



Making the Case for Women's Economic Empowerment: The World Bank's Gender Action Plan

Presented at the MENA Region Workshop
Promoting Women's Economic Empowerment
May 21-23, 2009
Tunis, Tunisia

Waafas Ofosu-Amaah
Senior Gender Specialist, The World Bank

2000 Policy Research Report – Shaped the WB's Gender Work

- Research to show links between gender equality & development effectiveness – gender equality in access to:
 - **Resources** - gender disparities result in inefficiencies in labor allocation within households and in the economy at large
 - **Rights** - gender biases in rights and entitlements limit women's ability to participate effectively
 - **Voice** - disparities between males and females in access to power and decision making
- Led to policy on the Country Gender Assessments (CGAs) approach

Rationale & challenges for CGA Approach

- Modeled on Bank's focus on economic & sector work (ESW) to convince country policy makers on key topics
- A consensus-building process based on empirical information – about gender aspects of development
- Requires Country Directors' full engagement for success
- Challenge and limitations:
 - Gender is not a sector, but cross-cutting
 - No obvious counterpart for Bank to engage with
 - Not the Bank's area of comparative advantage
 - Link between policy implications of empirical findings & lending not clear

Progress since 2001

Annual Gender Monitoring Reports show the following:

- CGAs are increasingly being completed as part of other diagnostic ESW, e.g., PA's (no stand-alone CGAs)
- Since 2001, 74% (89/119) CAS's had adequate focus on gender issues
- Higher level of attention to gender issues in operations than in analytical work, but.....
- For both operations & ESW, gender-specific analysis & actions are predominantly in social (not economic) sectors

Social sectors ahead of economic sectors (2006)

| | |
|-------------------------|------------|
| Education | 28% |
| Health | 24% |
| Pensions/insurance | 8% |
| Labor market | 8% |
| Political participation | 5% |
| Agriculture | 5% |
| Water | 4% |
| Credit/land | 4% |
| Law Reform | 3% |
| Infrastructure | 1% |

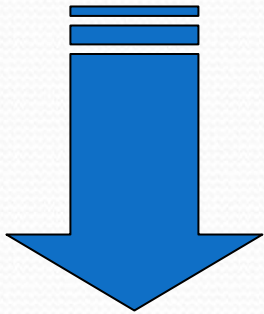
Objective of Gender Action Plan (GAP)

Advance women's economic empowerment in client countries to:

- Promote inclusive and pro-poor (shared) growth**
- Accelerate the implementation of MDG 3**
- Enhance the effectiveness of development activities**

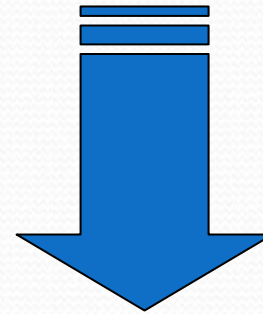
The GAP's Framework

Policy level



Make **markets**
work for women

Agency level



Empower women to
compete in **markets**

The GAP's Four Markets

| | Policy Level | Agency Level |
|--------------------------|--|--|
| Product Markets | Include female-owned businesses and farms in supply chains | Form women's business, purchasing, and transport associations |
| Financial Markets | Offer commercial credit lines and financial services for women | Support self-help groups and savings associations |
| Land Markets | Promote joint titling to land to enable women to access loans | Ensure women's participation in land adjudication and registration processes |
| Labor Markets | Certify good gender practices in firms | Provide labor intermediation services to young women |

Infrastructure Increases Access to all 4 Markets

The GAP in MENA: Labor Markets

“Women and Informality in MENA”

- **Objective:** To promote greater gender equality in working conditions of the informal sector
- **Activities:** studies/notes on the links between the informal sector, gender and poverty
- **Expected results:**
 - Studies inform Bank’s policy advice/projects, e.g., informal female home-based entrepreneurship/labor” which complements the formal sector focus of Bank project - “the environment for women’s entrepreneurship in the Middle East and North Africa.”
 - Improved knowledge on the status of women in the informal economy in MENA

The GAP in MENA: Land/Agriculture

“Engendering Youth Inclusion in Upper Egypt”

- **Objective:** mainstream gender into analysis and policy recommendations for the *Upper Egypt Youth Inclusion Study* - to ensure that they prioritize the perspectives and needs of young rural women
- **Activities:** analysis of existing secondary data; primary data gathering; consultations with rural youth/key stakeholders
- **Expected results:**
 - Development of gender-sensitive PCN and research instruments
 - Delivery of en-gendered Upper Egypt Youth ESW
 - UEIGDP – gender-sensitive TORs developed for social analysis

The GAP in MENA: Financial Markets

“Turning Theses into Enterprises: A (Randomized) Experiment in Tunisia”

- **Objective:** test the impact of Tunisian business plan theses competition on university-to-enterprise transition
- **Expected results:** high quality sex-disaggregated impact evaluation with results disseminated through:
 - Local/regional stakeholder workshop
 - Peer-reviewed academic journals
- **Link to World Bank projects** – no direct link but results would complement WB report “The Environment for Women’s Entrepreneurship in the Middle East and North Africa Region”, which indicated low female entrepreneurial participation in MENA.

The GAP in MENA: Cross-Market

“Women’s Empowerment through Conditional Cash Transfers”

- **Objective:** use an impact evaluation to provide evidence of differential effect of cash transfers to women versus men
- **Activities:** stakeholder consultation, baseline survey, follow-up survey, IE, dissemination via journals and seminars
- **Expected results:** evidence on whether or not direct cash transfers to women improve their empowerment in their homes, communities and markets
- **Link to Bank project** - Morocco Education and Training Sector Emergency Program Support (P095714)

The GAP in MENA: Infrastructure

“Gender and Transport in Yemen”

- **Objective:** mainstream gender in diagnostic and reform measures in Yemen Transport Sector Work
- **Activities:** reports prepared by social researchers
- **Expected results:**
 - Addressing women’s transport needs, especially in terms of access to resources, markets and employment, integrated into of Yemen Transport Sector Work
 - Influencing policy: findings and recommendations designed so that they may be directly used in the future CAS, PRSP for Yemen

New initiatives under the GAP

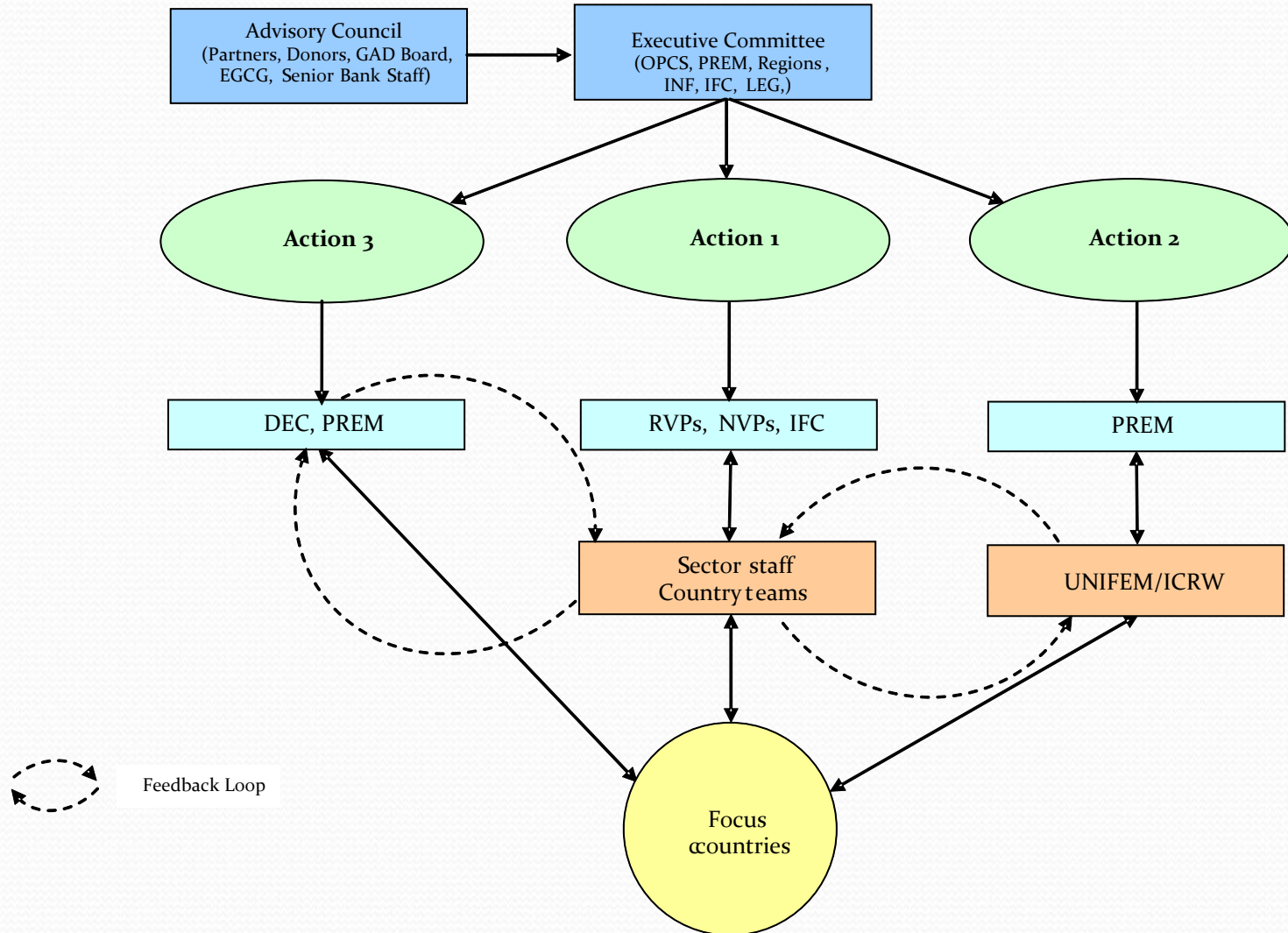
➤ Addressing the vulnerabilities of adolescent Girls:

- skills development for wage employment and entrepreneurship**
- Impact evaluations**

➤ Private Sector Development - Doing Business Indicators:

- Legal database on barriers to entry**
- Case studies on female entrepreneurs**

GAP Governance and Oversight



Guiding principles for GAP work

- **Emphasis on building capacity in the area of gender and economics, women's economic participation**
- **Emphasis on piloting new and scaling up proven interventions**
- **Emphasis on measuring results, through impact evaluations**
- **Integrated into or complement existing Bank programs – analytics, lending, or grants**