

# IRAQ GOVERNANCE STRENGTHENING PROJECT

## Gender Integration Strategy

### **FUNDED BY USAID**

December 2011

Contract No. AID-267-C-11-00006

### **DISCLAIMER**

*This report is made possible by the support of the American People through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID.) The contents of this report are the sole responsibility of Chemonics International, Inc. and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.*

The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary .....	1
Background .....	6
Identification of Gender Constraints and Opportunities and Recommendations for Possible Activities and Initiatives .....	11
Component 1: Law Reform .....	11
Activity 1.1: Assist Local Delegates to Engage Policy Makers in Decentralization Reforms .	11
Activity 1.2: Support Authorities Responsible for Decentralization Reform.....	14
Activity 1.3: Assist Government Lawyers to Understand Provincial Authorities.....	16
Component 2: Institutional Strengthening.....	17
Activity 2.1: Assist in Core Authority Institutionalization.....	17
Activity 2.2: Assist in Community Outreach Conduct .....	19
Component 3: Executive Oversight .....	21
Activity 3.1: Support Local Oversight of Service Delivery .....	21
Activity 3.2: Engage Policy Makers on Service Delivery Reforms .....	22
Conclusion .....	23
Recommendations for Gender-Sensitive Indicators .....	25
ANNEX 1: Gender Terminology.....	26
ANNEX 2: Guiding Principles for the GSP WorkPlan .....	29
ANNEX 3: Table: Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament as of February 2011(%).....	31
ANNEX 4: Meetings Held December 2011 .....	32
ANNEX 5: Documents Reviewed .....	33

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Iraq Governance Strengthening Project (GSP) was conceived for the purposes of assisting Iraq's process towards a decentralized government that is more responsive to community needs, provides greater accountability and transparency and more efficient public services, and enables greater citizen participation in local decision-making. The project is sub-divided into three components:

- Component 1: Law Reform - Legal and regulatory decentralization reforms clarify the authorities and responsibilities of provincial and local governments.
- Component 2: Institutional Strengthening - Targeted provincial and local governments institutionalize core authorities and responsibilities.
- Component 3: Executive Oversight - Targeted provincial and local elected officials hold executive ministries accountable for improved services,

GSP is a five year project, with four base years and an option year and was launched in October 2011.

The purpose of GSP Gender Strategy is to help guide the GSP projects' staff in discussion with counterparts, stakeholders, and other donor projects during the work planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation process. It was developed using a gender lens and based on findings and input derived from desk research and in-country discussions with the GSP technical staff, the Iraq Local Governance Association (ILGA) chair, a former PC member, and CSOs with gender missions (a list of all of these meetings and contacts can be found in Annex 4). Understanding what efforts have been undertaken to mitigate gender inequities in the Iraqi government and public services and the remaining gender issues articulated research and by Iraqi government stakeholders, and CSOs with gender missions enables us to make preliminary recommendations that address the cause of these gender issues while working towards GSP's goal to build the capacity of provincial and local governments and provide more effective, efficient, and responsive public services to the Iraqi people. In addition to discussions with relevant stakeholders, preliminary research was conducted through a review of gender-focused publications related to the Iraqi government and status of women in Iraq, namely the *USAID/Iraq Gender Assessment* and *Iraqi National Development Plan for the Years 2010-2014* (referred to as the *National Development Plan*). The challenges and recommendations within these documents are integrated throughout this gender strategy.

The GSP project is ripe with opportunity to integrate gender as this strategy will demonstrate. Iraq's decentralization efforts will involve a transfer of decision making power and authority to provincial and local governments. Thus, the very nature of Iraqi decentralization will provide new opportunities to empower women- who are found in greater numbers in local government- and pave the way for their advancement at the national level. Local government is often more accessible to women due to its physical proximity to the home as cultural restrictions on travel as well as domestic responsibilities can prevent women from taking leadership roles outside of their communities. The stringent criteria for eligibility in the national political arena also prevent women from entering political life. In provincial and local government, the criteria for eligibility is often lower, making it easier for Iraqi women (who generally

## Iraq GSP Gender Integration Strategy

have less education and work experience than Iraqi men) to participate. Strengthening the capacity of local governance awards Iraqi women and other traditionally marginalized groups greater decision making power and influence to make laws, policies, and public services reflect their needs and priorities.

An increase in decision-making power for women means a likely increase in attention to and provision for women's priorities and needs especially with regard to public service delivery. This is especially important to the well-being of women in the community as they are generally the primary consumers of public services given the domestic role played by the majority of Iraqi women. Water, sanitation, and electricity in the home and community are critical services for women to fulfill their domestic responsibilities. Likewise, as women are primary caregivers to children and the ill, they are most familiar education and health services. Bolstering Iraqi women's decision-making authority in provincial and local government is therefore crucial in narrowing the severe gender gaps that exist in these sectors.

The GSP Gender Integration Strategy describes gender considerations, constraints, and challenges identified within the national, provincial and local government, as well, as those related to public services. Information gleaned from our meetings conducted with GSP technical staff, the ILGA chair, a former PC member, and CSOs with gender missions suggest that there is limited awareness within the GOI of the impact of decentralization on women and minorities or the relationship between gender and service delivery. Only a fraction of the GOI, primarily those within women's committees at the national and local level and within the ILGA have received basic gender training and awareness through USAID/Iraq's Local Governance Program and presentations by CSOs, university scholars, and other gender experts. Findings would also suggest that GOI staff have not received training in gender analysis or gender responsive budgeting. This is apparent in the minimal inclusion of gender priorities and resource allocation found in provincial development strategies (PDS). Women's representation in government is limited (they make up 27.3 percent of Parliament) and women's committees in Parliament, the PC, and ILGA have few members which restricts their ability to influence and advocate for policies, projects, and resources that respond to gender issues related to decentralization and public services. While there is limited research on the gender impacts of decentralization, there is considerable research on access to public services. Access to public services like water, electricity, sanitation, health and education is limited throughout Iraq partly because of lack of or damaged infrastructure. The poor have even less access to these services. Because of Iraqi women's limited education and participation in the labor force, high rates of unemployment, widowhood, and female-

### **What is Gender Responsive Budgeting?**

"Gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) is government planning, programming and budgeting that contributes to the advancement of gender equality and the fulfillment of women's rights. It entails identifying and reflecting needed interventions to address gender gaps in sector and local government policies, plans and budgets. GRB also aims to analyze the gender-differentiated impact of revenue-raising policies and the allocation of domestic resources and Official Development Assistance."

- UNWomen, Gender Responsive Budgeting Website

## **Iraq GSP Gender Integration Strategy**

headed households, they are particularly vulnerable to poverty, and thus likely to not have access to basic resources. The *National Development Plan* notes that 14 percent of the non-poor are not connected to water supplies and 20 percent of the non-poor have no connection to public sanitation network or waste basic. These numbers are even grimmer for the poor at 33 percent and 35 percent, respectively. The poor may be cut off from electricity by as many as 16 hours a day.<sup>1</sup> Because women are more susceptible to poverty, it is not surprising that these numbers are even higher for women, 50 percent of whom report having no access to clean water or electricity.<sup>2</sup> Poverty is also a factor keeping girls and boys from school. Limited resources and cultural beliefs about the role of girls and women prevent many parents from enrolling their daughters in primary school. Similarly, boys' enrollment in second school is affected as parents take their sons out of the classrooms and put them in the labor force to supplement the household income. Women, especially those who are heads-of-household and their low economic status severely limit their access to healthcare. Conservative customs may also prevent women from receiving medical care from men which further constrains their access to healthcare.<sup>3</sup> If Iraq is to develop and grow economically, they must be responsive to the basic service needs and priorities of both male and female citizens. The GOI must be made aware and held accountable to mitigating the gender constraints related to decentralization and public services.

---

<sup>1</sup> Republic of Iraq Ministry of Planning. *National Development Plan for the Years 2010-2014*. 2010. p. 145.

<sup>2</sup> Women for Women International. Iraq. Retrieved from <http://www.womenforwomen.org/global-initiatives-helping-women/help-women-iraq.php>.

<sup>3</sup> USAID/Iraq. *USAID/Iraq Gender Assessment*. May 2010. P. 52-53.

## Iraq GSP Gender Integration Strategy

Given these challenges and constraints, our recommendations focus primarily on capacity building in the form of gender-related technical assistance and training, research, and advocacy and media exposure. GSP intends to support training at the national and local level in a number of areas including planning, budgeting, and civic education. The gender strategy recommends that such training courses be complemented by related training in gender mainstreaming in planning, gender responsive budgeting, and gender-sensitive reporting, for example. Most of these can be incorporated in training courses in a module or two so as to flow with the primary objectives of the training and not seem one-off. Such gender courses are one way of providing GOI staff practical experience so that they are able to mainstream and prioritize gender in planning, policy making and budgeting. GSP will also implement various behavior change methodologies that mobilize internal change agents within the GOI. It is recommended that these change agents- along with the ILGA, senior, budgeting,

policymaking, and planning staff- be some of the first recipients of gender training and training of training courses so that they self-identify gender constraints, promote gender reforms within the GOI, and facilitate gender training for their colleagues. To accompany gender training courses, this strategy also recommends close

cooperation and dialog between GOI and CSOs, research institutes, universities, and other institutions and members of the public able to provide gender input. Their active participation in town meetings, caucus discussions, and other policy forums, especially if accompanied by media presence, will not only increase GOI's awareness and provide them with recommendations, but will increase their accountability as there will be public record of their commitments to address gender. Findings from stakeholder meetings suggest that the most effective way of integrating change within the GOI and this project is by taking a three-prong approach that includes gender training, coordination with gender CSOs and other stakeholders, and media pressure. Gender is a sensitive topic in Iraq and should be approached from not only a human rights perspective, but an economic and social development perspective. The recommendations included within this strategy will help to ensure GOI is aware of the long term benefits of investing in men and boys and women and girls.

This gender integration strategy and its recommendations are intended to maximize project outcomes and benefits for both men and women. Given the additional challenges faced by Iraqi women; however, the focus of many activities and initiatives within this

### **Producers and Facilitators of Gender Training Courses**

- Chemonics International Inc
- International Labor Organization
- UNWomen
- UNESCO
- UNDP
- UNIFEM
- National Democratic Institute
- Interagency Gender Working Group
- Devtech Systems, Inc.

### **Why Should the GOI Invest in Women?**

- "Countries where women's share of seats in political bodies is greater than 30% are more inclusive, egalitarian, and democratic.
- When 10% more girls go to school, a country's GDP increases on average by 3%."

**-USAID/Office of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, "Why Invest in Women?"**

## **Iraq GSP Gender Integration Strategy**

strategy aim to increase Iraqi women's capacity to work in decision-making positions, enable the GOI to reform and produce gender-sensitive policies and laws, and improve the GOI's understanding of women's rights and increase women's access and enjoyment of public services.

Because of the fluid nature of the government and security status in Iraq and because of the additional information that will be gained during the work planning and implementation process, this strategy should be reviewed and modified according to the needs of USAID, the government, and public. GSP is in the process of recruiting a full-time gender specialist who would be the primary person responsible for reviewing and modifying this document as needed, as well, as elaborating on the project's gender strategy based on findings and research gleaned from additional research and meetings with stakeholders.

## **BACKGROUND**

Numerous indicators demonstrate Iraq's growing commitment towards gender equality. The Constitution of Iraq and other national laws including the citizenship law of Article 18 and the Personal Status Law of 1959 provide protection for citizens regardless of gender and establish political, economic, social and cultural rights which are more progressive than that of other countries in the region. In 1986, Iraq acceded the CEDAW (Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women) and in the 2006-2008 Transition Strategy Plan, identified the "importance of encouraging collective citizen and government decision-making to address gender-based disparities"<sup>4</sup>. These gender equitable sentiments are echoed within the *National Development Plan (2007-2010)* which includes gender-specific goals and targets including increasing women's and minorities' representation in the executive and legislative branches of government.<sup>5</sup>

**Iraqi Commitment to Women and Political Advancement**

"Women [and] weak female participation in politics and decision making" are priority areas to address in order to "Transform Iraq into a peaceful, unified federal democracy."

- *Iraq's National Development Plan (2007-2010)*

Despite these noble efforts towards gender equality, lack of enforcement and contradictory laws, rampant corruption, social, cultural, and religious conservatism, and violence continue to threaten women's personal safety and full participation, not only in politics and the government, but in the community at-large. For example, "the Constitution cites Islam as a basic source of legislation and forbids the passing of laws contradictory to its "established rulings." As a result, the situation of women in Iraq very much depends on the implementation of Islamic law" which may threaten women's rights based on interpretation (i.e. Islamic law does not condone spousal rape which could be interpreted as spousal rape being permissible)<sup>6</sup>. Also, while Iraq has acceded CEDAW, it was with the caveat that it be exempt from modifying or abolishing existing laws and penal codes which discriminate against women, like women being subject to punishment for crimes of honor and men being permitted to physically abuse female family members. Additionally, the progressive Personal Status Law is in jeopardy of being "abolished or superseded by less equitable legislation."<sup>7</sup>

Threats to women's safety are so severe that the *Stronger Women, Stronger Nations: 2008 Iraq Report* noted that 86 percent of women were "not able to walk down the street as they please, 68 percent said they are not able to drive a car and 48.8 percent said they are not able to work outside the home."<sup>8</sup> While violence towards women in Iraq is on the rise and manifests itself in a variety of ways, there is little protection for the physical

<sup>4</sup> Op cit., USAID/Iraq. p. 15

<sup>5</sup> Op cit., USAID/Iraq. p. 12-13.

<sup>6</sup> OECD. "Social Institutions and Gender Index". 12 December 2011, <http://genderindex.org/country/iraq>.

<sup>7</sup> Op cit., USAID/Iraq. p.12-13

<sup>8</sup> Op cit., USAID/Iraq. p. 6

## Iraq GSP Gender Integration Strategy

integrity of women.<sup>9</sup> Fifty-five percent of women have reported being a victim of violence since 2003; they are sexually harassed in the workplace, trafficked for sex, abused and murdered by domestic violence and “honor killings” (the act of murdering a woman because she committed, or was perceived to have committed an act which caused dishonor to the family), attacked for not wearing a hijab (head covering) or attire deemed “proper” for a Muslim women, and victims of female genital cutting (which occurs at rates as high as 81.2 percent in some regions of Iraq). These threats to women’s sense of security and human rights no doubt hamper Iraqi women’s ability to fully engage in the public sphere let alone the political sphere.<sup>10</sup>

It should be noted that men are also victims of violence in Iraq. Religious conflict, crime, and personal ties and to the military and former regime put men in significant danger. Many have been kidnapped, injured, disabled, or killed while others have chosen to flee the country resulting in numerous widows and female-headed households. According to a 2009 Oxfam survey, 35.5 percent of female respondents were acting heads of households and there was estimated to be upwards of 750,000 widows, 76 percent of whom said they did not receive government pension.<sup>11</sup>

Women’s participation in the economic and political spheres is limited not only by the aforementioned security issues, but “A rise in religious and cultural conservatism [which] devalues girls’ education.”<sup>12</sup> School attendance is particularly low for girls, especially poor girls, and according to the *Iraqi National Development Plan for the Years 2010-2014*, “Traditional cultural discrimination against women is still the most influential factor [preventing girls from attending school]. Cultural or familial concerns about a girl have become a justification for marrying her off or preventing her from continuing her education”. Girls may also be prevented from attending school due to displacement, safety concerns, overcrowding, damaged or destroyed schools, and associated education costs including transportation, supplies, and uniforms. As a result, approximately 40 percent of rural girls, and 20 percent of urban girls are not enrolled in school. The percentage of girls in secondary school; however, is greater than the percentage of boys as boys are often required to leave school in search of employment. Illiteracy rates reflect this dearth in education; rates for poor and rural females are as high as 38 and 46 percent, respectively, versus 18 and 19 percent for males.<sup>13</sup> Women’s low education levels and position in a male dominated society may go so far as influence their votes. Reports on voting patterns amongst Iraqi women show variance according to education levels, social pressure and male influence thus demonstrating that even women’s votes are influenced by their education and patriarchal society.<sup>14</sup>

With limited education and restrictive gender norms, girls grow into women who are at a disadvantage in the economic sector and political sector which, in the context of GSP,

---

<sup>9</sup> Op cit., OECD.

<sup>10</sup> Op cit., USAID/Iraq. p. 18, 7.

<sup>11</sup> Op cit., USAID/Iraq. p. 18.

<sup>12</sup> Op cit., USAID/Iraq. p. 40.

<sup>13</sup> Op. cit., Republic of Iraq Ministry of Planning. p. 135, 146.

<sup>14</sup> Op cit., USAID/Iraq. p. 19.

## Iraq GSP Gender Integration Strategy

negatively impacts their decision making power, political representation, and access to quality public services. Iraqi culture encourages women to take on traditional gender roles as wife and mother and holds a “negative attitude toward women working outside their homes”.<sup>15</sup> As a result, only 17 percent of Iraqi women participate in the work force (23 percent of whom are unemployed) and in some communities, women are banned from business and political leadership altogether because of father/husband or social disapproval or religion. With limited participation in the economic sector, high unemployment rates, limited education, and a high rate of widowhood, women are “targets for economic growth programs because of their heightened economic and social vulnerability” This economic vulnerability negatively impacts women’s access to public services including food, as 79 percent of women report having to rely on monthly government food rations.<sup>16</sup>

Women’s low level of participation in the labor force is mirrored in their participation in the political sector. While women do hold positions within the government- 52 percent of women in the labor force work in the public sectors like education and health- their average wages are two-thirds that of the average wage of males and they are generally concentrated at the lower levels.<sup>17</sup> This is evident in the fact that as of May 2010, of the 18 country governors, none were women and the percentage of women in provincial councils (PCs), though varied from region to region, often falls below 25 percent despite the fact that “The Second Paragraph of Article 13 stipulates that 25 percent of the elected candidates should be women.”<sup>18</sup> It should be noted that Iraq’s debate the interpretation of the law and some believe that the provincial election law does not, in fact, require 25 percent of elected candidates be women.

Corruption, cronyism and extremism within political parties also prevent women from fully engaging in politics and receiving quality services. This is especially detrimental to the lives of Iraqi women who rely heavily on public services like water, electricity, and waste management to fulfill the domestic duties that often dominate their lives because of gender-based traditional and cultural roles. Other public services like healthcare and education are even more critical for Iraqi women who may require additional resources and considerations to address expectant mothers need for prenatal healthcare and girls who are more often deprived of an education. Cronyism and political parties can create roadblocks for women in both the public and private sector. “Membership in a

### **Corruption: An Obstacle For Iraqi Women in the Government and the Public Sector**

“Collusion, corruption, and nepotism pose major changes for development and gender integration [...] corruption [is] in every aspect of life from employment to purchases and services. Corruption places women and other vulnerable groups [...] at a disadvantage. It siphons off much needed resources and instills a cycle of inefficiency and ineffectiveness in both the public and private sectors”

- **USAID/Iraq Gender Assessment, p.15**

<sup>15</sup> Op. cit, Republic of Iraq Ministry of Planning.. p. 30, 135.

<sup>16</sup> Op cit., USAID/Iraq. p. 29, vi, 30.

<sup>17</sup> The Iraq Partners Forum. *The Iraq Briefing Book*. December 2010. p. 80-81.

<sup>18</sup> Open Source Center. *Iraq Provincial Elections Guide 2009*. p. 5.

## Iraq GSP Gender Integration Strategy

political party influences opportunities in all areas of life, from getting a job to accessing healthcare.” Given that political parties and networks are often male dominated and puts women at a notable disadvantage and “A number of Iraqi women from both business and government reported that bribes and payoffs are required when dealing with the government in any way. Payoffs are demanded for business licenses and dealing with the government in any way” and women are prevented from excelling in the public and private sector.<sup>19</sup>

Iraqi women have overcome these obstacles to a certain degree. Prior to the war, women in Iraq enjoyed greater rights than most women in the region. Women were encouraged to attend school, owned property, and were leaders in government, medicine, law, and the arts. Presently, women are beginning to reclaim their former position in society.<sup>20</sup> The High Electoral Commission reported that more women voted than expected in the March, 2010 election and “more than 2,000 of the more than 6,000 total candidates were women, a significant increase compared with the 2005 elections”.<sup>21</sup> In an attempt to boost women’s representation in government, the 2005 Iraq Constitution included language that the parliament be made up of at least 25 percent women. The Election Law states that the Council of Representatives should “aim to achieve a percentage of representation for women not less than one-quarter”. The Election Law also applies to the election of the House of Representatives, National Assembly, national parliaments, governorate councils, and local councils.<sup>22</sup> Though the interpretation of these provisions are debated, there is progress being made towards gender equality as 27.3 percent<sup>23</sup> of Parliamentary seats were allocated to women.

### **Iraq Election Law- Representation of Women in Parliament**

**Article 11:** At least one woman must be among the first three nominees on the list and at least two women must be among the first six nominees on the list and so on until the end of the list.

**Article 14:** If the vacant seat belonged to a woman, it is not necessary that the woman be replaced by a woman unless not doing so would affect the percentage of women’s representation.

- **UNAMI English Translation of the Iraqi Election Law**

Also signaling progress, a State Ministry of Women’s Affairs (SMOWA) was established in 2003. Though the ministry is not considered a full ministry given its lack of an independent budget, it does serve in an advisory capacity and has developed its own strategy which identifies women in legislative sector as a critical area to the country’s growth and development. Gender focal points or women’s committees are housed in each government ministry and provides input and guidance regarding gender issues related to

<sup>19</sup> Op cit., USAID/Iraq. p. 18.

<sup>20</sup> Op cit., The Iraq Partners Forum. p. 79.

<sup>21</sup> Op cit., USAID/Iraq. p. 19-20.

<sup>22</sup> UNAMI. Unofficial Translation of “Elections Law”. Retrieved from [http://www.uniraq.org/documents/ElectoralMaterial/020310/Elections%20Law\\_2005\\_Unofficial%20UNAMI%20Translation\\_EN.pdf](http://www.uniraq.org/documents/ElectoralMaterial/020310/Elections%20Law_2005_Unofficial%20UNAMI%20Translation_EN.pdf) p. 1.

<sup>23</sup> Inter-Agency Information and Analysis Unit. “Iraq Governorate Profiles.” February 2011. Retrieved from <http://www.iauiraq.org/search.asp?search=governorate+profiles>.

## **Iraq GSP Gender Integration Strategy**

the work of the ministries (Parliament and PCs have women's committees which also provide input regarding gender-sensitive policy and legislation). Though not yet a full ministry, steps are being taken to make SMOWA a full ministry with an independent budget. As the GSP RFP indicates, the collaboration between the ministry director generals (the managers of regional ministry branches), PCs and Governors is hampered by insufficient capacity and unclear authority. .

Besides Iraq's internal efforts to increase gender equity, external players like USAID and other national donors have an extensive history of working with the GOI and Iraqi CSOs to increase the political participation of women and advance their status within the government. In 2010 for example, the National Democratic Institution (NDI) launched the "National Platform for Women" and worked with political party members, civil society and government officials to create a consensus and recommendations for gender-sensitive policy and political party action. Deputy Prime Minister Rafi al-Esawi noted that "advancing the status of women is a prerequisite to improving the economy, standard of living, human rights, and peace and security."<sup>24</sup> That government officials at the highest levels were so receptive of these gender integration efforts is a good indication that GSP's gender work will be supported by the government and other GSP stakeholders and thus, the recommendations within this gender integration strategy ought to be implemented to the greatest extent possible.

Based on the aforementioned status of men and women in Iraq, it is clear that men do face considerable danger and their own share of obstacles; however, the limitations in movement, education, and the economy fueled by social, religious, and cultural restrictions put Iraqi women in a particularly challenging situation which limits their participation in politics and government and access to efficient, quality public services. Hence the recommendations included within this strategy focus primarily on alleviating constraints facing women. Outlined are ways in which GSP can implement activities, trainings, and other interventions to support capacity building within the national, provincial, and local governments and ensure that decentralization optimizes women's representation and decision making within the government. Also described are recommendations to assist the government in providing better oversight of public services so as to increase men and women's access to public services mitigate gender inequities in service delivery.

---

<sup>24</sup> Op cit., USAID/Iraq. p. 87.

## **IDENTIFICATION OF GENDER CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES AND INITIATIVES**

Below we describe the existing gender constraints and opportunities as they relate to GSP's three components and corresponding activities. Following the identified constraints and opportunities are recommended possible interventions, activities, and training courses. These recommendations are based on research of best practices regarding gender and decentralization and public service delivery and on suggestions gathered during meetings with members of CSOs, the ILGA, a and former PC member. Their recommendations are significant as they represent activities and interventions that are most likely to receive the commitment of stakeholders and reflect Iraqi needs and priorities. While many of the activities and training courses outlined below specify women as the target participants and beneficiaries, they are not meant to be exclusive of men; rather they are intended to specifically include women. To complement these recommendations and the others that follow below are suggested indicators and benchmarks for monitoring and evaluating the project's success in meeting gender objectives.

It should be noted that the recommendations outlined below are a "menu" of recommended Possible Activities and Initiatives. It is understood that it is unlikely that all of these recommendations can be implemented; instead, GSP and USAID are encouraged to pick and chose from this "menu" of Possible Activities and Initiatives based on the project's priorities, time frame, and budget. The recommendations are intentionally written broadly (i.e. "support gender mainstreaming training for ILGA members") with the understanding that GSP and USAID will decide on specifics (i.e. "support gender mainstreaming training for the senior members of ILGA") based upon feasibility, sustainability, and interest and commitment from the stakeholders.

### **COMPONENT 1: LAW REFORM - LEGAL AND REGULATORY DECENTRALIZATION REFORMS CLARIFY THE AUTHORITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PROVINCIAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS.**

#### **Activity 1.1: Assist Local Delegates to Engage Policy Makers in Decentralization Reforms**

##### *Constraints and Opportunities*

The Iraqi Local Governance Association (ILGA) is an NGO made up of two PCs (three in the case of Baghdad) from each of the 18 governorates for a total of 37 members, five of whom are women. The ILGA members all belong to one of five committees, one being the Women's Committee which has six members (five women and one man). The purpose of the ILGA is to research and advocate for reform, policies, plans, and legislation at all levels of the government. One of GSP's first activities with the ILGA will be to conduct an assessment of their activities, resources, and challenges. Initial findings (which could be confirmed during GSP's assessment) from interviews and research suggest that only a small percentage of the ILGA (possibly as few as five

## **Iraq GSP Gender Integration Strategy**

members) has received any sort of gender training beyond basic gender awareness. Additionally, findings suggest that within the ILGA there is a lack of understanding of CEDAW, the Personnel Status Law, and public service issues facing women. Such lack of awareness and understanding prevents the ILGA from fully supporting or advocating policies and legislation that would improve the status of and services available to women in Iraq. In a decentralized government, the PCs decision-making power will increase, so to ensure their increase in power results in the betterment of their governorates, it is imperative ILGA be able to inform PCs of the needs and priorities of both male and female constituents. Furthermore, in order to engage in sophisticated policy dialogue with the GOI and advocate for an increase of women in the government and high level decision making positions (i.e. governors and ministers) and gender-sensitive policy reform, legislation and resources allocation, ILGA must be aware of the existing gender-related needs in public services, the constraints and inequities in laws and policy (such as the Personnel Status Law), and the potential benefits decentralization can have on women's empowerment. Therefore, GSP could support additional awareness raising workshops currently led by CSOs, university scholars, research institutes on gender issues (i.e. reliability of water service delivery and its impact on women and children's health).

Besides awareness raising workshops, GSP could also support training courses in gender analysis, mainstreaming, and GRB to build the capacity of ILGA members. Such training will improve the ILGA's ability to conduct research and analyze laws using a gender lens so that they can better identify gender implications resulting from decentralization and gender issues related to service delivery. In turn, this will enable them to more effectively advocate their positions regarding gender issues. ILGA Chairwoman, Wafa Fadhil, agreed that such training would be beneficial and also recommended that GSP support training in Gender Equality and that female member's leadership and business etiquette training. Iraqi culture supports traditional gender norms and male dominance and superiority, which does not serve women well in the political arena. Because of this, women in the government may need additional training to enable them to advance within the government and increase their representation. Women in the the ILGA (as well as women in the national and local government) must build their capacity to negotiate, advocate, speak publically, and liaise with heads of government. Therefore, in addition to training in the areas of gender analysis, gender mainstreaming, gender equality, and GRB, it is recommended that GSP support leadership and business etiquette training for ILGA members, especially for female ILGA members. An RFP may be used to identify local universities, scholars, or NGOs able to provide such gender training. Ideally, training would be subcontracted to a local entity which would be able to provide local context and practical application exercises, and facilitate in the local language. Women trainers should be used to the greatest extent possible to serve as role models and increase the perception of women as leaders and knowledgeable resources. Training of trainers (ToT) would be one method of retaining and transmitting this training to future ILGA members. Women ILGA members should be encouraged to participate in ToT and utilize the opportunity to build their capacity and leadership skills and ultimately, advance their careers within the government.

## **Iraq GSP Gender Integration Strategy**

GSP's work plan also includes support to ILGA in developing a local resource database for decentralization dialogue. Public policy research institutes, local think-tanks, interest groups, universities and academia, CSOs, media and citizen groups with experience analyzing laws and advocating for gender equality in legislation must be identified and included in the database (a preliminary contact list of such gender-focused CSOs and NGOs has been provided to the GSP staff) The Iraq Women's Network, for example, is a network of over 100 women's NGOs, thus making it a valuable resource of potential partners or grantees for GSP's gender related activities. Partnership with such entities is essential for ILGA as they will be a primary source of data, research, and constituent feedback regarding gender issues and concerns.

Representatives from CSOs, media, universities, private law firms, research institutions, advocacy groups, local experts, etc. al. with gender missions or work as well as prominent women in the national and local government, members of Women's Committees, SMOWA, and ministry gender focal points should be regularly invited to attend ILGA national conferences, regional workshops, and round tables including the planned GSP supported sub national outreach event over Council of Representatives decentralization agenda. Gender implications related to decentralization (for example, local governments in regions that are religiously conservative or ascribe to traditional roles for women may not be inclined use their new, decentralized authority to prioritize or allocate adequate resources for girls' education) should be on the agenda for discussion during the event and it is recommended that at least one high-profile member of the aforementioned gender representatives be a keynote speaker. These policy dialogue events present opportunities to engage the ILGA and key gender players and build consensus over gender priorities.

In order to increase the capacity of the ILGA and other partner CSO organizations to better communicate their priorities and advocate for gender equitable policies, they must fully understand methods for targeting women. GSP's planned communication training could emphasize the importance of gender-sensitive reporting and media outreach which targets women, as they make up over half of their constituents in many areas. Media advocacy campaigns could target women through TV, SMS, newspapers, the ILGA website; press conferences, press releases and informational materials strategically placed in areas frequented by women (i.e. schools, health centers, shopping areas, and hair salons) are potential outlets for ILGA to communicate gender-related priorities. The same ToT strategy recommended above could be applied here as well so that gender-sensitive reporting and methods of targeting women through the media are retained and passed on to future ILGA members and GOI staff.

MOUs are another possible entry point to integrate gender into the ILGA. GSP may consider adding verbiage to any future MOU with ILGA that requires the organization to commit to building their capacity to conduct gender analysis and integrate gender into their research and advocacy work. ILGA may be encouraged to adopt gender as a priority area of concentration.

### *Possible Activities and Initiatives*

## **Iraq GSP Gender Integration Strategy**

- Incorporate questions regarding members' receipt of gender training and their application of the skills learned in training into the ILGA assessment to confirm or deny ILGA's limited gender training.
- Training for ILGA members in: gender equality, analysis and mainstreaming; leadership; business etiquette; gender-sensitive reporting and media outreach; and GRB.
- Additional awareness raising workshops for ILGA on topics related gender implications related to public services and decentralization led by members CSOs, university scholars, research institutes, et al.
- Include gendered CSOs, universities, private law firms, research institutions, et al. in the ILGA resource databank.
- Ensure that gender experts, representatives from gendered organizations, and prominent women in the government are regularly invited to attend ILGA policy dialog events including the sub national outreach event over COR decentralization agenda and that gender issues related to decentralization are discussed during the event.
- Include modules on gender-sensitive reporting and communication methods in communication and social media training courses
- ToT for select ILGA members
- Include gender related terms in the MOU with ILGA

### **Activity 1.2: Support Authorities Responsible for Decentralization Reform**

#### *Constraints and Opportunities*

Because of the gender constraints and opportunities that can emerge from decentralization, it is important that stakeholders such as the Members of Parliament and Committees, key executive offices and policymakers (including the Ministry of State for Provincial Affairs (MSPA), the High Commission for Coordination among Provinces (HCCP), key advisors in the Prime Minister's Office, the Council of Ministers, and Council of Advisors to the Prime Minister (CAPM)) engage in dialog, understand the gender implications, and build consensus regarding how decentralization legislation can be used to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of the local government to provide better services to both men and women in the community. GSP will organize caucus sessions to serve as forums for reviewing proposals and draft amendments and revisions pertaining to the Provincial Powers Law and other decentralization-related efforts. GSP could coordinate the attendance of individuals from CSOs, universities, research institutes and other relevant experts that could provide input regarding possible gender implications of decentralization so as to raise awareness and influence policy makers' decentralization legislation and reform efforts. Women, Family, and Childhood's Committee members and gender focal points from the ministries could serve as members of the caucus to ensure that a gender lens is applied to decentralization legislation. This will also offer the Women, Family, and Childhood's Committee and gender focal points an opportunity to enhance coordination and increase dialog with gender CSOs as recommended by Ala Talabani, chair of the Council of Representatives Committee on Civil Society.<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup> Op cit., USAID/Iraq. p. 87.

## Iraq GSP Gender Integration Strategy

Decentralization dialog amongst policy makers (e.g. HCCP, CAPM, MSPA, COR committees and members) will also be facilitated through GSP established working groups which address subnational interests and their inclusion into national policy making. Similarly, NDI's National Platform for Women (see additional details in the Background section) created working groups for policy areas significant to women such as healthcare, education, economic empowerment, and participation. Participants of the working groups- which included women from PCs, NGOs, and political parties- went on to form advocacy committees to advance proposals in these policy areas. GSP could work with the National Platform for Women advocacy committees and organize for members to speak at or participate in GSP established working groups to build awareness and consensus around policies that respond to subnational gender issues. If a relationship with the NDI working groups or members is not feasible for any reason (though in a meeting with a representative of NDI they expressed interest in working together), the GSP established working group could review the National Platform for Women tool and policy recommendations to build their awareness of gender issues.

COR's Research Department will provide invaluable data, statistics, and research regarding best practices that will inform COR's decentralization legislation efforts. During an initial assessment, GSP will identify activities and capability level of the COR. Based on the results of the assessment, COR staff will be provided with technical assistance to build their capacity for legislative research, analysis, and drafting and oversight of legislation and budgets. GSP could include in the assessment questions which determine the COR's secretariat, research staff, and committees exposure to gender analysis and GRB training. Meetings and research to prepare this strategy suggest that COR has received little training to no training on these topics. Should the assessment confirm this, GSP could include training modules in gender analysis and GRB. While the PCs draft and submit a Provincial Development Strategy (PDS) outlining provincial public service priorities in water, sewage, health, and education, the budget allocations and service delivery come from the national government. COR and their staff's research and understanding of gender issues, therefore, must be sophisticated enough that they have the capacity to fully evaluate and prioritize the gender needs expressed in PC PDSs. Therefore, gender analysis training and GRB training (especially for the Budget Committee) would enable the COR to improve their awareness of gender issues and ability to evaluate, prioritize, plan, and allocate resources that mitigate gender inequities in public service delivery. As recommended under component one of this strategy, ILGA could receive ToT. This would allow ILGA to provide new ILGA members with gender analysis, gender mainstreaming, and GRB training, and could also allow ILGA to provide such training to COR staff.

### *Possible Activities and Initiatives*

- Encourage Women, Family, and Childhood's Committee members and gender focal points from the ministries to be caucus members that perform legislative review of decentralization amendments and drafts. (Alternately: set a quota that at least 25% of the caucus members be women)

## **Iraq GSP Gender Integration Strategy**

- Invite gender organizations and scholars to speak at caucus sessions.
- Build linkages between GSP established working groups and NDI's Platform for Women working groups through joint membership, discussion groups, or review of the tool and recommendations.
- Assess CORs receipt of training in and application of gender analysis and GRB.
- Support gender analysis and GRB training to COR staff including committees and research department staff as needed (possibly provided by ILGA)

### **Activity 1.3: Assist Government Lawyers to Understand Provincial Authorities**

#### *Constraints and Opportunities*

Under this activity GSP will aid COR in developing their decentralization agenda by disseminating legal and technical analysis of decentralization laws to general counsel offices in PCs and government offices. Though limited, there is research<sup>26</sup> on the impact of decentralization on women's empowerment and representation as well as the effects of decentralization on women's access to public services. Government lawyers would be well served by familiarizing themselves with this research as understanding gender implications should influence their drafts of and recommendations for decentralization legislation. GSP could support government lawyers by identifying and supporting additional research linking gender, decentralization, and service delivery. GSP could provide grants to think tanks, universities, or research institutions to undertake additional research on these topics.

Activities under this component will support law associations or law schools to develop continuing legal education courses on topics of decentralization. Given the gender implications associated with decentralization, law association and law school coursework related to the topic of decentralization ought to include information regarding the opportunities it offers for empowering women and improving their access to public services. GSP could assess law associations and schools' curriculum to determine if gender rights, gender equality in law, and gender as it relates to decentralization are part of the coursework. If these topics are not covered, GSP could help law associations and law schools acquire from other schools or develop coursework on such topics.

#### *Possible Activities and Initiatives*

- Identify research and think tanks, universities, and research institutions conducting research regarding the linkages between decentralization, service delivery, and gender
- Grant funds to research entities to conduct research linking gender, decentralization, and service delivery
- Identify and disseminate such research to government lawyers

---

<sup>26</sup> Examples include: International Development Research Center's report *Decentralization, Local Power and Women's Rights: Global Trends in Participation, Representation and Access to Public Services* found here: <http://www.undp.org/rw/PMU-Press-Release-Conference.pdf>; From the *Journal of Political Studies* Vol. 18, Issue 1, 61-75 "Decentralization and Women's Empowerment: Exploring the Linkages" found here: <http://pu.edu.pk/images/journal/pols/pdf-files/Decentralization%20-%205.pdf>; and the International Research and Consulting Centre's report *Gender and Decentralized Governance* found here: [http://www.federalism.ch/files/categories/IRCC/winter2004review\\_rev\\_june05.pdf](http://www.federalism.ch/files/categories/IRCC/winter2004review_rev_june05.pdf).

## **Iraq GSP Gender Integration Strategy**

- Assess law association and law school coursework to determine whether or not it includes content related to gender rights, gender equality in law and gender as it relates to decentralization.
- Assist law associations and law schools in the acquisition of coursework covering gender rights, gender equality in law, and gender as it relates to decentralization

### **COMPONENT 2: INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING - TARGETED PROVINCIAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS INSTITUTIONALIZE CORE AUTHORITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.**

#### **Activity 2.1: Assist in Core Authority Institutionalization**

##### *Constraints and Opportunities*

Activities under this component will focus largely on building the capacity of targeted provincial and local governments and begin with an initial assessment to determine capacity and needs. It is recommended that GSP assess whether or not council members, particularly mid and senior level staff, technocrats, and engineers and those tasked with budgeting, planning, and development of PDS' Accelerated Reconstruction and Development Programs (ARDP) have received gender analysis, gender mainstreaming, or GRB training. Like the ILGA and COR, it is essential that members of provincial and local government staff understand the linkages between women and decentralization and how decentralization may- negatively or positively- impact women's empowerment and access to public services. Staff must be able to effectively apply a gender lens to data collection, project-design, and feasibility studies. Results of the assessment will determine what gender training courses staff have received and if they are applying gender mainstreaming and GRB. Based on assessment results, GSP could then support gender training courses in conjunction with planning training, as needed. Gender analysis and mainstreaming training could be targeted at mid and senior level staff in provincial councils and governors offices (including technocrats, engineers, and planning staff) and GRB training could be targeted at budget unit staff.

As recommended under component one of this strategy, ILGA could receive Tot provide gender analysis, gender mainstreaming, and GRB training to provincial officials and their staff. Gender analysis, gender mainstreaming, and GRB training would improve the capacity of provincial and local government staff to produce gender-sensitive policies, plans, and budgets under their new decentralized authority. Additionally, ILGA could facilitate gender-sensitive reporting and media outreach training which would better equip provincial and local governments to effectively publicize and distribute public laws that reach male and female constituents. GSP could coordinate training of provincial and local office staff by ILGA. ILGA developed training materials may then be passed on or adapted by provincial universities and/or civil service institutes for their use. Conversely, if provincial universities and/or civil service institutes are found to possess such training, GSP could coordinate the sharing of such training materials with the ILGA. Should ILGA not possess the capacity to provide such training courses, GSP may assist in identifying provincial universities, civil service institutes, CSOs, or other entities capable of providing such training. GSP could also assist provincial universities and civil service institutes lacking gender related coursework (in women's rights, family law, personal

## **Iraq GSP Gender Integration Strategy**

law, and human rights courses, for example) to develop or acquire such material from other universities so as to ensure that future civil servants' education provides them with a foundation in gender as it relates to decentralization, law, human and civil rights, policy planning, and budgeting. GSP could also assist providers of continuing legal education courses for civil servants to acquire gender-related coursework.

Activities under this component also consist of assisting council legislative committees, members, and staff to improve the legislative process by establishing Rules of Procedure and standards for drafting laws. GSP could assist provincial and local government staff to adopt a rules of procedure or a provincial/local government-wide policy that gender mainstreaming and GRB must be applied to all policies, planning, and budgeting. Given the staff's existing (or enhanced through GSP supported training) knowledge of the importance of gender mainstreaming and GRB, it may be expected that they would be amenable to adopting such policies. Palestine has adopted a similar policy which mandates the use of gender mainstreaming in all ministerial planning. Similarly, local and national governments around the world, including Pakistan, Afghanistan, Palestine, Egypt and Morocco apply GRB to their budgets. While adopting a gender mainstreaming and GRB policy does not guarantee its immediate application, it will set a standard that Iraqi provincial and local governments can measure themselves against and assert the importance of gender mainstreaming and GRB in policy, planning, and budgeting.

This activity and its subactivities will be largely driven by the Organizational Self-Assessment Transformation Program (OSTP) methodology. This approach involves selecting change agents amongst provincial and local government staff who are receive training to identify areas for improvement. Change agents then create evidence base to justify change, produce a transformation plan, implement and monitor change, and finally "graduate". The process is cyclical and begins again with the nomination of new change agents. The aforementioned gender training courses suggested under this activity (gender analysis, mainstreaming, GRB, and gender-sensitive reporting / media outreach) may incorporated into the initial training change agents receive. This way, change agents can self-identify the contents of the training courses as areas for improvement and advocate for such training courses for their colleagues. They can then set benchmarks for change, such as adoption of the rules of procedure and policies that mandate use of gender mainstreaming and GRB, and then self-assess their progress. This way, change agents in the local and provincial governments lead their own transformation rather than GSP. Finally, to build capacity and leadership amongst female staffers, women should be encouraged to participate as change agents. Positive discrimination, in the form of a quota, such as requiring 25 percent of all change agents to be women, may be applied as needed.

### *Possible Activities and Initiatives*

- During initial assessment, determine local and provincial staffs receipt of gender analysis, mainstreaming, GRB, and gender-sensitive reporting / media outreach
- Support ILGA's provision of gender analysis and mainstreaming training targeted at mid and senior level staff in provincial councils and governors offices

## **Iraq GSP Gender Integration Strategy**

- (including technocrats, engineers, and planning staff) and GRB training targeted at budget unit staff
- Support ILGA's (other other capable institution) provision of gender-sensitive reporting / media outreach to local and provincial staff responsible for publication and dissemination of public laws
  - Facilitate knowledge sharing between ILGA, provincial universities, civil service institutions, and continuing education providers by coordinating the exchange of training materials related to gender (i.e. gender analysis and mainstreaming, GRB, and gender-sensitive reporting / media outreach).
  - Assist provincial universities, civil service institutes, and continuing education providers to develop or acquire from other universities gender related coursework.
  - Assist local and provincial governments to adopt policies which mandate the use of gender mainstreaming and GRB in policymaking, planning, and budgeting.
  - Encourage (or implement a quota requiring) women's participation as change agents of OSTP
  - Assist ILGA to pilot gender training courses (i.e. gender analysis, mainstreaming, GRB, and gender-sensitive reporting / media outreach) for change agent participants.

### **Activity 2.2: Assist in Community Outreach Conduct**

#### *Constraints and Opportunities*

For provincial governments to produce legislation, plans, and provincial strategies that adequately reflect citizens needs and priorities, they must solicit input from both men and women in the provinces. The Community Action Group (CAG) methodology, which GSP will apply here and component 3, systematically moves community priorities up the provincial level and builds the capacity of provincial actors to transparently prioritize projects and evaluate communities for project execution. As in the OSTP methodology, change agents are identified, but in this case, agents are community members elected during town hall meetings. The CAG process requires that 40 percent of change agents, called CAG members, be women and that all agents undergo a series of training courses on topics including participatory needs assessment, project prioritization and gender awareness. It is expected that this community outreach coupled with gender awareness training, equal representation of men and women in CAG, and the participates intimate knowledge of their own community will allow them to effectively develop project priorities that respond to gender issues and needs (i.e. low enrollment rates of boys in secondary school and high maternal mortality rates).

Simultaneously, GSP will assist PCs in gathering input through various citizen outreach methods including public hearings, town hall meetings, focus groups, citizen report cards, SMS surveys. CSOs, research institutes, think tanks, women's groups and other individuals able to provide insight on gender issues within the community should be encouraged to participate in these forums and present priorities and recommendations for projects. GSP could, by way of email, for example, request such CSOs to provide a list of priorities and recommendations. An email to the Iraq Women's Network, for example would reach their network of over 100 women's organizations. Survey questions and

## **Iraq GSP Gender Integration Strategy**

methods must be crafted so as to be gender sensitive and must consider how questions are worded and how and when they are conducted so as to ensure accuracy in responses and maximize equal representation of male and female respondents. GSP could take measures to ensure that such community outreach methods, especially surveys and other data collection methods are produced and conducted in a gender sensitive manner. Additionally, such data must be analyzed from a gender perspective to determine if responses indicate potential gender inequalities in policy or basic service.

CAG and citizen input coupled with the gender mainstreaming and GRB training (recommended under activity 2.1) and technical support in planning will allow PCs to better translate citizens' feedback into policy and provincial plans. Currently, there appears to be a disconnect between the actual local needs and those included in PDS'. Despite data which indicates unequal access to public services for Iraqi women and variety of other gender-related issues (i.e. enrollment rates of rural girls in elementary being as low as 60 percent<sup>27</sup> and 23 percent of the 17 percent of women in the labor force being unemployed<sup>28</sup> and 50 percent of women surveyed having no access to electricity and water<sup>29</sup>) only four out of 12 PDS summaries available for review include gender-related priorities in their strategy and only in the health sector (i.e. reduce maternal mortality rates, increase the number of gynecologists). This would indicate the importance of CAG groups, CSO, and citizen input regarding gender needs and priorities as well as the PCs' need for GSP technical support to incorporate this input into PDS and ARDPs.

Under this component, GSP will also support training for PCs in methods of maintaining constituency relations, constituency services and civic education. PCs must understand the importance of listening to constituent needs and priorities and communicating their efforts so that both male and female citizens are informed and understand that their voices are being heard. PCs may overly focus their attention on gaining support from male constituents because of the perception that they are the "decision makers," in the community. The voting power of women and the influence of their CSO and community networks should not be overlooked or underestimated. It is recommended that in constituency relations training, the importance of gender-sensitive communication and being responsive to the needs and priorities of female constituents, be addressed in these training courses. Likewise, constituency service and civic education training must emphasize the importance of informing women of their democratic rights, particularly, their voting rights. Research and anecdotal information gleaned during meetings for this strategy suggest that male, and particularly female citizens, are unaware of their rights. Constituency service and civic education can be an important tool for informing citizens of their democratic rights and rights to public services. Training should address how information should be disseminated to adequately reach both men and women, bearing in mind limitation in literacy and mobility, particularly for women. PCs may be encouraged to use women's community group meetings, religious gatherings, SMS, town meetings,

---

<sup>27</sup> Op. cit., Republic of Iraq Ministry of Planning. p.146.

<sup>28</sup> Op cit., USAID/Iraq. p. 36.

<sup>29</sup> Women for Women International. Iraq. Retrieved from <http://www.womenforwomen.org/global-initiatives-helping-women/help-women-iraq.php>.

## **Iraq GSP Gender Integration Strategy**

or other methods to ensure both men and women are reached and provided with constituency services and education.

### *Possible Activities and Initiatives*

- Support CSOs, research institutes, think tanks, women’s groups and other individuals able to provide insight on gender issues within the community to participate in community outreach activities
- Solicit priority lists and policy and planning recommendation regarding gender needs and priorities from CSOs, research institutes, think tanks, women’s groups and other individuals able to provide insight on gender issues within the community
- Provide technical support to ensure that surveys and data collection methods are gender sensitive and analyzed with a gender lens
- Assist PCs to incorporate CAG and citizen priorities and recommendation, especially those related to gender, into PDS’ and ARDPs.
- Include in constituency relations constituency services and civic education training courses material on: gender-responsive communication; the importance of providing civic education that informs citizens, particularly women of their democratic and voting rights; and the importance of being responsive to the needs and priorities of female constituents.

## **COMPONENT 3: EXECUTIVE OVERSIGHT - TARGETED PROVINCIAL AND LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS HOLD EXECUTIVE MINISTRIES ACCOUNTABLE FOR IMPROVED SERVICES.**

### **Activity 3.1: Support Local Oversight of Service Delivery**

#### *Constraints and Opportunities*

Under this activity, GSP will strengthen the convening powers of PCs and governors to bring together representatives of PC, governors offices, ministerial departments, local CSOs, businesses, and media to discuss “hot topics” related to key social services. This presents an opportunity for those organizations with research, statistics, and insight to raise awareness of gender issues related to service delivery (i.e. high illiteracy rates amongst females, high maternal mortality rates, limited access to water and electricity for widows and other vulnerable populations). Representatives of entities possessing this insight should be included as active participants in “hot topic” meetings, workshops, and round-tables, so as to raise awareness and advocate for the integration of gender issues into PCs’, governors’, and ministries’ priorities, planning and budgeting. Some GOI members may be familiar with these gender issues, but unwilling to prioritize them or unaware of how to address them. Giving voice to these representatives allows them the opportunity not only to raise awareness of gender issues, but to make informed recommendations. Additionally, each participating ministry’s gender focal point could be engaged to speak at these events to communicate what issues, priorities, and recommendations they have identified regarding gender and public services. These events could open up a regular dialog between gender focal points in ministries and PC and governor office staff. Once this channel of communication is open, GSP could coordinate

## **Iraq GSP Gender Integration Strategy**

regular meetings or communication between PCs, governors, and ministerial gender focal points to discuss ministries implementation of reforms and projects which address gender and service delivery. Gender focal points may be able to provide a layer of internal oversight and monitoring that would support PCs and governors efforts.

Awareness raising and policy dialog alone is not enough to increase performance and accountability within the government. Thus media exposure of such events is critical as it give CSOs and gender advocates the opportunity to reach broader audiences and gain the support needed to effectively apply pressure to the GOI to be accountable and responsive to gender issues in service delivery. GSP can help coordinate media presence at such events to assist with public exposure of gender issues and government's responses to those issues.

In Iraq, ministries are the providers of public services, while officials at the provincial level, governors and local councils provide oversight and monitoring. GSP will conduct an initial assessment to determine what accountability mechanism are currently being utilized to provide oversight. Such mechanisms should monitor whether or not ministries are implementing projects, procedures, and services that are responsive to the gender priorities in the PDS' (at this point, only gender related priorities in the health sector have been identified). In creating or adapting accountability mechanisms, GSP could ensure that such the mechanisms monitors and evaluates ministries integration of gender in their service delivery.

### *Possible Activities and Initiatives*

- Engage CSOs, think tanks, research institutions, women's groups and other entities with insight on gender issues related to service deliver to actively participate in "hot topic" meetings, workshops, and round tables with PCs, governors' offices and ministerial staff.
- Coordinate dialog between PCs, governors, and gender focal points to gain insight (and another layer of monitoring and oversight) into ministries implementation of gender issues related to public services.
- Coordinate media coverage of such events and ensure press coverage of priority issues, recommendations, and government responses, especially regarding gender issues in public service delivery
- Include monitoring and evaluation of gender integration in ministerial into oversight and accountability mechanisms adapted or developed for use by provincial councils, governors and local councils.

### **Activity 3.2: Engage Policy Makers on Service Delivery Reforms**

#### *Constraints and Opportunities*

Community outreach activities recommended under Component 2 will link with those in Component 3 and leverage CAG activities. Not only will CSOs, research institutes, think tanks, women's groups, and other entities be able to provide insight on gender needs and priorities within the community, but they can also be mobilized through grant assistance to serve as monitoring groups that inform PCs and governors offices of service delivery

## **Iraq GSP Gender Integration Strategy**

issues, including those that disproportionately impact women. Through CSO's regular reporting of gender issues in service delivery (i.e. rural women's access to clean water, prenatal care, and electricity) PCs and governors offices will be better informed and equipped with evidence based evaluations to hold ministries accountable.

Citizen satisfaction surveys, government report cards, and other methods of soliciting citizen feedback like customer service windows, website comment submissions offer yet another opportunity for gathering information about gender issues regarding service delivery and a method for tracking progress once reform efforts are underway. GSP could ensure that gender considerations are taken into account in the design of customer feedback methods (i.e. communication/questions are gender sensitive and dissemination takes into account locations frequented and accessible to both men and women). GSP will conduct a joint review of citizen satisfaction data could build the capacity of provincial and local governments to analyze results from a gender perspective. By using a gender lens to analyzing data, staff will have a better understanding of how access to and quality of delivery services may be disproportionately affecting women.

### *Possible Activities and Initiatives*

- Engage CSOs, research institutes, think tanks, women's groups, and other entities through grants to serve as monitors of service delivery and provide regular reports to provincial and local governments
- Design methods of capturing citizen feedback that take into account gender
- Build the capacity of monitoring and evaluation staff in provincial and local governments to analyze citizen feedback using a gender lens to identify gender related constraints and issues in service delivery.

## **CONCLUSION**

This gender strategy makes every effort to lay out objectives concerning gender, and address how interventions that address gender concerns could be integrated throughout project activities. Project technical staff is urged to continue in-depth discussions with USAID, national, provincial and local government staff, including the ILGA, and other stakeholders; conduct mini-assessments; and complete a deeper review of the literature to confirm observations; and refine activities to determine their feasibility and sustainability. Much of the feasibility of these recommendations relies on the stability of the Iraqi government. With the withdrawal of the American troops in December 2011, there is a risk of regression regarding women's rights and participation. This may result in violence and additional security risks for women and resistance towards activities which relate to gender issues, women's representation in government, and access to public services. Project staff is advised to maintain dialog with gender CSOs, women in the government, and other stakeholders to assess the climate regarding gender and act accordingly. Project staff should take a "light handed" approach to gender emphasizing it not as a Western concept, but as a development approach for a more effective and efficient government, economy, and society. As much as possible, the project should work through change agents to establish gender and gender training a priority identified within and facilitated by the GOI. If gender becomes a topic that is too controversial and affects project implementation, the project may suspend gender activities until it becomes

## **Iraq GSP Gender Integration Strategy**

safe enough to reintegrate gender. Gender activities should be integrated into planned activities as much as possible so that they are cost effective and not perceived to be one-off activities that are being imposed because of USAID regulations. Gender training should be complemented by active participation by and coordination with gender CSOs and community to ensure that GOI policy, plans, and budgets reflect public needs and priorities. Media coverage will hold the GOI accountable and encourage them to make good on their commitments towards policies and projects which address gender issues in government and public services. The desired result is that these gender-focused interventions increase gender equity within policy, planning, and budgeting of Iraq's decentralizing government and result in gender-sensitive service delivery to the Iraqi people thus maximizing project benefits for both men and women.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GENDER-SENSITIVE INDICATORS**

According to USAID's ADS 203.3.4.3 GSP performance management and evaluation must include gender-sensitive indicators and sex-disaggregated data. Below are recommendations on incorporating gender into GSP's monitoring and evaluation:

### **Sex-disaggregated Data**

Disaggregating project data by sex will add an additional layer of detail to project reporting and assist the project in determining whether designed activities are gender balanced. This data is particularly important as the GSP contract requires that 25 percent of training participants be women.

The project may also consider other disaggregation attributes such as age and locality.

Indicators that GSP could express and male to female ratios:

- Ratio of male to female change agents in OSTP
- Ratio of male to female CAG members in CAP
- Ratio of male to female trainers and recipients of ToT

### **Gender Sensitive Indicators**

Gender sensitive indicators go beyond just disaggregating data by sex. Gender sensitive indicators provide insight into whether or not project activities are impacting gender and increasing gender equity and equality.

Suggested gender-sensitive indicators for GSP:

- Number of gender-related priorities and projects included in PDS and ARDP
- Number of gender-related modules included in ILGA, COR, PC planning, policy, and budget, and citizen engagement, et al. training courses
- Increase in women responding to customer service surveys, government report cards, etc.
- Number of CSOs, research institutions, think tanks with gender missions or work receiving grants
- Number of grantees implementing activities with a gender focus
- Number of national, provincial, and local government budgeting units utilizing GRB
- Number of national, provincial, and local government planning units utilizing gender mainstreaming

## **ANNEX 1: GENDER TERMINOLOGY<sup>30</sup>**

### **Sex**

Sex refers to the biological characteristics that define humans as female or male.

### **Gender**

The economic, political, and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being male or female. The social definitions of what it means to be male or female vary among cultures and change over time. (USAID ADS Chapters 200–203). Gender refers to the array of socially constructed roles and relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviors, values, and relative power and influence that society ascribes to the two sexes on a differential basis. Gender is an acquired identity that is learned, changes over time, and varies widely within and across cultures. Gender is relational and refers not simply to women or men but to the relationship between them.

### **Gender Roles**

Communities and societies create social norms of behavior, values, and attitudes that are deemed appropriate for men and women and the relations between them. These roles are assigned by social criteria rather than biological. For example, childbearing is a female sex role because men cannot bear children. Although both men and women can rear children, these duties are socially assigned.

### **Gender Relations**

A term that emphasizes the relationship between men and women as demonstrated by their respective roles in power sharing, decision making, the division of labor, returns to labor, both within the household and in the society at large.

### **Gender Mainstreaming or Integrating**

The process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies, or programs in any area and at all levels. It refers to strategies for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic, and social spheres—such that inequality between men and women is not perpetuated.

A continuum exists for gender mainstreaming. Gender-Negative refers to development activities in which gender inequalities (norms, roles, and stereotypes) are reinforced in the process of achieving desired development outcomes. Gender-Neutral activities are ones in which gender is not considered relevant to the development outcome but the process and the outcome do not worsen or improve gender norms, roles, and relations. Gender-Sensitive activities view gender as a means and aim to redress existing gender inequalities and gender norms, roles, and access to resources so that project goals can be reached.

---

<sup>30</sup> Adapted from USAID's Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Website. "Gender Terminology". Retrieved from [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PNADL089.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADL089.pdf).

## **Iraq GSP Gender Integration Strategy**

In Gender-Positive activities, the focus remains on development outcomes, but changing gender norms, roles, and access to resources is seen as central to achieving positive development outcomes. For Gender-Transformative activities, addressing gender issues is viewed as central to both positive development outcomes and transforming unequal gender relations to promote shared power, control of resources, decision making, and support for women's empowerment.

### **Gender Analysis**

A systematic approach, usually using social science methodologies, for examining problems, situations, projects, programs, and policies to identify the gender issues and impacts. There are a number of tools available for conducting gender analyses. Gender analysis of a development program involves identifying the gender issues for the larger context (i.e., structural factors); specific sites; and the issues and differential impacts of program objectives, strategies, and methods of implementation. Gender analysis must be done at all stages of the development process; one must always ask how a particular activity, decision, or plan will affect men differently from women in areas such as access and value of labor, property access and ownership, access to information and services, and social status.

### **Data: Sex- or Gender-Disaggregated**

Information differentiated on the basis of what pertains to women and their roles and to men and their roles. More correctly termed sex-disaggregated when collected and analyzed for men and women.

### **Gender Role Stereotyping**

The portrayal, in media or books or conversations, of socially assigned gender roles as "normal" and "natural."

### **Gender Division of Labor**

An overall societal pattern where women are allotted one set of gender roles and men are allotted another set. An unequal gender division of labor refers to situations in which there is an unequal division of the rewards of labor by sex, i.e., discrimination. The most obvious pattern in the gender division of labor is that women are mostly confined to unpaid domestic work and unpaid food production, whereas men dominate in cash crop production and wage employment.

### **Gender Equality**

Refers to the absence of discrimination, on the basis of a person's sex, in the allocation of resources or benefits or in the access to services. Gender equality entails the concept that all human beings, both men and women, are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by stereotypes, rigid gender roles, or prejudices. Gender equality means that the different behaviors, aspirations, and needs of women and men are considered, valued, and favored equally. It does not mean that women and men have to become the same, but that their rights, responsibilities, and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Inequality, discrimination, and differential treatment on the basis of sex can be structural (i.e., it is practiced by public or

## **Iraq GSP Gender Integration Strategy**

social institutions and maintained by administrative rules and laws and involves the distribution of income, access to resources, and participation in decision making).

### **Gender Equity**

Gender equity means fairness of treatment for women and men, according to their respective needs. This may include equal treatment or treatment that is different but considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations, and opportunities (e.g., equal treatment before the law, equal access to social provisions; education; equal pay for work of the same value). In the development context, a gender equity goal often requires built-in measures to compensate for the historical and social disadvantages of women. Specific measurements and monitoring are employed to ensure that, at a minimum, programs, policies, and projects implemented do not leave women worse off than men in their peer groups and families and that measures are taken to compensate for historical and social disadvantages.

### **Gender Sensitivity and Gender Awareness**

The ability to recognize gender issues and especially the ability to recognize women's different perceptions and interests arising from their different social location and different gender roles. Gender sensitivity is considered the beginning stage of gender awareness. The latter is more analytical, more critical, and more "questioning" of gender disparities. Gender awareness is the ability to identify problems arising from gender inequality and discrimination, even if these are not very evident on the surface or are "hidden" (i.e., not part of the general or commonly accepted explanation of what and where the problem lies).

### **Gender-Blind**

Person, policy, or institution that does not recognize that gender is an essential determinant of the life choices available to us in society.

### **Gender Planning**

A planning approach that recognizes the different roles that women and men play in society and the fact that they often have different needs.

### **Sources:**

Moser, C. (1993) *Gender Planning and Development: Theory, Practice, and Training*. Routledge: London, UK. [www.bigpond.com.kh/users/gad/glossary/gender.htm](http://www.bigpond.com.kh/users/gad/glossary/gender.htm)  
[global.finland.fi/julkaisut/taustat/nav\\_gender/glossary.htm](http://global.finland.fi/julkaisut/taustat/nav_gender/glossary.htm) [www.un-instraw.org](http://www.un-instraw.org)

## **ANNEX 2: GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE GSP WORKPLAN**

The aim of a “mainstreaming” program is to integrate gender issues into all of an organization’s activities and objectives with the ultimate goal to promote gender equality and participation. The following principles reflect a gender-sensitive approach that should ultimately inform all activities and initiatives of the GSP work plan.

### **I. Stakeholders and Counterparts**

- When engaging stakeholders and counterparts, promote inclusion of women’s voices through female government officials with decision-making authority and women’s organizations.

### **II. Data Gathering**

- When requesting/reviewing data, use gender-sensitive indicators<sup>31</sup>
- Promote collection and publication of sex-disaggregated data about the Iraqi national and local government, and public sector and services by key counterparts and stakeholders.
- Ensure that GSP project performance monitoring indicators are sex disaggregated to the fullest extent possible and note ratios of men: women’s participation.

### **III. Communications/Public Awareness**

- To ensure gender sensitivity and effectiveness of public communications conducted through GSP, women should be consulted in creating effective messaging and determining communications mechanisms that may be specifically designed to effectively reach women.
- Communication should be done through channels that reach a broad population of women keeping in mind the high levels of illiteracy
- Activities related to public service reforms should develop communications outreach to increase women’s understanding of laws and processes, especially those related to political participation, public services, and voting rights.

### **IV. Training**

- The landscape of women’s position in local government in Iraq could easily result in women’s exclusion from training opportunities. When women are not readily

---

<sup>31</sup> USAID/DevTech System. “Integrating Attention to Gender in Development Programming” Module Integrating Gender in Objectives, Indicators and Performance Monitoring and Evaluation. November 2010 and Feb 2011. Version 1 [http://www.devtechsys.com/gender\\_training/sar/training/16\\_integrating\\_gender\\_in\\_indicators\\_and\\_progrm\\_cycle.pdf](http://www.devtechsys.com/gender_training/sar/training/16_integrating_gender_in_indicators_and_progrm_cycle.pdf) and Version 2 [http://www.devtechsys.com/gender\\_training/dr/training/8-0\\_indicators\\_ME\\_dr.pdf](http://www.devtechsys.com/gender_training/dr/training/8-0_indicators_ME_dr.pdf).

## **Iraq GSP Gender Integration Strategy**

identified as participants in GSP-sponsored trainings, the Project should actively seek out women who can benefit from the training.

- The lack of women in high level positions within the local government may exclude them from training unless their inclusion is specified. Inclusion of such women can serve to build their capacity and elevate their professional status.
- To ensure women's participation, the time and location of training activities should take into account that women's mobility may be limited, they may require separate facilities from men, and may have time restrictions based on household responsibilities.
- GSP should utilize female trainers and include female participants in training of trainer activities as often as possible in order to promote female role models and ensure sustainability. GSP must first assess the audience to ensure that the participants would be receptive to a female trainer. Female trainers may need to be senior-level or paired with a male trainer to ensure they are well respected by participants.
- Government staff receives many training opportunities which are optional. This may result in low participation for gender training courses which may be perceived to be of low importance. To maximize participation, get buy-in from senior staff that can provide incentives and encourage participation. If possible, make gender related training courses mandatory as opposed to optional.
- The GSP contract mandates at least 25% of training participants be women.

### **V. Grants**

- Include a gender section within the grants manual
- Preference may be given to women or minority owned or operated CSOs, research institutes or think tanks or those entities whose work has a gender focus
- Identify and support CSOs, research institutes, think tanks, and universities to conduct research of gender as it relates to decentralization and public services in Iraq
- Identify and support CSOs, universities, civil service, and continuing education institutes in the development of coursework related to gender and decentralization and public services.

### **VI. Reform Initiatives**

- Evaluation and prioritization of reform initiatives should consider the potential impact and unintended consequences of increasing women's participation and increasing gender equity within the local government.
- Proposed legislative, process, and procedural reforms should be discussed with potential female beneficiaries and organizations focused on women's participation in the public sector to ensure that they are gender-sensitive and are responsive to women's needs and priorities.

**ANNEX 3: TABLE: PROPORTION OF SEATS HELD BY WOMEN IN NATIONAL PARLIAMENT AS OF FEBRUARY 2011(%)<sup>32</sup>**

Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament (%)	
Governorate	%
Babil	27.3
Basrah	35.3
Erbil	33.3
Missan	33.3
Najaf	22.2
Qadisiya	25.0
Sulaymaniyah	16.7
Thi-Qar	30.8
Kerbala	16.7
Salah-al Din	9.1
Wassit	33.3
Dahuk	37.5
Diyala	16.7
Kirkuk	15.4
Muthanna	40.0
Baghdad	33.0
Ninewa	25.0
Anbar	21.4

<sup>32</sup> Derived from Inter-Agency Information and Analysis Unit. "Iraq Governorate Profiles." February 2011. Retrieved from <http://www.iauiraq.org/search.asp?search=governorate+profiles>.

**ANNEX 4: MEETINGS HELD DECEMBER 2011**

Date	Institution	Representative
12-Dec-11	Kaizen	Omar Al Kindi, Change Management Specialist
12-Dec-11	CHF	Peter Blunt, Sr. Technical Advisor- Decentralization and Local Governance
13-Dec-11	United Lawyers Firm, LLC	Hadeel A. Hassan, Lawyer
15-Dec-11	National Democratic Institute	Sally Abi Khalil, Program Manager for Women's Political Participation
17-Dec-11	ILGA	Wafa Fadhil, Chairwoman
23-Dec-11	Baghdad Women's Association (BWA)	Liza Nissan Hido, President

## **ANNEX 5: DOCUMENTS REVIEWED**

The Iraq Partners Forum. *The Iraq Briefing Book*. December 2010.

Inter-Agency Information and Analysis Unit. “Iraq Governorate Profiles.” February 2011. Retrieved from <http://www.iauiraq.org/search.asp?search=governorate+profiles>.

OECD. *Social Institutions and Gender Index*. 12 December 2011, <http://genderindex.org/country/iraq>.

Open Source Center. *Iraq Provincial Elections Guide 2009*.

Republic of Iraq Ministry of Planning. *National Development Plan for the Years 2010-2014*. 2010.

UNAMI Human Rights Office and Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. *2010 Report on Human Rights in Iraq*. 2010.

UNAMI. Unofficial Translation of “Elections Law”. Retrieved from [http://www.uniraq.org/documents/ElectoralMaterial/020310/Elections%20Law\\_2005\\_Unofficial%20UNAMI%20Translation\\_EN.pdf](http://www.uniraq.org/documents/ElectoralMaterial/020310/Elections%20Law_2005_Unofficial%20UNAMI%20Translation_EN.pdf).

USAID/DevTech System. “Integrating Attention to Gender in Development Programming” Module Integrating Gender in Objectives, Indicators and Performance Monitoring and Evaluation. November 2010 Version  
1 [http://www.devtechsys.com/gender\\_training/sar/training/16\\_integrating\\_gender\\_in\\_indicators\\_and\\_program\\_cycle.pdf](http://www.devtechsys.com/gender_training/sar/training/16_integrating_gender_in_indicators_and_program_cycle.pdf) and February 2011 Version  
2 [http://www.devtechsys.com/gender\\_training/dr/training/8-0\\_indicators\\_ME\\_dr.pdf](http://www.devtechsys.com/gender_training/dr/training/8-0_indicators_ME_dr.pdf).

USAID/Iraq. *USAID/Iraq Gender Assessment*. May 2010.

USAID’s Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Website. “Gender Terminology”. Retrieved from [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PNADL089.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADL089.pdf).

USAID’s Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Website. “Why Invest In Women?” Retrieved from <http://50.usaid.gov/infographic-why-invest-in-women/usaid-women/>.

UNWomen. Gender Responsive Budgeting Website. Retrieved from <http://www.gender-budgets.org/>.

Women for Women International. Iraq. Retrieved from <http://www.womenforwomen.org/global-initiatives-helping-women/help-women-iraq.php>.