Gender, good governance, decentralisation and public sector reform

This Thematic Brief provides quick guidance on the most important issues relating to gender, good governance, including decentralisation and public sector reform.

This Brief is addressed to staff from development cooperation agencies who are involved in good governance, public sector and decentralisation programmes and projects.

Contents

Introduction

Governance relates to the state's capacity to serve its citizens, through a set of rules, processes and behaviours, organising the articulation of interests, the management of resources and the exercise of power (EU Commission, 2006). The concept of 'good governance' is central to the Millennium Development Goals, considered as an 'enabling environment' for the implementation of the MDGs and the elimination of poverty. Core features of good governance include public accountability, transparency and integrity (free from corruption).

Related to good governance, the concept of **decentralisation** refers to the restructuring of power, responsibilities and resources between government institutions at the central, regional and local levels, resulting in the movements of powers away from the away from the centre. Local governance refers to institutions, mechanisms and processes through which citizens and their groups can exercise their rights and obligations at the local level (UNDP, 2007). Decentralisation is seen as a potential way to improve governance, as it should bring decision-making closer to the people who are affected by decisions and enhance their capacity to influence those decisions. It can take different forms (such as deconcentration, delegation, or devolution) and concerns different types of authority (administrative, fiscal or political) (EU Commission, 2006).

The correct functioning of the **public sector** is directly linked to good governance and decentralisation processes. Often, as a consequence of those processes, the public sector is reformed. The European Commission defines public administration reform as 'the search for public service structures that respond to the needs of all citizens, and deliver appropriate goods and services efficiently, responsibly and impartially' (EU Commission, 2006).

Good governance programmes, including decentralisation and public sector reform programmes, aim at improving service delivery at local level, but are also a response to the need to increase citizens' participation in the decision-making process. Thus, they are often accompanied by the will to develop a more inclusive process of consultation and participation at local and national levels, and to offer many possibilities to improve women's participation in decision-making processes. Gender equality should thus be a key component of good governance programmes.

In this Brief, staff from development cooperation agencies will find information on the most important gender issues at stake and how to address them, indicators that can be used to monitor whether a programme is integrating gender dimensions, examples of gender-sensitive development actions and references to further information and tools related to gender, good governance, public sector and decentralisation.

Gender issues in good governance, decentralisation and public sector

Gender inequalities in good governance, decentralisation and public sector

- **Worldwide, decision-making remains a male-dominated sphere**. The world average of women in national parliaments in 2014 was only 21.8%. Only 17.2% of the ministers were women in 2014 (they were 16.1% in 2008) (UN Women, 2014). Local governments are well placed to promote gender equality, as they

can best gauge community needs and contexts and are the main bodies responsible for providing services to citizens (UN Women/UNJPGE, 2012). Global figures show that the presence of women in decision-making positions is higher at local level than at national level, but that local governments are still not engaging women sufficiently.

■ **Women are overrepresented at lower levels and in certain functions of the civil service** (EU Commission, 2006). Existing data show that women represent an average of 30% of the civil servants in all countries. However, the share of women in decision-making positions is far from the 'critical mass[1]' of 30% in most developing countries (except in Latin America and the Caribbean) (UNDP, 2014). Women are usually overrepresented in less prestigious and lower paid positions, traditionally considered as 'soft' areas of public policies (e.g. culture, tourism or health). For instance, in 2009, in Kazakhstan, women comprised 58% of the public administration employees, but only 9% of those who were in decision-making positions.

■ **Quotas are not enough to ensure gender equality in decision-making processes.** Research on the impact of quotas has shown that often they are considered as 'upper limits' rather than the minimum goal. Also, quotas might have limited impact if procedures are not in place to ensure gender balance throughout the whole decision-making process. For instance, there are quotas to ensure women's access to local councils in India. However, only a few states have introduced rules on the number of women required to be present when the citizen fora (Gram Sabha) take a decision. Once elected, women are sometimes prevented from accessing the meeting rooms by other (male) members. Thus, decisions taken by these institutions might be considered valid even if no woman was present during the debates and deliberation (Mukhopadhyay, 2005).

■ **Increasing the quantity of women participating in decision-making bodies might not result increase the quality of their participation.** For instance, in India, the 1992 reform of the Panchayats (village assemblies) elections called for 33% of seats to be reserved for women from different castes and tribes. There were a number of positive outcomes, such as the election of 700,000 women; reforms adopted at local level to challenge local discriminatory land and property rights; and an increase in service provision such as public transport, education, and access to water. However, research has shown that in some cases, women were elected as 'proxies' for their male relatives, or were not able to effectively attend to their representative functions, due to socio-cultural barriers that had remained unaddressed by this reform (see section below) (Mukhopadhyay, 2005). Besides, women who accede to decision-making positions might lack knowledge and skills to effectively participate in the decision-making process. For instance, a study conducted in 2004 in Bangladesh show that more than 70% of women councillors interviewed were not aware of their rights and responsibilities as representatives and that 80% of them did not feel confident in conducting meetings (Mukhopadhyay, 2005).

■ **Increasing the level of women's participation in decision-making bodies does not always result in structural changes towards more substantive gender equality.** Indeed, women who access decision-making positions might not be willing to instigate structural changes in the unequal distribution of power prevailing in society in general. Research conducted in South Asia showed that women who ac-

---

[1] The 'critical mass' is generally considered the minimum representation of women necessary to trigger changes towards more gender equality in an organisation.

cess political positions often belong to the dominant elite (in terms of class, family background, etc.) and are not willing to challenge the prevailing distribution of power (UN Women, 2012). This limits their capacity to develop a gender-specific agenda (Mukhopadhyay, 2005).

- **Gender equality machineries, such as women's ministries or national commissions, are usually in place, but lack resources and a clear mandate.** Research showed that in 1985, national women's machineries had been implemented in 90% of the countries, and this number increased following the adoption of the BPfA in 1995. However, they usually receive a very small share of the budget and are forced to focus on limited activities, making them unable to address structural inequalities (Bridge, 2009).

- **Devolution of competences to local level governments can lead to greater gender equality in decision-making as local government tends to be closest to women's sphere of life.** In some context, women might have a better access to local government's structures. As local governments are usually in charge of public service provision and delivery, women, as main users of those services, might be interested in participating directly in planning of service provision and delivery.

- However, **consultative processes implemented at the local level might not take into account local hierarchies, institutions and structures that do not enable women and other groups (e.g. minorities, migrants, lower class) to participate freely** (Bridge, 2009). Decentralisation processes can sometimes reinforce the power of local elites and thus reinforce discrimination against women too. Research has shown that local governments might be more hierarchical and more embedded into social structures than national government. For instance, the traditional prejudices of local authorities, often hostile to change and to women's rights, might be reinforced by the devolution of new powers. In South Africa, the power of traditional authorities has been institutionalised through the legal process accompanying decentralisation (Mukhopadhyay, 2005).

- **Decentralisation processes might entail some reforms that negatively impact women's empowerment, such as their economic independence.** For instance, decentralisation processes and public sector reforms might result in the downsizing of the central administration and eliminate lower level jobs, where women are usually clustered (EU Commission, 2006).

- **Sectoral decentralisation systems are often tied to privatisation of natural resources and services, with negative impacts on disadvantaged people.** Privatisation often goes hand in hand with an increase of fees to access local services (e.g. water) or with the creation of new taxes (e.g. market and road taxes). This impacts differently on women and men. Research has shown that in some cases, decentralisation has not resulted in an improvement of the equity and efficiency of public services, but that on the contrary, it has increased inequalities in access to some social services (e.g. health or education), with specific negative impacts for the most poor and marginalised people, including women (Mukhopadhyay, 2005; EU Commission, 2006).

- **Women are more affected by corruption of public sector and service providers**. Women are the primary users of public services, both for themselves and for the dependent people for whom they care (e.g. children). The additional service fees entailed by corruption are thus likely to hit women most hard. Women also form the majority of the global poor, the group that is most reliant on public services and that suffers disproportionally when corrupt practices impede access to services (UNDP and UNIFEM, 2010). Also, some forms of corruption

might disproportionally affect and target women (e.g. demand for sexual favours in return for receiving public goods).

- **Decentralisation can also result in further corruption**. Decentralisation is dependent upon other factors, such as the extent of devolution of funds and other resources to local level, the extent of decentralisation of powers to oversee, monitor, and audit resources used by local government bodies (Mukhopadhyay, 2005).

- **Specific issues in relation to gender-responsive governance have been identified in fragile states**. In such cases, conservative local authorities or the military may fill in the vacuum created by the absence of government or public authorities at the local level, with negative impacts on women's rights (limited and costly services provision; prohibition to participate in civil life, etc.).

Several structural and cultural factors can explain gender inequalities in public sector, good governance and decentralisation

Several factors affect or limit women's access to and influence in good governance process, including:

- **Discriminatory and gender-blind legal and policy frameworks:** Government and decision-making institutions are not gender neutral. Historically, those institutions, their structures and procedures have been designed for and by men. Thus, they often do not take into account women's interests and needs, nor their multiple responsibilities in the home and community, nor the different ways that women have of communicating, discussing, listening, co-operating and making decisions (UN-Habitat, 2008). For instance, the meetings and consultation procedures are often designed for and to the male norm.

- **Socio-cultural obstacles:** Social and cultural factors can impede women from participating in public life, such as customs or social expectations regarding women's and men's roles in society (e.g. women might not be allowed to participate in consultation process if there are men involved). Lack of education also restricts women's ability to engage and participate in political processes, as they might have inadequate access to technical and legal procedures and documents to successfully perform political duties (UN-Habitat, 2008).

- **Women's lack of economic and social capital** impedes their access to governance structures. Women often lack the necessary finances and 'connections' for entering politics and/or supporting political campaigns (Bridge, 2009). Overall, women in developing countries have less access to economic and social resources, such as money, information, time, support for childcare, transportation, campaign materials, etc. (UN-Habitat, 2008).

- Women's association with private and domestic sphere of activities might prevent them from participating in public and governing activities. Governance processes often exclude people with caring responsibilities (primarily women) (Bridge, 2009b). For instance, it might be more difficult for women to engage in decision-making processes (e.g. public consultations) in the absence of childcare facilities. Political parties typically do not take into account the care responsibilities incumbent upon women when planning and organising meetings, organising elections and campaigns, etc.

How to address gender inequalities in public sector, good governance and decentralisation

Decentralisation and public sector reforms have the potential to contribute to good governance. However, for governance programmes to reach their potential, gender disparities must be addressed and effectively reduced. Decentralisation and public sector reforms, as part of good governance programmes, need to be **gender-responsive**, in the ways described below.

- Making use and creating demand for **sex-disaggregated data in decision-making bodies and public sector in general**. Sex-disaggregated data should also be collected to assess the extent of gender inequalities in some sectors. For instance, data on corruption in public services (such as on donors and recipients of bribe payments) should be sex-disaggregated, to assess the extent to which corruption is a gendered issue.

- **Ensuring that women's needs and priorities are voiced, understood and addressed.** For instance, in decentralisation processes, women might have specific needs and interests that they cannot voice if gender-sensitive, participatory decision-making mechanisms are not in place.

- **Avoiding reinforcing gender inequalities**, by ignoring the existing gender relations and power disparities between women and men. For instance, decentralisation processes imply a transfer of competence, resources and authority to local councils: processes that might reinforce gender inequalities if women's participation in these local decision-making bodies is impeded by traditional norms.

- Promoting the adoption of special measures addressing women's underrepresentation in political and decision-making institutions (such as quotas or reserved seats in political bodies). For instance, when creating new functions to implement devolved activities at local level, those positions should be advertised in a gender-sensitive way (e.g. gender inclusive language) and with the objective of reaching a gender balanced representation of women and men.

- **Addressing social and cultural norms** that prevent women from effectively participating in the decision-making process.

- **Adopting tools to mainstream gender in the governance process**. For instance, decentralisation process should be accompanied by gender budgeting and gender audit exercises to ensure that services provided at local level are equally accessible to men and women.

- **Providing regular training and support to women involved in the decision-making process and governing institutions, at the central and local levels.** This training could take the form of on-going training on government and administrative functions/procedures (e.g. budget and fiscal issues, legal reform, policy development), but could also aim at developing general 'governing' competences, such as public speaking, lobbying, etc. Support networks for elected women could also be created, to provide them with information to effectively promote gender-sensitive policy objectives.

- **Adopting longer term "transformative" perspectives**, supporting women's participation in decision-making and changing prevalent negative attitudes on women's leadership capacities and social roles. In order to challenge gender-blind governing institutions, and encourage structural changes, gender analysis and planning should be included in the training of women (and men) representatives, so that they can become a platform for more structural changes.

- **Engaging in reflexion on how to ensure equality and 'quality' of women's participation and representation in governance processes**, by assessing which invisible barriers might impede women from taking part to decision-making processes.

- **Engaging men**, within and outside the governing authorities. Men in decision-making positions are able to instigate changes, and it is thus important that they understand that governance processes are not gender neutral and that gender inequalities undermine the effectiveness of the democratic process itself. Men role models or 'champions' might help to raise the awareness of other men on those inequalities.

- **Strengthening the capacity of governments to provide efficient, effective and equitable services to all their citizens** should be part of gender-responsive governance programmes.

- **Supporting the implementation of mechanisms to ensure that governments are held accountable for promoting gender equality.** These mechanisms should also promote government programmes to enable right-holders, particularly the poorest and most marginalised women and men, to participate in policy dialogue and decisions on issues that affect them and to hold their government accountable for failing to provide equal access to services (health, education, housing, etc.).

- **Strengthening the capacity of women's organisations to contribute to the policy process and to monitor government's commitments on gender equality and women's rights** at national and local levels.

- **Supporting the establishment of new independent women's groups, coalitions and networks,** focusing on women's political power and priorities at local level and strengthening the capacity of civil society organisations (CSOs) involved in good governance (e.g. fair elections), such as editors, journalists, academics and human rights groups.

- **Ensuring that policies and procedures respond to the different needs of women and men and enable the full participation of women.** For example, in parliament, ensure that women and men receive equal pay, that the parliament building has equal facilities for women and men and that the scheduling of meetings is compatible with women's timetables (e.g. adapted to the needs of carers).

A roadmap for gender mainstreaming in public sector, good governance and decentralisation programmes
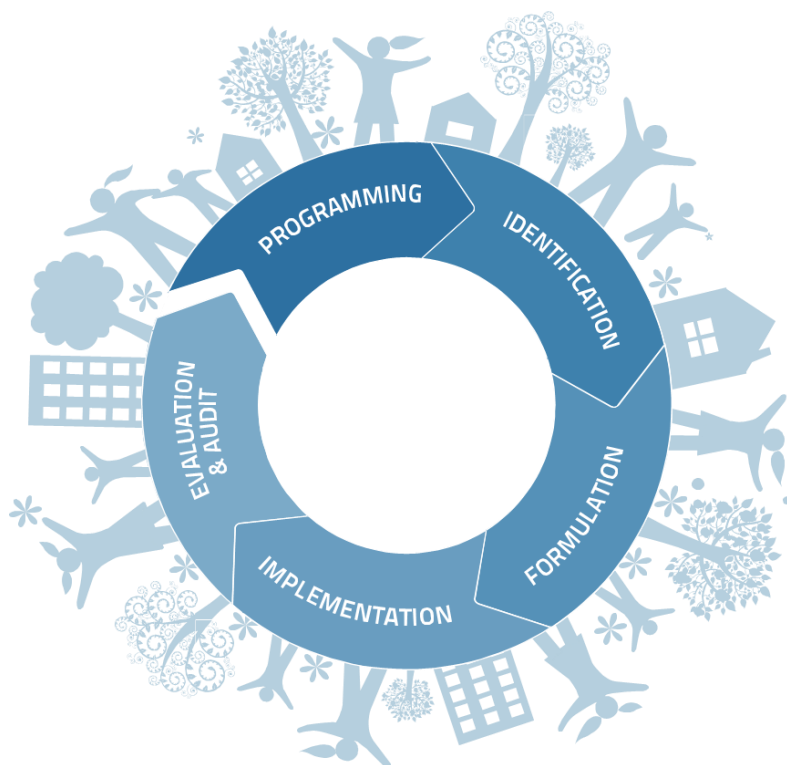
Gender equality considerations should be integrated throughout the whole cycle of development planning.

This Section proposes a roadmap for gender mainstreaming in the various phases of a programme – or project - lifecycle.

1. Analysis, programming and identification of country strategies

Programming and identification are strategic moments to promote good governance programmes (including decentralisation and public sector reform programmes) which serve to redress gender inequalities and promote women's participation in civil and civic life. The most essential steps are:

- To keep gender equality in the policy dialogue agenda;
- To carry out gender sensitive analysis for the diagnostic stage.

Dialogue and negotiations related to good governance, public sector and decentralisation should:

- **Be grounded in the shared objectives of the global good governance agenda,** and in the common respect of the human rights framework, including gender equali-ty, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; the CEDAW; the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA); the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the Millennium Development Goals and other relevant national instruments stating

and reaffirming women's full and equal participation and representation in public life.

- **Align with the country commitments (laws, policies, strategies) to promote gender equality and gender-responsive governance.**

- **Analyse the different roles and take-off positions of women and men in the diverse contexts of decentralisation or public sector reform** (e.g. conflict and post-conflict situations or specific forms of governments such as indigenous self-government). Use sex-disaggregated data in diagnostic studies. Gender country profiles or other sectoral studies should be used or commissioned.

- **Systematically involve and support "gender stakeholders", from Government, donors and civil society, at all stages.** This can include gender coordination groups, gender focal points in ministries, representatives from associations of elected women, women's rights groups of political parties, gender experts and representatives of women's rights groups at national and local levels, cooperatives, women's rights groups of trade unions and CSOs focussing on human rights issues, etc.

- **In the decentralisation process, involve government, international agencies and other actors in the design of the devolution system to organise regular gender-inclusive reviews** in order to consult, discuss and evaluate the project/programme with women's rights groups.

- **Build on previous and current initiatives to promote gender equality in the sector or in contributing sectors**, map existing needs and financing gaps, and avoid duplication of efforts.

- **Assess whether the institutions that will be responsible for programme management and service delivery have the resources and capacities to promote gender equality** and plan for competence development initiatives, including at service delivery level.

- **In decentralisation processes and public sector reform, assess whether the capacity to undertake new decentralised functions exists at the local level** (e.g. sufficient human and financial resources have been allocated to perform new functions).

- **Ensure that the devolution of powers is accompanied by adequate fiscal decentralisation to provide local government with adequate resources to deliver services, without placing additional burdens on disadvantaged groups, such as women.** For example, if not enough financial resources are allocated to local government, they might establish direct fees for service users.

- **Assess if there is an effective legal and judicial system addressing women's and men's status and protection under the law, and if this system is decentralised.**

2.   Formulation and budgeting

The results of gender analysis should be used to tailor the formulation of programmes and projects. The formulation phase is particularly important, as it affects all subsequent phases of the programme (implementation, monitoring and evaluation). To do, one must follow the steps described below.

- **Design objectives and activities to address gender gaps identified and include them in programme documents, plans, logical frameworks, financing agreements and budgets.**

- **Include and budget for initiatives to address specific needs and constraints faced by women or men**, including long-term capacity building of women in political life; provision of additional support to women representatives (such as training in public speaking and leadership skills), organisation of study tours and other learning and skills development activities.

- **Allocate resources for gender mainstreaming, capacity building and awareness raising at all levels and in ways that are adapted to the needs of different target groups** (e.g. training in gender analysis and gender planning for all civil servants; training in gender audit and gender budgeting for civil servant and staff from finances ministries; citizenship education to be included in general curriculum).

- **Allocate resources to gender equality competence development activities amongst women's rights groups and other human rights CSOs, so that they can monitor the work of the decision-making bodies** (e.g. parliament or local councils) and assess the extent to which their work is in line with gender equality commitments.

- **Commit to pursue a strategy for continued gender mainstreaming in the programme** (donor and country led processes). This may be formalized in an action plan which should then clearly assign responsibilities, resources and results to be achieved, as part of the broader programme's result chain.

- **Establish formal mechanisms of consultation with gender stakeholders.**

- **Design and budget for participatory and gender-sensitive monitoring processes, particularly at service delivery level** e.g. in assessing the effect of the devolution of competence on service provision and delivery, or the impact of decentralisation on women's and men's economic situation.

- **Include budget for activities aiming at assessing the impact of decentralisation processes on women and men**, such as gender budgeting and gender audits to assess to what extent the new decentralised service provision is equally accessible to women and men.

- **Ensure that part of the funds allocated to local government are earmarked for promotion of gender equality**.

- **Define performance monitoring frameworks and processes which can capture progress in gender-related objectives.**

- **In direct budget support initiatives, include gender indicators in financing agreements between donor and recipient countries** (e.g. *Percentage of national and local government expenditure targeted at gender mainstreaming and gender equality initiatives* or *Existence of a gender focal point person in all ministries*).

- **Respect equal opportunity principles in management arrangements and establish accountability structures for gender mainstreaming at programme level**. For instance, support the establishment of a decentralisation secretariat and human resource management plan, in which gender concerns are mainstreamed.

- **Support the establishment of a training unit responsible for the development and implementation of gender equality development activities targeting civil servants and policy makers.**

3. Implementation and monitoring

At this stage what is planned in relation to gender equality should be maintained, monitored and corrected as needed. The most important points are to:

- **Continue coordination, dialogue and consultation on gender equality within working groups on good governance, decentralisation or public sector reform;** with institutional stakeholders (such as the gender units of the relevant ministries) as well as with a broader range of actors from civil society.

- **Effectively monitor the progress of the various gender dimensions of the programme and sub-programmes**, including at service delivery level, collecting opinions and experiences of women and men regarding their access to services after the devolution of power at local level;

- **Integrate gender in joint sector reviews and policy dialogues** (particularly at the level of the SWAP committee);

- Monitor if resources planned for gender equality are spent, and if not, why.

- **Include views and proposals of women's rights groups, CSOs and citizens in monitoring processes,** at central and local level by supporting the establishment of regular monitoring consultation meetings (organised at flexible time).

4.   Evaluation

- **Terms of Reference of (mid-term) evaluations should require gender expertise in the evaluation team and give account of the differential impacts of a programme on women and men**, identify potential negative impacts on women or men and offer recommendations and lessons learned useful to further pursue gender equality in the sector.

- Evaluators and monitors should be able to use participatory evaluation techniques and sex-disaggregated beneficiary assessments of service delivery.

- Evaluations should also build on past gender evaluations of programmes in the sector.

- Include transparent, gender-responsive indicators and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in decentralised systems to assess the gender-responsiveness of the various aspects of the system.

GENDER TOOLS FOR THE DIFFERENT AID MODALITIES
An ample selection of analytical and planning tools useful at each phase of the development cooperation cycle, according to the different aid modalities, is available in the "Aid Modalities" Section of the EU Resource Package on Gender Mainstreaming in Development Cooperation. The following Section offers a list of gender-analysis questions that can be used in Programmes related to good governance, decentralisation and public sector.

Questions for gender analysis in public sector, good governance and decentralisation[2]

Gender analysis helps acquire a different perspective on the complexity of a development context, and understand how to better address other forms of social inequalities. It looks at how economic and social structures at multiple levels can reinforce, or help overcome, gender inequalities and imbalances in power relations between women and men.

DIFFERENT LEVELS OF GENDER ANALYSIS

Macro analysis looks at national level law, policy and decision making, including trade and finance policies and national development plans. It helps identify how good governance programmes can contribute, or hamper, broader development strategies. It assesses whether good governance-related legislation or policies contribute to gender inequalities, or to their elimination. It is particularly useful when programming or identifying development cooperation strategies, programmes and projects.

For example:

A gender analysis at macro level will look at the existing national policies related to good governance, decentralisation or public sector reform to assess to what extent those reflect (or not) international and national commitments for women's rights. Such analysis should enable the identification of potential barriers to a more participatory and inclusive participation of citizens in the decentralised decision-making process.

Meso level analysis looks at markets, institutions, services, infrastructures which serve as a link between laws/policies and people, enabling them to benefit (or be excluded) from policy effects: communication and transportation systems, health services, education, decentralized public services (revenues, rural development, land registration), credit institutions, markets and extension systems.

This is particularly useful at programme formulation, as it also assesses the extent to which gender roles relationships and cultural issues can influence the effectiveness of service delivery and other policy and programme implementation mechanisms.

For example:

At meso level, a gender analysis of an e-governance programme would enable one to assess if women access information through information and community technologies (ICT) to the same extent as men. ICT services available in the public sphere might be easily accessible to men, but women might face specific barriers in reaching these (e.g. time spent on caring responsibilities; prohibition from entering male-dominated spaces…). A gender analysis might provide evidence of women's specific needs in relation to location of ICT services. For instance, ICT services should be available in areas where women usually gather, such as schools, health care centres. Training on how to use ICT should also be provided at flexible times, so that women can also attend (UNDP, 2007).

---

[2] More on gender analysis is available in the EU Resource Package, Section "Building Blocks".

DIFFERENT LEVELS OF GENDER ANALYSIS
Micro level analysis studies people: women and men as individuals, and the **socio-economic differences** between households and communities. It considers women and men's roles, activities and power relations within the household and the community, and how these influence their respective capacities to participate and benefit from development programmes. It is particularly useful at formulation, implementation and monitoring levels. *For example:* *A gender analysis of the decentralisation process at micro level would enable to identify potential gendered (and negative) impacts. For example, if decentralisation lead to the privatisation of certain services such as healthcare, a gender analysis of the socio-economic situation of both women and men at household and community level might reveal that due to their role of main provider of care, women's economic situation has been more impacted by the introduction of access fees.*

The following section proposes guiding questions for gender analysis in public sector, good governance and decentralisation, at macro, meso and micro levels.

Macro level

Macro level. Policies and laws

- What gender equality commitments have been made by the government, for instance in the framework of the Beijing Platform for Action, CEDAW, the SDGs? Is there a law and/or a policy on gender equality in the country?

- Do national policies related to good governance, decentralisation or public sector reform reflect these commitments through awareness of inequalities between men and women, and do they outline the means to address them?

- Are there gender policies and action plans in specific policy sectors that will be affected by the decentralisation or public sector reform (e.g. gender equality action plan in health sector)? Do national good governance programmes and sub-programmes align to and support these gender plans?

- Do current policies, laws and regulations address women's and men's needs separately? Do they have discriminatory provisions? Do they have measures for equal opportunities and women's rights? For instance, some rules and procedures for the recruitment and promotion of civil servants might still discriminate against women (e.g. pensions, health benefits and allowances).

- Is there a national gender equality machinery, with allocated budget and clear mandate?

- Are there current policies to reform and to enhance access to basic services at local level? Do these policies include gender concerns?

- Is the social and health protection system inclusive of women's specific needs (e.g. right to maternity care)?

- Does public expenditure reflect the government's explicit gender equality goals and targeting the delivery of high-quality services to all citizens?

- Are there anti-corruption laws? Are there whistleblowing mechanisms in public administration, with provisions to ensure the safety and protection of people reporting incidents of corruption?

- Is there a law guaranteeing the independence and protection of NGOs and CSOs?

- Are there policies aiming to address different types of barriers (legal, financial, social) impeding women from participating in politics and civil life (e.g. financial support for women who want to run for elections)?

- Have affirmative action policies been implemented in the administration?

- Are there policies to develop participatory decision-making processes (e.g. participatory budgeting, including gender budgeting)?

- Are there specific policies in place to improve the participation of women in political and decision-making bodies (e.g. quotas, reserved seats)? Are those policies in place at local level too?

- Does civil service reform promote gender equality principles, such as gender balance, equal pay and avoidance of gender stereotypes?

- Does the core training for civil servants include courses on gender equality issues?

- In decentralisation processes, is gender equality an explicit goal in the legislation instituting the devolution of powers to local level? Is there a decentralisation secretariat with a gender unit and a gender-sensitive human resource management plan?

- In public sector reform, do the new normative and legal frameworks for the reformed civil service reflect national commitments to gender equality and women's rights, such as CEDAW, BPfA, etc.?

- Do the new human resource management policies have clear gender-sensitive job descriptions, competency-based recruitment and evaluation and promotion procedures responding to the principle of equal opportunities; and targets and specific actions for women to ensure women's equal representation?

- Does the new code of conduct for civil servants insist on the importance of responding to gender equality obligations and the illegality of gender-based discrimination (e.g. sexual harassment)?

Macro level. How are decisions made in national-level institutions?

- Are there decision makers (in Government, Parliament) who are ready to champion gender equality and women's empowerment (e.g. actively promoting women's participation in elections, as voters and candidates)?

- Are governmental institutions responsible for women's and gender issues (e.g. gender equality national machinery), involved in decision-making at national policy and planning levels?

- Are national machineries on gender equality and human rights able to participate in the decision-making process (e.g. proposing new law or being consulted prior to the adoption of a piece of legislation)? Is the national gender equality

machinery able to provide recommendations on pieces of legislation that address women's rights?

- Are there mechanisms in place to facilitate the participation of women's organisations in policy formulation (e.g. hearings and consultations)?

- Are there gender thematic groups that could be involved in sector level consultations (e.g. in decentralisation of health or education services)?

- Is the budget analysed through a gender perspective?

Macro level. Data and information

- Are there policy documents or agreed gender assessments that information and statistics on the gender gaps and priorities in governance and public sector?

- Are sex-disaggregated data available on decision-makers, senior management level positions and civil servants at national and local level?

- Have similar programmes/projects been implemented in the country? Were gender-sensitive evaluations carried out? What are good examples of women's empowerment in the study area? Which attempts to achieve gender equality were failures (e.g. because they were taken over by men or had adverse effects on women)?

Macro level. Monitoring frameworks

- How is the country faring on gender equality targets established at international level?

- Has the government developed indicators that allow for monitoring progress in the implementation of good governance policies from a gender equality perspective? Which data exists to show the impacts of the programme/project for women and men?

- Has there been a gender analysis of government spending in this sector and in the sub-sectors? Does the government have a system to track the gender sensitivity of development programmes?

- Does the Parliament have access to the necessary data and do its members have the skills to monitor and oversee the government's implementation of legislations particularly relevant to gender equality?

- Does the gender equality machinery enable independently monitoring of the impact of government actions?

- Is it possible to have a benefit incidence analysis by sex of beneficiaries? (method of computing the distribution of public expenditure across different demographic groups, such as women and men.) In decentralisation process, has the impact of the new devolution of competences on women and men been analysed?

- In sector budget support modality, can payments be linked to progress made on the gender objectives and gender indicators? Is part of the budget earmarked for specific gender equality objectives?

- Are there mechanisms to ensure accountability for gender equality commitments?

- Are there mechanisms to track resource allocations and expenditures to promote gender equality?

- Are there mechanisms to ensure the functioning of the system of checks and balances? For example, can the parliament control the functioning of the judiciary and related civil and criminal justice agencies (including the security sector) to assess gender-specific barriers faced by women to access justice?

Meso level

Meso level . Service provision

- Do services delivered in key sectors enhance participatory and transparent decision-making, institutional accountability and responsiveness to both women's and men's specific needs?

- Are there plans to improve the outreach capacity of local-level service delivery institutions to poor communities and in particular to women (E.g. fee waivers to access to service, or assistance for illiterate women and men to be able to participate in elections)?

- In decentralisation processes, does the planned decentralisation of services cater to the needs of both women and men? Does it include specific services for women and men facing multiple discrimination?

- If financial mechanisms or facilities are in place, are they accessible to women as well as for men (e.g. financial support for candidates running for local election)?

- Are local duty-bearers (e.g. council members) familiar with human rights systems and their obligations with regards to gender equality commitments adopted by their country?

- Are there quotas implemented in local level institutions in charge of decision-making and service provision?

- In decentralisation process, when new functions are created to manage devolved tasks, are special efforts made to reach out women candidates?

- Are workers' organisations or NGOs able to promote the rights of women working in public sector?

- Are gender equality competence development initiatives (e.g. gender equality training) provided to people involved in decision-making processes at the national and local level (e.g. support staff from the parliament, from local councils or from civil servants involved in the supervision of elections)? Is there training on how to use specific gender equality instruments, such as gender budgeting or gender impact assessment, in decision-makers' induction courses?

- Are there measures to provide gender equality training to representatives of different political parties?

- Are there programmes to provide citizenship education to women and men, and to improve their understanding of human rights legislation, gender equality and how the electoral system works?

- If ICT elements have been introduced as part of a good governance policy, is training on how to use those tools provided to women and men, especially those from the most marginalised areas?

- Do people in charge of designing and implementing decentralisation programmes receive training on gender equality issues?

- In public sector reform programmes, have new systems of working been established to facilitate a more gender balanced participation (e.g. flexi-time)?

- Are there mechanisms to enable women to denounce rights violations? Are those mechanisms implemented at local level too?

Meso level. Decision making and consultation

- If the good governance programme envisages decentralisation of legislative power to local level, are women represented in the local councils and at which levels? Which women?

- Are gender equality institutions and structures at local level involved in the decision-making process related to decentralisation of competences and services?

- Are there mechanisms to increase the participation of women in decision-making processes (E.g. training and awareness campaigns, e-governance projects tailored to meet the specific needs of women)?

- If there are discussions around the introduction of ICT as part of a good governance process, are women included in those discussions?

- Are both women and men citizens equally able to interact with their representatives (e.g. through participating in committee hearings)?

- Is women's political participation monitored? Have there been changes in levels of participation before and after the decentralisation process?

- Is there a gender balance in electoral bodies?

- Is state funding to political parties and candidates equitably distributed between men and women candidates?

- Are there rules and procedures to facilitate women's effective political participation (e.g. quorum rules that require a minimum presence of women in decision-making sessions)?

Meso level. Data collection and monitoring processes

- Which data can be collected to monitor the impacts of the programme for women and men? Who will be responsible for collecting this data, and how frequently? Will they be trained in participatory, gender-sensitive data collection techniques?

- How will consultation processes be organised at various levels? Will both women and men be involved in community level consultation processes? How are women's interests going to be represented? Is there a need to set up new fora?

- Are adequate resources allocated for participatory consultation, monitoring and assessment of the impacts of the programme on women and men?

- Are sex-disaggregated data collected on the share of elected and appointed women and men in all levels decision-making bodies (e.g. parliament, regional and municipal councils; executive and ministry cabinets; other governing bodies)?

- Are sex-disaggregated data collected on the share of women and men at the different levels of civil administration?

- Are sex-disaggregated data collected on the use of ICT?

- Have studies been conducted to understand women's low level of participation at national and local levels?

- In programmes supporting public administration reform, are the impacts of the reform analysed from a gender perspective (e.g. impact of the down-sizing of administration on women and men; gender analysis of the new incentives and recruitment systems)?

- Are salaries, pensions and benefits the same for women and men with the same responsibilities?

- Is there recognition in salaries, pensions and benefits of women's caring and family responsibilities (e.g. allowances for family-related career breaks)?

Micro level

Micro level. Gender division of tasks and labour

- What are women and men's traditional activities?

- What types of public services do women and men use to carry out their tasks/labour?

- What is the profile of women and men working in the public sector?

- What is the profile of women and men who access to representative position (in terms of jobs, age, ethnicity, socio-economic background, etc)?

- What are women's and men's literacy levels?

- What is the impact of women's (and girls') unpaid work on their opportunity to engage in decision-making process at local level?

- Are children involved in household work? Which different tasks are allocated to girls and boys?

Micro level. Gender relations: Access and control over resources

- What are the general economic and demographic conditions of the household? Of the community? What are men and women's main sources of income?

- What are the sectors of activity in which women and men are mainly represented?

- Which factors influence participation in decision-making process, or access to services (for example, age, sex, wealth, ethnicity, peri-urban versus rural locations, education level, networks and patronage)?

- Are there gender inequalities in access to and control over resources and benefits (e.g. do both women and men working in public administration have the same access to benefits and are entitled to the same labour rights)?

- At the household level, who takes decisions about resources and activities?

- At the community level, how are decisions made about resources and activities?

- If community-based organisations exist, (e.g. cooperative, traditional sociocultural organisation, religion-based etc.), are women members? Do they participate? At which level? If not, why not?

- Do women and men have the capacity to engage with governance institutions?

- If women and men participate in decision-making bodies at local level, who speak the most?

Micro level. Perceptions about gender equality

- What are women and men's perceptions on gender-based violence (domestic and at work) and harmful traditional practices?

- Are women aware of their rights? Are they able to voice them in the community or with service providers?

- Are women able to access their representatives and lobby for their rights?

- Are men openly resistant to gender equality? Are there groups of men who are more supportive/resistant than others? Who can influence them?

- What are the reasons for which women are not participating in politics (according to women and men)?

- What are women's and men's views on quotas and other affirmative actions aiming at improving the gender balance in representation?

- What are women's and men's attitudes towards women and men who access to political functions?

- What is women's and men's experience of corruption?

Gender sensitive indicators for the good governance, public sector and decentralisation sector

Gender sensitive indicators aim at 'creating awareness of the different impacts of a development intervention on men and women, taking into consideration their socio-economic and cultural differences.' (FAO, n.d. – Gender sensitive indicators for Natural Resources Management). Gender-sensitive indicators reveal valuable information to identify the specific problems faced by women and men; to assess the extent of gender inequalities in access to and use of resources and services in good governance, public sector and decentralisation, and provide the basis for evidence-based policy-making processes (FAO, n.d.).

The table below provides some examples of gender sensitive indicators.

Area/Sub-sector	Indicator
National commitments	Adequate national capacity, procedures and systems are in place to promote gender sensitive planning and implementation National policies are formulated with gender concerns Existence of an official policy mandate for gender equality, including a mandate for equal representation and participation
Women's participation in decision-making institution	Share of women and men candidates to elections to decision-making positions Share of women and men elected to political and decision-making positions Share of women and men nominated to political and decision-making positions (e.g. cabinet posts)
Gender equality in public sector and civil service	Share of women and men civil servants, by sector and level of responsibilities Average wages for women in public sector employment compared with those for men Gender pay gap in civil service, by sector and level of responsibilities Share of women and men civil servants benefiting from flexible working time arrangements Description of affirmative action and supportive measures to reduce discrimination and foster recruitment, Number and percentage of women and men civil servants trained, by type of training (e.g., professional, technical, management, administration) Number of training sessions specifically targeted at women compared with those targeted at men, by content area Evidence that antidiscrimination, equal opportunity, and sexual harassment laws and policies are implemented Number of women and men, including those with disabilities, who report sexual harassment or workplace discrimination annually Women's and men's perceptions of legal and institutional responses to sexual harassment and discrimination complaints Evidence that women and men who lost jobs due to downsizing in the public sector or state-owned enterprises have received compensation and assistance to find alternative employment

Area/Sub-sector	Indicator
Integration of gender concerns into the policy process	Number of gender strategies or action plans developed and implemented, by sector or line ministry, including the number with a budget allocation
	Degree of institutionalisation of consultations with NGOs and CSOs on issues related to women's rights
	Frequency of public hearings
	Frequency of gender audits
	Number of women's organisations and coalitions supported, by type of support (financial, technical, logistic)
	Number of other civil society organisations supported to achieve gender equality goals, including women with disabilities
	Number of initiatives that target the needs of women and girls
	Number of ministries that undertake a gender-responsive budget analysis, or have mechanisms for tracking budget allocations and expenditures for programs targeted at women
	Percentage of the budget allocated to measures targeted at women's and girls' needs and the promotion of gender equality, including equal employment opportunity
	Percentage of national and local government expenditure targeted at gender mainstreaming and gender equality initiatives
	Existence of a gender focal point person in all ministries
Gender equality competence development	Number of tailored gender-training courses developed and targeted to civil servants and local government employees
	Percentage of women and men local politicians trained in gender planning and gender budgeting
	Number and percentage of women who won positions or were promoted due to programme or project training or other supportive measures, by type of job (e.g., professional, technical, management, administration, field positions)
	Annual expenditure on training and mentoring programs targeted at women, compared with those targeted at men
	Percentage of leadership-trained men and women government officials, in NGOs, trade unions and business organisations
	Evidence of changes in attitudes of women and men (including youth) on appropriate roles for women and their right to participate in governance and public administration

Area/Sub-sector	Indicator
Access to services in decentralisation process	Change in access to and use of the services by sex and age
	Women's and men's level of satisfaction with service provision, including quality, accessibility, and corruption (by sector and type of delivery agency, including public–private partnerships and services contracted to nongovernment organisations)
	Evidence that service standards are established and regularly monitored, and reflect women's and men's different needs, responsibilities, and access to services
	Evidence that procedures for responding to complaints are publicly available and accessible to women; and that standards for responding to complaints are implemented and monitored
	Percentage of women and men using public services who experienced corruption in the past 12 months
	Number of women's and other civil society organisations monitoring and advocating against corruption

Source of indicators:
Danida (2006), *Gender-sensitive monitoring and indicators*
Asian Development Bank (2013), *Gender Equality Results and Indicators, ch. 10*
NPA/UN-JPGE (2012), *Final report on the development of gender responsive indicators (Table 3 and 4)*

Examples of gender-sensitive projects in good governance, public sector and decentralisation

Several development and cooperation programmes have successfully addressed the issue of gender inequalities in good governance, public sector and decentralisation. Some examples are provided in the table below, and additional documents gathering good practices are listed in the following page.

Programme/project	Challenges	Gender Strategy	Source
Participatory Budgeting in the Municipality of Elbasan in Albania	In Albania, the municipality of Elsaban implemented participatory budgeting in 2004, as part of its efforts to better address the needs of its citizens. Through participatory budgeting, the municipality aimed to enable its citizens to influence local decision-making and the allocation of public resources to better reflect and respond to the needs of the community. However, low rate of women's participation were observed during the meetings (between 15% and 20%). As a result of this low participation, women's specific issues were not addressed, or only marginally. They were not considered as priorities during the discussions, since women were always outnumbered by men.	In order to respond to this issue, the municipality partnered with UN Women to apply a gender lens to the analysis of the participatory budgeting process. Several activities were carried out, including: - Involvement and partnership with local women's organisations to identify how public expenditure had benefited to women and men differently; -Dissemination of information on meetings objectives and dates through the local media and in places frequented by women; -Organisation of preparatory meeting with women to help them articulate their concern prior to the official meetings; -Training delivered to municipal administration officials in charge of managing the Participatory budgeting process, on how to encourage women and vulnerable groups' active participation. This programme led to positives outcomes: -The participation of women in participatory budgeting process increased to 45%); -Women from marginalized groups such as mothers of children with disabilities, divorced women, widows, survivors of domestic violence and Roma women also participated; -In 2009, due to this increased participation of women in the participatory budgeting process, there was an increase in the number of gender-sensitive mini-projects financed by the municipality (from 14 in 2007 to 24 in 2009). The resources available at municipality level to support gender equality were four times higher compared with the previous year.	UN Women/UNJPGE, the Austrian Development Cooperation, Government of Albania, 2012, *Gender Equality and Local Governance* http://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/media/Themen/Gender/GELG_publication_2012_EN.pdf

Programme/project	Challenges	Gender Strategy	Source
"Enhancing women's political voice" in the Philippines and Cambodia	Lack of women's participation in local elections	In 2007, the National Democratic Institute conducted a six-month training programme to help first time runners women candidates to prepare for the village and youth council elections. Several activities were implemented in the framework of the programme, including: - Training aiming at developing women's leadership skills and capacity to campaign; - Training on electoral rules and procedures. Similar initiative was carried out in Cambodia by UN Women in partnership with women's NGOs on the same year. Training was provided to women candidates and activities targeting voters in general were implemented to raise their awareness on the importance of women's representation in politics. As a results, the share of women candidates to the elections rose from 15% in 2002 to 21% in 2007. 15% of women got elected in 2007, as opposed to 8.5% in the previous elections.	OECD (2014), *Social Institutions and Gender Index 2014 - Synthesis Report* http://www.oecd.org/dev /development-gen-der/BrochureSIGI2015-web.pdf

Further References

About gender, good governance, decentralisation and public sector

BRIDGE (2009), *Gender and Governance. Overview report*
http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/sites/bridge.ids.ac.uk/files/reports/Governance_OR_final.pdf

BRIDGE (2009), *Gender and Governance. Brief - Bridge Bulletin, Issue 21*
http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/bridge-publications/cutting-edge-packs/gender-and-governance

BRIDGE (2009), *Gender and Governance. Supporting Resources Collection*
http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/ids-document/A54733?lang=en

EU Commission (2006), *Briefing Note on Mainstreaming Gender Equality in Decentralisation, Public Administration Reform and Local Development*

International Development Research Centre (2008), *Decentralization, local power and women's rights*
http://www.idrc.ca/EN/Documents/policy-recommendations-on-decentralization.pdf

Maitrayee Mukhopadhyay (2005), *Decentralisation and Gender Equity in South Asia. An Issues paper*
http://www.idrc.ca/EN/Documents/WRC-Decentralization-documents/Maitrayee-Mukhopadhyay-Decentralization-and-Gender-Equity-in-South-Asia.pdf

UNDP (2014), *Gender equality in public administration*
http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/public_administration/gepa.html

UNDP and UNIFEM (2010), *Corruption, Accountability and Gender: Understanding the Connections*
http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/womens-empowerment/corruption-accountability-and-gender-understanding-the-connection.html

UNDP (2008), *Gender Responsive E-governance: Exploring the Transformative Potential*
http://www.coa.gov.ph/gad/resources/downloads/UNDP/GenderGovPr_eG_Web.pdf

UNDP (2007), *Quick Entry Points to Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality in Democratic Governance Clusters*
http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/womens-empowerment/primers-in-gender-and-democratic-governance-1.html

UN Women (2012), *Concept paper on gender responsive governance*
http://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2012/10/concept-paper-gender-responsive-governance

UNWomen (2012), *Towards Gender Responsive Governance: A Mapping Study (BANGLADESH)*
http://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2012/6/towards-gender-responsive-governance

UN Women (2012), *Country Reviews: Women's Political Participation in South Asia*
http://iknowpolitics.org/sites/default/files/country-reviews-womens-political-participation-in-south-asia.pdf

UN Women/UNJPGE, the Austrian Development Cooperation, Government of Albania (2012), *Gender Equality and Local Governance*

http://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/media/Themen/Gender/GELG_publication_2012_EN.pdf

On the planning cycle for gender-sensitive programmes in good governance, decentralisation and public sector

EU Commission (2006), *Briefing Note on Mainstreaming Gender Equality in Decentralisation, Public Administration Reform and Local Development*

UN-HABITAT (2008), *Gender in Local Government - A sourcebook for Trainers*
http://www.un.org/womenwatch/directory/pdf/Source_BK_9-May.pdf

UNDP (2007), *Quick Entry Points to Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality in Democratic Governance Clusters*
http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/womens-empowerment/primers-in-gender-and-democratic-governance-1.html

UNDP (2007), *Electoral Financing to Advance Women's Political Participation: A Guide for UNDP Support, Primers in gender and democratic governance N.3*
https://www.ndi.org/files/Electoral%20Financing.pdf

On gender-sensitive indicators in gender, good governance, decentralisation and public sector

Danida (2006), *Gender-sensitive monitoring and indicators*
http://amg.um.dk/en/~/media/amg/Documents/Technical%20Guidelines/Monitoring%20and%20Indicators/Indicators%20in%20sectors/Gender_Sensitve.pdf

Asian Development Bank (2013), *Gender Equality Results and Indicators, ch. 10*
http://www.adb.org/documents/tool-kit-gender-equality-results-and-indicators

NPA/UN-JPGE (2012), *Final report on the development of gender responsive indicators (Table 3 and 4)*
http://npa.ug/wp-content/themes/npatheme/documents/Publications/GENDER%20RESPONSIVE%20INDICATORS%20FOR%20SECTORS-FINAL%20REPORT.pdf