

## WORLD BANK

### Organizational Overview and Approach to Gender

The World Bank is a Bretton Woods financial institution that works with governments in order to promote economic development, reduce poverty and develop democratic governance. The World Bank has a large Timor-Leste country program. It works closely with the government, United Nations agencies, the Asian Development Bank (a World Bank subsidiary) and other large donors to support and monitor development programs and the government's budgetary processes.

As outlined in its Country Assistance Strategy for 2006 to 2008, the World Bank's work in Timor-Leste is guided by a tripartite framework of objectives: delivering sustainable services, creating productive employment and strengthening governance. Gender and youth are considered 'cross-cutting issues' to be mainstreamed across all World Bank projects. The World Bank identifies women and youth as two particular social demographics that need specific consideration due to the socio-economic pressures these groups face. Moreover the World Bank holds that economic development and reduction of poverty is achieved more quickly if women and men participate equally in the development process.

Primarily the World Bank looks to ensure a gender balance in participation in its projects, seeks to co-ordinate with UN agencies and other donor bodies on gender matters and provides some small grants to women's organizations and gender initiatives. The World Bank is a member of the United Nations Working Group on Gender.

**Timor-Leste is determined to overcome the numerous social and demographic obstacles to the promotion of equality and gender balance ... Women are prominently represented in Government and Parliament. The Minister of State Administration, the Minister of Planning and Finance, the Minister of Education and Culture, the Minister of Public Works, and the Vice-Ministers of Planning and Finance, Education and Culture, and Foreign Affairs and Co-operation are all women. Twenty-six per cent of parliamentarians are women, a significantly higher share than in many OECD countries. Reflecting a concerted effort by the Government to involve women, several ran in recent local elections, and a number of them were elected. Nevertheless, strong cultural biases are an obstacle to women assuming leadership roles and participating in decision-making at community and family levels.**

World Bank Timor-Leste Country Management Unit, *World Bank Country Assistance Strategy for Timor-Leste FY 06-08: Creating the Conditions for Sustainable Growth and Poverty Reduction*, World Bank, Dili, 2005, p. 19 (with updates by the World Bank in Timor-Leste, 21 June 2007).

The World Bank in Timor-Leste does not have staff positions solely dedicated to gender. The External Affairs representative is the Gender Focal Point. This person is expected to allot 20 per cent of his or her time to gender, particularly to ensuring the adequate inclusion of gender dimensions in World Bank projects. The Gender Focal Point communicates the gender-related issues to World Bank regional and headquarters staff.

## **Programs**

### *Country Assistance Strategy (CAS) and the Consolidation Support Program (CSP)*

The Country Assistance Strategy (CAS) evaluates the development conditions of countries in which the World Bank is situated and determines the priority areas for World Bank support. The CAS is designed together with government and other partners, who then implement the strategy.

The Consolidation Support Program (CSP), replacing the Transition Support Program (TSP), is a World Bank-led initiative to support the development and administration of effective national government budgets and to assist government structures to become self-sufficient and effective. As well as CSP donor partners providing grant funds to the government, they also advise on policy design and priorities. In addition the CSP assists the Government with monitoring of economic and social performance. A CSP Mission has evaluated the overall performance and progress on gender mainstreaming in particular government agencies considered key to the realizing of gender equality in public administration: the Police, the Ministry for Justice, the Ministry for Health, the Ministry for Education, and the Office for the Promotion of Equality.

Gender is mainstreamed across the CAS and CSP, and the World Bank has identified particular focus areas: increasing girls' rate of school enrolment, improving access to justice for women (especially with regard to gender-based violence), and ensuring better access for women to health services. All projects must have a gender component—with associated actions—that answers to the priorities of the CAS and CSP.

### *The Trust Fund for East Timor (TFET)*

The Trust Fund for East Timor is a financial trust fund for government ministries' development and reconstruction projects. It is co-ordinated by the World Bank alongside other major donors such as the aid and development agencies of Portugal, the European Commission, Japan, Australia, the United Kingdom, Finland, the United States, Ireland, New Zealand and Italy. World Bank dialogue with the Government and main sector agencies is normally based on CAS indicators for gender mainstreaming.

One example of successful gender mainstreaming held up by the World Bank is the Market Management Committee aspect of the Small Enterprise Project. Goods markets are physically rehabilitated across the country, and local management committees are established to ensure the sustainability of that market. There has been strong involvement of women in these committees.

### *Provision of Small Grants*

The World Bank has financially supported gender activities through its small grants program (although there is not separate budget provision for gender per se). For example, in 2006 the World Bank worked with the Norwegian Dutch Trust Fund for Gender Mainstreaming (GENFUND) and the Timor-Leste Media Development Centre (TLMDC) to provide a 16-week training program to female community radio journalists.

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