



INSTITUTE FOR INTEGRATED TRANSITIONS

## IFIT INCLUSIVE TRANSITIONS FRAMEWORK: ANNEX<sup>1</sup>

### “ADVANCING ESSENTIAL INTERESTS OF WOMEN AND GIRLS”

In 2015, IFIT published the [Inclusive Transitions Framework](#). This short annex to the Framework presents a number of recommendations on how best to apply it in order to advance the essential interests of women and girls in post-conflict and post-authoritarian transitions. All references to “women” in this annex should be understood to include women and girls.

#### GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

The participation of women in policy development and the mapping of the future of their countries and communities is vital for ensuring consideration of issues and interests that are critical to women in times of transition, such as participation in public life, access to education, and the ability to own property and access justice, to name only a few. Regrettably, women are often prevented or impeded from taking on leadership roles due to a variety of legal and social barriers. As such, as part of any inclusive transition, it is important to promote the participation of women as government officials, businesspeople, journalists, civil society leaders, scientists, academics, and so on. In such roles, women will be in a better position to positively influence the language, expectations, strategies and decisions of organisations and institutions across a country.

At the same time, the visible participation of women, and any targeted measures adopted to advance their essential interests, may be interpreted as threats to a given society’s established social structure and norms. As such, reform requires a sensitivity to context, an appropriate level of consultation, and consideration of issues such as power, the quality of government, and tradition. Any policy changes that elevate the status and interests of women should include an explanation of the wider societal benefits that accompany such measures, as changing laws and policies won’t be enough to produce significant improvements for women. Reconfiguring budgets, expanding capacity, introducing accountability mechanisms, and redefining leadership in ways that advance women’s essential interests will all be necessary.

#### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND POLICY OPTIONS

Just as there is no one-size-fits-all approach to strategy formation across countries in transition, there is none for understanding and enhancing women’s interests. A customised analysis is required to understand the context-specific dynamics, roles and possibilities relating to women, in order to determine which kinds of policies merit greater attention or priority as part of a national transition, and which less.

However, high-quality analysis is not enough. The political, social and business leaders in any transition – whether they are women or men – will face a wide range of conflicting policy choices, and an equally wide range of actors competing for influence and lobbying for different

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priorities and agendas. As a result, the critical role women need to play when transitions arise risks being overlooked or under-emphasised.

In order to ensure that countries suitably prioritise women's issues and participation in times of transition, this annex analyses nine areas of inclusive action (discussed at length in the Framework) with the objective of ensuring better outcomes for women: 1) political dialogue processes; 2) nation-building programmes; 3) elections and political party development; 4) transitional justice (including reconciliation and reintegration measures); 5) rule of law; 6) security (including the security sector as such); 7) education; 8) economic growth; and 9) taxation and the administration of public resources.

These are not the only areas that require attention when a fragile or conflict-affected state enters a transition, and their level of importance will naturally vary from one state to the next. However, by prioritising these areas and using inclusiveness as the guiding principle for developing strategies and policies, national and local leaders – with the support of their international partners – will be more likely to set priorities and make decisions that empower women and maximise the advancement of their essential interests, which in turn will benefit all citizens, including the minority groups (racial, ethnic, sexual and other) to which so many women simultaneously belong.

## **Political Dialogue Processes**

### Potential objectives

- Integrate women into political dialogue processes via their involvement in the development of agendas, the dialogue groups themselves, and various formal and informal working groups.
- Ensure women can participate meaningfully in the debate, drafting, and adoption of peace agreements, new constitutions, and similar foundational processes.
- Facilitate the representation and meaningful participation of women throughout the monitoring and implementation stages of major political agreements.
- Guarantee that women from any background (rural/urban, religious/secular, different ethnic groups, etc.) can contribute to major political debates free of structural discrimination.

### Potential strategies

- Identification of women who can influence media, culture, academia, civil society, and political parties, and facilitation of their role in political dialogue processes.
- Mobilisation and capacity-building specifically designed for women and women's organisations so that they may have greater impact in political dialogue processes.
- Establishment of criteria for the inclusion and participation of women from different sectors of society and age groups (e.g. women-led households, widows, rural/urban, ethnic groups, religious groups) in political dialogue spaces, including within formal and informal working groups.
- Working with parliament, government ministries, local authorities, NGOs and the private sector to ensure that women's voices are heard in the political dialogue process.

## **Nation-Building Programmes**

### Potential objectives

- Ensure that a state's national identity and narrative champion and encourage women's active involvement in major decisions.
- Develop an inclusive vision of the nation that does not allow gender role stereotypes to constrain women's opportunities.
- Contribute to the economic and political empowerment of women of all ages.
- Ensure that international, regional and national legal commitments to women's rights are taken into account in any nation-building programmes.

### Potential strategies

- Sponsoring of research into the history of a country in order to publicly highlight inspirational women leaders.
- Integration of historical and contemporary female role models from a variety of backgrounds into the curricula used in schools and universities, as well as national television, radio, and other programmes.
- Build country capacity and knowledge in the implementation of national, regional and international gender equality and women's rights commitments.
- Support national statistical institutions to collect, produce and analyse social data disaggregated by sex.

## **Elections and Political Party Development**

### Potential objectives

- Increase the representation and participation of women in politics and political spaces.
- Improve the legitimacy of the country's political and policymaking processes by ensuring that they are actively inclusive of women.

### Potential strategies

- Use of surveys to ascertain women's specific perceptions of governmental performance (including with respect to the fairness of political parties, elections, and budget allocation) and men's views on the role of women in politics.
- Guaranteeing of significant female political participation through the design and implementation of electoral rules that ensure a minimum level of gender parity and programmes to increase representation in senior civil service positions.
- Design of protective measures for at-risk female electoral candidates at the local, regional, and national levels.
- Implementation of awareness-raising measures in schools and media to promote support for, and acceptance of, increased female representation in political life.

## **Transitional Justice**

### Potential objectives

- Ensure the representation and meaningful participation of women in the leadership of

major transitional justice bodies and mechanisms.

- Mitigate barriers, including financial insecurity, societal pressure, and threats to safety, that inhibit the participation of women victims as witnesses in transitional justice processes.
- Ensure that violence recovery programmes and institutional reforms are sensitive to women's essential interests and needs.
- Reduce impunity for past and present cases of gender-based political violence.

#### Potential strategies

- Senior appointments of women on the country's main transitional justice bodies.
- Design and implementation of measures that actively prevent the re-victimisation of female victims and witnesses when participating in tribunals or truth commissions.
- Specialised training and capacity-building for those charged with collecting the testimony of women who have suffered atrocities.
- Creation of society-wide programmes to address the root causes of gender-based violence (including physical, sexual, psychological and economic violence).

### **Rule of Law**

#### Potential objectives

- Increase women's ability to report violations of their rights and physical integrity.
- Ensure an adequate proportion of justice system personnel (e.g. officials, judges, prosecutors, public defenders, lawyers, administrators, mediators, and law enforcement officers) are trained and able to apply appropriate measures to deal with cases of violence against women.
- Improve women's level of trust in the national and local justice system.
- Increase the representation of women in senior justice system positions.

#### Potential strategies

- Design of a system (e.g. surveys) to collect information about women's trust in the justice system, and perceived ability to access it.
- Specialised training for male and female justice system personnel on how to identify and appropriately interact with women that have suffered rule of law abuses.
- Appointment of more women as members in, and as leaders of, the various rule of law institutions at national and local levels.
- Design of measures and services (e.g. crisis centres, financial assistance, hotlines, medical and psychological services, security assistance, information centres) that help guarantee the physical integrity of women victims of violence (and their dependents) from the moment they decide to press charges.
- Promote gender-sensitive harmonisation of standards between national justice institutions and customary or traditional justice mechanisms.

### **Security**

#### Potential objectives

- Enhance the implementation of a broad concept of human security, addressing both

physical well-being and economic safety.

- Reduce the threat and incidence of violence against women.
- Increase investigations into and prosecution of violence and discrimination committed by members of state security forces against women.
- Ensure that police and military officials are trained and capable of dealing appropriately with cases of gender-based violence.

#### Potential strategies

- Design and implementation of surveys to collect data on women's perceptions about their level of security in daily life.
- Improvement of infrastructure and public spaces to enable women the safest possible access to work places and vital services.
- Establishment of programmes that address the specific reintegration needs of demobilised women combatants.
- Participatory design of mechanisms and policies to ensure increased accountability for abuses committed against women by security forces.

### **Education**

#### Potential objectives

- Increase the number of girls attending school and the number of women with higher education degrees.
- Increase the number of female professionals in non-traditional fields of work.
- Leverage public and private media as a way to overcome discrimination and prejudice against women.

#### Potential strategies

- Participatory design of programmes and measures that incentivise access for girls to basic education (e.g. conditional cash transfer programmes that pay parents to enrol their children in school) and facilitate women's increased access to higher education.
- Design of educational and vocational training programmes that teach women and men equivalent core skills, and establish high academic and civic expectations for all students regardless of gender.
- Implementation of sensitisation programmes directed at society as a whole with respect to the benefits that girls' access to education can bring, and likewise the benefits of the inclusion of women in traditionally male-dominated professions.

### **Economic Growth**

#### Potential objectives

- Increase the participation of women in the formal labour force, and the conditions thereof.
- Ensure equal opportunities to women and men in access to credit and the realisation of economic activities, such as the creation of small and medium-sized enterprises.
- Increase the number of economically independent women (i.e. with the ability to earn their own income).

### Potential strategies

- Implementation of surveys to collect disaggregated data about women's working conditions (formal and informal, paid and unpaid), access to paid work, and similar matters.
- Design of measures to promote more equal access to economic resources for women, particularly widows and single parents.
- Provision of equitable pay and access to the labour market, including to unions (e.g. ensuring proportionate female representation in union leadership and membership).
- Creation of incentive programmes to increase the availability of bank loans to women.

## **Taxation and the Administration of Public Resources**

### Potential objectives

- Ensure women's equal access to key public services.
- Increase the representation of women in government positions responsible for the administration of public resources.
- Adjust the tax code to fix any built-in discrimination against women.

### Potential strategies

- Collection of data regarding women's perceptions of state services, the quality of their management, and similar matters.
- Implementation of measures (e.g. a quota system) to increase women's participation in decision-making processes associated with the allocation and use of public resources.
- Identification and design of public economic intervention programmes necessary to address the specific needs of women, close gender gaps and eliminate discrimination.

### **Checklist for Implementation**

- *Analyse* continuously the impact of any proposed interventions on women.
- *Hold* regular consultations with a view to anticipating and addressing potential negative consequences that any planned actions may have on women.
- *Involve women and men* as active participants in the formulation, design, planning and targeting of projects to promote gender equality and women's rights.
- *Include* a gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation strategy that takes context, norms and changing dynamics into account.
- *Use* gender experts and allocate a sufficient budget for their involvement.