

Organization of American States

MANUAL FOR INCORPORATING A GENDER PERSPECTIVE INTO OAS ELECTORAL OBSERVATION MISSIONS (OAS/EOMs)



Canadian International
Development Agency

Agence canadienne de
développement international



GOBIERNO
DE ESPAÑA

MINISTERIO
DE ASUNTOS EXTERIORES
Y DE COOPERACIÓN



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Manual para la incorporación de la perspectiva de género en las Misiones de Observación Electoral de la OEA (MOEs/OEA) =
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Introduction

In 2012, the Organization of American States (OAS) celebrated the 50th anniversary of its observation of electoral processes in the region. Over the past five decades, the OAS has made considerable efforts to professionalize the task of international electoral observation and to establish OAS Electoral Observation Missions (OAS/EOMs) as key instruments of technical and political cooperation. One of the most important steps in professionalizing these missions was the adoption of a standardized methodology for electoral observation based on the rights set forth in the legal instruments of the Inter-American system.¹

The adoption of this methodology in 2006 constituted an important step forward in the institutionalization and standardization of OAS electoral observation; it demonstrated the need to develop additional technical tools that would enable the OAS to observe electoral processes in an even broader fashion, relative to the standards established by documents such as the Inter-American Democratic Charter (IDC).

Pursuant to this need, the OAS Department of Electoral Cooperation and Observation (OAS/DECO) began work on the design and implementation of methodologies to facilitate a comprehensive, in-depth analysis that would extend beyond election-day observation to cover the entirety of the electoral cycle.² Such analysis would involve the continued observation of technical and procedural aspects related to election day, but with added emphasis on other elements related to the quality of electoral processes, specifically an assessment of equity in conditions for the effective exercise of political rights by citizens in the observed country.

The methodology for incorporating a gender perspective into OAS/EOMs presented in this manual provides OAS international electoral observation with the technical tools for a careful examination of equitable participation by men and women throughout the electoral process. Other methodologies developed in recent years have similarly focused on equity in electoral races.³

¹ Methods for Election Observation: A Manual for OAS Electoral Observation Missions

<<http://www.oas.org/en/spa/docs/Methods%20manual.pdf>>

² These methodologies include the following:

Methodology for Incorporating a Gender Perspective into OAS Electoral Observation Missions

<<http://www.oas.org/en/sap/pro-metodo.asp>>.

Methodology for Observing Political-Electoral Financing Systems

<<http://www.oas.org/en/sap/pro-metodo.asp>>.

Methodology for Media Observation during Elections: A Manual for OAS Observation Missions

<http://www.oas.org/es/sap/docs/deco/ManualMedia_WEB.pdf>.

Methodology for Observing the Use of Electoral Technologies

<http://www.oas.org/es/sap/docs/Technology%20English-FINAL-4-27-10.pdf>.

Methodology for Observing the Electoral Participation of Groups in Vulnerable Situations (in preparation).

³ Methodology for Observing Political- Electoral Financing

<<http://www.oas.org/en/sap/pro-metodo.asp>>.

Methodology for Media Observation during Elections: A Manual for OAS Observation Missions

http://www.oas.org/es/sap/docs/deco/ManualMedia_WEB.pdf.

Methodology for Observing the Electoral Participation of Groups in Vulnerable Situations (in preparation).



The underpinning of this new tool is the conviction that equality and nondiscrimination are cornerstones of democracy, the rule of law and full respect for human rights. From this point of view, the methodology for incorporating a gender perspective into OAS/EOMs is an instrument that enables Electoral Observation Missions to assess compliance with the commitments made by OAS member states, in both national and international legislation, to promote the political participation of women.

The first part of this manual presents a conceptual framework, which is divided into two sections. The first section provides an overview of the principles and precepts on the political participation of women established in both the international and Inter-American human rights system. The second section explains how a gender perspective has been incorporated into the four criteria of a democratic election, according to the OAS definition.⁴ That section defines inclusiveness, cleanliness, competitiveness, and elective public office from a gender perspective.

The second part of the manual presents a methodological framework. It sets forth criteria such as the scope and procedures for observation, data and sources of information, the functions of OAS/EOM members, and the steps to be followed during each observation stage. Lastly, the third part of the manual describes the necessary tools for observing elections from a gender perspective.

Lastly, it bears noting that the incorporation of a gender perspective in international electoral observation is more than an institutional obligation for OAS/DECO; the inclusion of gender has fundamentally enriched the democracy strengthening work carried out by the OAS General Secretariat through its electoral observation missions. The most important aspect of this endeavor is the potential for recommendations emitted in electoral observation missions to encourage member states to undergo efforts to transform the asymmetrical relationship between men and women in the political arena, in order to generate stronger, more inclusive, and more representative democracies in the region.

⁴ See: Methods for Election Observation: A Manual for OAS Electoral Observation Missions
<http://www.oas.org/en/spa/docs/Methods%20manual.pdf>.



1. Conceptual framework

1.1. The Equal Exercise of Political Rights by Men and Women

OAS member states have signed and ratified various international treaties under which they are bound to promote gender equality; in other words, to ensure that all people irrespective of sex are afforded the same opportunities to participate in the social, political, economic, and cultural development of their countries. Along the same lines, they have adopted agreements of a political nature, namely the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

The international system for the protection of human rights dates back to the twentieth century and grew at an accelerated pace following World War II. (López, I. 2007) It is estimated that the United Nations General Assembly and other specialized institutions have approved more than 100 documents—counting declarations and conventions—in the area of human rights. Of that number, at least ten related to the important role of states in promoting gender equity: the Charter of the United Nations (UN) (1945); the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948); the Convention on the Political Rights of Women (1952); the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966); the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966); the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (1967); the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (1979) and the Optional Protocol thereto (1999); and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (1998).

In addition to the binding instruments mentioned, another instrument to consider—which is not binding but constitutes a political commitment for states—is the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995. This document is considered by many to be the most specific plan of action in the defense of women’s rights.

The Platform proposes a working agenda and concrete measures that governments should take to end discrimination against women and promote gender equality, largely focusing on the topic of equal access to and respect for political rights. For example, the Platform recommends that signatory states adopt and enforce laws to eliminate inequality, recognizing that “[w]omen’s equal participation in decision-making is not only a demand for simple justice or democracy but can also be seen as a necessary condition for women’s interests to be taken into account. Without the active participation of women and the incorporation of women’s perspective at all levels of decision-making, the goals of equality, development and peace cannot be achieved.” (UN, 1996: 85)

The Inter-American arena has also produced a significant body of law related to the protection of human rights, which resulted from discussions at the international level. The most relevant regional instruments



in the area of gender equality are the following:

- The Convention on the Nationality of Women (1933), which provides that governments shall make no distinction based on sex, as regards nationality, or in their legislation or practice. (Articles 1, 2, and 3)
- The Charter of the Organization of American States (1948), which reaffirms among its principles the rights of persons to live free of any type of discrimination, including sex-based discrimination. Article 3.1 provides that the American states “proclaim the fundamental rights of the individual without distinction as to race, nationality, creed, or sex.”
- The Inter-American Convention on the Granting of Political Rights to Women (1948), which recognizes women’s right to political equality and specifies that the right to vote and to be elected to national office shall not be denied or abridged by reason of sex. (Article 1)
- The American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man (1948), which states in Article II that “[a]ll persons are equal before the law and have the rights and duties established in this Declaration, without distinction as to race, sex, language, creed or any other factor,” and recognizes in Article XX that every person having legal capacity “is entitled to participate in the government of his country, directly or through his representatives, and to take part in popular elections, which shall be by secret ballot, and shall be honest, periodic and free.”
- The American Convention on Human Rights (1969), which, in Article 1 commits signatory states to respect the rights and freedoms recognized therein, without any discrimination, including sex; and, in Article 23(1), elaborates on the political rights to which persons are entitled in conditions of equality: “... to take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representatives; ... to vote and to be elected in genuine periodic elections, which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and by secret ballot that guarantees the free expression of the will of the voters; and ... to have access, under general conditions of equality, to the public service of his country.”
- The Additional Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights (1988), which commits signatory states to guarantee the exercise of the rights set forth therein without discrimination of any kind for reasons related to race, color, sex, language, religion, or political or other opinions. (Article 3)
- The Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women, also known as the Convention of Belem do Pará, not only refers to the concept of gender but also recognizes that violence against women prevents and nullifies the exercise of the civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights of women. At the same time, in Article 4, it recognizes that every woman has the right to the recognition, exercise, and protection of all human rights and freedoms embodied in regional and international human rights instruments, including “... [t]he right to have equal access to the public service of her country and to take part in the conduct of public affairs, including decision-making.”
- The Inter-American Democratic Charter (2001), which recognizes that the elimination of all forms of discrimination, especially gender, ethnic, and racial discrimination, as well as diverse forms of intolerance, strengthens democracy. (Article 9) Moreover, in Article 28, the Charter specifies that “[s]tates shall promote the full and equal participation of women in the political structures of their countries as a fundamental element in the promotion and exercise of a democratic culture.”

The Inter-American Democratic Charter is not a treaty per se, but rather a milestone in the political commitment to a broader vision of democracy that extends beyond the holding of periodic elections. From a legal point of view, the Charter is a tool to interpret and update the OAS founding charter. (Arrighi, J. 2003) Article 28 is instrumental in that it establishes a correlation between the promotion of the political participation of women and the strengthening of democratic systems, thus committing OAS member states to progress in that direction.

This broad international framework for the protection of human rights, within both the universal and regional systems, encourages states to adopt effective measures to guarantee that men and women are able to fully exercise their political rights under equal conditions.

Table No. 1:
Summary of International Instruments on Gender Equality

Instruments, Universal Human Rights System	Rights	Articles
Charter of the United Nations, 1945	Equality	1, par. 3
Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948	Equality	1, 7, 16, 23
	Nondiscrimination	2, 7
	Political participation	21
Convention on the Political Rights of Women, 1952	Equality	I,II,III
	Nondiscrimination	I,II,III
	Political participation	I,II,III
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966	Equality	3, 26
	Nondiscrimination	2, 25, 26
	Political participation	25
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966	Equality	3,7
	Nondiscrimination	2, 7i
Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, 1967	Equality	2
	Political participation	4
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), 1979	Equality	2–15
	Nondiscrimination	1, 2, 16
	Political participation	7
Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, 1998	Scope of gender**	7
Optional Protocol to CEDAW, 1999	Equality	Preamble
Beijing Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women, 1995	Equality	Par. 181



Instruments, Human Rights System	Rights Texts	Articles
Convention on the Nationality of Women, 1933	Nondiscrimination	1
Charter of the Organization of American States, 1948	Nondiscrimination	3.1
Inter-American Convention on the Granting of Political Rights to Women, 1948	Equality	1
American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man, 1948	Equality	II
	Nondiscrimination	II
	Political participation	XX
Inter-American Convention on the Granting of Civil Rights to Women, 1948	Equality	I
American Convention on Human Rights, 1969	Equality	1.1, 24
	Political participation	23
Additional Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights, 1988	Nondiscrimination	3
Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women, 1994	Scope of gender**	1
Inter-American Democratic Charter, 2001 ⁵	Nondiscrimination	9
	Political participation	28

1.2. The Concept of Democratic Elections from a Gender Perspective

Based on rights enshrined in Inter-American legal instruments, “Methods for Election Observation: A Manual for OAS Electoral Observation Missions” establishes that elections are democratic in so far as they are inclusive, clean, and competitive, and that those elected actually assume office.

Elections are inclusive when all citizens are effectively enabled to exercise their right to vote in the electoral process. They are clean when voter preferences are respected and accurately recorded. Elections are competitive when both men and women are entitled to run for public office and are able to compete on an equal footing. Finally, public offices are considered elective when the principal public offices are chosen through periodic elections, the results of which are irreversible. (OAS, 2007: 7)

⁵ Although the Inter-American Democratic Charter is a resolution rather than a treaty “it is clearly not just any resolution since it was issued as a tool for updating and interpreting the OAS founding charter, within the spirit of the progressive development of international law.” Humberto de la Calle, Organization of American States, September 5, 2010, <http://www.oas.org/OASpage/eng/Documents/book_cartademo_spa.htm>



The aforementioned international instruments of the universal and Inter-American human rights systems call for equity between men and women in all domains of social life. Gender equity implies that all people, irrespective of sex, should have the same opportunities to participate in the social, political, economic, and cultural development of their countries.

In accordance with international instruments, gender equity in the political sphere means that men and women are afforded equal opportunities to exercise their right to elect and be elected. The gender perspective seeks to evaluate necessary conditions for ensuring that equivalent opportunities exist for men and women in the exercise of their political rights, and that they are consolidated.

To achieve the desired effects of equity in the sphere of political rights, the gender perspective must be mainstreamed into every component of the electoral process. The United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) defines the concept of gender mainstreaming as follows:

“... the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in any area and at all levels. It is a strategy for making the concerns and experiences of women as well as of men an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres, so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal of mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality.”⁶

According to this concept, gender mainstreaming in OAS electoral observation means assessing conditions that may affect men and women differently in the exercise of their political rights, through the examination of all aspects pertaining to: inclusiveness, cleanliness, competitiveness, and elective public office in an electoral process. Conditions in which people are treated in an unequal fashion by reason of gender generally result from existing norms or the composition of the institutions in which such norms are applied, as well as the policies or programs related to gender, social practices, and structural features of a historical, cultural, or economic nature.

From this viewpoint, gender mainstreaming ensures that the concerns and experiences of men and women are integral to the evaluation of electoral processes. In short, incorporating the gender perspective means recognizing that “[g]ender issues affect all aspects of an election and are therefore an integral part of an Electoral Observation Mission’s work.” (OSCE/ODIHR, 2004: 8)

Integrating a gender vision into electoral observation facilitates the evaluation of norms, institutions (their composition, policies, and programs), practices, and the structural aspects affecting equity between men and women in the exercise of their political rights, in the context of each of the attributes of a democratic election. The aim is to be able to assess the factors that directly or indirectly influence the opportunities and obstacles faced by women, relative to their participation on an equal footing in political-electoral processes.

Pursuant to this analysis, the OAS makes specific recommendations on gender participation aimed at encouraging its member states to step up their efforts to carry out electoral processes that will lead to equal opportunities of political participation for men and women.

⁶ See: <<http://www.ilo.org/public/spanish/bureau/gender/newsite2002/about/defin.htm>>.

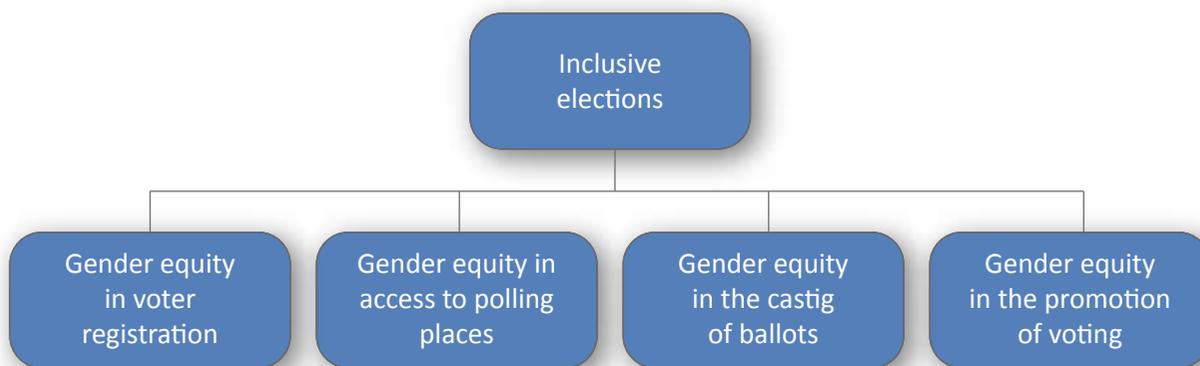


1.2.1. Inclusive Elections

As mentioned above, elections are inclusive when all citizens are effectively enabled to exercise their right to vote in the electoral process. Inclusiveness requires that the right to suffrage be universal and equitable, and that conditions exist for its effective exercise. Observing the inclusiveness of elections from a gender perspective involves paying attention to norms and practices that affect equity in voter registration, access to polling places, and the casting of ballots; it also entails observing whether the policies or programs carried out by the responsible public institutions favor the full and effective exercise of both men's and women's right to vote on an equal footing, as well as any structural aspects that might have a bearing on the effective exercise of that right.

1. Gender equity in voter registration: The absence of documentation and registration affects both men and women. However, for historical and cultural reasons, women often find themselves in a more

Figure No. 1:
Inclusive elections: Gender analysis indicators



vulnerable situation than men. Observation therefore must ascertain whether norms exist to guarantee that men and women may, under equal conditions, obtain identity documents and register on the electoral roll or voters' list, and whether sex-disaggregated data exist to enable a practical analysis of this issue.

2. Gender equity in access to polling places: This indicator involves observing conditions of accessibility regarding the casting of ballots by both sexes as well as by pregnant women or men and women with children. Lack of accessibility, whether due to structural, legal, or logistical reasons, hinders the effective exercise of the right to elect.

For these reasons, information regarding access to polling places should be examined with a gender perspective, and compared with any structural, social, economic, demographic, or other variables that would indicate whether gender gaps exist in the effective exercise of the right to vote. Attention should also be paid to norms that grant priority access or voting for pregnant women or men and women with children. Additionally, data on the access to polling places by this particular group should be collected and analyzed.

3. Gender equity in the casting of ballots: Gender equity in the casting of ballots means examining how many men and women have voted in the election observed. Even in cases in which optimal conditions exist for voter registration and access, sex-disaggregated data on voting can reveal significant gaps between men and women. Such gaps may reflect a variety of issues: ranging from problems of registration or access, to the absence of women on candidate lists, or deficiencies in training or information related to the electoral process.

In view of the foregoing, it is necessary to examine the legal guarantees of men’s and women’s right to vote, and to collect the corresponding data disaggregated by sex. Statistics on the voting-age population and participation and absentee rates by sex are essential for this analysis. The aforementioned data must also be broken down by geographic area and by age and ethnic group. A comparison between this data and associated structural variables (economic and cultural) enables further analysis on whether differences in voting rates between men and women can be attributed to conditions related to gender equity.

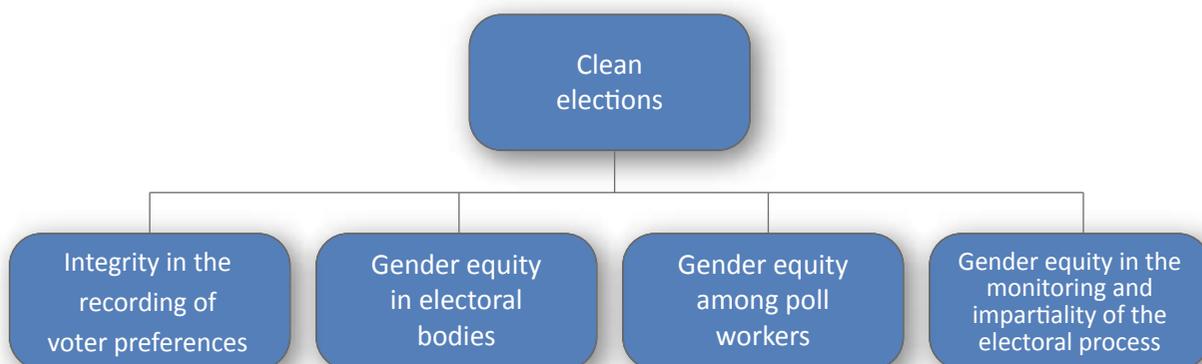
4. Gender equity in the promotion of voting: Assessment of gender equity in vote promotion involves the observation of policies or programs of public institutions aimed at promoting the right to elect from a gender perspective. Such public policies and programs demonstrate the active involvement of government institutions in the establishment of conditions conducive to gender equity in the right to elect. Observation should focus on whether such measures are geared towards equitable conditions in registration, access to polling places, and the casting of ballots. Nonetheless, the mere existence of these measures is insufficient. Observation must determine whether they are being effectively implemented, as well as the results and impact in practice of the right to participate as voters.

1.2.2. Clean Elections

Elections are clean when voter preferences are respected and faithfully recorded. Cleanliness connotes integrity and impartiality in the expression of the right to elect; in other words, the absence of external pressures or partiality in the voting, registration, and vote counting processes.

In the context of cleanliness in elections, mainstreaming the gender perspective consists of observing the following: on the one hand, norms and practices that affect integrity in the expression of the preferences of women voters in particular; on the other hand, norms, policies, and practices determining conditions of gender equity in institutions responsible for guaranteeing impartiality in the electoral process, namely the electoral body, poll workers, and election supervisors, and in those areas where the legality of the voting process is monitored.⁷

Figure No. 2:
Clean elections: Gender analysis indicators



⁷ It should be borne in mind that in some countries the entity responsible for election organization and administration is separate from the entity responsible for administering electoral justice (Electoral Tribunals) whereas in other countries a single entity handles all of these functions.



1. Integrity in the recording of voter preferences: This indicator involves observing potential restrictions on the exercise of the right to a free and secret ballot, as well as external pressures exerted through violence of any type. Restrictions on free and secret voting enable other people to influence and determine the expression of the right to vote, thereby undermining the integrity of voter preferences. “Family voting” is one of the most common forms of restricting free and secret voting since one member of a family decides how the others should vote.

In the majority of cases, occurring most often in rural areas, a man accompanies his sons and daughters and/or his spouse, presents everyone’s identity documents, and votes for all of them. Although family voting⁸ is theoretically a phenomenon that can affect different family members, asymmetrical power relations between men and women generally make women more vulnerable to this practice. External pressures caused by violence, whether physical or psychological, also limit integrity to the extent that they influence voter preferences. Although this phenomenon can affect anyone, for the reasons mentioned above, women often find themselves at greater risk.

In any event, attention must be paid to norms and practices designed to prevent and punish restrictions on the right to a secret ballot and to external pressures that have a negative impact on the integrity of voter preferences, especially those of women voters.

2. Gender equity in electoral bodies: In addition to observing conditions that can undermine the integrity and expression of voter preferences, consideration must also be given to gender equity in those institutions responsible for guaranteeing impartiality in the electoral process, whether they are national electoral management bodies or otherwise. Such a focus involves observing their composition: in other words, the percentage of men and women in their institutional structures.

Likewise, attention must be paid to whether such institutions operate with policies and departments that promote gender equity. Observation of these aspects entails acknowledging that the concerns and experiences of women, as well as men, must be an integral part of the design, monitoring, and evaluation of electoral processes.

It must be recognized that in some aspects of electoral processes, unless gender differences are taken into account in the design of democratic elections, there is a serious danger that results might not reflect the genuine will of the electorate and that women’s participation will be undermined. (Humanas, 2011)

In this regard, one way to account for gender differences and avoid any bias against women is precisely to achieve a gender balance in the composition of those institutions responsible for guaranteeing impartiality in the electoral process. Studies on access to justice have shown that the involvement of women within judicial bodies helps to ensure gender equality, through the incorporation of the gender-sensitive approach into the interpretation and resolution of cases. (Humanas, 2011)

In summary, policies and departments that promote a gender perspective internally reinforce views that account for differences between men and women in decision-making and, at the same time, encourage a balanced composition.

⁸ “Family voting” or “delegated voting,” a practice that has been reported in a number of cases, occurs when two or more people enter the polling station together. One person approaches the poll worker with the identification documents of his or her family as well as his or her own, in order to vote on their behalf. Typically, this practice grants a supplementary vote, or multiple supplementary votes depending on the size of family in question, for heads of household. Regardless of cultural differences and the particularities of each electoral context, it is important for international observers to take note of such situations which affect and potentially jeopardize the right to a secret ballot and to free suffrage.



Specifically, the second aspect to observe is gender equity in those institutions responsible for guaranteeing impartiality, which involves observing the composition of the electoral body and its internal policies and units. Observing the composition of electoral bodies necessarily entails determining whether norms exist to promote or guarantee a balance of men and women at distinct levels of the institutional structure. Also required is an analysis of percentages of gender representation at each level of management, including gender rotation or alternation in leadership.

The composition of the decision-making forums of electoral bodies deserves special attention, as does analysis of different levels of institutional structure. Another point involves observation of the existence, both legally and in practice, of policies and departments aimed at incorporating the gender perspective within the organization. Though departments may vary according to the nature of the institution, it is important to focus on an evaluation of their resources, powers, scope, and impact.

3. Gender equity among poll workers: The observation of gender equity in those institutions responsible for guaranteeing impartiality in the electoral process involves verifying the composition of polling stations. Such observation should indicate whether norms establish selection mechanisms that ensure equitable gender composition within polling stations. In this regard, it is also important to look at the posts held by women compared to those held by men as well as whether women serve as principals or alternates.

4. Gender equity in monitoring the voting process: Observation of gender equity in the monitoring of the voting process involves an assessment of the composition of party representatives at the polling stations as well as those representing national observation missions. Observation of the composition of representatives should focus on the existence of mechanisms to guarantee a gender-based approach in the selection of party monitors or poll watchers. Likewise, data should be collected on the percentage of women and men in these positions on election day.

Along the same lines, the assessment of the composition of domestic observation groups must consider the existence of gender-based selection mechanisms as well as the percentages of men and women who make up said missions, in view of the fact that national observers play a key role in assessing the electoral process. In the event that mechanisms are in place for selecting observers, it is important to verify whether such mechanisms are codified in legislation, party bylaws, mission regulations, or internal policies or guidelines.

1.2.3 Competitive elections from a gender perspective

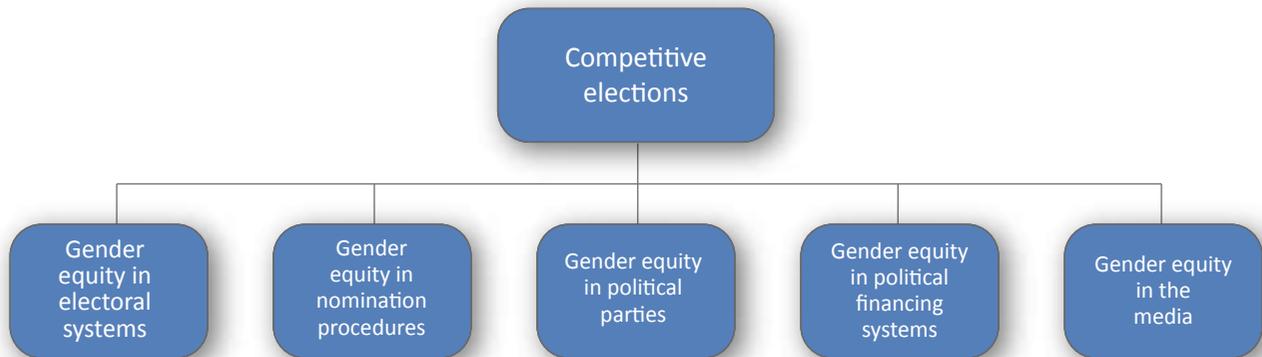
Elections are competitive when both male and female citizens have the right to run for public office and to compete in the electoral race with basic guarantees of equity. Incorporating a gender perspective into an assessment of competitiveness involves observing the norms and practices that affect equity in electoral systems, in nominating procedures, political parties, political-electoral financing systems, and access to the media.

1. Gender equity in electoral systems: The electoral system, understood as the mechanism in which votes are converted into seats, has the potential to exert significant influence on equity in the access of women to public office. In general terms, electoral systems can be classified into two archetypes: majoritarian and proportional representation (PR).⁹ In a majoritarian system, the candidate who obtains the majority

⁹ Larserud, Stina and Rita Taphorn. *Designing for Equality*. Stockholm: International IDEA, 2007. While electoral systems generally fall into one of these two “families,” on a global level one can identify a greater variety of electoral systems, including: List Proportional Representation, First Past the Post, Two-Round System, Parallel Systems, Mixed Member Proportional, Block Vote, Limited Vote, Single Non-Transferable Vote, Party Block Vote, Alternative Vote, Single Transferable Vote and Borda Count.



Figure No. 3:
Competitive elections: Gender analysis indicators



of votes within a defined electoral district is elected. This category comprises systems for the election of executive posts, such as mayor or president, as well as the parliamentary systems of Canada and the Caribbean, which are based on the Westminster model. On the other hand, PR systems are those in which the distribution of posts reflects, exactly if possible, the distribution of votes between political parties, as is the case with the list-based voting to elect legislative bodies in Latin America.

From a gender perspective, the two main elements of an electoral system that affect the representation of women are: district magnitude, which determines how many representatives are elected within an electoral district, and the structure of the ballot, which determines if the elector votes for a candidate versus a political party and whether he or she makes one choice or expresses a series of preferences.¹⁰ Majoritarian systems by nature are made up of uninominal districts, in which the magnitude of the district is one and the elector votes for one candidate only. Because each seat or office is chosen individually, majoritarian systems can be described as being candidate rather than party-focused. Within PR systems, on the other hand, there is much variety in terms of district magnitude, type of list and ballot design; all of these factors have a direct impact on the representation of women in elective public office.

It bears emphasis that electoral systems are not determinative in terms of equity in representation. The relationship between the electoral system and the nature of the participation of men and women is mediated by a myriad of other factors: the political context, political party system, and media behavior, to name a few. Nonetheless, the general tendency is that electoral systems are more inclusive in so far as the number of seats in play within electoral districts is larger. In systems that distribute multiple seats according to the quantity of votes received, those minority candidates or parties who receive lesser percentages of the vote have a greater opportunity to occupy a post. The larger the district, more specifically the greater number of vacant seats at play, the more likely that smaller parties or candidates placed lower down on party lists will win election. Due to the fact that men frequently head party lists while female candidates are placed in lower positions, districts of a greater magnitude tend to provide greater opportunities for women to obtain a popularly elected post.

Likewise, the types of list used for nominating candidates affect gender equity in electoral competition. When closed lists are utilized, political parties define the order of candidates within the list, and voters

¹⁰Ibid.



cannot modify this order. In open list systems, parties also define the initial order but voters can modify that order by choosing individual candidates from multiple parties. There are also intermediate categories of lists (such as closed and unblocked) in which voters can either vote for the entire party list or order their preferences of candidates from an individual party.

Studies suggest that closed lists are beneficial to female candidates when employed in conjunction with affirmative action measures such as gender quotas and placement mandates, which guarantee that women are placed in positions within candidate lists in which there is a high probability they will be elected.¹¹ On the other hand, open lists give voters greater decision-making power and can therefore increase the likelihood that women with leadership skills or name recognition will be elected, as long as minimum conditions of equality exist in the electoral race.

Consequently, it is essential to observe the norms governing the electoral system, district size, and the types of lists; to verify their implementation; and to examine how they favor or are detrimental to equitable conditions between men and women in electoral races.

2. Gender equity in nominating procedures: Observation of gender equity in nomination procedures involves a focus on affirmative action measures, which are aimed at eliminating barriers that prevent women from gaining access to public decision-making spheres. An important example of an affirmative action measure is the gender quota, which requires political parties to nominate a defined minimum percentage of candidates from the same sex within their lists. A quota that requires that 50% of candidates be of a distinct sex is considered a parity measure. It bears mentioning that gender quotas may either be legal or voluntary. The former involves cases in which quotas are established by law and therefore obligatory, while the latter refers to cases in which the quota is established within the internal norms (bylaws or regulations) of political parties.

Given the imbalance in political representation between men and women, such measures aim to level the playing field for women in elections. The specific purpose of quotas is to increase the opportunities for women to access public office, by guaranteeing them space as candidates within party lists.

Additionally, there are complimentary measures to strengthen the effectiveness of gender quotas, such as position mandates or alternation mechanisms. Both of these measures regulate the placement of candidates within the lists in order to ensure greater opportunities for election. They are mechanisms that prevent political parties from merely complying formally with the quota, placing women at the bottom of lists where their chances of being elected are slim or nonexistent. While placement mandates can take many forms, alternation mandates are those in which each male candidate must be followed by a female candidate, and vice-versa.

In general, quotas tend to favor gender equity in electoral competition and in access to public office, providing a sufficient justification for the observation of these elements within an electoral process. The observation of these measures involves verification of their existence in law, as well as an evaluation of how they function in practice.

Observation of the enforcement of quota laws entails an assessment of those procedures or measures that affect their effective implementation, namely the existence of sanctions such as the refusal to register lists

¹¹ Generally among the top positions on the lists and with “alternation by sex.”



that do not comply with the quota. Likewise, it involves observation of the legal requirements for position mandates and the ways in which they are implemented in practice.

In the course of the analysis, it should be recalled that the effectiveness and efficiency of affirmative action measures is linked to other variables, such as the cultural characteristics of voters and the types of lists used, i.e. closed, open, or intermediate.

3. Gender equity in political parties: Evaluation of gender equity within political parties involves observing the composition of political party members, i.e. the percentage of men and women among the rank and file and in party leadership structures as well as party bylaws and guidelines, particularly references to equal participation by men and women. It also must be ascertained whether political parties operate with policies and departments that promote a gender perspective within their internal structures. Political parties are the institutional foundation of the full and effective exercise of the right to elect and be elected. They are the entities that offer voters the candidates and substantive programs among which to choose. As a result, the composition, policies and structure of political parties have a direct bearing on equity in the participation of women as candidates. History has proved that a party that is dominated by men in its rank and file and leadership positions creates an unfavorable environment for the participation of women and their effective access to popularly elected posts.

It is essential to observe the gender composition at all levels of political parties and organizations, as well as whether internal norms promote or guarantee an equitable distribution of men and women throughout the party structure. The gender distribution of decision-making positions in political parties deserves special attention, as does the comparison of these positions with other levels of the party structure. Special attention should be paid to the number of men and women among the rank and file compared to those in management and decision-making positions.

Finally, it is necessary to observe the existence of policies and departments aimed at incorporating a gender perspective into political parties and organizations. As the names or particular mandates of said units or departments might vary according to the parties concerned, the evaluation should focus on resources, capacity, scope, and impact.

4. Gender equity in political financing systems: Observation of political financing systems with a gender perspective focuses on direct and indirect public financing designated to female candidates. It is based on the premise that the male or female candidate with most resources or the greatest fundraising capacity will have a better chance of being elected to public office. As a result of socioeconomic asymmetries and the *machismo* embedded in political culture, women are typically less likely to have resources and more likely to encounter difficulties in fund-raising than men.¹²

¹² The persistence of higher poverty or lower income among women in many countries constitutes a further barrier to women's access to public life. Despite the growing influx of Latin American and Caribbean women into the labor market, they tend to be concentrated "in precarious, poorly paid jobs in low-productivity employment." Moreover, women's wage income in these countries amounted to 84 percent of that earned by men. A breakdown of this data shows that, considering the two extremes, both poorly educated and highly educated women earn about 66 percent of what men earn under equal conditions. Multiple forms of discrimination explain these differences, among them "working hours (as most part-time workers are women), occupational segmentation (brought about in part by obstacles linked to family obligations), gender stereotypes, traditional gender roles and work experience. For many women, the work experience they accumulate is influenced by their reproductive cycle, although fewer and fewer women leave the labour market when they have children." See: Machinea, José Luis, Alicia Bárcena and León, Arturo (Coordinators). The Millennium Development Goals. A Latin American and Caribbean Perspective, ECLAC. 2005. P. 126. Available at: <http://www.eclac.org/cgi-bin/getProd.asp?xml=/publicaciones/xml/1/21541/P21541.xml&xsl=/tpl/p9f.xsl&base=/tpl/top-bottom.xsl>.



Public financing for female candidates establishes a minimum level of equity in electoral contests. Financing can be direct, when it is in the form of cash or equivalent financial assets, or indirect, when it is provided in-kind (the most important type of indirect financing is time or space in public or private media.) In this regard, it should be ascertained whether norms exist that establish public financing for the campaigns of female candidates. Compliance with the existing legal system should also be assessed, as should the effective impact of these measures on conditions of equity in the electoral race.¹³

5. Gender equity in the media: An evaluation of media access with a gender perspective focuses on observing whether men and women have equitable access to the media in promoting their campaigns and publicizing their platforms. This variable also comprises the coverage of issues related to gender equity, such as the presence of stereotypes and the use of “sexist or discriminatory language” that may have a negative impact on the chances of female candidates of attaining leadership positions.

Difficulties experienced by female candidates in accessing the media, the lack of coverage of gender equity issues,¹⁴ and the presence of negative stereotypes about women’s leadership are factors that reinforce a political culture, present throughout the region, which favors male over female leadership. This culture is further reinforced by pejorative references to female candidates compared to male candidates.

Such factors have the potential to exert a direct influence on the conditions of equity between men and women in electoral races, through their effects on voter perception that may reduce the likelihood that women are elected to public office. Observation should therefore focus on the existence of norms that balance media coverage, guarantee equitable radio and TV time for female candidates, and prohibit the dissemination of negative stereotypes about female leadership. Media conduct should also be assessed in practice, in order to obtain actual data on the media access, coverage, and presence enjoyed by male as opposed to female candidates.¹⁵

1.2.4 Elective Public Office

Public posts are elective when the main public offices are filled through periodic elections and the results of the elections are irreversible. Mainstreaming the gender perspective into this indicator involves observing norms and practices that affect gender equity with regard to the irreversibility of the results of the electoral process observed.

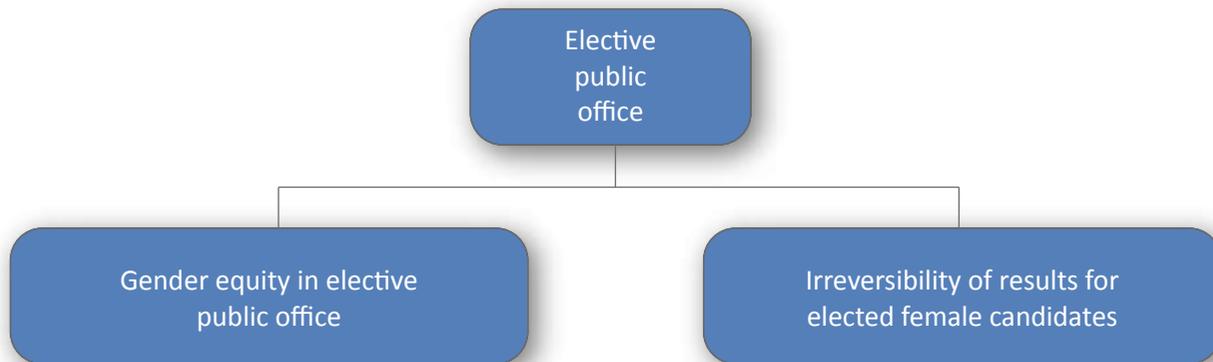
¹³ The OAS methodology to observe political financing systems contains indicators related to equity in the access of men and women to public financing.

¹⁴ Topics such as sexual and reproductive rights, equal pay for equal work, domestic violence, etc.

¹⁵ The OAS Methodology for Media Observation during Elections available at http://www.oas.org/es/sap/docs/deco/ManualMedia_WEB.pdf, facilitates the gathering of key information for the analysis of equity in media coverage of men and women.



Figure No. 4:
Elective public office: Gender analysis indicators



1. Gender equity in elective office: Assessing gender equity in elective office involves determining how many men and women are elected in the observed process. In the event that affirmative action measures, such as “reserved seats,” are used, account should be taken of whether the requirement for the minimum number of seats for men and women was met. Reserving seats means setting aside a number or a percentage of seats (as opposed to slots on candidate lists) exclusively for women.

This measure is designed to guarantee that public institutions whose membership is selected through the ballot box include a certain number of women. The number of seats held by gender or, in other words, the number of women elected compared to men, reflects the degree of effectiveness of the measures that the observed country has adopted to promote the right to elect.

Observation of the reserved seat measure is intended to verify whether said measure has been established in binding norms. If so, its application in practice or the reasons impeding its implementation should be examined.

2. Irreversibility of results among elected candidates: Evaluating the irreversibility of results requires observation that the elective offices are filled by the same individuals that were elected by voters during the democratic electoral process. As far as the irreversibility of results is concerned, emphasis should be placed on situations that hamper effective access to a post, in violation of the principles of equality and nondiscrimination. It must be ascertained that those elected actually assume their posts, and are not prevented from assuming their seats because of political pressure.

The first point refers to the installation of elected individuals in their corresponding posts. The second has to do with pressures, threats, or manipulation generally directed at elected women to persuade or force them not to occupy the posts to which they were elected. Such pressures are intended to oblige women to resign from their posts, which could mean that the vacancies would then be filled by men.

Observing both of these aspects requires an analysis of the legal framework in order to determine its corresponding strengths and weaknesses. For example, some countries have adopted legal measures to guarantee that individuals who resign from posts to which they are elected will be replaced by persons of the same sex, thereby preventing cases like *Las Juanitas*¹⁶ in Mexico. Moreover, information should be collected to verify whether there has been any post-election fraud or cases of political harassment that affect women in particular.

¹⁶ The case of *Las Juanitas* refers to a controversy in Mexico in 2009 in which, according to charges filed, eight elected congresswomen resigned their seats due to threats and political pressure, to be replaced by their alternates, all of whom were men.



Table No. 2
Democratic Elections: Matrix of Gender Indicators

Attribute	Components of attributes	Indicator	Variables
Inclusive elections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal and equal suffrage • Effective use of the right to vote 	Gender equity in the voter registration process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquisition of an identity document • Registration on the electoral roll/voter's list
		Gender equity in access to polling places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility of polling places and polling stations • Conditions for access by pregnant women and/or women with children
		Gender equity in the casting of ballots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender distribution of votes casts
		Gender equity in the promotion of voting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public policies or programs promoting the right to vote directed specifically at women
Clean elections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrity of voter preferences • Faithful recording of voter preferences 	Integrity of female voter preferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restrictions on the exercise of free and secret ballot • External pressures caused by any form of violence or manipulation
		Gender equity in electoral bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Composition of the electoral body • Internal departments or policies
		Gender equity at polling stations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Composition of poll workers
		Gender equity in election monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Composition of party representatives • Composition of national observer groups
Competitive elections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to run for public office • Basic guarantees for an electoral campaign 	Gender equity in electoral systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type of electoral system • Type of electoral lists • District size/magnitude
		Gender equity in nominating procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existence of quotas or other affirmative action mechanisms • Gender placement/alternation mandate for candidate lists • Composition of candidacies by gender
		Gender equity in political parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Composition of political parties (rank and file and leadership positions) • Internal policies or departments (existence of gender quotas in bylaws or internal regulations) • Existence of "gender units" or entities for promoting gender equality within parties
		Gender equity in political financing systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted direct public financing¹⁷ • Targeted indirect public financing¹⁸
		Gender equity in the media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media access of electoral campaigns • Media coverage of male and female candidates • Coverage of gender issues¹⁹ • Presence of stereotypes
Elective public offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodic elections for top national offices • Irreversibility of electoral results 	Gender equity in elective public offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance with quotas and/or reserved seats • Composition of elective offices
		Irreversibility of electoral results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-election fraud • Political harassment of elected women

¹⁷ Public financing targeted specifically at female candidates or at promoting female leadership in the electoral race.

¹⁸ The most important indirect "in-kind" financing is public or private media time. In that respect, it must be ascertained whether or not there are norms that provide for public campaign financing specifically for female candidates.

¹⁹ Gender issues may include sexual and reproductive rights, equal pay for men and women in the workplace, domestic violence, etc.



2. Methodological framework

2.1. Criteria for Electoral Observation from a Gender Perspective

2.1.1 What to Observe

This manual offers a set of theoretical and methodological tools for collecting information in order to evaluate equity between men and women in the exercise of their political rights in the context of an electoral process. The conceptual foundation for the manual, presented in the preceding chapters, is the mainstreaming of the gender perspective into the criteria that define democratic elections. The methodology is applicable to any electoral process.²⁰

As mentioned above, gender mainstreaming in electoral observation is aimed at evaluating those conditions that exert an impact, whether direct or indirect, on equity between men and women in the electoral process. To that end, this methodology focuses on the observation of norms, institutions (their composition, policies, and programs), practices, and structural aspects (social, economic, and cultural) related to equity in elections within the scope and timeframe of an Electoral Observation Mission. The aim is to assess the degree to which said elections are inclusive, clean, and competitive and that public offices are elective, from a gender perspective.

2.1.2 How to Observe

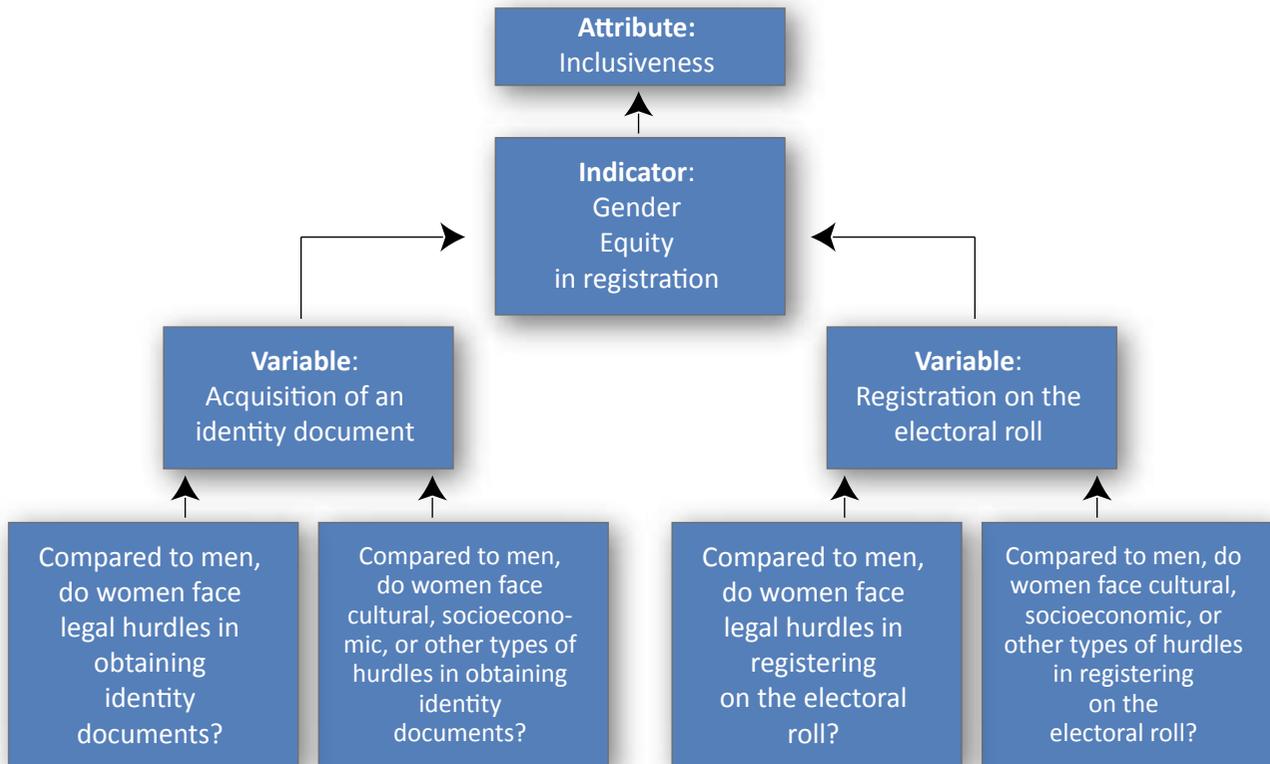
Electoral observation with a gender perspective involves assessing whether the variables in the matrix (Table No. 2) are met during the electoral process. This assessment is achieved by asking questions on norms, institutions (their composition, policies, and programs), practices, and structural aspects that have a bearing on equity between men and women in the exercise of their political rights. Specific questions on the indicators in the matrix are defined in the different instruments used by OAS/EOM members (gender specialists and other Core Group specialists, regional coordinators, and international observers), who must collect the necessary information to answer them.

Figure No. 5 provides an example of the incorporation of the gender perspective into electoral observation.

²⁰ The methodology set forth in this manual may be used for presidential, parliamentary, and municipal elections and for other electoral processes observed by the OAS.



Figure No. 5
Observation of an indicator of the attribute “inclusiveness”



2.1.3 Data and Sources of Information

OAS/EOM members are responsible for collecting the data needed to analyze gender equity in the electoral process. To ensure systematic data collection, questions have been drawn up and included in forms, reports, and questionnaires to be filled out by gender specialists and regional coordinators, as well as by international observers on election day.

Sources of information for answering these questions may be primary or secondary. Primary sources generate information directly and are therefore preferable to secondary sources in electoral observation. OAS/EOM members should endeavor to answer questions using primary sources. If none are available, they may make use of secondary sources.

Primary sources for answering the questions and indicators related to norms include laws, regulations, resolutions, manuals, party bylaws or equivalent documents, as well as any other document that is part of the legal framework of the observed country. A secondary source in the same case would be any other document that examines either existing norms or proposals for legal reform, and other documents of a similar nature.

Primary sources for answering questions on institutions (their composition, policies, and programs), practices, and structural aspects include data produced by electoral bodies, public institutions, and political

parties, as well as information generated by the OAS/EOM through the questionnaires administered on election day.²¹ Secondary sources of information include studies, analyses, and other documents produced by international organizations, civil society organizations, or study or research centers, inter alia. The data may be objective or subjective. Data are objective when they come from direct verification, such as electoral observation, or when they contain verifiable numerical information, such as the percentage of women or men on a candidate list. Subjective data would include, for example, the opinions of stakeholders in the electoral process; such information is generally collected in working meetings, or through the analysis and systematization of relevant information.

OAS/EOM members should, to the extent possible, answer questions with objective data. Subjective data, on the other hand, should be used as a supplement in order to examine or contextualize the information collected. Presented below is an illustrative, non-exhaustive list of possible data and information sources for answering the questions on institutions (their composition, policies, and programs), and on practices and structural aspects that affect gender equity.

Table No.3
Data and Sources of Information for Measuring Variables.

Variables	Data and sources of information
Inclusive elections	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issuance of identity documents • Registration on the electoral roll 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National census data disaggregated by sex and geographic area • Percentage of population with identity documents disaggregated by sex and geographic area • Electoral roll / national population or civil register • Data on structural aspects (economic and cultural) disaggregated by sex and geographic area • Information collected in meetings with key actors in each country
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility conditions • Accessibility for pregnant women or men and women with children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data on access to polling places provided by electoral authorities (disaggregated by sex and geographic area) • Data on structural aspects (economic and cultural) disaggregated by sex and geographic area • Information obtained by observers through election-day questionnaires. Priority rules for voting and preferential schedules to facilitate voting for pregnant women and for men and women with children

²¹ See Tool 3.7.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Composition of the ballots cast 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on electoral participation and rate of absenteeism, disaggregated by sex, geographic area, age group, and ethnic group (as appropriate)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public policies or programs to promote the right to vote 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents provided by the electoral body and political parties or public institutions • Reports on electoral results and the impact of public policies and programs • Information collected in meetings with key actors in each country • Studies or reports of international organizations, civil society, or centers conducting research on the matter
Clean elections	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restrictions on the right to free and secret ballot • External pressures on the vote 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information obtained by observers through election-day questionnaires • Complaints filed with the OAS/EOM or with corresponding public entities • Information collected in meetings with key actors in each country • Studies or reports of international organizations, civil society, or centers conducting research on the matter
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Composition of the electoral body • Internal policies or internal departments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents and data provided by the electoral body or public institutions • Information collected in meetings with key actors in each country • Information from the web page of the electoral body or public institutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Composition of poll workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information obtained by observers through election-day questionnaires
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Composition of party representatives • Composition of national observation groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information obtained by observers through election-day questionnaires



Competitive elections	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type of electoral lists • District size 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents and data provided by the electoral body and other public institutions • Number of seats at stake in each electoral district (as appropriate) • Information collected in meetings with key actors in each country • Studies or reports of international organizations, civil society, or centers conducting research on the matter
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quotas • Gender placement/ alternation mandates • Composition of candidacies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidate lists provided by electoral authorities and political parties (percentage of women as candidates, placement of women on lists) • Complaints filed with the OAS/EOM or with corresponding public entities • Number and type of sanctions imposed for noncompliance with quotas or gender placement/ alternation mandates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Composition of political parties • Policies or internal departments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents and data provided by the electoral body and political parties • List of political party members provided by parties or electoral authorities • Information collected in meetings with key actors in each country • Information from the web page of the electoral body and political parties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted direct public financing • Targeted indirect public financing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information generated by the OAS methodology for observing political-electoral financing • Documents and data provided by the electoral body and political parties • Studies or reports of international organizations, civil society, or centers conducting research on the matter
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to campaigns • Coverage of gender issues • Presence of stereotypes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information generated by the OAS methodology for media observation • Documents on the media: written press, TV, and radio • Studies or reports of international organizations, civil society, or centers conducting research on the matter • Summary of news stories prepared by the press specialist during the OAS/EOM • Information collected in meetings with key actors in each country



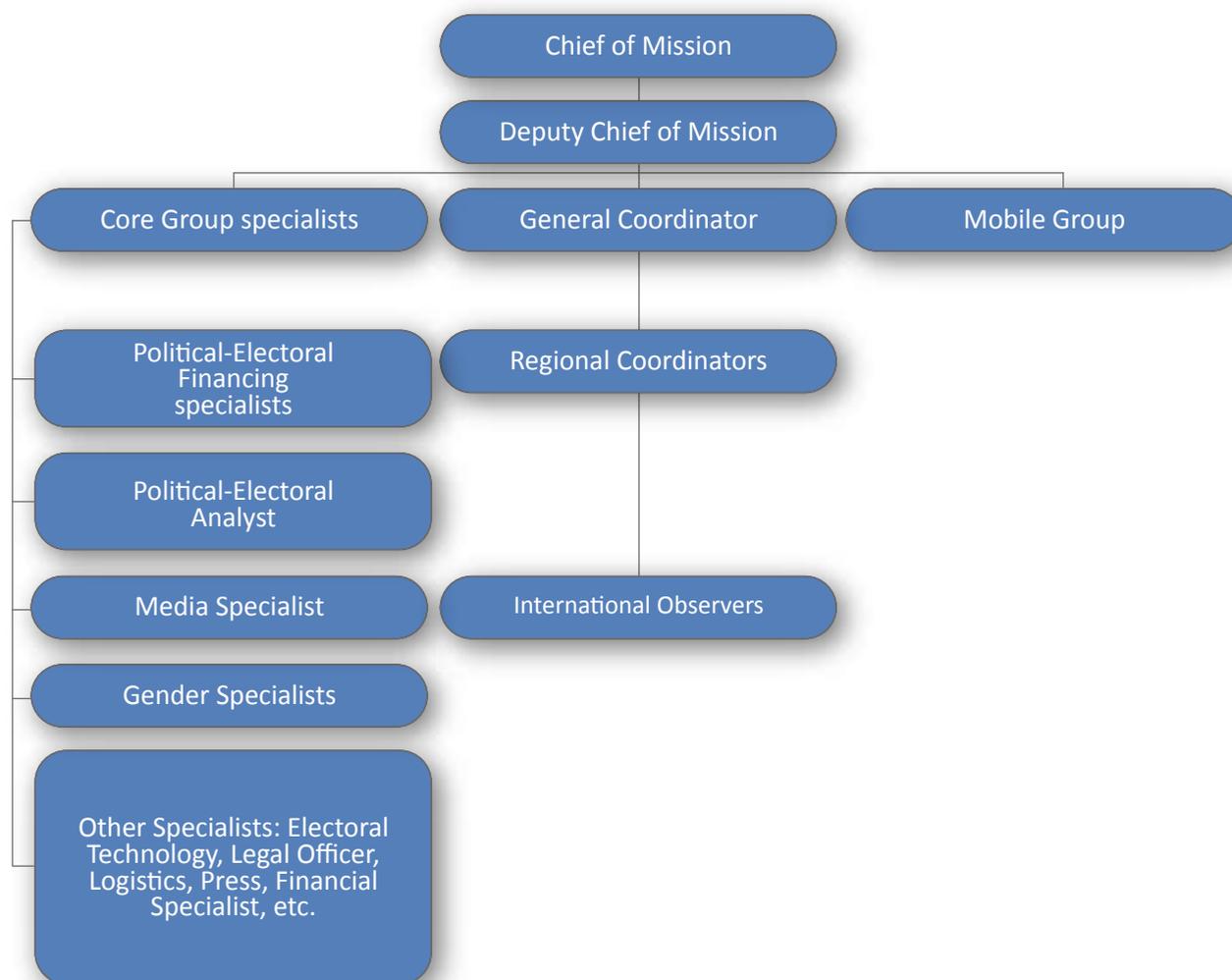
Elective public offices	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance with quotas and/or reserved seats • Composition of elective posts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of seats to which women were elected compared to those to which men were elected • Data on historical trends showing advances or setbacks in this regard
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-election fraud • Political harassment against elected women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents and data provided by the electoral body, other public institutions, and political parties • Complaints filed with the OAS/EOM or with corresponding public entities • Studies or reports of international organizations, civil society, or centers conducting research on the matter • Information collected in meetings with key actors in each country

2.2 Electoral Observation and OAS/EOM Structure from a Gender Perspective

Incorporating a gender perspective into electoral observation necessarily involves a reformulation of the roles and functions carried out by OAS/EOM members, to ensure that the new focus is included in their work and to enable all members of the mission to assess the differentiated impacts on men and women at every moment subject to electoral observation.

To support the overall implementation of this methodology in the work of OAS/EOMs, a new team of gender mainstreaming specialists have been added to the Core Group. The team of gender specialists will consist of at least two individuals, preferably a man and a woman. The principal responsibility of the gender specialists is to act as a focal point in the implementation of the methodology, providing guidance to the other members of the OAS/EOM on the appropriate incorporation of a gender perspective into their observation work. In general, the Core Group will follow the guidelines set forth in the manual and carry out the tasks described below:

Figure No. 6
EOM Structure and Gender Specialist Team



2.2.1 Functions of OAS/EOM members

The functions of OAS/EOM mission leadership are spelled out in the Manual for OAS Electoral Observation Missions²². However, the incorporation of a gender perspective into OAS electoral observation involves additional functions for those in charge of the Mission, namely:

²¹ Available at: http://www.oas.org/en/spa/docs/Manual_Misiones_publicado_en.pdf



Chief of Mission: Each OAS/EOM is headed by a Chief of Mission appointed by the OAS Secretary General on the basis of the person's experience and sound judgment. The Chief of Mission should preferably be from outside the OAS. His or her functions include:

- Working in coordination with the Deputy Chief of Mission to ensure compliance with General Secretariat standards and procedures as well as incorporation of the gender perspective into electoral observation.
- Presenting the Verbal Report of the Electoral Observation Mission to the Permanent Council of the OAS. Said report should include the main findings, conclusions, and recommendations on equality of conditions for men and women in the exercise of their political rights, in the framework of the elections observed.

Deputy Chief of Mission: The Deputy Chief of Mission is the official responsible for coordinating the operational and administrative aspects of the OAS/EOM. The post must be filled by a specialist from the OAS Department of Electoral Cooperation and Observation (OAS/DECO) designated by the DECO Director. The Deputy Chief supervises all members of the Core Group and acts as a liaison between OAS/DECO and the OAS/EOM. The Deputy Chief's functions include:

- Providing the OAS/DECO Director with a list of possible international observers, ensuring a numerical balance, preferably parity, between men and women. Gender balance should apply both to the list of international observers and among the other members of the OAS/EOM (Core Group and regional coordinators).
- Coordinating the preparation of all documents related to the OAS/EOM and ensuring that they meet the requirements established in this manual.
- Preparing the final report of the OAS/EOM, which must be presented to the Permanent Council no later than three months after the presentation of the verbal report. The final report should include the main conclusions and recommendations related to the equitable exercise of political rights by men and women in the framework of the elections observed.
- Approving the work plans of the Core Group specialists, verifying that said plans include activities that guarantee that the information required by this manual is collected.

General Coordinator: Appointed by the DECO Director, the General Coordinator is always a specialist from that department. Along with the Deputy Chief of Mission, the General Coordinator is responsible for organizing the training and deployment of international observers and regional coordinators²³ and acts as a liaison between the observers and OAS/EOM headquarters. The General Coordinator is also responsible for providing the Chief of Mission with daily reports on the situation in the different regions of the country in which the OAS/EOM is present. His or her functions are to:

- Prepare the deployment plan for regional coordinators and international observers, in coordination with the logistics and administrative specialists, seeking a balance between men

²³ General Secretariat of the Organization of American States: Manual for OAS Electoral Observation Missions, p. 27



and women in each of the regions. Once the plan has been completed, it should be sent to the Deputy Chief of Mission for approval.

- Approve the work plans of regional coordinators, which should include activities designed to gather any information needed in the framework of this methodology.
- Prepare and conduct training sessions for regional coordinators and international observers, in accordance with the standards developed by OAS/DECO. Such sessions should include specific modules and/or crosscutting content to train the members of the OAS/EOM in the gender-focused electoral observation methodology developed in this manual.
- Prepare and lead the meetings in which international observers and regional coordinators exchange experiences and views at the conclusion of the OAS/EOM. Time will be set aside for comments on information collected by the coordinators and observers in the context of this methodology.
- Forward the documents received by the regional coordinators to the Deputy Chief of Mission. It must be verified in advance that said documents include the information collected on the basis of this methodology, in accordance with assigned tasks. The information should then be sent to the gender specialist or team, who will use it as input for preparation of the Preliminary Report, which will in turn serve as input for the OAS/EOM Final Report.

Press Specialist: The press specialist coordinates relations between the OAS/EOM and the national and international press. The individual in this post should preferably be a GS/OAS staff member with experience as a journalist, an educational background in communications, and experience in press coverage and electoral observation. The press specialist’s activities include:

- Playing a role in the communications strategy of each OAS/EOM for including and positioning the findings of the gender-focused observation methodology in interviews and pieces.
- Notifying the gender specialists in advance about any news related to the OAS/EOM.
- Including in the final OAS/EOM press release, subject to approval by the Chief of Mission and the OAS/DECO Director, the most important findings on equity between men and women— issues that the team of gender specialists wishes to highlight in the framework of the election observed.

Media Specialist: The media specialist is responsible for coordinating the team in charge of implementation of the Methodology for Media Observation during Elections. The media specialist should have experience in tracking and analyzing media coverage and in group management. He or she must also be familiar with the election, candidates and key actors in the electoral process and have impartial views on these matters. The media specialist should present the following information from the implementation of the media observation methodology:

- Data on equitable access to media coverage for male and female candidates during the election campaign.
- Presence of gender issues in the media as observed during the campaign.
- Presence of “gender stereotypes” or “sexist language” in media coverage.
- Promotion of women’s participation in elections: existence of specific media campaigns



organized by electoral authorities to promote women's participation in elections or help them cast informed votes.

Electoral Analysis Specialist (political-electoral context): The electoral analysis specialist should preferably be a specialist from the Department of Sustainable Democracy and Special Missions of the OAS Secretariat for Political Affairs. The electoral analysis specialist should:

- In conjunction with the team of gender specialists, coordinate the collection and systematization of data on the elections observed. Coordination efforts range from joint preparation of respective work plans, as appropriate, to meetings among specialists to share agendas and progress and to discuss and reach consensus agreements on findings, evaluations, and results.
- With the team of gender specialists, share information and analysis relating to equity between men and women in the electoral process to which the electoral analysis specialist has gained access in the performance of his or her functions. Given the nature of said analyst's work, the information provided will pertain to policies, programs, data, and statistics on implementation of the variables included in the matrix of indicators of the gender perspective in elections.

Legal Specialist (legal context): The legal specialist should preferably be an OAS legal analyst who is both familiar with the legal framework of electoral processes, including human rights norms under both national and international law, and highly knowledgeable about international conventions and treaties, agreements and resolutions under the universal and Inter-American human rights systems, protocols, interpretative declarations, reservations, etc. S/he should also be well versed in the Constitution, ordinary law, and case-law of the country observed, as well as in the body of regulations stemming from or complementing the domestic legal system. The legal specialist should:

- With the team of gender specialists, coordinate the collection and systematization of data on the legal framework of the elections observed, in order to avoid duplication. Coordination efforts range from joint preparation of respective work plans, as appropriate, to meetings among specialists to share agendas and progress and to discuss and reach consensus agreements on findings, evaluations, and results.
- Share information on those aspects of the legal framework related to equity between men and women in the electoral process to which the legal analysis specialist has gained access in the performance of his or her functions. Given the nature of said analyst's work, most of the information provided will pertain to the national and international legal framework with respect to the variables included in the matrix of indicators, as well as complaints received by the OAS/EOM or by the competent public authorities.

Electoral Organization Specialist: The electoral organization specialist acts as the liaison between the OAS/EOM and the electoral body and should preferably be an OAS General Secretariat staff member with prior experience in the area. His or her work should include:

- With the gender specialist team, coordinating all activities for the collection and systematization of data on the observed elections, in order to avoid duplication. Coordination efforts range from joint preparation of respective work plans to meetings among specialists to share agendas and progress and to discuss and reach consensus agreements on findings, evaluations, and results.
- With the gender specialists team, sharing information and analysis relating to equity between men and women in the electoral process to which the electoral organization specialist has gained access in the performance of his or her functions. Given the nature of said analyst's



work, most of the information provided will pertain to data and statistics on implementation of the variables included in the matrix of indicators of the gender perspective in elections.

Regional Coordinators: Regional coordinators are individuals assigned to different regions of the OAS/EOM host country primarily to organize and supervise the work of the observers under their charge, and to act as liaisons between the observers and the General Coordinator. As part of this methodology and in keeping with the daily report form, they should carry out the following functions in their regions, in order to enrich the OAS/EOM's final assessment with information specific to each region of the observed country:

- In contacts and meetings in the field, include authorities and political parties involved in the electoral process, as well as diverse stakeholders, in order to identify specific problems that women face in exercising their political rights, among them:
 - ✓ The existence of relevant, verifiable obstacles to women's enrollment in the civil register, census or to registration on the electoral roll.
 - ✓ Obstacles to the full exercise by women of the right to vote.
 - ✓ Electoral irregularities that affect women voters in particular (pressure/manipulation): complaints by women voters received by authorities.
 - ✓ Restriction on women's right to vote: complaints about proxy or family voting affecting women voters among other vulnerable groups. Violence against and/or restrictions on women candidates: complaints received by authorities.
- In meetings with electoral authorities (on the basis of information provided by the above-mentioned organizations), look into the existence of any actions being carried out to promote women's political participation, for example:
 - ✓ Degree to which the registration of women voters is promoted: existence of specific campaigns by electoral authorities to promote the registration of women, especially indigenous women, illiterate or displaced women, or women from rural areas.
 - ✓ Promotion of the electoral participation of women: existence of specific campaigns or actions to promote the right to cast an informed vote.
 - ✓ Existence of campaigns and/or training programs for women to strengthen female leadership and encourage female candidacies.

All information collected by the regional coordinators must be systematized on the "Regional Coordinators' Daily Report" form (Tool 3.6), which has been specifically adjusted for observation from a gender perspective. Said form must be sent to the General Coordinator on a daily basis during deployment. The General Coordinator will then transmit this information to the gender specialist or team for analysis.

2.2.2 Functions of the OAS/EOM Gender Specialists

Gender Specialist Team: Core Group specialists responsible for coordinating incorporation of the gender perspective into the OAS/EOM. They are also responsible for advising and supporting all other Core Group members in implementing this methodology and should preferably be OAS/DECO staff members. Their other functions include:



- Drawing up a work plan and presenting it to the Deputy Chief of Mission.
- Coordinating and carrying out all necessary actions for implementation of the gender methodology.
- Collecting and systematizing necessary information for observing the variables in the matrix of indicators for observing elections with a gender perspective.
- Drawing up the preliminary study on the gender perspective in elections in the host country.
- Preparing for and conducting a preliminary visit to the country, when the required resources and time are available.
- Preparing for and conducting the observation visit to the country.
- Coordinating and holding meetings with the other Core Group specialists.
- Coordinating and holding meetings with key actors in the country.
- Participating in any other meetings indicated by the OAS/EOM Chief or Deputy Chief.
- Informing the OAS/EOM Chief or Deputy Chief about matters concerning the incorporation of a gender perspective into electoral observation.
- Completing the corresponding forms according to the criteria and steps set out in this manual.
- Organizing and conducting trainings for the regional coordinators and observers on the incorporation of a gender perspective into electoral observation.
- Systematizing the information collected by the regional coordinators.
- Presenting information on the most relevant aspects of the participation of men and women in the observed electoral process, in order to disseminate it in OAS/EOM press releases, interviews of the Chief of Mission, and OAS/EOM press conferences.
- Preparing the Final Report with the data and findings resulting from electoral observation from a gender perspective, which should include specific recommendations aimed at strengthening the equitable participation of men and women in the electoral process of the country observed.
- Signing and complying with the Code of Conduct for International Election Observers.
- Performing any other functions assigned by the OAS/DECO Director.

2.3 Observation from a Gender Perspective

2.3.1 Observation of Gender Equity During the Initial Phase of the OAS/EOM

The initial phase begins when a member state asks the OAS Secretary General to deploy an Electoral Observation Mission and ends with the installation of the OAS/EOM in the host country. During that period, the process of electoral observation from a gender perspective comprises the following steps:

• STEP 1: DESIGN AND APPROVAL OF THE WORK PLAN

Once the OAS/DECO Director has appointed the OAS/EOM gender specialists, their first task is the design of a work plan. The plan is drawn up by the specialists and approved by the Deputy Chief of Mission. The basis for developing this plan comprises the steps described below and in the model timetable (Tool 3.10), although this does not preclude the inclusion of any other tasks that the specialists deem necessary.



• STEP 2: PREPARATION OF THE “PRELIMINARY STUDY”

The preliminary study is intended as an initial assessment, before deployment to the country, as well as an overview of the international instruments ratified by the state to which the OAS/EOM is deployed. In addition to providing information on the national and international legal framework and on conditions for men’s and women’s participation in the host country, the study will constitute the starting point for observation from a gender perspective. This document should:

- a) Be descriptive.
- b) Focus on the previous electoral process and also consider the current legal framework.
- c) Be consistent with the substantive focus and approach of the methodology in order to ensure that the observation is comprehensive during its subsequent stages and phases.

Preparation of the preliminary study includes document compilation, data systematization, and drafting of the text.

- Document compilation consists of obtaining information on the normative framework of gender equity and political participation, as well on practices and on participation disaggregated by sex, according to the *Document Checklist* (Tool 3.1).

It should not be forgotten that the preliminary study not only focuses on the previous election process but also the election to be observed; consequently, the texts compiled must include past and present norms (including reforms, if any) as well as documents on prevailing practices from both electoral periods.

- Systematization entails analysis of the texts compiled and the selection of data that are potentially useful for drafting, using as a guide the General Form on the *Gender Perspective in the Electoral Process* (Tool 3.5).

The specialists need not answer every question on the preliminary study forms but only those that are essential to understanding the previous process and the prevailing situation. For that reason, the forms are merely a guide.

- The draft of the preliminary study is prepared on the basis of the contents and space allotments indicated on the *Preliminary Study Template* (Tool 3.2).

• STEP 3: INITIAL COMPLETION OF THE GENERAL FORM

The General Form is the tool used to collect the most important information for observation from a gender perspective. The rationale for collecting information on the methodology along with the dynamics of the OAS/EOM make completing the forms an ongoing process, which begins before arrival in the observed country, continues during the deployment phase of the Electoral Observation Mission, and ends upon its completion.



The form should be completed according to the instructions provided in the *General Form on the Gender Perspective in the Electoral Process* (Tool 3.5). Initial completion begins immediately after submission of the preliminary study. This step includes three activities:

1. Collection and classification of all data obtained at that point. The principal sources of data to begin completion of the form (all documents collected) and the preliminary study, inter alia.
2. Analysis and selection of data useful for answering the questions on the form.
3. Entry of data on the form.

The product expected at this initial stage consists of answers to all or most of the questions on norms and, to the extent possible, a preliminary understanding of those related to practices, institutions (their composition, policies, and programs), and other structures affecting gender equity in the electoral processes of the country where the OAS/EOM is deployed.

• **STEP 4: PREPARATION OF ON-SITE VISITS**²⁴

Preparation of a visit in the framework of the OAS/EOM includes organization of the agenda and technical aspects. Organization of the agenda consists of drawing up a proposed list of institutions to conduct on-site visits, based on priorities established in advance and coordinated with said institutions, after their approval by the Deputy Chief and the OAS/DECO Director, in accordance with the following table.

Table No. 4
Priority and Type of Actors/Institutions

Priority	Type of actors/institutions
Group 1	Political parties and electoral bodies, in particular units that work on gender issues.
Group 2	Other public institutions, civil society organizations, and research centers or academic institutions that work on the issue of gender equality and the promotion of female political participation.
Group 3	Any international organizations or institutions headquartered in the country that have funded projects or initiatives related to the matter.

Organization of the technical aspects involves drafting five documents:

1. **Institutional profiles**, that is, descriptions of the institutional structure, functions, work areas, or activities related to gender equity or the promotion of women’s political participation. In the case of political parties, the profiles will include a brief historical background and relevant information on the gender policies implemented by the party in past elections and on whether they have mechanisms to promote gender equity within their structures.
2. **Tools** for use during meetings, specifically the *Questionnaire for Meetings in the OAS/EOM Host Country and the Document Checklist* (Tools 3.3 and 3.1).
3. **List of texts** that have not been accessible but must be requested or sought, in accordance with the *Document Checklist* (Tool 3.1).
4. **Review** of the *Regional Coordinators’ Daily Report* form (Tool 3.6).

²⁴ Visit in the framework of the OAS/EOM installation phase, when there is a mass deployment of the mission around election day.



5. **Presentation** for training regional coordinators and international observers, drawn up on the basis of the *General Form on the Gender Perspective in the Electoral Process*, focusing primarily on the existence of legal provisions on quotas/parity and proposals/positions of candidates on gender equality and sex-disaggregated information on candidacies and voter registration, among other issues.

2.3.2 Observation of Gender Equity During the Deployment Phase of the OAS/EOM

The deployment phase begins when the members of the core and/or mobile groups arrive in the host country and ends with the return of international observers and regional coordinators from their assigned zones following election day. During this period, observation from a gender perspective includes the following steps:

• STEP 1: MEETING WITH CORE GROUP SPECIALISTS

The gender specialists must hold a meeting with the other Core Group members to share information on the political participation of men and women in the country to which the OAS/EOM is deployed. The meeting will focus on matters of interest to the gender specialists, identified on the basis of gaps in existing data.

• STEP 2: TRAINING SESSIONS FOR REGIONAL COORDINATORS AND INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS

The OAS/EOM involves two general training sessions: one for regional coordinators and the other for international observers. The gender specialists must make a presentation to each group describing the methodology; explain the roles of Core Group members, coordinators, and observers in its implementation; and summarize conditions for the political participation of men and women in the observed country. In addition to providing tools for implementing the methodology, the training sessions are intended to increase the awareness of OAS/EOM members of the incorporation of a gender perspective into international electoral observation.

• STEP 3: MEETINGS WITH KEY ACTORS

The meetings with key actors, the most important phase of the on-site visit, will consist of three activities: (1) confirming meetings and the agenda; (2) holding meetings; and (3) drawing up a report based on the *Report Template for Meetings in the OAS/EOM Host Country* (Tool 3.4).

The criteria of the methodology require that priority be attached to objective data and primary sources. Every effort must therefore be made to use the meetings to request this type of information and the respective supporting documents.



• STEP 4: DATA COLLECTION THROUGH REGIONAL COORDINATORS

The regional coordinators will help collect information on the conditions in which men and women participate in elections at the regional level or in their respective geographic areas. This effort involves several steps:

1. The regional coordinators will have to obtain the indicated information and transmit it through the *Regional Coordinators' Daily Report* (Tool 3.6).
2. The gender specialists will review the data collected and select the most relevant findings for inclusion in the *Preliminary Report* (Tool 3.8).

• STEP 5: COLLECTION OF DATA COMPILED BY INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS

International observers have a fundamental role to play in collecting data for the gender methodology, principally because they are responsible for completing the *Election-Day Questionnaires* (Tool 3.7), which include questions regarding the exercise of political rights by men and women on election day. The observers may also receive complaints on any form of violation of political rights and transmit them to the General Coordinator. With the collaboration of the General Coordinator, the gender specialists will review the data collected and select the most relevant findings to include in the report.

• STEP 6: FURTHER COMPLETION OF FORMS

The gender specialists will continue to complete the *General Form on the Gender Perspective in the Electoral Process* (Tool 3.5), which includes three activities.

1. Collection and classification of the information obtained. The main sources of information will be all documents compiled up to that point, reports on meetings with key actors, and the information collected by the regional coordinators and international observers.
2. Reading and selection of data useful for answering the questions on the forms.
3. Entry of data on the forms

The information acquired at that point will be sufficient to answer pending questions on norms, if any, but especially to progress in answering questions on practices and institutions (composition, policies, and programs), as well as on structural aspects. For this reason, this stage of completion of the form will focus on practices and the effectiveness of norms.

By the end of the deployment phase, it is expected that all questions on norms and practices will have been answered. Even though time is limited during this period, it is essential that the gender specialists complete the forms distributed as they serve as the basis for the Preliminary Report.

2.3.3 Observation of Gender Equity During the Final Phase of the OAS/EOM

The post-election period begins at the end of election day and lasts until the official proclamation of results. This phase consists of the following steps:

• STEP 1. PREPARATION OF THE PRELIMINARY REPORT

The Preliminary Report should be a brief yet specific overview of the most relevant findings of observation from a gender perspective. The report will serve as input for the mission's press release(s) and for the



Verbal Report, which the Chief of Mission will present to the OAS Permanent Council. It should contain sex-disaggregated information on the results of the electoral observation.

The resulting document should assess norms and practices in light of the indicators presented in this manual, identifying how they favor or impede the inclusiveness, cleanliness, and competitiveness of the electoral process as well as the irreversibility of the election results, from a gender perspective. All inputs from the Preliminary Report on electoral observation from a gender perspective that are reflected in the press release must be based on rigorous and substantiated information. The information contained should be brief and concise, and include conclusions, and recommendations on gender equity in political participation in the observed country.

The text is to be drafted by the gender specialists and must follow the space allotted and the order established in the *Preliminary Report Template* (Tool 3.8).

• STEP 2: FINAL COMPLETION OF FORMS

The *General Form on the Gender Perspective in the Electoral Process* (Tool 3.5) must be completed after preparation of the Preliminary Report. It is to be filled out according to the explanations and instructions given on the questionnaires. Final completion of the questionnaires takes place after the deployment of the OAS/EOM to the host country. During this step, the specialists must be certain to:

1. Finalize the collection and classification of the data obtained from election day to the current date. The deadline for collecting data will be 30 days after the elections, in keeping with the time periods established in the OAS/EOM methodology.
2. Conclude the analysis and selection of useful information for answering questions on the forms.
3. Data entry as per the specialized forms.

The information acquired throughout the process of observation from a gender perspective should be sufficient to answer all questions on norms and practices contained in the forms. It should be borne in mind that the absence of information often constitutes a piece of data itself that may help identify regulatory gaps or shortfalls. Forms on which all questions have been answered should be kept at GS/OAS headquarters for future reference, if needed. The specialists must make every effort to complete all answers as they constitute the basis for the Final Report.

• STEP 3: DRAFTING AND APPROVAL OF THE FINAL REPORT ON GENDER

The purpose of the Final Report is to provide a comprehensive overview of the political participation of men and women in the electoral process of the observed country. The document will serve as input for the Final Narrative Report of the OAS/EOM and should have the following characteristics:

1. It must be both descriptive and analytical, i.e., it must identify norms and practices relating to gender equity and explain how they affect the inclusiveness, cleanliness, and competitiveness of the electoral process observed.
2. It must be exhaustive.
3. It must focus on the observed process and include any background materials that shed light on current realities.
4. It must be consistent with the approach and substantive focus of the manual.

The text is to be drafted by the gender specialists and should follow the space allotted and the order established in the Final Report Template (Tool 3.9).



Considering that the final narrative report of the OAS/EOM²⁵ is prepared within three months after the presentation of the Verbal Report,²⁶ the first draft of the final report on observation from a gender perspective must be presented by the gender specialists no later than 45 days after the elections. To allow the specialists a reasonable amount of time to include new data, the deadline for collecting information on gender equity will be approximately 30 days after the elections. The OAS/EOM Deputy Chief will review the report and submit comments. The gender specialists will then return the definitive version of the report for approval and use as input for the final narrative report of the OAS/EOM.

²⁵ The final narrative report of the OAS/EOM consists of all of the Mission's observations and is drawn up by the Deputy Chief of Mission. It is published within three months after presentation of the verbal report.

²⁶ The verbal report consists of information on OAS/EOM activities, observation findings, and some key recommendations for improving the observed electoral system/process. It is presented by the Chief of Mission to the OAS Permanent Council between four and six weeks after election day.

3. Tools for observation and for data collection, systematization, and presentation

3.1. Document Checklist

Documents on norms				
N°	Type of document	Yes	No	Comments
1	National Constitution			
2	Electoral Code (electoral legislation)			
3	International and Inter-American human rights instruments pertaining to gender equity, adopted and ratified by the observed country			
4	Recommendations of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)			
5	Laws on elections, political parties, and nondiscrimination issued by the legislative branch or other related powers			
6	Regulations issued by the executive branch, such as rules, agreements, etc.			
7	Regulations issued by electoral bodies, such as resolutions, etc.			
8	Internal norms and bylaws of political parties			
9	Lower-level regulations, such as circulars, notes, etc.			



Documents on practices				
N°	Type of document	Yes	No	Comments
1	Reports produced by electoral bodies			
2	Documents or reports produced by political organizations			
3	Election day questionnaires			
4	OAS/EOM reports from the previous election			
5	Reports of other international electoral observation missions			
6	Documents produced by civil society organizations in the host country			
7	Academic papers published by universities, research centers, and other entities			
8	Any other documents containing information on the status of political participation by men and women in the observed country			



3.2. Preliminary Study Template

Observation of political participation by men and women OAS/EOM (host country / date) Preliminary study

1. Introduction

- Description of the components of the political and electoral system related to gender equity in political participation: type of election, proportional or majority representation system, type of candidate lists, size and number of districts, bodies responsible for elections, and number of parties, among other relevant information
- Description of International and Inter-American instruments on the issue of gender equity ratified by the host country

2. Political Participation of Men and Women in Previous Elections

2.1. Inclusiveness of elections in terms of gender equity (1 page maximum)

- Comparison between the percentage of women of voting age out of the total population and the proportion of women with the identity documents required to vote and the proportion registered on the electoral roll. Description of norms and practices related to the procurement of identity documents and voter registration
- Suffrage rate by sex, in both the previous elections and historically
- Description of norms on guarantees of the right to vote and on the accessibility of polling places
- Description of programs to promote women's participation as voters and related recent reforms, as well as potential effects in practice

2.2. Cleanliness of elections from a gender perspective (½ page maximum)

- Description of norms and practices related to the composition of the electoral body and to the selection and composition of poll workers
- Summary of the situation in the previous elections in terms of the proportion of women involved in national electoral observation, the proportion of women who worked as political party poll watchers, incidents related to restrictions on women's right to vote, and violence or manipulation directed at women
- Description of post-election reforms that may have changed norms on the same subject areas, as well as potential effects in practice



Observation of political participation by men and women
OAS/EOM (host country/date)
Preliminary study

2.3. Competitiveness of elections from a gender perspective (1 page maximum)

- Description of the legal framework governing electoral competition and its effects on the participation of men and women in the electoral race in the previous elections, focusing particularly on the design of the electoral system and on affirmative action measures
- Analysis of the proportion of men and women on all lists of candidates for elective offices in the observed elections, as well as their competitiveness
- Description of norms and practices related to gender equity of the main political parties competing in the elections: internal norms to promote the participation of women, composition of party rank and file and leadership, and existence of gender mechanisms within party structures
- Description of norms and practices related to political financing for women and to gender equity in media coverage (information collected in coordination with the methodologies on political-electoral financing and the media)
- Description of post-election reforms that may have changed norms on the same subject areas, as well as potential effects in practice (as appropriate)

2.4. Elective public offices from a gender perspective (½ page maximum)

- Summary of the gender distribution of elective offices in the country observed, including historical trends
- Description of norms and practices on the irreversibility of election results, such as cases of political harassment against elected women or post-election fraud in the previous electoral processes

3. Conclusions: (½ page maximum)



3.3. Questionnaire for Meetings in the OAS/EOM Host Country

Questionnaire for meetings with key actors / institutions OAS/EOM (country / election) (place, time, and date)	
Meeting participants representing the OAS/EOM / Name, position	Meeting participants from other institutions, parties, etc. / Name, position
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic and subtopic: Inclusiveness / registration, access to the polling place, suffrage, programs and policies to promote women’s participation as voters • Questions: *Contents of the <i>General Form on the Gender Perspective in the Electoral Process</i> (Tool 3.5) for which there is no or inadequate information. • Sources of information: Supporting documents used to provide answers. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic and subtopic: Cleanliness / equity in electoral bodies, in polling stations, in vote monitoring, norms and practices that promote or undermine the integrity of female voter preferences • Questions: *Contents of the <i>General Form</i> (Tool 3.5) for which there is no or inadequate information • Sources of information: Supporting documents used to provide answers 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic and subtopic: Competitiveness / electoral system, candidate nomination procedures, conditions within political parties, financing system, media coverage • Questions: *Contents of the <i>General Form</i> (Tool 3.5) for which there is no or inadequate information • Sources of information: Supporting documents used to provide answers 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic and subtopic: Elective public offices / cases of post-election political harassment or fraud • Questions: * Contents of <i>General Form</i> (Tool 3.5) for which there is no or inadequate information • Sources of information: Supporting documents used to provide answers. 	



3.4. Report Template for Meetings in the OAS/EOM Host Country

Observation of political participation by men and women OAS/EOM (host country / date) Report on visit (___)	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction. 2. General analysis of the inclusiveness of elections from a gender perspective (the participation of men and women as voters) (½ page maximum) 3. Relevant aspects of the cleanliness of elections from a gender perspective (the ability of women to vote without external pressure, and the participation of women in the organization and monitoring of the electoral process) (½ page maximum) 4. Analysis of competitiveness in elections and the conditions in which men and women participate in the electoral race (½ page maximum) 5. Relevant aspects that undermine the irreversibility of election results 6. Description and analysis of the variables and indicators identified during the visit that favor or impede equitable conditions for the participation of men and women in national politics 7. Minutes of meetings 	
Meeting 1	
a. Meeting participants	
Participants representing the OAS/EOM / Name, position	Participants from other institutions, parties, etc. / Name, position
b. Summary of the meeting	
c. Relevant information collected (based on the questionnaires)	
d. List of documents or information requested (obtained, requiring follow-up, or denied)	



3.5. General Form on the Gender Perspective in the Electoral Process

Instructions for completing the questionnaire:

- In the binary (yes/no) columns, indicate the answer that is most representative of the situation being evaluated. In the event the answer is not precise, select the most approximate choice and explain under “Comments.”
- For questions referring to compliance with a norm by more than one actor (for example, affirmative action measures adopted by political parties), the binary answer given should be based on the proportion of compliance (more than half or more than 50%), with explanatory information provided in the corresponding column.
- Use the “basis” column to indicate the source of information (laws, reports, etc.) as well as information such as article, page, or any other reference that can help identify the supporting documentation.
- In the “Comments” column, provide any analysis that will complete the binary answer and make it more comprehensible.

Attribute 1: Inclusive elections					
Indicator 1: Gender equity in the registration process			Answers		
Variable	Questions	Yes	No	Basis	Comments
Issuance of identity documents	Compared to men, do women face legal hurdles in obtaining the documents required for voting?				
	Compared to men, do women face cultural, geographic, economic, or other hurdles in obtaining the documents required for voting?				
	Are there differences between the proportion of men and women with identity documents?				
Voter registration	Do women face legal hurdles in registering to vote?				
	Do women face cultural, geographic, economic, or other hurdles in registering to vote?				
	Is sex-disaggregated data available on voter registration?				
	Is there a gender gap in rates of voter registration?				



Indicator 2: Gender equity in polling place access		Answers			
Variable	Questions	Yes	No	Basis	Comments
Accessibility	Compared to men, do women face legal hurdles in terms of access to polling places?				
	Compared to men, do women face geographic, economic, or other hurdles in terms of access to polling places?				
Accessibility for pregnant women and/or men and women with children	Are there norms regarding preferential treatment for pregnant women and/or men or women with children?				
	Are the norms regarding preferential treatment for pregnant women and/or men or women with children complied with in practice?				
Indicator 3: Gender equity in the casting of ballots		Answers			
Variable	Questions	Yes	No	Basis	Comments
Composition of the ballots cast	Do norms guarantee the right of men and women of voting age to vote?				
	Is sex-disaggregated data available on the casting of ballots?				
	Is there a gender gap in the number of votes cast by men and women?				
Indicator 4: Gender equity in the promotion of voting		Answers			
Variable	Questions	Yes	No	Basis	Comments
Public policies or programs to promote the right to elect	Does the electoral authority have specific programs for promoting women's electoral participation?				
	Does the electoral authority have specific programs for registering women on the electoral roll, in particular indigenous/illiterate/displaced/rural women?				
	Are the programs institutionalized?				
	Do the programs have evaluation mechanisms to measure impact?				



Attribute 2: Clean elections					
Indicator 1: Integrity of women's preferences			Answers		
Variable	Questions	Yes	No	Basis	Comments
Restrictions on the right to a free and secret ballot	Are women exposed to situations that violate the guarantee of a free and secret ballot?				
	Were cases of "family" or "proxy" voting observed that affected women voters in particular?				
External pressure caused by any type of violence	Were any cases of external pressure, intimidation, or reprisals observed that were directed at women voters in particular?				
Indicator 2: Gender equity in electoral bodies			Answers		
Variable	Questions	Yes	No	Basis	Comments
Composition of the electoral body	Are there norms to promote gender equity in electoral bodies?				
	Is there gender equity in the distribution of leadership (decision-making) positions among electoral authorities?				
	Is there gender equity in the composition of electoral body staff?				
Internal policies or departments	Do electoral bodies have policies or actions designed from a gender perspective in order to promote equality within the institutions?				
	Is there a secretariat/office/unit for women or gender within the structure of the national electoral body?				
Indicator 3: Gender equity in polling stations			Answers		
Variable	Questions	Yes	No	Basis	Comments
Composition of poll workers	Do norms on poll worker selection take gender equity into account?				
	Is there gender equity in the composition of principal poll workers?				
	Is there gender equity in the composition of alternate poll workers?				
	Is there a gender gap in the composition of presiding officers of polling stations?				
Indicator 4: Gender equity in poll monitoring			Answers		
Variable	Questions	Yes	No	Basis	Comments
Composition of party representatives	Are there norms to promote equal representation between men and women as party poll watchers in polling stations?				
	Is there a gender gap in the participation of men and women as political party poll watchers in polling stations?				



Composition of members of national observation groups	Are there norms to promote equal representation between men and women in national electoral observation groups?				
	Is there a gender gap in the participation of men and women in national electoral observation groups?				

Attribute 3: Competitive elections					
Indicator 1: Gender equity in electoral systems			Answers		
Variable	Questions	Yes	No	Basis	Comments
Type of electoral lists	Are candidates for popular elections selected through a majoritarian system?				
	Are candidates for popular elections selected through a system of proportional representation?				
	Are candidates for popular election selected through closed lists?				
	Are candidates for popular election selected through blocked lists?				
Importance and size of districts	Do the importance and size of districts afford opportunities for female candidates to be elected?				
	Is there evidence that political parties have historically placed men in more politically important and influential districts than women?				
Indicator 2: Gender equity in nominating procedures			Answers		
Variable	Questions	Yes	No	Basis	Comments
Quotas	Are quotas established by law?				
	Are the quotas applied in practice?				
	Does the law grant the electoral body capacity to sanction non-compliance with gender quotas?				
	Are sanctions for noncompliance with quotas applied in practice?				
	Are quotas established in the internal statutes or bylaws of political parties?				
	Are the internal quotas (established in party norms) applied in practice?				
	Do political party bylaws or statutes grant parties the capacity to sanction noncompliance with gender quotas?				
	Are the sanctions for noncompliance with internal quotas applied in practice?				



Gender placement or alternation mandate	Does the law establish a gender placement mandate?				
	Is the gender placement mandate applied in practice?				
	Is alternation by sex established through norms?				
	Is alternation by sex applied in practice?				
Composition of candidacies	Is there a gender gap in the composition of candidates running for popular election?				
	Is there a gender gap among heads of candidate lists?				
	Is there a gender gap in the placement of candidates in competitive positions (top positions) on lists?				
Indicator 3: Gender equity in political parties		Answers			
Variable	Questions	Yes	No	Basis	Comments
Composition of political parties	Are there norms to promote representation of men and women within the political party rank and file?				
	Is there a gender gap in membership in the political party rank and file?				
	Are there norms to promote the representation of men and women in decision-making positions in political parties?				
	Is there a gender gap among decision-making positions in political parties?				
Internal policies or departments	Do internal political party rules establish principles of equality and nondiscrimination?				
	Is there a secretariat/office/unit for women or gender within national party structures?				
Indicator 4: Gender equity in political financing systems		Answers			
Variable	Questions	Yes	No	Basis	Comments
Targeted direct public financing	Does the law establish direct public financing targeted towards women?				
	Is direct public financing targeted at women applied in practice?				
Targeted indirect public financing	Does the law establish indirect public financing targeted towards women?				
	Is indirect public financing targeted at women applied in practice?				
Sanctions/ Oversight	Does the law grant an entity the capacity to oversee targeted financing to ensure that it serves its purpose?				
	In practice, does this entity effectively carry out its oversight functions over gender-targeted financing?				



Indicator 5: Gender equity in the media		Answers			
Variable	Questions	Yes	No	Basis	Comments
Access to media time/ space	Does the law establish measures to promote equity in media access for male and female candidates?				
	Are measures to promote equity in media access for male and female candidates complied with in practice?				
	Is there a gender gap among candidates in terms of access to media time and/or space?				
	Is there a gender gap among candidates in the use of free media time/space provided by the state?				
Coverage of gender issues	Are gender equality issues present in the publicity of the electoral body?				
	Are gender equality issues present in the electoral statements and platforms of male and female candidates?				
Presence of stereotypes	Does the media reproduce gender stereotypes or sexist language?				

Attribute 4: Elective public offices					
Indicator 1: Gender equity in elective public offices		Answers			
Variable	Questions	Yes	No	Basis	Comments
Reserved seats	Does the law established reserved seats for women?				
	Are reserved seat measures applied in practice?				
Composition of elective offices	Were advances made in the representation of men and women in elective offices in the past five elections?				
	Is there a gender gap in national level elective offices?				
	Is there a gender gap in regional level elective offices?				
	Is there a gender gap in executive-level elective offices?				



Indicator 2: Irreversibility of election results					
Variable	Questions	Yes	No	Basis	Comments
Post-election fraud	Are the legal winners of elections, both men and women, duly installed in their corresponding posts?				
Political harassment against elected women	Have any forms of pressure (intimidation, harassment, or manipulation) been exerted to prevent women from assuming the offices to which they were elected?				
	Does the law establish guarantees that elected officials who withdraw or are not able to occupy their posts are replaced by an individual of the same sex?				
	Are measures to guarantee that office holders are replaced by someone of the same sex applied in practice?				



3.6. Regional Coordinators' Daily Report (adapted for observation from a gender perspective)

 <p>Organization of American States</p>	<p>Department of Electoral Cooperation and Observation Electoral Observation Mission (country) (election) (date)</p>
<p>Coordinator's name:</p>	
<p>Department / province:</p>	
<p>Date of the report:</p>	
<p>1. Analysis of the political-electoral situation in the region (department, province)²⁷:</p>	
<p>1.1 Problems encountered by women in the exercise of their political rights (obstacles to voter registration, lower electoral participation, composition of elective offices, status in political parties, violence/manipulation, other)²⁸.</p>	
<p>1.2. Measures taken by electoral authorities to promote gender equality in the exercise of political rights (women's advocacy, registration of women, voter registration and electoral participation, incorporation of the gender perspective in measures/provisions/training, preferential voting, resolutions/decisions on quotas/parity, etc.)²⁹.</p>	
<p>1.3. Equity in financing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do local party headquarters receive direct public financing for campaigns? (request copies of records) • Do local party headquarters receive indirect public financing for campaigns? (request copies of records) 	
<p>1.4. Transparency in financing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do local party headquarters prepare composite reports on their campaign finances? (request copies of reports) • Does the local office of the public institution responsible for oversight receive the parties' financial reports? (request copies of the reports received) • Does the local office of the public institution responsible for oversight audit the parties? (request copies of the audit reports) • Are the party reports and the audit reports of the local public offices public? (request a copy or a link attesting to that fact) 	

²⁷ The analysis should focus exclusively on the region assigned to the regional coordinator.

²⁸ This information should be collected through contacts and meetings with political parties, civil society organizations or public entities working to promote women's political rights in the region.

²⁹ This information should be collected in meetings with the electoral authorities of the region observed.



2. Official activities during the day (include trips, visits, evidence of communications, etc.):
3. Election matters that the mission has to monitor in the region and possible lines of action: ³⁰
3.1 Based on the observation carried out, what is your evaluation of the situation regarding the exercise of political rights by men and women? Are there aspects in your assigned zone that require special attention by the OAS/EOM? If so, please specify them and provide a brief description.
3.2. Which aspects of financing do you consider affect equity in the electoral race and related transparency at the local level (use the training points as a basis)?
4. Regional election news (indicate the specific media outlet and include links if possible):
4.1. Election news containing sexist language and/or gender stereotypes (include the name of the media outlet and the date concerned and send a link or photocopy of the news item to the General Coordinator):
4.2. Local election news containing information of any kind on campaign financing (indicate the media outlet concerned and include links if possible):
5. Minutes of meetings (include the minutes of each meeting held):

²⁹ Indicate any source that can support this information.



3.7 New Election Day Questionnaires

As stipulated in the Manual for OAS Electoral Observation Missions, the standardized questionnaires are to be completed on election day and consist of five parts. Questionnaires A, B, and C are used to collect data at three specific times on election day: at the opening of the polling station, at mid-day, and at the closing of the polling station. Each of these questionnaires should be answered based on observation of a polling station that was previously assigned to each observer and is part of a representative sample.

Questionnaire D seeks to obtain an overall assessment of the electoral process at the assigned polling station, based exclusively on the direct observations of the person filling out the questionnaire. Finally, Questionnaire E is meant for recording information in cases in which observers are able to visit polling stations in addition to the principal assigned polling station.

These questionnaires have been modified since their official adoption in the Manual for OAS Electoral Observation Missions, and are to be used and processed as indicated in the models below:



Organization of American States

ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES (OAS)
ELECTORAL OBSERVATION MISSION (EOM)
Country : _____ Date: _____

ELECTION DAY QUESTIONNAIRE - A

Name of observer:

Polling place:

Polling station assigned:

Note: All questions refer exclusively to the voters assigned to the polling station being observed. Please answer the questions on the basis of your own observations or on the basis of credible information you received. If you observe more than one polling station, please use a separate questionnaire for each.

A		Opening of the polling station			Answer (Check a box or write in your answer)		
1	At what time did the polling station open?	Time: ____:____	Did not open	<input type="checkbox"/>			
2	Were all necessary electoral materials available at the polling station?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>		
3	Were all the principal poll workers present?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>		
3.a	How many men and women were principal members of the polling station?	Men	<input type="text"/>	Women	<input type="text"/>	Total	<input type="text"/>
3.b	How many men and women were alternate members of the polling station?	Men	<input type="text"/>	Women	<input type="text"/>	Total	<input type="text"/>
3.c	Was the presiding officer of the polling station a man or a woman?	Man	<input type="checkbox"/>	Woman	<input type="checkbox"/>		
4	Were poll watchers from the following parties present at the polling station at 7:00 a.m.?						
4.a	How many men and women were present as poll watchers at the polling station?	Men	<input type="text"/>	Women	<input type="text"/>	Total	<input type="text"/>
5	Were national election observers present at the polling station at 7:00 a.m.?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>		
5.a	How many of the national observers at the polling station were men and women?	Men	<input type="text"/>	Women	<input type="text"/>	Total	<input type="text"/>
6	Is the space at the polling station adequate?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>		
7	Were members of the security forces present?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>		
8	Was the electoral roll posted?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>		
9	Do voters have adequate information about the location of their polling station?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>		



Organization of American States

ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES (OAS)
ELECTORAL OBSERVATION MISSION (EOM)

Country : _____ Date: _____

ELECTION DAY QUESTIONNAIRE - B

Name of observer:

Polling place:

Polling station assigned:

Note: All questions refer exclusively to the voters assigned to the polling station you observed. Please answer the questions on the basis of your own observations or on the basis of credible information you received. If you observe more than one polling station, please use a separate questionnaire for each.

B	Status of voting in the polling station as of 1:00 p.m. approximately	Answer (Check a box or write in your answer)																																		
1	How many voters are on the electoral roll?	Number: _____																																		
2	How many voters had cast ballots by 1:00 p.m.?	Number: _____																																		
3	How many minutes does each voter take to cast a ballot?	Minutes:	_____																																	
4	Were poll watchers from the following parties present at the polling station at 1:00 p.m.?	<table border="1"> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>																																		
4.a	How many men and women were present as poll watchers at the polling station?	Men	Women	Total																																
		_____	_____	_____																																
5	Were national election observers present at the polling station at 1:00 p.m.?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>																																
5.a	How many of the national observers present were men women?	Men	Women	Total																																
		_____	_____	_____																																
6	Did you observe any of the following practices at the polling station?																																			
i.	Voters on the electoral roll were not allowed to vote	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>																																
i.a	If this was the case, in how many cases did you observe acts of violence or manipulation to keep registered women from casting ballots, and in how many to keep men from doing so?	Men	Women																																	
		_____	_____																																	
ii.	Long lines of voters waiting to vote	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>																																
iii.	Interruptions of the voting process	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>																																
iv.	Restrictions on the right to a secret ballot	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>																																
iv.a	In cases of restrictions on the right to a secret ballot, did you observe any situations of "family," "delegate," or proxy voting that affected women voters?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>																																
v.	Electioneering	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>																																
vi.	Incidents of violence	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>																																
vi.a	If women were pregnant or accompanied by children, were they given preferential treatment?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>																																
vii	Other (please specify)																																			
7	How many polling places did you visit by 1:00 p.m.?	Number:	_____																																	
8	Are there any other issues or observations not covered in the questions that you consider significant?																																			



Organization of American States

ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES (OAS)
ELECTORAL OBSERVATION MISSION (EOM)

Country : _____ Date: _____

ELECTION DAY QUESTIONNAIRE - C

Name of observer:

Polling place:

Polling station assigned:

Note: All questions refer exclusively to the voters assigned to the polling station you observed. Please answer the questions on the basis of your own observations or on the basis of credible information you received. If you observe more than one polling station, please use a separate questionnaire for each.

C	Closing of the polling station and vote counting	Answer (Check a box or write in your answer)
---	--	---

1 At what time did the polling station close? Time: ____ : ____

2 Were there voters in line when the polls closed who were not allowed to vote? Yes No

3	Were poll watchers from the following parties present at the polling station when it closed?				

4 Were national observers present at the polling station when it closed? Yes No

4.a	How many of the national observers present were men many women?	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Total</i>
		<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

5 How many voters are on the electoral roll? Number:

6 What was the total number of votes cast in the presidential election? Number:

7 How many votes were declared null and void in the presidential election? Number:

8 Was the statement of poll challenged? Yes No

9 Were the parties given a copy of the statement of poll? Yes No

10 Did the counting of ballots follow legal procedures? Yes No

11 At what time did the vote counting process end? Time: ____ : ____

12 How many polling places did you visit during the day? Number:

13 Are there any other issues or observations not covered in the questions that you consider significant?



ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES (OAS)
ELECTORAL OBSERVATION MISSION (EOM)

Country : _____ Date: _____

ELECTION DAY QUESTIONNAIRE - D

Name of observer:

Polling place:

Polling station assigned:

Note: All questions refer exclusively to the voters assigned to the polling station you observed. Please answer the questions on the basis of your own observations or on the basis of credible information you received.

D	Overall evaluation in light of observations made at the polling station throughout the day and during the subsequent transfer of the ballots	Answer (Check a box or write in your answer)						
Voter education								
1	Did the voters appear to understand when, where, and how to vote?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>						
Exclusion of registered voters								
2	Were registered voters prevented from voting because of problems with the electoral roll, voting hours, or other reasons?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>						
Ballot design								
3	Did the design of the ballot enable voters to accurately record their preferences?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>						
Voter intimidation								
4	Was there any evidence of threats and/or violence targeted at voters?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>						
4.a	If so, in how many cases were the threats and/or violence targeted at women voters and in how many cases at men?	<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 2px;"><i>Men</i></td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 2px;"><i>Women</i></td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 2px;"><i>Total</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="width: 50px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 50px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 50px; height: 20px;"></td> </tr> </table>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Total</i>			
<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Total</i>						
Vote buying								
5	Was there any evidence of vote buying?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>						
Electioneering at the polling place								
6	Was there any evidence of electioneering in or around the polling place?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>						
Secret ballot								
7	Was the right to a secret ballot guaranteed?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>						
7.a	In cases of restrictions on the right to a secret ballot, did you observe any situations of "family," "delegate," or proxy voting that affected women voters in particular?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>						
Observation of the count								
8	Were party poll watchers present to observe the counting of ballots?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>						
9	Were national election observers present during the counting of ballots?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>						
Counting of ballots								
10	Were there any administrative or organizational defects or problems in the counting of ballots?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>						
11	Were any intentional acts committed to alter the expressed preferences of voters during the counting of the ballots?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>						
Secure ballot								
12	Were all ballots properly supervised and secured before, during, and after the voting?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>						
13	Were the tally sheets, statements of poll and other materials transferred to the counting center in a secure and orderly fashion?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>						
14	Was the transmission of results carried out in an orderly fashion?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>						
Dispute resolution								
15	Were complaints and disputes dealt with in a fair and timely manner?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>						
General impression								
16	In general, the voting process at the polling station that you observed was	Very good Good Bad Very bad						



Organization of American States

ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES (OAS)
ELECTORAL OBSERVATION MISSION (EOM)

Country: _____ Date: _____

ELECTION DAY QUESTIONNAIRE - E

Name of observer: _____

Note: All questions refer exclusively to the voters assigned to the polling station you observed. Please answer the questions on the basis of your own observations or on the basis of credible information you received

E	Evaluation in light of observations made at a polling station visited at any time of the day	Answer (write in your answer for each station)	PS																	
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10								
1	Voter education. Did voters appear to understand when, where, and how to vote?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A																		
2	Exclusion of registered voters. Were registered voters prevented from voting because of problems with the electoral roll, voting hours, or other reasons?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A																		
3	Ballot design. Did the design of the ballot enable voters to accurately record their preferences?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A																		
4	Voter intimidation. Was there any evidence of threats and/or violence targeted at voters?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A																		
4a	If so, in how many cases were the threats and/or violence targeted at women voters and in how many cases at men?	M: _____ W: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> N/A																		
5	Vote buying. Was there any evidence of vote buying?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A																		
6	Electioneering at the polling place. Was there any evidence of electioneering in or around the polling place?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A																		
7	Secret ballot. Was the right to a secret ballot guaranteed?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A																		
7a	In cases of restrictions on the right to a secret ballot, did you observe any situations of "family," "delegate," or proxy voting that affected women voters?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A																		
8	Secure ballot. Were all ballots properly supervised and secured before, during, and after the voting?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A																		
9	Dispute resolution. Were complaints and disputes dealt with in a fair and timely manner?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A																		
10	Party poll watchers. How many parties had poll watchers at the polling station?	<input type="checkbox"/> All <input type="checkbox"/> Some <input type="checkbox"/> None																		
11	National observers. Were national electoral observers present at the polling station?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A																		
12	General impression. In general, the voting process at the polling station that you observed was ...	<input type="checkbox"/> Very good <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Bad <input type="checkbox"/> Very bad																		



Organization of American States



3.8 Preliminary Report Template for Electoral Observation from a Gender Perspective

Observation of gender equity OAS/EOM (host country / date) Preliminary Report

1. Introduction
2. Legal framework and electoral system
3. Participation of men and women in the observed electoral process
 - 3.1. Inclusiveness of the elections from a gender perspective (½ page maximum)
 - Obstacles to the participation of women as voters (in the registration process, in access to the polling place, and in the casting of ballots)
 - Programs of electoral authorities to promote the informed participation of women voters
 - 3.2. Cleanliness of the elections from a gender perspective (½ page maximum)
 - Cases of restrictions on the exercise of women's suffrage
 - Composition of members of the polling station, national observation groups, and political parties
 - 3.3. Competitiveness of the elections from a gender perspective (1 page maximum)
 - Analysis of gender equity in nominating procedures (existence and effectiveness of quotas)
 - Analysis of the composition of candidacies
 - Conditions of gender equity within political parties, in the financing system, and with regard to media access.
4. Preliminary recommendations



3.9 Final Report Template for Observation from a Gender Perspective

Observation of gender equity
OAS/EOM (host country / date)
Final Report

1. Introduction
2. Executive summary: Gender in the country observed (1 page maximum)
3. Legal framework and the electoral system (2 pages maximum)
 - a. International and regional instruments on gender ratified by observed country
 - b. Analysis of the electoral system
4. Participation of men and women in the elections observed (title only)
 - a. Inclusiveness in elections from a gender perspective (title only)
 - i. Registration process
 - ii. Access to the polling place
 - iii. Promotion of voting
 - iv. Casting of ballots
 - b. Cleanliness of elections from a gender perspective (title only)
 - i. Integrity of the preferences of women voters
 - ii. Gender equity within electoral bodies
 - iii. Gender equity in polling stations
 - iv. Gender equity in the monitoring of voting
 - c. Competitiveness in elections from a gender perspective (title only)
 - i. Gender equity in the electoral system
 - ii. Nominating procedures
 - iii. Gender equity in political parties or organizations
 - iv. Political financing system
 - v. Access to the media
 - d. Elective public offices from a gender perspective
 - i. Analysis of electoral results
 - ii. Cases of post-election fraud and political harassment
5. Conclusions: (1 page maximum)
6. Recommendations: (1 page maximum)
7. Bibliography
8. Appendices



3.10 Model Timetable for the Work Plan

Stages, phases, and steps	S8	S7	S6	S5	S4	S3	S2	S1	E day	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6
Pre-electoral stage: Initial phase of EOM															
Step 1: Design and approval of the work plan															
Step 2: Preparation of the preliminary study															
Step 3: Preparations for and execution of the preliminary visit (when applicable)															
Step 4: Initial completion of the observation forms															
Step 5: Preparations for the observation visit															
Pre-electoral stage: EOM installation phase															
Step 1: Meeting with Core Group specialists															
Step 2: Meetings with institutions and actors in situ															
Step 3: Data collection by coordinators and international observers															
Step 4: Further completion of the forms															
Post-electoral stage: Final phase															
Step 1. Drafting of the Preliminary Report															
Step 2: Final completion of the forms															
Step 3: Drafting and adoption of the Final Report															



4. Glossary

Affirmative action or positive discrimination measures: Temporary measures designed to overcome inequality between men and women. The best known measures are quotas for participation by traditionally excluded sectors in political, labor, or educational spheres.

Closed and blocked lists: Candidate lists in which the order of candidates is fixed, and in which the voter may only choose a list in its entirety from one party. (Nohlen, D. 2004)

Closed and unblocked lists: Candidate lists in which the order of candidates may be modified by the voter through the use of preferential votes or through the possibility of changing the order of candidates on the list. (Nohlen, D. 2004)

Gender approach (perspective): A systematic way to identify or analyze inequalities that stem from the roles that society assigns to men and women, the asymmetrical power relations between them, and the consequences of these differences in the lives of both sexes. (López, I. 2007)

Gender equality: An equality of rights, responsibilities, and opportunities between men and women, including opportunities for women and men to participate in and enjoy political, economic, social, and cultural development under equal conditions and to be valued equally for their experience and knowledge. (López, I. 2007)

Gender mainstreaming: A process that facilitates the assessment of the impact and implications of any action on men and women. It allows the concerns of men and of women to be equally incorporated into any process in order to generate, implement, and evaluate such actions so that both sexes may benefit equally.

Gender stereotypes: As a consequence of an androcentric/sexist society and viewpoint, individuals and media outlets often reproduce ideas or images assumed as models for the treatment of men and women, which then reinforce inequalities in treatment. According to the 2010 Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP), “blatantly stereotyped” stories are those “which use language or visual images that denigrate women, or trivialize women’s achievements, or that glorify or justify male violence [or] ridicule men who perform nontraditional roles.”³¹ And stories are “subtly stereotyped” when they “contain unstated

³¹ *Global Media Monitoring Project 2009/2010*, (Available at: <<http://www.whomakesthenews.org/gmmp-20092010-metodologia.html>>).



assumptions about the roles of women and men ... or stories that convey stereotyped beliefs, such as those that depict women as emotionally fragile.”³²

Open lists: Candidate lists in which the voter can place the candidates in different positions within and among party lists. (Nohlen, D. 2004)

Parity: Permanent measure aimed at having men and women assume equal responsibility for a task, such as the management of nations. The term refers to both the end itself and the mechanism for moving toward equality. Under the latter meaning, presence may be understood as equal (50%-50%) or as a balance (a minimum of 40% and a maximum of 60% for either sex).

Placement mandate: A mechanism that facilitates the inclusion of traditionally underrepresented groups, including women, in places on candidate lists in which they will have a realistic opportunity to be elected. It is also defined as the preferential placement of women candidates using numerical criteria.

Political harassment: Acts of physical, psychological, or sexual violence committed by those in power against candidates or officeholders in order to terrorize or degrade them, to pressure them to support decisions with which they do not concur, or even to resign.³³

Political participation: Fundamental right of all individuals to decide on the system of government, elect political representatives, be elected as representatives, participate in the design of public policy, and control the exercise of powers assigned to elected representatives. (Barreiro, L; Torres, I. 2009)

Public/party financing of political campaigns from a gender perspective: Any reference to public financing from a gender perspective must consider whether legal/party norms or policies consider (explicitly or implicitly) that allocated resources should be available to both men and women for all their activities, bearing in mind the particular needs of each.³⁴ One of the main obstacles to women’s participation in electoral races is precisely access to the resources needed to cover electoral campaign costs.

Quotas: Temporary measures designed to eliminate barriers that prevent women from gaining access to spheres of public decision-making. Starting from the realization of a significant imbalance between the political representation of men and women, such measures attempt to level the playing field for women, guaranteeing their presence on candidate lists and establishing minimum levels for their participation by reserving positions for them. Such measures may be constitutional/legislative or voluntary (party.) (Llanos, B; Sample, K. 2008) Quotas may be formal measures established in a country’s legislation or measures that parties and political organizations adopt voluntarily in their bylaws.

Replacement by gender: A mechanism that provides for the replacement of an officeholder who resigns from his or her post by an alternate of the same sex.

³² Ibid.

³³ “Discrimination, disqualification, verbal and physical aggression, and political harassment are all problems that affect or inhibit women’s right to participation and to effective performance in municipal elective posts in almost all Latin American countries reported in testimony, news accounts, and commentaries, but they have not yet been included as priority problems for investigation and reporting on the political agenda of feminist movements or on the agenda of public policies on gender equity.” INSTRAW/AECID/INAMU, *Hacia la constitución de una Red de Mujeres Municipalistas en Costa Rica. Esfuerzo, articulación y muchas voces: sistematización de un proceso* (San José, Costa Rica: INSTRAW/AECID/INAMU, 2008).

³⁴ See Ana Isabel García Quesada, “Financiamiento político y perspectiva de género, De las normas a las buenas prácticas. El desafío del financiamiento político en América Latina, ed. Steven Griner and Daniel Zovatto (San José: OAS and Idea International, 2004) 148.



Sexual harassment:³⁵ A type of conduct typically regulated in the workplace, sexual harassment can also be extended to the political environment. For the International Labour Organization, sexual harassment refers to “conduct which is unwanted and unwelcome to the recipient.”³⁶ Examples of such conduct may include, among other things, unsolicited physical contact, unwelcome verbal advances, sexually oriented comments about physical appearance, requests for sexual favors, jokes of a sexual nature, offensive flirtation, sexually explicit gestures, or even the display of sexually suggestive images, objects, or written materials or sexually suggestive gestures. In the political-electoral context, and in the particular case of women, sexual harassment may be a form of political harassment or political violence when “acts of physical, psychological, or sexual violence are carried out ... to terrorize, pressure, manipulate, or degrade women who hold or wish to hold political office to oblige them to act against their will, and in many cases to oblige them to resign from their elective posts and/or to support political decisions they do not concur with.”³⁷

Sexist use of language (sexist discourse):³⁸ Display of subordinate images of women. For example, masculine pronouns are used generically to refer to both men and women (“if a voter finds that he is not registered ...”); men are presented as the subject of the action and women in a subordinate role (“Candidate Eduardo Silva of the X Party, went to cast his vote, accompanied by his wife;”) women are referred to in ways that minimize their role (“the Honorable Minister of Health, Juan Pérez, and the Minister of Public Works, Meche Salinas;”) or pejorative references are made to women or to the values or behavior assigned to them, (“he cried like a woman at his defeat in the elections.”)

³⁵ See International Labour Organization, Circular No. 543, Series 6, September 29, 2004, <<http://www.ilo.org/public/spanish/ethics/download/acoso.pdf>>.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ximena Machicao Barbey. “*La Participación Política de las Mujeres ¡Un Dilema sin resolver!*” III Latin American Meeting of the Latin American and Caribbean Network for Associations of Elected Women in Local Governments, Quito, Ecuador, February 2011 (Available at: <http://www.un-instraw.org/pdf/Ponencia_Ximena_Machicao.pdf>).

³⁸ See Instituto Vasco de la Mujer, *El lenguaje más que palabras. Propuestas para un uso no sexista del lenguaje* (Bilbao: Instituto Vasco de la Mujer: 1988).



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