

## GENDER EQUALITY COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE FOR FINANCE MINISTERS

OCTOBER 12, 2014

### *Discussion Summary*

The second meeting of the Gender Equality Community of Practice (CoP) for Finance Ministers convened at the World Bank Group (WBG), in Washington DC, on Sunday, October 12, 2014. The purpose of the group is to advance gender equality results through budgets and public finance measures. Key objectives of this meeting were to: (i) institutionalize the group by adopting a charter; (ii) discuss the WBG's role in supporting ministers' efforts; and (iii) share lessons learned from finance ministers with advanced initiatives. The meeting recognized finance ministers from Bangladesh, Jamaica, Mauritania, Nigeria, Romania, and Timor-Leste. It was opened and co-chaired by WBG President Kim and UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka.

*Photos from the meeting and the CoP Charter can be found in the annex.*

**WBG President Dr. Jim Yong Kim** expressed support for the charter and reiterated the WBG's commitment to improving opportunities for women and girls. He encouraged financing for activities that promote gender equality and noted that the vice president for Operations Policy and Country Services (OPCS) would explain how WBG financing instruments can help countries advance and achieve gender equality. In addition to financing, he noted, the Bank can play an important role in providing solutions, in particular through its gender innovation labs. In Rwanda, for example, an innovation lab evaluation of a land rights pilot project found that while men increased investments in their land by 10 percent, and women by 19 percent, unmarried women *did not* benefit. The government adjusted the program as a result to protect their rights before expanding it nationally. The Bank is well positioned to assist in the specific work needed to meet the CoP's goals by sharing evidence regarding what works to promote gender equality and by helping countries develop strategies suited to their specific needs, he said. Finally, he committed to establishing a secretariat for this community of practice at the WBG in the next six months.

**UN Women Executive Director Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka** underscored the importance of the CoP for the post-2015 agenda and reported that the Open Working Group has integrated gender throughout all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). UN Women is pleased with the report, but Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka noted that measures and targets can be strengthened further. Data from implementation of the MDGs highlights remaining gender gaps as well as opportunities to address them, she said, adding that gender-responsive budgeting and financing are essential to close these gaps under the SDGs. She cited a study from Kenya that identified two key challenges in keeping girls in schools: the behavior of male teachers and a lack of sanitary pads. In this case, the Kenyan ministry of finance provided budget to address these challenges, improving girls' education outcomes.

**Nigeria Minister of Finance Ms. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala** welcomed the convening of this meeting, which originated during the October 2013 World Bank Group/International Monetary Fund Annual Meeting as a forum for ministers of finance to exchange ideas on how to secure

financing to effectively empower girls and women. WBG President Jim Yong Kim agreed to chair the group's meetings twice a year during the Spring and Annual meetings. She announced that African ministers created a regional chapter of the CoP, partnering with the World Bank and the African Development Bank.

Ms. Okonjo-Iweala presented and proposed a Charter for the global CoP, including governance structure, coordination, and secretariat hosted by the WBG. She called for a vote and CoP members approved the Charter's adoption (attached below).

Ms. Okonjo-Iweala also shared Nigeria's finance ministry's experience in using internal revenue and incentives linked to line ministry budget allocations to see more effective results for women and girls: Ministries that volunteered to deliver specific results to empower girls and women, beyond their regularly planned and funded activities, now receive an additional budget allocation from the ministry of finance if results are met. The mechanism has worked well, generated results, and garnered private sector support. Going forward, the ministry of finance will extend this mechanism to additional ministries. She attributed part of the success to high-level political support, but said challenges remain in winning support from senior officials

**World Bank Vice President for Operations Policy and Country Services Mr. Kyle Peters** noted that the WBG is committed to supporting countries' efforts through a mix of financing instruments and analytical work. But the WBG's country engagement model requires that member countries request this type of support for gender. Some of this happening already: Development Policy Loans, the Bank's budget support instrument, are increasingly gender-informed. For instance, in Burkina Faso, the WBG worked with the ministry of finance to scale up under-capitalized lending institutions with sound business models and significant social impacts. As of late 2013, the country's premier microfinance institution supported 87,000 female entrepreneurs as client borrowers. Similarly, a Development Policy loan in the state of Bahia, Brazil, supported reforms including implementation of a statewide action plan to prevent teenage pregnancy. A newer instrument called Program for Results (P4R) aims to incentivize better results, and may be possible to use much in the way that Nigeria's own program works. Experience with this new tool is still limited, however. The WBG also provides complementary analytical work and technical assistance to close knowledge gaps on gender, he said.

**Bangladesh Minister of Finance Mr. Abul Maal Muhith** discussed his country's development experience and expressed eagerness to learn how other countries pursue gender-responsive development. Women's empowerment in rural areas has advanced in recent decades, he said, citing changing attitudes and norms in Bangladesh. Moreover, non-governmental organizations, particularly BRAC and Grameen, have had a significant impact in empowering women in rural areas, along with government investment in education. Gender parity in primary and lower secondary school has been achieved, while female participation in politics is increasing at all levels. While 34 years ago women constituted only 7 percent of the labor force, he said, they now account for some 36 percent. Bangladesh began gender budgeting in 2009, successfully focusing attention on gender and spurring new programs and projects.

**Mauritania Minister for Economic Affairs and Development Mr. Sidi Ould Tah** reported that Mauritania has been working with the WBG on land reform and women's access to land as a source not only of decent housing but also access to credit. Although the legal framework in

Mauritania is gender-neutral, norms and customs in rural areas mean that women are often denied their rights. Mauritania has also been working on a national plan to incentivize women's access to land through financial incentives, he said.

**Romania Minister of Finance Ms. Ioana Petrescu**, who joined the first CoP meeting a month after taking office, expressed her belief that working with other finance ministries could help address gender inequality. She also noted the importance of tailoring solutions for individual contexts. Since the last CoP meeting, the ministry has identified key gender gaps, which include labor force participation and earnings—translating into very large disparities in pensions (about 39 percent). Moreover, Romania still experiences low rates of female entrepreneurship and representation of women in parliament (11.5 percent of MPs are women). Violence against women is a persistent issue; last year 1,500 such cases led to deaths. Measures to address gender gaps will be discussed before budget finalization with the labor minister and minister in charge of small- and medium-sized enterprises to identify programs that might be funded from the budget. Ms. Petrescu stressed the need to establish a mechanism to quantitatively measure the success of gender programs and ensure that the budget leads to outcomes, and noted that female political empowerment remains a challenge and a priority.

**DFID Director General for Policy and Global Programs Mr. Nick Dyer** shared examples from the UK about domestic efforts to end female genital mutilation (FGM) and early forced marriage: This required legislative change, regulatory change, and action by service providers including police and departments of health and education. It also required each department and treasury to agree on resources and actions, and it meant tough budget choices. Internationally, Mr. Dyer said DFID is happy to support efforts to generate more data and lessons about what works from countries outside the UK. The agency is eager to ask collectively how to create incentives through public financial management reforms to include gender considerations. DFID is developing a resource for this issue and will share it during the next CoP meeting, he said.

**Jamaica Minister of Finance Mr. Peter Phillips** emphasized the economic benefits of gender equality. He discussed the need for sex-disaggregated data in the micro, small-, and medium-sized enterprise sector to identify productivity gaps between male- and female-owned enterprises as well as challenges for female business owners. Mr. Phillips said he believed this was an area in which Jamaica could benefit from the experience of the WBG and other countries, and he urged the secretariat to share experiences across different countries and region.

Ms. Okonjo-Iweala noted that the support of WBG country directors is invaluable: They must be engaged and informed about public financial management and monitoring and evaluation in their respective portfolios so they can tap instruments such as P4R. In this regard, Mr. Peters reiterated that country directors are required to be responsive to clients: Ministers of finance can send a clear message that gender equality is a high priority, and country directors will respond. The WBG will send messages to country directors particularly on the new P4R instrument. Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka will also send messages to UN Women teams on the ground to ensure collaboration is strengthened at the country level.

Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka closed the meeting by thanking Dr. Kim for committing to establish the CoP secretariat and endorsing the Charter. She thanked Ms. Okonjo-Iweala for securing the adoption of the Charter and other ministers for supporting it and sharing experiences.

### ***Commitments and Next Steps***

1. In the next six months, the WBG has committed to establishing a secretariat that will serve the community of practice.
2. Ministers of finance will appoint senior technical level staff (or “sherpas”) to engage with each other, the CoP secretariat, and support teams between meetings, and to help with CoP meeting participation.
3. The WBG Gender group will provide evidence of what works in addressing challenges raised during the CoP meeting and will share them through country directors.
4. Bank country management units are the point of entry for WBG engagement with client countries: Country directors will stand ready to support ministries of finance and facilitate mobilization of technical expertise to prepare financing facilities in support of gender equality.

## Annex 1: Photos from the Gender Equality Community of Practice for Finance Ministers

October 12, 2014



## **Annex 2: Agenda**

# **Community of Practice for Finance Ministers**

## **Financing for Gender Results**

11:15am-12:15pm; Sunday, October 12, 2014

World Bank Main Complex, Room MC 4-800  
Washington, DC

## **AGENDA**

11:15-11:25

### **OPENING**

*Jim Yong Kim*, President, World Bank Group

*Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka*, Executive Director, UN Women

11:25-11:35

### **CHARTER AND LESSONS LEARNED FROM ADVANCED INITIATIVES**

*Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala*, Minister of Finance and Coordinating Minister for the Economy, Nigeria

11:35-11:40

### **PROMOTING FINANCING FOR GENDER RESULTS: WORLD BANK GROUP INSTRUMENTS AND INCENTIVES**

*Kyle Peters*, Vice President, Operations Policy and Country Services, World Bank Group

11:40-12:10

### **DISCUSSION**

12:10-12:15

### **CLOSING**

*Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka*, Executive Director, UN Women

*Jim Yong Kim*, President, World Bank Group

### **Annex 3: Participants**

#### **Community of Practice of Finance Ministers for Gender Equality**

##### **Participants**

##### **Chairs**

**World Bank Group** Jim Yong Kim, President

**UN Women** Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director

##### **Ministers**

**Bangladesh** Abul Maal A. Muhith, Minister for Finance

**Jamaica** Peter Phillips, Minister of Finance and Planning

**Mauritania** Sidi Ould Tah, Minister for Economic Affairs and Development

**Nigeria** Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Coordinating Minister for the Economy and Minister of Finance

**Romania** Ioana Petrescu, Minister of Finance

**Timor-Leste** Emilia Pires, Minister of Finance

##### **Other Heads of Delegation**

**United Kingdom** Nick Dyer, Director General for Policy and Global Programmes, DFID

## **Annex 4: Charter**

### **Gender Equality Community of Practice for Finance Ministers**

#### **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.<sup>1</sup>
- 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.

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<sup>1</sup> <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.