

Fourth Global Forum on Reinventing Government

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP

Women and Governance: Participation, Percentages, Impact - and Power

Aide Memoire and Agenda

Marrakech, Morocco, 10-11 December 2002

Introduction

The Fourth Global Forum on Reinventing Government, which will take place in Marrakech on 12 and 13 December 2002, will be hosted by the Kingdom of Morocco, and organized with the support of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). It will focus on the theme “Citizens, Businesses and the State: Dialogue and Partnerships for the Promotion of Democracy and Development” and will explore the evolving relationship and partnerships between the State, the private sector and civil society. The overall goal of the Fourth Global Forum is to devise means of promoting democracy, as well as economic and social development through cooperation and partnerships between various components of society and the international community.

All Workshops aim at providing an opportunity for participants to:

- Discuss key issues regarding the changing role of the public sector, the capacity of governance institutions to promote development in a globalizing world and to foster partnerships for social development;
- Share experiences and best practices in promoting dialogue and partnerships between the government and citizens;
- Identify strategies and approaches to formulate and implement policies, programmes and initiatives fostering synergies between the State and its citizens;
- Promote co-operation among government, private sector, and non-governmental organizations; and
- Identify existing or potential areas of North-South and South-South co-operation in promoting good governance and enhanced capacity of countries to cope with globalisation.

Within this context, the Norwegian Agency for Development Assistance, NORAD, UNIFEM and the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities intend to organize a two-day preparatory capacity-development workshop, which will be held in Marrakech on 10 and 11 December 2002.

The objective of the Workshop is to provide a platform for high-level officials, regional/municipal leaders, representatives of civil society organizations (NGOs) and key stakeholders, from developing countries and countries with economies in transition, to exchange views and practical experiences regarding Women and Governance, focusing on the women’s participation in formal and informal governance institutions.

Background

The aim of the workshop is advocacy and capacity development in the area of gender and governance. Gender issues will in this case be limited to the participation of women in governance institutions, as international experience after the Beijing conference in 1995 – as well as the Beijing + 5 in 2000, shows that women’s participation in decision making is a universal challenge. The workshop will focus on tools and lessons learned, combine presentations with discussions and seek to bring out knowledge and tools within and outside the UN system. The workshop will hopefully serve as substantive input to the Global Forum.

The workshop focuses on general challenges related to the participation and power of women in governance as well as the use of quotas as a tool to increase the percentage of women in governance.

The workshop will start with a general overview of key challenges regarding Gender and Governance, and then focus the rest of the workshop on two specific issues regarding women's participation:

- participation and percentage, e.g. the issue of quotas
- power and impact, i.e. the result of women's participation.

The summing up session will present the result of the workshop in the form of a revision of the key challenges – which will then be presented to the Global Forum.

Rationale for the workshop

The Beijing conference in 1995 – as well as the Beijing + 5 in 2000 - showed that women's participation in governance is a universal challenge. Women's participation in governance seems to be one of several preconditions for advancement of women's rights and gender issues in society.

Many countries in Europe, Africa and Asia have introduced the use of quotas as a tool to increase the participation of women in governance. The 14 SADC countries Head of States signed a declaration in 1997 regarding 30% women in decision making by 2005, and India has been practising quotas since 1990. Morocco has recently introduced quotas, as the first country in the Arab region. Norway has been practising a 40% quota in public boards or committees since 1988.

The quota systems vary when it comes to aims, systems, target groups, percentages - as well as results. In some countries the quota system has had a positive effect; in other countries there have been limited results or even negative results?

The workshop will focus on the different quota systems and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the different systems, related to the international UNDP Human Development and Gender Empowerment statistics.

On the other hand, participation of women in governance does not automatically lead to changes – or to power. The workshop will also focus on the relationship between women's participation – and power.

Objectives and output for the workshop

The objective of the workshop is capacity building regarding the different forms of quotas as tools to increase women's participation and influence in governance, i.e. a combination of a technicalities and advocacy. The workshop will focus on tools and lessons learnt and hopefully serve as substantive input to the Global Forum.

The Workshop is expected to achieve the following goals:

- Enhance the understanding of the importance of women's participation in governance in order to ensure a democratic society as well as ensure the development of public services adapted to the needs of the whole population
- Enhance the understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of the different forms of quotas in order to increase women's participation in governance
- Enhance the understanding of the links between participation, impact and power
- Increase partnerships among governments, NGOs, CSOs, parliamentarians, mayors and the private sector in order to increase women's participation in governance related areas.

Participants

Participants will include ministers and senior government officials, parliamentarians, mayors and other local government officials, representatives of civil society, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and representatives of international institutions.

The workshop would like to have a 50%50 participation from men and women.

Format of the Workshop

The opening ceremony of the Capacity Building Workshops will be followed by a plenary session during which a few keynote speakers will introduce selected themes. After the plenary session in the morning of the first day, the participants will be divided into the 11 Workshops. Each discussion group will focus on one or more themes.

The Norwegian Agency for Development Assistance, UNIFEM and the Norwegian Association for Local and Regional Authorities will organize this workshop introduced by leading experts that will be followed by general discussions. A very participative process will be encouraged.

Facilitators will make a presentation of 30 minutes. The presentation will reflect on both theory and practice in a comparative manner. It will highlight concrete cases and lessons learned. Then the Chair will introduce a 30 minutes discussion based on practical cases presented by the participants from their own experience.

The summing up session we will present the result of the workshop in the form of a revision of the key challenges which will be presented to the concluding plenary session and taken forward to the Global Forum, together with key issues from the other workshops.

Venue and Dates

Marrakech, Morocco, 10 and 11 December 2002

Language

The official languages of the Workshop will be French and English. If possible, organizers will try to arrange Arabic and Spanish interpretation.

For further information

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