

ARTF Gender Working Group Meeting

May 15, 2016

Summary of Discussions

An ARTF Gender Working Group (GWG) Meeting was held on May 15th, 2016¹. The meeting was co-chaired by Wezi Msisha (Senior Operations Officer, World Bank) and Ernesto Alfonso (US Embassy). Issues discussed were as follows:

- 1. Introduction:** The meeting started with introductions of the participants followed by a brief introduction of the World Bank Social Development team including the new Gender Focal Person Ms. Najla Sabri. The group was also informed of the new the International Senior Social Development Specialist, Mr. Shankar Narayan, who will join the World Bank Kabul Office from June 1st 2016.
- 2. Gender work over the coming year:** As part of the discussion on gender work in the coming fiscal year (July 2016-June 2017), Ms. El-Horr presented a recently approved concept note for the Women Economic Empowerment (WEE) Programs Mapping exercise. The consulting firm (ASCOR) selected to collect data for the study also briefly presented the proposed methodology for the study. The study is expected to contribute to the government's WEE National Priority Program (NPP) Action Plan, and is planned to be completed by September, 2016. The GWG members were encouraged to share their written comments with the study team on the concept note that was circulated earlier. The participants welcomed the initiative and expressed their willingness to share any data information they might have to support the study. The members suggested the study team meet with UN Women to obtain more information on the 1325 National Action Plan and also with USAID and the EU on the ongoing Afghanistan Gender Profile work. It was agreed that the presentation on the study would be shared with the group. GWG members were also invited to participate in the line ministries' monthly gender coordination meetings where line ministries' gender focal points discuss current gender initiatives.

Furthermore, the Bank team briefed the group about the following gender related work either already initiated or in the pipeline for the coming year:

- Women Economic Empowerment Pilot Project, with the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs (MOLSAM)
 - Development of the Country Gender Action Brief
 - Establishment of a Gender Platform to consolidate all gender work in the Bank and address gender in a more systematic way
 - Mandatory gender tagging in all World Bank financed projects (both ARTF and IDA)
- 3. GWG Meeting Plan:** The group suggested that, to the extent possible, the meeting topics of the gender working group should be aligned with the agenda of the ARTF Strategy Group. Some initial suggestions on areas for discussion in future GWG meetings included:
 - Systematic discussions of gender across the portfolio;

¹ Member attendance: Sinnikka Koski, Finland Embassy; Mario-Giuseppe Varrenti, EU; Natalie Faye Hicks, Danish Embassy; Liz Fajber, DFID; Nicole Robillard and Mirwais Saadat, Canadian Embassy; Semin Qasmi and Simon Puckett, Australian Embassy; Zabihullah Shinwari, Norwegian Embassy; Roma Osmani, Japanese Emabassy; Rabia Akhtar and Ernesto Alfonso, US Embassy; ASCOR Consulting Firm; Wezi Msisha, Najla Sabri, and Jana El-Horr, World Bank

- Use of data from various surveys and studies could be used to develop measurable indicators and baseline data for projects;
- Periodic strategic overviews of gender across the portfolio;
- MOF to give presentation on gender sensitive budgeting
- Linkage between SMAF and ARTF
- Finding ways to address workplace harassment across line ministries

The tentative date for the next GWG meeting was agreed for mid-June. The co-chairs also agreed to meet to develop a draft agenda for the remaining half of 2016.