



# **Why Women Matter: Women's Representation and Gender Mainstreaming at the World Bank**

Mirko Heinzl (University of Potsdam),

Kate Weaver (UT Austin), &

Samantha Jorgensen (U.S. General Accounting Office)

# Bureaucratic Representation in Global Governance

- Q: Beyond the boards and top leadership, what does representation look like within IOs?
- Q: How does the representation of staff in international organizations affect those IOs' perceived legitimacy, behavior, and effectiveness?
- Q: How do specific dimensions of staff representation and identities affect IO outcomes that we care about, such as aid allocation, number and types of loan conditionalities, ideas and policies embedded in Article IV consultations, priorities within project activities, and mainstreaming of key agendas (like gender and development)?
- How does all of this play out in the IMF and World Bank?



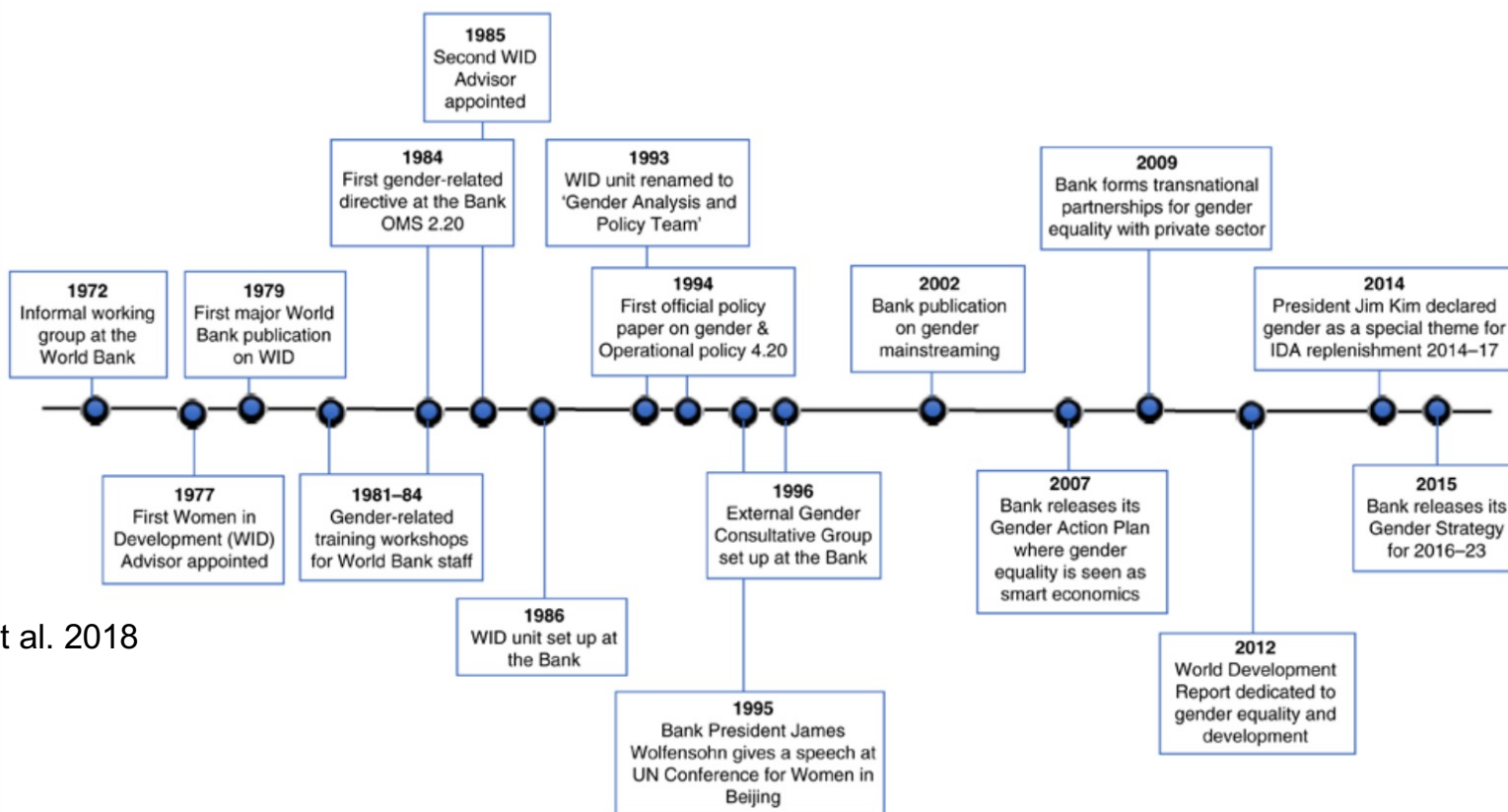
# Bureaucratic Representation in Global Governance

---

- Collection of primary data on the nationality, education and gender of staff in the IMF and World Bank 2000-2021. Data gathered through hand-coding online sources (e.g. LinkedIn, dissertation databases)
- Focus on key positions of decision-making and authority: e.g.; VPs, Country Directors, Residential Representatives; Country Managers, Task Team Leaders.
- >10,000 staff coded with year level data between 2000-2021.
- Initial descriptive statistics show increasing national diversity, narrowing intellectual diversity, and mixed results wrt gender diversity.
- Beyond description: what are the instrumental effects of these patterns of representation?

# World Bank internal variation in application of Gender Mainstreaming norms

TIMELINE: GENDER AT THE WORLD BANK

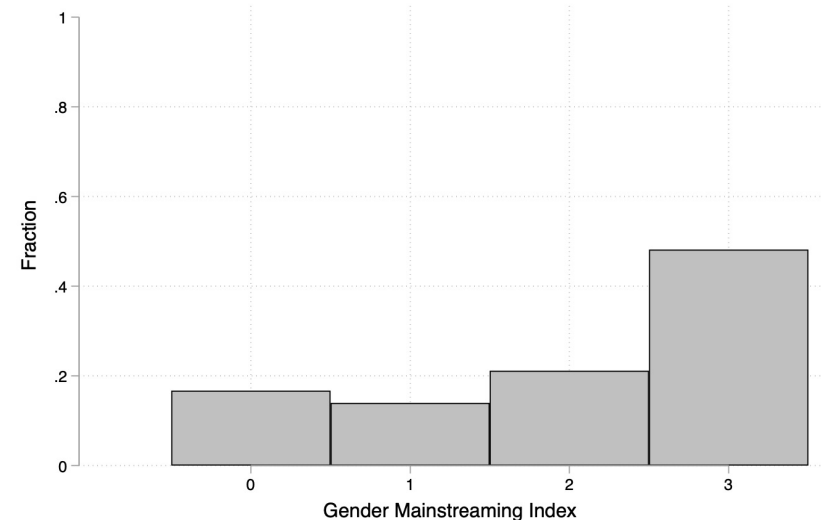


Winters et al. 2018

# Puzzle & Argument

---

- Literature explains why some IOs de-couple (IO-level); ie: disconnect between official talk and action.
- But why is there decoupling within the IO? What explains where and how much new policy norms, such as gender mainstreaming, are taken up vs. marginalized in Bank operations?
- To what extent can we discern how representation matters in explaining this? Women are pervasively underrepresented in WB staff (around 35%). Do we see more gender mainstreaming where women are better represented in key staff positions?



# Mechanisms & Hypotheses

---

*H1: If women staff oversee projects (are TTLs or CDs), projects will have more gender mainstreaming components (Representational and expertise-based mechanism logic)*

*H2: If more women are working in a bureaucratic sector unit, gender norms are diffused more among sector staff and sector projects will have stronger gender mainstreaming components (Bureaucratic sub-culture mechanism logic)*

*H3: Stronger representation of women leads to improvements in recipient country's perception of World Bank project performance on gender equity.*

# Research Design

---

- **Main DV:** gender mainstreaming index (0-3; coded for presence of analysis of gender issues, specific gender action, and M&E indicators focused on gender outcomes)
- **Main IV:** Binary variable whether at least one staff member was a women
- **Primary Data:** 3,619 Task Team Leaders (86% of projects between 2009-2017) and 196 Country Directors (95% of projects). Data extracted from scraping project documents and World Bank website.
- **Secondary Data:** World Bank Country Opinion Survey Programs: 299 country surveys conducted between 2012 and 2020 in more than 130 countries. Survey Question: “to what extent does the World Bank effectively address gender equity in that country?” From this, built a database on the country-sector-year level that links gender of staff working in these country-sectors to the perceptions of key stakeholders.
- Gender was predicted based on self-ascribed gender of millions of social media users (genderize.io). Hand-coded based on gendered pronouns for names with less clear share of women (98% accuracy).

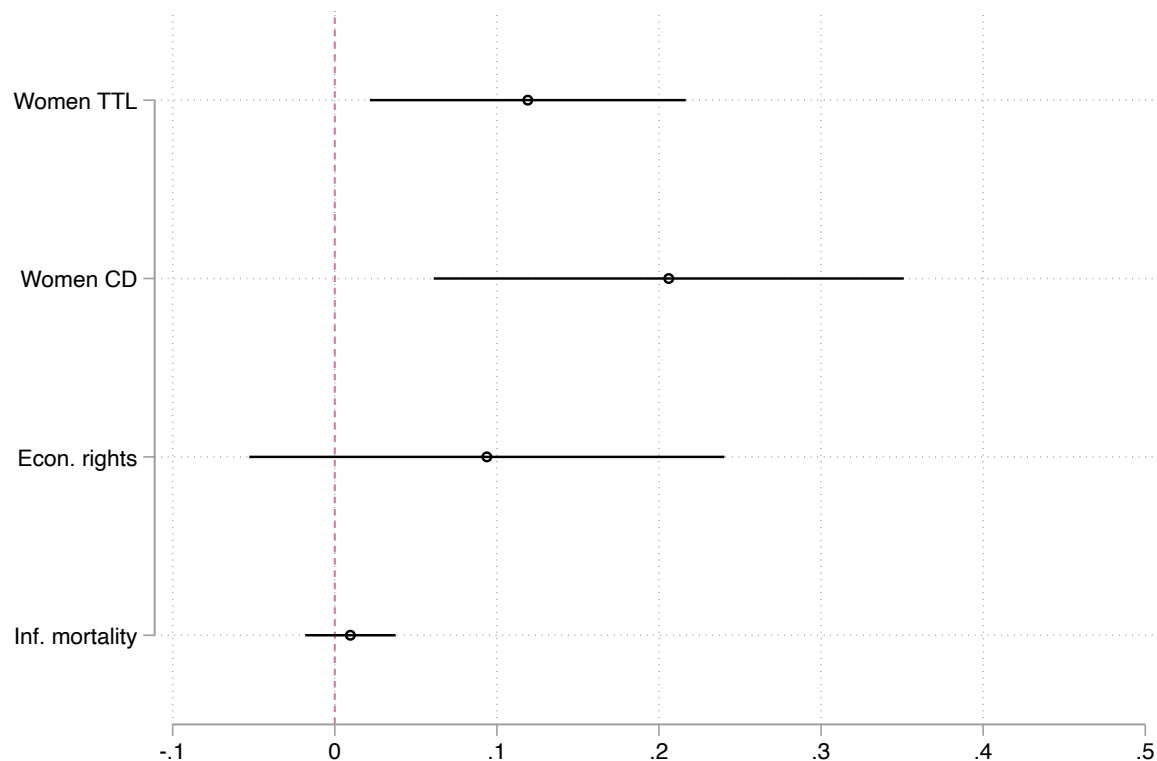
# Research Design

---

- **Control variables:** Women ministers, Women economic rights, Women infant mortality, Women vulnerable employment, Principals gender lending, Post-conflict country, GDP per capita, Population (log), project amount, IDA dummy
- **Fixed effects:** Country, sector, year fixed effects (and country-year & sector-year fixed effects in some specification)
- **Estimation approach:** OLS, SE clustered at country-year



# H1: *If women staff oversee projects (are TTLs or CDs), projects will have more gender mainstreaming components*



## Findings:

- Statistically significant and positive findings ( $p < 0.05$  in Model 1 and  $p < 0.1$  in Model 2 when using country and sector-year fixed effects)
- Having at least one TTL on a project is associated with a 0.12 increase in gender mainstreaming ratings (0-3)
- Stronger effect for CDs: 0.22 increasing in mainstreaming ratings ( $p < 0.01$ )

# Selection bias:

## Are women assigned to, or opt into, gender-projects?

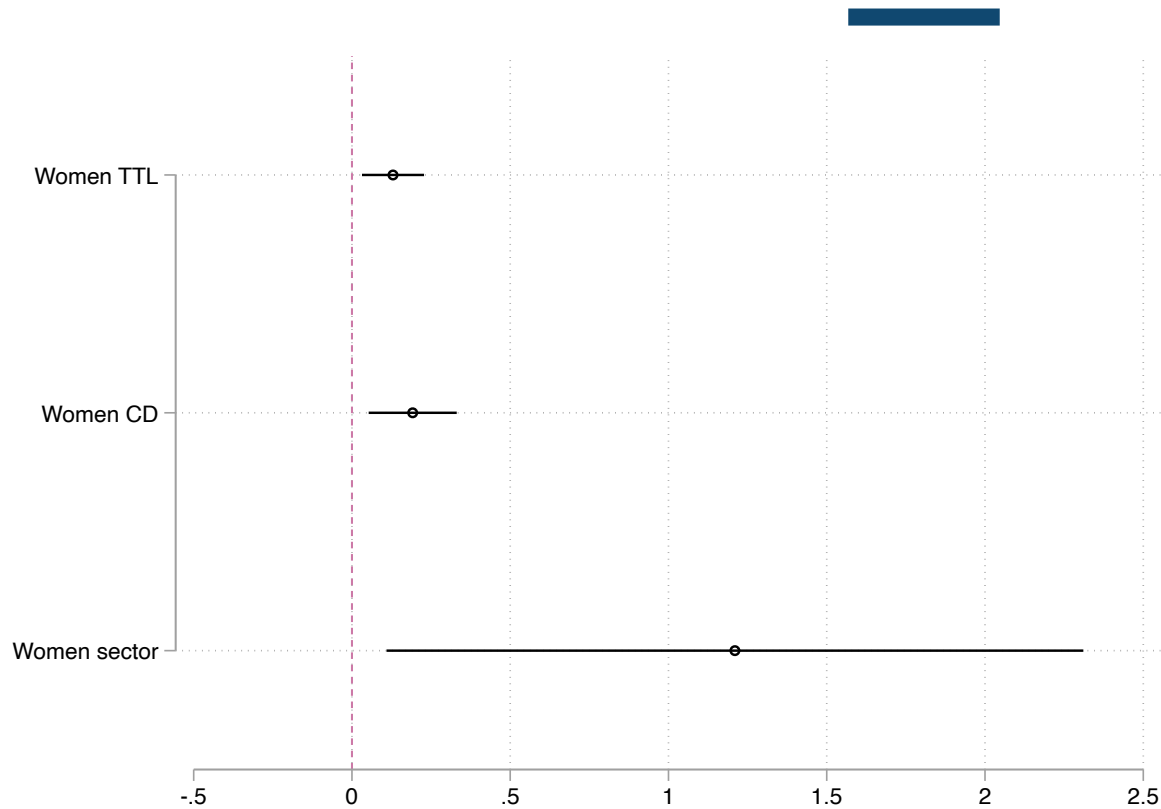
---

- Concern for TTLs (less for CDs)
- Instrument: Number of TTLs in project
- Relevant? The more people are selected, the more likely one of the TTLs is a women
- Excludable? No theoretical expectation of link between more TTLs and more gender mainstreaming

### Finding:

- Analysis shows passive representation of women and the application of gender mainstreaming norms in projects are related.

**H2: If more women are working in a bureaucratic sector unit, gender norms are diffused more among sector staff and sector projects will have stronger gender mainstreaming components (even if the CD or TTL is not a women).**



Findings:

- Positive and statistically significant ( $<0.05$ )
- One std. dev. (0.09) change in the share of women in a sector is comparable to the coefficient of having at least one women TTL overseeing the project of interest.
- If all TTLs in a given sector were women, the models estimate that gender mainstreaming scores would increase an average of 1.17 (on a 0-3 scale)

### ***H3: Stronger representation of women leads to improvements in recipient country's perception of World Bank project performance on gender equity.***

---

- We interact perceptions of the overall effectiveness of the World Bank in a given country-sector-year with the number of Women TTLs that have worked in this country sector within three years.

#### Findings:

- Positive and significant in three of 4 models (at least  $p < 0.05$ )
- “Implies that the more women that are staffed in a particular country-sector, the more the World Bank can translate effectively perceived operations into operations that are also perceived as effective in addressing gender equity.
- An increase from zero to five women staff in a country sector nearly triples the association of overall effectiveness perspective with effectiveness perceptions for gender equity.

## Conclusion

---

- More women staff = more gender mainstreaming;
- Sub-units with more women = more gender mainstreaming;
- Women staff = better (perceived) gender equity performance (survey data from 55,000 stakeholders in more than 100 countries);
- Application of policy norms is shaped bureaucratic representation & representation effects on bureaucratic sub-cultures.



# Appendix: Findings H1: IV-regression

---

	(5)	(6)	(7)
Women TTL (instrumented)	0.2541 <sup>+</sup> (0.1412)	0.4269 <sup>**</sup> (0.1473)	0.4621 <sup>**</sup> (0.1530)
Control variables	Yes	Yes	Yes
Country fixed effects	Yes	Yes	No
Country-year fixed effects	No	No	Yes
Sector fixed effects	Yes	No	No
Sector-year fixed effects	No	Yes	Yes
Year fixed effects	Yes	No	No
Observations	2089	2089	2205

Clustered standard errors in parentheses; <sup>+</sup>  $p < 0.10$ , \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$