

# GENESYS

Special Studies  
No. 9

**Democracy  
and Gender:  
A Practical Guide  
to U.S.A.I.D. Programs**

By  
David Hirschmann

THE  
**FUTURES**  
GROUP





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**Democracy  
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A Practical Guide  
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By  
David Hirschmann

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*GENESYS (Gender in Economic and Social Systems) is a U.S.A.I.D. - funded project to support the Agency's efforts to integrate women into the national economies of developing countries around the world. The project provides assistance to U.S.A.I.D. staff worldwide in reviewing, initiating, or expanding gender considerations in development activities for sustainable economic and social development. Project components include technical assistance, training, research and evaluation, and information dissemination and communications. The sectoral foci are private enterprise, agriculture and rural development, democratization, and environment/natural resource management.*

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## INTRODUCTION: A.I.D.'s DEMOCRACY INITIATIVE

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### THE 1991 POLICY PAPER

In December 1990, A.I.D. issued a series of four initiatives to help shape its program for the 1990s. One of these was the Democracy Initiative, which called for A.I.D. to focus its "experience, skills and resources explicitly to help promote and consolidate democracy" (U.S.A.I.D., *Democracy and Governance*, November 1991).

The 1991 paper emphasized *both a development and an ethical objective*. Regarding *development*, it explained that "(t)he effective and efficient use of resources depends fundamentally on the strengths and capacities of local institutions, including political institutions. When political institutions falter, and there is violent civil conflict, military usurpation of political power, and arbitrary and unresponsive government, economic and social development cannot be sustained."

But, it went on, there is also a *normative purpose*. "Democracy is also to be valued as an end in itself because it is more likely to provide scope for the exercise of individual judgement and initiative, the fulfillment of individual potential and social justice."

The paper then furnished a *working definition of democracy*. "Democracy is fundamentally rooted in the proposition that political authority is anchored in the will of the people. Enduring democratic systems are characterized by meaningful political participation and peaceful competition; protection of basic human rights; lawful governance, and strong democratic values."

Deriving directly from this definition, the paper divided A.I.D.'s Democracy Initiative (referred to throughout this document as DI) activities into *four clusters*:

<i>Cluster I</i>	Strengthening Democratic Representation
<i>Cluster II</i>	Supporting Respect for Human Rights
<i>Cluster III</i>	Promoting Lawful Governance
<i>Cluster IV</i>	Encouraging Democratic Values

The paper enunciated some important *operational principles* for DI assistance, including the following: it should be provided on a *non-partisan* basis; it should be offered *equitably to all groups* committed to the democratic process; it should be *open and transparent*, and country-specific; and it should be *integrated* into the full range of AID social and economic programs.

The term "*governance*" appears only as a part of the third cluster of activities; yet the title of the policy paper is *Democracy and Governance*. The reason for the terms' prominence in the title derives, at least partly, from an ongoing debate within the Agency (as also the broader donor community) about the appropriateness and effectiveness of external encouragement of democracy, particularly if the pursuit of democracy is at the expense of other A.I.D. programs, notably those relating to economic policy reform.

The objectives of attention to governance include (a) a more efficient, transparent, accountable and responsive system of public service, (b) working in a more constructive relationship with the private for-profit and not-for-profit sectors and civil society in general, (c) within a political, legal and regulatory environment that facilitates private sector and associational initiative, and (d) that strengthens the institutions of civil society in such a way as to create a better balance to, and monitor of, state power.

This definition permits interpretations that would include everything from enhancing the rule of law, to improving financial management and public administration, to strengthening legislative oversight of the bureaucracy, to building up NGO and press capacity to monitor government policy, to activities related to structural adjustment. The inclusion of the term "governance" provides the Agency, the Bureaus and the Missions with some sensible space for discretion in choosing priorities (and titles) for their democracy (and governance) programs.

### INTERPRETATIONS OF THE INITIATIVE

As implied by the above discussion of governance, and as should be anticipated, the reality of the Democracy Initiative is far more complex than the policy paper might suggest.

At the most significant policy level there are really three major themes -- *democracy, economic policy reform and governance* -- around which Bureaus structure their DI programs. While one Bureau may emphasize the inherent value of democracy, another may seek to integrate democracy with either economic reform or governance; yet another may subordinate democracy to one of the latter two themes.

Some Bureaus are very clear on this at the moment. Others are finding their way. In part, this represents a legitimate difference of opinion within the Agency; and in part it is a response to the great variations in political and economic realities not only between regions but also within regions. Democracy is much more in demand in some parts of the world than others. The U.S. role is welcome in some countries, but less so in others. A.I.D. itself has a unique history and relationship in each country; and each Bureau operates according to different mandates and earmarks from Congress.

As can be expected with a new and complex, even controversial, initiative, there are numerous other contradictory pressures and undecided issues relating to the Initiative. Examples include differences over questions such as the pace of reform (there is a tension between the "window of opportunity" argument and the call for careful institution building); programmatically supportive constituency-building as opposed to open access to all viewpoints and groups; the feasibility and validity of measuring democratic progress; the most effective sequence of steps (for example, in establishing an enabling environment, what should come first: reforming the formal legal system or strengthening organizations?); the strategic level of focus (macro, micro, or some combination); relating the principle of non-partisanship to the need sometimes to level the playing field for political organizations long excluded from the political process; and the logical validity of the four clusters of DI activities.

Users of this guide, in thinking through the incorporation of gender into the Democracy Initiative, need to be aware of, and make inquiries about, these divergent approaches and their practical implications.



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## SING THE GUIDE

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### 1.1 INTENDED USERS OF THE GUIDE

This guide has a specific focus on U.S.A.I.D.'s Democracy Initiative. It is therefore intended primarily for the use of those working on the design, implementation or evaluation of any of the numerous policy, program or project undertakings that A.I.D. includes under this Initiative. While the guide should be of interest and use to others outside of the Agency who may be involved in democracy-related work, the undertakings considered, the terminology used, and the approaches discussed are specific to the Bureaus, Missions and Offices of A.I.D.

It is intended for users who may or may not have expertise in gender and sociological analysis, and/or prior familiarity with DI. It is also meant to be useful both for those whose prime DI assignment focuses on gender and those for whom it is a secondary responsibility.

### 1.2 HOW TO USE THE GUIDE

As will be clear from its format and content, the guide is intended as a *reference manual* rather than an analysis of A.I.D. programs. With the exception of Part 1, which is introductory and explanatory in nature, the guide is comprised of a discussion of DI issues and topics that users can select in response to their own requirements. The contents page, which doubles as an index, provides a list of issues to assist in such selection. The guide is organized in four parts, as follows.

- Part 1 answers questions that users might have about the guide itself, and how best to use it.
- Part 2 responds to some key preliminary questions that might arise in anticipation of incorporating gender concerns into DI.
- Part 3 breaks DI into 16 components, explains each one and the gender considerations to which it gives rise, and poses a set of questions aimed at incorporating gender into that particular component.
- Part 4 provides a brief discussion of gender and democracy indicators.

### 1.3 PURPOSE OF THE GUIDE

The purpose of this guide is to assist in *constructively incorporating gender* into DI. It does not set out to establish gender as the prime issue of concern. Rather the objective is to ensure that:

- gender is included as a key construct in the core analytical and strategic planning stages of all DI undertakings; and
- a cross-section of local women and women's groups is included in all stages of design, implementation, and evaluation of those undertakings.

Taken together with input from local women's groups, organizations that represent women's interests, and experts on local gender issues, the questions listed in this guide -- and the logic behind them -- should provide a starting point for crafting realistic and gender-aware democracy programs, implementation strategies, and evaluation designs.

In paying attention to gender the guide is also meant to be suggestive of a mode of *incorporating a more sociological approach* into the Initiative. This places gender concerns within a framework that emphasizes the significance to DI of social variables such as ethnicity, religion, class, education and literacy, language, caste, and location. This sociological and gendered perspective is not intended to replace or contradict any of the Bureau approaches framed around politics or institutions, or economics. Rather it aims to enhance those forms of analysis and design, their programmatic effectiveness, and their positive people-level orientation and impacts.

#### 1.4 MATERIALS AND SOURCES OF IDEAS FOR THE GUIDE

**A.I.D. materials.** Preparation of this guide took place over a four month period ending in November 1992. The project was initiated by the Women in Development Office of U.S.A.I.D., in cooperation with The Futures Group through the GENESYS (*Gender in Economic and Social Systems*) Project. The research on which the guide is based was conducted within the following U.S.A.I.D. units: Women in Development Office, Center for Development Information and Evaluation, the Africa Bureau, the Latin America and Caribbean Bureau, the Bureau for Asia, the Near East Bureau, and the Europe Bureau.

About ninety interviews were conducted with personnel in these and other offices in A.I.D. as well as with others working independently or for contracting agencies. The list of people who contributed through interviews or in small team meetings are listed in the Appendix.

Much of the assignment was devoted to studying a large number and variety of documents. Documents included requests for proposals, scopes of work, country democracy assessments, Bureau policy papers, evaluation designs, evaluations, commissioned research papers, a very rich "grey" literature of memoranda, internal background papers and "think-pieces", and numerous project documents on specific undertakings such as elections, administration of justice, civic education, journalism training, financial management, and human rights.

The purpose in reviewing these documents was to discern the logic behind regional and country programs and projects, their processes of design, the content of programs, the means of implementation and the early lessons of experience,



and the extent and manner of incorporation of gender concerns. Still other important sources of helpful concepts and ideas are noted below:

**Sociology.** A basic theme throughout this guide is the incorporation of a sociological approach, as a refinement, and not a replacement, in analyzing and implementing DI. The nature and dynamics of social variables need to be included because political and economic power and access to resources and influence are *integrally interrelated with the operation of key social cleavages* such as class, caste, ethnicity, race, religion, language, location, and gender. In stressing the importance of these categories, the guide is fully cognizant of the fact that these are not rigid, nor are they inevitably competitive or conflictual. They are often closely linked with conflict over resources and are subject to socialization and manipulation.

**A gender critique.** Most democracy theory ignores the critical importance of *linking the political dynamics of the private domain* (family, household, possibly communal, often unwritten and cultural) *to the public domain*. By ignoring the fact that many restrictions on women's legal and political capacity -- such as mobility and contractual capacity -- derive from limitations established within the household, such theory will be unable to comprehend the predicament of women in the transition to democracy. Attempting to distinguish too strictly between the private and the public realms is open to criticism. But there can be no doubt as to the critical importance of this distinction to DI.

**A.I.D.'s Gender Information Framework, and Social Soundness Analysis.** Many of the lessons learned through the empirical and conceptual development of studies of women and men in development, of intra-household decision-making, and of the division of labor and income streams, have an application to DI. Of immediate relevance is *the emphasis on informal constraints*, for example, the burden of domestic responsibilities, lack of time, illiteracy or lack of familiarity with the national language, lack of confidence, social reticence, concern about inter-gender communication with strangers, and a variety of other religious and cultural limitations.

**Literature on gender and the state** differentiates classes of women, state systems, and individual actors within those systems, and acknowledges the potential for some women to make political space for themselves in dealing with the state. The usefulness of this corpus of literature lies in its theoretically and historically based caution to a process such as DI, that the new political system will *almost inevitably provide differential benefits and opportunities to men and women*. In its analysis of patriarchy across space and time, it warns of the likelihood that those same social categories who dominate at the moment -- say men of a particular caste -- are in a very strong position to continue that dominance during and after political transition.

**Literature on women and the law** points to another important theme. There are two closely interrelated spheres of concern. One focuses on *physical and sexual violence* perpetrated against women both inside and outside the home. The extent of the violence, and the inability or/and lack of will of many societies or governments to counteract such abuse represents a major challenge to the human rights and administration of justice components of the democracy program. The second sphere relates to *family law or personal status law* and spans issues such as

marriage, divorce, child custody, alimony, and inheritance. These concerns spill over into women's rights to full legal capacity to operate in the economy and politics.

**Recent observations on the East European experience** indicate that in the transition to capitalism and democracy, *women suffer more than men* -- in competition with men for scarce jobs in industry and services; through loss of positions in the government and in political parties, via loss of subsidized clinics and child care facilities that freed women to work outside the home; a breakdown in law and order, and so forth. A.I.D. and "democracy" as such are not responsible for this; but when A.I.D. encourages democracy, it bears some responsibility for anticipating the possibility of an uneven distribution of benefits and losses, and planning for ways to mitigate negative impacts. If the transition is too painful, the end result may be undermined.

**The burgeoning of women's organizations**, as recorded by many scholars, activists, and observers, provides the final thematic source. Either on their own, or together with men, and often under the most unpromising and oppressive of circumstances, women in many countries have come together to advocate and protect their own, and often broader, social interests in political and human rights, the economy, the environment, education, family planning, and health. At all times these groups need to be recognized and included in the design and implementation of DI programs.

## 1.5 THE LOGIC OF THE GUIDE'S QUESTIONS

As explained above, Part 3 presents sets of questions aimed at incorporating gender into each of the 16 components of DI. For ease of reference, these components are listed alphabetically. The questions are of three kinds.

- **Context Questions.** These are very few in number and are included only in particular circumstances where (1) introductory questions provide a necessary background for the questions on gender, and (2) other sociological variables are closely interrelated with gender concerns.

*These questions are preceded by the symbol ◆*

- **Gender Analysis Questions.** These seek to investigate to what extent and in what manner opportunities, constraints, and impacts existing within a political system and/or arising from DI may differ for men and women, and why. These questions pay attention to both formal and informal factors.

*These questions are preceded by the symbol ●*

- **Questions of Concern to Women.** The guide makes an assumption that the gender questions will often reveal significant differences between men and women, usually disadvantageous to women. This in turn requires that attention be paid to concerns of importance to women and to methods of assisting them. In the unlikely circumstances in



which such gender differences are not identified, the analyst need not give further attention to this set of women-focused questions.

*These questions are preceded by the symbol ■*

Some readers new to democracy or gender work may be surprised at the extent and variety of relevant gender concerns and questions. Others, experienced in these areas, will find questions and recommendations that border on the obvious. The latter group should be assured that the reason for their inclusion here is that they were omitted from the overwhelming majority of documents studied and the processes observed.

## **1.6 LIKELY ADAPTATIONS**

Those working on any aspect of DI will find it complex, multifaceted and still in the process of definition. The Agency is finding its way. The Regional Bureaus vary in their approaches. Country Missions have considerable programmatic autonomy. Situations in each country demand unique, locally specific responses from A.I.D. Times change, lessons are being learned, and programs will alter accordingly. Users should therefore be prepared to adapt the material in the guide in a variety of ways. As a start the following kinds of factors will affect their work:

- national and sometimes subnational level political, economic and social realities;
- the broad policy and programmatic logic of A.I.D. Regional Bureaus; and
- the programs, priorities, and capacities of A.I.D. Country Missions.

This guide is based on actual undertakings of all the Bureaus and is of Agency-wide application. It attempts to anticipate as much of the complexity and variety in DI as possible. It is not feasible, however, to deal with every activity or variation that might occur. Users are likely to come across new programs not covered in this guide. Nevertheless, it should be possible to draw on the logic and questions in this guide and in the Gender Information Framework -- available from the Women in Development Office of A.I.D. -- in order to formulate questions relevant to new types of democracy undertakings.



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## KEY PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS

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### 2.1 WHY INCLUDE GENDER?

There is a continuing need to explain/justify the case for including a focus on, and a constructive integration of, gender into the democratic process. DI consists of numerous and diverse components (see Introduction). The significance and practical implications of a gender perspective will become clear as each of the components is discussed in turn in Part 3. This section relates to DI in broad terms.

**Economic.** To the extent that democratic political systems are seen as advantageous to the operation of a free market system -- an argument that has to be carefully made, and will not be true in all circumstances -- there is a powerful economic rationale for reducing obstacles to the participation of both men and women in politics. Even in a free market economy, *political institutions* (national and local, governmental and non-governmental) *are instrumental in setting the operating economic and business environment.*

Women are central to economic progress: as entrepreneurs, professionals, and managers in the formal sector; traders and craftspeople in the informal sector; full-time, part-time, piece or home workers in the industrial or the service sectors; agricultural producers and farm laborers; and as major consumers of goods and services. Equally important to the economy are their vital roles in social reproduction and human resource development. They pay taxes and contribute directly and indirectly in many ways to national revenues. Therefore, efforts to open up, spread, and deepen the arena of effective economic competition will be fundamentally flawed and skewed to the extent to which DI facilitates male, but disallows or discourages, female access to political institutions.

**Equity.** This is particularly relevant, given the strong normative thrust behind DI. The impacts of, and participation in, the *institutions created by democracy can easily be coopted by a small group.* It may be a class, or even one element of a class, a caste or combination of castes, an ethnic or religious group, or an elite, and it is very likely to be male dominated.

While A.I.D. cannot and should not engage in detailed social and political engineering, it also does not wish to serve and facilitate a particularistic, narrowly based, or elitist form of government. In other words DI, in whichever of its many forms, will be both more effective and more equitable the more it opens up opportunities to women as well as to other social categories.

**Inclusion and Representation.** Two related principles of democracy that strengthen the argument for including a gender focus relate to *Inclusion* and *representation.* Democracy is intended to be an inclusive process that brings into the political process as broad a spectrum of approaches and social groupings as possible or as practical. It should thereby *ensure the representation of a broad cross-section of the population.* Women make up half of the population. Policies and regulations often affect them differently from men; they often have divergent interests and priorities, and

consequently different perspectives from men. Their participation therefore needs to be considered in terms of fulfilling these two principles.

**Women's contribution to democracy.** Women too may have a particular contribution to make to the democratic transition. This is an argument that needs to be carefully made. In particular circumstances, *the inclusion of women may bring a specific advantage to the process.* For example, the mothers of the "disappeared ones" in Argentina, relying on their role as mothers, played a significant part in discrediting the military dictatorship. Women in Zambia played an invaluable role as independent monitors of a recent national election. It has often been observed that women in financial management and judicial positions appear to be less easily corrupted than men. Poor women in Asia and elsewhere have proved themselves considerably more reliable credit risks than men. Women in Ireland formed inter-religious groups to work for peace. Women are in general less prone to resort to physical violence and war.

These observations are not meant to suggest that women are inherently superior to men, or that any of the attributes implied in such observations are immutable. Neither is it to suggest that women should conform to the stereotypes created for them, nor that they should be limited to acting as brokers rather than political actors. Rather, *in seeking creative solutions to particular problems* such as chronic corruption, a culture of violence, or inter-ethnic conflict, one may consider the possibility of turning to women to end deadlocks and promote positive and peaceful momentum.

One final point needs consideration in this regard. As a number of A.I.D. country assessments observe, there are usually *far more immediate and critical, and often violent, threats* to progress in democracy than anything that would be presented by a failure to pay attention to gender. It is sometimes suggested that attention to gender should be delayed, or not even dealt with, because of the overwhelming danger of ethnic, tribal, or religious strife, economic collapse, or urban rioting.

This presents *a false dichotomy.* We are not involved in an either/or situation. Even assuming there is such an imminent threat, it is conceptually and practically feasible to attend to that threat while still integrating gender concerns into the core DI analysis and strategy. It is also possible that gender issues may be embedded in, rather than separate from, broader threats, such as religious conflict, urban unemployment, or essential food production.

## 2.2 LOCAL CULTURE AND RELIGION

As a foreign agency thinking through the full participation of local women in the democratization process, A.I.D. must always give careful attention to local culture and religion. It is obviously important to respect the fundamental values and social fabric on which societies base their beliefs and structure their organizations. For practical reasons, relating to *institutional development and sustainability*, such respect is also important. It has been found that rules, procedures, and organizations introduced from outside tend to be more effective the more they incorporate and are explained in terms of local culture.



This is not a new concern in terms of A.I.D. operations in general or, more specifically, in terms of integrating gender concerns into A.I.D. programs. We have long been aware that there may be situations where encouraging women's participation in projects may clash with local culture. Yet we must also acknowledge that *cultures are neither static nor homogeneous*. Nor have most cultures been completely isolated over time. Moreover, even within the same culture, there are *often different interpretations* of the principal tenets of both religion and culture; local religious and political leaders and scholars differ among and between themselves on such issues. Sometimes men and women perceive those tenets in different ways; sometimes women of different classes, religions, regions, and ages disagree on their interpretations.

Typically *interpretations are defined by powerful men* in whatever the particular social unit, be it a religious sect, a nation, a village, an industry, an NGO, a government, or a ministry; and on occasion, men use culture as a pretext for excluding women and for continuing to marginalize weaker groups in their society.

On the other hand, throughout history women have been adapting to, circumventing, and influencing local political systems in myriad ways. *Care needs to be exercised to avoid prematurely disrupting women's channels of political influence and access* before new and secure ones have been established. Also even a group of people who are desperately seeking cultural change, will feel more comfortable in calling for and defining those changes themselves, rather than having them initiated externally.

Therefore in the early stages of program or project design, it is important to gain an understanding of local culture(s), and particularly those components of the culture that may have the most impact on progress toward democracy. While such a study clearly needs to give explicit attention to gender issues, it has the far broader function of informing the whole A.I.D. initiative about the local social dynamics that will impact the initiative.

It is equally important to *listen to a variety of local women's groups* to get a sense of their key problems and priorities, and the *cultural appropriateness and political feasibility* of the various options proposed. This also should be undertaken early in the design process.

### **2.3 INTEGRATING vs SEGREGATING GENDER COMPONENTS**

There are a number of interesting DI related projects that give specific attention to women, and from which the Agency should soon be in a position to learn useful lessons. These include projects focusing on women and the law, journalism, municipal government, and women's conferences to establish networks and exchange information. However, in some of the Bureaus such projects are few; in general they tend to be small-scale; and usually they do not derive from the core analytical process preceding the design of a country program or of a major activity such as comprehensive legal reform or political party strengthening.

There are, of course, situations where separate projects for women make sense. In certain conditions, local culture and religion may make this a necessity.

Sometimes women's groups work more effectively and confidently on their own; or they have particular concerns that are of less interest to men. Sometimes they have the momentum to move forward and they are looking for support. Assistance in these kinds of situations can make an important contribution to strengthening the human rights and political participation of women. But a decision to help with such separate undertakings should *derive from the analytical stage of the design process, and be based on local women's clearly expressed preference for working on their own.*

The *danger is that separate undertakings may be seen as a substitute for including gender issues in the design and implementation of larger, more comprehensive DI programs: for example in assessing the feasibility of elections, in helping draft constitutions, in training legal or elected officials, or in designing civic education projects. Inevitably, such a substitution will marginalize women from the major processes of transition.*

## 2.4 PROCESS AND EXPERTISE

It is essential to the effective and constructive integration of gender in DI that it be included from the start in all major undertakings. For example, in documents such as requests for proposals, scopes of work, indefinite quantity contracts, and contracts for assessments, design, implementation, training, and mid-term and final evaluations, expertise should be required by A.I.D. in one or more of the following: WID/ gender analysis, social soundness analysis, the sociology of the relevant countries or regions, family or personal status law.

Similarly, gender should be on the agenda in team preparation, team-building, and de-briefing exercises. A.I.D. needs to make clear to contractors that gender concerns are an essential element of legal reform, administration of justice, political party support, national and municipal elections, governance programs, civic education, etc.

To illustrate, consider the difference this approach might make to election management. Responses to the questions listed under Elections in Part 3 could influence the timing of elections (for example, the season of the year, how long the polls stay open, and for how many days) the location of polling booths, the language of ballot papers, the use of symbols instead of words, the nature of voter education, the gender-mix of those who carry out the training, the nature of political party and NGO support and training, the design of ballot papers, and requirements relating residence to location of voting.

Including the gender factor will not require any alteration in contractors' major areas of professional strength. But it does require some additional expertise and the will to carry out gender analysis, and to include the findings in program design and in policy dialogue with governments. *If attention to gender is excluded from the essential steps in the process, or if gender expertise is absent during analysis and programming, it will inevitably be omitted from the mainstream of DI. Consequently it will end up being ignored or relegated to the status of an add-on activity, and progress toward democracy will suffer accordingly.*



## 2.5 REPRESENTATION AND PARTICIPATION

In a democratic initiative, both the means and the ends should meet the goal of democratic participation. This principle is clearly established in the A.I.D. policy documents, as is the related principle of allowing the local society to determine its own democratic forms and procedures. In practice this means that country missions and visiting teams need to identify appropriate, representative individuals and institutions with whom to consult and negotiate in preparing the way for enhancing democracy.

*Representation* becomes a fundamental precept, essential to both the legitimacy and the likely effectiveness of the initiative. The test of representation is the extent to which *a broad cross-section of society is actively included* in the preparation and design process. From a gender perspective it is *essential to ensure that women and women's groups of different social and economic categories are included in the process*. Representation should also include other key social categories and the variety of political parties and approaches within the country.

Furthermore, much of DI will proceed through local institutions, both governmental and non-governmental. Thus it will be necessary to conduct careful institutional assessments of the capacity and potential of local organizations. In addition, further questions need to be asked concerning the socio-economic, ethnic, religious, and gender representation and membership and leadership of these institutions. The combination of organizations on which A.I.D. will rely will need to be reasonably representative. More specifically from a gender perspective, organizations representing the interests of various categories of women should be included.

## KEY TO QUESTION SYMBOLS <sup>1</sup>

### Symbol

### Question Type



#### Context Questions

These are included only where (1) introductory questions provide necessary background for the questions on gender and (2) other sociological variables are closely interrelated with gender concerns.



#### Gender Analysis Questions

These investigate to what extent and in what manner opportunities, constraints, and impacts existing within a political system and/or arising from DI may differ for men and women, and why. These questions pay attention to both formal and informal factors.



#### Questions of Concern to Women

The guide assumes that the gender analysis questions will often reveal significant differences between men and women, usually disadvantageous to women. This in turn requires attention to concerns of importance to women and to methods of assisting them.

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<sup>1</sup> For full detail, refer to Section 1.5 "The Logic of the Guide's Questions"

# GENDER AND THE COMPONENTS OF DI

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## 3.1 ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE/LEGAL REFORM

**INTRODUCTION:** These programs pre-date DI by many years. The rationale for including them within DI is that an efficient, fair, independent and accessible judicial system is essential to a functioning democracy, accountable government, and respect for human rights (as well as contractual agreements and property rights). These types of programs aim to improve court administration, train judicial officials, and increase public understanding of, and access to, the justice system. They include training activities such as curriculum and faculty development, and assistance to institutions responsible for legal aid and alternative mediation services.

**INCORPORATING GENDER:** While both men and women suffer under oppressive or inefficient legal systems, *women are affected in very different ways from men*. In many countries, concerns about violence, abuse, sexual harassment, and the effects on women of family law or personal status law all distinguish women's relationship to the system of justice from that of men (also see the discussion of Human Rights). These concerns need a response in Administration of Justice programs.

Certain clarifications about the program might be helpful. For a start, a distinction needs to be made between *administration and content*. In dealing with court administration, in all training and education programs -- including those for judges, prosecutors, lawyers, public defenders, court clerks, laboratory scientists and technicians, and those in charge of legal information management systems -- an effort must be made to include women as well as men. One also needs to ensure that the legal concerns of women are included in the improved management and tracking of cases, in information systems and exchange, and in libraries.

In terms of improving content of the law through training, seminars, degree programs, curriculum development, technical assistance and visits, women's legal concerns should be incorporated into programs with a broad focus, and receive specialized attention when appropriate. In the same way as one is enhancing expertise in, and improving, modernizing, and clarifying tax law, contractual law and criminal law, one needs also to give attention to family law, personal status law, and law relating to sexual and physical abuse of women.

Another distinction should be drawn between *courts and justice*. Justice is a far broader concept. It encompasses improved legal access and fairness for all categories of people including marginalized groups, and enhanced public education about the law and about legal rights. In institutional terms this means working not only with the courts to achieve just settlement of criminal or civil disputes; it also entails working with those public and private agencies that assist people who are educationally or economically disadvantaged or discriminated against on the basis of gender or caste or ethnicity, or who for a variety of reasons fear or do not trust the system.

This includes attention to public defenders, legal clinics, legal education for the public, alternate mediation and conciliation mechanisms, shelters for battered or threatened women and children, and paralegal services. Very serious and innovative thought also needs to be given to the fact that in many countries the reach of the formal legal and court system is minimal.

In principle, *training of police* is not part of DI. In order for A.I.D. to work with police, a special waiver is required. Where it is part of the program, it has a special relevance to women. *Women and police interact in a variety of situations*, many of which involve violence and sexual abuse both inside and outside the home. These are situations that demand specific types of training in police ethics, crisis management, interviewing techniques, treatment of victims, collection and evaluation of evidence, and forensic science. Treatment of women prisoners by prison warders is another important concern.

The large and immediate response of abused women to the opening of "Police Stations for the Defence of Women" in Brazil, staffed entirely by women police officers, demonstrates in a very concrete manner *the fear women have of approaching conventional police stations*. Therefore, even in situations in which legal reform programs are not working with the police force, it may be worth reminding the designers and implementors of these programs that the police provide a significant component of the legal system. Their behavior and attitudes are very important to women's sense of security and dignity.

## RELEVANT QUESTIONS

- What are the comparative percentages, and/or numbers, of men and women employed in the following positions? (Terminology will vary from one legal system to another)
 

Judges	Magistrates
Lawyers	Prosecutors
Public Defenders	Court Administrators
Court Clerks/Recorders	Court Librarians
Information Systems Managers	Police
Senior and Junior Police Officers	Forensic Experts
Laboratory Scientists	
- What are the comparative percentages of male and female legal students?
- ◆ What is the ratio of cases pending to cases tried?
- What is that ratio in cases of concern to women (relating essentially to violence against women and to family law or personal status law)?
- Do court management improvement programs (case tracking, information management and exchange, library upgrading, national and foreign case reports, research facilities, journals) include attention to materials relevant to women and the law?
- Do legal degree, diploma and short-term upgrading and professional courses include material on family law and violence against women?
- What are the principle legislative enactments regarding violence against women and family law?
- What are the major precepts of customary/religious/traditional law pertaining to women?



- To what extent and in what situations is the law governing these concerns influenced more by customary rather than formal law?
- What is the literacy rate for men and women according to age categories, urban or rural locations, and ethnic or religious groups?
- What are men's and women's level of understanding of the law and of their rights (across different social categories)?
- ◆■ What provisions are made to assist the poor (including poor women) to receive free legal counsel and free defense?
- ◆ Are public defenders paid competitive salaries or given adequate compensation? What is the average case load of public defenders?
- ◆ Do legal professional associations or universities make any arrangements to assist the poor?
- Are there legal clinics and support services to prepare women (provide them with information on laws, procedures and rights, and comfort and confidence) in order to go to court?
- ◆ What systems are in place to provide public education about the law? To high schools? To the urban poor? To rural areas? To educated or illiterate people?
- ◆ Is the level of complexity and use of illustrative examples in the materials used for public legal education appropriate to the educational levels and cultures of the recipient communities?
- Do public legal education programs include topics on women and the law, and target women about the law in general and about their personal, family, contractual and other legal rights?
- Are any arrangements available to shelter women and children who have been abused or feel themselves to be in immediate danger of abuse?
- Do women and men (of different social categories) have confidence in the legal system? If not, what are their main concerns?
- Do women and men (of different social categories) have confidence in the police force? If not, what are their main concerns?
- What is the record of police response, and how do they treat victims in cases of sexual assault or violence against women?
- Do women take their complaints to court? If yes, what type of complaints? If no, what are the reasons?
- Are the laws of evidence/burden of proof the same in women and the law type cases as in others?
- In court, does a woman's evidence count as much as a man's? In all cases? In some cases?
- How are women and men prisoners treated?
- Is any agency, governmental or private, charged with monitoring the treatment of women and men prisoners? Do women and men prisoners have effective recourse to any such authority in case of abuse?
- ◆ Is there support for alternative legal conciliation mechanisms?
- Do these mechanisms give attention to working with both men and women?
- ◆■ Who arbitrates and settles conflicts in remote rural or other communities beyond the reach of the courts? What lessons can be learned from this in general, and for women?
- ◆■ What is the role of traditional, customary or religious authorities in the settlement of disputes? What is the impact in general, and on women?
- ◆■ Are there programs in place, or plans to bring legal justice to these remote communities? What lessons may have been learned so far in this regard in general, and about women?

### 3.2 CIVIL SOCIETY

**INTRODUCTION:** The policy paper says that civil society includes activities such as support for professional associations, civic groups, labor organizations, business groups and other non-governmental advocacy groups. The brevity of the statement belies the challenge and complexity of the task, and its importance to DI. Essentially this objective derives from the notion that a functioning democracy and a plural society involve far more than a multiparty system that holds elections every few years. It requires a rich and varied network of private organizations and associations -- religious, traditional, cultural, political, national, local -- to counterbalance and monitor the activities of the state.

Such associations also serve to articulate and represent a broad array of opinions, and they help to define policy options. They enhance citizens' participation in decisions of most direct importance to them and so too their sense of self-reliance and empowerment. If the state is one side of the democracy coin, civil society is the other.

**INCORPORATING GENDER:** Strengthening civil society is an undertaking that cuts across many of the other initiatives: Human and Civil Rights with special emphasis on freedom of association and expression; Trade Unions; Democratic Values; Leadership Training; and Administration of Justice, in particular legal education and support organizations. Thus the gender concerns discussed under all of those headings will be relevant to civil society.

The overarching gender concern would relate to *the differential representation of men and women* of different classes, ethnic groups, etc, and of their particular interests, *in the associational life of the country*. DI programs aimed at strengthening the components of civil society should include different categories of women's organizations, or organizations that effectively represent both women's and men's interests. Such programs should also ensure that materials used for training provide a positive image of women, encourage respect for women's contribution to society, and deal with issues of interest to women.

One other gender concern relates to the *possibly restrictive ambit of DI*. Civil society consists of associational life that includes educational, welfare, health, the arts and child-care. DI would prefer to have a clearer focus on political, legal, and economic aims and agencies. But many societies exclude women from these three domains. Therefore this narrow emphasis may limit women from sharing fully in DI-sponsored institution-building programs.



## RELEVANT QUESTIONS

The reader should also review the discussion and questions listed under Democratic Values, Leadership Training, and Human and Civil Rights – especially all questions relating to freedom of association and expression.

- ◆ What is the government attitude (e.g., positive, negative, cooperative, distant) toward NGOs in general, and those with a political or policy or advocacy focus in particular?
- ◆ What arrangements and procedures has the government established to consult and cooperate with, and give assistance to, NGOs?
- ◆ Does the government treat NGOs equally irrespective of their ethnic, racial, class, religious or gender composition?
- What percentage of the membership of major NGOs is comprised of women/men?
- What percentage of the leadership of major NGOs is provided by women/men?
- Do the major NGOs deal with issues identified as important by women?
- Are there major women's NGOs (exclusively women's organizations, or organizations whose membership or leadership is predominantly women)? If so, which are they?
- What categories of women do they represent (e.g., educated or less educated, rural or urban, middle or lower class)?
- Are there examples of women's organizations operating on a traditional community basis? What lessons can be learned from these organizations?
- In what areas are women's organizations' interests focused (e.g., politics, law, health, education, business, community development)?
- Which have policy or advocacy or service or development orientation?
- Do the women's organizations have policy analysis or advocacy skills or experience?
- Are they operating independently or associating as networks?
- Are they connected to political parties or major newspapers?
- ◆ Are there cultural/religious/informal constraints on people of various social categories participating in non-political or political organizations? e.g., a caste or indigenous people?
- What are the main cultural/religious/informal constraints on women forming non-political or political organizations?
- What are the main cultural/religious/informal constraints on women taking up leadership positions in NGOs?

### 3.3 CIVIL - MILITARY RELATIONS

**INTRODUCTION:** Essentially this component of DI is concerned with increasing civilian control over the military, and reducing the role of the military in politics, economics, and internal security. Assistance typically involves technical assistance and training for, and informational exchange and consensus-building between, military and civilian leaders. It also requires civic education of the public to limit the role of the military in a democracy.

**INCORPORATING GENDER:** In most societies the military is an almost completely male-dominated, if not male-exclusive, organization. It is therefore sometimes assumed that women have limited interest or expertise in this field. It is important to stress that *both women and men have very good reason to be interested* in the military and in the civil-military relationship.

Women, whether as women per se or as wives and mothers have suffered both cruelty and disruptions at the hands of the military. In some instances, women -- sometimes on their own, sometimes as part of protest movements -- have taken heroic stands that have helped bring down military rulers. In a number of places, too, women have played an active role in liberation forces that have freed their nations from colonial rule or dictatorship.

Therefore the fully *justifiable interest of women in civil-military relations should be acknowledged*. Representatives of both women's and men's organizations should be included in discussions and decisions on the proper role of the military in society, on national budget allocations for the military, and on civic education to transform the attitudes and behavior of the military.

In certain societies too women may be ready to participate in, and be employed by, the military. The participation of women and their input into the process of rendering the military accountable to civilian rule and therefore to the public should be encouraged.





## RELEVANT QUESTIONS

- ◆ How effective is civilian control of the military?
- ◆ What has been the military's human rights record?
- What has been the military's record in the treatment of women in society?
- ◆■ Does the military monitor the behavior of its soldiers towards civilians in general? Towards women? Does it prosecute and punish offenders?
- Are there women serving in the army? In what capacities and at what ranks?
- ◆ Does the military influence national policy making?
- ◆ Does the military influence the judiciary?
- ◆ Are there secret funds available to the military?
- ◆ What is the military's share of the budget? compared to education, health, commerce, infrastructure?
- ◆● Are there civic education programs aimed at all levels of the military teaching them about democracy, tolerance for diversity, peaceful settlement of disputes, human dignity and respect for personal integrity of both men and women?
- ◆● Do these topics appear in any of the military training manuals?
- ◆ Do the senior levels of the military openly support these elements of the civic education program?
- Are there any women on senior policy committees dealing with national security and civil-military relations?
- Is the role of women in the military being debated at any level? If so, what is the nature of the debate?

### 3.4 THE COUNTRY POLITICAL/DEMOCRATIC ASSESSMENT

**INTRODUCTION:** The Country Political/Democratic Assessment (CP/DA) differs from all other topics covered in Part 3. It is not a DI activity as such. Rather it is an analytical exercise in preparation for a DI program in a particular country. It is intended to provide a political or political economic background to, and suggest the strategy and content of, such a program. This document is fundamental to the constructive incorporation of gender in DI, because it can provide the analytical framework within which DI for each country will be framed.

The document tends to include a description and analysis of recent and current political history, the economy, relevant political institutions, constraints and opportunities for progress in DI, and sometimes the political and economic interests of stakeholders (institutions, socio-economic classes) who stand to win or lose from the proposed changes. If there is a major threat to transition to or consolidation of democracy -- such as ethnic or religious conflict, or urban unemployment -- that topic is dealt with in detail. Sometimes very brief discussions of political culture are included. The assessments conclude with specific suggestions for introducing DI.

The document produced is therefore potentially very important insofar as it lays the intellectual basis for a Country Mission's DI program. It is worth pointing out, however, that country assessments are not routinely carried out and that most missions are operating without them. Also, the seriousness with which they are followed seems to vary.

**INCORPORATING GENDER:** In general, these documents *need to have a far stronger sociological emphasis* to complement the political, economic, institutional, and political-economic approaches that have been taken so far. They need more systematically to analyze key social variables such as race, nationalism, ethnicity, class, religion, caste, and gender. They should observe how the interrelationship of these social categories affect politics, how steps to introduce democracy are likely to impact upon these categories of people, how they are likely to respond, and therefore how the DI program should proceed.

*Gender presents an essential but complex analytical category.* It cuts across all other groups, and many, although certainly not all, of the important gender questions relating to power and decision-making, access to influence and resources, and legal and political capacity, are unwritten, informal, and bolstered by custom and culture rather than by law.

Analysis of *political culture* and political values also needs to be given more attention in these documents. Relevant issues relate to the degree of respect for hierarchy and authority -- whether that be based on tradition, religion, or patron-client networks -- the associational propensity of communities; patriarchy; conflict resolution practices; and household and community power structures. More careful attention to sociological and gender analysis and to political culture will *encourage an enhanced and more rigorous people-orientation to DI*, and better enable it to anticipate dangers, inequities, and likely distortions of its principles.



## RELEVANT QUESTIONS

Since the country assessment is comprehensive in nature, many of the questions on Democratic Values and Civil Society, as also those dealing with Elections, Political Parties, Decentralization, and Human and Civil rights will be relevant to a reasonably in-depth investigation of gender concerns. Some additional key questions include the following:

- What is the national education profile of men and women? In rural and urban areas? By age? By income level? How many women and men university graduates are there?
- What are the patterns of employment of women and men? e.g., in the formal and informal sectors? In agricultural and non-agricultural work?
- What are the main patterns of household decision-making among the major social categories of people? By ethnicity? By location? By religion? By education?
- What are the main religious/cultural/informal constraints on women's participating in politics? In voting? In joining political parties? In standing for election? In organizing NGOs?
- What are the main labor and time constraints -- household, agricultural, industrial -- on women and men participating in politics? Are there marked regional differences? Seasonal differences? Class differences?
- What are the levels of violence against women? What are the prevalent male attitudes towards this violence? What has been the government response to the violence?
- How do men and women respond to the idea of women playing an active part in politics?
- Do women participate in the major political parties? If so at what levels? More specifically, what are the comparative percentages of women and men in the membership and leadership of these parties?
- Do the major parties give attention to issues which various categories of women identify as important?
- Are there women's political organizations including women's wings of political parties, or policy oriented professional, welfare or policy oriented NGOs?
- Are there other types of women's organizations (e.g., health, education, savings, coops, business, religious groups)?
- What are the comparative percentages of women and men in the national legislature?
- What are the comparative percentages of women and men in local councils?
- What can be learned from the experience of those women who have been elected about constraints and opportunities for women's political participation?
- Are there examples of women using traditional structures or methods to organize themselves politically? economically? socially? What can be learned from these organizations about constraints and opportunities for women's political participation?

### 3.5 DEMOCRATIC VALUES

**INTRODUCTION:** On the subject of democratic values, the A.I.D. policy paper notes: Within the context of indigenous cultures, there should be support for the emergence of basic democratic values of tolerance for diverse opinions, the values of political compromise, acceptance of majority rule and respect for minority rights, supremacy of civil authority over the military, and peaceful resolution of differences. So far, the principal method of achieving this objective has been through civic education activities such as: incorporating civic education into curricula; supporting PVO activities to promote civic values and debate; and leadership training which teaches leadership skills and democratic values.

**INCORPORATING GENDER:** The logic behind these activities, is that democratic institutions operating without a supportive value system are not sustainable. There needs to be a broad-based societal understanding of, and eventually commitment to, the value of democracy as a superior political system. Such a value system will require civic education about how and why the processes and institutions of democracy work. It should also focus on citizens' rights and responsibilities in a democratic system. Such rights, responsibilities and attitudes relate not only to the state but to other individuals, organizations, and social groups. Democratic Values should also include attention to peaceful settlement of conflicts, the importance of compromise, tolerance of, and respect for, diversity of race, religion, ideology and gender.

The key gender issues here relate to *who participates in defining and transmitting a society's political and social values*, and the nature and content of those values. This component of DI is therefore clearly of signal importance to women, as are women to it. Not only should both men and women be involved in all stages as teachers and students, but they should also share responsibility for the design of curricula and materials.





## RELEVANT QUESTIONS

- What are the comparative percentages of men and women included among the trainers?
- What are the comparative percentages of men and women (of various social categories) included as students?
- Are women (of various social categories) being consulted on curricular and materials development?
- Do the materials encourage a positive attitude towards women's rights and their contributions to society and the economy?
- Do the materials encourage a positive attitude towards women playing a role in politics either/both at the local or/and the national level?
- Do the materials educate about and discourage violence against women?
- Do the materials -- both written and visual -- avoid negative or restrictive stereotypes of women?
- Are examples and illustrations used which are of relevance to both men and women?
- Are women being informed of their human, legal and political rights?
- ◆● Do the materials take account of cultural/religious/linguistic /generational/gender heterogeneity, and of the special needs of remote, rural, uneducated or illiterate people?
- ◆● Do the means of delivering the material (radio, newspapers, school classes, neighborhood groups, adult literacy classes) take these same factors into account?
- In selecting NGOs to take responsibility for developing and delivering the materials, have women's organizations or/and organizations which represent both men and women or/and organizations which have a track record of concern for women and women's issues been included?

### 3.6 DECENTRALIZATION/LOCAL GOVERNMENT

**INTRODUCTION:** Decentralization involves different forms of transferring responsibility from central government to regional, provincial, and district or municipal governments. It may entail an administrative transfer of responsibility from a central ministry to its field offices -- frequently referred to as *deconcentration*. Or it could involve the political transfer of responsibility and power to an elected local authority -- this is referred to as *devolution*.

**INCORPORATING GENDER:** The focus of deconcentration is very similar to that of Governance with regard to, e.g., information management, financial management, accountability and personnel policies. One major difference relates to effective delegation, that is finding the most appropriate division of responsibility between different levels of government. The same sorts of questions arise concerning women's and men's opportunities to participate and benefit in strengthening local government as they do in the central ministries. As will be discussed under devolution, deconcentrated government may provide more opportunities for a broader array of women and men to gain experience with administration than does centralized government concentrated in the capital city.

The key *relevance of devolution to gender issues lies in the new opportunities* it may provide for women's political participation. Some scholars have argued over the years women have lost influence through the compartmentalization of politics, economics, and social concerns, as also through the displacement of power from the community to the more distant capital.

Devolution tends to turn both of these processes around. Not only does it *bring decision-making closer to the community*, but the focus of local government is more often on *concerns of direct interest to community and household*. These include health, education, water, sanitation, markets and small business, all of which, in many societies, are of immediate and practical interest to women.

It is also much *easier for women to participate in politics* at this level because time, travel, and absence-from-home difficulties are reduced. Recent history in a number of western societies shows that women make their first effective entrance into modern political institutions at the local level.

A final potential advantage of decentralization for both men and women is that it is capable of responding to different situations within countries. For example, educated urban women may run for election to urban councils despite a low average female literacy level in the country as a whole. Religious or cultural restrictions on women's participation in one locality need not limit women in another. And effective participation by women in one region can serve as a positive example to women elsewhere, and provide preparation for national politics.





## RELEVANT QUESTIONS

- ◆ Is decentralization included in the democracy program?
- ◆ Is devolution a component of the decentralization program?
- ◆ What is the pattern of power distribution between different levels of government?
- What are the comparative percentages of women and men holding elected positions in local or provincial or/and municipal or/and district government?
- Are there cultural/religious/informal constraints on women's participation in local councils?
- What lessons can be learned from the experiences of locally elected women about opportunities and constraints to political participation at the local level?
- Where women are not elected to local governments, are any arrangements made to include women?
- Are any efforts being made to encourage women to take an interest and take part in local government?
- Are both women and men local councilors being included in training programs, conferences, information exchanges, etc.?
- In terms of local government accountability and responsiveness, are women and women's organizations included along with men and men's organizations in 'the public' to which the council responds?
- Are women able to articulate their concerns to, and in, the local councils and are the councils dealing with issues of significance to local women?

### 3.7 ELECTIONS

**INTRODUCTION:** In order to assist governments to carry out elections through universal suffrage, the policy paper calls for help with strengthening electoral systems and institutions; observing and monitoring elections; educating and registering voters; and improving the professionalism of political parties. Considerable effort has gone into assisting with pre-electoral assessments, the elections themselves, and sometimes the more limited role of election monitoring.

**INCORPORATING GENDER:** There are usually three distinct phases to the management of an election, namely pre-election assessment, management of the election, and monitoring and evaluation of the election. The management of national elections is extremely complex and demanding. There are a host of logistic, transport, timing, training, equipment, and negotiation issues to deal with. Analyzing the likely behavior of numerous and often embryonic political parties is also a challenging aspect of the work.

But if elections are to be truly fair and free for all, additional questions need to be asked at all three phases. In preparing for and managing an election, consideration needs to be given to the *special needs of disadvantaged groups*, such as uneducated, illiterate, minority or ethnic groups, or lower castes, people who do not speak the national language, indigenous and rural people, and women. In this case the situation of women will tend to be more complex than those of other categories because the *limitations placed on women's participation are likely to be the least visible* to the analyst's eye. At the conclusion of an election, we do not simply want to know that it was peaceful and orderly. We also want to know who the voters were (men, women, youth, urban/rural, socio-economic classes, ethnic groups, castes) and who was elected, in order to learn from those findings.





## RELEVANT QUESTIONS

- ◆ Are there any legal restrictions on any categories of adults voting or standing for election?
- What are the major features of male-female political relations?
- In particular who usually takes responsibility for making major decisions on behalf of the household or/and community?
- Are women constrained to vote as they are told by the head of the household or head of some extended social unit?
- Are there cultural constraints preventing women from mixing with men in public?
- To what extent are women more constrained than men by the fact that they have very limited access to information on which to base decisions?
- To what extent are women more constrained than men by the fact that they are less literate or do not speak the national language?
- How mobile are women? If they are free to move around, do they get time away from home and work to learn about or vote or become involved in politics in any way?
- Are women allowed, and is it practical for them, to stand and canvass for elections, and to participate in party politics?
- Are there any legal restrictions on women voting in elections?
- How many women and men are migrant workers or live and work semi-permanently away from home, and therefore might be unable to vote in their home districts?
- When are the main agriculture or production labor peaks for men and women in different communities?
- Are there any other features of society that might discourage women from voting such as threat of political violence, hostile treatment by male officials?
- Have steps been taken (e.g., including women as electoral officials through civic education, or possibly by men and women lining up to vote separately) to reduce fear and risks?
- What is the feasibility of women standing for election given cultural and educational and work responsibility constraints?
- What are the chances of people voting for women?
- If very few women are likely to be elected, how will women's perspectives and needs be channelled into the legislative bodies? (Are there possibilities of setting aside a minimum number of seats for women?).
- Do women have any special or cultural status which might make them useful as guarantors of fair and free elections?

### 3.8 GOVERNANCE

**INTRODUCTION:** As discussed in the introduction to this guide, the term “governance” is included in the title of the A.I.D. policy paper. Its definition in that instance is by implication a very broad one. Within the policy paper, the term is used more narrowly to define one component of DI. Yet even in the latter case, it embraces substantially more than public administration. It includes enhanced efficiency of public institutions and private for-profit and not-for-profit institutions and their linkages. It is also concerned with creating systems of checks and balances, competition and openness to ensure greater government transparency and accountability. Government here includes state-owned enterprises.

In operational terms, much of the emphasis on governance centers on strengthening and modernizing public services (information, financial management, and personnel systems), as well as preparing them for changing economic policies and a new type of relationship with the private sector. In many instances this translates into training and technical assistance and the provision of new equipment.

**INCORPORATING GENDER:** From a gender perspective, the main concerns include *government employment patterns for women and men* (e.g., numbers, seniority, pay scales), possible formalized and informal *differences in personnel policies*, organizational culture and comparative *governmental responsiveness* to men’s and women’s organizations and issues.

Training programs for government and for non-governmental organizations should include both men and women and should facilitate the entry of women into higher levels of management and new, non-traditional fields of responsibility. Based on local circumstances -- availability of qualified or qualifiable women, recent trends, degree of male resistance, women’s own expressed interest, cultural and religious concerns, trends in employment -- the undertaking should set an appropriate target (20%, 30%, 50%) for women’s participation in governance training and technical assistance programs. Also, training programs should take note of informal or formal constraints on women’s participation and attempt to time and locate courses in such a way as to accommodate women.

*Administrative reforms should also take account of limitations sometimes placed on women*, such as rules concerning loss of job permanency on marriage, retirement and health benefits, problems of maternity leave, discrimination in hiring and promotion. For example, written examinations, as opposed to interviews, have been found to be helpful in creating a fairer environment for the hiring and promotion of women. Attempts to create new personnel systems, career structures and incentive systems need to take note of invisible blocks to women’s progress.

*Organizational culture* may be of relevance to women as well. Attitudes toward, and treatment of, women in some organizations may create an uncertain or hostile environment. The phenomenon of senior men taking sexual advantage of more junior women over whose careers they exercise some influence is said to be common in some countries. While this may present an external agency with a sensitive area for reform, practices of this kind clearly hinder the establishment of personnel systems based on transparency and merit.



Also in structuring systems of mutual accountability and responsiveness between the private and public sectors, efforts should be made to include women's organizations and organizations representing women's interests and those of other groups who may be less politically prominent or visible.

## RELEVANT QUESTIONS

- What are the comparative percentages of women and men in the formally employed labor force?
- What are the comparative percentages of women and men with high school diplomas and university degrees?
- What are the comparative numbers and percentages of women and men in senior management positions in government?
- What are the comparative numbers and percentages of women and men in middle management positions in government?
- What are the comparative numbers and percentages of women and men at the junior levels in government?
- In which ministries, departments, agencies or state owned enterprises are middle and senior level women concentrated?
- Are terms of service and benefits in government the same for men and women?
- Does marriage or giving birth affect a women's career prospects in any way? e.g., does it affect their job permanency or promotion prospects?
- Are there any formal or informal limits on women's upward advance within the public service?
- What is the prevailing organizational culture in terms of attitudes toward women? Are efforts made to create an encouraging environment in which women feel confident that they will be treated on merit.
- Is attention given to including both women and men in the training and technical assistance programs? Will they both benefit from the delivery of new equipment and the training that accompanies the equipment?
- Is an effort being made to locate and time training events so as to accommodate women with domestic responsibilities?
- In which areas of management do women express interest in being trained?
- Are women as well as men being included in preparation for more advanced policy analysis capability?
- Are concerns of women included in training for policy analysis and on the agenda of topics suggested for policy analysis?
- Might there be an argument for including more women in anti-corruption programs? e.g., as accountants, financial managers, prosecuting judges?
- Are government agencies that deal with the private sector -- assist, regulate, mediate, license, contract, etc - familiar with the roles of women in business, and with some of the constraints that often prevent women from taking advantage of, or competing for, government services, licenses etc? Has there been any training of officials in those agencies on ways to help businesswomen overcome these constraints?
- To the extent that governance programs include strengthening the management and capacity of non-governmental organizations that inform, pressure, cooperate and co-manage with government -- think tanks, research institutes, advocacy and interest groups, human rights groups, professional organizations, civic education organizations -- have organizations representing and including women also been involved?

### 3.9 HUMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS

**INTRODUCTION:** Basic human rights are stated in A.I.D. policy documents to be fundamental to all human beings, regardless of their cultural traditions and form of government. The Agency supports the Universal Declaration of Human Rights statement that the rights of individuals should not be denied on the basis of ethnic origin, religion, gender, race, or economic class.

The rights included in the Universal Declaration center around three categories: integrity of the person; civil and political rights; and social and economic rights. A.I.D.'s emphasis is on the first two. Integrity of the person (the 'freedom from' rights) includes freedom from political killings, torture, cruel treatment or punishment, arbitrary arrest or imprisonment, denial of fair public trial, or arbitrary interference in personal life. The civil and political rights (the 'freedom to' rights) include the right to take part in government, to vote, freedom of opinion and expression, freedom of association and assembly, freedom of movement within a country and the right to leave, the right to nationality, and freedom of religion.

The Bureaus have different emphases insofar as some focus on human rights abuse only, whereas other are concerned with the full range of rights.

**INCORPORATING GENDER:** At the official level, governments tend to guarantee or deny rights without reference to gender. Formally, therefore, distinctions between men and women are few, although some countries forbid women to participate in the political process, usually on religious grounds.

At the informal level there may be cases where men may suffer in far larger numbers than women. Examples include political imprisonment and torture in the name of state security. On the other hand, the treatment of women prisoners in a number of countries is extremely abusive and leaves them no recourse to any authority.

In general, restrictions on women's freedom arise from household, community, religious or cultural practices which the state either supports, condones, or lacks the capacity to address. Women may have less freedom than men in marrying and divorcing, traveling, forming associations, signing contracts, owning property, achieving full legal capacity; and they may be restricted from mixing with men in public. In court, women may face different burdens of proof in alleging rape or domestic abuse, and their evidence may be given less weight than that of men. In some societies the social stigma and punishment of going to court and losing a case is so serious that many women will simply not try.

There is a growing trend towards the international migration of women, usually confronted by poverty, but often also threatened or misled -- for purposes of prostitution or domestic work. This trend adds new dangers: vulnerability to violence and lack of recourse to any protective authority.





In all of the foregoing instances, there is a very close link between power relations in the household (and according to custom) and women's treatment and status in public institutions, whether these be political, legal, or commercial. Encroachments on the human rights, and limitations on the freedom, of men is no less deserving of attention. The point here is that the restrictions on, and abuse of, women are more often camouflaged by cultural and unwritten nuances, and as a consequence are often countenanced by the state.

In some countries in which A.I.D. works, high levels of violence and discrimination against women have led to demands by local women's organizations to *recognize women's rights as a particular category of human rights* in need of urgent national and international attention. In addition to highlighting the plight of women in the world, this amounts to a call from women to participate more fully at all levels in redefining the human rights agendas. Such demands require serious consideration and response from A.I.D. and international human rights programs.

To some extent DI could deal effectively with gender and human rights simply by sexually disaggregating all responses. This method would need to be employed with considerable care, however, since the differences between men's and women's rights will often be found in the realm of the informal, the unwritten, and the cultural, and in the failure to implement the laws on the statute books.

## RELEVANT QUESTIONS

- ◆ Are there constitutional provisions protecting human rights?
- ◆ Has the government signed any of the major international conventions on human rights and/or women's rights?
- ◆ Has the government established its own human rights monitoring agency?
- ◆ Does the government allow nongovernmental human rights organizations to operate freely?

The following four questions should be asked about each kind of right listed below:

1. Do women have the right according to law?
2. Do women have the right in practice?
3. Is there evidence that women are exercising their right?
4. Are there differences in men and women's experience with any of the above?

- freedom from arbitrary arrest?
- freedom from search without warrant?
- freedom from torture, violence and sexual abuse?
  - a) in state institutions?
  - b) by state officials?
  - c) which the state condones or fails to punish?
- the right to due process in court?
  - a) does a woman's evidence count as much as a man's?
  - b) are there additional burdens of proof in cases of concern to women such as domestic violence, rape and divorce?
  - c) are public defenders available to both sexes?
- the right of assembly and public demonstration?
- the right to join and form organizations? for example,
  - a) professional
  - b) business
  - c) trade unions
  - d) women's
- freedom of speech?
- freedom to participate and contribute to the mass media?
- to choose a marriage partner?
- to divorce?
- to choose where to live?



- to custody of children?
- to alimony?
- to an inheritance?
- to vote?
- to stand for election?
- freedom of mobility, internal and external?
- to contractual rights?<sup>2</sup>
- to property rights?
- of access to financial markets?
- to employee benefits (ex health and pensions)?<sup>2</sup>
- to non-discrimination in employment practices?

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<sup>2</sup> Although the last five questions would be more appropriately included with economic rather than human rights, answers to these questions will provide an insightful measure of a society's acceptance of discrimination against women and of its definition of women's legal capacity.

### 3.10 LEADERSHIP TRAINING

**INTRODUCTION:** This involves the selection and development of community and organizational leadership committed to democracy. In particular, such a cadre of leaders should be established to put democracy and conflict resolution into practice at whatever level they operate, and to educate, explain, and set an example to others.

**INCORPORATING GENDER:** Gender concerns here are closely analogous to those included in the discussion of Democratic Values and Civil Society. Care should be taken to include in the training process both men and women who are already in leadership positions or have leadership potential. In many societies this may be complicated. The old leadership may be discredited and the new leadership inexperienced and untested.

**Locating women leaders for this task may present additional challenges.** For a variety of cultural reasons, women may not volunteer for training or may not be put forward by community leaders -- for example, if the training courses entail absence from home, if the trainers are men, or if the courses are co-educational. Considerable time, sensitivity, creativity, and flexibility may be necessary in such circumstances.

Training materials should encourage a positive attitude toward women's leadership and women's rights; provide attention to issues that women regard as important; and avoid negative stereotypes of both genders.





## RELEVANT QUESTIONS

- What are the comparative percentages for men and women holding leadership positions in the public, the private and the NGO sectors?
- ◆ What are the criteria (defined or implied) for leadership that are being applied?
- ◆■ Who is responsible for defining these criteria, and do they disadvantage women in any way?
- ◆■ Who is responsible for identifying and selecting leaders?
- ◆ From which communities and which organizations are leaders being selected?
- What are the main cultural/traditional/religious/time/educational constraints on women taking up leadership positions?
- Do the locations, times and length of courses take account of women's domestic responsibilities and work patterns?
- Are there examples of women in positions of influence in traditional social structures? What lessons can be learnt from them about women and leadership?
- Have efforts been made, or are efforts being made, to find creative ways of providing women with leadership training and opportunities?

### 3.11 MASS MEDIA

**INTRODUCTION:** The policy paper calls for support for the existence, professionalism, and independence of mass media and independent journalists, and reduction of censorship, legal, or regulatory constraints. DI assistance to radio, television, newspapers, and newsletters seeks to improve the standards of reporting, interpreting, and conveying of news and analysis. The purpose is to better inform the public, and to keep governmental and, to a lesser extent, private institutions accountable to the public.

**INCORPORATING GENDER:** A gender focus on the media would enquire as to the comparative *numbers of men and women employed in the production of information and news*, the participation of men and women in journalism training programs, the *gender content of the courses*, *the manner in which women and issues of significance to women are dealt with in the press*, and the accessibility of men and women -- potentially excluded because of language, literacy, or remoteness -- to the media.

There may be a danger for rural men and women in setting the technology of the media at the level demanded by those who work in, and focus on, the capital city. This may be inappropriate in terms of the overall information needs of the country. There is also a danger of over-concentration on the national level. In practice this often means use of the official language only and an over-concentration on the major city(ies).

Women need to be included in this component of DI. If there are few women employed in the mass media, some effort should be made to include women who are intending, or are studying, to be journalists or who may be involved at different, possibly simpler or more local, levels of reporting or writing. Course content should include issues of interest to women in the country. Content should also deal with the potentially harmful and restrictive effects on public attitudes of relying on *negative stereotypes of women* in media reporting.

The question of the appropriateness of a 'women's page' or 'women's hour' will often arise. There are of course trade-offs involved. Dangers include the possible stereotyping, marginalization, and compartmentalization of women's issues. On the other hand such separate sections have often been used to provide serious and constructive discussion of substantial issues of concern to women.



## RELEVANT QUESTIONS

- ◆ What are the major sources of public information and opinion? (Note in particular the role of radio, television, newspapers and news magazines.)
- ◆ Are all or most of them concentrated in the capital?
- ◆ Are there examples of minor/regional/local sources of information?
- ◆● To the extent that information is available, provide a profile (using categories such as education, class, urban/rural, ethnic and gender) of listeners/readers/viewers.
- What are the comparative literacy rates for men and women, distinguished e.g. by class, urban/rural location, age group and religion?
- What percentage of men and women speak/read the major national language?
- ◆ What other languages are spoken?
- What are the comparative numbers and percentages of men and women journalists working in radio/television/newspapers?
- Are there particular types of news which women journalists tend to cover? If so, what are they?
- What are the comparative numbers of men and women in management or production positions?
- What are the comparative percentages of men and women journalism students?
- Do journalism courses include attention to issues of interest and importance to women, e.g., health, education, harassment, discrimination, violence against women, restrictions of various kinds, reproductive issues, women and work, women and business, etc?
- How do the major newspapers, radio stations etc portray women and women's roles in society and the economy? In particular do they tend to reinforce stereotypes?
- Do journalism courses deal with ethics? If so, do they deal with issues relating to the major role of the media in creating images/stereotypes of women and in establishing a congenial or hostile environment for women?
- ◆ Do the media make an effort to provide information to those who are illiterate, less educated, do not speak/read the national and/or commercial language, who live in remote areas?
- ◆■ Has research been done or have polls been taken on the interests and priorities of various social categories, including women, across the country, as also on the most convenient broadcast times?

### 3.12 POLITICAL PARTY SUPPORT

**INTRODUCTION:** A.I.D.'s objective with regard to political parties is to improve their professionalism in a spirit of non-partisanship. The ultimate purpose is to create political parties that can more effectively analyze policy issues, inform their supporters of the choices, and represent their views in the formulation of legislation. This involves technical assistance, training, equipment, visits abroad, and sometimes financial support.

**INCORPORATING GENDER:** A gender approach would pay attention to the comparative *percentages of men and women who are members and leaders of parties*, and who are selected for *training courses*. It would also investigate whether there are any formal or informal *restrictions on women's participation* in any of the parties, and whether party policies deal with gender issues and concerns of importance to local women.

The DI program itself should include both men and women of different levels of seniority in its party-strengthening activities. In the process it should expose trainees and visitors to the US debate on gender issues, and encourage the inclusion of concerns of local women in party platforms and policy analysis. Methods of communicating with, and winning the support of, women and women's groups and of creating environments encouraging to women's participation should be discussed. Because of the size of the female population, there is a strong incentive for parties to take women's representation and support seriously. Finally, women's NGOs should be trained in methods of gaining access to, and influencing, political parties.





## RELEVANT QUESTIONS

- ◆ Which are the major political parties (or political movements)?
- What are the comparative percentages women and men in leadership positions in the major political parties (or political movements)?
- What are the comparative percentages of women and men members of the major political parties?
- What mechanisms do they have for including women as members? as leaders? (Leaders are defined as individuals in a position to influence policy.)
- If there are separate women's sections, what are their roles and relationships to the central agencies of the parties?
- To what extent do the parties take up issues of importance to women?
- Have any steps been taken by any of the parties to increase women's participation and influence?
- Are there any legal constraints on women's participation in political party activity?
- What are the main cultural/traditional/religious constraints on women's effective participation in any of the major political parties?
- To what extent are women more constrained than men by the fact that they are less educated, less literate, do not speak the national language, and have less access to information?
- How mobile are women? e.g., are they restricted much of the time (to a home, or compound, or neighborhood)?
- If women are free to move around, do they get time away from home and work to learn about or become involved in party politics?
- Are there any other features of society that might discourage women from participating in political party activity such as the threat of political violence, hostile treatment by male officials? Have steps been taken to reduce fear and risks?

### 3.13 PRIVATE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

**INTRODUCTION:** Although not strictly a part of DI, Mission democracy programs may include private sector development or trade and investment. The private sector may be the central focus of the program, or it may be combined with a political undertaking, or it may provide one element of work on legal systems reform.

**INCORPORATING GENDER:** The sorts of gender issues that may arise are considered in an A.I.D. document entitled *Private Enterprise Development: Gender Considerations* (PM ABE-612) prepared for the Office of Women and Development and the Bureau for Program and Policy Coordination in 1988. The document deals with gender and the private sector under six headings: Micro-Enterprise Development, Business Development, Agri-Business Development, Trade and Investment, Skills Training and Financial Sector Development. This is a valuable document in terms of the quality of advice it gives and because it emphasizes (1) that *women's business concerns go well beyond those of microenterprises*, and (2) policy considerations are as relevant as those of project design.

Anyone confronting the inclusion of this type of program under DI should refer to the *Private Enterprise Development* paper itself. Should that paper not be available, the following are illustrative of the types of questions that should elicit useful responses on gender and private sector development. With the exception of the final set of questions on associations, the questions mainly derive from issues discussed in the paper. It must be stressed that the short lists of questions under each topic are illustrative only; they are not intended to be comprehensive in their coverage.

#### RELEVANT QUESTIONS

##### Microenterprises

- What are the comparative percentages of men and women who own microenterprises?
- ◆ Do macro economic policies discriminate against or assist microenterprises?
- Are there any programs in place to assist men and women who own microenterprises?
- ◆ What is the attitude of formal financial institutions to providing small loans to microenterprises?
- ◆ Given the high transaction costs of small loans are any incentives being provided to encourage financial institutions to lend to microenterprises?
- What other credit channels do small scale businessmen and women have available to them?
- Are there any formal restrictions on women's ownership of microenterprises?
- Are there any customary/religious/informal constraints on women owning or working in microenterprises?

##### Business Development

- Are there legal restrictions on women's access to credit?
- Does the requirement of collateral prevent some women from obtaining credit?



- Do men and women have the same legal rights to own land and property?
- Are there any customary/religious/informal constraints on women having rights to own land or property?
- Are women allowed to have bank accounts in their own names?
- Are there any programs in place to assist women in business development?
- Which organizations have a record of assisting women in business development?

#### **Trade and Investment Promotion**

- What are the comparative percentages of men and women employed in the export sector?
- What are the comparative percentages of men and women employed in free trade zones?
- What are the conditions of service of men and women in the export sector or/and free trade zones?
- What are the trends in these conditions of service? Are there indications of improvement or deterioration?
- ◆ What size firm will the trade and investment project assist?
- Since women are more likely to be managers/owners of small firms than large firms, is any of the assistance targeted at small firms or women-owned firms?

#### **Skills Training**

- ◆ What variables are being considered in assessing business training needs (e.g., formal/informal, sector, scale of firm, level within the firm, specialization, education, gender)?
- Are both male and female trainers being used?
- Are training programs taking account of women's domestic responsibilities (e.g., in planning locations and times for courses)?

#### **Financial Sector Development**

- Are there different incentives and opportunities for men and women to save in the economy?
- Are there different investment patterns for men and women?
- Are women legally allowed to open savings accounts in their own names?
- How do women learn about basic banking procedures?
- Do women make use of traditional or community savings schemes? What lessons can be learned from these?

#### **Associations**

- Do the major commercial associations -- chambers of commerce, traders' associations, trade unions, farmers associations, cooperative societies -- include women as members? or leaders? Do they provide a forum for the concerns of businesswomen to be discussed?
- Are there separate women's commercial associations? Who do they represent? What is their role? How effective are they? Do they have access to government policy makers or bureaucracy?

### 3.14 PUBLIC OPINION POLLING

**INTRODUCTION:** Public opinion polling is seen as a useful addition to the democratic process. Working effectively, polling may have the effect of establishing additional, flexible channels of communication between the public and decision-makers, by providing the latter with timely information on trends in public opinion and responses to policies enacted. Careful polling may also provide better quality information for research, policy analysis, and policy-making than accounts of journalists or anecdotal evidence. It may also enable politically 'invisible' categories of people to express opinions and be heard.

**INCORPORATING GENDER:** In undertaking this kind of assistance A.I.D. is likely to work with an already established public opinion polling organization or to assist a local research/policy/social-marketing organization to undertake polls. Polling is not a politically neutral undertaking, however. Its impact depends on *who sets the agenda for the polls, the nature of the questions asked, the wording of the questions, and the sample of people polled.* Therefore selection of local polling organizations should take account of their openness to issues deriving from a wide variety of sources, including both men's and women's associations. The organizations' employment of men and women and their track record on issues identified as important by women and men of different social categories should be also be taken into account.

Attention should be given to the problems of including difficult-to-reach groups -- whether the difficulty is caused by geographical remoteness, cultural constraints, choice of language, or complexity of vocabulary. Polls by telephone are not going to include a high proportion of the people!

Also issues on which the public is to be polled should include questions regarded as important by local women of different categories. Training and technical assistance aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of polling should be given to women as well as men.





## RELEVANT QUESTIONS

- ◆ What experience is there of polling in the country?
- ◆ Which agencies have carried out the polling?
- ◆■ Have they successfully found methods of polling remote or less educated communities or women?
- ◆ On what basis, and at whose initiative, were questions selected?
- Do the polling agencies employ men and women, and at what levels?
- ◆ What access to these polling agencies do women's organizations have?
- Have they taken women's concerns into account in preparing previous polls? Are they willing to do so?
- Are men and women employees of polling organizations to be included as recipients of training and technical assistance?
- Are examples of policy issues or current concerns of relevance to women included in training programs?

### 3.15 REPRESENTATIVE INSTITUTIONS

**INTRODUCTION:** Typical A.I.D. goals with regard to representative institutions are to enhance the professionalism of legislators; strengthen legislative research, analysis and drafting capabilities; and increase accountability of municipal/local government. Other objectives include improving legislative oversight of the civil service, building more effective committee systems, and promoting the use of public hearings.

**INCORPORATING GENDER:** The following points apply to both national and local level elected bodies. There are two categories of people to be considered: elected politicians and professional staff working for individual politicians or for committees or agencies of the institution. Elected women and men as well as male and female staff should be included as direct beneficiaries in all aspects of these activities such as training and technical assistance.

Some attention should also be given to facilitating women's inclusion in new and more challenging undertakings. In other words, policy analysis assistance should not be limited to men and secretarial support to women. If there are no elected women or senior women employees, an effort should be made to include women who are qualified and may be applying for positions and women who have shown an interest in pursuing political careers. For example, there may be women who are working in public advocacy groups, or who have shown leadership in election monitoring or have achieved seniority in a political party.

In teaching legislative drafting the way in which terms may be used is important to ensure equal application of laws to men and women, to better protect women's rights and to avoid stereotypes. In dealing with policy analysis, topics of concern to women should be included in the training and in the early agenda on which the trainees work.





## RELEVANT QUESTIONS

- What are the comparative numbers and percentages of elected women and men in the national legislative body?
- What are the comparative numbers and percentages of women and men in senior, mid-level and junior staff positions?
- Are there any formal limitations on employment or promotion or training of women in any of the departments or committees of the legislature?
- Are there any informal/traditional/cultural (including administrative culture) constraints on women staff?
- Does training in legislative drafting include attention to, and use examples of, policy concerns of women?
- Does training in legislative drafting demonstrate an awareness of gender biased terminology?
- Does policy analysis training include attention to, and provide examples of, policy questions of specific relevance to women?

### 3.16 TRADE UNIONS

**INTRODUCTION:** A.I.D. has for some time given assistance to labor movements in various countries around the world. The purpose of this assistance is to enable workers to organize democratically and effectively and to make unions more accountable and open organizations. It also aims to strengthen union leaderships' management and negotiation skills and policy analysis, and enhance their understanding of workers' rights and responsibilities.

**INCORPORATING GENDER:** To a significant extent the concerns of male and female workers may overlap, but there are also a variety of situations in which female workers face different problems and may have different perspectives from those of men. In many work situations women face discrimination in employment, salaries, permanency, pensions, and health protection. In some societies the practice of sexual harassment is so common as to be considered part of organizational culture.

**Discrimination against women workers stems from a variety of sources.**

One is women's reproductive role which, given common patterns of division of labor, leaves women with prime responsibility for care of infants and toddlers, which in turn requires maternity leave. This discourages some employers from giving women jobs or job permanency. Another source of discrimination derives from the still common notion that the man is the main breadwinner and therefore should receive a higher salary or get priority in hiring.

A third problem arises from laws that 'protect' women from certain kinds of work, or locations or times of work. Sometimes these are designed with good intentions but they often end up hurting women by excluding them from certain kinds of employment or by rendering them uncompetitive. A fourth cause of discrimination results from lack of education in general and more specifically from lack of training in what are considered male skills.

**Women's disadvantage may play itself out in trade union organizations** as well. Women -- fewer in number, less skilled, and lacking job permanency -- are likely to make up a minority of union members and to be excluded from leadership positions. They are therefore unlikely to be heard within the labor movement when it defines its priorities.

It therefore takes extra care and investigation to discover women workers' priorities. DI strategies should target women for training and technical assistance, and incorporate training content that deals with women's concerns and educates men about these issues.



## RELEVANT QUESTIONS

- ◆ Which are the major trade unions?
- ◆ What is their relationship to government/political parties?
- What are the comparative percentages of women and men in leadership positions in the major unions?
- What are the comparative percentages of women and men who are members of the major unions?
- What are the comparative percentages of eligible women and men workers who are not members of unions?
- What are the comparable salaries for women and men doing comparable work (in the economy as a whole, in different regions or sectors)?
- Are there any legal constraints to the employment and advancement of women? What are the formal justifications for these constraints (e.g., religion, the protection of women)?
- What are the major informal/cultural/religious restrictions on employment and advancement of women workers?
- If there are women's sections of unions, what is their role and relationship to the central body of the unions?
- How do women articulate their concerns to the unions?
- Is there evidence of the unions responding to women's concerns (e.g., maternity leave, sexual harassment, discrimination)?
- Have there been efforts by the unions to encourage/facilitate an enhanced role for women?
- What are the main problems identified by women workers?
- Are there any unions which are predominantly female in membership?
- Is there a debate in any sectors of the economy on the role and treatment of women in the workplace?





# D

## EMOCRACY INDICATORS AND GENDER: A DISCUSSION

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### 4.1 COUNTRY PERFORMANCE

There is considerable debate within the Agency about measurement. Since there are differences over the goal of DI there will obviously be disagreements over what it is that one is measuring. Even when goals are agreed upon, there are differences over means, stages and sequences, and that adds further to the difficulty of finding consensus.

There are arguments too that quantitative indicators of separate events or activities are inappropriate, and certainly less helpful than more qualitative discernment of a pattern of trends. It is also asserted that the very introduction of indicators runs counter to the democratic process in that, at least by implication, it pre-determines the type of democracy that foreign countries must pursue.

Within all this uncertainty, Bureaus and the Agency nevertheless need to find measurements of progress on which to report. The first reason is the relationship of democratic progress to the allocation of funds. In looking for ways to concentrate its funds more effectively A.I.D. is working on performance based budgeting, and progress toward democracy is one of the measures that will be applied. That being the case, the question then arises as to what yardsticks to use, and how to make valid comparisons of progress in democracy. A.I.D. has reviewed the work of a number of scholars on these questions; it has organized seminars and panels; and there are numerous memos on this topic. The various Bureaus have made efforts to select and combine elements from a variety of sources.

In the interim there seems to be some working consensus on relying, at least to some extent, on Freedom House's Index of Freedom. A number of doubts have been expressed about the wisdom of relying on one source only, about this organization's emphasis on quantitative indicators, and about the saliency of some of the indicators. On the other hand, a number of people noted that in comparison with A.I.D. setting up its own system, the Freedom House Index is inexpensive and convenient. It is also comprehensive, and comes out annually and punctually.

This on-going debate over indicators is of course *very important to integrating gender* into the democracy initiative because indicators are not only a means of measurement, but also *cues to the Agency's priorities*. If gender or women do not make it onto the list of indicators they are considerably less likely to be taken seriously.

The Freedom House Index lists over 20 different measures, divided into those focusing on Political Rights and those dealing with Civil Liberties. None of these specifically mentions women or gender, although in one version the question on socio-economic rights uses women's situation as one of a number of illustrative examples. If A.I.D. is going to use Freedom House's Index, then women's rights need to be included more explicitly as a measure.

There are a number of possibilities for doing this. Question/criterion #9 under Political Rights, states that no major group should be denied reasonable self determination. In the list of Civil Liberties question/criterion #18 is concerned with free trade union and peasant organizations, #19 with free business organizations and cooperatives, #20 with free professional and other private organizations, #22 with personal social rights including those to property and choice of residence and marriage, #23 with socio-economic rights including freedom from dependency on landlords, bosses, etc, and #24 on freedom from gross socio-economic inequality.

Women's concerns could be explicitly included in any or some of the above criteria, which do lend themselves to such an adaptation; or it might be possible to add one question specifically on women's rights; or preferably do both. Certainly, one criterion out of about 25 will not distort the purpose of the index and it will draw attention to the situation of women. This might be done through negotiation with Freedom House, or by relying on other organizations' monitoring of human and civil rights and including their findings on women in the assessments.

#### 4.2 PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

Measuring the effectiveness of A.I.D Country Missions' democracy programs is no less complicated. In addition to many of the disagreements discussed above, there is a serious problem of attribution of credit for progress in democracy. There are also varying interpretations of the different types of measures such as impact, outcome, and output indicators.

*It is essential that the gender dimension continue to be raised in the on-going discussions on indicators.* The following points are intended as introductory suggestions on methods to enhance the inclusion of gender in measuring progress toward democracy.

#### IMPACT INDICATORS AND GENDER

There has been no final agreement as yet on how to measure the impact of DI programs. It is therefore obviously difficult to suggest how to incorporate gender concerns at this level of measurement. However, the following three-part measurement might be useful. Each measure would act as a test of the validity of the others, and taken together they would be indicative of a pattern or trend of change.

- The first measure would be *PERCEPTUAL*, that is, it would test public perception of change. It would ask people whether they believed, for example, that the elections were fair and free.
- The second measure would be *BEHAVIORAL*, that is, it would test if behavior had changed. It would investigate whether people had actually voted in the last national and local council elections.



- The third measure would test the *INSTITUTIONALIZATION* of democracy. It would assess whether elections had been held, and whether a national election commission had been established on a permanent, sustainable basis.

Assuming that this tripartite model or something like it were used, then *gender could be incorporated by ensuring that men and women are both consulted on perceptual questions and that the actions of both men and women are included in the behavioral measure.* Not only would this refine the validity of the measurement, but awareness of this requirement would go a long way substantively incorporating gender concerns into major DI undertakings.

## PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND GENDER

Essentially, these indicators aim to measure improvement -- to the extent that reasonably reliable data are available or can be generated -- usually as observed in an increase in numbers, percentages, or proportions, or an improvement in ratios.

First, Country Missions should be urged to *disaggregate their numbers on the basis of gender.* In addition to disaggregation being formally required by the Agency, it is clear both from theory and practice that democracy is an uneven process. While it will obviously enfranchise many people, it has the potential to disenfranchise others, at least temporarily.

Therefore, in order to test the impacts of democracy and governance at the people level, it is essential to evaluate its consequences for groups whom we anticipate might easily be left out of the benefits of these initiatives. In addition to gender there are numerous other social categories -- religious, caste, class, geographic, racial, ethnic -- that may be so disadvantaged.

Gender disaggregation will make most sense if it relates closely to the original analysis, logic and components of the particular DI program the progress of which is being measured. There are two aspects to disaggregation. One is to *ensure that figures are collected about both men and women* whether one is collecting figures on a national level or breaking them down on the basis of education, class, religion etc. The second aspect is to ensure that *both men and women are consulted, interviewed, polled or included in focus groups.*

Second, *some of the content of policy or legal decisions should be "unpacked" on the basis of gender.* Based on a number of studies of women and the law and women and politics, and on the common reality that limitations placed on women in the household or in the community will affect their capacity to participate freely and effectively in the democratic or legal process, it becomes clear that there are a *number of concerns that affect women differentially from men.* These include: in the area of *family law*, marriage, divorce, maintenance and custody of children, brideprice, dowry, polygyny and inheritance; under *economic rights*, land and property rights, access to credit and labor rights; under *violence* against women, rape, domestic violence, sexual harassment, and finally there are concerns relating to *reproductive rights.*



Hence a helpful method of making indicators more gender sensitive would be to “unpack” legislation, policy decisions, and court cases to take account of these special concerns. For example, one indicator used to measure improvement in the legal system is an increase in the ratio of court cases processed to cases pending. A measure of the strengthening of a representative institution is the passage of an increasing number of well defined, clearly drafted, and coherent laws. To make both these measures gender sensitive, one needs to assess not only whether progress is being made in court cases or legislation overall but also in cases and legislation pertaining to the concerns of women listed above.

Third, there is also a clear *need to go beyond formal/governmental institutions*. The experiences of women in many countries demonstrate that they often face a number of additional barriers -- cultural, religious, psychological, educational -- that may make women reluctant to use the courts, demand their rights, stand for election, and so forth. For example, legal clinics and legal support agencies -- whether governmental, or, more likely, independent -- are an essential component of a fair and effective system of justice. It is therefore particularly important that indicators relating to the administration of justice *go beyond measurement of the official court system* to include an indicator such as “increased numbers of legal support services assisting larger numbers of people.” This would have obvious relevance not only to women but also to other disadvantaged groups.

Finally, *the indicators should emphasize implementation*. It is apparent from women’s experiences that passing laws does not necessarily lead to the *implementation or enforcement* of those laws. There are numerous examples of laws aimed at enhancing the position of, or providing equality of opportunity for, women never being implemented. Therefore from a gender perspective it is essential that indicators measure the implementation and enforcement of laws and decisions rather than being satisfied with merely monitoring the passage of legislation. This emphasis would also have relevance to all disadvantaged groups, and in fact makes sense in regard to all legislation.

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