the questions covered by *Women, Business and the Law*, only 47 are included in this measure. Twenty-two questions are included because they contain explicit gender-based differences. Three questions pertain to constitutional rights: the absence of a nondiscrimination clause in the constitution with gender as a protected category, the validity of customary law even if it is contrary to constitutional nondiscrimination and equality, and the validity of personal law even if it

**FIGURE 2.1** NUMBERS OF GENDER LEGAL DIFFERENCES VARY BY ECONOMY



Source: *Women, Business and the Law* database.

is contrary to constitutional nondiscrimination and equality. These questions were selected because of the importance of specific constitutional protections on nondiscrimination for gender equality and assume that customary and personal laws might include gender-based legal differences. One question pertains to the absence of legal recognition for nonmonetary contributions to marital property. This question was selected based on the assumption that women are more

### BOX 2.1 LEGAL DIFFERENCES FOR MARRIED AND UNMARRIED WOMEN

*Women, Business and the Law* examines differences by comparing men and women of the same marital status on the following 21 areas:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Applying for a passport  | 12. Having ownership rights over property                                   |
| 2. Traveling outside the home   | 13. Having inheritance rights over property                                 |
| 3. Traveling outside the country                                      | 14. Working the same night hours  |
| 4. Getting a job or pursuing a trade or profession without permission | 15. Doing the same jobs   |
| 5. Signing a contract   | 16. Enjoying the same statutory retirement age                              |
| 6. Registering a business   | 17. Enjoying the same tax deductions or credits                             |
| 7. Being "head of household" or "head of family"                      | 18. Having their testimony carry the same evidentiary weight in court       |
| 8. Conferring citizenship on their children                           | 19. Absence of a gender or sex nondiscrimination clause in the constitution |
| 9. Opening a bank account   | 20. Validity of customary law if it violates the constitution               |
| 10. Choosing where to live  | 21. Validity of personal law if it violates the constitution                |
| 11. Obtaining a national identity card                                |   |

In addition, the dataset captures five other areas applicable only to married women:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 22. Being legally required to obey their husbands                  | 25. Having legal recognition for nonmonetary contributions to marital property |
| 23. Being able to convey citizenship to their non-national husband | 26. Having inheritance rights to the property of their deceased husbands       |
| 24. Administering marital property                                 |  |

likely to perform activities that benefit the household but are not paid for, such as childcare.

The questions which are not part of this measure can be divided into three sets. First, questions that are not gender differentiated but may disproportionately affect women because of the types of businesses they are concentrated in—such as businesses that are smaller, more likely to be home-based and more likely to operate in the informal sector. Second, questions describing legal frameworks, such as marital property regimes, that are gender neutral. Third, questions from the pilot indicator on Protecting women from violence that are presented separately. The questions are not weighted by their importance to women or by the number of women affected. For example, prohibitions on women working in mines can affect women more intensely where mining is a major industry, but may matter less in economies where it is not—while requirements for married women to get their husbands' permission to travel outside the home affect all married women.

### How common are legal incentives encouraging women to work?

Governments also institute policies that encourage women to work and make it easier for them to do so. Such policies can range from nondiscrimination in hiring to maternity and paternity leave regimes to quotas encouraging women's participation in economic life. *Women, Business and the Law* examines 12 such legal provisions (box 2.2).

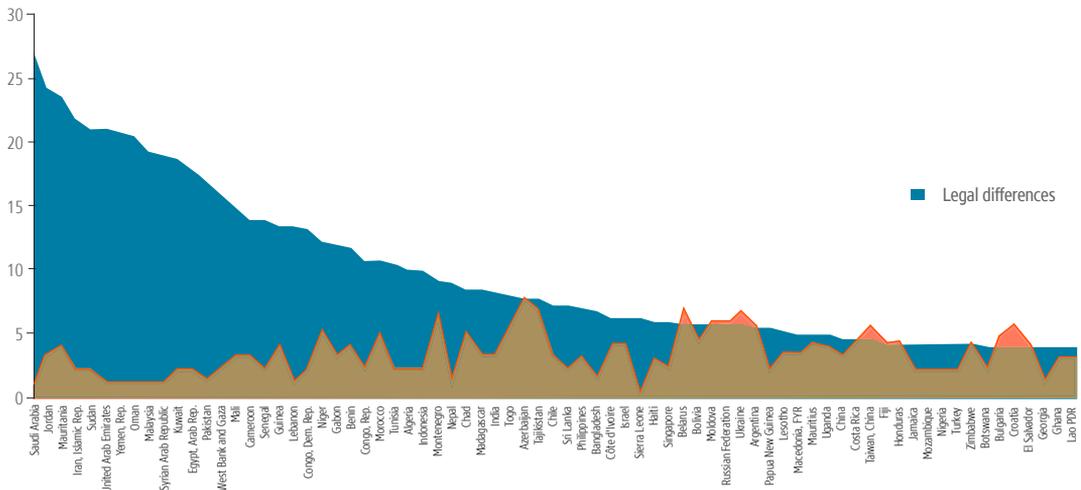
#### BOX 2.2

#### POLICIES THAT AFFECT WOMEN'S ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

1. Length of paid maternity leave
2. Length of paid paternity leave
3. Ratio of the length of paid paternity to paid maternity leave
4. Laws penalizing or preventing employers from firing pregnant women
5. Laws requiring employers to give the same or an equivalent position to female employees when they return from maternity leave
6. Laws requiring employers to provide break times for nursing mothers
7. Tax deductions applicable to women
8. Legal quotas for women on corporate boards
9. Legal quotas for women in parliaments
10. Legal quotas for women in local governments
11. Laws mandating equal remuneration for women and men for work of equal value
12. Laws mandating nondiscrimination in hiring practices

Of these, 10 directly relate to promoting women's employment—including quotas, benefits associated with maternity and paternity leave and women-specific tax deductions. The other 2 involve equalizing the treatment of women and men in the workplace through equal remuneration for work of equal value and nondiscrimination in hiring practices.

FIGURE 2.2 LEGAL DIFFERENCES AND INCENTIVES FOR WOMEN TO WORK DIFFER WIDELY



Source: *Women, Business and the Law* database.

These incentives represent an initial cataloguing of government policies that can encourage women’s economic participation. But they are not an exhaustive list of government policies promoting women’s economic opportunities.

When incentives for women to work are mapped against legal differences in women’s economic opportunities as measured by *Women, Business and the Law*, economies with the most legal differences tend to provide fewer incentives (figure 2.2).

Hungary, the Slovak Republic and Spain have no legal differences and six or more incentives. Oman, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and the Republic of Yemen have more than 20 differences and fewer than two incentives.

### How have restrictions on women’s legal rights changed over time?

Gender-based restrictions on women’s legal capacity and property rights have fallen in recent decades. The *50 Years of Women’s Legal Rights* database has made it possible to take two *Women, Business and the Law* indicators (Accessing institutions and Using property) backward in time for 100 economies for 50 years. The results are striking: more than half the restrictions in these two indicators in place in 1960 had been removed by 2010 (figure 2.3).

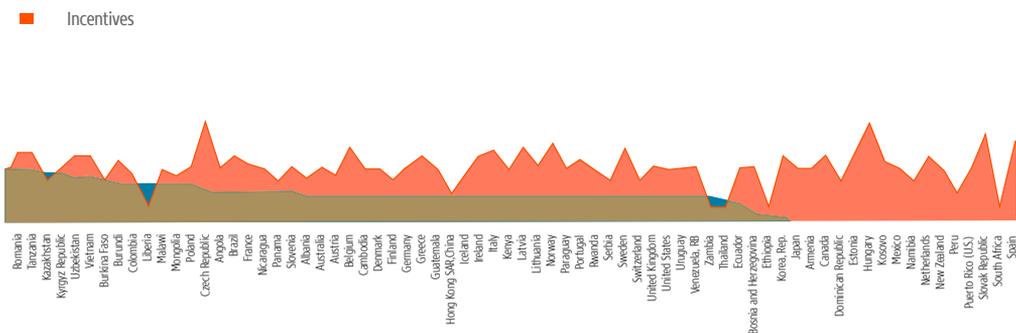
Sub-Saharan Africa had the most restrictions in 1960—and by 2010 had implemented the most reforms. For example,

in 1960 South African women in customary unions were deemed legal minors, with their husbands as guardians. The 1998 Recognition of Customary Marriages Act reformed this by ensuring that women in customary unions had full status and capacity, including the ability to acquire and dispose of assets, enter into contracts and litigate.

Most economies examined in Latin America and the Caribbean had removed the gender legal differences measured since 1960. Between 1960 and 2010 significant reforms occurred in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Peru and Paraguay. Until 1988 in Brazil the husband was the head of household, giving him sole legal ability to represent the family, choose the family domicile and administer marital assets as well as his wife’s separate assets. Since then women have had equal recognition in these areas.

Economies in East Asia and the Pacific covered by *Women, Business and the Law* also made significant reforms in the areas examined. These include Indonesia’s 1974 Law on Marriage, which replaced the 1874 Dutch Civil Code and granted married women greater rights, including the ability to open individual bank accounts.

In Eastern Europe and Central Asia the communist influence on legal systems resulted in few gender differences in women’s property rights and legal capacity as measured by the Using property and Accessing institutions indicators. The differences that did exist in 1960 had been removed by 2010. The OECD high-income economies covered had also removed the measured differences by 2010.



The Middle East and North Africa and South Asia have changed the least since 1960 in the areas covered. Though some constraints have been removed in both regions, many restrictions remain. One example of reform in the Middle East and North Africa is the changes that occurred in Morocco in 1996, when the Commercial Code was amended to allow married women to engage in commercial activities without the permission of their husbands. In 2004 the passage of a new Family Code also equalized the right of both spouses to make household decisions.

Yet additional legal barriers have been introduced. In 1994 the Republic of Yemen removed the constitutional provision on nondiscrimination. Moreover, after the reunification of Yemen in 1990, gains in women’s rights made in the Arab Republic of Yemen (in the south) were reversed. The Islamic Republic of Iran also saw reversals in legal protections. The 1975 Family Protection Law equalized the right to work for both spouses, but in 1979 the law was reversed—once again allowing husbands to keep their wives from working. After 1979, laws were also put in place limiting women’s economic opportunities. For example, women judges were no longer allowed to impose sentences, limiting their ability to work in the judiciary. In addition, women faced restrictions on their mobility that had not been in place before.

A more recent reversal in legal rights occurred in the Arab Republic of Egypt, where the removal of constitutional non-discrimination based on gender has led to a discussion on the relationship between legal rights and gender equality.

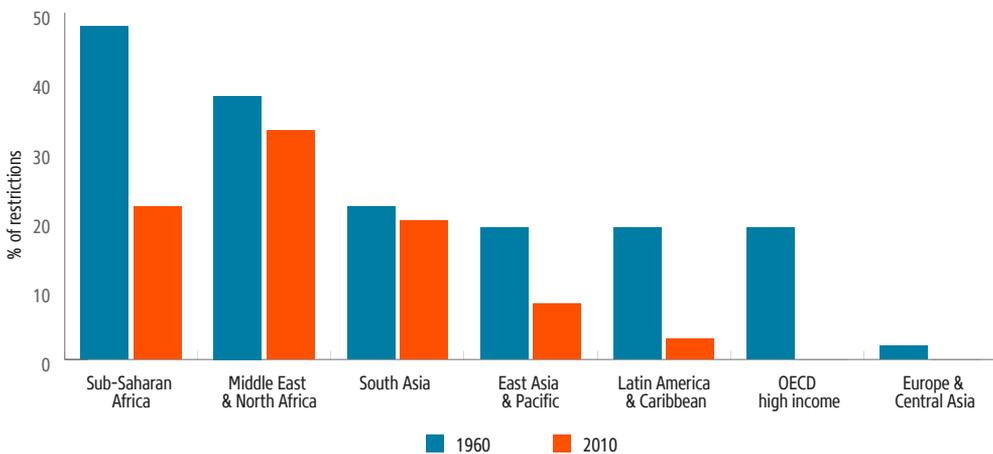
Reformers in South Asia include Nepal, which in 2002 reformed its General Code to allow, among other things, unmarried daughters under 35 to inherit property. But the reform did not cover married daughters regardless of their age.

Over time some of the measured legal restrictions have become nearly obsolete. Since 1960, 18 of the economies examined have lifted requirements that married women must have their husbands’ permission to initiate judicial proceedings: Angola (1996), Argentina (1968), Austria (1975), Benin (2002), Bolivia (1975), Brazil (1962), the Dominican Republic (1978), Indonesia (1963), Lesotho (2006), Mozambique (2004), Namibia (1996), Paraguay (1987), Portugal (1966), Rwanda (1988), South Africa (1998), Spain (1981), Switzerland (1984) and Zimbabwe (1982).<sup>1</sup>

Yet these restrictions still exist in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. According to articles 450 and 451 of the Family Code, married women require spousal permission to sue in civil matters unless the suit is against their husbands. And under Liberia’s Code of Civil Procedure a married woman who brings action in court must have her husband joined as a party to the suit. Only if the action is against her husband or she is suing in connection with a business she operates can she file independently.

Legal restrictions remain on the books in other areas. An example is the requirement that husbands give their wives permission to work. *Women, Business and the Law 2014* found that 15 economies still have this restriction. Yet many

**FIGURE 2.3** EVOLUTION OF RESTRICTIONS OVER TIME IN 100 ECONOMIES



Source: 50 Years of Women’s Legal Rights database; Hallward-Driemeier, Hasan and Rusu forthcoming.  
 Note: Where data are unavailable for 1960, the first known value is used.

economies have removed it. Since 1960 at least two dozen economies have curtailed husbands' legal power to restrict their wives from working, including France (1965), Indonesia (1974), Morocco (1996), Peru (1984), South Africa (1998) and Turkey (2001).<sup>2</sup> And in the past two years Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and Togo have reformed such laws.

## Where are relationships between women and the law changing?

Over a two-year period ending in April 2013, *Women, Business and the Law* recorded 59 legal changes in 44 economies on its six established indicators (table 2.1). Of these changes, 48 increased gender parity, 11 were neutral to gender parity and none reduced gender parity.

### Who reformed the most?

Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, the Philippines and the Slovak Republic each increased gender parity in two *Women, Business and the Law* indicators. Côte d'Ivoire reformed in the Accessing institutions and Providing incentives to work indicators. Previously in Côte d'Ivoire only husbands could decide on the family residence and could legally stop their wives from working if they deemed that the work was not in the interests of the family. Husbands were also the legal heads of household. A 2013 reform allows both spouses to choose the family residence and stop the other from working if they deem it against family interests. Moreover, both husbands and wives can legally be the head of household. These reforms in the Accessing institutions indicator also had tax

implications that were captured by the Providing incentives to work indicator. Married women who previously could not claim tax deductions for their children or husbands because they were barred from being legal heads of household can now claim the same deductions as married men, reducing their overall tax burden and increasing their incentives to join the workforce.

Mali abolished differences that allowed husbands to prevent their wives from working, which were captured by the Accessing institutions indicator, and introduced equal inheritance rights for spouses, triggering the Using property indicator.

The Philippines lifted restrictions on night work for women, as captured in the Getting a job indicator, and has a new credit bureau with no minimum loan amount that also collects information from microfinance institutions, as reflected in the Building credit indicator.

The Slovak Republic increased the percentage of wages paid during maternity leave from 55% to 65%, affecting the Getting a job indicator. It also raised the maximum amount of a small claim, allowing additional claims to be processed by small claims courts and triggering changes in the Going to court indicator.

### Changes by indicator

For the Accessing institutions indicator, in addition to the changes made in Côte d'Ivoire and Mali, Togo enacted a new Family Code giving both spouses the right to choose

**TABLE 2.1** IN RECENT YEARS MANY ECONOMIES MADE CHANGES INCREASING OR NEUTRAL TO GENDER PARITY

<i>Women, Business and the Law</i> indicator	Changes increasing gender parity	Changes neutral to gender parity	Changes reducing gender parity
<b>Accessing institutions</b>	Botswana; Côte d'Ivoire; Jamaica; Mali; Syrian Arab Republic; Togo; Zimbabwe		
<b>Using property</b>	Mali		
<b>Getting a job</b>	Belgium; Bolivia; Chile; China; Colombia; Ethiopia; Hungary; Italy; Lithuania; Malawi; Mexico; Montenegro; Norway; Philippines; Poland; Slovak Republic; Slovenia; Ukraine; Venezuela, RB; Vietnam	Belgium; Finland; Hungary; Italy; Latvia; Lithuania; Malaysia; Netherlands; Poland; United Kingdom	
<b>Building credit</b>	Algeria; Angola; Cambodia; Egypt, Arab Rep.; Ethiopia; Ghana; Kenya; Lao PDR; Macedonia, FYR; Mauritius; Philippines; Tajikistan; Vietnam		
<b>Providing incentives to work</b>	Côte d'Ivoire; Israel		
<b>Going to court</b>	Latvia; Netherlands; Slovak Republic; Uganda; United Kingdom	Malaysia	

Source: *Women, Business and the Law* database.

the family domicile. The new code also allows each spouse to object to the profession of the other. Under the previous code only husbands could do so.

Botswana and the Syrian Arab Republic enacted new constitutions including nondiscrimination clauses with gender as a protected category. Jamaica enacted a constitutional amendment adding a gender equality clause and a non-discrimination clause with gender as a protected category. Zimbabwe also enacted a new constitution under which customary law is no longer exempt from constitutional protections on nondiscrimination.

For the Getting a job indicator, 20 economies made changes toward gender parity. In addition to the changes in the Philippines and the Slovak Republic, Belgium extended the length of parental leave and Chile introduced it. China, Colombia, República Bolivariana de Venezuela and Vietnam increased the number of days for maternity leave, and Bolivia and Mexico introduced paid paternity leave. Mexico also adopted legislation prohibiting the dismissal of women for being pregnant, and Montenegro adopted legislation requiring employers to give women their jobs back after returning from maternity leave. It also adopted 365 days of paid parental leave, 45 of which are reserved for the mother (while decreasing the length of maternity leave). Norway extended the length of paid parental leave and increased the quota of parental leave reserved for fathers.

Hungary's new Labor Code removed women-specific restrictions in employment, instead providing employment protections for all workers. The previous code prohibited employing women and young people for work that could have detrimental effects on their physical condition or development. The new Labor Code provides protection against harmful jobs for both women and men regardless of their age. Slovenia removed night work restrictions on women. Italy and Ukraine raised and equalized retirement and pensionable ages for women and men. Lithuania and Poland are gradually increasing and equalizing retirement ages, and Slovenia is doing the same for retirement and pensionable ages. Ethiopia and Malawi introduced retirement and pensionable ages for women and men.

For the Going to court indicator, four economies reformed in addition to the Slovak Republic. Latvia and Uganda introduced small claims procedures, and the Netherlands and the United Kingdom raised the maximum for small claims.

For the Building credit indicator, 12 economies recorded positive reforms in addition to the Philippines. Algeria eliminated the minimum loan amount for inclusion in the credit registry, which now includes information from microfinance institutions. In Angola, Mauritius and Vietnam public credit

registries now also include information from microfinance institutions, as do private credit bureaus in Egypt, Kenya, Ghana and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Cambodia and Tajikistan have new credit bureaus with no minimum loan amounts that also collect information from microfinance institutions. The Lao People's Democratic Republic has a new credit registry that includes information from microfinance institutions. In Ethiopia loans of any amount are now included in the credit reporting system.

For the Providing incentives to work indicator, reforms occurred in Côte d'Ivoire (discussed above) and Israel, whose Cabinet approved free education to all children 3 and older. Previously free education was provided only for children above the age of 5.

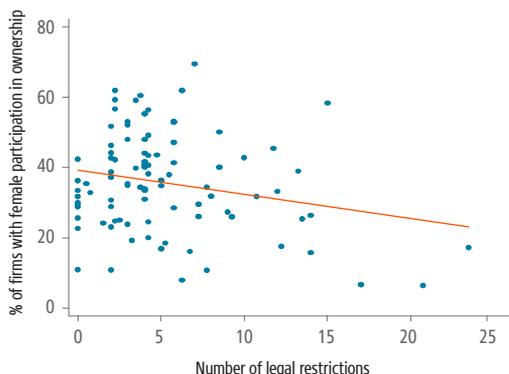
Finally, 11 economies made changes that were neutral to gender parity but still affect the *Women, Business and the Law* indicators. Italy introduced a day of paternity leave on an experimental basis for 2013–15, and Latvia temporarily reduced the percentage of wages paid during maternity and paternity leave. Lithuania gave parents more options in terms of the length of parental leave they could choose and the percentage of wages received. In Hungary paternity leave used to be paid by the government but is now paid by employers. Belgium and Finland increased pensionable ages, Malaysia increased its retirement age and made procedural changes to its small claims courts and the Netherlands is gradually increasing retirement and pensionable ages. These four economies have maintained existing gender parity. Poland raised the pensionable age for women from 60 to 62 but maintained unequal pensionable ages for men and women. Meanwhile, the United Kingdom adopted the Employment Equality (Repeal of Retirement Age Provisions) Regulations, phasing out pensionable ages for women and men.

## Why do relationships between women and the law matter?

Regulatory restrictions on women's economic participation are associated with real economic outcomes. *Women, Business and the Law* and World Bank Enterprise Surveys data show that lower legal gender parity is associated with fewer women participating in the ownership of firms (figure 2.4).

Using the Gini coefficient of inequality as a proxy, *Women, Business and the Law* data show that policies encouraging women to join and remain in the labor force are associated with less income inequality (figure 2.5). Ensuring that women are encouraged to work helps promote shared prosperity around the world.

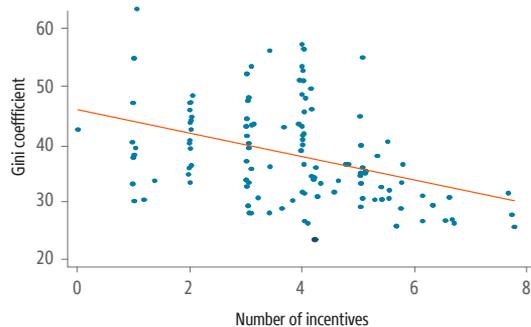
**FIGURE 2.4 GENDER-BASED LEGAL RESTRICTIONS ARE ASSOCIATED WITH LOWER FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN OWNERSHIP OF FIRMS**



Source: *Women, Business and the Law* database; World Bank *World Development Indicators* database; World Bank Enterprise Surveys, <http://www.enterprisesurveys.org/>.

Note: The figure is based on 94 economies for which data are available. The negative relationship between legal restrictions and the percentage of firms with female participation in ownership is statistically significant at the 5% level even after controlling for 2011 income per capita. The regression analysis of this relationship includes 70 economies for which data are available. These statistical relationships cannot be interpreted as causal.

**FIGURE 2.5 ECONOMIES THAT PROVIDE MORE INCENTIVES FOR WOMEN TO WORK HAVE GREATER INCOME EQUALITY**



Source: *Women, Business and the Law* database; World Bank *World Development Indicators* database; All the Ginis dataset, updated October 2012, <http://econ.worldbank.org/projects/inequality>; Milanovic 2005.

Note: The figure is based on 120 economies for which data are available. A Gini coefficient of 0 indicates perfect equality and a Gini coefficient of 100 indicates maximum inequality. The negative relationship between incentives and the Gini coefficient is statistically significant at the 5% level even after controlling for 2011 income per capita, welfare (income or consumption/expenditure, gross or net) and the recipient unit (household or individual) to which the reported Gini refers. The regression analysis of this relationship includes 74 economies for which data are available. These statistical relationships cannot be interpreted as causal.

Legal gender equality matters for women's economic opportunities. It matters for women's access to finance and entrepreneurial activities. And it matters for increasing equality of opportunity in economies. Whether by easing restrictions on women's employment and business activities or by adopting policies increasing women's ability to take up economic activities, gender equality is smart economics.

## Where do things stand on women and the law globally?

Around the world, economies tend to cluster their legislative choices by region, partly because economies are likely to have similar legal histories and share some sociocultural norms and values.

OECD high-income economies and those in Eastern Europe and Central Asia do not impose many legal restrictions on women as measured by the Accessing institutions and Using property indicators. But economies in Eastern Europe and Central Asia have pervasive restrictions on women's employment, as measured by the Getting a job indicator.

In Latin America and the Caribbean and East Asia and the Pacific explicit legal gender differences are less common in the areas measured by the Accessing institutions and Using property indicators. But they still exist in some economies including Ecuador, Honduras, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines.

Explicit legal gender differences are more common in the Middle East and North Africa, South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, both in Accessing institutions and Using property. All 14 economies covered in the Middle East and North Africa have at least one legal differentiation in both Accessing institutions and Using property, as do all five economies covered in South Asia. Of the 36 economies covered in Sub-Saharan Africa only 6—Angola, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe—have no legal differentiations in these areas. Moreover, benefits such as paternity leave, designed to share child-raising responsibilities and free women's time to work outside the home, are rare in these three regions. In fact, none of the economies covered in South Asia offers any paternity leave.

The following sections examine new data and regional trends in the *Women, Business and the Law* indicators.

## Accessing institutions

Lack of autonomy to interact with government institutions or conduct official transactions restricts women's ability to conduct basic transactions.

## A husband's legal veto power

To determine whether women and men have the same capacity to operate in and access the business environment, *Women, Business and the Law* examines 11 actions that women might have to take to earn an income.<sup>3</sup> Some are directly related to women's abilities to function in the business environment, such as being able to take a job or pursue a profession. Others, such as the ability to travel outside the home or country, are indirectly related. But each can affect a woman's ability to function without hindrance in the business environment. Each action is examined separately for married and unmarried women. The data show that most restrictions apply only to married women (table 2.2).

In 29 economies husbands are the legally designated heads of households. That means that husbands control key decisions such as choosing the family residence or obtaining official documents. In 19 of the economies where husbands

are the legal heads of households, they also choose the family residence.

In 15 of the 143 economies covered by *Women, Business and the Law*, husbands can prevent their wives from working. In Guinea a husband may object to his wife's employment if his objection is based on the interests of the family. A wife can go to court and have her husband's objection overturned, but must prove to the court that his objection is unjustified.

Vestiges of history remain codified in certain economies simply because legislation such as the Code Napoléon was adopted wholesale and not regularly reviewed or updated. The notion of head of household, for example, was removed from France's Civil Code in 1970 but persists in many civil codes throughout West Africa.

Other restrictions are holdovers from history as well. Niger's Family Code still only allows women to open bank accounts to deposit funds that their husbands gave them if banks first

**TABLE 2.2** IN MANY ECONOMIES MARRIED WOMEN DO NOT TAKE SOME ACTIONS THE SAME WAY AS MARRIED MEN

Action	Economies where married women do not perform the action the same way as married men
<b>Be head of household</b>	Benin; Burundi; Cameroon; Chad; Chile; Congo, Dem. Rep.; Congo, Rep.; Gabon; Guinea; Honduras; Indonesia; Iran, Islamic Rep.; Jordan; Madagascar; Mali; Mauritania; Morocco; Nicaragua; Niger; Oman; Philippines; Rwanda; Saudi Arabia; Senegal; Sudan; Togo; Tunisia; United Arab Emirates; Yemen, Rep. (29)
<b>Choose where to live</b>	Benin; Burkina Faso; Cameroon; Chad; Congo, Dem. Rep.; Congo, Rep.; Gabon; Guinea; Haiti; Iran, Islamic Rep.; Jordan; Kuwait; Malaysia; Mali; Nicaragua; Niger; Oman; Rwanda; Saudi Arabia; Senegal; Sudan; Syrian Arab Republic; United Arab Emirates; West Bank and Gaza; Yemen, Rep. (25)
<b>Apply for a passport</b>	Benin; Botswana; Cameroon; Congo, Rep.; Egypt, Arab Rep.; Fiji; Gabon; Haiti; Iran, Islamic Rep.; Jordan; Kuwait; Malawi; Oman; Pakistan; Saudi Arabia; Sudan; Uganda; United Arab Emirates; Yemen, Rep. (19)
<b>Confer citizenship on her children</b>	Guinea; Iran, Islamic Rep.; Jordan; Kuwait; Lebanon; Madagascar; Malaysia; Mali; Mauritania; Nepal; Oman; Saudi Arabia; Sudan; Syrian Arab Republic; United Arab Emirates; West Bank and Gaza (16)
<b>Get a job without permission</b>	Bolivia; Cameroon; Chad; Congo, Dem. Rep.; Gabon; Guinea; Iran, Islamic Rep.; Jordan; Kuwait; Mauritania; Niger; Sudan; Syrian Arab Republic; United Arab Emirates; West Bank and Gaza (15)
<b>Obtain a national identity card</b>	Benin; Cameroon; Egypt, Arab Rep.; Mauritius; Oman; Pakistan; Saudi Arabia; Senegal; Togo (9)
<b>Travel outside the home</b>	Iran, Islamic Rep.; Jordan; Kuwait; Malaysia; Oman; Sudan; Syrian Arab Republic; West Bank and Gaza; Yemen, Rep. (9)
<b>Travel outside the country</b>	Oman; Saudi Arabia; Sudan; Syrian Arab Republic (4)
<b>Open a bank account</b>	Congo, Dem. Rep.; Niger (2)
<b>Register a business</b>	Congo, Dem. Rep.; Pakistan (2)
<b>Sign a contract</b>	Congo, Dem. Rep. (1)

Source: *Women, Business and the Law* database.

notify the husbands. But women can open bank accounts in their own names if they have their own jobs, in which case their husbands do not have to be notified. Such legal provisions used to be common throughout Europe. Complicated provisions such as these can create confusion among financial institutions, which might simply require all married women to get permission from their husbands before opening bank accounts even when not legally bound to do so.

### Women in leadership positions

*Women, Business and the Law 2014* expands the data coverage on Accessing institutions to better examine women's ability to access the institutions of public and economic life. The data now cover legal quotas on the share of women on corporate boards and in parliaments and local governments.<sup>4</sup>

The principle of equity is at the core of arguments in favor of gender quotas. Quotas can enable a more equitable representation of women in leadership positions, improving their descriptive representation—which may translate into more equitable representation of women's interests in decision making. This aims to improve women's substantive representation.

Six economies have established quotas for women on boards of publicly listed companies. These quotas vary. Rwanda's constitution sets a minimum of 30% for women and men on boards of publicly listed companies. In 2010 Iceland set a 40% quota for women's representation on corporate boards, and in 2011 Belgium and Italy established 33% quotas. France's Law 2011-103, enacted in January 2011, established a 20% quota, to be progressively raised to 40%.

Norway led the way on this issue in 2002, when its secretary of state for trade and industry proposed voluntary quotas for increasing women's representation on corporate boards. The goal was to reach average representation of 40% by 2005, up from 6%. By the deadline the average had only increased to 25%, so parliament amended the Public Companies Act—making quotas mandatory and establishing a new deadline of 2008. The quotas were to be enforced first by fines, then deregistration from the Oslo Stock Exchange and, finally, dissolution. By 2008 more than 80% of listed firms had complied.

Critics of the Norwegian experience have stressed the limits of corporate board quotas. In addition to the argument that governments should not determine the composition of corporate boards, critics pointed out the lack of diversity among female board members after a small number of senior women accumulated a large share of the new board appointments. The relatively few qualified women available to serve on boards when quotas were introduced in Norway led to the emergence of private initiatives to train women to serve on

boards. Thus the initial lack of diversity among female board members might be a transitional issue.

Of the 143 economies measured by *Women, Business and the Law*, 12 have legal quotas for women in parliaments. The proportion of women in parliaments is 6 percentage points higher in these economies than in economies without legal quotas.<sup>5</sup> Though this represents a small number of economies, the result suggests that quotas may be an effective policy tool for increasing female representation in parliaments.

Decisions by legislative bodies with more women may qualitatively differ from those by institutions with fewer women involved in decision making. A study of 265 village councils in two states in India where a third of the positions of council head had been reserved for women since 1993 found that leaders invest more in infrastructure directly relevant to the needs of their gender.<sup>6</sup>

Women's participation in parliaments might also affect government spending priorities. One cross-country study that analyzed government spending over more than 35 years found that economies with gender quotas spent more money on social services and welfare than economies without them.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, women's participation in parliaments might affect their labor force participation rates. Analysis based on *Women, Business and the Law* data shows that female labor force participation rates are higher in economies with legal quotas for women in parliaments.<sup>8</sup>

Beyond improving equity in representation and policy outcomes, quotas might help allocate women's talents more efficiently. The public and practical demonstration of those talents may, in turn, change gender-biased attitudes and social norms, and reveal role models who foster other women's aspirations. In the Indian state of West Bengal the 1993 quotas for female village councilors changed expectations and beliefs about what women can achieve. In villages administered by female councilors, parents expressed higher aspirations for their daughters' educations and occupations. Adolescent girls also attained higher education levels and spent less time on domestic chores.<sup>9</sup>

### Using property

The importance of land ownership goes beyond capital accumulation. Access to and control over land provides income and reinforces bargaining power and agency. Moreover, the ability to leverage property as collateral is important for both female and male entrepreneurs. But regional and local gender asset gaps persist in property ownership, particularly for major assets.<sup>10</sup>

Unequal inheritance regimes are one cause of gender imbalances in assets. In 98 economies equal inheritance rights were related to a higher likelihood of women having formal bank accounts and credit.<sup>11</sup> Another reason for gender asset gaps may be the structure of marital property regimes. A marital property regime determines the system of property ownership and management between spouses during the course of a marriage and at its dissolution through death or divorce (box 2.3).

Full and partial community of property regimes implicitly recognize the importance of nonmonetary contributions to the household, such as childcare and household labor, by presuming joint ownership of assets. This approach allows the spouse with lower or no income to acquire greater wealth both during marriage and upon its dissolution.

Deferred full or partial community property regimes recognize the importance of nonmonetary contributions at the end of a marriage (either through death or divorce) by equalizing each spouse's share of wealth at that time. This approach protects the spouse with lower or no income at the dissolution of a marriage, but not during its course.

Separation of property regimes leave the spouse with lower or no income at a disadvantage in terms of wealth accumulation both during marriage and at its dissolution.

A study on gender asset and wealth gaps in Ecuador, Ghana and the Indian state of Karnataka used household asset surveys to estimate married women's share of couples'

wealth. It found that in Ecuador married women owned 44% of couples' wealth, in Ghana they owned 19% and in Karnataka the owned 9%. The much larger share of couples' wealth held by married women in Ecuador was explained by the fact that it has a partial community of property regime, where most assets are owned jointly by wives and husbands. Married women's smaller share of couples' wealth in Ghana and Karnataka was largely explained by their separation of property regimes, where assets are not jointly owned.<sup>12</sup>

Marital property regimes can also relate to married women's financial inclusion. Under full and partial community regimes, assets such as bank accounts, savings, stocks and bonds are generally legally presumed to be jointly owned. But women married under a separation of property regime must rely solely on assets they earn themselves, as well as their bargaining power in the household.

*Women, Business and the Law* and the World Bank's Global Financial Inclusion (Global Findex) database show that in economies with a default full community of property regime, there are on average 10 percentage points more female-owned accounts at formal financial institutions than in economies with a default separation of property regime (figure 2.6). One reason is that economies with full community of property regimes may have more joint accounts between wives and husbands. Available data do not make it possible to disaggregate joint accounts from individual ones.

Some separation regimes have enacted legislation protecting spouses earning less or no incomes, recognizing the

### BOX 2.3

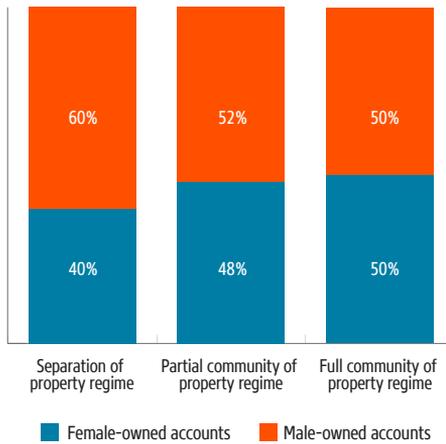
### MARITAL PROPERTY REGIMES

The default marital property regime—the one governing the property relationship of every married couple unless they opt for an alternative—defines how each spouse can use, buy or sell property. Among the economies covered by *Women, Business and the Law* there are four common marital property regimes:

- *Full community of property.* All assets and income brought into a marriage, as well as those acquired during it, apart from inheritances or gifts to one spouse, are considered joint property. If a marriage ends, these assets are divided equally. Joint assets are also divided equally upon the death of either spouse. This regime is the default in 6 economies.
- *Partial community of property.* Assets acquired before marriage are considered the property of the acquirer. Assets and income acquired during marriage, apart from inheritances or gifts to one spouse, are considered joint property. If a marriage ends, each spouse retains ownership of their own assets. Assets acquired during the marriage are divided equally. Such assets are also divided equally upon the death of either spouse. This regime is the default in 65 economies.
- *Deferred full or partial community of property.* The rules of full or partial community of property apply at the time of a marriage's dissolution (either by death or divorce). Prior to this time, the rules of separation of property regimes apply. This regime is the default in 16 economies.
- *Separation of property.* All property acquired by spouses before and during their marriage remains separate property. Each spouse has sole control of their assets. This regime is the default in 46 economies.

Source: *Women, Business and the Law* database.

**FIGURE 2.6** WOMEN ARE LESS LIKELY TO HAVE FORMAL ACCOUNTS IN SEPARATION OF PROPERTY MARITAL REGIMES



Source: *Women, Business and the Law* database; Global Financial Inclusion (Global Findex) 2012 database; World Bank World Development Indicators database.

Note: The figure includes data on 110 economies for which data are available and presents average values.

importance of nonmonetary contributions to the household. Of the 46 economies covered by *Women, Business and the Law* with separation of property regimes, 10 have legislation expressly recognizing nonmonetary contributions: Australia; Hong Kong SAR, China; Ireland; Jamaica; Kenya; Malaysia; Tanzania; the United Kingdom; the United States; and Zambia.

## Getting a job

All the economies covered by *Women, Business and the Law* have labor regulations that differentiate between women and men. Some of these differences may facilitate women’s workforce participation—while others may prevent it. Differences in how women and men are treated under labor law can affect women’s incentives and abilities to get the jobs of their choice.

One common reason given by policy makers for restricting women’s access to certain jobs is the desire to protect them. Historically these measures stemmed from the perceived need to protect women’s physical integrity and reproductive capacity. In 1908 the U.S. Supreme Court upheld an Oregon state statute that limited the workday to 10 hours for women employed in any mechanical establishment, factory or laundry. The court held that, notwithstanding the

“freedom of contracts” guaranteed by the U.S. constitution, women’s physiques and the performance of maternal functions required workplace protections.<sup>14</sup> After this decision, other states enacted similar protective legislation, such as maximum hour and minimum wage laws, health and safety regulations and prohibition of night work and certain occupations.

With rapid changes in social mores and the incorporation of women into the global workforce, many such restrictions no longer serve their original purpose. Better safety standards and technology also raise the question of whether such protections are still needed for women—particularly women who are not pregnant or nursing—but not men.

### Restrictions on women’s work

To better understand gender-specific job restrictions, the Getting a job indicator examines jobs where women are more likely to face employment restrictions. *Women, Business and the Law* records eight areas of work where women face partial or complete employment bans: mining, construction, metalwork, factory work, jobs requiring lifting objects above a certain weight, jobs considered too hazardous for women, jobs considered too arduous for women and jobs considered morally inappropriate for women (box 2.4).

Though the definition of jobs considered morally inappropriate for women suffers from a lack of specificity, the opposite may be true of other gender-based job restrictions. Economies in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, for example, have detailed and lengthy lists of jobs prohibited for women (table 2.3).

Of the 143 economies covered, 79 restrict women who are not pregnant or nursing from doing all the same jobs as men. Restrictions on working hours, sectors and occupations limit the range of jobs that women can hold and can lead to occupational segregation and women’s confinement to low-paying sectors and activities.<sup>15</sup> In fact, many of the jobs prohibited for women are in highly paid industries such as mining and manufacturing.

This has real implications for women’s earnings potential. The Russian Federation had a high gender earnings differential during its transition to a market economy largely because of occupational segregation by gender. That segregation was related more to gender-based job restrictions in Soviet-era labor regulations than to gender differences in education or the higher incidence of part-time work among women. Because of their maternity and childcare functions, women were considered a specific labor force barred from “unsuitable” occupations and encouraged to concentrate in healthcare, education, light industry and white collar jobs.<sup>16</sup>

Restrictions on the types of work that women pursue can also hurt firms and an economy's overall competitiveness. The pool of qualified candidates for open positions is artificially halved, reducing the likelihood of getting the most talented people for the jobs. Analyzing the number of restrictions on women's work in the eight areas examined shows that having more restrictions is associated with lower labor force participation by women (figure 2.7).

### Maternity and parental benefits and women's employment

Though restrictions on women's work may lead to fewer women working, other areas of labor legislation—such as

parental leave regimes—can increase women's participation in the workforce. Parental benefits enabling mothers, fathers or both to take paid or unpaid time off to care for a child following birth can foster a more equitable division of childrearing responsibilities in the family. This in turn can give women greater opportunities for career advancement. *Women, Business and the Law* measures the length of paid and unpaid maternity, paternity and parental leave and the rate at which it is paid.

More women participate in the labor force in economies with longer fully paid maternity and parental leave available for new mothers.<sup>17</sup> But too much leave can undermine women's labor force participation. In economies where the cumulative

#### BOX 2.4

#### JOBS LEGALLY DEEMED MORALLY INAPPROPRIATE FOR WOMEN

Some economies prohibit women from working in jobs legally deemed harmful to their moral character. Though this is an explicit restriction in labor codes, jobs that are "morally harmful" to women are often not defined objectively but left to employers to determine. Working at night can fall into this category if employers feel working at night is morally harmful to women. Bolivia's General Labor Law prohibits women from working in "occupations that harm their morality and good customs" but does not define what that means, leaving it to employers to interpret.

Labor codes can also conflate jobs that are morally inappropriate for women with those that are morally inappropriate for children without explaining what such jobs may entail. An example is Mauritania's Labor Code, which prohibits the employment of children under 18, women and pregnant women for tasks that exceed their strength or might harm their health, physical integrity or moral conduct. Where women and children are treated the same way under labor law, it may make employers more likely to feel that women are incapable of carrying out particular jobs.

Source: FAO 1994.

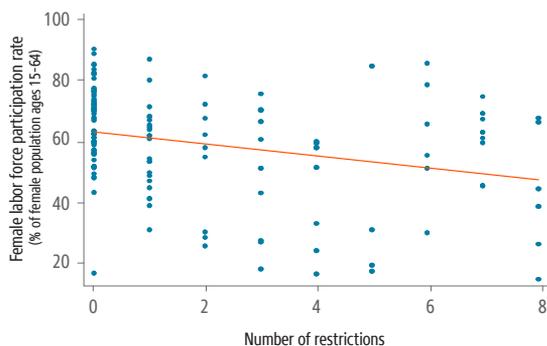
TABLE 2.3

#### NUMBER AND EXAMPLES OF JOBS PROHIBITED FOR WOMEN IN SOME ECONOMIES IN EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

Economies	Number of specific jobs from which women are barred	Examples
Belarus	252	Diver; porter; lumberjack; carpenter; stonecutter; repairer of wagons; transporting timber; tractor-driver; direct firefighting and emergency response; aircraft mechanic (technician) of radio equipment; pouring steel; laying concrete and asphalt; cross-border driver of vehicles with 14 or more passengers or trucks weighing more than 5 tons; processing of fish and seafood involving hand-mixing fish in salting tanks.
Kazakhstan	299	Snowmobile driver; metal welder; machinist for diesel trains, locomotives, and electric multiple unit trains; railway fitter; operating cranes at sea; stoker of ship operating on solid fuel; drilling for oil and gas for developmental and exploration purposes; rubber-mixing equipment operator; blaster in mines; calibrator of pipes on the press; concrete products carver; presser of raw materials and fibers during initial processing of cotton; rescuer in gas emergencies; lumberjack.
Russian Federation	456	Truck driver in agriculture; freight train conductor; deckhand (boatswain, skipper, assistant skipper and sailors of all denominations) on ships of all types of fleets as well as floating docks and cranes for loading grain, cement, coal and other dusty cargo; worker in integrated teams and longshoreman engaged in loading and unloading in ports and harbors; woodworker; installer of antennas at high places; mining rig operator; operator of chemical treatment of wells; lift machinist in oil and gas industry; bulldozer machinist; plumber involving the repair of sewer networks; metal and alloy smelter; driver of loading machine; pipe, furnace and flue cleaner; controller of speed of train wagons.

Source: *Women, Business and the Law* database

**FIGURE 2.7** RESTRICTIONS ON JOBS OPEN TO WOMEN CAN REDUCE THE NUMBER OF WOMEN IN THE WORKFORCE



Source: *Women, Business and the Law* database; World Bank *World Development Indicators* database.

Note: The negative relationship between the number of restrictions on women's work and the female labor force participation rate is statistically significant at the 5% level even after controlling for 2011 income per capita. This relationship is based on regression analysis involving 103 economies for which data on 2011 income per capita are available. The figure is based on 139 economies for which data are available. These statistical relationships cannot be interpreted as causal.

duration of paid maternity and parental leave available for mothers exceeds two years, female labor force participation is lower.<sup>18</sup>

There are several possible reasons. Because women tend to take most or all of their leave entitlement, long periods of leave might cause their skills to deteriorate or become less relevant, slowing their earnings and career progression. They might also lose touch with their professional network, which can reduce their opportunities for career advancement. Finally, employers may be less willing to hire women who they suspect will take long maternity leaves in the near future.

These findings are consistent with a study of the labor market effect of paid leave in 30 OECD economies. Looking at paid leave duration and female employment rates between 1970 and 2010, the study finds that extending paid leave results, on average, in higher female employment rates as long as the leave is less than two years. Additional weeks of leave have a negative impact on female employment and the gender employment gap.<sup>19</sup>

## Going to court

Women's access to justice can be hindered by limits on their representation in judicial institutions. The United Nations

estimates that globally women account for 27% of all judges.<sup>20</sup> Evidence is emerging that women judges can make a difference in outcomes of cases where gender is a salient issue. For example, an analysis of U.S. federal appellate cases in 1999, 2000 and 2001 found that a judge's gender mattered in cases involving sex discrimination or sexual harassment. Plaintiffs were twice as likely to win when a women was on the panel deciding such cases. The data showed both that women judges were significantly more likely than their male counterparts to find for the plaintiff in such cases and that having a woman on the panel increased the probability that male judges would support the plaintiff.<sup>21</sup>

Where gender equality is guaranteed in the constitution, constitutional reviews—that is, supervising implementation of the constitution and jettisoning incompatible laws—allow challenges to discriminatory provisions in areas of law such as the civil code, family law and criminal law. In 2004 South Africa's Constitutional Court decided that the rule of primogeniture in customary law, under which the eldest son inherits the family land, was unconstitutional because of its discriminatory impact on African women and children—arguably the most vulnerable groups in society.<sup>22</sup> Over the years most economies have established institutional mechanisms to conduct constitutional reviews. These reviews vary across economies and legal traditions. To examine women's representation in constitutional reviews as judges and chief justices, *Women, Business and the Law* examines courts or court-like bodies mandated to conduct such reviews.

Among the 123 economies covered by *Women, Business and the Law* that have constitutional courts or court-like bodies, women are absent from 19: Cameroon; the Democratic Republic of Congo; Egypt; El Salvador; Hong Kong SAR, China; the Islamic Republic of Iran; Jordan; Kuwait; Lebanon; Mauritania; Moldova; Pakistan; Panama; Peru; Senegal; Thailand; Uruguay; the United Arab Emirates and the Republic of Yemen.

On the other hand, women judges preside over constitutional reviews in 16 economies: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Costa Rica, Croatia, Gabon, Ghana, Ireland, Jamaica, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, the Philippines, Sierra Leone, the Slovak Republic, República Bolivariana de Venezuela and Zambia.

Women account for 10% or less of the members of constitutional courts in nine economies: Belgium, Chile, Hungary, India, Italy, Morocco, Nepal, Turkey and United Kingdom. In 71 economies women make up between 11% and 33% of institutions in charge of constitutional reviews. In 18 economies women represent between 34% and 50% of constitutional judges. And in six economies—Bolivia, the Kyrgyz Republic, Latvia, Sierra Leone, Slovenia and Zambia—women account for more than 50% of members of constitutional courts.

## Building credit

Establishing a good credit history can help entrepreneurs access finance. Lenders rely on credit histories to distinguish diligent clients from those with late payment records or defaulting loans. Borrowers who build and maintain good credit histories are rewarded with enhanced reputation collateral, giving them the ability to qualify for larger loans and lower interest rates.<sup>23</sup>

Several factors can affect women's ability to build credit histories. Where public credit registries and private credit bureaus only record loans above a certain threshold, they might exclude small borrowers like female entrepreneurs. Where credit registries and bureaus do not record loans from microfinance institutions—for whom women make up a large share of borrowers—the good repayment histories of microfinance clients cannot be leveraged. Finally, where information from nonbank institutions such as retailers and utilities is not used to assess borrowers' creditworthiness, it excludes those who lack traditional banking relationships, many of whom are women.

Of the 143 economies covered by *Women, Business and the Law*, only 6 do not have a public credit registry or private credit bureau (the Democratic Republic of Congo, Jamaica, Lesotho, Malawi, Sudan and Tanzania). Among the 136 economies with credit reporting institutions, 16 have minimum loan thresholds higher than 1% of income per capita. In this group thresholds range from 49% of income per capita in Lebanon and 87% in Bangladesh to more than 20 times income per capita in Nepal and Niger.

Among the 104 low-income, lower-middle-income and upper-middle-income economies covered, microfinance institutions share credit information with public registries or private bureaus in 67. For example, in 2002 Nicaragua's microfinance institutions began sharing such information through Sin Riesgos, a credit bureau promoted by the Nicaraguan Association of Microfinance Institutions (ASOMIF). By 2004 the Law on Bank Secrecy allowed commercial banks, which already shared information through the public credit registry, to access potential clients' credit histories from private credit bureaus. Today commercial banks can access Sin Riesgos records of microfinance clients and assess their creditworthiness and eligibility for conventional loans.

Across all income groups, credit bureaus and registries also collect information from retailers in 40 economies and from utilities in 30. In Rwanda two mobile phone companies and an electricity and gas company have shared information with the country's credit bureau since 2011. On the other hand, the five economies in South Asia covered by *Women, Business and the Law* have credit reporting institutions, but none collects information from retailers or utilities. Overall,

in 25 of the economies measured both retailers and utilities provide information to credit reporting institutions.

## Conclusion

Evidence is emerging on the value of reforms improving women's legal parity. In 2000 Ethiopia revised its Family Code, which had been in place since 1960. Among other things, the reform eliminated a husband's right to deny his wife permission to work and required the consent of both spouses in the administration of marital property.

Though the reform has now been implemented throughout Ethiopia, it was first introduced in three regions and two charter cities. Two nationally representative surveys, one before the reform and the other five years later, allowed researchers to estimate the reform's impact. Where the reform was followed, women's labor force participation and work outside the home increased. Women were also more likely to work full-time and in higher-skilled jobs.<sup>24</sup>

Similarly, in 1994 two states in India—Karnataka and Maharashtra—reformed the Hindu Succession Act, giving women and men equal rights to inherit joint family property. This change altered the control of assets in families and increased parental investments in their daughters.<sup>25</sup>

The findings from these studies are consistent with analysis of similar reforms. For example, around the turn of the 20th century most U.S. states reformed legislation affecting married women's ability to own and administer property and conduct legal transactions. And state census data showed that expanding women's economic rights through legal reform led more girls to attend school.<sup>26</sup>

There is growing evidence showing the links between women's legal rights and economic opportunities. *Women, Business and the Law 2014* provides a rich body of data that can generate further research and policy action in this area. This report has shown that although much progress has been made in recent decades in gradually dismantling many of the legal restrictions which have hampered women from more fully contributing to national prosperity, there is a large unfinished agenda of reform. In too many economies across all regions the law is still being used to hold women back, to silence their voices and limit their actions—imposing large tangible costs linked to these constraints on women's freedom. Gender equality is important not only for fairness and equity, but also for economic efficiency and is at the center of creating a more prosperous world.

## Endnotes

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- 1 *50 Years of Women's Legal Rights* database.
- 2 *50 Years of Women's Legal Rights* database.
- 3 One action was added for *Women, Business and the Law 2014*: Can a woman get a national identity card in the same way as a man?
- 4 *Women, Business and the Law 2014* covers only mandatory quotas for a certain number of seats reserved for women and not quotas for women on candidate lists.
- 5 The results of the regression analysis of this relationship are statistically significant at the 5% level even when controlling for 2011 income per capita. The analysis includes 103 economies for which data are available and shows that legal quotas are positively correlated with the proportion of seats held by women in parliaments. These statistical relationships cannot be interpreted as causal.
- 6 Chattopadhyay and Duflo 2004.
- 7 Chen 2010.
- 8 The relationship is statistically significant at the 10% level even when controlling for 2011 income per capita. The regression analysis includes 103 economies for which data are available.
- 9 Beaman and others 2012.
- 10 Deere and León 2003a; Quisumbing and Hallman 2005; Deere and Doss 2006.
- 11 Demirgüç-Kunt, Klapper and Singer 2013.
- 12 Deere and others 2012.
- 13 The Global Financial Inclusion (Global Findex) database's variable "Account at a formal financial institution, female (% age 15+)" is not disaggregated by marital status. In the analysis of the relationship between marital property regimes and accounts at a formal financial institution it is assumed that all women are married.
- 14 Muller v. Oregon 208 U.S. 412 (1908).
- 15 World Bank 2011.
- 16 Oglobin 1999.
- 17 The regression analysis shows a positive relationship that is statistically significant at the 5% level even when controlling for 2011 income per capita. The analysis includes 114 economies for which data are available. These statistical relationships cannot be interpreted as causal.
- 18 The results of the regression analysis of this relationship are statistically significant at the 10% level even when controlling for 2010 income per capita. To analyze this relationship, 2010 income per capita was used as a control variable, as opposed to 2011, due to missing 2011 data on 11 economies that drive the results. The analysis includes 103 economies for which data are available. The variable "paid maternity leave and parental leave available for the mother" includes the number of days of leave paid at various rates, as opposed to the number of days of leave paid at 100% of wages used in the previous relationship. These statistical relationships cannot be interpreted as causal.
- 19 Thévenon and Solaz 2013.
- 20 UN Women 2011.
- 21 Peresie 2005.
- 22 South Africa Constitutional Court 2004.
- 23 Miller 2003.
- 24 Hallward-Driemeier and Gajigo 2010.
- 25 Deininger, Goyal and Nagarajan 2010.
- 26 Geddes, Lueck and Tennyson 2012.

# ON THE TECHNOLOGY FRONT

## *Nne–Nna Issues in ICT Access*

*Nnenna Nwakanma*



### **Gender and gender roles**

I love the way the Council of Europe (1998) describes gender as socially assigned roles and behaviors attributable to men and women, the socially constructed meaning of biological sex differences. These are roles that are played by both women and men and are not determined by biological factors, but by the socioeconomic and cultural environment or situation (ICA-ILO 2001; Mollel and Mtenga 2000). Gender affects the distribution of resources, wealth, work, decision making, and political power, as well as the enjoyment of rights and entitlements within the family and in public life (Welch and others 2000). With the ever-increasing role of technology in our daily lives, the boom in mobile phones, and the resultant social change, it is important to seek out not only the gender roles in access to technology, but also their impact.

#### ***Technology access from a gender perspective***

Hafkin and Huyer (2008) have shown that the countries that collect gender ICT statistics are generally the countries where internet penetration is high and the gender digital divide is the least marked. The Canada, Chile, Denmark, Finland, Hong Kong, Iceland, Korea, Norway, Singapore, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand and United States, all collect sex-disaggregated ICT usage statistics. Also, all European Union (EU) members agree to participate in Eurostat ICT data collections, which are sex-disaggregated. This is confirmed by 2002 International Telecommunications Union (ITU) figures, which show that the highest percentages of females among internet users are found in the United States and Canada, at 51 percent, closely followed by Hong Kong, China, Thailand, and Iceland, at 49 percent. South Africa, which ranked highest in Africa, recorded 40 percent.

More recent studies into access to technology in Africa (Gillwald, Milek, and Stork 2010) show that of 17 African countries assessed, only in Botswana, Ghana, Nigeria, and South Africa do more than 50 percent of women own mobile phones or active active SIM cards. Further assessment that sought to understand the percentage of adult women (16+) who had e-mail addresses showed Uganda at 0.8 percent, Mozambique at 0.7 percent,

*Emlar Vushe, Africa's Internet Society's Ambassador to Azerbaijan, during the United Nations Internet Governance Forum, Baku 2012.*



## What's in a name?

### *In Africa? Everything*

Nnenna—I cherish the name. It is an alliance of two words: Nne, which is the word for mother, and Nna, which is the word for father. I do not understand why the Igbo-speaking population of Africa use the same word—Nne for both “mother” and “female.” The same words are not used for father and male. Another unexplained linguistic mystery is the reason behind another set of word alliances, when “umu” is added to the words. Umu is the plural of the word “nwa,” which means child. The word compounds nwanne and nwanna or their plurals, umunne and umunna, are used to describe different relations among persons. Nwanne is the sibling, the closer relative. Nwanna is also a relative, but not in the immediate family circle. I have asked for an explanation of this, and I found one reason: the female and her role are at the center of the social and economic system. Seeking to apply this in my work as a lady in the Information and Communication Technology for Development (ICT4D) profession has not been easy. This article is a part of the quest.

Nnenna Nwakanma, Africa Regional Coordinator of the World Wide Web Foundation



*The Web Index has measured the impact of technology in over 80 countries. In Africa, only South Africa, Mauritius, and Tunisia were found among the first 50 countries, with Namibia, Botswana, Benin, and Mali scoring less than 10 percent on the empowerment assessment.*

and indicators by gender is to inform national policy and to set international policy goals. Without data, there is no visibility; without visibility, there is no priority (World Bank). The Web Index (of the World Wide Web Foundation) has provided us with a list of key policy questions that can be used to guide policy making, not just for the Web, but across all technology fields:

- To what extent has the government prioritized support for increased access to the Web for women and girls?
- To what extent has the government prioritized support for increased training in how to use the Web for women and girls?
- To what extent do girls have equal access to training in how to use the Web, relative to boys (at school, through community organizations, or in the workplace)?
- To what extent are there official programs that support the training of female government employees in Web use?
- To what extent are there women in positions of leadership in the ICT field?

and Ethiopia at 0.3 percent. Different reasons may account for this, but these figures are a call to action for African leaders and development institutions. In our quest for development and poverty reduction, we must seek to balance out these figures.

### ***Technology access policy from a gender perspective***

The major reason for collecting and disseminating macro-level ICT statistics

- To what extent is the Web used to expand access to information about reproductive and sexual health rights and services in the main local languages?

These questions, and many more, help us develop a greater sense of the challenge of gender access in technology. ***Increase is one thing, impact is another.*** The Web Index has measured the impact of technology in over 80 countries. In Africa, only South Africa, Mauritius, and Tunisia were found among the first 50 countries, with Namibia, Botswana, Benin, and Mali scoring less than 10 percent on the empowerment assessment. But beyond this, it is possible for sub-regions in Africa, and even countries, to develop their own set of questions and to measure the real impact of ICT for men and women.

### ***The affordability challenge***

The high cost of internet access in many developing countries has been one of the most significant barriers to increasing adoption. A study by Research ICT Africa found that affordability dwarfed other barriers (including local availability and digital literacy) for several countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. This should come as no surprise. The International Telecommunications Union (ITU) (2012) notes that in Sub-Saharan Africa, fixed-broadband internet service costs more than 100 percent, and mobile broadband over 50 percent, of average monthly gross national income per capita (ITU-UNESCO Broadband Commission for Digital Development, 2013). There is no way that Africans in general, and women in particular, can be empowered by technology they cannot afford. Accessible and affordable broadband internet connection is fundamental for any engagement into today's fast-paced and increasingly complex world of digital power play.

### ***Positives***

There are a number of positive examples that can be improved upon and shared across Africa. Some may be in their nascent stage, but they do hold promises in policy, in inclusion, in capacity building and in affordability. Some of these examples include:

**CHAD:** In Chad, the National Broadband Plan aims at developing 18 ICT training centers within a 4-year time frame. It has defined concrete goals to measure progress in this area by outlining administrative and fiscal measures to achieve ICT gender equality, and to develop a favorable legal framework within two years.

**ZAMBIA:** In a bid to accelerate technology access in rural and under-served areas, there has been a suspension of duty on taxes related to all active and passive Global System for Mobile Communication (GSM) telecommunications equipment, the ministries of Finance and National Planning and Communication and Transport jointly issued SI Number 23 of 2011 under the Customs and Excise Act which waived all taxes for telecommunication site equipment. The waiver has facilitated telecommunication service operations in the country by reducing capital expenditure, and it has enhanced the spread of technology

**KENYA:** As early as 2009, Kenya had waived import duties on all mobile phones. This immediately led to an increased access. The waiver was followed by that a similar move for computers. New computers, computer printers and parts only attract import declaration fees of 2.25% of cost. Notable also was the establishment of KICTANET – Kenya ICT Network, which is a platform for all of the country’s ICT actors, under the able leadership of the Permanent Secretary at that time – Dr Bitange Ndemo. In contrast, Côte d’Ivoire, like many other countries of the West African Monetary Union, still imposes duties as high as 26% on computers, computer printers and parts.

**NIGERIA:** The Lagos State Government has elected to reduce charges imposed on telecommunications companies for granting them permission to lay cables and installations across the state (right of way). Initially, RoW right of way was charged at 3000 Naira (18.75\$) per linear meter, but the State decided to cut these costs by over 85%percent, bringing them down to 500 Naira (3.1\$). Further, the state encouraged the operators to adhere to the

“dig once” policy. This means that any operator digging up the road for cable installation would additionally also install a duct with spare capacity for other operators to use.

**CAPE VERDE:** In all of the 10 islands of Cape Verde, municipal authorities have prioritized access to the internet for the population. These municipal authorities have created public spaces a free wifi access for citizens. Over the months that these public wifi-enabled spaces have been in existence, they have been adopted by the Cape Verdian population and are growing in social impact. Some of them turning into veritable social and economic hubs.

**A4AI:** The Alliance for Affordable internet (A4AI) is a coalition of private sector, public sector, and not-for-profit organizations that have come together to advance the shared aim of affordable access to both mobile and fixed-line internet in developing countries. Its primary goal is to see the realization of the UN Broadband Commission Broadband Target of entry-level broadband services priced at less than 5 percent of average monthly income realised. A4AI has a clear focus on policy and regulatory change through a combination of advocacy, research and knowledge-sharing. A4AI is driving policy change by seeking to create the conditions for open, competitive and innovative broadband markets. It has published a set of policy and regulatory best practices that guides its work. The Alliance’s added value lies in bringing major players together across sectors and geography to generate both the will and incentives to drive change. By unifying diverse actors in pursuit of a goal that delivers both social and commercial dividends, they hope to achieve a much



*... gender inequities in access to and use of ICTs cannot be addressed through ICT policies alone, but require policy interventions in other areas that would allow women and girls to enjoy the benefits of ICTs equally*

greater impact than any one actor could achieve on their own. The Alliance has started working closely with national governments – 2–3 countries in year 1, expanding to 10–12 countries in years 2 and 3.

### ***Going forward***

Mariama Deen-Swarray and Mpho Moyo (2010) have opined that while the descriptive analysis shows that mobile phone and internet access have increased among women, modeling of the data indicates that there is a negative correlation between mobile adoption and being female and a negative causal relationship between using the internet and being female. This evidence shows that to a large extent, gender inequities in access to and use of ICTs cannot be addressed through ICT policies alone, but require policy interventions in other areas that would allow women and girls to enjoy the benefits of ICTs equally. This would include policies and programmes that incentivize the education of girls, which in turn will increase the income that women have to spend on ICT services.

Further examination of the extent to which women are represented in decision-making about ICTs reflects the progress of women in the field and also the possibility that women in positions of power will serve as role models for others, facilitate the entry of other women, and alleviate some of the negative impacts of new technologies on women. Available

  
*Education systems that do not encourage girls, the education of girls, or that insist on the education of minority and vulnerable populations, set the stage for gender imbalance.*

data indicate that women are conspicuously absent from decision-making structures in Africa. These structures include boards and senior management of ICT companies, senior management and advisors of policy and regulatory organizations, organizations setting technical standards, industry

and professional organisations such as the Africa Telecommunications Union, internet Society (ISOC) Africa, The Africa ICT Alliance (AFICTA), the Africa Network Operators Group (AFNOG), the Africa Network Information Center (AfriNic), the Africa Top Level Domain Name Organisation (AfTLD), the African Peering and Interconnection Forum (AfPIF), Africa Computer Emergency Response Team (AfricaCERT) and the Africa Internet Governance Forum (AfIGF).

We cannot underestimate the importance of early education and its influence in the career and economic well-being of women. Education systems that do not encourage girls, the education of girls, or that insist on the education of minority and vulnerable populations, set the stage for gender imbalance. Further, the rates at which women drop out from schools and universities are a concern. Studies in Western countries show the low numbers of women in engineering and technology courses at the university level. Data from Africa, though not properly researched will show similar, maybe worse, numbers. There is need to move from the objectification of women in the media across Africa to the positive and gender-balanced representation of women across all careers.

There are a few initiatives that can be carried out across Africa towards a gender-balanced technology access on the continent. A large cross-country dataset on the ICT gender gap, presented in a clear and actionable format will be useful, not only to decision makers but also to the international community. We need to be informed by evidenced, in order to get our priorities right. Working with initiatives such as the Web Index may be one of the possible ways. Toolkits and training modules that address the gender gap for decision makers will be a natural follow-up to this.

### ***Women ICT entrepreneurs***

In an earlier study I carried out among young African women, I was surprised that funding and finance were not the most important issues for those envisaging a technology career. The top priority

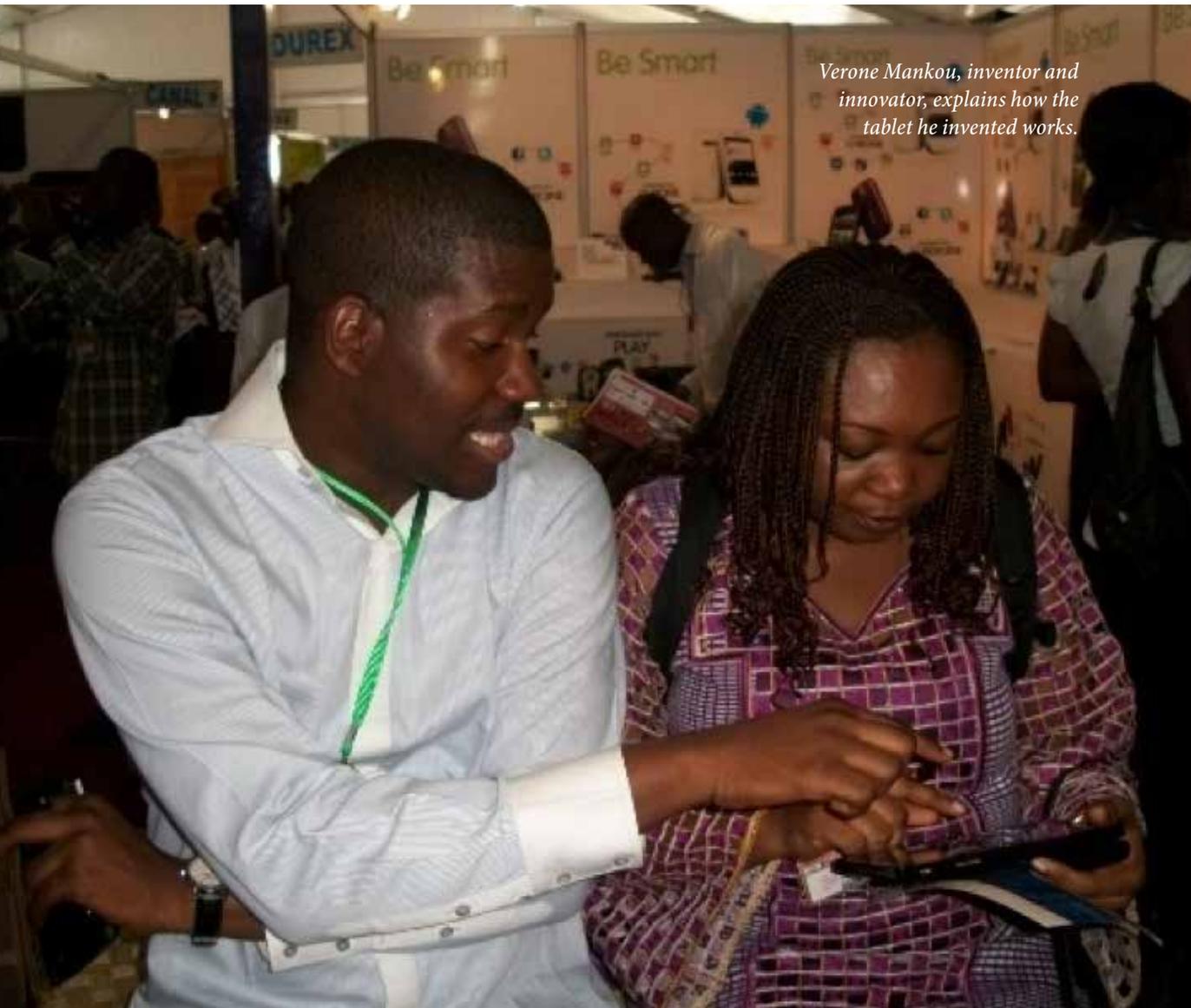
was mentoring. We need to encourage women ICT entrepreneurs, support their businesses and build national champions. In turn these individuals may mentor younger women. The more female techno-preneurs we have today, the more techno-preneurs we are sure to get in the nearest future.

### ***Openness in technology: licenses, data, source code, and platforms***

Access to technology in Africa will be greatly be improved by opening up data, adopting open licensing regimes in content, encouraging open source software and using minimum interoperability standards in hardware. Open technologies allow for users to adapt, modify, and share. The culture of sharing is key to digital life and are key motivators for creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship.

### ***Last word***

Gender (Nnenna) analysis (GA) seeks to create awareness of inequality, as well as integration of a more equal situation for women and men in all aspects of project execution, such as conceptualization, data gathering and analysis, field implementation and interventions, and evaluation. It is therefore an intensely political act that may be met with resistance because it challenges those who have the power to decide, allocate resources, and control. Gender-focused development means that women and men are given equal opportunities to contribute to and benefit from social, economic, and political processes.



*Verone Mankou, inventor and innovator, explains how the tablet he invented works.*

The African Development Bank group stands at a very advantageous position in Africa to leverage its resources, partnerships, initiatives and policy support capacity in favor of a more gender-mainstreamed and balanced access to technology in Africa. It is not enough to record achievements literacy rate, maternal and child health, and investment growth. We must face the increasing digital

gender divide and begin to close it faster and more thoroughly than we have done before. We must task ourselves to plan, execute, measure, evaluate, and show reports in easily readable ways. Mainstreaming gender in technology access is not just “something good to do”, it is a policy priority that will give Africa the full use of its human resources (male and female) to ensure efficiency and national development.



*Unmeasured and non-channeled activity. A lot is happening but it needs to be guided by a vision and measured for impact!*

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### Profile of the Author

Nnenna Nwakanma is the Africa Regional Coordinator of the World Wide Web Foundation. She is an experienced development professional who has worked in the ICT field in Africa for over a decade. As well as leading a highly regarded consultancy platform, Nnenna has in recent years co-founded The Free Software and Open Source Foundation for Africa, and served as a board member of the Open Source Initiative. Her career has allowed her to work closely with many civil society and global financial organizations, and has seen her involved in many phases of the UN's Africa Information Society Initiative. She has lived and worked in five African countries and is fluent in English, French and a number of African languages.

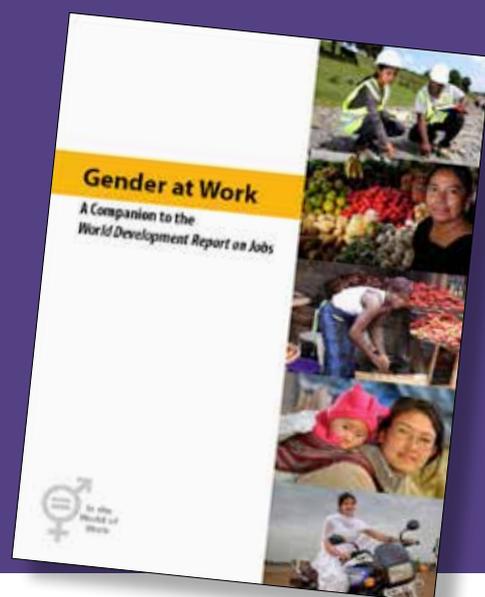


# GENDER AT WORK

## Gender Equality in the World of Work Matters

- Excerpts from the Executive Summary  
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World Bank Group's  
Gender and Development unit.



**Jobs can bring gains for women, their families, businesses, and communities.** Jobs boost self-esteem and pull families out of poverty. Yet gender disparities persist in the world of work. Closing these gaps, while working to stimulate job creation more broadly, is a prerequisite for ending extreme poverty and boosting shared prosperity.

**Gender equality in the world of work is a win-win on many fronts.** A large and growing body of evidence demonstrates both the business and the development case. Booz & Company estimates that raising female employment to male levels could have a direct impact on GDP, increasing it by 34 percent in Egypt, 12 percent in the United Arab Emirates, 10 percent in South Africa, and 9 percent in Japan, taking into account losses in economy-wide labor productivity that could occur as new workers entered the labor force.<sup>1</sup> Yet almost half of women's productive potential globally is unutilized, compared to 22 percent of men's, according to the International Labour Organization.<sup>2</sup> In places where women's paid work has increased, as in Latin America and the Caribbean, gains have made significant contributions to overall poverty reduction.

**Both the *World Development Report 2013 on Jobs* (WDR 2013) and the *World Development Report 2012 on Gender Equality and Development* (WDR 2012) provide valuable and complementary frameworks to help policy makers advance gender equality in the world of work.** The WDR 2013 approach helps us to understand how and when promoting gender equality in the world of work adds significant development value. The WDR 2012, meanwhile, offers an important framework for diagnosing and addressing gender-specific constraints. An important link between the two WDRs is the notion of agency—women's ability to make choices they value and to act on those choices. Jobs can increase women's agency by expanding their life choices and their capacity to better support their families and more actively participate in communities and societies. Conversely, significant constraints on agency pose major barriers to women's work and help explain the persistence of gender gaps.

**Following the WDR 2013, "jobs" are broadly defined to include various forms of wage and non-wage work, formal and informal.** Informal work is the largest source of employment throughout Africa, Asia,

and the Middle East, and working women are more likely than working men to be self-employed or farming. The jobs that are best for women's economic empowerment—and development goals more broadly—depend on country-specific jobs challenges.

### ***Where do we stand?***

**Gender equality in the world of work is multidimensional.** Broadly, key dimensions include labor force participation, employment, firm and farming characteristics, earnings, and job quality. The last is the most difficult to measure and varies by context. However, full-time wage employment is a strong predictor of subjective well-being, and jobs that provide higher earnings, benefits, rights, and opportunities for skills development are more likely to expand women's agency.

**On virtually every global measure, women are more economically excluded than men.** Trends suggest that women's labor force participation (ages 15–64) worldwide over the last two decades has stagnated, declining from 57 to 55 percent globally. Participation is as low as 25 percent in the Middle East and North Africa. Globally, Gallup estimates that men are nearly twice as likely as women to have full-time jobs—and, in South Asia, they are more than three times as likely<sup>3</sup>

**Gender gaps are evident among farmers, entrepreneurs, and employees alike.** Because of gender-specific constraints, female farmers tend to have lower output per unit of land and are less likely to be active in commercial farming than men. In the Central Highlands of Ethiopia, the value of output per hectare of female-headed households has been estimated to be 35 percent lower than that of male-headed households, a disparity stemming mainly from unequal access to productive inputs.<sup>4</sup> Female entrepreneurs typically operate smaller firms and in less profitable sectors. In Latin America and the Caribbean, half of established businesses owned by women have no employees, compared to 38 percent of businesses owned by men.<sup>5</sup> Female employees are more likely to work in temporary and part-time jobs,

are less likely to be promoted, and are concentrated in occupations and sectors with lower barriers to entry. Women and girls also do the vast majority of unpaid care and housework.

**Women generally earn less than men.** ILO analysis of 83 countries shows that women in paid work earn on average between 10 and 30 percent less than men.<sup>6</sup> Gaps are particularly acute in the Middle East and North Africa, but also persist in high-income OECD countries.

**Gender sorting into different jobs, industries, and firm types explains much of the pay gap.** Throughout the world, women are concentrated in less-productive jobs and run enterprises in less-productive sectors, with fewer opportunities for business scale-up or career advancement. The latest Grant Thornton International Business Report indicates that the share of women in senior management roles globally is only 24 percent.<sup>7</sup> Across developing countries, 18 percent of non-agricultural self-employed males work in business-oriented services, compared to only 5 percent of females; women are more heavily concentrated in retail services, often in the informal sector.<sup>8</sup>

### ***Overlapping disadvantages and gender equality at work***

**Gender-smart jobs strategies need to identify and address multiple deprivations and constraints that underlie gender inequality in the world of work.** The WDR 2012 provides a valuable framework for understanding the challenges. It highlights key outcome areas—agency, endowments, and economic opportunities—and underscores the fact that disparities are driven by multiple constraints that arise in formal and informal institutions, markets, and households. The constraints are most severe among women who face other disadvantages, such as being a member of an ethnic minority, having a disability, or being poor.

**Social norms are a key factor underlying deprivations and constraints throughout the lifecycle.** Norms affect women's work by dictating the way they

spend their time and undervaluing their potential. Housework, child-rearing, and elderly care are often considered primarily women's responsibility. Further, nearly four in 10 people globally (close to one-half in developing countries) agree that, when jobs are scarce, men should have more right to jobs than women.<sup>9</sup> Research shows that women are frequently disadvantaged by gender biases in performance and hiring evaluations.<sup>10</sup>

**Jobs can increase women's agency, but a lack of agency also restricts women's job opportunities.**

In most developing countries, women have fewer choices in fundamental areas of day-to-day life, including their own movements, sexual and reproductive health decisions, ability to use household assets, and whether and when to go to school, work, or participate in other economic-related activities. Further, a large proportion of women in the world lack freedom from violence. The World Health Organization estimates that more than 35 percent of women have experienced gender-based violence.<sup>11</sup> Without addressing these critical constraints on agency, women cannot take full advantage of potential economic opportunities.

**Inequalities in endowments and assets contribute to gaps in the world of work.**

While there has been important progress globally, in some countries fundamental deprivations persist. In 2010–12, female-to-male enrollment ratios for primary school were less than 90 percent in 16 countries, mainly in Africa, and some 57 million primary school age children were not enrolled.<sup>12</sup> Many women lack access to land and financial capital. Other deep-seated differences also persist. For example, young women and men often follow different educational streams and develop differences in aspirations and skills that underlie occupational segregations later in life. A wider account of productive inputs shows women disadvantaged in areas such as access to financial services, technology, training, information, and social networks.

**Legal discrimination is a remarkably common barrier to women's work.**

Of 143 economies, 128

had at least one legal differentiation in 2013.<sup>13</sup> These barriers include restricting women's ability to access institutions (such as obtaining an ID card or conducting official transactions), own or use property, build credit, or get a job. In 15 countries, women still require their husbands' consent to work. In many economies, especially in the Middle East and North Africa, women face the cumulative effects of multiple legal constraints.

***Igniting gender equality in the world of work***

While there are no "magic formulas," effectively tackling gender inequality at work is likely to be an integral part of addressing country jobs challenges. Overcoming gender inequality involves barriers to women's work is key to leveling the playing field. Reforms should focus on removing restrictions to women's work in labor and employment; removing understanding local specificities and developing bold, coordinated actions to address multiple constraints. It requires investments in people's skills and capabilities, and supporting their abilities to contribute to higher productivity activities and economy-wide competitiveness over their life cycles. Four broad areas are likely to be important.

**1. Integrate gender into jobs diagnostics.** Growth and labor market country diagnostics can identify the gender-specific constraints that women face in accessing productive jobs. A joint World Bank and Asian Development Bank gender assessment for Lao PDR found persistent wage gaps and self-employed women running smaller businesses. These diagnostics led to growth strategy recommendations focused on improving access to finance and business training for women entrepreneurs. A gender assessment in Vietnam identified adverse impacts of gender differences in statutory retirement ages and outlined policy options for addressing the problem.

**2. Level the playing field through government actions across the lifecycle.** Biases can begin very early in life, sometimes in subtle ways, and start trajectories of inequality that become increasingly difficult and costly to resolve. Policy actions across

the lifecycle to advance gender equality in the world of work will typically include both (a) broad-based actions that, while benefiting everyone, may have an even greater impact on women's economic opportunities (such as early childhood development programming or reducing inefficiencies to business registration) as well as (b) targeted actions to remove or offset gender-specific constraints. The report discusses evidence behind a wider range of targeted actions, but selected examples are highlighted here.

**During childhood and youth, policy actions can tackle inequalities through education and training.** A growing body of evidence demonstrates the value of cash transfers with special incentives as a demand-side tool for boosting equality in schooling. Examples of supply-side strategies that have shown positive results by addressing gender-specific constraints include increasing the proximity of schools to homes in Afghanistan and building “girl-friendly” schools in Burkina Faso that improve facilities and incentives for girls' education while engaging parents and teachers.<sup>14</sup> Education systems can challenge stereotypes through curricula. Tanzania's national curriculum includes substantial gender-related material in its secondary school civics syllabus and examinations.<sup>15</sup> Multicomponent skills-development programs can also make a difference. A World Bank-supported youth employment program in Liberia that included vocational and life skills training, along with job placement help, boosted young women's employment by 47 percent and average weekly earnings by 80 percent.<sup>16</sup>

**For women of productive age, actions can focus on removing barriers to getting paid work.** Eliminating legal and formal equal status provisions, such as head-of-household provisions, in family law; allowing and encouraging women's ownership and joint-titling of land; enforcing equitable inheritance laws; and applying nondiscrimination principles to customary laws. Most countries have made significant progress toward more equitable laws over recent decades, but there has been less progress in some regions, notably in the Middle East and North Africa and in South Asia.

Beyond addressing legal discrimination, targeted policies can address more subtle constraints. Strategies can include family-friendly leave and flexibility policies, extending affordable child-care and early child development programs, and developing technology and infrastructure to reduce burdens on women's time for household chores and care work. The World Bank estimates that adding one year of preschool education in Turkey, for example, could increase female labor force participation by 9 percent.<sup>17</sup> Father-friendly leave policies in the UK and Nordic countries have strengthened opportunities and incentives for men to share in domestic responsibilities. A World Bank-supported program in Cambodia reduced women's time devoted to collecting firewood and increased their incomes by selling low-cost, fuel-efficient cookstoves through local female vendors.<sup>18</sup>

**During elderly years, governments can support equitable old-age labor regulations combined with appropriate social protection.** The importance of this demographic cannot be ignored. In developing countries, the old-age dependency ratio is expected to increase by 144 percent from 2010 to 2050, whereas the child dependency ratio is projected to fall by 20 percent during the same period. This translates to increased elderly care responsibilities for productive age women, as well as potential challenges for elderly people themselves. Many governments have removed differences in retirement and pension ages, but gaps remain in 49 countries. World Bank analysis showed that mandatory earlier retirement causes early labor force withdrawal of urban women in China.<sup>19</sup> In developing countries, many elderly women are outside the scope of formal social protection—although studies in Brazil and South Africa have shown that pensions received by elderly women significantly increased granddaughters' education and health.<sup>20</sup> More policy experimentation is needed on interventions for updating older women's and men's skills and increasing connections to the labor market.

**3. Proactive private sector leadership and innovation for gender equality.** The private sector accounts

for about three out of four jobs in countries like Egypt, Finland, and France and nine out of 10 jobs in countries such as Brazil, Chile, Japan, and South Africa. With International Finance Corporation (IFC) support, commercial banks in Cambodia, Nigeria, and Romania, among other countries, are increasing their female clientele,<sup>21</sup> and companies in male-dominated sectors, such as chemicals and construction, are increasing women's access to jobs through more concerted recruitment and family-friendly work arrangements. Multinational firms have increased profitability in South Korea by actively recruiting women for local managerial positions.<sup>22</sup> While success stories are encouraging, a focus on gender equality is still all too rare. ManpowerGroup surveys report that only 2 percent of employers across 42 countries have adopted strategies to recruit more women.<sup>23</sup>

Private and public sector actors can form powerful partnerships to support women's entrepreneurship, which in turn contributes to growth and a dynamic private sector. Women's entrepreneurship can be fostered through a combination of increased access to capital, networks, and new markets; high-quality business skills and development training; and access to broader services that offset gender-specific constraints.

**4. Global action is needed to fill knowledge gaps about both the problems of, and the solutions to, gender inequality in the world of work.** This involves addressing data gaps in such areas as earnings disparities, control over assets, and gender-based violence in homes and workplaces. But it also means contributing to stronger evidence on what works for increasing gender equality in the world of work. The World Bank recently launched *enGENDER IMPACT*, a gateway to its gender-related impact evaluations. This effort complements gender innovation and evaluation initiatives in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean, and efforts by the IFC to highlight good business practices.

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The full publication, Gender at Work, A Companion to the World Development Report on Jobs, is available on the World Bank's website <http://www.worldbank.org>

A portrait of Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women, smiling. She is wearing a dark top and a red shawl. The background is dark with a large, glowing red heart shape on the right side.

# GENDER MAINSTREAMING:

## *Part of a holistic approach to achieve women's rights, women's empowerment and gender equality*

*By Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women*

## Introduction

This is a historic moment for the international community and its efforts to achieve women's rights, women's empowerment, and gender equality.

In the coming months, governments and partners will review progress made since the Millennium Summit, the 1995 Beijing Women's Conference, the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, and the 2000 adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, and chart the way forward. With the Millennium Development Goals set to expire in 2015, the nations of the world will agree on the post-2015 development agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. Gender mainstreaming can ensure that the needs and rights of both women and men are taken into account and advanced in all policies and programmes across sectors. Successful gender mainstreaming requires commitment, strong leadership, adequate funding, sufficient human resources, robust monitoring and evaluation, and increased accountability. Gender mainstreaming also demands a gender data revolution with the systematic use of gender indicators and targets and a focus on achieving concrete goals that bring positive and real change in people's lives.

### ***History***

When the strategy of gender mainstreaming was first endorsed at the international level at the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, UN member States agreed that "governments and other actors should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programmes so that before decisions are taken, an analysis is made of the effects on women and men, respectively."

Two years later, the Member States of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) explicitly defined gender mainstreaming and its governing principles, and provided guidance for it to be operationalized at the international, regional and national levels:

*“Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality....Gender mainstreaming does not replace the need for targeted, women-specific policies and programmes or positive legislation, nor does it substitute for gender units or gender focal points.”<sup>1</sup>*

### **Operationalizing gender mainstreaming**

Since 1995, gender mainstreaming has become increasingly accepted and applied to advance gender equality. This has been facilitated by institutional

arrangements, such as national coordination ‘machineries’ for gender equality, and the creation of gender units, gender focal point systems and gender markers.

The catalytic work of the Commission on the Status of Women has promoted gender mainstreaming at the national level and within the United Nations system. This has led to increased efforts to mainstream a gender perspective into the work of other functional commissions of the United Nations such as ECOSOC, the work of the General Assembly on the human rights of women, as well as the work of the Security Council on women, peace and security, beginning with the landmark UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000).

International and regional organizations and the United Nations system have supported Governments, at their request, to develop gender-responsive policies and strategies and to take gender perspectives into consideration in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluation of development interventions. Non-governmental and civil society organizations have also supported gender mainstreaming as they push for government accountability to international commitments.

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<sup>1</sup> Report of the Economic and Social Council for 1997 (A/52/3. 18 September, 1997) Agreed conclusions of the Coordination Segment.



Today there is growing recognition that gender equality is not only a critical human rights issue for women and girls, it is a prerequisite for the achievement of broader development goals, effective humanitarian response and sustainable peace and security. Thus, successful efforts have been made to mainstream gender into legal and policy frameworks at the global, regional and national level across sectors.

In Zambia, gender mainstreaming is taking place in the traditionally 'hard' sector of macroeconomic policy. Investments in building national capacities of statisticians, economists and gender experts to address gender inequalities in economic policy-making and poverty reduction has resulted in the integration of unpaid care work and gender responsive budgeting into the national budget.

In Morocco, a policy environment has been created that is widening the space for gender mainstreaming through the National Human Development Initiative, which has the reduction of gender inequality as one of its goals. Policies are being re-focused by introducing the practice of gender budgeting. This was made possible through research, capacity building and a clear definition of gender-sensitive budget targets and indicators. As a result, the annual Gender Report is part of the National Economic and Financial Report, changes have also been made to budgetary rules, and various ministerial departments and NGOs have progressively appropriated gender budgets.

Over the past several years, organizations such as the International Labour Organization (ILO) have made great strides in mainstreaming gender into their work. By collecting and analyzing sex disaggregated data and using the analysis to inform policies and strategies, the ILO has developed labour standards and international treaties to advance women's rights and equal opportunities in the labour market. Progress has been achieved in both the formal and informal sectors as evidenced by the International Convention for Domestic Workers, which came into force, with the full support of UN Women, in 2013.

Gender equality has also been formally mainstreamed in the response to the HIV epidemic. In light of women's increased exposure to HIV infection due to factors such as harmful gender norms and gender-based violence, a global indicator on intimate partner violence against women has been added to the list of core indicators to monitor national progress in HIV response. Goals related to gender equality are also included in the UNAIDS strategy 2011-2015, namely: meeting the gender-specific needs of women and girls in HIV response and zero tolerance for gender-based violence. Each goal has specified outcomes, outputs and activities, and there are indicators at impact, outcome and output levels.

Progress is also being made to mainstream a gender perspective into humanitarian response to ensure that women and girls and men and boys have equal access to and benefit from assistance. In times of crisis, gender roles and dynamics change, and



gender-based violence becomes more prevalent. It is essential to identify and address these issues in humanitarian response, both at the individual programming level in project design and in programme analysis and development.

Understanding how crises affect women and men, girls and boys is critical to humanitarian effectiveness. Women, men, girls and boys experience crisis differently: they have different priorities, responsibilities and protection needs. Women, girls, boys and men can also play different roles in responding to conflict and building peace.

The UN Office of Coordination for Humanitarian Assistance has developed a gender toolkit to provide practical guidance to staff to effectively integrate gender into their day-to-day activities. Its main objective is not to simply add gender-sensitive words to a document, but to strengthen programming and analysis based on the different needs, concerns, capacities and contributions of the affected population.

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee, which provides coordination of the UN and non-UN humanitarian partners, has developed a gender marker to track humanitarian aid financial flows and who benefits, and to make response more efficient.

### ***Assessing gender mainstreaming***

In recent years, numerous evaluations and studies have been undertaken on gender mainstreaming, which provide valuable insights and lessons to improve its practical implementation. One evaluation undertaken by the African Development Bank in 2012, *Mainstreaming Gender Equality: A Road to Results or a Road to Nowhere?*, found that leadership has not consistently supported or prioritized the mainstreaming of gender equality. This has resulted in what has been described as “policy evaporation” and an absence of accountability and incentive structures and insufficient financial and human resources have handicapped gender mainstreaming initiatives. The report found that many gender mainstreaming procedures and practices were introduced and actively pursued for a short period, before gradually declining in use, and that the integration of gender

equality into new aid modalities presents tough new challenges to donor organizations.

In addition, evaluation reports often state that gender mainstreaming is seen as too complex and not easily understood by both policymakers and development practitioners, and that it is marred by a lack of practical frameworks and guidance.

Despite these challenges, gender mainstreaming has achieved real results, and remains vital to the achievement of broader development goals. There is now an urgent need to address the perceived shortcomings of gender mainstreaming as we strive to eliminate extreme poverty and hunger and achieve universal access to education and sexual and reproductive health, decent work, an end to violence against women and girls, and women’s full and equal participation in decision-making.

### ***Reinvigorating gender mainstreaming***

It is time to promote greater understanding about gender mainstreaming— what it is and how to do it. As part of this effort, UN Women has prepared an online course for all UN system staff to develop their understanding and awareness of basic concepts of gender equality and women’s empowerment, and promote behavioral change and the integration of the gender perspective in their everyday work.

UN Women has also developed a Global Issues Brief on Gender Mainstreaming in Development Programming, which provides forward-looking guidance on gender mainstreaming across sectors to bridge the gaps between global norms and their actual implementation in national policy-making and programme planning.

As a global leader in gender responsive evaluation, UN Women supports the UN system in integrating human rights and gender dimensions into evaluation. An evaluation that is human rights and gender responsive addresses the programming principles required by a human rights based approach and gender mainstreaming strategy. It contributes to the social and economic change process by identifying





*Visiting South Sudan in February 2014, UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka met with officials and women's groups to discuss women's full participation in political negotiations and the humanitarian and security response.*

and analyzing the inequalities, discriminatory practices and unjust power relations that need to be addressed to achieve women's rights, women's empowerment and gender equality. A human rights and gender responsive evaluation leads to more effective interventions and sustainable results.

The UN Women Manager's Guide to Gender Equality and Human Rights responsive evaluation has proven to be a practical guide for evaluators and complements the United Nations Evaluation Guide on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality into evaluation, the production of which was led by UN Women and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, OHCHR.

Gender responsive evaluation is still at its inception in most of the development organizations. There is a need to build a constituency of sector specialists who understand gender equality, including evaluators, and the benefit of gender equality considerations in the discussions related to the gender wage gap, access to and control over productive and financial means, time poverty, equal sharing of responsibilities in the household level, and women's equal representation at all levels of decision making in the private and the public spheres, among others.

The fifty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women in March 2014 focuses on "Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls". It is hoped that the outcome will provide additional guidance on gender mainstreaming across the MDGs, and set the bar for the post-2015 development agenda.

UN Women's position is that a transformative stand-alone goal on gender equality and women's empowerment is essential, as is the mainstreaming of gender across all other goals. In 2012, the Rio+20 outcome reaffirmed the centrality of gender equality and women's empowerment for sustainable development and of gender-sensitive indicators to measure and accelerate progress. And, more recently, Member States at the General Assembly

called for "the goal of gender equality and women's empowerment to be considered as a priority in the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda and for the integration of a gender perspective into the new development framework".

### ***Practical solutions***

The UN System experience provides examples of coordination frameworks and mechanisms that enhance effectiveness and coherence for gender mainstreaming. Through the Delivering as One initiative, the UN System has promoted gender mainstreaming, improving accountability. There are currently 113 gender theme groups around the world, 62 of which are led or co-led by UN-Women.

The UN Development Group (UNDG) has identified gender equality as one of the five guiding principles for programming through the UN Development Assistance Framework. UN country teams, under the leadership of Resident Coordinators, are responsible for addressing gender equality throughout all aspects of programming including evaluation. For the UN system's work at the country level, the UN Country Team Performance Indicators for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (also known as "The UNCT Gender Mainstreaming Scorecard") is a useful accountability mechanism.

Launched in 2008 by the United Nations Development Group, the Scorecard defines clear performance standards for the processes and institutional arrangements that must be put in place when preparing Common Country Agreements, UN Development Assistance Frameworks, and joint programmes. By defining good gender mainstreaming practices, this tool provides a clear and simple performance guide, around which UN Country Teams can plan and organize activity, as well as report on results.<sup>2</sup>

However, we have found that the successful use of gender mainstreaming requires robust accountability mechanisms at global, regional and national levels. At the United Nations system level, a System-wide Action Plan on gender equality and women's

empowerment was developed in 2012 by UN Women, in consultation with other UN entities, and endorsed at the highest level by the Chief Executives Board for Coordination. It is a significant breakthrough, and includes performance standards and indicators to accelerate gender mainstreaming across the broad spectrum of mandates for peace and security, human rights, development and humanitarian assistance.<sup>3</sup>

With an agreed set of performance indicators, the Action Plan establishes a new model for accountability, allowing a snapshot of the state of work across the UN system. Specifically in the area of oversight, UN Women has developed an Evaluation Performance Indicator with a specific scorecard that supports UN agencies evaluation offices in assessing their gender responsiveness in evaluation. It is also expected to motivate action and investment through two indicators requiring the use of gender markers to track spending.

Within the international development community, many policy documents and tools to share information and knowledge on gender mainstreaming exist. However, effective knowledge management structures are yet to be in place for sharing and leveraging such knowledge and experience.

Over the years, some countries have noted the challenges of monitoring and evaluating gender mainstreaming initiatives. This has highlighted the

need to routinely integrate gender equality perspectives in monitoring and evaluation activities and to systematically collect and analyse sex and age disaggregated data. Even where such information is available, there is a need to review the types of indicators and targets that are used to measure and monitor the full complexities of gender inequality, including issues such as unpaid work, time use, and violence against women.<sup>4</sup>

In conclusion, I would argue that gender mainstreaming is not an abstraction – it is a necessity. Applied at all levels, throughout all programmes, gender mainstreaming is an approach with an immense capacity to improve the lives of women and men, boys and girls, around the world. Success requires leadership, capacity building, and increased funding to advance women’s rights, women’s empowerment and gender equality.

2 United Nations 2012, *Advancing Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment: An assessment of Gender Mainstreaming in UN Operational Activities for Development*

3 Report of the Secretary-General on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in all Policies and Programmes in the United Nations system (E/2013/71)

4 A review of national MDG reports from a gender perspective Background paper prepared by: Megan Dersnah for the UN Women Expert Group Meeting on “Structural and policy constraints in achieving the MDGs for women and girls”. Mexico City, Mexico 21-24 October 2014

### Profile of the Author

Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka is United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women. Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka has worked in government, private sector and civil society and was actively involved in the struggle to end apartheid in her home country of South Africa.

From 2005 to 2008, she served as Deputy President of South Africa, overseeing programmes to combat poverty and bring the advantages of a growing economy to the poor, with a particular focus on women. Prior to this, she served as Minister of Minerals and Energy from 1999 to 2005 and Deputy Minister in the Department of Trade and Industry from 1996 to 1999. She was a Member of Parliament from 1994 to 1996 as part of South Africa’s first democratic government.

Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka began her career as a teacher and gained international experience as a coordinator at the World YWCA in Geneva, where she established a global programme for young women. She obtained a PhD on education and technology at the University of Warwick, United Kingdom.

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# GENDER EQUALITY: *It is within our reach*

*Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi,  
AfDB Special Envoy on Gender*

## ***Why gender equality?***

Two main arguments have been advanced on the importance of gender equality in development.

- First, gender equality is a human rights issue, a prerequisite to the advancement of human dignity and social justice. In this regard, gender equality is seen as the “right thing to do.”
- Second, a business case can be made for gender equality. In this instance, gender equality is seen as smart economics – the “smart thing to do.”

The reasoning behind the second argument, gender equality as a business case, is that economies grow faster when both women and men have equal opportunities to resources. In most African countries, women comprise the backbone of rural economy. The logic is simple. If women are empowered, the result is nothing less than the transformation of livelihoods and national economies.

The recently launched Third Billion Campaign makes this point graphically. China and India together represent 2 billion emerging participants in the global marketplace. Half of them are women. Added to women in other developing countries, the total represents a third billion people whose economic lives have been stunted, underleveraged or suppressed. Women have also been referred to by some as the “third emerging market.” In essence, gender equality is therefore the “smart thing to do” from a purely economic perspective (Kebeer and Natali 2013).

The quest for gender equality is not new. In 1430, Christine de Pizan, an Italian writer, wrote “If it were the custom to send little girls to school and teach them all sorts of different subjects there, as one does with little boys, they would grasp and learn the difficulties of all the arts and sciences just as easily as the boys. (Brown-Grant, R. 1999)” Yet nearly 700 years later, girls represent 54 percent of the 32 million children out

of school in sub-Saharan Africa (UNESCO 2010). In the 21st century the proposition or even suggestion that gender equality is an impossible dream is simply unacceptable.

### ***Gender equality is the goal; gender mainstreaming the means***

Two major International Women's Conferences, Mexico 1975 and Beijing 1995, established a global consensus and commitment to promote gender equality, which was reaffirmed by the Millennium Summit in 2000. In 1995, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action endorsed gender mainstreaming as a global strategy for promoting gender equality (AfDB 2011). In 1997, the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC) defined gender mainstreaming as

*...the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated.*

Gender mainstreaming should not be pursued as an end in itself. The ultimate goal of gender mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality (United Nations University- World Institute for Development Economics Research (UNU-WIDER) 2012). But has gender mainstreaming succeeded in hardwiring men's and women's concerns and experiences into project designs? Evaluations have concluded that gender equality is not yet integrated into the mainstream operations and organizational cultures of national and international development organizations. In fact, there is no example of a development organization that has successfully mainstreamed gender to the degree that it has been incorporated into its DNA (AfDB 2011). A recent AfDB synthesis report on mainstreaming gender confirms this (AfDB 2012a).

## ***So, what will it take to deliver the gender equality goal?***

### **1. Vision, strategy and tactics**

The African Development Bank Group Strategy (2013–2022) has a focus on two objectives to improve the quality of Africa's growth: (i) inclusive growth, and (ii) the transition to green growth. Gender equality is a crucial component of inclusive growth. The Bank defines inclusive growth as economic growth that results in a wider access to sustainable socio-economic opportunities for a broader number of people, regions or countries, while protecting the vulnerable. All these ought to be done in an environment of fairness, equal justice, and political plurality (AfDB 2012b). The Bank further elaborates this growth as one that protects disadvantaged, marginalized and excluded groups from adverse shocks and takes into account age, gender, regional or geographical concerns. In its 10 Year Strategy (TYS), the Bank therefore identifies gender equality as an area of special emphasis for the advancement of inclusive growth (AfDB 2013a).

To implement this commitment to gender equality, the Bank has elaborated a strategy to guide efforts to effectively integrate gender equality into its operations and to promote gender equality in Africa. The recently adopted a gender strategy, *Investing in Gender Equality for Africa's Transformation 2014–2018*, which envisions an Africa where women and girls have easy access to knowledge, where women's skills and innovations are optimized and their capacities tapped to contribute to greater economic opportunities, and where women fully participate in the decision-making process.

The strategy identifies three mutually reinforcing pillars to tackle the underlying causes of gender inequality:

- Women's legal status and property rights
- Women's economic empowerment

- Capacity development and knowledge management for gender equality

Advancing progress in each of these pillars will be fused into the core operational areas identified in the TYS – infrastructure development, governance and accountability, private sector development, regional integration, skills and technology – as well as the areas of special emphasis – fragile states, gender, agriculture and food security.

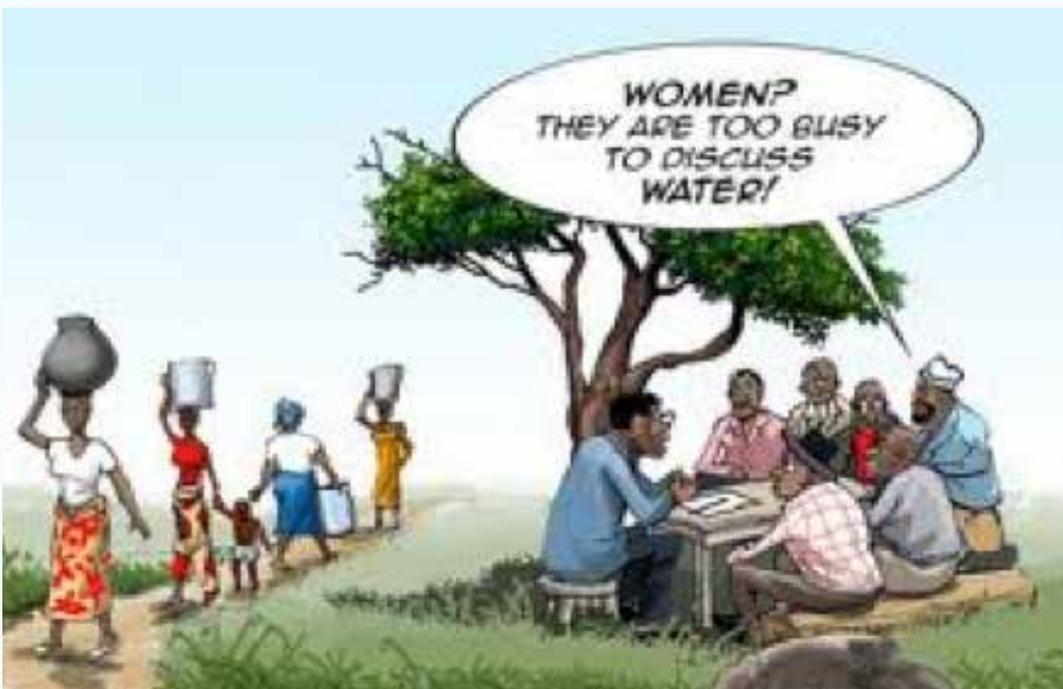
## 2. Leadership

Development of a strategy must be moved and supported by strong leadership. The responsibility for promoting gender equality is system-wide and rests at the highest levels of management. The Bank leadership must consistently guide and support the mainstreaming of gender equality and policy to ensure the translation of formal commitments into specific decisions and operational actions. It means bringing on board the right talent and capacity, as well as creating accountability measures at various levels. Ultimately, the strategy entails ownership and commitment at all levels. Critical to the attainment of these goals is the strong, active support of top management.

## 3. An inside-out transformation

A focus on internal transformation is crucial for credibility and reputation. The Bank must lead by example. Hence to be successful in the implementation of the strategy, the Bank needs to transform itself internally. This transformation is a long-term process that will require reflection and introspection. It will require a cultural change as captured in the People's Strategy (AfDB 2013b). What does an internal transformation entail?

- A clear policy on gender equality and equal opportunities that is both implemented and assessed
- Sufficient attention to gender equality at all management levels
- Collective responsibility – each person in the organization needs to know how they contribute to gender equality in their work and interactions
- A gender-responsive physical work environment and organizational practices



- A gender-responsive organizational culture with zero tolerance for inequalities and exploitation on the basis of sex

Creating a gender-responsive organization means a change in institutional systems and practices – that is, transforming things that on the surface appear to be merely routine and gender-neutral, and changing them in ways that will not only benefit women, but men and, very importantly, the organization (Merrill-Sands and others 1999).

**4. The right architecture: a critical mass of skilled individuals**

The strategy makes everyone responsible for implementation of gender mainstreaming. The danger of universal responsibility is that when no single entity is in charge there may be a sense of being “nowhere at all.” A specialized unit is therefore needed to take overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of the strategy. The success of such a unit will often depend on its placement within the Bank’s organizational structure. The unit responsible for gender must be adequately staffed in order to have traction in the Bank. Adding a few junior gender staff is not enough.

**5. Carrot and a stick**

Gender mainstreaming is often viewed as an “optional extra” and, when included in project documents, is sometimes done superficially. Project documents frequently include the line “Gender will be mainstreamed across the project” and this is perceived to be adequate. It isn’t. Incentives and sanctions are necessary to ensure that task managers do not evade their responsibilities. Such incentives could be provided by making certain resources available for projects or by encouraging career progression and advancement.

**6. Putting your money where your mouth is**

At the international level, the Beijing Platform for Action called for adequate financial resources for the advancement of gender equality, particularly in Africa and least developed countries. The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness called for

harmonization of efforts on cross-cutting issues, such as gender equality and other thematic issues, including those financed by dedicated funds. Yet, even with these global commitments, coupled with the increasing evidence that promotion of gender equality is smart economics, most public sector expenditures still fail to reflect gender equality concerns. Gender equality work must be properly funded.

***What are the potential weak links?***

**1. The process... are we doing enough?**

Successful work on gender requires a significant level of analysis that informs actions taken as well as the reason why those actions were chosen. Such an analysis cannot be broadly conceived; it has to be contextualized. Often there is insufficient time or effort provided for analysis, yet this could make or break the initiative. Vision, strategy and tactics depend on the depth of analysis.

**2. Thematic exhaustion**

A growing concern within the Bank and other institutions is that of “gender fatigue.” Task managers often have to consider cross-cutting themes such as agriculture, environment, governance, health, education, and so on while balancing the twin objectives of the TYS, operational priorities, and the national priorities from Regional Member Countries. In the face of so many concerns, how do we guard against



thematic exhaustion? Some development practitioners have proposed a rebranding of the term “gender mainstreaming,” but would this reinvigorate the attention to gender? Simple rebranding is not the answer. Gender equality must not be viewed as a theme in itself that needs to be fully integrated into development projects. It has to be viewed as the *missing link for sustainable growth*.

### 3. Need for a reality check

A recent Bank study showed that only 34 percent of a selection of projects and programs included intentionality to achieve gender equality results in their logframes. How can the Bank be expected to advance gender equality with partners if it is not included in the Bank’s own projects? Moreover, the knowledge that gender results are expected to be visible in project logframes often leads to superficial indicators and targets. Many logframes include numbers of women and men trained in workshops, or employed as semi-skilled labor. But these numbers are not transformational, nor do they change the conditions of women. The identification of gender results and indicators needs to reflect ambition towards inclusive development effectiveness. Such results need to show improvement in women’s access to economic opportunities, to opportunities in leadership, and ultimately to the reduction of inequalities. The results must address the structural roots of inequality. In essence, while pragmatism is necessary in framing results, the need for vision and ambition must not get left behind.

### 4. Dearth of gender expertise

One of the greatest tragedies for gender equality work is the assumption that anyone can undertake gender analysis and mainstreaming work. While each and every person can become a gender equality advocate, gender mainstreaming work requires expertise and experience – just like any other area of specialization. It is not unheard of, for example, for a female staff member of a unit to be designated as the gender focal point simply because of her sex. We need to build a critical pool of experts, through training and re-training, to ensure effective

mainstreaming. Having women on the staff is not synonymous with gender equality.

## *Moving forward*

At a satellite meeting of African foreign ministers during the recent 22<sup>nd</sup> African Union Summit at Bahir Dar, Ethiopia, in January 2014, Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, presented a fictional message in the form of an email. The email, dated 2063, elaborates the progress Africa will have made 50 years from now. Of the areas of progress cited, the major contributions by women to Africa’s development are elaborated.

*By the intelligent application of centuries-old indigenous knowledge, acquired and conserved by African women who have tended crops in all seasons, within the first few years bumper harvests were being reported...*

*...Agronomists consulted women about the qualities of various grains – which ones survived low rainfalls and which thrived in wet weather; what pests threatened crops and how could they be combated without undermining delicate ecological systems.*

*...The status of women, the tillers of the soil by tradition, rose exponentially.*

*...The girl child, condemned to a future in the kitchen or the fields in our not too distant past, now has an equal chance of acquiring a modern education (and owning a farm or an agribusiness).*

*...African mothers today have access to tractors and irrigation systems that can be easily assembled.*

*...The producers’ cooperatives, (agribusinesses) and marketing boards these women established help move their produce and became the giant food companies we see today...*

As the Bank reflects on the past 50 years and plans for the next 50, it has the opportunity and potential to make long-lasting changes to the lives of women and men on this continent. This is a keystone of the future to which the AfDB can and must contribute. A future in which the full involvement of all its citizens is the new norm.

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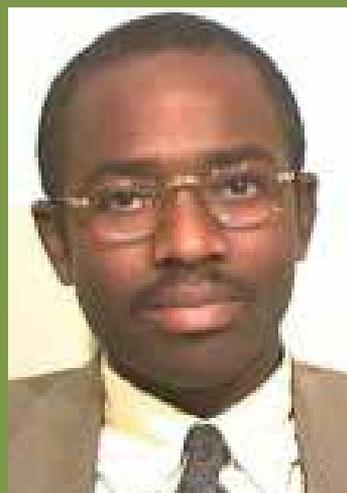
### Profile of the Author

Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi is the Special Envoy on Gender at the African Development Bank. She previously held the position of Director of the United Nations Development Programme’s (UNDP) Democratic Governance Group, overseeing the organization’s related strategic and policy work in 197 countries and territories around the globe. She was also appointed by the Secretary General of the United Nations as a board member of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research. Prior to joining UNDP, she served as Minister for Public Service and Administration in South Africa (1999 to 2008) and as Minister for Welfare and Population Development (1996-1999). She also served as National Deputy Elections Coordinator for the African National Congress from 1993/1994 in the lead up to South Africa’s first democratic elections of April 1994.



# OVERVIEW OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN THE WORLD BANK

*Hippolyte Fofack*  
*The World Bank Group*



Gender mainstreaming is a process of systematically assessing the implications for both women and men of any policy or program, addressing the specific concerns and experiences of each gender so as to maximize the social and economic impacts of such policies and programs for all concerned. If the process is to be successful, it should take into consideration each stage of the project cycle – design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. In short, gender mainstreaming is a holistic concept that advocates a participatory and gender-inclusive approach to development.

Although this concept was first proposed at the Third World Conference on Women in Nairobi in 1985, it took another decade for gender mainstreaming to become officially established and accepted by various institutions as a major global strategy. At the global level, the Beijing Platform for Action from the Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women in 1995 provided the right context (UN 2002).

Within the World Bank, the first Operational Policy on Gender and Development was issued in the late 1990s (World Bank 2010). That policy mandated that all Country Assistance Strategies (CASs) – framework documents that inform the Bank’s policy dialogue and assistance to client countries – include a gender assessment. Specifically, the policy called for examining the issues emerging from country gender assessments and proposing actions to address them.

The Operational Policy was followed by the World Bank Gender Mainstreaming Strategy in 2001. More holistic and comprehensive, this strategy went beyond merely taking note of gender issues in CASs to integrating them into the actual work, as well as supporting the strategic integration of gender issues into operations (such as lending portfolios). In other words, the new strategy had a dual focus: non-lending and lending operations. It was now a priority to ensure that resources deployed by the World Bank would benefit women and men equally.

Over time, however, it became clear that institutional commitment to a uniform integration of gender considerations across all Bank products was only reinforced by the follow-up strategic frameworks that

guide the Bank's work on gender. In particular, the Gender Action Plan introduced in 2007 for the 2007–2010 period strengthened the Bank's gender and development work in the economic sectors. This emphasis on economic sectors took cognisance of the Bank's consistently stronger record in the social sectors (education, health, social protection), thus closing the persistent sectoral gap on gender mainstreaming.

More recently and specifically over the last three years, the Bank has adopted and even strengthened accountability and monitoring mechanisms to deepen the breadth and depth of gender mainstreaming across its lending and non-lending operations. Most notably, this has been illustrated by the establishment of institutional targets and binding commitments under the IDA 16 Results Measurement System (RMS) and World Bank Corporate Score Card. This adoption of monitoring targets has strengthened the implementation of operational policy, and all recent CASs approved by the Board have been gender-informed, essentially meeting the 100 percent target called for under the 2001 operational policy.

The Bank is doing well with its institutional commitment to improve the integration of gender considerations into its lending portfolios. The initial targets of 60 percent of gender-informed lending portfolios established under IDA 16, and 55 percent for the Corporate Score Card, have been exceeded. More ambitious targets were adopted under the RMS, underpinning the IDA 17 framework. In addition to pushing for gender mainstreaming at the design stage, the emphasis is increasingly shifting towards gender development impact – that is, monitoring of project performance on gender at exit and monitoring of results through gathering of sex-disaggregated data.

### ***Increasing the emphasis on gender mainstreaming***

The increasing focus on a gender mainstreaming approach within the Bank is the direct result of dissatisfaction with earlier approaches to fostering

gender equality. Initially, frameworks informing development were essentially gender-blind. The basic assumption underlying these frameworks was that output expansion and economic development mainly depended on capital accumulation, labor and technical progress (World Bank 2011a). In this regard, there was really no need to pay any particular attention to gender relations, especially given that in the absence of barriers to entry, labor provided the path for equalizing access to opportunities for all in the paid labor market.

However, even in the labor market arena, empirical evidence has suggested that development outcomes are largely affected by gender relations (World Bank 2011a; Akyeamong and Fofack 2014). For instance, job segregation within the paid labor market prevails in all regions, with certain types of jobs exclusively going to women and others being the preserve of men (World Bank 2011a; Fofack 2014). The disproportionately larger representation of women in informal sector activities across sub-Saharan Africa is partly attributed to limited barriers at entry.

Regardless of whatever progress is made within the Bank, however, certain inevitabilities remain. The time allocated to household work and caring for children and the elderly, for example, continues to confine the majority of women (especially in low-income countries) to either predominantly unpaid labor or to part-time jobs. Globally, Gallup estimates that men are nearly twice as likely as women to have full-time jobs. This gender gap is even higher in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, with men more than three times as likely as women to have full-time jobs.

Furthermore, results from a review of World Bank operations show that gender-blind design at project level delivers gender-biased services and outcomes. In order words, unless development programs specifically consider gender differences and inequalities, the intrinsic barriers encountered when initiating the programs, as well as the traditional customs of the targeted beneficiaries, are destined to be biased against women.

Against this background, early approaches to narrowing gender gaps exclusively focused on initiatives that provided women with education and resources. The rise of microcredits to enhance female entrepreneurship over the last few decades has been part of these targeted initiatives. However, while these targeted projects (or components within larger initiatives) are often well intended, their impact is limited by the scope of the operations. Thus, structural gender inequalities are going to be resolved not only through marginal initiatives, but through broad processes of change and integrated approaches to development.

The concept of gender mainstreaming, with its holistic alternatives to targeted interventions, is the logical outcome of this historical treatment of gender in development. Not surprisingly, gender mainstreaming has often been described as a process that supersedes targeted interventions in addressing women's empowerment and gender equality (UN 2002). However, the two approaches continue to be used within the World Bank. Gender mainstreaming is used to achieve greater impact at the national level, while targeted interventions are more suited to addressing constraints that are specific to women in certain communities. On one hand, the utilization of gender mainstreaming in designing large-scale infrastructure operations may take into account gender-specific considerations to ensure equal access and distribution of benefits. On the other, targeted interventions may be preferable in designing a project component such as a public employment scheme for women's economic empowerment.

In some cases, the Bank also implements stand-alone targeted interventions to narrow gender gaps. For instance, in order to support the growth of female entrepreneurs, the Bank committed more than USD750 million through microfinance institutions specifically targeted at female-owned small and medium enterprises (SMEs) between 2008 and 2010 (World Bank 2011).

Simultaneously, the Bank is funding a large gender-mainstreamed operation in South Sudan to increase

access to income opportunities and to provide temporary employment to the poor and vulnerable groups. Another such effort, the Adolescent Girls Initiative (AGI), promotes the transition of adolescent girls from school to productive employment.

The prioritized emphasis on gender mainstreaming within the World Bank over the last few years is based both on the potentially higher-development impact offered by such an approach, and on its overall potential for effectiveness. A major review of World Bank infrastructure portfolios found that the inclusion of gender methods systematically enhances project performance. More specifically, infrastructure projects that mainstreamed gender, when compared with all infrastructure projects, performed significantly better at meeting project objectives. In the most recent review period, projects including gender methods were rated satisfactory or better in 86 percent of cases, compared with 81 percent for all infrastructure projects.

An independent evaluation of a much larger sample comprising 138 projects, including infrastructure, economic, and social sectors, and approved by the Board of the World Bank for 12 focus countries during the period 2002–08, produced similar results. While over 68 percent of projects that integrated gender considerations delivered good results for gender equality and outcomes, less than 25 percent of projects that did not were able to achieve good results (World Bank 2010). In other words, from the World Bank standpoint, gender mainstreaming is not a cosmetic exercise, but a path to increase development effectiveness. In this regard, it may be fundamental in the quest for achieving the new twin goals of ending extreme poverty by 2030 and boosting shared prosperity.

### ***Monitoring progress***

Efforts to develop an accountability system and to design a framework for monitoring the integration of gender considerations in both lending and non-lending operations have been significant. The result is improved breadth and depth of gender mainstreaming over the last few years (World Bank

2011b; World Bank 2013). The revised monitoring framework currently assesses the extent of integration of gender considerations in lending and non-lending operations during project design along three dimensions – what might be termed the “triple A dimensions” or “AAA”:

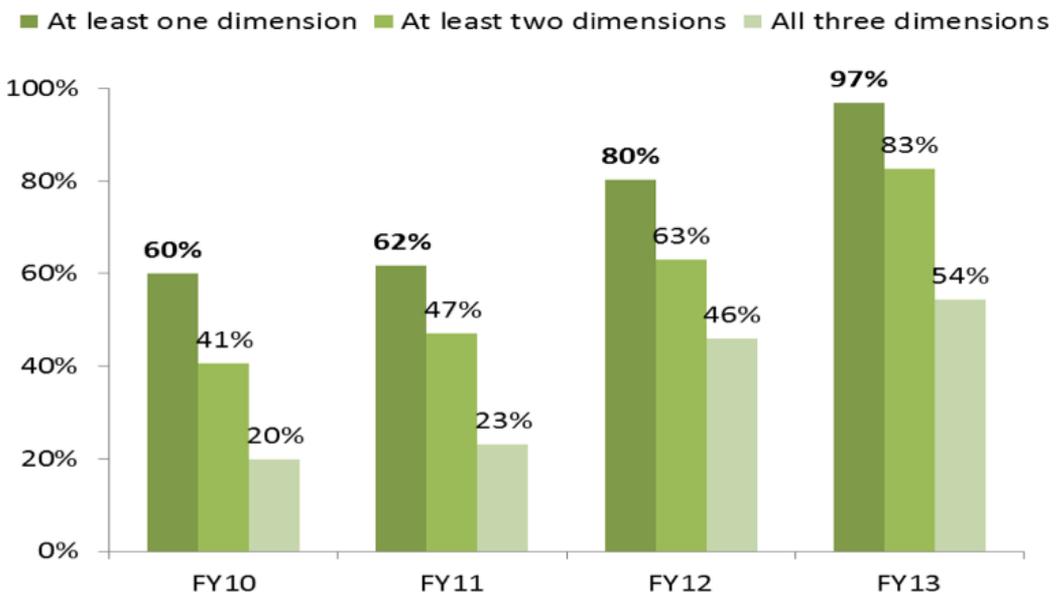
- *Analysis* of gender issues relevant to the project objectives
- *Actions* to narrow gender gaps
- *Adoption* of an M&E system

The proposed framework allows for ex-ante assessment of the extent of gender mainstreaming during the concept note stage as well as other preliminary internal reviews. Gender-mainstreamed operations systematically consider gender inequalities as reflected in the underlying analysis, actions and M&E arrangements – the AAA. At the same time, projects are also monitored ex-post after board approval, and results that contrast regions and sectors are published on a quarterly basis internally and on an annual basis for the consolidated lending portfolios through the World Bank Open Data Initiative.

A focus on the lending portfolio shows that measures of gender mainstreaming have improved consistently and steadily over the last four fiscal years, with the proportion of gender-informed operations approved by the Board rising from 60 percent during fiscal year 2010 (FY10) to 97 percent during FY13, as the figure shows. The deepening of gender mainstreaming is also consistent across the AAA. While only 20 percent of lending operations were fully gender-mainstreamed in AAA during FY10, the percentage was more than 54 during FY13.

The deepening of the depth and breadth of gender mainstreaming along the AAA of the monitoring framework suggests that more and more lending operations are including specific actions to address gender issues during project design. As far as the non-lending portfolio is concerned, the institutional target of full compliance has been met for CASs that are closely monitored as part of the corporate mandate. More than complying with the World Bank Operational Policy (OP 4.20), more and more CASs are proposing gender-informed actions and programs. They are also including baseline and target indicators in the results matrix to monitor

### Share of lending operations rated as gender-informed by dimensions, FY10-FY13



progress towards gender equality during the CAS implementation cycle (World Bank 2013).

In addition to the adoption of targets and design of an operational framework to monitor progress over time, other factors have contributed to the significant improvement of gender mainstreaming within the World Bank. Most staff have attributed these positive changes to three concurrent factors: a stronger commitment to gender equality and women's economic empowerment by the Bank's senior management, the success of awareness-raising efforts to illustrate the value and benefits of gender-equality (made even more evident by the World Bank 2012 World Development Report on Gender Equality and Development), and available incentive funding to strengthen the focus on gender in existing operations.

The support of senior management was illustrated in the adoption of the World Bank's Six Gender Commitments in 2008. Some of these commitments included increasing IDA investments for gender equality, having country directors report directly to the president on what is being done and what should be done to empower girls and women economically, and channeling at least USD100 million in commercial bank credit lines to women entrepreneurs through the International Finance Corporation by the end of 2012.<sup>1</sup>

More recently, senior management further illustrated its commitment by approving the implementation of a "gender tag" that makes the integration of gender considerations into lending operations more systematic during project design. Other relevant initiatives include:

- *Gender Data Portal* – provides access to various databases on gender
- *enGender Impact* – provides a compilation of World Bank experimental and quasi-experimental, gender-related impact evaluations
- *AdePT Gender* – makes gender analysis standard practice in poverty analysis and incorporates

gender analysis into the design of lending operations and CASs

### ***Lessons learned and emerging challenges***

The World Bank has made significant progress on the path to gender mainstreaming and gender equality over the last few years. The adoption of institutional targets and systematic monitoring of progress towards agreed targets has played a significant role in the results thus far achieved. However, a successful gender-informed operation at entry does not necessarily guarantee gender equality of outcomes at exit. One of the most important challenges moving forward is to increase the collection and dissemination of beneficiary data disaggregated by sex for impact assessment and for monitoring project performance on gender at exit.

The push for more ambitious gender targets and emphasis on development impact embedded in the IDA 17 Results Measurement System should enhance progress on impact assessment. At the same time, the success and commitment to gender mainstreaming has not been achieved at the expense of targeted interventions, which are still needed to tackle specific constraints facing women, especially in poverty-stricken countries and poor rural areas in sub-Saharan Africa. Besides the increased emphasis on development impact of gender-mainstreamed operations, the coexistence of targeted interventions and gender-mainstreamed approaches augurs well for the push for gender equality and women's economic empowerment in Africa.

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<sup>1</sup> The other three commitments include (i) measurably improving the integration of gender equality into World Bank's Agriculture and Rural Development projects by December 2010; (ii) launching a work program on *Young women count for economic development*, starting with an event prior to the 2008 Annual Meetings; and (iii) creating a Private Sector Leaders' Forum to convene their first meeting on the margins of the 2008 Annual Meetings. For more details and progress on these commitments, see World Bank (2011).

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# GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN ENERGY AND LAND GOVERNANCE IN SOME AFRICAN COUNTRIES

Vera Songwe



*Women entrepreneurs are changing the face of the global economy, helping to sustain job creation and economic growth. It is estimated that women-owned entities represent over 30 percent of registered businesses worldwide. Yet on average about 10 percent of women entrepreneurs have access to the capital needed to grow their businesses.*

So says a 2013 report from the International Finance Corporation.

Over the past few years, gender gaps have narrowed in many developing countries. Inequalities between men and women have been reduced through increased efforts to improve the access, opportunities and voice of women. These efforts have resulted in accelerated growth in many countries.

In every society, men and women tend to play different social and economic roles. Because each gender is assigned different responsibilities, their access to human, social and productive resources are also different. It follows that they bring different capabilities and contributions to development initiatives.

For example, according to some estimates, 80% of civil society organizations (CSOs) are led by women. In some West African countries women constitute the majority of the population (Mauritania



51.1%, Burkina Faso 52%, Mali 51.8%, Senegal 52%. Despite these numbers, however, women's contribution to national economies remains a struggle. Although sub-Saharan African women produce the vast majority of the continent's food, they attract little investment to their business ventures. Less than 12% of agribusiness investments are directed at women smallholder farmers.

While considerable progress has been made especially in Africa on the gender equality front, much remains to be done at the local, national and international levels. Following the release of the *World Development Report 2012* – which emphasized that greater gender equality can enhance productivity, make institutions more representatives, and improve development outcomes for the next generation – the World Bank has made gender mainstreaming a corporate priority. In an effort to complement individual country efforts, the World Bank is focusing its programs on increasing women's access to economics opportunities and productive resources. More importantly, gender inclusion is now a measure of success in the results framework, and the push to identify and measure gender-sensitive outcomes is finally bearing fruit.

But the battle is not yet won. The inadequate use of gender analysis in the design of interventions has undermined attempts to improve gender outcomes in projects. To correct this deficiency, several instruments and tools are being developed to assist governments, financial institutions and CSOs to conduct their policy dialogue. Two examples of gender mainstreaming tools developed by the Bank are in the area of energy and land governance.

## **Energy**

The recently released *World Bank Group Energy Directions* paper clearly supports that the World Bank will work to empower women as users of energy, as well as enabling women to become providers of energy services or make productive use of energy for income generation.

In 2009–10, the AFREA Gender and Energy Program worked with energy teams and government clients to

integrate gender into existing and new energy access operations. The program's objective was to *develop and mainstream the application of good practices in applying a gender-sensitive approach to energy access policies and projects*. The program, which was called AFREA I, entailed operational support in integrating gender considerations into energy projects across Africa. The emerging results can be summarized as follows:

1. *Institutional development and client capacity.* Rural electrification agencies have integrated gender into their business models. Gender focal points/units have been established with formal management roles. Local partnerships and pilot interventions on gender and energy are sustained and capacity training has been conducted in ministries of energy and rural electrification agencies.
2. *Results on the ground.* In Senegal's Sustainable and Participatory Energy Management Project (PROGEDE), women have assumed decision-making roles within village forest management committees, and their incomes have increased substantially from the sale of charcoal in urban markets. From the charcoal value chain, the total income of local government and participating communities has increased from USD18 million in 2009 to USD25 million in 2013. The findings of a gender assessment survey conducted in the Senegal rural electrification subsector specified five needs :
  - Identification of a focal point with a clear mandate within the agency
  - Strengthening of the capacity of staff and partners on gender mainstreaming in rural electrification
  - Development of a methodology for analyzing gender mainstreaming in project activities
  - Development of information and communication on the operationalization of gender mainstreaming

- Development of a funding strategy to facilitate access of beneficiaries to financing
3. *Improvement in West Africa.* Through surveys and awareness building in West Africa, the number of women in income-generating activities tripled, rising from 14 (11.6%) to 105 (37.5%). In partnership with the UN, village-level pilots that benefit women directly are ongoing. The focus is on such initiatives as health centers, female-headed households, local processing with solar energy, training, and multifunctional platforms.
  4. *Gender-informed energy operations and policies.* Gender impact assessments conducted by PROGEDE I in Senegal contributed to increasing women's incomes and spurred the design of robust gender interventions under PROGEDE II, which is making things happen in Mali, Liberia and Tanzania.

When AFREA I comes to a close at the end of 2014, a second phase of this program is proposed. The overall objective of AFREA II is to increase adoption of gender-sensitive approaches across energy projects throughout Africa by providing technical support, building internal capacity for gender mainstreaming in energy operations, developing knowledge, and improving monitoring and evaluation. The AFREA II Gender and Energy Program will expand the scope of activities beyond energy access to include electricity infrastructure and projects that support national utilities and policy reform.

### ***Land governance***<sup>1</sup>

In Mauritania, Senegal and The Gambia, women's land rights are formally recognized in both urban and rural areas. Equality between men and women is guaranteed legally in terms of land ownership, management, inheritance and access.

*In Mauritania*, land laws are gender-neutral and do not introduce any form of discrimination (although they contain no provision to avoid existing discrimination).

*In Senegal*, the constitution states that equal access to land is granted to both men and women and guarantees women's autonomy in managing goods. According to the current legislation, married women have the right to manage their land personally, and are entitled to inherit. However, even if the law on national domain (1964) does not expressly exclude women from the transmission of land rights, it tacitly supports discrimination against them by deferring to customary law that offers prior land access to members of the rural community. In such cases, decisions are made by rural councils, which are mostly composed of customary owners and their allies (i.e., men).

*In the Gambia*, as in Mauritania, the formal system appears to be gender-neutral. However, the constitution recognizes inheritance rights as granted under personal law, even if it discriminates against women. This limits the rights of women under the Islamic Law of Inheritance, according to which females are entitled to only half the amount of a male's share of the estate. Since more than 90% of the Gambian populations are Muslim, this law pertains to almost everyone.

In practice, therefore, in all three countries the preeminence of customary law over state law leads to practices denying women equal access to land.

### ***Customary law***

Customary law is the prevalent method of ownership for the majority of the land in The Gambia, in both urban and rural areas. There, gender inequalities are ingrained in religious and cultural practices. In Mauritania and Senegal, customary law has a major influence as well, although it is more important in rural areas than in urban areas.

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1 The analysis is based on three 2013 reports commissioned by the World Bank on the Implementation of the Land Government Assessment Framework (LGAF) in the Gambia (Improving Land Sector Governance in the Gambia), Senegal (Cadre d'Analyse de la Gouvernance Foncière au Sénégal) and Mauritania (Contributions à l'Amélioration de la politique foncière en Mauritanie à travers l'usage du Cadre d'Analyse de la Gouvernance Foncière)

In customary law, land is regarded as communally owned by clans or families. In principle, all individuals can access land through the allocation of parcels by the community council. The main criterion is the availability of means to enhance the land. Usually, as the heads of households, men have control over the family members involved in agricultural activities. Women have little direct access to formal land rights; access is usually indirect through their spouses or male relatives. In rural areas in Mauritania, most communities deprive women of land inheritance to avoid family properties falling to strangers by succession. Usually, land is maintained in joint ownership to avoid the endless division of land into ever smaller plots as families expand. In Senegal, access through inheritance is similarly difficult. It is estimated that two thirds of men inherited land from their parents, while only one fifth of the women did. In Senegal and Mauritania, most women do not know about legislation that could allow them to enforce their rights, and even those who know about the legislation do not dare to challenge societal rules, particularly relationships between men and women.

Women play an important role in land development and natural resource management, whether they are involved in agriculture, home gardening, food gathering or wood harvesting. In Mauritania, women are also very present in irrigated perimeters in both rural and urban areas. Despite their contributions to economic and social development, including food security, in the absence of formal land rights women have reduced access to credit and inputs, resulting in low productivity.

In spite of women's important contribution, agriculture is still considered men's business. According to a 2005 study by the State Secretary for Women's Condition in Mauritania, only 19% of women were property owners and 56% needed the approval of a third party to complete a financial operation. In the Gambia, while it is difficult to determine the number of individual lands owned and registered to women, a review of the number of leases registered in the past 10 years from all local government areas suggest that less than 20% are registered to women. In Senegal, according to a study by Diop et al. (2012), 43% of women have access to land.



*Women play an important role in land development and natural resource management, whether they are involved in agriculture, home gardening, food gathering or wood harvesting.*

### ***Rural vs urban***

It is easier for women to access land in a collective manner through women's groups, associations or cooperatives. There are also fewer barriers in urban areas. Land allocations for women remain very limited compared to those for men, but at least collectives constitute a first step toward improved access. In rural areas of The Gambia, thousands of women's groups are seeking to register land for agricultural purposes, usually on the advice of donors/sponsors. In urban areas in Mauritania and Senegal, there are fewer barriers for women concerning land rights.





Women have a better access to land and sometimes to land property. It is especially true in Senegal where there are almost no obstacles for women to inherit in urban areas. Women are also more aware of legal provisions and they do not hesitate to go to court when they feel they have been wronged.

### ***Some women are more equal than others***

Research shows that in Senegal there are differences regarding women's access to land depending on their agro-ecological zone, social status or financial situation. For instance, women from poor households suffer more from a limited access to land, while women from wealthy families can usually lease or buy land, even in rural areas. Direct access to land is rare but does exist in certain cases such as the Diola ethnic minority which has a matrilineal system. In the Diola community, ricefields are sometimes transmitted from mother to daughter.

### ***Where are we now?***

In each of the three countries, recent improvements towards more equity between men and women in land rights were observed. Mauritania has undertaken economic and social reform for sustainable development, putting women at its core with a national strategy for the advancement of women. Recent progress has been significant with the adoption of a policy for family and childhood

that stresses the role of women and their new place in society. Their economic and political status was improved with laws on quotas passed by Parliament and their implication in grassroots development programs. For example, women's access to land has improved a little through the exploitation of irrigated land. However, women still constitute one of the most vulnerable groups, especially in rural areas. In The Gambia, several policy documents and statements have promoted women's access to land, but no attempt to engage in land reform ensued. Although the Women's Act asserts the right of women to own property, the point of reference comes back to personal law.

### ***Where do we go from here?***

Experts from The Gambia and Senegal agree that consultations should be held in the process of formulating legislation. The next steps, of course, are to enact the legislation and to implement the policies. In Mauritania and Senegal, it is necessary to ensure that legal and regulatory texts concerning access to land are enforced. It would be useful to have a communication strategy to raise awareness at the local level.

In Senegal, local experts call for the translation of laws into local languages, capacity building for women (functional literacy, education, retention of girls in schools, etc.), and the fair redistribution of land. They also suggest that it is necessary to ensure

female representation on land allocation commissions. Vulnerable groups need to be included in processes of fast land acquisition and benefit from these investments.

In the Gambia, in order to improve gender mainstreaming in the sustainable conservation and management of forest resources, experts suggest that awareness raising can help to ensure gender balance in decision-making processes at all levels. They also suggest that policy should be adopted for the systematic replacement of informal systems of land ownership with a formal system that observes and enforces women's rights.

In Mauritania, it is essential to support women's initiatives in land management and generally support land access for women, especially when they are the ones improving the land.

We don't live in a perfect world and African women continue to face obstructions to full equality. Still, over the past five years there has been a shift in favor of public land allocation to women. It is clear from this study that there remains a need to review or develop land policies that address women's rights.



#### **Profile of the Author**

Vera Songwe is the World Bank Country Director for Senegal, Cape Verde, The Gambia, Guinea Bissau, and Mauritania.

She joined the Bank in 1998 as a young professional in the East Asia and Pacific Region. She has worked on several countries and regions including Cambodia, Morocco, Tunisia, Malaysia, Mongolia, and the Philippines. Her areas of policy interest include economic growth and structural transformation, capital markets and financial regulation, and governance with emphasis on energy and agriculture issues. Dr. Songwe holds a Ph.D. in Mathematical Economics from the Center for Operations Research and Econometrics from the Catholic University of Louvain (CORE-UCL) in Belgium.

# GENDER IN IEG: Assessing World Bank Group Results in Gender Equality

Caroline Heider



A world where women and men, girls and boys do not have the same rights, opportunities, and access to resources cannot be a world hoping to eradicate poverty and boost shared prosperity. The World Development Report 2012 on Gender and Development, after reviewing a large (and increasing) body of evidence, eloquently states that “gender equality is a core development objective in its own right (and) it is also smart economics: “Greater gender equality can enhance productivity, improve development outcomes for the next generation, and make institutions more representative”.

This is why the gender equality goal is an integral part of the two main goals of the World Bank Group (WBG).

The centrality of gender equality to the development process is reflected in the recent WBG restructuring, which identified gender mainstreaming as a top priority of the institution and established Gender as a Cross-Cutting Solution Area. This decision reflects the increasing efforts of the WBG to ensure that country strategies and operations adopt gender-sensitive approaches to increase inclusiveness along gender lines and maximize results for everyone.

The adoption of ‘gender mainstreaming’ as the key approach to move towards the gender equality goal, is actually not a new strategy of the WBG. Gender was selected as a special theme in IDA16 and reconfirmed as such in IDA17. Gender indicators are included both in the IDA framework and in the Corporate Scorecard. A couple of years ago, a ‘gender flag’, based on a self-assessment of the team at the entry stage, was also introduced to identify ‘gender-informed’ operations and country strategies. However, despite these efforts, not much is known about the results achieved by ‘gender informed’ operations and, more generally, by this gender mainstreaming strategy. This is one area where IEG can provide a valuable contribution. At present, according to the gender flag, all country strategies and almost all operations (97 percent of new operations in FY13) are ‘gender informed’. These overly optimistic numbers, obtained by an extremely generous definition of ‘gender informed’, do not provide any insight into the impacts that we should expect. But it is precisely the impacts on beneficiaries that client countries, donors, and the institution itself need to know about.

This is why IEG has adopted a strategic plan to improve the integration of gender in its evaluation work. The main objective of this plan is to identify viable approaches that can be used to systematically integrate gender into the evaluation of strategies and operations so that gender-relevant results can be assessed and documented.

This work program will respond to two sets of questions.

- First, at the methodological level, what are the best approaches to integrating gender into IEG evaluation work?
- Second, at the substantive level, which gender-relevant outcomes can be documented in IEG evaluation work?

As a result, this work program will identify approaches to facilitate the assessment of gender-relevant impacts in evaluation products; provide support to evaluators (through guidelines, training, brown bag lunches, etc.) to better integrate gender in their work; and measure and disseminate gender findings within and outside the Bank.

The Gender in IEG work program fills an important gap given that IEG currently has neither an explicit nor an implicit strategy to integrate gender in evaluation. This is not to say that IEG does not have any experience—a quick review of the most recent country and thematic evaluations undertaken by the IEG Gender Team has revealed that some evaluations include an explicit and substantial attention to gender. Examples include the Afghanistan Country Evaluation and the Fragile and Conflict States Evaluation. Upcoming evaluations (for example, the Energy and Investment Climate Evaluations) will also pay attention to gender.

IEG can therefore use past and current evaluations (with or without satisfactory gender integration), as well as IEG evaluators’ experiences and insights and other tools to develop a methodology to improve gender integration in future evaluations, and make it more systematic.

The Gender in Evaluation work program comprises four components:

1. Stocktaking of staff skills and gender inclusion in IEG products;
2. Identifying gender entry points, in the various IEG products;
3. Preparing guidelines to integrate gender in evaluation; and
4. Providing training and resources to evaluators to support them in integrating gender in their work.

IEG is currently in the initial phase and is conducting an internal IEG survey to learn about evaluators' attitudes, skills, knowledge, and experience.

The analysis of gender outcomes in evaluation will improve IEG's ability to assess distributional effects, which closely links this work program with the other important IEG objective—to develop a methodology to measure the contribution of WBG operations to eliminate extreme poverty and enhance shared prosperity. The evidence we generate through this

effort will become part of our regular reporting. By shedding light on what works and what does not, we will contribute to the continuous improvement of the performance and results of the WBG.

Only an inclusive development process can maximize the well-being of everyone concerned. The gender equality goal will either be achieved together with the poverty reduction and shared prosperity goal, or it will not be achieved.

### **Profile of the Author**

Caroline Heider, Director General, Evaluation, Independent Evaluation Group, World Bank, joined the Independent Evaluation Group on October 1, 2011. She reports directly to the World Bank Group's Boards of Executive Directors through the Committee on Development Effectiveness.

Ms. Heider has 25 years of international experience in evaluation. Before joining IEG, she headed the Office of Evaluation at the World Food Programme. She has extensive evaluation experience in international development and humanitarian assistance and experience in related areas of strategic planning, management audit, and program design. She has worked with six multilateral organizations.



# MAINSTREAMING GENDER INTO EVALUATION

## *An Evaluation Community of Practice Event*

Prepared by JOELLE KANYANA MURARA and AICHA ZEINABOU FOFANA under the guidance of LINET GATAKAA MIRITI, AfDB Results and Quality Assurance Department

### ***Dr. Bamberger Visits the AfDB***

On February 13, 2014, the AfDB Operations Evaluation (OPEV) and Results and Quality Assurance Departments (ORQR) jointly organized an AfDB Evaluation Community of Practice discussion on how better incorporate gender into evaluations.

The discussion on *Mainstreaming Gender into Evaluations* was led by Michael Bamberger, a world-renowned expert in gender and development evaluation. His presentation stressed gender analysis, the different arguments about incorporating gender, and some of the serious consequences when gender issues are not addressed.

## OPENING REMARKS

In his opening remarks, the Chair of the meeting, Simon Mizrahi, Director of the Quality Assurance and Results Department underscored the remarkable recent gains of African women in terms of rights, education and access to the job market. However, he also stressed the various challenges that Africa faces when it comes to gender equality, illustrating his point with the fact that while African women comprise 80% of the labor force on the continent, they own only 1% of the land. He emphasized the Bank's commitment to gender equality as one of the three areas of special emphasis in the Bank's Ten-year Strategy.

Mr. Mizrahi highlighted the need to advance gender equality in Africa in order to sustain the continent's current economic growth and development goals. The four main requirements to achieve this are:



*Investing in women and girls is smart economics.*

*Simon Mizrahi,  
Director, ORQR,  
African Development Bank*

- A top-level political commitment by the Bank as shown by the appointment of a Special Envoy on Gender
- A clear sense of direction, which is well articulated in the Bank's newly approved Gender Strategy (2014–2018)
- Willingness to put ourselves in a position to learn from our past failures in addressing gender inequalities
- Recognition of the important role of OPEV in the process

Samer Hachem, Division Manager in the Evaluation Department, emphasized the importance of integrating gender into evaluations underscoring the

Evaluation Department's long interest in the issue, as seen by its publication in 2012 of a synthesis report, *Mainstreaming Gender Equality: A Road to Results or a Road to Nowhere*. The synthesis highlighted common issues that institutions face in addressing gender inequalities: inconsistent leadership, absence of accountability, lack of incentives for integrating gender equality, insufficient human and financial resources, poor results reporting and monitoring systems. M. HACHEM noted that like other development institutions, the Bank is not fully equipped when it comes to gender evaluation tools, hence the need to provide a meaningful measurement framework to move the gender agenda forward.

## *Mainstreaming Gender in to Evaluations: An Evaluation Community of Practice Event, AfDB, Tunis, February 13, 2014*





What they said ...

## Incorporating Gender into Program Evaluation

As we start this conversation on gender mainstreaming, I think it is useful to set out the broader context within which the AfDB operates.

To start with, I would like to put a serious dent in the old Afro pessimism myth that has been bandied around for way too long. The fact is that the lives of women in Africa have improved at a pace difficult to imagine a generation ago. Across this continent, women have made remarkable gains in rights, education, health and access to jobs. Take the case of girls' enrolment in primary and secondary schools—The kind of progress that took the United States 40 years to achieve, has taken Morocco, just to name one African country; just a decade. This does not mean that Africa does not confront some serious challenges when it comes to gender.

As we all know, yawning gender inequalities remain in Africa. I would like to illustrate this point with one example: Although women make up more than half of the agricultural labour force and produce up to 80% of staple food, they own only 1% of the land. This means that if we do not close these gaps, and if we do not make more progress in achieving greater equality between women and men, it will be much more difficult for Africa to make development progress and sustain its current pace of economic growth.

This is why, as an African institution AfDB is absolutely committed to gender equality, not only as an objective in its own right, but as integral part of its 10-year development strategy. This is because the Bank understands that investing in women and girls is smart economics—it boosts the pace of development progress for both women and men. So, one of the Bank's first challenges is to identify how and where its resources can be used most effectively to accelerate the pace of progress on gender.

And this, I think, means at least three things:

**ONE**—It means top level commitment to gender within the Bank. Nothing better illustrates this commitment than the President's decision to appoint Ms Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi as the Bank's Special Envoy on Gender.

**TWO**—It means a very clear sense of direction for the Bank. These directions are clearly articulated in the Bank's Gender Strategy. The Gender Strategy operationalizes the Bank's long-term strategy and provides staff with detailed guidance on gender over the medium term.

**AND THREE**—We need to make sure that, as an organisation, we are in a position to learn from our successes and failures in addressing gender inequality. And this naturally brings me to today's conversation about OPEV's role in incorporating gender into programme evaluation.

*Simon Mizrahi, Director, ORQR  
Opening Remarks at ECoP Meeting on Mainstreaming Gender into Evaluation  
Tunis, February 13, 2014*

## What they said ...



Good afternoon,

I would like to welcome you all again, on behalf of the Evaluation Department. We firmly believe that evaluation can play a meaningful role in supporting the Bank's transformation only if evaluation knowledge is shared and debated, and this is at the centre of the Evaluation Community of Practice meeting. It is good to see you all here.

Coming back to the topic of the day, I will not reiterate the importance of mainstreaming gender for development. To quote from the AfDB Gender Strategy, this is a matter of "smart economics". However, as always, things are easier said than done. In 2013, we published a synthesis of 26 evaluations done in other development institutions around gender. The synthesis highlighted some common issues concerning mainstreaming gender: these include the lack of sustained leadership in the face of competing priorities; absence of accountability and incentives structures resulting in new policies and practices pursued for some time then abandoned; insufficient resources; and inconsistent approaches to monitoring and evaluation. A lot has happened since then at the AfDB, starting with the appointment of an AfDB Special Envoy on Gender and the adoption of a Gender Strategy; and, not least, conversations around the topic we are discussing today.

A classic performance management saying is "what gets measured gets done". While changes are needed in many parts of the system, we do need to ensure that we measure our progress and report transparently on it for it to be sustainable. Beyond this, we need to have mechanisms in place to learn from our experience, successes and mistakes, and this is one of the major roles of evaluation.

We are very happy to have started this collaboration with ORQR to further mainstream gender into our own evaluation products. We are honoured to be working with Dr. Bamberger and Dr Tisch on this and our objectives is, indeed, to go to the next level in our evaluations by equipping ourselves with the right tools to look at the effect of our operations, strategies and policies on gender and propose lessons. This is actually even more important for us at this stage as we are embarking on a comprehensive evaluation of development results achieved by the Bank, which we expect to deliver in 2016.

The name of the evaluation I mentioned was actually "Mainstreaming gender equality: a road to results or a road to nowhere?" Well I think we'll agree here that we are on the road to results, and, for us in OPEV, we will do our part in looking into and questioning experience; bringing lessons forward; and learning to keep improving.

Thank you.

*Samer Hachem, Division Manager, Operations Evaluation Department, AfDB  
Welcome Remarks at ECoP Meeting on Mainstreaming Gender into Evaluation  
Tunis, February 13, 2014*

Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, the AfDB Special Envoy on Gender emphasized the importance of gender equality for the development of the continent and the economic empowerment of women to raise the global economy, stating that women comprise the third global emerging market. She thanked Mr. Bamberger for helping the Bank sharpen its evaluation tools and helping to make gender the business of the Bank. She reiterated the need to ensure that the Bank's operations are fully involved in the process so that gender mainstreaming does not become an elusive dream.

## Notes from Michael Bamberger's Presentation on Mainstreaming Gender into Evaluations

### 1. How gender analysis is used

From a technical standpoint, gender analysis helps improve program design by exploring the different effects of programs and policies on women and men. It also provides a categorization of projects by importance of gender issues/ problems. Gender analysis also serves developmental and advocacy purposes by contributing to the achievement of broader development goals, promoting a social inclusiveness approach to development, and compiling credible evidence that gender issues are important in all development programs. On a road construction project, for example, gender analysis could focus on the following three key issues:

- Comparing how men and women use roads
- Identifying potential positive outcomes
- Identifying unanticipated and gender-differentiated negative outcomes

The best times to conduct gender analysis include during country strategy planning, project identification, and project design. The different data collection methods that can be used include theory of change, sample surveys, reports, or mass media.

### 2. Defining gender analysis and arguments frequently used to justify the need for gender analysis

Gender analysis can be defined as "...understanding and documenting differences in gender roles, activities, needs, and opportunities in a given context." Gender analysis focuses on relations between men and women and this can be shown through disaggregated quantitative data by sex. Therefore, it helps understanding of how gender relations affect all aspects of social, economic, and political life. Some of the key arguments that justify the need for gender analysis include the fact that gender roles affect:

- Access to labor markets and income-generating opportunities
- Ownership and control of productive resources
- Access to education and public services
- Geographical mobility
- Exposure to domestic and public violence
- Ability to participate in political processes

### 3. Missed opportunities for gender

The main reasons gender issues are often not addressed include the following:

- Political and cultural sensitivities
- Belief that development programs are "gender-neutral"

- Concern that gender analysis implies a “feminist agenda”
- Methodological limitations of conventional data collection systems
- Failure to identify unintended outcomes

The methodological limitations for gender analysis include the fact that gender often involves sensitive issues such as domestic violence, power relations, control of resources, and organizational culture that are difficult to study. As well, gender transformation involves attitudinal and behavioral changes that are often difficult to measure, and funders seek evaluations to examine whether or not programs achieved the intended objectives.

M. BAMBERGER ended his presentation by listing ways to strengthen the use of gender analysis with a view to capturing missed opportunities. On the one hand, he said, it is imperative to provide regular feedback on gender issues and how to address them. This can be done by providing regular management briefs on gender issues in monitoring reports, and also by communicating positive outcomes of gender interventions on both men and women. Basing the evaluation on a well-articulated gender framework is key.

He urged project task managers to generate gender-responsive data to ensure that all key variables are sex-disaggregated. They should also utilize new data collection and analysis technology and promote “agile” evaluation that allows the program to be packaged into separate components, each of which is easier to monitor and evaluate. Most importantly, he called for an “eyes-wide-open” type of evaluation to identify what is really happening on the ground – in other words, to identify the critical events that took place before the program began, and to develop creative ways to obtain information from and about non-beneficiaries and groups that may be worse off as a result of the program.

**Concluding the session,** Mr. Bamberger thanked participants and stated that he felt the wider commitment of the Bank towards gender equality. Highlighting the unique role of African women in the economic, social, and political realms, he reiterated the urgent need for the Bank to develop a clear system of gender analysis in evaluation with a view to moving forward with its gender agenda.



## Q&A During the ECoP Meeting with Dr. Bamberger

They asked	Michael Bamberger said
How do we address labor dimensions in road construction projects (such as men being paid more than women)?	Labor dimensions assessment is key in the gender analysis process. It is proven that in most cases women find themselves in an exploitative situation and are confined to specific jobs. It is therefore critical to understand the challenges women face in that respect, and to take appropriate measures to enable them to climb the work ladder.
How can gender analysis inform the right policies? How can we include gender evaluation at corporate/institutional level?	Understanding the constraints is a sine qua none condition to the development of a relevant policy framework. A relevant gender analysis can then inform the right policy to address those constraints. Gender issues ought to be addressed both externally (through projects) and internally. It is crucial to promote corporate social responsibility within the institution by raising the quota of women at the professional level and in management positions.
The presentation deals mostly with the evaluation sector. How can we improve gender analysis at quality-at-entry level?	Quality-at-entry questions should be rephrased so that evaluators ask more relevant questions.
How can we assess budget allocation within the household?	When you look at budget allocation within a household, you can note that some members of the household are below the nutrition level. It is important to undertake an in-depth analysis on power relations between men and women. As it sometimes proves difficult to assess women's leeway in that regard, various data collection techniques can be used (observation, socio-metric analysis, and so on).
In the water and sanitation sector, women are highly involved in water resource management. How do we get men more involved?	We must look at how water is allocated in the village. Here again, use of power relations is important. In some projects, it might be noted that women's situation improves over the short term. However, a long term evaluation is needed as in some cases men take over on activities that were initially allocated to women, getting them back in a marginalized position.
How do we define a gender analysis framework, taking into account the care economy?	Although it is difficult to make an assessment of the care economy within a given country as it is not accounted for as a conventional economic activity, task managers could potentially look at other sources of information (such as time use).
How can we approach gender mainstreaming in a more holistic manner? Where can you refer us for gender literature in the transport sector?	Gender analysis provides a checklist that identifies which needs are being addressed. A more holistic approach does not have to amount to a complex framework. Change can be initiated at the village level. All issues cannot be tackled at once and at all levels. The World Bank has exhaustive literature on gender in the transport sector.
Don't we need to establish a proper gender monitoring process before reaching the evaluation level? The most pressing issue we face at the moment is grappling with gender mainstreaming at quality-at-entry. It is crucial to develop a gender monitoring framework to dovetail with the overall Bank's results and management framework.	(The terms of reference for the study Mr. is undertaking at the Bank strictly concerns evaluations, which is why his presentation focused on integrating gender into evaluations.) Regarding gender integration at quality-at-entry, learning from past failures and recommendations is key. It is important to pinpoint issues identified in different sectors before attempting to build a gender monitoring framework to address those issues.

# Where were the boys? Where are the men?

Wele Elangwe



As we approach the 20th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, which was held in Beijing in September 1995, gender mainstreaming as a mechanism for women's empowerment continues to challenge us. But its importance now is no less than it was for its supporters then. At that historical meeting, the United Nations managed to gather together an amazing total of 189 states and more than 2000 civil society organizations to ratify the Beijing Platform for Action as a global agenda to foster gender equality and women empowerment. Gender mainstreaming was identified as the key mechanism to achieve these goals. The most common and widely used definition of gender mainstreaming is the one adopted by the United Nations Economic and Social Council in June 1997:

*Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.*

But the achievement of gender equality cannot be accomplished solely through policymaking – these concepts must be integrated into all fields of life, thus the term mainstreaming. Gender mainstreaming means integration of gender into the prevailing structures.

## **Since Beijing**

The Beijing Conference was a huge success for gender policies all over the world, and major strides have been taken by international and national organizations and government departments to implement gender mainstreaming.

Since 1995, the level of women's representation in parliaments is significantly greater in African countries such as Botswana, Mozambique, Senegal and South Africa. Even more heartwarming was the event that took place on 16 January 2006, when the world watched in awe as Ellen Sirleaf was sworn into office as Africa's first female democratically elected head of state. The music was no less joyful when Liberians reelected her for a second term of office 5 years later. In 2011, President Johnson received international recognition when she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize alongside two other women for "...their non-violent struggle for the safety of women and for women's rights to full participation in peace-building work."

### ***Not to be left behind...***

**Malawi** followed suit by electing Joyce Banda as its first female president in April 2012. As a testament to this woman's leadership and influence beyond her native land, Forbes Magazine ranked her as one of the world's 50 most powerful women.

In Senegal, Aminata Touré was elected as prime minister of **Senegal** on 1 September 2013 after previously serving as Minister of Justice.

More recently, the **Central Africa Republic (CAR)** entrusted a woman as interim president to hold things together in a nation struck by bloody sectarian strife. Catherine Samba-Panza, who was sworn in on 23 January 2014, pledged to bring peace and unity.

Even more impressive is **Rwanda**, which currently leads the rest of the world in political participation of women in the legislature – over 64% of Rwanda's parliamentarians are women.

### ***Peace-building: a natural for women***

It is clear from every indication that African women are rising in the ranks as far as political participation is concerned. It should be stressed here that women are also intensely devoted to peace building, as they often suffer directly from the excesses of armed

conflicts. According to the National Democratic Institute (NDI), "... reconstruction and reconciliation efforts take root more quickly and are more sustainable when all the stakeholders – including women – are involved."

### ***And on the economic front...***

Women are also running the economic arena more than ever before, with billionaire powerhouses like Angola's Isabel dos Santos and Nigeria's Folorunsho Alakija now making it onto Forbes' world female billionaire list.

### ***Are we there yet?***

After ratifying the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995, South

Africa made a firm commitment to gender mainstreaming by creating the National Gender Machinery for the Advancement of Women. And with a view to monitoring and supervising gender mainstreaming, the Joint Monitoring Committee for Improving the Quality of Life and Status of Women was also established. Yet another initiative was the creation in 2009 of a Ministry of Women, Children, Youth and the Disabled. Unfortunately, despite these efforts, the Public Service Commission of 2006 reported that many challenges persist in the implementation of gender mainstreaming in South Africa's public service.

Although the pieces may be in place, the gender mainstreaming mechanism is still not running



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smoothly. We seem to be at a critical crossroad with many early supporters expressing disillusionment. Now, 20 years after Beijing, there is need for stock-taking on why efforts on gender mainstreaming have not been as successful as intended.

### ***After Beijing: different but the same***

Beijing solidified the need for change and advocated for gender mainstreaming. However, this radical change could not be wholly implemented by the women of the Beijing era who were still oppressed by societies that considered them second class citizens. The responsibility therefore fell to the girl child who – it was hoped – would enjoy the benefits of gender mainstreaming in all spheres of life.

At the outset, this vision was great and seemed to be heading towards fruition as there was an increase in the number of girls enrolled in school, a reduction in the number of forced marriages, and a vast improvement in women’s political participation. However, while these girls were taught about gender equality in school, they lived something else at home. They looked on sullenly as their mothers were kept subordinate by their fathers, performing the drudgery of cleaning and cooking while the men continued to wield the power of authority.



*The Rwanda Men’s Resource Centre (RWAMREC) is a glowing example of incorporating men in the debate on gender mainstreaming. In Rwanda, the participation of women in politics, as mentioned above, is commendable.*

Moreover, while much emphasis was placed on the empowerment of the girl child in the years after the Beijing conference, little was done to sensitize their brothers on the new social dynamic. In school, the boys were taught about gender equality, but like their sisters they watched the old scenario of female subservience

unfold at home. And there’s the problem. For most males, their mothers represent the acme of female conduct, the yardstick against which all other women must be compared, the role models they expect their women to emulate. When young boys witness their mothers and sisters being treated like second-class citizens by the men in their lives without complaint, they emulate the same behavior when they grow up. Thus the cycle continues.

### ***The way forward: bring the men in***

The question we should be asking is not whether women have earned a better place in society over the past decade, but what can be done to include men in the discussion. In fact, this conversation is already gaining ground as a policy recommendation for advocacy on gender issues. Witness the Men and Gender Equality Policy Project (MGEPP), a project supported by UNESCO and coordinated by the International Center for Research on Women.

Currently, most gender mainstreaming policies focus primarily and often exclusively on female empowerment, placing the bulk of responsibility to champion these efforts on the women themselves. Beijing brought to light the pervasiveness of gender inequality, labeling it as social vice that ought to be the concern of everyone, irrespective of gender, race, age or social class. It is clear now that if we want to ensure gender mainstreaming in all areas of society, we urgently need to get men on board. Policies for gender mainstreaming cannot be limited to women and women’s organizations, but must also be an objective for men and society as a whole. Only joint efforts will provide lasting solutions.

As Rwanda’s President Paul Kagame, the man who has succeeded in safeguarding a female dominated parliament, no easy feat by African standards, succinctly puts it:

*“Fighting against inequality and poverty and working for development will only succeed if it involves men and women equally. It is the responsibility of each of us.”*

At the international level, engaging men in the promotion and achievement of gender equality has been increasing. Beginning with the Beijing Declaration itself, a number of intergovernmental platforms, such as the 1995 World Summit on Social Development in Denmark, its review session in 2000, and a special session of the UN General Assembly on HIV/AIDS in 2001, have focused on the issue. The importance of education systems in shaping the gender perspective of boys was underscored in the landmark Dakar Framework for Education for All, which was convened by UNESCO in 2000. One explicit goal of the Dakar Framework is to ensure that education systems contribute to and promote gender equality, instead of reinforcing gender stereotypes. And in March 2004, during its 48th session, the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women specifically focused on the theme: The role of men and boys in achieving gender equality.

Achieving gender equality requires systemic changes in policy and modes of social interaction at all levels of society: the home, the workplace, schools, public services, the media, and so on. Men continue to occupy positions of power and privilege in patriarchal social systems, and without their active involvement, an equitable society is neither achievable nor sustainable.

### ***Rwanda leads the way***

The Rwanda Men's Resource Centre (RWAMREC) is a glowing example of incorporating men in the debate on gender mainstreaming. In Rwanda, the participation of women in politics, as mentioned above, is commendable. However, gender-based violence unfortunately continues to abound at an appalling rate. A 2010 UN report estimated the incidence of sexual violence amongst Rwandan women aged 15–49 report at about 48%. With a view to reversing this situation, RWAMREC trains men to oppose this negative and violent behavior. RWAMREC, which was founded in 2006, is a grassroots organization by men who wanted to engage other men on gender issues and to promote 'positive masculinity', which encourages men to be loving, caring fathers and partners. Nearly 3,000 local leaders have thus far been educated and engaged to fight gender-based

violence by promoting the concept of "positive masculinity".

According to Edouard Munyamaliza, Executive Secretary of RWAMREC, peer pressure is a dominant factor for many men. Most men, he says, indulge in gender-based violence because they are afraid of being ostracized by their peers. The thinking is: *If I don't behave like this, the community*

*will disqualify me as a man.* RWAMREC encourages a positive, nonviolent understanding of masculinity as the starting point towards fighting gender-based violence. Getting the men on board deters adherence to repugnant traditional norms or practices.

Anecdotal evidence indicates that RWAMREC's sensitization campaigns have significantly reduced the incidence of gender-based violence. Women report that they have received increased support from their husbands and that they now participate in decision-making and engage in economic and social activities.

### ***Challenges ahead***

In many parts of the world (and especially in Africa), male supremacy is justified on grounds of culture, religion, biology, or employment (for example, in the military or police). The African man is culturally sensitized to believe that dominating women is normal. Because men benefit from such social norms, efforts at gender mainstreaming continue to be challenged – men who might otherwise agree about gender equality shy away from the discourse because of traditional culture.

In a continent plagued by social and political strife, gender-based violence in Africa has come under a lot of public attention. From Egypt, to Libya, to South Sudan, to Democratic Republic of Congo, to

*It is clear now that if we want to ensure gender mainstreaming in all areas of society, we urgently need to get men on board ... only joint efforts will provide lasting solutions*

Mali and most recently to CAR, conflicts in Africa are many and their unique effects on women and girls are pervasive. Kidnappings, sex trafficking and rape are daily realities faced by millions of women and girls in this war-torn continent.

### *Next steps*

Opportunities to learn about approaches and tools for the implementation of gender mainstreaming strategies and programs should be made available to men and boys. A platform for networking and a face-to-face exchange of good practices between civil society organizations and governments, working with men to implement gender mainstreaming and gender equality, is of vital importance.

Because of the reasons discussed above, advocacy efforts need to shift from women to men. These efforts can be made using different methods and in this age of technology, social media is a good place to start. In fact, at least one Facebook page called MAGE (Men Advocating Gender Equality) has already been set up to bring men into the fold, boldly declaring that “It’s time to stand with the women in our lives to help guarantee gender equality and eliminate sexual assault.” More forums like this are needed to bring men on par with advocacy for gender mainstreaming.

Gender mainstreaming clearly remains a very difficult social theory, albeit one whose practical application could finally achieve the long-awaited dream of gender equality. The problem has been that the focus has been on females to the exclusion of males. But no social vice can be eradicated without a change in the mindset of the perpetrators. What was true for racism, apartheid and genocide will definitely hold true for gender mainstreaming. It is incumbent on every society to propagate gender equality by introducing men into the discussions on gender mainstreaming. We need male role models to advocate for gender mainstreaming in society, in government and in business.

For too long, the task has been on women to engineer change, a charge with which they have valiantly struggled. But almost two decades after they met in

Beijing to articulate their rights as equal citizens of the world, it is clear that something else is needed. We need the men to join us in this noble endeavor.

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#### Profile of the Author

Wele Elangwe graduated from the Indiana University School of Law with a Master of Laws degree in International Human Rights Law in 2010. She also completed a *Maîtrise en Droit* in Business Law from the University of Yaoundé II, Cameroon, in 2004. She has worked with the United Nations Center for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa and the Office of the Senior Human Rights Advisor's Office in Rwanda. Wele is currently working at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore as the Student Services Coordinator for the Graduate School. While a student in the Program in International Human Rights Law (PIHRL) at Indiana University, Wele published articles in the *Human Rights Bulletin*; contributed to and authored two major United Nations Shadow Reports: *USA Shadow Report on Hurricane Katrina*, Race Committee, Geneva, 2008, and *Chad's Breach of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights: Failure to Protect the Rights of Women and Girls*, Human Rights Committee, New York, 2009, which helped to garner Special Consultative Status for PIHRL from the United Nations Economic and Social Council (UN-ECOSOC). Wele is currently pursuing a PhD in Organizational Leadership.

# CELEBRATING THE CONTRIBUTION OF AFRICAN WOMEN TO DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA



Hippolyte Fofack

On March 8, 2014, the world will once again acknowledge the achievements of women in myriad fields and honor them for their exceptional contributions to the progress achieved in building more inclusive societies, where access to opportunities is no longer intrinsically biased by gender and racial considerations. These commemorations, which are part of the International Women's Day celebrations, have become annual rituals with variation in the theme since the first such event, held on March 8, 1913. This year, they are wrapped under the slogan "Equality for Women Is Progress for All," probably reflecting the transformational and intergenerational benefits of women's empowerment. In the words of Brigham Young "You educate a woman; you educate a generation."

However, at the beginning of these commemorations, in the early 1900s, the social aspirations were equally dictated by the class and racial origins of individuals in a non-color-blind world of institutionalized inequality of opportunity. The International Women's Day (IWD) of that era was to a large extent less concerned with the plight of women of African descent. In America, the 1900s were dominated by the struggles for civil rights, as the 1863 Emancipation Proclamation signed by President Lincoln to free the slaves gave birth to the Jim Crow era of de jure racial segregation. In the continent of Africa, where countries were basically either European colonies or under the apartheid regime in southern Africa, African women could not be part of the emancipation movement at the global level. Instead, they were just like their sisters in North America, primarily concerned with racial equality and aspiration to greater dignity for all Africans, both women and men, around the world.

Perhaps this history partly explains the delay in the celebrations of IWD on the African continent, and in some cases overlapping or parallel celebrations whereby women's contributions are celebrated on a different day in some countries. For instance, in South Africa, the National Women's Day, which has been an annual celebration since 1994, was born out of the historic march of courageous women in August 9, 1956, to petition against the legislation introduced to curtail the freedom of movement for South Africans of African descent during the apartheid era. Under that legislation, no South Africans of African descent could travel in their

own country unless they carried an identity-pass, a requirement not applied to Caucasians.

Over time, the women's anti-pass campaign became the benchmark in the struggle for freedom in South Africa—we all remember valiant and powerful women raising their fists and marching under the tune “Amandla, Amandla!” That tune inspired scores of liberation movements whose ideals of freedom and equality ultimately prevailed, with the end of the apartheid regime and transition toward a more inclusive and democratic society in 1994. Perhaps these political considerations and asymmetric distribution of power and treatment of states at the global level also played a role in the fact that the United Nations commemorated its first IWD in 1977, more than three decades after its creation—and after more countries had become sovereign states.

The contribution of women to Africa's development goes beyond the fight for freedom and equality during the colonial and apartheid era, however. It is much broader and part of a long historical process going back several centuries, including the pre-colonial and colonial periods. In effect, despite the constraints imposed by the colonial institution, some of which included racial discrimination and division of labor along gender lines, women's perseverance in the sphere of subsistence agricultural production ensured the survival of families, making them the bedrock of resistance in the face of economic uncertainty and political instability.

In this context, assessing the contribution of women to Africa's development from a historical perspective provides a better understanding of potential causes and historical processes underpinning gender inequality in the region. It also has the potential to shed some light on the extent of women's contribution to Africa's development and the growing wave of economic empowerment, besides the struggle for freedom. In effect, while freedom is the first critical step to personal growth and emancipation, economic empowerment is the sure and sustainable path to true equality.

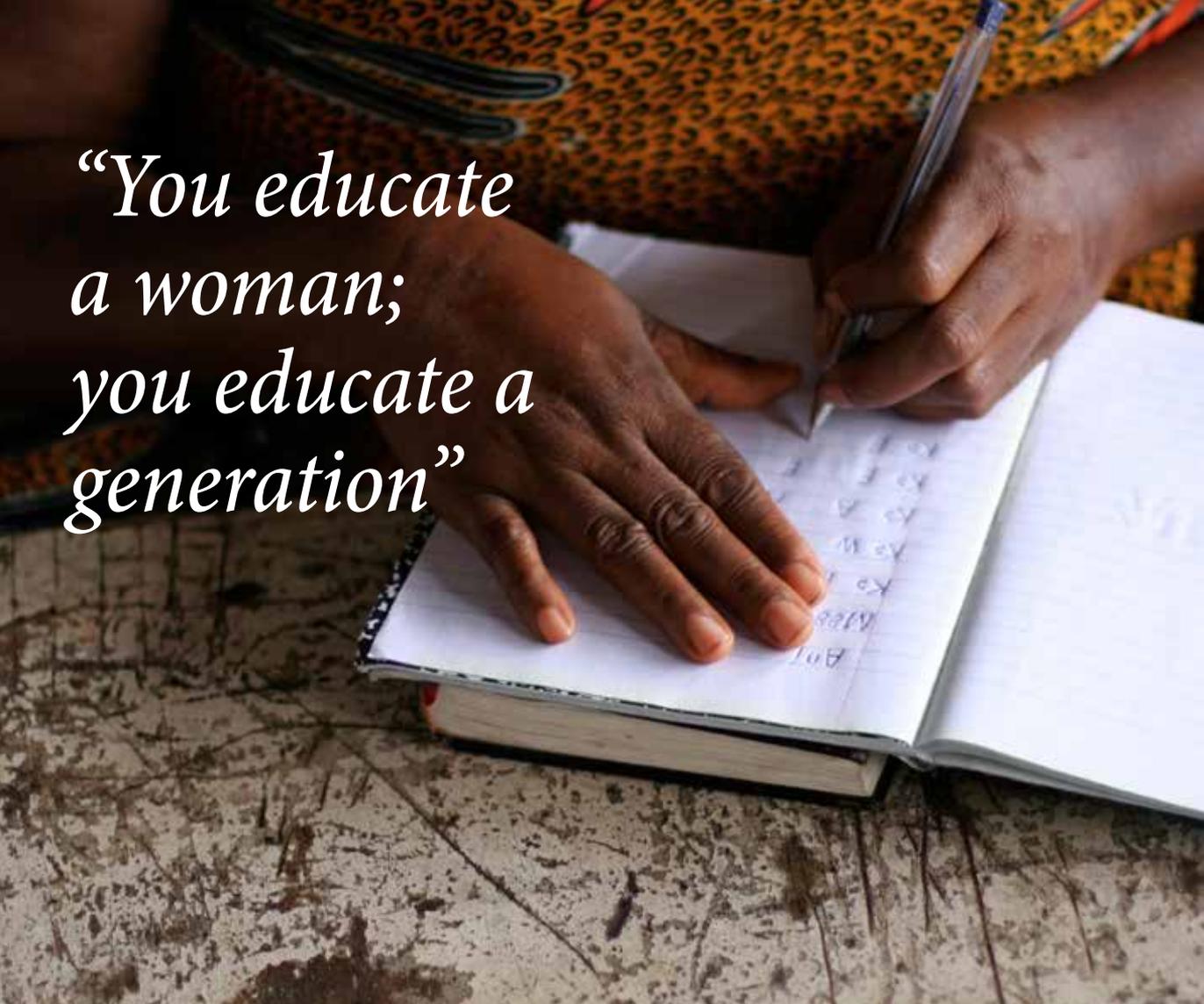
### **Colonial institution and gender production**

Although it is relatively more difficult to trace studies focusing on intra-household distribution of resources and gender production in pre-colonial Africa—owing in a large part to the preeminence of oral traditions, the absence of household surveys, and distortions of knowledge in the colonial period—there is a larger body of research devoted to gender production in the colonial period (Boserup 1970; Alesina et al. 2011; Ajyamong and Fofack 2014). The majority of these studies highlight gender segregation with respect to economic activity. In particular, they point to gender bias in the nonagricultural sector and division of labor by gender in the agricultural sector, with some types of work strongly associated with women, and some types with men.

Reviewing the gender-linked division of labor in the colonial period, numerous scholars have established that African women performed mostly domestic duties (Boserup 1970; Guyer 1984). Outside the household, in the realm of agriculture, women were primarily employed as workers, helping their husbands with food production and conservation. In contrast, and as sole owners of the family enterprise and related production factors, men enjoyed the full control of household assets and inherent production under that social division of labor.

Inequality in the ownership and distribution of resources and sexual division of labor in agricultural production was widespread across Africa, irrespective of the colonial power. A review of the production process in the central region of Cameroon—a French colony—shows that husbands had the ultimate right of disposal over the production of goods from subsistence farms, even though their contribution to

... while freedom is the first critical step to personal growth and emancipation, economic empowerment is the sure and sustainable path to true equality



*“You educate  
a woman;  
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generation”*

the production process was limited to clearing fields (Guyer 1978). This responsibility for a single task was in contrast to women’s continuous work and sustained effort, which extended over the whole food production chain: preparing the land, planting, weeding, and harvesting.

Similarly, studies have shown that the division of labor in the context of household production followed the same pattern in British colonies. For instance, in addition to doing most of the planting, weeding, and harvesting in Kenya, women in the Luo community were also responsible for housework and childcare and for storing and managing the food supply, while Luo men had very specific and time-sensitive tasks and limited responsibility with respect to agricultural

production (Hay 1976). In addition to pastoral activities, their contribution to the food production chain was limited to clearing the fields and breaking the ground for first cultivation.

At the same time, a number of studies have established that the division of labor along gender lines in the agricultural sector was not always clear-cut, but determined by local conditions [Baumann (1928)]. Though men consistently played a role in the initial phase of agricultural production by clearing the farm, there are a number of societies where they also participated either directly or indirectly in other aspects of food production, especially with the transition from shifting cultivation (hoe culture) to plough culture.

Although women's work continues to be prominent, there are geographical areas where men actively participated in the whole chain of food production. This is particularly the case in the steppes and savannas of the Sudan and East Africa, where the man shares the work of hoe culture; he hoes the ground, sows, weeds, and harvests, alone or with women. In a few cases in the northeast, for instance, men actually play a more prominent role (Baumann 1928). However, in the Central and West African regions, all the man does is to clear the ground, leaving all the rest of the work to the woman.

### ***Changing dynamics of gender relations***

Still, a number of studies have focused on the extent to which the theoretical division of labor that underpinned pre-colonial Africa and produced a certain equilibrium in the dynamics of gender production might have been affected by the introduction of cash crops and the emergence of resource extraction during the colonial period. In this line, Mullings (1976) argues that the shift towards increased production of export crops during the colonial period destroyed the pre-existing reciprocal division of labor. In effect, the new equilibrium that emerged from the rise of colonialism confined African women to the production of food crops, and the preeminence of women in subsistence agriculture has continued to this day.

Some scholars have argued that the shift toward increased production of export crops and the expansion of the mining sector during the colonial period destroyed the pre-existing reciprocal division of labor (Mullings 1976; Henn 1984). While women continued to play a critical role in subsistence agriculture, men abruptly reduced their initially limited contribution to food crop production to discretely and inelastically allocate their time to cash crop production and natural resource extraction as laborers. Reflecting on that sexual division of labor in the agricultural sector, a European director of agriculture in Uganda famously declared in 1923 *"Cotton growing could not be left to women and old people."*

This transformation in the colonial period affected time allocation for both men and women. The largest workload fell on women, who had to work even longer hours without commensurate benefits. As men gradually shifted from food crop to cash crop production, and later to export-oriented extractive industries, women had to assume full control of the food production chain, from clearing and farming to harvesting, while at the same time being fully responsible for housework and childcare. In this context, and not surprisingly, research on the colonial period established that women, on average, worked 70 hours a week in Cameroon, compared to 46 hours in the pre-colonial period. Meanwhile, men worked an average of 55 hours a week (Henn 1978).

Recent empirical evidence suggests that the gender gap in the number of daily working hours remains significant in Sub-Saharan Africa. Despite the generally declining trend and reduction in the length of work in the post-colonial period, women continue to have much longer working days in Africa. In 2007, a World Bank study noted that on average African women worked 13 hours a day in households and outside labor, while men's daily average number of hours devoted to work oscillated around 8 hours.

In addition to managing the entire food production chain, women also contributed directly or indirectly to the growth of the cash crop industry and the expanding mining sector by supporting male workers confronted with forced labor and low wages (Guyer 1978). Wages received by male workers in the cash economy were extremely low and had to be supplemented with food and other goods produced by women, an informal coping mechanism that may be viewed as the unpaid labor of women subsidizing the structurally

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*the South African Parliament—with representation that is 42.3 percent women—is one of the most gender-balanced in the world (in the top 10).*

low colonial wage—also often referred to as the “starvation wage.”

It has been established that the colonial extraction of economic surpluses from the African population was among the main reasons behind the higher work load faced by African workers, and especially women, who assumed greater responsibilities both inside and outside the home as a result (Henn 1984). In practice, that colonial extraction was achieved through several channels, including higher taxes, forced production of cash crops, resource extraction, food levies, and removal of men to work in sectors leading colonial production.

However, in addition to gender bias in the nonagricultural production sector and sexual division of labor in the agricultural sector, the asymmetric nature of the relationship between men and women in the colonial period was also fueled by inequality in access to opportunities and technology. In this regard, it has been argued that women cultivated food crops using tradi-

tional methods, while men used modern scientific methods as a result of institutional support to the export sector by the colonial administrations (Boserup 1970). At the same time, women had smaller farms, less fertile lands, and limited opportunities for occupational mobility and wage employment, which all contributed to productivity gaps between subsistence and export crops (Guyer 1984).

But irrespective of gender considerations, the

indigenous population had only limited access to the more fertile and productive intra-marginal lands in settler economies such as South Africa and Zimbabwe. Naturally, this further constrained the prospects of raising the productivity in the subsistence agricultural sector dominated by women in the overwhelming majority of countries, especially with a growing number of male workers migrating to the cash economy, mainly mining in South Africa and agricultural commodities in Zimbabwe.

### ***Narrowing gender gaps in the post-independence era***

However, gender inequality and sexual division of labor—illustrated most notably in the preeminence of men in the export sector (cash crops and natural resource extraction) and the continued ascendancy of women in the production of food crops—is not due to any innate and intrinsic difference in the ability of men and women to perform one set of tasks or another. Instead, different efficiencies are simply associated with their efforts because the tasks are gender-typed.

The resilience of African women in sustaining food production under the constraints imposed by the colonial institution and by traditional norms proves that they were always physically and intellectually capable of economic independence. Perhaps these capabilities were simply repressed by traditional and colonial practices of land and crop control and the Western education system, which divorced women from many political, public, and economic activities (Gaidzanwa 2003; Akyeampong and Fofack 2014).

The independence of many African nations in the 1960s and the transition toward a more inclusive and democratic society following the end of apartheid regime in the 1990s have created a new era. Africa is now leading the world in the area of gender relations and dynamics. Across Africa, cases of gender equality in political participation are blossoming at a rather fast pace, with more and more women ascending to the highest offices of the land. Their contribution in other sectors of the economy besides agriculture is expanding as well. The latest listing

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According to the latest data released by the World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Index, Lesotho, South Africa, and Rwanda (in that order) are now in the leading nations where women face the least discrimination in the world, cruising along with Nordic countries, and ahead of countries such as the United States and France.

of the wealthiest Africans released by Forbes lists 2 women (Isabel dos Santos and Folorunsho Alakija) in the top 15.

Similarly, the South African Parliament—with representation that is 42.3 percent women— is one of the most gender-balanced in the world (in the top 10). This global ranking is a significant improvement from the apartheid era, when women accounted for only about 2.8 percent, until the 1990s. Remarkably, advanced economies such as the United States, where women hold 16.8 percent of seats in Congress, and the United Kingdom, where they hold 21 percent, are trailing South Africa and several other African countries, including Angola (38.2 percent), Mozambique (39.2 percent), and Rwanda (63.8 percent), Rwanda being the world leader.

At the global level, countries such as South Africa and Rwanda are among the pioneers in the area of gender-responsive budgeting, along with Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom. For these countries, gender mainstreaming has been strengthened within the government. In particular, gender issues are integrated into the design and implementation of development programs, and gender-disaggregated data are systematically collected to monitor the outcomes and impact of public expenditure allocation across gender lines. To the extent that the budget is the most important redistribution instrument available to governments, this augurs well for women's economic empowerment in post-colonial Africa and for progress on Millennium Development Goals, provided the experiment is sustained and adopted by more countries.

The results and progress toward gender equality achieved by countries in the region are increasingly being recognized at the global level. According to the latest data released by the World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Index, Lesotho, South Africa, and Rwanda (in that order) are now in the leading nations where women face the least discrimination in the world, cruising along with Nordic countries, and ahead of countries such as the United States and France. The Global Gender Gap Index is

a composite measure based on gender gaps in economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, political empowerment, health, and survival of women in 136 countries.

According to the World Economic Forum, the progress achieved by leading African nations is largely attributed to increased female labor force participation and narrowing wage gaps. In practice, this progress is the result of institutional transformation and the loosening of traditional norms across the region. These changes are most notably illustrated by the reduction of gender gaps in education and labor force participation, although major challenges remain in the latter, especially with the disproportionately large representation of women in the informal economy (Akyeampong and Fofack 2013).

## **Conclusion**

Perhaps the emerging changes and institutional transformations witnessed in the region could be more profound in South Africa—the Rainbow Nation that was truly founded by both mothers and fathers, unlike the United States and many other countries where the birth of a nation is often associated with the founding fathers. For one, while the International Women's Day celebrated every year on March 8 is too global to be country- and event-specific, South Africa's National Women's Day is rooted in the country's history, born out of the historic 1956 march by courageous women.

The emblem of that historical march—“You strike a woman, you strike a rock” —has become the national anthem and a commonly shared national heritage honored by all citizens, men and women alike. One can only hope that, over time, the aspiration for a more inclusive society born out of that historical march will grow beyond the borders of South Africa to inundate the rest of the continent, just as the one organized in the early 1900 in the industrialized world has become an annual ritual observed worldwide. Then, progress towards Millennium Development Goals will accelerate, not just because Equality for Women is Progress for All, but also because equality for women will be seen as

the foundation for collective and uniform progress on the development ladder.

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# Did you know? Women in parliament

May 7th 2012

ALMOST 20% of the world's parliamentary seats are now occupied by women, up from 17.2% five years ago, according to the Inter-Parliamentary Union. Nordic countries have the highest share of women in single or lower houses of parliament, averaging 42%. Europe, Africa and Asia follow with around 19-20% of total seats. Arab states still trail behind, with less than 12% women parliamentarians, though quotas have helped increase representation, up from 9.5% five years ago. Of the 59 elections held last year around the world, 17 countries had quotas for women. Countries with quotas saw women gain 27% of seats, compared with only 16% in those without.

Women are expected to do well on May 10th, when Algeria goes to the polls, thanks to its law requiring 30% of electoral candidates to be female—currently only 8% of women hold parliamentary seats (not shown).

Egypt, which has removed its quota, has one of the lowest shares of women parliamentarians at less than 2%.

Read the full article

<http://www.economist.com/blogs/graphicdetail/2012/05/focus-1>

# Gender Inequality and You

**About the AfDB:** The overarching objective of the African Development Bank Group is to foster sustainable economic development and social progress in its regional member countries (RMCs), thus contributing to poverty reduction. The Bank Group achieves this objective by mobilizing and allocating resources for investment in RMCs and providing policy advice and technical assistance to support development efforts.

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*From Experience to Knowledge ...  
From Knowledge to Action  
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