

GENDER ACTION LINK:



This Link summarizes Gender Action's (GA) analysis of the extent to which IFIs address gender based violence (GBV) in their policies and investments. GBV is not only a critical sexual and reproductive health (SRH) issue (UNFPA, 2011), but it also arises in extractive industry, infrastructure, transportation and public administration sectors in which IFIs spend the bulk of their multi-billion dollar investments. GA found very few IFI operations that focus on GBV. They vary in quality and comprise a tiny fraction of IFI spending.

The World Bank (WB): The WB's gender policy and action plan essentially ignore gender rights (Gender Action, 2010); the WB addresses GBV mainly in relation to its economic impact, as GBV negatively affects productivity and "severely limits women's contributions to social and economic development" (WB, 2009). Only three WB investments currently focus exclusively on GBV: 1) a US\$500,000 operation to "address and prevent" GBV in Haiti (0.2 percent of all WB investments in Haiti since the 2010 earthquake); 2) a US\$1.98 million operation (0.01 percent of the WB's Sub-Saharan Africa budget) to address GBV in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), where tens of thousands of women and girls have been raped (Oxfam, 2010); 3) a US\$730,000 operation (0.006 percent of the WB's Sub-Saharan Africa budget) to combat GBV in Cote d'Ivoire. Although the WB's US\$80 million "Total War Against AIDS" project in Kenya and its US\$19 million HIV and Health Project in the Republic of Congo recognize GBV survivors as a "vulnerable group," neither project measures its impact on this population. The WB explicitly addresses GBV within five active justice sector projects, but only one investment—a US\$10 million "Street Children Project" in the DRC—includes sex-disaggregated indicators in order to determine whether boys and girls equally accessed and benefited from the project. None of the WB's three transport projects that mention gender acknowledge the linkages between the transport sector and GBV, let alone try to address it through project activities.



The African Development Bank (AfDB): Although the AfDB's Updated Gender Plan of Action 2009-2011 promises that the AfDB will "support specific activities aimed at the treatment and prevention of GBV" (AfDB, 2009) among boys and girls, the AfDB fails to rigorously address GBV in actual investments. According to its website, only one of the AfDB's 51 ongoing health-related investments mentions GBV: in 2005, the African Development Fund (ADF), the "concessional window" of the AfDB Group, invested US\$7.1 million (0.5 percent of the ADF's total budget) in an "HIV/AIDS control" project in Cote d'Ivoire that included "educational messages with a special focus to reduce GBV" (ADF, 2004). Only two AfDB transport projects, both in Uganda, examine "negative impacts on women," including increased "exposure to HIV/AIDS and STIs and increased sexual exploitation of young girls, which could also lead to unwanted pregnancies" (AfDB, 2206; 2009). Both projects fail to include GBV prevention among their activities and indicators. In 2010, the AfDB invested over 70 percent of its estimated US\$27 billion budget in infrastructure projects. None even mention gender, let alone GBV.



The Asian Development Bank (ADB): The ADB acknowledges "pervasive patterns of violence against women" in the Asia Pacific region (ADB, 2006) and its Gender and Development policy promises to "address female-focused violence," especially in health, education and agriculture projects (2003). Although the ADB has funded several non-governmental organizations to engage in GBV interventions, relatively few of its current operations actively address and measure their impact on GBV. For example, an article on the ADB's "HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control in Rural Development Enclaves" operation in Papua New Guinea (PNG) profiles an HIV clinic where "many women resist confiding in their husbands [about HIV], fearing abuse" (ADB, 2010). The design and monitoring framework for the US\$15 million operation fails to even mention GBV, despite the fact that PNG has one of the highest GBV rates in the world (UNICEF, 2008). None of the ADB's five active energy sector projects that mention "gender" or "women" address or even acknowledge this sector's linkages to GBV. Only one ADB transport project, a US\$3 million grant to build roads in Timor Leste, acknowledges women's vulnerability to GBV and explicitly addresses it through workshops for male and female participants to learn about women's rights, GBV, and managing gender relations in the household and on work sites" (ADB, 2009).



The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB): The IDB's new Operational Policy on Gender Equality in Development (2010) promises that "the Bank will give priority to direct investment in areas with a significant impact on gender equality and the empowerment of women," including the "prevention of gender based violence" (2010). While this policy is highly commendable, the IDB's operations to prevent GBV are extremely limited. Only one small IDB investment currently addresses GBV within the context of SRH in the Dominican Republic (IDB, 2007). The US\$164,000 operation constitutes only 2.6 percent of the IDB's \$6.2 million Gender Mainstreaming budget, and 0.001 percent of the IDB's total 2007 budget of US\$8.8 billion. According to the IDB website, none of the IDB's active transport, energy or industry projects even mention GBV.



GENDER BASED VIOLENCE: GLOBAL STATISTICS

- At least one in three of the world's female population has been physically or sexually abused at some time in her life. Many, including pregnant women and girls, are subject to severe, sustained or repeated attacks.
- Nearly 50 percent of all sexual assaults worldwide are against girls 15 years and younger.
- The World Health Organization estimates that 6,000 girls per day—more than 2 million per year—undergo female genital mutilation (FGM). FGM causes immediate and long-term physical complications, including an increased risk of adverse obstetric outcomes at childbirth.
- Sexual violation and torture of civilian women and girls during periods of armed conflict is a rampant phenomenon. Extensive gender based violence has been reported during recent conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, Iraq, Afghanistan, Sierra Leone, Liberia, and East Timor.

—Reproductive Health Response in Crisis Consortium, 2006

WHAT CAN CIVIL SOCIETY DO?

- [Join Gender Action's campaign](#) to pressure IFIs to increase and improve their spending on GBV, SRH and HIV/AIDS, as well as remove investment conditionalities that harm women and girls
- Pressure all IFIs to increase their investments that reduce GBV and prevent harmful GBV impacts of other IFI investments on women and girls
- Identify and bring gender discrimination cases, especially those related to GBV, to IFI accountability mechanisms

RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL DECLARATIONS:

- [Beijing Declaration/Platform for Action](#)
- [Cairo Declaration on Population and Development](#)
- [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women \(CEDAW\)](#)
- [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)
- [International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#)
- [UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)

GBV OUTCOMES OF IFI INVESTMENTS IN EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES

IFIs investments in extractive and other industries have led to devastating GBV impacts. As Gender Action's publication *'Boom Time Blues'* demonstrates, oil and gas projects inflicted considerable social and gender problems on local communities in Azerbaijan, Georgia and Sakhalin. The projects "brought increased poverty, hindered access to subsistence resources, increased occurrence of still births, prostitution, HIV/AIDS and other diseases in local communities" (Gender Action, 2006).

GENDER ACTION RESOURCES:

- ['International Financial Institutions and Gender Based Violence: a Primer,' 2011.](#) An in-depth examination of GBV in IFI investments.
- ['Mapping Multilateral Development Banks' Reproductive Health and HIV Spending,' 2007.](#) An examination of the quality and quantity of MDB spending on SRH and HIV projects.
- ['Speaking Up for Gender: A Step-by-Step Guide to IFI Accountability Mechanisms, 2010'](#) A user-friendly, comprehensive guide for taking gender discrimination complaints to IFI accountability mechanisms. Includes specific information about the complaint process and the requirements of each IFI as well as case studies. Available in Spanish.

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

- Inter-American Alliance for the Prevention of Gender-Based Violence:
www.alianzaintercambios.org
- Reproductive Health in Crisis Consortium:
www.rhrc.org
- Sexual Violence Resource Initiative (South Africa) www.svri.org
- Women Won't Wait Campaign (International): womenwontwait.org
- Raising Voices (Uganda): www.raisingvoices.org
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) www.unfpa.org/gender/violence

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