CRITERION INSTITUTE

Roadmap for Development Finance Institutions:

Strategies to Address Gender-based Violence

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Contents

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A Roadmap to Leverage Finance to Address Gender-based Violence

Introduction

As global momentum toward gender lens investing[1] builds, there is a growing opportunity for development finance institutions (DFIs) to leverage financial systems to reduce and eliminate gender-based violence (GBV)[2]. Embedding a gender-based violence lens across DFIs' investment processes would unlock the unique virtuous cycle that is inherent to gender lens investing by addressing one of its most significant and ubiquitous challenges.

The Ongoing Crisis of GBV

The World Health Organization estimates that 1 in 3 women worldwide experience physical or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence—two common forms of gender-based violence—during their lifetime, costing the global economy an estimated US$1.5 trillion every year. These figures do not include other forms of violence against women and girls nor many of the forms of violence experienced by LGBTIQ+ persons; they also do not illustrate the nuance of how individuals at the intersection of socially excluded identities, such as women with disabilities or women of color, are disproportionately and differently impacted by violence. Global surveys show that gender-based violence in the workplace is pervasive across geographies and occupations.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the incidence of violence, with the development of a "shadow pandemic." Domestic violence increased substantially during mandated shelter-in-place measures implemented to stem the spread of novel coronavirus. This meant that victims and perpetrators were confined during a period of reduced access to GBV support services. The pandemic has represented a significant setback in the reduction of gender-based violence, as social, political, public, and private resources were focused on the health crisis or became inaccessible to survivors.

The Moment Is Now: Building on Unprecedented Investment in Gender Equality and GBV

While violence shows no signs of abating, momentum in the international community to address it is strong. Along with growing global commitments to gender equity represented by the 2X Challenge, there has been growing recognition that targeted investments to address gender-based violence are needed as well. At the 2021 Generation Equality Forum, in parallel to the announcement of the 2X Collaborative, the Generation Equality Gender-Based Violence Action Coalition recognized the potential leverage of global systems of public and private finance and investments to reduce and ultimately eliminate gender-based violence.

1 Gender lens investing is defined as the systematic integration of gender analysis into investment processes to identify, understand, and incorporate gender perspectives into decision making.

2 Gender-based violence includes physical, sexual, verbal, emotional, and psychological abuse, threats, coercion, and economic or educational deprivation directed at an individual based on their gender.

We see a growing understanding of how gender-based violence is rooted in gender inequity and unprecedented global commitments to addressing both. These two factors highlight like never before the need for action and responsibility across all of our political, legal, and economic structures to deliver justice and safety. That includes our financial systems.

The Role of and Opportunity for DFIs

Generally, DFIs have demonstrated a clear and commendable interest and willingness to engage on gender equity, including addressing gender-based violence. Yet the DFI political economy (see Annex 2) can often be a barrier for institutions to update processes, slowing the uptake of this lens. The internal team structures and the division of responsibilities, while necessary, can unexpectedly create obstacles to streamlined, organization-wide awareness of gender-based violence and mitigation efforts. For example, it may be the case that Environmental & Social (E&S) teams have deep experience in identifying gender-based violence risks and designing mitigation efforts; however, this GBV knowledge and expertise might not readily permeate throughout the organisation, including to decision-making bodies such as Investment Committees. Teams with direct experience in gender-based violence mitigation might have only limited interactions with credit/risk teams, which may in turn limit these teams' awareness of GBV issues and restrict their ability to originate investments that proactively combat gender-based violence. In addition to barriers, it is also very important to keep in mind that DFI employees are often under incredible pressure to move deals forward quickly—something that became especially evident during the COVID-19 pandemic. All these factors, when combined with limited budgets, time, and overall understanding by staff of the drivers of gender-based violence, can represent significant barriers to evolving the existing process.

It is important to note that this roadmap does not claim that DFI investments are a silver bullet to addressing gender-based violence. Attention to policy, culture change, research, services, and more remain critical to the broader effort. But finance is one tool—an underutilized one—in the toolbox of change, and it serves as an important signaling mechanism to other fields. Thus, the focus of this roadmap is on how DFIs can use their assets and power to play a crucial role in the broader ecosystem of efforts to end GBV.

Gender-based Violence as an Investment Risk

Gender-based violence is a human rights violation that disproportionately and seriously impacts women, girls, and gender-diverse persons. It is rooted in deep power imbalances and the social devaluation of specific individuals due to their gender identity or expression, as well as their sexual orientation or sex characteristics. The most common approaches to investing with a gender lens currently focus on women's representation (e.g., quotas or thresholds for women on boards) or access to resources (e.g., economic empowerment through financial inclusion).

However, the impacts of gender-based violence pose direct risks to investments. Much research by international organizations such as the IFC has demonstrated that there is a compelling and positive business case for addressing GBV. From an investment point of view, not addressing it can have multiple negative impacts on businesses (e.g., litigation costs, higher insurance premiums, increased absenteeism, lower productivity, reputational damage among investors and partners, higher implementation costs, etc.) These all translate into financial and investment risk.

Table 1: Examples of risks related to gender-based violence

Risk Category	Impacts
Operational Risk	Sexual and physical harassment of workers translates into direct costs for companies, including costs associated with individual productivity, team performance, turnover, litigation, insurance, and brand perception and reputation. One meta-analysis of 41 studies on workplace sex-based harassment found that companies lose an estimated $22,500 in productivity per harassed individual. Additionally, employees experiencing violence at home (intimate partner violence) or in the workplace take more time off and, when at work, perform differently due to the physical and mental consequences of violence; their absenteeism and lower productivity affect the bottom line. Similarly, perpetrators may also miss days of work to escape the consequences or to let a situation "blow over." Many businesses may be entirely unaware of employees' experiences of violence and do not have workplace policies to support survivors. In fact, supervisors may terminate an individual's employment without understanding the reasons behind their absenteeism or lower performance, which creates additional turnover costs. When companies effectively address gender-based violence, including forms of violence perpetrated at the workplace as well as those experienced by their employees at home or in other environments, they not only mitigate operational risk but also contribute to a world in which employees are poised to thrive. In environments where their safety and voices are valued, women employees are enabled to engage more fully, improving a company's creativity and innovation potential. For example, workplace harassment is a significant barrier to improved gender equity in workplace leadership, and eliminating this barrier is critical to unlocking such benefits. One survey across 70 countries found that almost three-quarters of companies across various sectors that tracked gender diversity in management reported profit increases between 5-20% that were associated with greater diversity. 57% of businesses stated that it was easier to attract and retain talent, and 54% said they saw improvements in creativity, innovation, and openness in their companies.

The following draws upon global evidence to illustrate specifically how gender-based violence intersects with and amplifies different types of risk that affect DFIs' investments.

Reputational Risk	When gender-based violence occurs in the context of a DFI's investment, there are reputational risks with financial implications. Some experts suggest that in terms of risk prevention and crisis management, #MeToo concerns—or, in other words, gender-based violence as a reputational risk—are as serious as cybersecurity breaches and corruption. Market analysts attribute the record number of CEO exits in 2019 as a result of changes in what behaviors were tolerated given the rise of the #MeToo movement. Poor reputation translates not only into legal defense costs, but also into increased insurance costs, with data from the world's 30 largest insurance companies illustrating a 10% increase in employee practices liability insurance rates as a result of #MeToo as of December 2019. Companies that invest in safe workplaces—and especially those that take the extra step to invest in safe homes and safe communities—are well-positioned to weather (and lead) changes in societal tolerance around gender-based violence globally. They will be perceived as leaders in growing movements for gender equity and social change, which may bring transformative knock-on effects such as improved retention and satisfaction of women and socially excluded groups who are employees, increased brand value and perception, and customer loyalty.
Regulatory Risk	Robust laws, policies, and regulations on gender-based violence lay the groundwork for long-term changes in the social acceptance of gender-based violence, which is fundamental for reducing associated costs. Annually, it is estimated that gender-based violence costs the equivalent of 2% of global GDP, or US $1.5 trillion, accounting for direct health and psychosocial services, legal costs, and child welfare services; and indirect cost of lost wages, productivity, and potential. With growing attention to this issue worldwide— including the new ILO Violence and Harassment Convention that entered into force in June 2021—many countries may be introducing regulations to hold companies accountable, including improved transparency around workers' safety, including sexual harassment and assault. Similarly, there is a growing trend of treating gender-based violence in the workplace as an occupational health and safety risk. Organizations that identify and value these trends set themselves up for success in a world where laws, policies, and regulations against GBV are on the rise.
Political Risk	Research shows that levels of violence against women are a better predictor of state instability than traditional measures such as wealth and the strength of institutions. Additionally, countries with high levels of violence against women are less likely to comply with international norms and treaty agreements, and they are less likely to operate peacefully in the international system. High levels of violence can indicate unseen instability in a country, including corruption and coercion, ultimately diminishing return on investment. Organizations demonstrate that gender equality is critical to promote sustainable economic growth and unlock development benefits through their robust commitments to end gender-based violence and through their actions to create systems, instate well-enforced laws and policies, and shift norms for more equitable and safe communities.

The ubiquitous nature of gender-based violence means that every investment in every sector and industry is potentially affected. Thus, gender-based violence is material to all investments. Adopting a specific gender-based violence lens is a critical component of mitigation for the risk areas identified here, but that is not all. It also represents a tactical opportunity for DFIs to address the underlying structural causes of gender inequality and maximize the potential of their development work.

Strategies for DFIs

This high-level framework distils several ways DFIs can put their assets into action in support of gender-based violence prevention and mitigation. In many cases, DFI staff members will recognize that one or many of the components that make up these strategies are already in place within their institutions, while in other cases they might be inspired to explore innovative ideas to push their institution and their industry further. This roadmap is designed for a wide audience at any stage of incorporating a systematic approach to gender-based violence prevention, risk management, and response. While the strategies are not exhaustive, they provide a broad perspective on the state of the field and suggest concrete ways in which DFIs can incorporate gender-based violence reduction into their investments. The strategies aim to empower the teams already working on these initiatives at DFIs and spark the financial imagination[3] of stakeholders across the DFI landscape by providing an initial set of actionable ideas.

Box 1: Internal Policies, Practices, and Culture to Ground a Gender-based Violence Approach

A comprehensive good practice on gender-based violence begins with creating an internal workplace culture that attracts a diverse workforce and provides a safe, supportive environment for all employees to thrive. The four strategies in this Roadmap focus on ways to incorporate a gender-based violence lens into investment processes and partnerships with clients and contractors, but all of this must be grounded in the institution's own policies, practices, and culture that keep employees and everyone in the value chain safe and ensure that all voices are heard. Accomplishing gender equity and gender-based violence prevention and mitigation through investments requires attracting and retaining a diverse workforce, including those with gender-based violence expertise. It also requires that those with that expertise have decision-making power. Any institution that seeks to encourage good practices in projects and investments but does not invest in those practices internally risks both lower credibility and broader reputational risk that could affect their own ability to partner with clients. Many resources on strong internal policies and practices on gender, equity, and diversity exist, such as USAID's Integrating Gender into Workplace Policies. It is strongly recommended that institutions work towards, at a minimum, policies, trainings, and accountability measures that ensure they attract and retain diverse talent and that that diversity is reflected in the teams implementing the strategies laid out in this Roadmap.

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3 Criterion uses the notion of financial imagination to refer to the exercise of imagining the use of finance as a tool for social change. This refers to how social actors can use systems of finance creatively to achieve their objectives for social change.

Strategy 1: Assess Risks in the Project as Part of ESG Due Diligence and Determine the Material Impact on the Investment

This section first assesses DFIs' existing approaches with respect to integrating gender-based violence into their safeguarding practices at the deal or project level. Data show that already 74% of DFIs include a gender lens in their investment process. While risk assessments traditionally analyze and quantify operational, regulatory, reputational, and political risk factors, investors are increasingly recognizing the material impact of environmental, social, and governance (ESG) issues on their investments.

The strategy outlined below aims to build on the existing practices by strengthening the integration of gender-based violence to the existing ESG due diligence policies and practices. Specifically, it lays out a step-by-step process for DFIs to quantify and measure the risk of gender-based violence and enhance or supplement their risk assessment processes—the first step in safeguarding—to improve gender-based violence reduction outcomes.

The specific Theory of Change behind this strategy is the following:

> *If DFIs recognize gender-based violence as a ubiquitous material risk to the outcomes of their investments and measure this risk more accurately, then they will be incentivized to prevent, mitigate, and act more effectively to reduce the prevalence in the context of a given project or site.*

It is likely that upon updating risk assessment standards that integrate data on gender-based violence into risk assessments and financial analyses, DFIs will identify higher systemic risk—a risk that has always existed but was previously undervalued or unidentified—and recognize it as jeopardizing their investment outcomes and development impact. In turn, this will support action either to avoid investing due to the serious risk of aggravating violence or, alternatively, to plan from an early stage to effectively mitigate the prevalence of gender-based violence in the context of a project or deal. These two paths will reduce incidents and contribute to a social shift in which the need for the reduction of gender-based violence is recognized and valued across all the teams involved in investment decisions.

Background: DFIs' Current Practice

All DFIs assess risk before making an investment decision, but every organization has a different approach. For every DFI, however, ESG due diligence is a critical piece of overall risk assessment given the evidence underscoring a strong correlation between high ESG ratings and portfolio performance. While ESG due diligence has traditionally focused on issues such as environmental impacts, working conditions, or corruption, many investors, including DFIs, are integrating a gender lens into their operations against the backdrop of important worldwide shifts in gender norms in recent decades. This is based on the twofold assumption that gender equality is not only good for business (and thus has a material impact on their investments) but is also the right thing to do.

In fact, nearly all DFIs have a gender strategy aimed at increasing the benefits of their investments for women. A 2020 survey by the Center for Global Development underscores DFIs' significant efforts to integrate gender equity into their operations and processes. Specifically regarding risk assessments, the findings reveal that 12 out of 16 (75%) surveyed DFIs require the identification of gender-specific benefits or mitigation of gender-specific risks in investment documents. Additionally, for 8 out of 16 (50%) DFIs, a gender score or qualitative factors are incorporated into every investment approval decision by an investment committee.

The integration of a gender perspective during ESG due diligence, however, has typically not included a systematic or explicit process to identify the risk of gender-based violence. A 2019 benchmarking study of DFIs' safeguards conducted by the OHCHR shows that almost all DFIs have gender strategies and identify women and girls as "vulnerable groups" in their safeguards. Even so, it took specific high-profile cases for DFIs to recognize that gender-based violence merited significant attention and action. For example, the World Bank developed a ***Good Practice Note*** in 2018 to apply new standards on gender-based violence risk identification and response to infrastructure projects after several infrastructure projects resulted in egregious gender-based violence incidents against members of local communities.

Given the large wide sectoral scope, transactional volume, and diversity of transactions that characterizes DFIs' work, it is difficult for their risk assessment teams to integrate data on the many different forms of gender-based violence into the various risk assessments and analyses that influence decision-making for every deal. Such forms of gender-based violence would include intimate partner violence, child marriage, sexual harassment at the workplace, and violence against LGBTIQ+ persons due to their sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, or sex characteristics.

Because gender-based violence is ubiquitous and DFIs must weigh many risk factors for transactions, identifying some form of this risk by itself will likely not disqualify an investment, except in the most egregious of cases. Furthermore, the risk may not be identified until the last stages of a deal being approved, or it may not be identified at all as a risk ex ante. When the risk is identified, an E&S team is engaged to design a plan to mitigate it (a "do no harm" approach). While safeguarding is a critical component of executing a project, there are limitations to this approach. One is the siloing of social issues within E&S teams; another is reducing these risks to compliance-focused activities, rather than raising them as considerations for decision-making.

Proposed Strategy: Gender-based Violence Lens Risk Assessment

This strategy supports integrating an explicit gender-based violence lens into risk assessment processes in order for DFIs to more accurately and rapidly identify gender-based violence as a material risk to their investments. Implementing this strategy involves commitment and action from a number of different stakeholders. It especially requires collaboration between members of DFIs' investment/credit/risk assessment teams, E&S teams, and internal or external gender-based violence specialists.

Putting this strategy into action requires taking into account the political economy of DFIs. For example, one must consider how credit teams and E&S teams can work together closely from the earliest stages of a deal and ensure that gender-based violence expertise is valued as a critical component of evaluating and approving a deal. Specific steps in this strategy include:

- **Ensure that all parties in the deal have a clear understanding of the operational, reputational, regulatory, and political risks posed by gender-based violence:** Standard risk assessment practices will not change unless all stakeholders involved in a deal fully understand the critical need to incorporate a gender-based violence lens. To this end, all parties—including DFI teams outside of the E&S realm, as well as investees, sub-contractors, and implementing parties—should be trained to recognize gender-based violence risk and its material impacts on an investment (see Table 1 for context).

- **Evaluate risk assessment guidelines currently used for the inclusion of a gender-based violence lens and update accordingly:** Many DFIs use the International Finance Corporation (IFC) Performance Standards as a base for their ESG due diligence work. However, these standards could be improved to address gender-based violence in a more robust way (see Box 1 below). This means DFIs relying upon the IFC Performance Standards who are also interested in incorporating a gender-based violence lens must do this as an add-on. To improve the process, DFIs as a community might advocate for strengthening gender-based violence standards in existing standards such as the IFC Performance Standards, or they could develop a complementary set of guidelines to be used by a range of DFIs. In the meantime, as these efforts ramp up, it is important for DFIs to engage gender-based violence experts to update their own risk assessment standards accordingly.

- **Progressively incorporate gender-based violence data into risk assessments (beyond E&S), ensuring that all individuals and parties responsible for risk assessment have adequate training to do so:** Include gender-based violence data from the relevant country, project area, or company in financial analyses in the same way that standard macroeconomic indicators are used to calculate various types of risk. This represents a significant shift from how DFIs currently assess and quantify risks. Making this shift is further complicated by the fact that reliable data are difficult to acquire and, in many circumstances, not available at all). This process will require considerable iteration and collaboration among DFIs. However, new data sources and tools to identify gender-based violence risks for investment decisions are starting to emerge, creating an opportunity for DFIs to start exploring and testing new approaches. The fact that similar conversations are also starting to happen about other types of non-financial risks (e.g., climate change) also present interesting synergies. As a starting point, systematic attempts should be made to procure and incorporate as much data as possible. For example, data on the prevalence of intimate partner violence may be included in calculations of political risk (see: Gender-based Violence: A Hidden Indicator of Political Risk), or data on the existence of robust penalties for sexual harassment in the workplace may be used to strengthen calculations of regulatory risk. In practice, this means that considering gender-based violence is moved up in the process and becomes a key element of investment decision-making from the earliest stages.

While these steps reflect actions an individual DFI may take (including steps they often already take), they are also an invitation for the broader community of DFIs to shape the way that ESG due diligence is typically conducted. This strategy reflects a shift in business-as-usual risk assessment processes that, when systematically implemented across projects, has the possibility to produce widespread, transformative impact by shaping the way that DFIs as a collective value risk and make investment decisions across countries and sectors. Strategy 2: Partner with Client on Strategies to Reduce

Box 2: Gender-based Violence and the IFC Performance Standards

The IFC's Environmental and Social Performance Standards (2012) are an internationally recognized benchmark for environmental and social (E&S) risk management that influence what issues are elevated and addressed by business and development finance. The standards, along with the IFC's overarching Sustainability Framework, articulate a commitment to sustainable development and good industry practices, and cover issues that are a material risk to development outcomes. The standards cover eight broad categories, each defining counterparty responsibilities and providing specific process guidance to sustainably manage environmental and social impacts, risks, and development opportunities. The IFC Performance Standards have become de facto standards for many DFIs worldwide.

In the current version of the standards, gender-based violence is not treated as a ubiquitous systemic risk. There is guidance on preventing sexual harassment and preventing exploitation and the Sustainability Framework names the overall importance of minimizing "gender-related risks," but analysis of gender-based violence as a spectrum of issues and dynamics is largely absent.

IFC's broader work reflects that gender-based violence is rooted in systemic gender inequality and the standards contain guidance on addressing inequality through non-discrimination, equal opportunity, inclusive engagement, and proactive opportunities to empower women and girls. Beyond the standards, IFC also puts significant resources towards encouraging better industry practices on gender equality and addressing multiple forms of gender-based violence. The Sustainability Framework helps to foster good industry practices to addressing GBV in projects. It supports clients and institutions in various sectors in developing gender-sensitive policies and procedures, including assessments of GBV in the workplace and communities, which in turn, result in the implementation of GBV risk management action plans. In 2018, IFC issued a two-page memo laying out how the IFC's ESG team screens each potential investment for gender-based violence risk and requires clients to implement certain anti- gender-based violence and gender-equality provisions. In 2020 IFC, CDC and EBRD published the Good Practice Note: Addressing Gender-Based Violence and Harassment: Emerging Good Practice for the Private Sector.

While the Gender Implementation Plan, the Good Practice Note, and the many ways in which IFC invests in prevention of GBV in business and development finance are all critical, the recognition of GBV as a core and ubiquitous risk and impact issue is not yet reflected in the current standards. This means most institutions implementing the standards as are not likely to see GBV as core risk management. To adequately incorporate both the impact and the investment risks of gender-based violence into the DFI investment process, we recommend the following.

- The IFC Performance standards should be revised to incorporate considerations of gender-based violence into the existing themes. We recommend that a gender-based violence lens be incorporated into the existing standards over creating a separate gender/gender-based violence theme for the standards—both because it is valuable not to think of gender as an added burden for clients to take on and also because the power dynamics that underpin gender-based violence are woven into all social and environmental issues. This would also support DFIs in strengthening their risk management practices. The implementation of the IFC standards generally sits with DFIs' E&S teams as part of a safeguarding approach. If the standards had a gender-based violence lens woven in throughout, the DFI teams implementing them would be integrating GBV risk management practices throughout, reflecting the ubiquity of the issue.

- DFIs should fully leverage the existing guidance on gender while also committing to a stronger set of practices on GBV than are currently laid out in the standards. There is broad recognition across the DFI community that gender analysis needs to be a part of core financial analysis for all deals and that clients need to be doing more to prevent GBV than the standards currently lay out. Updating the standards takes significant time and resources, and there is no need for DFIs to wait on that to strengthen their own standards. The Good Practice Note provides detailed guidance and individual DFIs have published guidance notes and resources on how a gender-based violence lens can be applied to the IFC standards. These can be the basis of a stronger set of practices in the interim, and DFIs have the opportunity not only to implement them individually, but also to come together as a community to share and advocate for them.

Strategy 2: Partner with Client on Strategies to Reduce Company or Project-Level Gender-based Violence

This section begins by examining how DFIs currently approach gender-based violence mitigation through safeguarding policies and practices. Then, it introduces a strategy focused on strengthening DFIs' partnerships with their clients/investees to reduce the incidence rates of violence with respect to company or project operations in situ. The strategy builds upon the previous strategy about risk assessment by suggesting specific steps to respond to the identified risk, by directly engaging the client, and by requiring a gender-based violence lens in project implementation.

The specific Theory of Change behind this strategy is the following:

> *If DFIs effectively integrate a gender-based violence lens into existing safeguarding practices, ongoing monitoring, technical assistance, and client relations, then clients will be supported (and also required) to prevent and mitigate gender-based violence at a given company, project, site and/or the surrounding communities. In other words, incorporating a gender-based violence lens into the safeguarding action plans will ensure that clients address this risk across all investments, and the prevalence of gender-based violence will be reduced as a result.*

Background: DFIs' Current Practice

DFIs' extensive efforts to "do no harm" are reflected in sustainability frameworks, safeguarding policies, and accompanying performance standards. Environmental and Social Frameworks (ESFs) or Environmental and Social Action Plans (ESAPs) are common compliance documents required across investments to support the identification of risk (e.g., risks associated with biodiversity or natural disasters, community health and safety, involuntary resettlement, or indigenous peoples), assessment of investee capacity to mitigate such risk, and implementation of risk mitigation activities.[4] Each project's ESAP is binding and is accompanied by a timeline and the requirement to report any events that are material to the investment. Additionally, many DFIs have stand-alone gender policies and may require a Gender Action Plan for specific investments, notably those earmarked for gender equality. These practices demonstrate the dedicated effort, scope, and range of existing approaches to incorporating gender safeguards.

4 Different institutions use different terminology with regard to safeguarding. In addition to those mentioned above, alternative terms used across international financial institutions include Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA), Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP), Environmental and Social Framework (ESP), Environmental and Social Policy (ESP), and Environmental and Social Standards (ESS).

Still, project E&S frameworks and even gender policies do not always include sufficient attention to gender-based violence. In a 2020 study on international financial institutions, the organization Gender Action developed indicators to analyze and score the E&S frameworks and gender policies of these institutions' as strong, adequate, or weak. The findings reveal that:

1. With regard to E&S frameworks, 2 out of 12 international financial institutions (16.7%) scored as strong, 3 (25%) scored as adequate, and 7 (58.3%) scored as weak on the "sexual and gender-based violence & harassment" indicator. Support for victim reporting, grievance and accountability processes, and prevention training for project staff were regarded as elements of strong environmental and social frameworks for this indicator.

2. Regarding gender policies, 5 out of 12 international financial institutions (41.7%) scored as strong, 2 as adequate (16.7%), and 5 as weak (41.7%) on the "sexual and gender-based violence" indicator. Strong policies were defined as those including a clear and extensive definition of many forms of violence, assistance to people who report violence, and consideration of violence as a risk during project identification, design, and implementation.

3. No international financial institution had a strong E&S framework around violence related to an individual's sexual orientation, gender identity, or sex characteristics, as most of these frameworks do not address violence or discrimination against sexual and gender minorities.

Even when DFIs uncover significant human rights risks, including gender-based violence, safeguards rarely include specific commitments from the DFI or investee to remedying adverse impacts. Rather, clients are required to align their practices with specific performance standards, which may include engaging stakeholders, addressing labor conditions, implementing codes of conduct, or developing grievance mechanisms about project performance and impacts. There are few actions specifically tailored to reduce gender-based violence.

Most DFIs do provide gender-related training, technical assistance, and/or advisory services to investees. According to the Center for Global Development survey, 69% do so. No data, however, are available on whether this training involves specific attention to gender-based violence and we know that gender lens investing often omits an analysis of gender-based violence on-site. Correcting that gap would provide an opportunity for investees to receive additional support from DFIs to strengthen their prevention and mitigation efforts, as well as to maximize investment outcomes and development impact. Nevertheless, the widespread existing practice of providing training and technical assistance to clients on gender equality, gender-based violence reduction policies and practices (including on how to respond and provide referral pathways for survivors) is a promising start that may be leveraged for the adoption o f an explicit gender-based violence lens.

Proposed Strategy: Strengthen DFI-Client Partnership for Gender-based Violence Reduction

This strategy is aimed at strengthening existing safeguarding frameworks and processes by integrating a specific gender-based violence lens into a client's social and environmental risk mitigation activities. Implementing this strategy involves participation from DFIs' E&S teams, internal or external gender-based violence experts, implementing partners, client-side managers, site representatives and administrators, and project managers.

It may be implemented as follows:

- **Evaluate whether the existing safeguarding framework adequately recognizes and mitigates gender-based violence:** For an existing project or investment, evaluate the ESAP to determine if it comprehensively recognizes and addresses gender-based violence risks. At a higher level, evaluate DFI guidance and frameworks around preparing an ESAP to ensure that a gender-based violence lens is systematically integrated. Consider alternative client engagement approaches, including technical assistance projects, capacity building, partnerships, and other types of action plans.

- **Engage the client and determine their ability to effectively mitigate gender-based violence:** Assess the client's capacity to recognize and mitigate gender-based violence, identifying potential policy changes, mechanisms, or training that need to be created or improved through technical assistance and other formal or informal client support. This must include an analysis of gender norms in the client's context, their willingness to put a written commitment into action, and the client's understanding of gender-based violence as material to the investment. In many cases, this practice is already in place for some investments. The recommendation, however, is to include this assessment for all investees. From a practical standpoint, DFIs may implement this recommendation by developing an approach that is adapted to their portfolio's characteristics (e.g., sectors, location, deal sizes).

- **Engage local partners to work with the client and design an ESAP or technical assistance interventions with a gender-based violence lens:** Local partners—especially women's organizations, LGBTIQ+ organizations, and experts working on gender-based violence—are well-placed to identify context-specific gender-based violence risks and inform recommendations to prevent, mitigate, and act on gender-based violence. Working with local partners may involve conducting a gender and power analysis or a gender-based violence audit of the proposed project. It could also include designing budgets, activities, trainings, and monitoring and evaluation plans that are responsive to gender-based violence. In addition, DFIs can work with local partners and investees to design technical assistance interventions that leverage local knowledge and communities in efforts to reduce and mitigate gender-based violence. Efforts should be made to engage with local partners as early as possible in the investments process so they can inform the development of ESAP. It is also important to engage with these partners in ways that do not place undue burden or responsibility on them. Recognizing that deal timelines would not always permit an extensive and meaningful engagement to happen ex ante, such engagements should also be pursued as part of ESAP implementation and technical assistance interventions.

The broader community of investors engaged in pushing gender lens investing forward—in this case, the 2X Collaborative as a collective that includes DFI leaders—also has a role to play in this strategy. Collectively, DFIs can signal that directly engaging with clients on gender-based violence (in every investment, in every country) is a new standard. They can also develop tools for other DFIs as well as clients that will help them implement this strategy. One example of how this is already being put into practice by members of 2X is the recent publication of *Addressing Gender-based Violence and Harassment: Emerging Good Practice for the Private Sector*. Jointly commissioned by the IFC, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), and CDC Group, this resource includes specific guidance on assessing, preventing, responding to, and monitoring gender-based violence and harassment.

Strategy 3: Address Systemic Risk to the Portfolio by Integrating a Gender-based Violence Lens Across All DFI Operations and Processes

This section begins with an acknowledgment that DFIs do not currently address gender-based violence as a ubiquitous and material risk to their portfolios. It then outlines a strategy to show how prevention, mitigation, and action can be moved out of the exclusive E&S domain and built into institution-wide internal and investment processes. As a result, reducing gender-based violence is addressed not only on a project-by-project basis but becomes a portfolio-wide priority. The strategy includes aspects such as internal team training, sufficient funding for GBV efforts, and disaggregated data.

The Theory of Change behind this strategy is the following:

> *If DFIs, upon recognizing that gender-based violence is material to their portfolio, systematically integrate a gender-based violence lens into their operations, then other actors in the financial system will follow their lead and join violence-reduction efforts as a strategic and urgent issue. Leveraging DFIs' signaling power—and especially their commitment to address gender-based violence in their own operations, as well as in the world, via their investments—is critical to building momentum and political will to reduce and ultimately eradicate gender-based violence.*

Background: DFIs' Current Practice

As the previous two strategies have alluded, not all DFIs currently address the material risk of gender-based violence to their investments. Despite the growing evidence that gender-based violence significantly and negatively impacts investment outcomes (see Table 1 for illustrative examples), data on different forms of violence is not integrated into risk assessment, gender-based violence is often not clearly integrated in standard environmental and social risk safeguarding procedures, and performance standards are largely silent on gender-based violence.

In short, while there may be attention to gender-based violence in specific investments or projects, there is no systematic, writ-large approach to identifying, preventing, mitigating, and proactively acting with respect to gender-based violence across the entire DFI portfolio. Understanding gender-based violence as a ubiquitous risk means that it cannot only be addressed on an ad hoc basis or at the project or deal level. Different manifestations of gender-based violence affect every investment in every sector in every country. An ideal structural approach thus begins with the recognition that gender-based violence affects DFIs' staff, not just project beneficiaries. It involves reducing gender-based violence within the DFI itself, as well as in its day-to-day work to invest for development impact.

Some limitations are evidenced by current institutional practices of training on gender lens investing and equity and inclusion. According to the Center for Global Development survey, although 69% of DFIs provide gender-related training, technical assistance, and/or advisory services to investees, it is much less common for them to turn their gender lens inwards. Only 19% of DFIs require gender lens investing training for staff and only 21% require internal equity and inclusion training for staff and managers. A state of the field report on DFI practices regarding gender-based violence training has found that efforts are underway to address this. If the majority of staff, especially those outside of E&S or gender teams, do not have training on gender equality, this poses difficulties for integrating a gender-based violence lens across all processes and operations.

On a positive note, even though DFIs do not currently approach gender-based violence as a systemic risk to their portfolio, they do have specific experience in valuing risk differently, as evidenced by past work on climate change, humanitarian crises, and other areas. DFIs fill an important gap in the market by investing in companies, projects, and contexts that the private sector may consider to be too risky. This experience and the lessons learned from it may thus be leveraged when updating DFI operations and investments to integrate a gender-based violence lens.

Proposed Strategy: Integrate a Gender-based Violence Lens into All Processes, Operations, and Deals

This strategy seeks to strengthen internal DFI processes to incorporate a gender-based violence lens across operations and deals, recognizing that the reduction of gender-based violence is an opportunity to strengthen the entire DFI investment portfolio. Stakeholders involved in implementing this involve staff across the entire organization, including DFI leadership and management, human resources, project budgeting/finance teams, and the monitoring and evaluation teams. It also involves contractors, clients, local stakeholders, and internal or external gender equality and gender-based violence experts.
It may be implemented as follows:

- **Evaluate what current portfolio objectives are and ensure gender-based violence is named (and measured) as a risk to achieving objectives:** Start by naming the reduction of gender-based violence as an explicit objective of the portfolio. Not only does this support recognizing the risks that violence poses to investment outcomes and strengthen the "do no harm" approach, but it also represents an opportunity to strengthen a DFI's overall social impact.

- **Develop a DFI-level plan to prevent and respond to gender-based violence across the portfolio, updating processes to address gender-based violence risk and maximize impact:** Develop a Gender-based Violence Prevention & Response Plan that institutionalizes the commitment to reducing gender-based violence into operations, investments, and programming. This may include the following actions, many of which are discussed in more detail under Strategies 1, 2, and 4 in this document:

- *Instate mandatory gender* [5] *and [power analyses](#) for all investments:* Conduct a gender and power analysis for every new investment from an early stage, engaging a diverse set of stakeholders and using findings to inform partnerships and investment decisions.

- *Benchmark internal human resources policies and processes against international standards and best practices for gender equality and the reduction of gender-based violence:* Implement changes to human resources policies and processes to broadly improve workplace gender equality (e.g., through gender-responsive recruitment, work-life balance, retention strategies, etc.) and prevent and respond to the occurrence of gender-based violence and harassment impacting the workplace and supply chain (e.g., design and enforce a respectful workplaces policy, a policy on supporting employees experiencing domestic violence, and a code of conduct that includes employees and contractors). Support employees, partners, and project beneficiaries who are survivors and, if possible, institute safe processes for reporting to law enforcement for perpetrators employed or affiliated with the company. (Note these processes cannot be mandatory, as this can put survivors at risk and/or lead to underreporting.)

- *Ensure sufficient funding for efforts to tackle GBV:* Allocate budget resources to address gender equality and gender-based violence at systems, project, and investment levels. Additionally, allocate budget at the organizational level, ensuring funds are available to implement the DFI's Gender-based Violence Prevention & Response Plan.

- *Design and require across-the-board due diligence questions and stakeholder engagement with regard to gender-based violence:* Due diligence may include questions to understand contextual gender norms, local risk factors that influence the prevalence of gender-based violence, and client capacity to prevent and mitigate (see Strategy 2 for more information on strengthening DFI/client partnerships). Further establish partnerships with local, national, and global non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations, and companies with demonstrated expertise and experience in preventing and responding to gender-based violence. Collaborative partnerships (based on fair compensation, when relevant) with organizations that hold local knowledge and technical expertise on effective strategies to engage with workplaces, communities, and governments to mitigate risk can ensure sound investments are made in financing the reduction of gender-based violence.

- *Require all staff and contractors to receive regular training on gender-based violence:* Develop organizational culture and capacity for gender equality and anti-gender-based violence efforts. This includes promoting a shared commitment to gender equality and the reduction, prevention, and mitigation of gender-based violence by ensuring staff have the proper understanding, skills, and support through training, guidance, and capacity building. As a starting point for their work, all staff—including investment officers, financial analysts, E&S officers, and especially individuals in decision-making positions—must be able to understand gender-based violence as a material risk.

5 Gender analysis is a process of critical reflection to analyze and assess how proposed policies, programs, and services might be experienced or affect women, men, and gender-diverse people differently.

- *Collect relevant disaggregated data to inform strategies and MEL:* Develop mechanisms for collecting disaggregated data (especially from secondary sources, given the sensitive nature of collecting primary data on gender-based violence), developing indicators, measuring gender-based violence prevalence across the portfolio, and monitoring progress over time.

- **Use monitoring and evaluation findings to establish portfolio-level impact on gender-based violence reduction and update processes accordingly:** Use gender-responsive monitoring, evaluation, and learning processes and outcome metrics to track and collect data that can be used to analyze the impact of addressing (or not addressing violence) within the portfolio. Positive or negative changes in gender-based violence must be included in evaluations of the overall portfolio performance. A key consideration therefore is what kind of baselining needs to be implemented in programs in order for GBV reduction to be monitored.

DFIs as a collective have an important role to play in the implementation of this strategy. In addition to pushing forward changes in the way each of their individual institutions consider gender-based violence to be a material risk to their portfolio, DFIs occupy a critical space at the intersection of finance and social good and they have the power to call for change in the wider DFI community, as well as among public and private investors.

Strategy 4: Proactively Invest in Gender-based Violence Reduction as Part of the DFI Portfolio

DFIs play a significant role in fostering the conditions for developing a robust private sector by attracting investment through various financing, risk sharing, and support mechanisms. In addition to the previously mentioned efforts to incorporate gender analysis into investments, there is also an opportunity for DFIs to harness their catalytic and convening capabilities to invest in opportunities that actively address gender-based violence.

Given the nascent stage of using finance and investments to mitigate and prevent gender-based violence, DFIs' catalytic capital has an outsized role in shaping the investment landscape in this respect and are therefore uniquely positioned to attract other investors to opportunities that proactively seek to change systems of inequity. DFIs' investments have the potential to address root causes of gender-based violence and transform harmful gender norms and power dynamics.

The Theory of Change behind the active investment strategy is the following:

If DFIs exercise their economic leverage by proactively investing in strategic sectors with an expressed intent to achieve reduction and prevention of gender-based violence, then there will be system-wide reductions in inequity and its resulting gender-based violence. This sustained and systemic change is a new frontier for the impact that DFIs can achieve in the world.

Background: DFIs' Current Practice

Currently, an increasing proportion of the over US $161 billion annual disbursements in official development assistance include some form of gender equality objective into their program. Not all DFI funding is linked to official development assistance, so it is difficult to track the overall percentage of funding with a gender or gender-based violence lens. Nevertheless, the system in place can hardly be considered investing with a gender-based violence lens. Even though the 2X Challenge exceeded its target of mobilizing US $3 billion by 2020, having achieved a total investment commitment between mid-2018 and 2020 of US $6.8 billion, the proportion of funds of official development assistance with a specific gender-based violence reduction lens is still relatively small. There is a growing consensus that it will be important to move beyond metrics that ensure something "counts" as a gender objective toward metrics that focus on outcomes and impacts of programs, building the specific evidence base of the impact DFIs can achieve with a dedicated gender-based violence reduction lens.

Proposed Strategy: Invest in Strategic and Tactical Opportunities to Reduce Gender-based Violence

The unique ability to deploy catalytic concessional capital and risk-sharing mechanisms means that DFIs can play a vital role in developing the nascent field of solutions to mitigate and prevent gender-based violence. In the next sections, we identify and provide selected opportunities for catalytic and active DFI investment in gender-based violence reduction. These opportunities are only a demonstration of the type of actions that can be undertaken by DFIs. Other sectors not covered in the below sections are also very promising.

It is important to note, however, that further efforts are needed to map the selected sectors in depth and identify the specific investment opportunities so that accurate details may emerge regarding the financing needs, regulatory landscape, appropriate investment vehicles and funding criteria so that DFIs can begin investing in these sectors. We also recognize that DFIs all have their own sectoral and geographical focuses and do not all have the same type of capital, instruments, and/or ticket sizes. These differences may influence their ability to directly invest in some of the sectors identified below. The following selected examples illustrate what is possible through this approach, i.e., using a gender-based violence lens to identify high-impact sectors and opportunities for new investments, which DFIs are invited to apply to their own contexts.

Agriculture

Women account for nearly half of agricultural labor in the developing world, yet they own fewer assets, such as land and livestock, and have less access to training, insurance, and key agricultural inputs, such as seeds, fertilizer, labor, and finance. There are structural systems that increase the exploitation of women within agricultural supply chains. Agriculture not only has a gender gap in compensation but, in some supply chains, workers tolerate sexual assault and other forms of gender-based violence as the only alternative to unemployment and extreme poverty. Close to 25 million people currently find themselves working under coercion and involuntarily. In fact, 90% of forced labor is concentrated in labor intensive industries such as manufacturing, agriculture and food processing.

Although the vast majority of DFIs support agricultural supply chains through their investments and programs, it is widely recognized that there is much yet to be done to reduce violence in this sector. DFIs oftentimes have limited influence on partners/clients to address the situation, as investments in agriculture are often routed through intermediaries. Even in cases of direct relationships, the very nature of this sector requires investing in supply chains that are situated in rural, traditional, and under-resourced settings where women workers are isolated and scant if any recourse is available for survivors of violence. Despite these challenges, DFIs can invest in the following mechanisms either directly or bundled into programs in order to address gender-based violence in supply chains:

- **Invest in women-focused financing for agricultural production:** Through intermediaries like agricultural cooperatives and other financial institutions with rural reach, DFIs can increase the availability of resources to women and gender-diverse farmers and increase their independence, which in turn reduces their exposure to exploitation. Because agricultural value chains are often highly debt dependent, it is possible to support smallholder farmers by lowering the cost of credit, improving payment terms, providing financial literacy (specifically debt repayment and budget management), and reducing barriers to access, which can sometimes include obtaining identity documents and ownership of collateral.

- **Invest in women-led/focused agricultural cooperatives:** Another way to reinforce independence and reduce vulnerability of women in agriculture is through the support and encouragement of risk pooling strategies either through direct or intermediated investments in cooperatives. This can increase access to credit, reduce competition in a fragmented market that rewards aggregators and intermediaries, and allow the organizations to reap the benefits of economies of scale in purchasing agricultural inputs and accessing technologies to increase efficiency and productivity in agriculture.

- **Leverage investments in the supply chain:** DFIs often invest in key supply chain opportunities from agricultural producers and aggregator intermediaries to infrastructure and port systems. All these major components of the supply chain have financial relationships with each other. By leveraging the conditions of investment in any of the links in the supply chain, DFIs can introduce requirements on reporting and enacting measures for the active reduction of violence that can have cascading effects throughout the supply chain.

- **Supporting and partnering with local NGOs:** Sometimes the nature of DFIs' financial relationships with clients/partners can introduce certain moral hazards, such as the disincentive to report gender-based violence incidents. By investing in the local system of civil actors through grants and concessional finance, DFIs improve the visibility they have in the context and build up the network of resources available to participants, beneficiaries, and communities that make up the agricultural supply chains that DFIs invest in.

- **Invest in and engage with women in ag-tech:** Technology innovations in agriculture are helping agricultural producers increase their productivity, reach markets better and increase their margins by internalizing links in the supply-chain. By engaging women through technical assistance, technology literacy programs, technology cost reduction and investing directly in ag-tech solutions aimed at supporting women in agricultural supply chains, DFIs can radically support disruptive power dynamics enabled by technology.

Safe Cities

Basic day-to-day safety is one of the leading concerns for women and people identifying as trans or non-binary. For example, a study found that in many countries, up to 80% of women feel unsafe using public transportation. DFIs can support reducing gender-based violence by directly investing in the emerging landscape of the safety sector and in safe cities. Specific opportunities for investment include four high-growth sectors: wearable devices, mobility, education, and technology solutions.

1. **Wearable devices** are tools that address safety concerns and can help prevent gender-based violence. They can restore freedom of movement and expand access to physical spaces for individuals who fear for their safety. Some devices track the wearer's physical location or

detect their reactions to alert family and friends; other devices offer a panic button, which when activated alerts a pre-programmed list of contacts such as friends, family, or the nearest police station of the wearer's whereabouts and supports them to access help.

2. **Mobility** safety innovations arise from the need for safe transportation solutions. Examples of developments in this space include women's-only transportation and trust-based ride-sharing solutions.

3. **Education** interventions in safety have focused on innovative ways of teaching and training individuals to prevent or address gender-based violence. These range from implicit bias and workplace equity training to self-defense teaching models tailored to the contexts where people find themselves. There is a growing global industry of tailor-made, in-context self-defense systems that support greater assertiveness in cultures of timid femininity. These educational innovations are reducing violence by accelerating cultural norm changes.

4. **Technology** safety innovations have gained momentum in helping to make information accessible and rapidly disseminated. Solutions include crowdsourced information regarding unsafe areas that can be used to warn other users and help them plan their routes. This technology, developed for use in active conflict zones, has been adapted for the needs of urban commuters. Other innovations in this space include digital services that support survivors of violence to access confidential reporting mechanisms, confidential legal support, or psychological counselling. Additional safety technologies can be as basic as lighting, security camera networks, and help/panic button kiosks in sidewalks and public transportation systems.

DFIs can invest in the buildout of safe cities and the adoption of safety innovations that reduce gender-based violence through direct or intermediated investments in these developing innovations, or by incorporating these products and services into their programs and projects as requirements. This may mean that DFIs can require these safety innovations in their infrastructure investments (i.e., security camera systems or panic/help terminals incorporated into transport systems and public walkways). They can also incorporate into their programs mandatory safety education, self-defense training, wearable safety devices, or gender-safe mobility innovations. Other approaches may include bundling these safety services with investments in fintech apps or insurance products. DFIs are uniquely positioned to scale the adoption of safety innovations, and weaving these into financial transactions has the potential to de-risk DFI investments while reducing and preventing violence.

Recognizing that gender-based violence is a cause and consequence of homelessness, investing in safer cities can also be achieved through affordable housing, security of tenure, and resources for survivors, which are essential to break the cycle of violence. A lack of housing options available to survivors often deters them from leaving abusive partners out of fear of experiencing homelessness; not having access to affordable housing is regularly cited as one of the top reasons people do not leave abusive partners. In addition to the safety innovations and technologies previously discussed, DFIs can also invest in the buildout of affordable housing supply and survivor support infrastructure in the following ways:

(i) Create, guarantee, and/or invest in financial vehicles for the development of affordable housing options that meet guidelines incorporating gender-based violence reduction measures, ranging from appropriate lighting to the eradication of forced evictions and other mechanisms that imperil survivors.

(ii) Include key survivor support and referral pathways in infrastructure, urban planning, and other urban investments so that affordable housing, survivor support, and legal and medical services are prioritized and seen as risk mitigation mechanisms.

Safe cities investments are gaining importance as most of the global population shifts from rural settings into urban dwellings. By combining technology and innovations with investments in public spaces and affordable housing, DFIs can take important steps to ensure that a gender-based violence reduction and elimination perspective shapes the evolution of the urban landscape.

Care Economy

Care work across the world remains a female-dominated sector that is characterized by a void of benefits and protections, low wages or non-compensation, and exposure to physical, mental, and, in some cases, sexual harm. There are two pathways to consider for investments: supporting care workers' access to fair terms of work and a violence-free workplace and supporting consumers' access to affordable care. If care workers are not compensated for their care and domestic work, or if potential consumers do not have access to talent and services that can provide care and domestic labor, then these workers' wages, economic stability, and participation in education/training leading to future work are at risk. This in turn increases societal inequity and increases exposure to gender-based violence.

DFI investments in the care economy can significantly reduce the inequity and vulnerability that women and gender-diverse persons face with respect to working conditions and access to opportunities. In the United States alone, the care economy has been estimated as a US $648 billion opportunity for investors, and that opportunity is rapidly growing. Opportunities include the following:

1. **Invest in care infrastructure:** Research has found that investments in care infrastructure, such as healthcare and education facilities, can increase women's economic empowerment through opportunities to formalize previously unpaid care work. This can increase their income as well as provide social security and formal employment structures that increase protections from job insecurity and reduce vulnerability to violence and harm.

2. **Incorporate time-use data collection and time-saving investments into DFI programs:** Reducing the amount of time and effort dedicated to care work is an important component of women's economic empowerment. It also contributes to changing social norms that are tied to patterns of gender-based violence. By investing in systems that prioritize the collection of time-use data (i.e., time-use surveys and time-use tracking apps), it is possible to understand the level of effort dedicated to unpaid care work. This information can support DFI investments in time-saving tools and technologies that can alleviate time poverty. This in turn can help reduce the social inequity that increases the risk of gender-based violence for specific individuals.

3. **Invest in the supply of care systems:** Through direct investments or intermediated investments in care systems such as clinics, childcare, and elder care, DFIs can incentivize and even attract public and private investment to care systems. This increase in supply of either public sector or private sector market-based care options can lower the cost of care services, reduce the burden on individuals currently performing unpaid care, and create new employment opportunities. This supply-side stimulus can accelerate the transfer of care work burden from households to public and private actors.

4. **Invest in care work education:** DFIs can invest in skill-building opportunities that address low wages and poor working conditions through certification programs and other opportunities for care workers to access better pay in the formal care economy. These investments in the professionalization of the care economy have the potential to improve pay and reduce the vulnerability of care workers.

An Invitation to Get Started

The strategies put forth in this roadmap all highlight the need for DFIs to view gender-based violence as a material risk to achieving their programmatic and investment objectives. By incorporating this perspective at all levels of an investment process, gender-based violence is thus viewed in a new light. It is no longer limited to risk mitigation activities, although those continue to be an enormously important element of reducing gender-based violence. Gender-based violence now becomes a critical element of decision-making, organizational processes, and investment design. Gender-based violence is pervasive, yet preventable. The many different stakeholders that are involved in DFI investments have power within their existing roles and networks to call attention to and end this violence. By outlining these selected strategies, this roadmap aims to empower these stakeholders to both envision a world without gender-based violence and take action to bring that vision to life.

While there are challenges in incorporating the proposed changes due to DFIs' political economy and the many operating constraints they face, **this roadmap demonstrates how anyone can get started**. Getting started may look different for each person or institution. Investment managers might consider how gender-based violence risk can inform their financial projections; program managers might evaluate how their next investments can be aimed at reduction opportunities; and organizational and team leaders might ponder what process changes need to take place so that a gender-based violence reduction perspective can be included in forthcoming deals or negotiations. Beyond prescribing how these concepts can be applied, the principal purpose of these strategies is to demonstrate that the significant financial leverage that DFIs hold in the world can be brought to bear for the reduction, prevention, and elimination of gender-based violence.

Annex 1: Key Tools and Resources

Due to increasing momentum and attention to gender equality and, more specifically, gender-based violence prevention and mitigation, several tools and guidelines have emerged with the purpose of strengthening safeguarding and integrating a gender-based violence lens into risk assessment. The following tools may be used to support the implementation of this roadmap.

Addressing Gender-based Violence and Harassment: Emerging Good Practice for the Private Sector: Jointly commissioned by the IFC, EBRD, and CDC Group, this resource outlines emerging practices in addressing gender-based violence and harassment in operations and investments. As well as the Good Practice Note, there are supplementary sector-specific guides for agribusiness; construction; education; hotels, catering, and tourism; manufacturing; and public transport.

Gender Risk Assessment Tool: Developed by IDB Invest, this tool is focused broadly on understanding and mapping the ways different genders are impacted by a project or company. It addresses the identification of risks and risk management, consultation and engagement, working conditions, community health and safety, and resettlement, and the publication includes key context about gender-based violence and sample questions that can be used during due diligence.

Good Practice Note: Addressing Gender Based Violence in Investment Project Financing involving Major Civil Works: The purpose of this World Bank note is to assist Task Teams in identifying gender-based violence risks. It is situated in the context of infrastructure projects and aims to strengthen the Environmental and Social Standards, although it does not directly modify these standards. The note includes practical advice on assessing risks and capacity to respond, as well as guidance on risk mitigation through procurement, codes of conduct, training, grievance redress mechanisms, and other measures.

E&S Toolkit: As part of a broader E&S Toolkit, the CDC Group includes a section on gender-based violence and harassment, which aims to support fund managers and companies to familiarize themselves with related risks and impacts, manage and respond to incidents, and integrate an overall gender-based violence lens into investments in company operations.

Gender-based Violence Risk Score tool: The Criterion Institute and Equilo, with support from UNICEF, developed an innovative tool called the Gender-based Violence Risk Score, which includes contextual information on sector-specific material risks of gender-based violence to investments (addressing operational, reputational, regulatory, and political risks), case studies, a country-specific Gender-based Violence Risk Score, raw data on different forms of gender-based violence, and strategies and actions to embed a gender-based violence lens into investment decisions and risk models.

Due Diligence Guide for Investing on Mitigating the Risks of Gender-based Violence: In this guide, the Criterion Institute offers specific recommendations and tools that investors and companies can use to mitigate the risks of violence in emergency settings, such as the global COVID-19 pandemic, and foster a culture of safe, inclusive, and high-performing companies and sectors.

Gender Lens Investing Tool: Designing a Gender Action Plan: This Criterion Institute guide has supported dozens of investors—with varying levels of experience and understanding of gender—to understand how gender analysis can be implemented in their existing processes to get to better gender outcomes across a range of sectors, geographies, and impact strategies.

Guidelines for Integrating Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action: While these guidelines from the Inter-Agency Standing Committee are targeted at supporting humanitarian stakeholders, they can also be used by financial stakeholders to identify and reduce gender-based violence risk. The website includes thematic area guides on the following: camp coordination and camp management; child protection; education; food security and agriculture; health; housing; land and property; humanitarian mine action; livelihoods; nutrition; protection; shelter, settlement, and recovery; and water, sanitation, and hygiene.

Mapping gender risks and opportunities for investors in Africa and South Asia: This Guidance note from CDC identifies key gender-related risks and opportunities under the International Finance Corporation (IFC) Performance Standards. The guidance focuses on Africa and South Asia, within priority sectors: financial services, infrastructure, manufacturing, food and agriculture, construction and real estate, healthcare and education.

Minimum Standards for Prevention and Response to Gender-based Violence in Emergencies: These UNFPA standards are aimed at promoting the safety and wellbeing of women and girls in emergencies and can be leveraged by DFIs to mitigate and prevent gender-based violence in emergencies and facilitate access to support services for survivors.

Toolkit for Integrating Gender-based Violence Prevention and Response into Economic Growth Projects: This USAID resource includes guiding principles, technical resources, and project examples on how to prevent and respond to gender-based violence in the context of economic growth projects.

HSES safeguarding rules: This Private Infrastructure Development Group resource provides a set of 10 rules designed to ensure safeguarding processes are in place to protect the fundamental rights and wellbeing of workers and the worker community interface, specifically regarding incidents of Gender Based Violence and Harassment (GBVH), Modern Slavery, and Child Labor in development projects and related supply chains.

Annex 2: Sample Political Economy Analysis for DFIs

Political economy analysis provides an understanding of the processes that can promote or represent barriers to change. The following are examples of questions that can be applied to elucidate the "lay of the land" across the many levels of the political economy.

Component	Description	Example Questions	
Structures	Structures are the enduring components within and around DFIs that shape the context such as global influences, natural resource endowment, demographic shifts, historical legacies, socio-cultural factors and technological progress.	• What are the key 'embedded' political structures? • How do they function? • What are their priorities? • What are the key constraints?	• What is the budget? • What are the reporting lines? Governance bodies? • How independent is it?
Instructions	Not to be confused with organizations, institutions are the 'rules of the game', the laws, conventions and traditions that shape policies and practices. Institutions are the internal and external rules and process that shape how a DFI operates.	• How aligned are formal and informal institutions? • What are the overriding 'rules of the game'? • What are the incentives that shape the behavior of key actors?	• How are decisions made? • What issues are institutionalized into operating and governance approaches?
Actors	Actors can be either individuals, organizations, or coalitions from the public, private or civil society sectors. Their interests, motivations, networks, and influence shift over time.	• Who are the key players driving and/or opposing change? • Is there momentum for change? • Are there coalitions for change?	• Who has access to budget and decision-making power? • Who sets the priorities? • Do teams or individuals operate flexibly or rigidly within the rules?
Dynamic Interaction	The evolving interplay between two or more parties in the political economy ecosystem.	• Why is the situation • as it is? • How do decision-making processes actually work? • What are the risks and the opportunities for engagement?	• Are there hesitancies around the issue that are bigger than the above? • What are the gaps in our knowledge? • What are the critical areas to be tracked?