

Terms of Reference

Global Gender-Based Violence Task Force

World Bank Group President Jim Yong Kim has formed a Global Gender-Based Violence Task Force specifically to strengthen the institution's response in its projects on issues involving sexual exploitation and abuse.

This task force will advise the institution on best practices for reducing risks to community safety in connection with our development projects. Comprised mostly of outside experts on gender-based violence and supported by a small Secretariat composed of World Bank staff, the task force will build on ongoing World Bank Group work to tackle sexual exploitation and abuse, specifically focusing on strengthened approaches to identifying threats and applying preventive actions in our projects.

In August 2016, the World Bank Group Board approved a new Environmental and Social Framework to protect people and the environment in the context of World Bank operations. The task force will aim to build on the evidence emerging from the Bank's growing portfolio of initiatives to improve prevention and response to gender-based violence; improve practices under the current safeguards policies; and help inform the transition to the new framework. The new safeguards framework calls for more extensive social assessments and for the Bank and borrowing countries to continuously monitor changing circumstances to address issues as they arise.

As a financier of development projects, the World Bank now supports millions of dollars in development projects aimed at addressing violence against women and girls across many different sectors, from health and education to infrastructure and public services. This work builds on evidence and lessons learned in these sectors accumulated by the World Health Organization, UNICEF, and many civil society organizations. At the same time, infrastructure projects (including projects supported by the World Bank) which involve a large influx of workers into a community, can expose women and girls to the risk of sexual exploitation and abuse unless adequate precautions are taken to prevent and address such risks.

The two main objectives of the Task Force are (i) to enhance the way World Bank Group operations teams assess the drivers of and conditions for sexual exploitation and abuse -- whether related to pervasive norms and dynamics, external stressors such as conflict and fragility, or as unintended consequences of development investments; and (ii) to build in measures to prevent and remedy situations that may arise in the course of a World Bank project.

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The Gender-Based Violence Task Force will be asked to:

- Develop a set of actionable recommendations for the President and the Bank's Management on ways to strengthen prevention, design, reporting, and supervision interventions in the context of WBG operations aimed at area development (including infrastructure construction, e.g. energy, roads, water/sanitation, slum upgrading, and resettlement);

- Identify effective ways for the Bank to increase coordination with multiple stakeholders -- locally, nationally, and internationally -- to prevent and respond to gender-based violence; and

Based on:

- A review of the tools, processes and mechanisms, including stakeholder consultations, citizen engagement, procurement, legal covenants, and grievance redress mechanisms that Bank operational teams use to assess potential drivers of sexual and physical violence and prepare interventions with the client;
- A review of findings of existing and ongoing research and experience, to identify best practices involving prevention and response that help communities tackle sexual exploitation and abuse.

Modus Operandi

- The Task Force will have a 6-9 month tenure and will meet up to four times. Up to two meetings are expected to be virtual.
- The WBG will cover expenses of Task Force members to Task Force meetings, to be held in Washington, D.C.
- The Task Force will be supported by a small WBG secretariat which will organize meetings (prepare agendas, minutes, logistics), compile relevant background materials and issue notes, respond to requests from panelists for information, and other tasks as appropriate.
- Based on the recommendations of the Task Force, an action plan will be prepared by WBG staff to strengthen the Bank's work. The World Bank will commit to implement the Action Plan.
- The names of Task Force members and their report/recommendations will be public.