

DOCUMENT OF THE INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

ARGENTINA

PROGRAM TO SUPPORT GENDER EQUALITY POLICIES

(AR-L1298)

LOAN PROPOSAL

This document was prepared by the project team consisting of: Mario Sánchez (SPH/CAR), Project Team Leader; Claudia Piras (SCL/GDI), Project Team Co-leader; María Teresa Villanueva (SCL/GDI); Andrea Monje (GDI/CAR); Natalia Benasso (CSC/CAR); Gabriel Sánchez (CSC/CAR); Andrea Bergamaschi (EDU/CAR); Rodolfo Graham (LEG/SGO); Teodoro Noel (VPC/FMP); Cristina Pombo (SCL/SCL); Graciana Rucci (SCL/LMK); Claudia Vázquez (SCL/LMK); Lina Uribe (SCL/GDI); and Sheyla Silveira (SCL/SPH).

This document is being released to the public and distributed to the Bank's Board of Executive Directors simultaneously. This document has not been approved by the Board. Should the Board approve the document with amendments, a revised version will be made available to the public, thus superseding and replacing the original version.

CONTENTS

PROGRAM SUMMARY

I.	DESCRIPTION AND RESULTS MONITORING	1
A.	Background, problem, and justification	1
B.	Objectives, components, and cost	12
C.	Key results indicators	15
II.	FINANCING STRUCTURE AND MAIN RISKS	16
A.	Financing Instruments	16
B.	Environmental and social risks	16
C.	Fiduciary risks	16
D.	Other risks	17
III.	IMPLEMENTATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN	17
A.	Summary of implementation arrangements	17
B.	Summary of results monitoring arrangements	18
IV.	POLICY LETTER	18

APPENDIXES

Proposed resolution

ANNEXES	
PRINTED ANNEXES	
Annex I	Summary Development Effectiveness Matrix
Annex II	Policy Matrix

LINKS	
REQUIRED	
1.	Policy letter
2.	Means of verification matrix
3.	Results Matrix
4.	Monitoring and evaluation plan
OPTIONAL	
1.	Plan for compliance with indicative policy actions for a second operation
2.	Relationship with other Bank operations
3.	Bibliography

ABBREVIATIONS

EPIs	Early Childhood Centers
ESI	Educación Sexual Integral [Comprehensive Sexual Education]
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INAM	Institución Nacional de las Mujeres [National Women's Institute]
INDEC	National Institute of Statistics and Censuses
LEBAC	Letras del Banco Central [Central Bank short-term bonds]
LIBOR	London Interbank Offered Rate
MPT	Ministry of Production and Labor
NAPs	Núcleos de Aprendizaje Prioritario [Priority Learning Cores]
PEIs	Planes Educativos Institucionales [Institutional Educational Plans]
PENIA	Plan Nacional de Prevención y Reducción del Embarazo no Intencional en la Adolescencia [National Plan to Prevent and Reduce Unintended Adolescent Pregnancy]
PIOD	Plan de Igualdad de Oportunidades y Derechos [Plan for Equality of Opportunity and Rights]
PNAVCM	Plan Nacional de Acción para la Prevención, Asistencia y Erradicación de la Violencia contra las Mujeres [National Action Plan to Prevent, Address, and Eradicate Violence Against Women]
PNPI	Plan Nacional de Primera Infancia [National Early Childhood Plan]
PNSSPR	Programa Nacional de Salud Sexual y Procreación Responsable [National Sexual Health and Responsible Procreation Program]
PUEI	Política de Universalización de la Educación Inicial [Universal Early Childhood Education Policy]
RUCVM	Registro Único de Casos de Violencia contra las Mujeres [Unified Registry of Cases of Violence against Women]

PROGRAM SUMMARY
ARGENTINA
PROGRAM TO SUPPORT GENDER EQUALITY POLICIES
(AR-L1298)

Financial Terms and Conditions				
Borrower: Argentine Republic			Flexible Financing Facility ^(a)	
			Amortization period:	20 years
Executing agency: The borrower, through the Ministry of Finance			Disbursement period:	1 year
			Grace period:	5.5 years ^(b)
Source	Amount (US\$)	%	Interest rate:	LIBOR-based
IDB (Ordinary Capital):	200 million	100	Credit fee:	(c)
			Inspection and supervision fee:	(c)
Total:	200 million	100	Weighted average life:	12.75 years
			Approval currency:	United States dollar (from the Ordinary Capital)
Program at a Glance				
Program objective: The objective of the programmatic series is to help reduce gender inequality in Argentina, by fostering the effective and timely implementation of policies to enhance equality of opportunity and promote the rights of women and girls. The objectives of this first operation are to help reduce gender inequality in Argentina by strengthening the regulatory and institutional framework for promoting the physical and economic autonomy of women and improving government capacity to mainstream gender policies.				
Special contractual conditions precedent to the first and only disbursement of financing: The first and only disbursement is conditional upon compliance with the policy reform conditions established in the Policy Matrix (Annex II) and policy letter (required link 1), and with the other conditions established in the loan contract (see paragraph 3.4).				
Exceptions to Bank policy: None.				
Strategic Alignment				
Challenges: ^(d)	SI	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PI	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
			EI	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crosscutting themes: ^(e)	GD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CC	<input type="checkbox"/>
			IC	<input type="checkbox"/>

^(a) Under the Flexible Financing Facility (document FN-655-1), the borrower has the option of requesting changes to the amortization schedule, as well as currency and interest rate conversions. The Bank will take operational and risk management considerations into account when considering such requests.

^(b) Under the flexible repayment options of the Flexible Financing Facility, changes to the grace period are permitted provided that they do not entail any extension of the original weighted average life of the loan or the last payment date as documented in the loan contract.

^(c) The credit fee and inspection and supervision fee will be established periodically by the Board of Executive Directors as part of its review of the Bank's lending charges, in accordance with the applicable policies.

^(d) SI (Social Inclusion and Equality); PI (Productivity and Innovation); and EI (Economic Integration).

^(e) GD (Gender Equality and Diversity); CC (Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability); and IC (Institutional Capacity and Rule of Law).

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND RESULTS MONITORING

A. Background, problem, and justification

1. Recent macroeconomic performance

- 1.1 Argentina faces a complex international environment, marked by the process of monetary policy normalization in the United States and the resulting financial pressure observed in emerging economies. In addition, there are important domestic factors, including the adverse impacts of a drought on agricultural production and exports; monetary policy that led to the accumulation of Central Bank short-term bonds (LEBAC) equivalent to reserves, with the resulting currency volatility; and the uncovering of a systemic corruption scheme in public infrastructure projects during past administrations. In this context, it is expected that growth will contract 2.5%¹ this year in contrast with the 2.9% expansion observed in 2017. Following the exchange rate devaluation, from Arg\$20.14 to the U.S. dollar in March to Arg\$40.9 to the dollar at the end of September, the market consensus is that inflation will close 2018 at 44.8% and at 27% in 2019. On the fiscal front, the primary deficit was 4.2% and 3.8% of GDP in 2016 and 2017, respectively, and is projected to decrease to 2.6% in 2018.
- 1.2 The authorities decided to support their economic program with a precautionary stand-by arrangement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to manage the growing macroeconomic vulnerabilities. That arrangement was reached in June for US\$50 billion with a duration of 36 months. The program was designed to cover an important part of the central government's financing needs for the rest of 2018 and 2019, with the objective of strengthening the credibility of the policy framework. Meanwhile, the Central Bank was to carry out a reduction of the stock of LEBACS with the aim of reducing currency volatility.
- 1.3 In September, Argentina faced an increase in financial volatility which made it necessary to strengthen the economic program and modify the arrangement with the IMF.² In this context, the government decided to accelerate the fiscal adjustment process and committed to equilibrate the primary fiscal result in 2019 and reach a surplus of 1.1% of GDP by 2020. The modified program increases the resources available from the IMF to US\$7.1 billion until 2021, and advances disbursements for 2018 and 2019 for an amount of US\$19 billion. The resources available for 2018 increased from US\$6 billion to US\$13.9 billion. For 2019, the resources available increased from US\$11.7 billion to US\$22.8 billion. The Central Bank has adopted monetary aggregate targets and interventions zones in the foreign currency exchange market.
- 1.4 The Stand-By agreement with the IMF is to be complemented with support from other multilateral organizations which agreed to present to their Boards, in the 12 months following the first Stand-By, projects for an amount of US\$5.65 billion of which US\$2.5 billion correspond to the IADB, US\$1.75 billion from the World

¹ Market expectations are surveyed by the Central Bank of Argentina.

² On September 26, 2018, The International Monetary Fund staff and Argentina authorities reached an agreement on First Review Under the Stand-By Arrangement (SBA) approved on June 20, 2018. The IMF Executive Board is expected to evaluate it in the coming weeks.

Bank and US\$1.4 billion from the CAF. The coordination is given by criteria established in the Stand-By and implemented by the authorities. The IADB program focuses in protecting social expenditures and increasing transparency and efficiency, as well as promoting gender equality. The IADB program is disaggregated in US\$1 billion in programmatic loans (US\$500 million in 2018 and US\$500 million in 2019) and investment loans that protect social expenditures and increase their efficiency for US\$1.5 billion (US\$900 million in 2018 and US\$600 million in 2019).

2. Regulatory and economic pillars of gender equality promotion

- 1.5 Gender inequality is manifested in multiple, interrelated dimensions that limit the opportunities of women and girls to make decisions that will affect their lives and full development as individuals in society. The concept of autonomy is used to illustrate the various spheres of gender inequality; it is understood as the degree of freedom that women have to act in accordance with their own choices and not with choices made by others [2]. The physical autonomy of women refers to their right to live free from violence, enjoying sexual and reproductive rights, while economic autonomy refers to their capacity to generate their own income and resources, based on their access to paid work under equal conditions with men.
- 1.6 As a fundamental right, gender equality is an imperative, and is a legitimate policy aim in and of itself. Like the other countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, Argentina ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 1985, through Law 23,179,³ and then granted it constitutional status with the 1994 reform of the Constitution of the Argentine Nation. The Constitution not only calls for nondiscrimination against women, but also takes measures to modify the traditional roles played by men and women in society and the family, including special temporary measures designed to fast-track gender equality.
- 1.7 The literature solidly establishes the impact of women's increased physical and economic autonomy on individual productivity, as reflected in various human development indicators, and poverty reduction [3], [4]. For example, growth in women's earned income and their higher rate of participation in the labor force are estimated to have accounted for 30% of the reduction in extreme poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean between 2000 and 2010 [5]. Likewise, a number of studies demonstrate that the existence of cultural or institutional barriers to education, participation in the workforce, or access to leadership positions for women work like a distortive tax, producing an inefficient allocation of human capital in the economy and thereby restricting its growth potential [6], [4].

3. Current status of women in Argentina in terms of their physical and economic autonomy

- 1.8 **Violence against women.** Argentina is one of the few countries in the region that does not have a national survey of violence against women, which makes it difficult to reliably establish the scale and prevalence of this scourge there. However, the results of a survey conducted in the metropolitan area of the city of Buenos Aires do evidence the severity of the problem: 22.3% of women there suffer physical violence

³ Published in the Official Gazette of the Argentine Republic on 2 June 1985.

and 15% suffer sexual violence over the course of their lifetimes [7].⁴ Furthermore, the Women's Office of Argentina's Supreme Court of Justice reports that a femicide is committed every 37 hours. An analysis of data from the 144 hotline⁵ shows that 98 out of 100 callers have suffered violence on repeat occasions, and that 63% have been in a violent situation for a period of between 1 and 10 years.⁶

- 1.9 **Adolescent pregnancy.** The teenage pregnancy rate in Argentina is higher than expected considering the country's income level [8], and varies widely across jurisdictions. In 2015, only 6% of live births in the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires were to mothers between 15 and 19 years old; this percentage is higher in the northwest and northeast provinces, at 16% and 20%, respectively [9]. Adolescent pregnancy primarily occurs in contexts of poverty: 7 of 10 young mothers are from low-income households [10]. Of all children born in the country in 2015, 15% were born to women younger than 19 years of age, and of those births, 70% were from unwanted pregnancies [9].
- 1.10 **Female participation in the workforce.** Although Argentine women, on average, have more years of schooling than men,⁷ they are 24 percentage points less likely to be employed, which is a larger difference than in Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Peru, and Uruguay [11]. In contrast to the general upward trend in Latin America and the Caribbean, female participation in Argentina's workforce decreased somewhat in the 2003-2013 period (from 58% to 56%), particularly among women with medium and low levels of educational attainment [12]. The largest gender gaps in employment occur among women of the lower socioeconomic strata and those who are married or partnered. Furthermore, 34% of employed women only work part time, compared to 13% of working men.⁸
- 1.11 **Quality of women's employment.** Around 36% of salaried Argentine women work in the informal economy, while the rate for men is 4 percentage points lower. This gap between women and men increases to almost 6 percentage points in households with children [13]. The gross gender pay gap in Argentina is 24%, and is strongly associated with the occupational and vertical segregation women face. The distribution of female employment across sectors aligns with tasks traditionally considered to be the domain of women, such as domestic services, education, and health care. In Argentina, 91%, 77%, and 69% of employees in those respective sectors are female. Salaries in the sectors with the highest percentage of female workers are below average for the economy [13]. Furthermore, women have less access to decision-making positions than their male counterparts. Only 3 out of every 10 people holding executive or management positions are women, despite their higher levels of educational attainment [14].

⁴ In the city of Buenos Aires, the rate of femicide per 100,000 women is lower than the national average, which implies that the prevalence rates of violence against women nationally must be higher than in the city of Buenos Aires.

⁵ Instituted by the former National Women's Council in 2013, the 144 hotline is a nationwide, free, accessible telephone hotline that offers information, guidance, and support to women facing gender-based violence.

⁶ Administrative records underestimate the scale of the problem of violence against women. In the Buenos Aires metropolitan area, only 1 out of every 10 women who noted that they had suffered physical, psychological, or sexual violence over the course of their lives had turned to a public institution to seek help.

⁷ While 45.6% of employed women had reached university, only 29.8% of employed men had done so.

⁸ Prepared by the authors based on the Permanent Survey of Households corresponding to the fourth quarter of 2017.

- 1.12 **Other gender challenges.** In Argentina, as in other countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, women's participation in leadership positions remains low, with 31% serving in senior management positions in the public sector compared to 34% in the private sector [13]. There is also a high degree of occupational segregation between men and women, due primarily to the fact that only 25% of students pursuing STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) degrees—who have better employment opportunities—are women. [13]. Although the program does not address these challenges, it is nevertheless important to mention them, since they hinder women's economic empowerment.

4. Determinants and impacts of gender inequality in Argentina

- 1.13 **Determinants and impacts of violence against women.** Violence against women is typically conceptualized with an organic model, in which the interaction of factors at the individual, relationship, community, and societal levels increases the risk that women and girls will suffer violence [15]. Notable risk factors include social norms that are accepting of violence,⁹ impunity for perpetrators,¹⁰ and low levels of awareness among service providers. Conversely, the preventive and protective factors that can reduce risks for women and girls include sexual education and coordinated services of good quality (legal, security/protective, social, and medical) equipped with appropriately trained staff [16].
- 1.14 Violence against women is associated with numerous detrimental physical and psychological effects on the health of the survivor, including a higher likelihood that her children will be subjected to abusive treatment, such as corporal punishment [17], [18]. It is also associated with depression, anxiety, and suicide, a higher probability of unwanted pregnancies, complications during pregnancy and birth, sexually transmitted infections, and drug or alcohol use [19]. Although the indirect cost of violence against women has not been studied in Argentina, its annual cost is estimated to be roughly 4.2% of GDP in Colombia; 2% of GDP in Chile; and 1.6% of GDP in Nicaragua [20].
- 1.15 **Determinants and impacts of adolescent pregnancy.** Adolescent pregnancies are the result of a number of interrelated factors, and are simultaneously the cause and consequence of the violation of a number of rights [21]. In Argentina, significant risk factors for teen pregnancy include violence, gender inequality, and difficulty accessing health services that provide modern forms of contraception [22] [23]. Less than 20% of young women between 15 and 19 years of age with an unwanted pregnancy were using contraceptives. The lowest rates of birth control use are observed in the northwest and northeastern provinces [9]. Evidence shows that financial barriers and partner negotiations hamper contraceptive use among young Argentine women. Only 43.3% of adolescent females have obtained birth control free of charge [24]. In the province of Buenos Aires, 24% of young women aged 15 to 29 who stated that they did not use contraceptives maintained that this was because “their partner did not want to” [25].
- 1.16 Adolescent fertility is associated with poorer outcomes for young women in education, health, and employment, fomenting the intergenerational transmission of

⁹ Sixteen percent of Argentinians believe that it is justifiable for a man to beat his wife under certain circumstances, which is a higher percentage of the population than in Chile, Uruguay, and Brazil (World Values Survey, 2013).

¹⁰ Convictions were handed down for only 13% of the femicides committed in 2014 (National Plan of Action to Prevent, Address, and Eradicate Violence against Women, 2016).

poverty [26]. Although there is a bidirectional relationship between early motherhood and staying in school, adolescent pregnancies account for 30% of the female high school dropout rate in Argentina [25]. Furthermore, teenage pregnancies are associated with a higher risk of health complications in the perinatal period, including preterm birth, and low newborn birth weight [21]. By truncating the acquisition of human capital, early pregnancy adversely impacts the employment prospects of young women: 56% of adolescent mothers are unemployed while the corresponding rate for their counterparts without children is 44%. Moreover, once in the job market, teen mothers tend to have more precarious career paths [23].

1.17 Determinants and impacts of the quantity and quality of female employment.

The main determinant of the lower quantity and quality of female employment is the unequal burden of care imposed on women by traditional gender roles [27]. The costs associated with balancing work and family life, in terms of time and money, represent a barrier to women's entry into the workforce and the subsequent development of their career paths. In Argentina, the work of care is largely shouldered by households, and within them, by women [28]. Among the employed population, women perform 5.9 hours of reproductive labor every day, while men only 3.5. Even college-educated women spend 66% more time on household chores, care-giving, and educational support than men with the same educational level [29]. Once they have children, women tend to become less focused on their careers, cut back their work hours, or remove themselves from the job market entirely, which consequently affects their subsequent career progression.¹¹ The number of 18- to 24-year-old mothers who leave the workforce is 20 times higher than fathers in the same situation [13]. Controlled for observable factors, evidence shows that part of the gender pay gap is attributable to discrimination, whereas the unexplained component is nearly 15% among full-time workers [30], [31].¹²

- 1.18 More female participation in the workforce has a positive impact on individuals, families, and the economy. At the individual level, economic autonomy is associated with women having more negotiating power in the household regarding life choices and decisions on the use of resources. At the macro level, international evidence shows that more female participation in the workforce and the improved allocation of workers to occupations and sectors can contribute to growth, poverty reduction, and better economic, health, and educational outcomes for the next generation [3], [5], [32]. According to estimates, Argentina could increase its per capita GDP by 12% if it closes the employment gender gap [33].

5. Public policy instruments to promote gender equality

- 1.19 The literature emphasizes that public policies and programs can effectively promote the physical and economic autonomy of women. With regard to physical autonomy, these include: (i) programs designed to change social norms and traditional gender roles [34], because they help decrease tolerance of violence against women; (ii) health sector programs that address violence against women, because they

¹¹ The effect of fertility on female labor supply has been studied using an exogenous source of variation in the number of children per women: parents' preference for having children of different sexes (Angrist and Evans, 1998; Cruces and Galiani, 2007).

¹² A study for the city of Córdoba analyzed employers' preferences and found clear biases in favor of males for covering executive positions, segregation of competencies, and university-level studies by gender (Carranza et al., 2012).

help improve provider practices and identify more cases of violence [35], [36]; and (iii) comprehensive interventions that include, comprehensive education on sexuality and adolescent-targeted health services, including access to modern contraceptive methods, which are more likely to successfully reduce teenage pregnancy rates [37], [38]. With regard to economic autonomy, the following are notable: (i) policies that foster greater parity between maternity and paternity leave, since they support mothers' faster return to work and help change gender norms [39]; (ii) flexible work agreements, because they help promote female employment [40]; (iii) the decreased cost, increased availability, and improved quality of day care services, which promote female participation in the workforce [41]; (iv) training programs, since they can promote employment and increase women's salaries [42]; and (v) employee gender equality certification programs, because they help raise awareness of the issue and reduce discrimination in the work environment [43].

6. Challenges for public policies designed to promote gender equality in Argentina

- 1.20 Argentina has one of the region's most advanced legislative frameworks for promoting gender equality [44]. However, there are significant challenges to implementing the guidelines issued from this framework. The policy measures that the Argentine State has been adopting in recent years implicitly take these challenges into account and address them in the scope of this operation.
- 1.21 **Multisector coordination.** The multicausal nature of gender inequality requires the involvement of many government agencies in order to reduce it. This makes it more difficult to design and implement public policies, as mechanisms must be developed to promote coordinated action on the part of these agencies in order to ensure that government action will be effective [45]. In light of this challenge, the National Women's Council was established in 1992 under the authority of the Office of the President, with a mandate to coordinate national, federal government action on policies and programs addressing women's issues. The Council's lack of financial autonomy, and de facto low-ranking position in the structure of the executive branch of the national government, limited its management capacity. This is evidenced by the fact that Argentina and Cuba are the only Latin American countries without national equality plans that serve as roadmaps for strengthening the institutional architecture for equality [46].
- 1.22 **Coordination among levels of government.** Coordinating multiple sectors is a particularly daunting challenging in a federalist country like Argentina, where subnational jurisdictions are in charge of financing and providing key public services, such as education and health care. The implementation of the 2006 Comprehensive Sexual Education Act and the 2002 law creating the National Sexual Health and Responsible Procreation Program (PNSSPR) exemplify the challenge that this federal context presents to implementing regulations and, specifically, to coordinating multiple sectors. The Sexual Education Act establishes that at every level of their schooling, all students have the right to receive comprehensive sexual education on such issues as gender identity, sexual orientation, equal treatment and opportunities for women, and the use of contraceptives to prevent disease and unwanted pregnancies. This last point is one of the vertices where the education and health sectors meet. Because of Argentina's federal structure, implementation of the Sexual Education Act and the PNSSPR has varied across jurisdictions, and the expectations for sexual education material, the guarantees and mechanisms for

the use of contraceptives, and the respective operational synergies between these two sectors have neither been specified nor agreed upon. Consequently, jurisdictions do not review the curricular foundations and incorporate the content of comprehensive sexual education into school activities in the same way. Jurisdictions also lack standardized guidelines for their health ministries to ensure the availability of contraceptives and adequate human resources, resulting in a disconnect between the promotion of contraceptive use and the availability thereof [\[9\]](#).

- 1.23 **Information for decision-making.** As mentioned above, Argentina does not have demographic data to determine the scale and characteristics of violence against women. Among other issues, this lack of information makes it difficult to raise awareness of the problem and allocate resources based on jurisdictions' needs. Despite INDEC's acknowledgement of how important it is to have a specific survey on violence against women, due to its incipient restructuring process and the country's lack of updated information on multiple social and economic aspects, the Institute has not prioritized this survey in its survey plans. One strategy for remedying this dearth of information is to standardize and consolidate administrative information from the various actors involved in addressing cases of violence against women, including the judicial branch. However, it must be underscored that this administrative information, which only includes cases that have been addressed or reported, is merely complementary and does not eliminate the need for a national survey. Furthermore, cases of femicide represent a particular challenge for the quality of this administrative information. Since there is no methodological guide with a gender-based approach to investigating these cases in place, federal and jurisdictional police tend to overlook potential cases of femicide, which leads to underreporting and decreases the effectiveness of investigations and legal proceedings [\[47\]](#).
- 1.24 The budget and public expenditure management process is another area in which Argentina's national government has the potential to produce key information to improve the effectiveness of its gender equality policies and programs. To date, this process is not carried out with a gender perspective, but even so it has the potential to become an essential tool for promoting gender equality through fiscal policies, analyzing the impact of government spending by gender, and allocating funds to specific objectives that promote gender equality [\[48\]](#).
- 1.25 **Childcare services.** The availability and quality of childcare services have a direct impact on women's participation in the workforce [\[49\]](#). Although in the past few years the various levels of government (municipal, provincial, and national) and civil society groups have made significant efforts to expand coverage, Argentina still faces the challenges of guaranteeing access to these services and ensuring that they meet a minimum level of quality, especially for the poorest population segments.¹³ According to the authors' estimates based on the 2015 Permanent Household Survey, 57.6% of three-year-olds and 11.7% of two-year-olds attend development centers or preschools, while for children in households with unmet basic needs, these figures decrease to 29% and 5%, respectively. Childcare services include the generically named Early Childhood Centers (EPIs); these are nonacademic facilities offering social services and day care for children between 45 days and 4 years old from very vulnerable families [\[50\]](#). According to the 2015

¹³ Although this loan does not directly address closing the gap in the provision of care, the IDB is working on this challenge through the [Program to Support the National Early Childhood Plan and the Policy for Universalization of Early Childhood Education](#) (operation AR-L1254, 4229/OC-AR), approved in 2017.

National Registry of EPIs, 39% of caregivers at these facilities—most of whom are women—have only completed their secondary education, or less. In greater Buenos Aires, only 38% of caregivers have any type of early childhood certification. Increasing the certification offerings for the caregiver population will potentially have two effects in terms of furthering gender equality: it will promote the professionalization of an informal, largely female sector, and by improving service quality, will help free up time spent on childcare in the home.

- 1.26 **Laws and regulations.** Although the Argentine regulatory framework is highly advanced for the region in terms of promoting gender equality, there is significant room for the country to strengthen its work-life balance policies, which will have a positive impact on female employment [39], [51]. The Law on Employment Contracts dates to 1974¹⁴ and does not reflect the social and cultural changes that have taken place in recent years. This law establishes a 90-day maternity leave and two-day paternity leave, does not include leave for adoption, shorter workdays for childcare or for mothers returning to work after having children, or telework arrangements. Gender equality has been a low priority at the Ministry of Production and Labor (MPT), thus jeopardizing the effectiveness of the policies and programs it implements to promote economic gender parity, in connection with proactive employment policies as well as to the promotion of women in higher-paid, mostly male sectors.
- 1.27 Another area of legislative reform that offers an opportunity to accelerate gender equality is the regulation of contraceptive use. In contrast to technical recommendations [52], in most of the country's jurisdictions, the legislation regulating professional midwifery does not allow midwives to prescribe modern contraceptives, effectively limiting anyone other than physicians from prescribing them. These laws therefore unnecessarily restrict the number of people able to prescribe contraceptives.

7. The Argentine government's strategy for promoting gender equality

- 1.28 As part of its sustainable human development goal, Argentina's current government identified gender equality as one of its 100 priorities [53]. Presented in early 2016, the National Early Childhood Plan (PNPI)¹⁵ and the Universal Early Childhood Education Policy (PUEI) are two policy instruments that are fundamental to achieving this goal. Both seek to improve the quality of childcare and stimulate early childhood development, and to expand the coverage of these services throughout the country, particularly for the lower-income population. While the main focus of these tools is on child development, they also effectively promote women's participation in the workforce.
- 1.29 Also in 2016, the government launched its first National Action Plan to Prevent, Address, and Eradicate Violence Against Women (PNAVCM, 2017-2019),¹⁶ with the objective of ensuring that all Argentine women have access to violence-prevention mechanisms and quality care. The National Women's Institute (INAM)¹⁷ coordinates the implementation of PNAVCM, structuring it into preventive actions,

¹⁴ Law 20,744, enacted on 20 September 1974 and amended by Decree 390/1976 of 13 May 1976.

¹⁵ Approved by Decree 574/2016 of 11 April 2016.

¹⁶ Approved by National Women's Council Resolution 2017-19-APN-CNM#CNCPS.

¹⁷ Established by Decree 698/2017 of 5 September 2017.

- comprehensive care, monitoring, and training in all areas and levels of government to ensure an appropriate response to all situations of violence.
- 1.30 The National Plan to Prevent and Reduce Unintended Adolescent Pregnancy (PENIA)¹⁸ was approved in September 2017. It aims to implement programs of sexual and reproductive health and comprehensive sexual education through a single financial and operating platform. This platform will promote the regional coordination of the Ministry of Health and Social Development and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Science, and Technology.
- 1.31 That same month, the government created INAM as the agency tasked with spearheading policies to promote gender equality in Argentina. Unlike the National Women's Council, which it replaced, INAM is a decentralized agency that reports to the Ministry of Health and Social Development of the Nation, with the rank of a government secretariat, which gives it greater autonomy in decision-making and budget execution.
- 1.32 Through INAM, the national government is currently preparing its first Plan for Equality of Opportunity and Rights (PIOD), which it plans to implement as a State pact among the three branches of government, to include a broad consultation with the private sector and civil society. The PIOD seeks to: (i) combine, in a logical way, all actions that the State has been taking to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women; and (ii) establish a framework for monitoring and evaluating the outcomes of those actions and identifying care gaps. The Gender Parity Initiative (IPG) is expected to play a fundamental role in structuring the PIOD. This initiative has been bringing together government and private sector leaders to identify specific actions designed to: (i) increase women's participation in the workforce; (ii) reduce the gender pay gap; and (iii) promote women's participation in leadership positions in the private and public sectors.
- 1.33 The Argentine State also maintains an active legislative agenda in areas related to gender equality. It includes the recently enacted Law 27,412¹⁹ on Gender Parity in Political Representation Spheres; the Draft Law on Gender Equality and Equality of Opportunities in the Workplace, which among other actions expands parental leave for the birth and adoption of a child; and the Draft Law Regulating the Professional Exercise of Midwifery, which gives professional midwives the power to prescribe the birth control methods set forth in the PENIA and to provide care and treatment for low- and medium-risk patients during pregnancy, birth, and the postpartum period.
- 1.34 While Argentina has been a pioneer in the region in developing a regulatory framework to promote gender equality, much room for improvement remains. The proposed policy reforms have the potential for significant progress, inasmuch as the government is receiving support in its commitment from the very active role civil society is playing, which has managed to spark much discussion of gender issues in the public sphere.

8. Project strategy and value added by the Bank

- 1.35 This project is the first in a series of two operations under the programmatic policy-based loan modality. It will recognize policy actions recently implemented by

¹⁸ Approved by Ministry of Health and Social Development Resolution 1790/2017.

¹⁹ Enacted 22 November 2017 and published in the Official Gazette of the Argentine Republic on 15 December 2017.

the government that represent good practices in promoting gender equality. Several of these actions are considered milestones in terms of the technical support that the Bank has been providing the Argentina government since the early days of the current administration. Specifically, the Bank has been supporting the design and implementation of the National Early Childhood Plan, the Universal Early Education Policy, the PNAVCM, and the Gender Parity Initiative, from the outset. [Optional link 2](#) lists the different agencies with which the Bank has been providing technical and financial assistance to the gender equality agenda in Argentina. Along with this first operation, a technical-cooperation operation to support implementation of the government's program to support gender equality policies (AR-T1202) is expected to provide assistance to fulfill, on time and to standard, the milestones that will trigger the second operation in the series.

- 1.36 **Overview of the policy process.** The policy actions in the first operation prioritize establishing regulatory frameworks (bills, national plans, and technical guidelines approved by presidential decree, or ministerial resolutions at the national or federal levels) designed to promote gender equality by: (i) establishing coordination mechanisms among the agencies and levels of government working towards this objective; (ii) producing the information needed to improve the design of public policies for this purpose; (iii) expanding rights that will help improve women's work/life balance; and (iv) strengthening public service offerings to promote the physical and economic autonomy of women. The indicative actions for the second operation are meant to foster the implementation of these regulatory frameworks.
- 1.37 **Lessons learned.** The analysis of the Bank's operational experience set forth in the sector framework documents and in the Evaluation of the Bank's Support for Gender and Diversity (document RE-518-2) makes it possible to incorporate the lessons learned into the execution of this operation. To promote the gender perspective, the Bank has developed gender action plans, which are planning instruments that contain results matrices. The sustained use and internal monitoring of such plans have increasingly led to the establishment of priorities that require a multisector approach and the collaboration of various Bank sector divisions. The Mesoamerican Health Facility 2015, Costa Rica – second individual operation (operation CR-G1004) emphasizes a cross-sectoral strategy approach, as well as the importance of improving the availability of modern birth control methods to reduce teen pregnancy. These experiences are incorporated into Components 2 and 4, through support for the implementation of the PNAVCM and PENIA, and for the development of the PIOD. In turn, the Gender and Diversity Sector Framework (document GN-2800-8) highlights, as a lesson learned from the Bank's operations, the importance of including the prevention of violence against women and care for female survivors across multiple sectors, such as citizen security, transportation, education, in addition to independent gender projects. The PNAVCM approach reflects this multisector proposal. The Citizen Security and Justice Sector Framework (document GN-2771-7) identifies the experience gained in supervising operations, and the importance of investing in trained human resources. For example, the Civic Coexistence and Neighborhood Improvement Program (operation HO-L1187; loan 4518/BL-HO) stresses the importance of strengthening technical capacities as a strategy to improve police effectiveness in the criminal investigation of violence against women. This lesson is incorporated into Component 2, by strengthening the competencies of the police forces involved in investigating femicides. Lastly, the Labor Sector Framework (document GN-2741-7) recommends establishing public-private partnerships to promote access to formal

employment and employability. This is included in Component 3 by promoting the employment quality management benchmark. The same document also highlights, as a lesson learned, the need to strengthen the institutional framework of the labor market. This lesson is incorporated into Component 3 by prioritizing the gender perspective at the MPT.

- 1.38 **Coordination with other international agencies.** Several international actors in Argentina have focused on developing programs to promote gender equality. Notably, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and the Andean Development Corporation have worked on the physical autonomy and sexual and reproductive health of women and young people, and the World Bank has worked on economic empowerment.²⁰ This work has been taken into account during the preparation of this operation, with a view to ensuring complementarity and avoiding the duplication of efforts. As part of Argentina's Gender Parity Initiative, led by the IDB, specialists from the UNDP, UN Women, and the Andean Development Corporation were invited to participate in working groups and workshops, to share their experiences in the country, lessons learned, and recommendations.
- 1.39 **Strategic alignment.** The program is consistent with the Update to the Institutional Strategy 2010-2020 (document AB-3008) and is strategically aligned with the development challenges of social inclusion and equality and productivity and innovation. It aligns with the crosscutting area of gender equality and diversity, in that it furthers policy actions designed to promote women's physical and economic autonomy, an objective demonstrated to impact various human development indicators, reduce poverty, and promote a more efficient distribution of human capital in the economy. The program is also aligned with the crosscutting area of institutional capacity and rule of law, by promoting an operational framework to coordinate public and private actions with the aim of fostering gender equality and including the gender perspective in the national budget process. The program also aligns with the Corporate Results Framework 2016-2019 (document GN-2727-6) by contributing to the following indicators: formal employment for women; beneficiaries receiving health services (contraceptives); beneficiaries of job training programs; and women beneficiaries of economic empowerment initiatives.
- 1.40 The program further aligns with the priority area for IDB lending and analytical work "fostering social inclusion with identity" of the Strategy on Social Policy for Equity and Productivity (document GN-2588-4), and is consistent with the following sector framework documents: (i) Gender and Diversity (document GN-2800-8), through its lines of action "improve the well-being of women and children by expanding access to quality public services," "expand economic opportunities by improving women's access to more productive jobs and occupations," and "strengthen women's voice and agency by supporting the prevention, care, and reduction of violence against women;" (ii) Health and Nutrition (document GN-2735-7), through its lines of action "strengthen intersectoral education and communications approaches for behavioral

²⁰ UNDP: awareness campaign against violence against women and creation of the Domestic Violence Victim Care Office at the Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation; UNFPA: National Comprehensive Adolescent Health Program; Andean Development Corporation and UNDP: implementation of technical cooperation for the INAM to prevent, address, and remedy violence against women by systematizing best practices and holding anti-violence institution-building activities; UNICEF: development of investigations, protocols, and evaluations on comprehensive sexual education and teenage pregnancy; and World Bank: implementation of a certification model to incorporate gender equality in the private sector.

change and the adoption of healthy lifestyles,” and “reduce economic, gender, ethnic, and cultural barriers to encourage the use of services;” (iii) Social Protection and Poverty (document GN-2784-7), through its line of action “expand teenagers’ and young peoples’ access to programs seeking to help prevent or mitigate the main risks associated with youth vulnerability;” (iv) Labor (document GN-2741-7), in connection with the need to pay special attention to gender barriers in the job market and social security, to achieve the goal of promoting “successful career paths while simultaneously enhancing productivity and social inclusion;” and (v) Education and Early Childhood Development (document GN-2708-5), through its line of action “promoting initiatives for closing the gender [gap] in the education sector.”

- 1.41 Lastly, the program is aligned with the IDB Group Country Strategy with Argentina, 2016-2019 (document GN-2870-1), and specifically with its strategic objective of “strengthening the employability of the population, and particularly supporting efforts to expand women’s participation in the job market,” and with the indicator “rate of labor force participation by women” in the strategy’s results matrix.

B. Objectives, components, and cost

- 1.42 The objective of the programmatic series is to help reduce gender inequality in Argentina, by fostering the effective and timely implementation of policies to enhance equality of opportunity and promote the rights of women and girls. The objectives of this first operation are to help reduce gender inequality in Argentina by strengthening the regulatory and institutional framework for promoting the physical and economic autonomy of women and improving government capacity to mainstream gender policies.
- 1.43 **Component 1. Macroeconomic stability.** The objective of this component is to promote a macroeconomic context consistent with the program’s objectives, as set forth in the Policy Matrix ([Annex II](#)).
- 1.44 **Component 2. Promotion of women’s physical autonomy.** The objective of this component is to foster the implementation of policies that promote the capacity of women to live their lives free from violence and fully enjoy their reproductive rights. With regard to violence against women, the policy actions in this component are designed to:
- a. Promote implementation of the PNAVCM at the jurisdictional level, strengthening INAM’s role as the Plan’s lead agency. Accordingly, the first operation in the programmatic series will recognize as a policy action that the national government has finalized the adhesion of 15 jurisdictions (of a total of 24) to the PNAVCM. The indicative policy action for a second operation would be the completion of an external evaluation of PNAVCM administration, with the aim of identifying actions to strengthen its implementation.
 - b. Help determine the scale and characteristics of violence against women. Accordingly, the first operation in the programmatic series will recognize as a policy action that the results of the Unified Registry of Cases of Violence against Women have been published, standardizing and systematizing the information recorded by the public agencies that processed reports or cases of violence against women between 2013 and 2017. Furthermore, the indicative policy action for a second operation would be the completion of a pilot test of the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, to include a violence against women module. In both operations, the policy actions are complementary in their logic,

with a view to estimating the proportion of cases of violence against women that are addressed or reported: the first operation policy action establishes the number of cases of violence against women that were addressed or reported, while the indicative policy action for the second operation would make it possible to estimate the total number of cases of violence against women.

- c. Help strengthen police force competencies for identifying and investigating femicide cases. Accordingly, the first operation in the programmatic series will recognize as a policy action that a modification to the guidelines for investigating femicides has been approved, ensuring that the gender approach will be adopted in investigations of the violent deaths of women. The indicative policy action for a second operation is the implementation of this guide through training courses for the police and for federal law enforcement agents.²¹
- 1.45 With regard to unintended teenage pregnancies, the policy actions in this component are designed to:
- a. Help promote the timely implementation of the PENIA in the prioritized departments of provinces with the highest prevalence of unintended teen pregnancies. Accordingly, the first operation in the programmatic series will recognize as a policy action that the PENIA has been approved, along with its general guidelines and the respective budgetary allocations for sexual and reproductive health actions, comprehensive sexual education, and social/community support for children and adolescents in the prioritized departments. Likewise, the indicative policy action for a second operation is that a mechanism will be in place to monitor implementation of the PENIA's operational approach plans.
 - b. Help expand the capacity of public and private health care teams to implement sexual and reproductive health actions. Accordingly, the first operation in the programmatic series will recognize as a policy action that the Ministry of Health and Social Development has supported efforts to introduce a bill in the Congress that would regulate the professional practice of midwifery, giving professional midwives the authority to prescribe all birth control methods included in the PENIA; the indicative policy action for a second operation is that the bill will have been enacted into law and entered into force.
 - c. Help establish a standard national curriculum that promotes students' abilities to make responsible decisions regarding the care of their bodies, responsible sexuality, and equitable gender relationships. Accordingly, the first operation in the programmatic series will recognize as a policy action that the Ministry of Education, Culture, Science, and Technology has fostered and confirmed the Federal Education Council's approval of a resolution that includes the guidelines of that curriculum. The indicative policy action for a second operation is the implementation of a mechanism to monitor comprehensive sexual education at the jurisdictional level.
- 1.46 **Component 3. Promotion of women's economic autonomy.** The objective of this component is to help implement policies that further women's capacities for

²¹ This policy action is consistent with the Bank's Operational Guidelines for Program Design and Execution in the Area of Civic Coexistence and Public Safety (document GN-2535-1), in that it will help strengthen police competencies for identifying and acting in cases of femicide. The process of supporting the government to achieve the respective indicative action for a second operation will be coordinated with the execution of operation AR-L1255 (loan 4113/OC-AR), "Federal Security Program."

generating income and their own funds through access to paid work and career development on an equal footing with men. The policy actions in this component are designed to:

- a. Help families balance their productive and reproductive lives by fostering women's participation in the job market. Accordingly, the first operation in the programmatic series will recognize as a policy action that the Draft Law on Gender Equality and Equality of Opportunity in the Workplace has been submitted to the Congress. This law would include: (i) the extension of parental leave for the birth or adoption of a child from two to 15 days; (ii) a shorter workday for persons responsible for children aged 0 to 4 years; and (iii) leave for gender-based violence. The indicative policy action for a second operation is that the draft law will have been enacted into law and entered into force.
- b. Help foster the professionalization of care providers at early childhood facilities, which will simultaneously help improve the quality of care for the children there. Accordingly, the first operation in the programmatic series will recognize as a policy action that the National Institute of Technological Education (INET) has developed profiles for initial professional training in early childhood care and a certificate program [*tecnicatura superior*] in childhood, adolescence, and the family. The indicative policy action for a second operation is that the above-cited Institute will have trained at least 1,000 early childhood center caregivers in the early childhood continuing education program.
- c. Help create incentives to align human resources management in public and private organizations with good practices for promoting gender equality. Accordingly, the first operation in the programmatic series will recognize as a policy action that the MPT has developed, with the technical assistance of the Argentine Standardization and Certification Institute (IRAM), a voluntary certifiable standard (benchmark) for employment quality, which, among other aspects, will address equality of treatment and opportunity and nondiscrimination between men and women. The indicative policy action for a second operation is that the instruments for applying the benchmark are being implemented in training sessions for public and private organizations.
- d. Contribute to the explicit establishment of equality of opportunity and treatment among men and women in access to employment and work as an objective at the highest level of the MPT hierarchical structure. Accordingly, the first operation in the programmatic series will recognize as a policy action that the Secretariat for Promotion, Protection, and Technological Change has been established at the MPT, with a view to incorporating the gender perspective in job training offered to women, affording them more and better opportunities to access quality employment. The indicative policy action for a second operation is the development of a line of professional training courses that outlines profiles of nontraditional occupations for women.

1.47 **Component 4. Strengthening gender-policy management capacity.** The objective of this component is to help develop a public sector institutional management framework that strengthens the capacity for implementing and monitoring gender policies in a crosscutting way. The policy actions in this component are designed to:

- a. Help provide a short- and medium-term framework for coordinating public and private actions aimed at promoting gender equality. Accordingly, the first

operation in the programmatic series will recognize as a policy action that INAM has been created with the rank of government secretariat, as the entity responsible at the federal level for coordinating actions to prevent and address violence against women, mainstreaming the gender perspective in public policy, and promoting policies to empower women. The indicative policy action for a second operation will be approval of the Plan for Equality of Opportunity and Rights, which specifies the national executive branch ministries' commitments to promoting gender equality.

- b. Help promote the gender perspective in the national government budget. Accordingly, the first operation in the programmatic series will recognize as a policy action that agencies of the national government have been advised to specify gender policies in their budgets, and that the National Budget Coordination Department of the Office of the Chief of the Cabinet of Ministers, in coordination with the National Budget Office of the Ministry of Finance, has prepared a technical report on identifying gender policies in the national government budget. The indicative policy action for a second operation is that the estimated national government budget associated with fulfillment of the fifth sustainable development goal of "gender equality" will have been prepared for inclusion in the country report.

C. Key results indicators

- 1.48 **Impact and outcome indicators.** In terms of impact, the policy actions fostered by the programmatic series aim to increase women's physical and economic autonomy. This objective will be measured using two indicators: (i) rate of unintended pregnancies in adolescent women aged 15 to 19 years; and (ii) index to assess management of employment quality in terms of gender equity.²² In terms of outcomes, the policy actions seek to strengthen the regulatory and institutional framework for promoting the physical and economic autonomy of women, and in a crosscutting way, the capacity for public management of gender policies. Given the nature of the program, this objective will be measured through two indicators that gauge use of services or programs that are impacted by the policy actions promoted by this operation: (i) effective modern birth control coverage for adolescents aged 15 to 19 years;²³ and (ii) number of organizations participating in training sessions on the use of the benchmark for the self-assessment of employment management practices, including with regard to equality of treatment and opportunity and nondiscrimination between men and women.
- 1.49 **Economic analysis.** Based on the recommendations of the Office of Evaluation and Oversight (OVE) in its 2011 Evaluability Review of Bank Projects²⁴ and on the results of the review of evaluation practices and standards for policy-based lending conducted by the Evaluation Cooperation Group (made up of the independent

²² This index will be built using an instrument that was specifically designed by the MPT to assess companies' employment practices associated with nondiscrimination between men and women.

²³ This rate will be calculated by adding up the availability of each of the modern contraceptive methods to be dispensed to the target population (male condoms, combined oral contraceptives, injectables, intrauterine devices, and subdermal implants), adjusted annually based on their duration, clinical efficacy, and observed adherence.

²⁴ Document RE-397-1: "Currently, [the] Economic Analysis section is computed as the maximum between the [cost-benefit analysis] and the [cost-effectiveness analysis]. Yet neither a [cost-benefit analysis] nor a [cost-effectiveness analysis] is applicable to [policy-based loans] and [programmatic policy-based loans]."

evaluation offices of the multilateral development banks),²⁵ set out in paragraph 1.3 of document GN-2489-5 (Review of the Development Effectiveness Matrix for Sovereign Guaranteed and Non Sovereign Guaranteed Operations), which indicates, among other aspects, that it is not necessary to include an analysis of efficiency in the use of financial resources,²⁶ it was decided that an economic analysis would not be performed for this type of loan, as reported to the Bank's Board of Executive Directors. Accordingly, this loan operation does not include an economic analysis, and thus none was used for the purposes of determining the program's development effectiveness matrix evaluability score.

II. FINANCING STRUCTURE AND MAIN RISKS

A. Financing instruments

- 2.1 **Financing instrument.** This operation has been structured under the programmatic policy-based loan modality and is the first operation of a programmatic series comprised of two contractually independent but technically linked loans, in line with the Guidelines for the Preparation and Implementation of Policy-Based Loans (document CS-3633-1). This programmatic approach was selected to: (i) promote ongoing policy dialogue between the Bank and the country; and (ii) facilitate the refinement of the strategy for implementing the policy lines, given that some of them require highly complex coordination among various agencies and levels of government.
- 2.2 **Amount and currency.** This operation will be for US\$200 million, to be financed by the IDB from the Ordinary Capital resources and disbursed in a single tranche. The amount of this operation is justified by Argentina's broad fiscal resource need, although it is not directly related to reform-associated costs to be borne by the borrower, as per paragraph 3.27 of document CS-3633-1. The public sector financial requirements for 2018 are estimated to be about US\$30 billion, meaning that this operation meets 0.7% of those requirements and 2.2% of expected external federal public sector financing.

B. Environmental and social risks

- 2.3 Based on Directive B.13 of the Environment and Safeguards Compliance Policy (Operational Policy OP-703), this program does not require classification. The operation directly supports actions designed to promote gender equality in Argentina and will not finance investments in infrastructure or construction works, so no social or environmental risks are anticipated.

C. Fiduciary risks

- 2.4 No fiduciary risks associated with the operation were identified. Funds for this operation will go directly into the treasury single account to cover the federal government's financing needs, for which the executing agency has the necessary financial management instruments and control systems.

²⁵ "Good Practice Standards for the Evaluation of Public Sector Operations." Evaluation Cooperation Group, Working Group on Public Sector Evaluation, 2012 Revised Edition. February 2012.

²⁶ According to the Evaluation Cooperation Group, policy-based loans must be evaluated according to their relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability. Efficiency is not included as a criterion, since policy-based loan amounts are tied to the country's financing needs, independent of the project benefits.

D. Other risks

- 2.5 **Macroeconomic and fiscal sustainability risk.** Argentina's macro-fiscal context could lead to the defunding of some government agencies or programs involved in performing the indicative policy actions for preparing the second operation of the programmatic series, or as a result of the program evaluations. This risk, classified as medium, will be mitigated through the executing agency's active monitoring of the budgetary programming and execution of those agencies and programs.
- 2.6 **Public management and governance risk.** Argentina's political context could become more complicated over time, given the 2019 elections process, leading to a delay in completion of the indicative policy actions for the second operation of the programmatic series. This risk, classified as medium, will be mitigated through a communications strategy that will be developed as part of the Gender Parity Initiative and will identify the target audience as well as the appropriate messages and channels of communication for supporting the progress of the government's gender agenda. The communications strategy and its specific outputs will be developed under technical-cooperation operation AR-T1202.

III. IMPLEMENTATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

A. Summary of implementation arrangements

- 3.1 **Borrower and executing agency.** The borrower will be the Argentine Republic and the executing agency will be the Ministry of Finance, acting through the Special Sector-wide Approach Programs and Projects Office, a division of the Ministry's Office of the Undersecretary for International Financial Relations. The Ministry of Health and Social Development will serve as the program's technical coordinator, through its General Office for Special Projects and International Cooperation of the Secretariat for Coordination.
- 3.2 The executing agency will have the following responsibilities: (i) coordinating all aspects of the actions indicated in this operation with the responsible agencies; (ii) providing evidence that the policy commitments have been fulfilled as well as any other program-related evidence that the Bank needs in order to approve the respective disbursement; (iii) once the program disbursement is assured, collecting information on performance indicators that will be used to evaluate program outcomes; and (iv) periodically monitoring the plan for compliance with indicative policy actions for the second operation ([optional link 1](#)), through the program's technical coordinator, and making quarterly reports to the Bank, to include monitoring of the budgetary status of the programs and agencies involved in program execution. The executing agency will use the institutional means at its disposal to ensure effective coordination of the public agencies involved with policy measures included in this operation. It will also collaborate with the Bank on the necessary coordination with other agencies involved in the measures that are part of this operation.
- 3.3 **Coordination mechanism.** Among its institutional missions and functions, the executing agency will periodically review all public sector operations financed with external resources and will oversee, evaluate, monitor, and control them, with the objective of coordinating and optimizing the execution of existing programs, ensuring compliance with the various public sector policies established by the State. As technical coordinator of the operation and the agency responsible for preparing the

PIOD, the Ministry of Health and Social Development will support the executing agency in monitoring the plan for compliance with the indicative policy actions for a second operation.

- 3.4 **Special contractual conditions precedent to the first and only disbursement of the financing. The first and only disbursement is conditional upon compliance with the policy reform conditions as established in the Policy Matrix (Annex II) and the policy letter ([required link 1](#)), and with the conditions established in the loan contract.**

B. Summary of results monitoring arrangements

- 3.5 Given the nature of the program, the central purposes of the monitoring are to: (i) verify fulfillment of the policy actions taken on by Argentina's national government for the first and only disbursement of the first operation, as specified in the policy matrix and the corresponding means of verification matrix ([required link 2](#)), once the disbursement has been finalized; and (ii) monitor the plan for compliance with the indicative policy actions for a second operation ([optional link 1](#)). The executing agency will be responsible for submitting to the Bank a quarterly report on implementation of the plan for compliance with the indicative policy actions for a second operation, after the operation's first and only disbursement has been completed. A single administrative mission is planned four months after the disbursement to assess the Plan's implementation.
- 3.6 The methodologies for evaluating program outcomes and impacts are based on the use of administrative data regularly gathered by the National Sexual Health and Responsible Procreation Program of Argentina's Ministry of Health and Social Development, and through the use of the Occupational Indicators Survey regularly conducted by the MPT, which as of 2018 will include a specific gender module. For the outcome indicators associated with women's physical autonomy, a combination of the propensity score matching and differences-in-differences methods will be used at the district level, where treatment will be dictated by PENIA implementation. With respect to the impact indicator associated with women's economic autonomy, a random promotion mechanism will be used for the employment quality benchmark, to handle possible selection biases among the companies that opt to receive training in applying the benchmark.

IV. POLICY LETTER

- 4.1 The Bank and the Government of Argentina agreed on the policy commitments that this program will support. These commitments are reflected in the Policy Matrix (Annex II), the means of verification matrix ([required link 2](#)), and the Results Matrix ([required link 3](#)). The policy letter ([required link 1](#)) reiterates the government's commitment to the objectives and actions envisioned for the programmatic operation as a whole.

Development Effectiveness Matrix		
Summary		AR-L1298
I. Corporate and Country Priorities		
1. IDB Development Objectives	Yes	
Development Challenges & Cross-cutting Themes	-Social Inclusion and Equality -Productivity and Innovation -Gender Equality and Diversity -Institutional Capacity and the Rule of Law	
Country Development Results Indicators	-Formal employment of women (%) -Beneficiaries receiving health services (#)* -Beneficiaries of on-the-job training programs (#)* -Women beneficiaries of economic empowerment initiatives (#)*	
2. Country Development Objectives	Yes	
Country Strategy Results Matrix	GN-2870-1	Poverty inequality reduction
Country Program Results Matrix		The intervention is not included in the 2018 Operational Program.
Relevance of this project to country development challenges (If not aligned to country strategy or country program)		
II. Development Outcomes - Evaluability		Evaluable
3. Evidence-based Assessment & Solution	9.5	
3.1 Program Diagnosis	3.0	
3.2 Proposed Interventions or Solutions	4.0	
3.3 Results Matrix Quality	2.5	
4. Ex ante Economic Analysis	N/A	
5. Monitoring and Evaluation	8.6	
5.1 Monitoring Mechanisms	1.1	
5.2 Evaluation Plan	7.5	
III. Risks & Mitigation Monitoring Matrix		
Overall risks rate = magnitude of risks*likelihood	Medium	
Identified risks have been rated for magnitude and likelihood	Yes	
Mitigation measures have been identified for major risks	Yes	
Mitigation measures have indicators for tracking their implementation	Yes	
Environmental & social risk classification	B.13	
IV. IDB's Role - Additionality		
The project relies on the use of country systems		
Fiduciary (VPC/FMP Criteria)	Yes	Financial Management: Budget, Treasury, Accounting and Reporting, External Control, Internal Audit.
Non-Fiduciary	Yes	Strategic Planning National System, Monitoring and Evaluation National System, Statistics National System.
The IDB's involvement promotes additional improvements of the intended beneficiaries and/or public sector entity in the following dimensions:		
Additional (to project preparation) technical assistance was provided to the public sector entity prior to approval to increase the likelihood of success of the project	Yes	AR-T1188; AR-T1189

Note: (*) Indicates contribution to the corresponding CRF's Country Development Results Indicator.

The loan proposal presents a diagnosis of gender inequality in Argentina, manifested in violence against women, teenage pregnancy and female labor participation and quality of employment. The document identifies the determinants of this problem, as well as its economic and social consequences.

To reduce the identified gender inequality, this first operation proposes three components focused on the promotion of women's physical and economic autonomy and the strengthening of gender policy management capacity. The document presents evidence of the effectiveness of the proposed policies in different contexts.

The results matrix of the project has a solid vertical logic and includes impact, outcome and output indicators that meet the SMART criteria and that are consistent with the operation's policy matrix.

The evaluation plan proposes two impact evaluations. The first one, to measure the effectiveness of the National Plan for the Prevention and Reduction of Non-Intentional Pregnancy in Adolescents, through a methodology of statistical matching and differences in differences. The second one, to estimate the impact of the Occupational Quality Management Referential, by means of a random promotion and instrumental variables methodology.

POLICY MATRIX

Specific objectives	Policy actions Programmatic operation I	Indicative policy actions Programmatic operation II
Component I. Macroeconomic stability		
Maintain a macroeconomic context consistent with the program's objectives as established herein	(1.1.1) A suitable macroeconomic policy framework will be maintained.	(1.2.1) A suitable macroeconomic policy framework will be maintained.
Component 2. Promotion of women's physical autonomy		
Contribute to the implementation of the National Action Plan to Prevent, Address, and Eradicate Violence against Women (PNAVCM) at the jurisdictional level, strengthening the role of the National Women's Institute (INAM) as the Plan's coordinating agency	(2.1.1) The national government will have fostered and finalized the adhesion of at least 15 jurisdictions (provinces and the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires) to the PNAVCM.	(2.2.1) An external evaluation of PNAVCM administration will have been performed.
Help determine the scale and characteristics of violence against women	(2.1.2) The results of the Unified Registry of Cases of Violence against Women (RUCVM) will have been published, standardizing and systematizing the information recorded by the public organizations that handled reports or cases of violence against women between 2013 and 2017.	(2.2.2) A pilot test of the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, including a module on violence against women, will have been conducted, with the aim of measuring childhood development and living conditions.
Help strengthen police force competencies for identifying and investigating femicide cases	(2.1.3) The amendments to the Guidelines for Police and Law Enforcement Action in Investigating Femicides at the Site of the Incident will have been approved. These guidelines are to include the gender approach in the investigation of the violent deaths of women.	(2.2.3) Training courses on investigating the violent deaths of women with a gender perspective have been implemented for the homicide and crime divisions of the federal law enforcement and police forces.
Help promote the timely implementation of the National Plan to Prevent and Reduce Unintended Adolescent Pregnancy (PENIA) in the prioritized departments of the provinces with the	(2.1.4) The PENIA will have been approved, along with its general guidelines and budget allocation, including actions for sexual and reproductive health, comprehensive sexual education and social/community support for children and adolescents in the prioritized	(2.2.4) A mechanism to monitor implementation of the PENIA approach operational plans will have been implemented.

Specific objectives	Policy actions Programmatic operation I	Indicative policy actions Programmatic operation II
highest prevalence of unintended teenage pregnancies	departments of the provinces with the highest prevalence of unintended teenage pregnancies.	
Help expand the capacity of public and private health care teams for implementing sexual and reproductive health actions	(2.1.5) The Ministry of Health and Social Development will have pursued the submission to Congress of a draft law regulating the professional practice of midwifery, authorizing professional midwives to prescribe the contraceptive methods included in the PENIA and to monitor and provide care to low- and medium-risk patients during pregnancy, birth, and the postpartum period.	(2.2.5) The draft law on the professional practice of midwifery will have been enacted into law and entered into force.
Help establish a standard national curriculum for the 24 jurisdictions that helps students at all levels of schooling develop the capacities to make responsible decisions regarding caring for their bodies, responsible sexuality, and equitable gender relationships.	(2.1.6) The Ministry of Education, Culture, Science, and Technology will have fostered and confirmed the Federal Education Council's approval of a resolution that includes at least two of the following commitments: (i) approve the prioritized comprehensive sexual education (ESI) content for each educational level (Priority Learning Cores, "NAPs"); (ii) include the ESI focus in the Institutional Educational Plans (PEIs); and (iii) identify a go-to entity that will serve as a liaison with the jurisdictional and PEI liaison teams for implementing the NAPs.	(2.2.6) A mechanism for monitoring implementation of ESI at the jurisdictional level will have been launched at the National Office for Educational Planning of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Science, and Technology.
Component 3. Promotion of women's economic autonomy		
Help families balance their productive and reproductive lives by fostering women's participation in the formal job market	(3.1.1) The Draft Law on Gender Equality and Equality of Opportunity in the Workplace will have been submitted to the Congress; among other aspects, this bill includes: (i) the extension of parental leave for the birth or adoption of a child; (ii) shorter workdays for persons responsible for children aged 0 to 4 years; and (iii) leave for gender based violence.	(3.2.1) The Law on Gender Equality and Equality of Opportunity in the Workplace will have been enacted and entered into force.
Help promote the professionalization of care providers at early childhood facilities, which will simultaneously help improve the quality of care for the children there	(3.1.2) The National Institute of Technological Education will have developed profiles for initial professional training on early childhood care and a certificate program [<i>tecnicatura superior</i>] in childhood, adolescence, and the family, with the aim of professionalizing the individuals in	(3.2.2) The National Institute of Technological Education will have trained at least 1,000 Early Childhood Center (EPI) caregivers of the National Early Childhood Plan (PNPI) in the early childhood continuing education program.

Specific objectives	Policy actions Programmatic operation I	Indicative policy actions Programmatic operation II
	charge of care and stimulation at early childhood centers, through technical-professional training pathways.	
Help create incentives to align human resources management in public and private organizations with good gender equality promotion practices	(3.1.3) The Ministry of Production and Labor (MPT) will have developed, with technical assistance from the Argentine Standardization and Certification Institute, a voluntary certifiable standard (benchmark) for employment quality that, among other aspects, will address equality of treatment and opportunity and nondiscrimination between men and women.	(3.2.3) The instruments for applying the benchmark will be in the process of being implemented in training sessions for public and private organizations.
Contribute to the explicit establishment of equality of opportunity and treatment between men and women in access to employment and work as an objective at the highest level of the MPT's hierarchical structure	(3.1.4) The Secretariat for Promotion, Protection, and Technological Change will have been created at the MPT, with a view to incorporating the gender perspective in the job training offered to women, affording them more and better opportunities to access quality employment.	(3.2.4) A line of professional training courses will have been developed, with profiles of nontraditional occupations for women.
Component 4. Strengthening gender-policy management capacity		
Help provide a short- and medium-term framework for coordinating public and private actions aimed at promoting gender equality	(4.1.1) INAM will have been created with the rank of government secretariat, as the entity responsible at the federal level for coordinating actions to prevent and address violence against women, mainstreaming the gender perspective in public policy, and promoting policies to empower women.	(4.2.1) The Plan for Equality of Opportunity and Rights (PIOD), which sets out the national executive branch ministries' commitments to promoting gender equality, will have been approved.
Help promote the gender perspective in the national government budget	(4.1.2) The institutions of the national public administration will have been advised to specify gender policies in their budgets, and the National Budget Coordination Department of the Office of the Chief of the Cabinet of Ministers, in coordination with the National Budget Office of the Ministry of the Finance, will have prepared a technical report on identifying gender policies in the national government budget.	(4.2.2) The estimated national government budget associated with fulfillment of the fifth sustainable development goal (gender equality) will have been prepared for inclusion in the country report.

DOCUMENT OF THE INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

PROPOSED RESOLUTION DE-___/18

Argentina. Loan ____/OC-AR to the Argentine Republic
Program to Support Gender Equality Policies

The Board of Executive Directors

RESOLVES:

That the President of the Bank, or such representative as he shall designate, is authorized, in the name and on behalf of the Bank, to enter into such contract or contracts as may be necessary with the Argentine Republic, as borrower, for the purpose of granting it a financing to cooperate in the execution of the Program to Support Gender Equality Policies. Such financing will be for an amount of up to US\$200,000,000 from the resources of the Bank's Ordinary Capital, and will be subject to the Financial Terms and Conditions and the Special Contractual Conditions of the Project Summary of the Loan Proposal.

(Adopted on ____ 2018)