

Charter

Gender Equality Community of Practice for Finance Ministers

October 2014

Background

Ministers of Finance can play a critical role in promoting gender equality using instruments such as the national budget, tax regulations, and institutional rules and regulations.

At the 2013 World Bank Group/International Monetary Fund Annual Meetings, World Bank President Jim Yong Kim welcomed Minister Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala's proposal to create a Community of Practice (CoP) of Finance Ministers to advance gender equality, and offered to host the group's meetings at the WBG/IMF Spring and Annual Meetings.

There is growing interest in identifying more effective ways to promote economic policies, tools, and reforms that reduce economic gaps between males and females as well as opportunities that enhance the agency and voice of women and girls in economic life. These are areas in which collaboration can foster mutual learning, and where partnerships between countries at different income levels will help advance the agenda.

The World Bank Group invited ministers of finance from a diverse set of countries to the inaugural meeting on April 13, 2014, to draw on the innovative and recent approaches they have developed to promote women's and girls' opportunities.

Objectives and Proposed Approach:

- Promote financing for gender results;
- Make national budgets more effective in supporting women's and girls' opportunities and reducing gender gaps by working through national budget processes and other finance ministry operations;
- Promote learning and cross-fertilization by sharing innovative finance ministry-led approaches; and;
- Support political momentum for gender equality goals in post-2015 agenda and associated financial commitments.

To meet the overall objectives, CoP members will seek to promote cost-effective, evidence-based policy solutions by:

- Increasing the visibility of CoP members' initiatives for gender equality results nationally and globally,

- Candidly sharing with the group experiences on what works and what doesn't, which institutional arrangements best help advance necessary reform, and specific modalities for monitoring and evaluation;
- Examining and discussing the rigorous technical evidence of what works in promoting gender equality, what doesn't work, and why.
 - Based on experiences and evidence, experiment, evaluate and adopt or advocate for new interventions and policies on gender at the national level
 - Disseminate at the international level key lessons learned, particularly in venues where finance ministers and other policymakers gather

Program of Activities

1. Selected Events

The CoP will meet at least every six months at events and venues where finance ministers are scheduled to meet, such as the WBG/IMF Annual and Spring Meetings. The meetings will be co-chaired by the World Bank Group President and UN Women's Executive Director, and will showcase innovative approaches and results of the group's work.

2. Knowledge Sharing

Part or all of the minister-level meetings of the CoP will be held behind closed doors to encourage a candid discussion of results and challenges, and to provide space to openly address what specifically was achieved and through what means, what didn't work, and why. One option is to have one country share experiences in some depth during each meeting, restricting attendance to ministers and technical level "sherpas." Summarized records of the meetings will be prepared and disseminated by the CoP secretariat, while respecting the confidentiality of the discussion. In addition, high-level and public events will be organized as appropriate to provide a platform for CoP members to share their innovative work.

Summary reports and recommendations from the minister-level meetings will highlight countries' innovative practices, along with major decisions made at the high-level meeting. The World Bank Group will develop a webpage to this end, and will use the social media platforms to host and disseminate useful resources and innovative solutions emerging from the CoP and elsewhere.

3. Learning

Meetings of principals will be preceded by a longer technical-level meeting of sherpas, organized as mutual learning, briefing sessions for conveying evidence-based policy advice and supported by the technical advisory team (discussed below). These meetings will likely be held in conjunction with the World Bank/IMF Annual Meetings prior to the principals-only meeting.

In addition, regional meetings and technical workshops can be organized for interested parties (e.g. finance ministers, other policy makers), where best practices can be shared. These can be

organized and hosted by members of the CoP or by other partners, including donor countries, supported by the technical advisory team.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

The key to an effective CoP will be the development of a set of indicators that finance ministers can use to monitor progress on gender equality. A number of finance ministers are already working on this, and drawing on their initiatives as well as post 2015 indicators there is scope to develop a solid monitoring framework.

5. Linkages to Ongoing and New Activities and Instruments

- The World Bank Group uses Development Policy Operations (DPOs) or other lending instruments to provide budget support to governments undertaking structural and budgetary reforms. The five DPOs approved in FY13 with gender priority actions amounted to over \$1 billion. Through the CoP, the Bank aims to support countries as they deepen their focus on gender using DPOs. While DPOs are increasingly more gender-informed, with one third integrating gender into the design, program and results framework in FY13, there is room for improvement. The scope for priority actions with potential for transformational change for women's and girls' opportunities will be explored.
- UN Women's work on gender responsive budgeting fits well with the scope of the CoP, and UN Women's Regional Centers of Excellence can provide crucial support to CoP members interested in pursuing this approach.¹
- Data2X, an initiative of the UN Foundation, USAID, US State Department, and Hewlett Foundation to enhance gender-relevant data collection and analysis by mapping global gender statistics and gaps, and exploring the use of "Big Data," can provide useful data for the CoP. Through its new leveraging initiative, DFID will be providing technical advice and support for nationally owned solutions to promote gender equality. This initiative can create opportunities for CoP members looking to use their budgets to promote gender results.

CoP Membership and Organization

Membership

The CoP comprises a core group of leaders who have shown commitment and willingness to use their positions as Ministers of Finance to promote gender equality. It will be affiliated with a broader group of actors who are interested in promoting and supporting these ministers in their work.

¹ <http://gender-financing.unwomen.org>

Sherpas

To ensure continuity in CoP activities, and that they are not restricted to the twice-annual meetings of the principal and minister-level members, ministers will appoint Sherpas to engage with each other and with the CoP secretariat and with support teams between meetings, and to help prepare ministers' meeting participation.

Secretariat

While member countries' finance ministers make up the core members of the CoP, a small CoP secretariat will be set up in the World Bank Group's Cross Cutting Solutions Area on Gender. The secretariat will arrange principal-level and Sherpa-level meetings as part of the WB/IMF Spring and Annual Meetings, administer member lists and invitations and prepare meeting materials for participants and the meeting chairs, and draft and disseminate meeting reports.

Support teams

To assist CoP members, two support teams will be put in place: a global outreach team in UN Women and a technical advisory team in the World Bank.

Global Outreach Team: Drawing on its global reach and its preeminent position in the global political and development sphere, UN Women will lead the COP Global Outreach Team (GOT). Using existing platforms and global network of offices, UN Women will:

- Increase the visibility of CoP member's gender initiatives;
- Share knowledge and accomplishments on the global level, including through the Knowledge Gateway for Women's Economic Empowerment;
- Support the political momentum for gender equality goals in post-2015, and other such goals, and associated financial commitments.

Technical advisory team: A technical advisory team (TAT), led by the World Bank, will support the CoP in its specific tasks. The World Bank's Africa Region Gender Innovation Lab, together with other regional departments' gender innovation labs, will lead the CoP technical advisory group, drawing on the growing body of evidence-based policy advice under production. In leading the technical advisory group, the World Bank will:

- Provide technical advice through regular briefings at technical-level meetings and through regular and short briefings to the minister-level CoP meetings. Initial key areas of focus will include agriculture, land, youth employment (including school to work transitions), and entrepreneurship;
- Provide technical advice on demand. Individual ministers and sherpas who are interested in more in-depth briefings on specific thematic areas and issues can request this from the technical advisory team;

- Act as a clearinghouse for evidence-based policy advice by collecting and distributing rigorous technical evidence of the specific programs and activities that most effectively promote gender equality, what the economic benefits are of doing so, and what the cost of inaction is. Evidence will be collected from research and impact evaluations produced both by the World Bank and by other research and development agencies.