



# Strengthening Women's Citizenship in the Context of State Building. Guatemala, Central America.

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## *Introduction*

This report is the result of research carried out in Guatemala on the opportunities for strengthening Guatemalan women's citizenship within the framework of state building. It analyses three areas: women's access to justice in the civil sphere; women's political participation through political parties; and the extent to which the Presidential Secretariat for Women (Secretaría Presidencial de la Mujer, SEPREM) fulfils its mandate. The document provides lessons and recommendations for international actors and national level policy makers on how to contribute to strengthening women's citizenship in Guatemala through their state building strategies.

This study forms part of a wider FRIDE research project on 'Strengthening Women's Citizenship in the Context of State Building',<sup>1</sup> which aims to provide information about and promote state building processes in fragile states which result in increased citizenship for women. The case studies include Burundi, Colombia, Guatemala, Kosovo and Sierra Leone.

In many fragile contexts, women's relationship to the state is fundamentally different to that of men. Often, their relationship is more limited; it only exists at local level, or it is mediated by the family, the community, or religious or customary institutions. Women frequently face a greater discrepancy between citizenship at the formal and substantive levels, as well as greater economic, social and cultural barriers which prevent them from accessing their rights and participating in decision making.

The widespread violence which prevails in many fragile states, combined with the lack of state capacity or will to provide security for women, can result in higher levels of gender violence and insecurity. Similarly, in these countries, women's main concerns on domestic and personal issues (such as family law, inheritances or access to land) are delegated to discriminatory traditional institutions or non-state actors. All of these factors erect specific barriers that challenge women seeking



<sup>1</sup> See <http://www.fride.org/proyecto/17/la-construccion-del-estado-y-la-ciudadania-de-las-mujeres>.

to claim their rights, participate in governance and call for state accountability – in other words, to act as full citizens.

The intense state building activities carried out in fragile contexts and post conflict situations frequently include drawing up a Constitution; democratisation or electoral reform; the establishment or reform of executive institutions; reform of the government and civil service and of financial systems; the establishment of oversight mechanisms; legal reform; security sector reform; decentralisation of governance; and support to civil society to give its members a voice and the capacity to demand state accountability. These processes have the potential to strengthen women's rights and participation in government significantly. Nonetheless, for this to happen, women's different experiences in terms of citizenship and their relations with the state must be taken into account.<sup>2</sup>

On the basis of the background analysis conducted by FRIDE and the Association for Research and Social Studies (Asociación de Investigación y Estudios Sociales, ASIES) from May to October 2009,<sup>3</sup> a series of consulting events were held, starting with a workshop with gender experts to determine the research processes and areas, as well as the spheres and criteria for undertaking the project.

In accordance with the methodology<sup>4</sup> drawn up by FRIDE, this study includes conversations, surveys, and personal and focus group interviews. At national level, the participants include civil servants directly responsible for the offices of the Judicial Body (Organismo Judicial) and SEPREM, the secretary generals of political parties, and their secretaries or delegates for women. At regional and local level interviews were carried out with representatives from SEPREM's departmental authorities; from the municipal offices for women; from the Women's Councils, belonging to the System of Development Councils (Sistema de Consejos de Desarrollo) and the Judicial Body in the civil sphere; and women who participate in partisan politics and local committees. The departments were selected non-randomly in order to favour the maximum number of responses. Guatemala, Huehuetenango, Suchitepéquez and Zacapa were chosen for issues concerning political parties and SEPREM. Relevant authorities and courts in Alta Verapaz, Quiché, Totonicapán, San Marcos, Izabal, Sololá and Quetzaltenango were also consulted on legal issues. Likewise, interviews were conducted with actors in international cooperation who stand out for their technical and financial commitment to strengthening women's citizenship in Guatemala.

This report is divided into three parts. The first section deals generally with the state building process in Guatemala; the specific processes on which this research is based; and the challenges that Guatemalan women face in order to experience increased citizenship. The second section presents and analyses the research results. It is important to note that 90 per cent of those interviewed were women, and the majority of the men interviewed are political party leaders. The conclusions summarise the most significant results and offer concrete recommendations for international actors and national level policy makers on how to strengthen women's citizenship in Guatemala through their state building strategies.

## Section I: General information

### 1. The context of state building

Guatemala is characterised by its rigid, fragile and unstable political system in which women, who account for more than 51 per cent of the population and are strategic protagonists of the country's development, have been marginalised in the state building process.

From its independence to date, Guatemala has formally (though relatively) assimilated the elements of a liberal democracy. However, its institutional weakness is marked, especially that of its political parties, whose means of operation has only served to legitimise an authoritarian, exclusionary system.

<sup>2</sup> Clare Castillejo, 'Inclusive Citizenship Research Project: Methodology', FRIDE Working Paper 73, January 2009. Available at <http://www.fride.org/publication/557/inclusive-citizenship-research-project-methodology>.

<sup>3</sup> Magali Quintana Saravia, Ana Lucía Blas and Marco Antonio Barahona, 'Desafíos a la construcción del Estado y la ciudadanía de las mujeres en Guatemala', FRIDE Backgrounder, August 2009.

<sup>4</sup> Clare Castillejo, op cit.

In the 1980s, the introduction of a National Constituent Assembly offered an opportunity to combat exclusion. However, the 1965 Political Constitution of the Republic, the election of six civil governments, constitutional limits to the exercise of military power, and the end of more than 35 years of internal conflict have still not served to generate effective conditions for inclusion.

The 1996 Peace Accords, which established the path for the re-founding of the state, acknowledge that institutional renewal must be based on participatory socio-economic development (Agreement on a Firm and Lasting Peace) and that the system of Development Councils has a fundamental role in ensuring citizenship participation (Agreement on Socio-Economic Aspects and the Agrarian Situation).

In 2002, a new law led to the creation of Community Development Councils (Consejos Comunitarios de Desarrollo, COCODEs) and Municipal Development Councils (Consejos Municipales de Desarrollo, COMUDEs), as well as a greater level of participation and activity among the Departmental Development Councils (Consejos Departamentales de Desarrollo, CODEDEs).

However, in practice these Councils still do not fulfil their purpose. Their ability to operate is hindered by issues including disputes over the inclusion of relevant policies, such as the Rural Development Law; lack of knowledge about the nature and roles of the system; the formulation of the investment budget and control over its implementation;<sup>5</sup> the lack of participation of organised civil society in generating public policy; and the absence of forums for consultation and effective decision making.

The problem of the situation of women is pointed out in the Agreement on the Identity and Rights of Indigenous Peoples (1995), which recognises the need to overcome the double discrimination that indigenous women suffer (as both women and indigenous people); and the Agreement on Socio-Economic Aspects and the Agrarian Situation, which devotes a section to women's participation in economic and social development, with limited progress. Mechanisms have been established for relations and interaction with the state, such as SEPREM and the Office for the Defence of Indigenous Women (Defensoría de la Mujer Indígena, DEMI). The judicial sphere includes the Law for the Dignification and Integral Promotion of Women and its regulations; the Policy for the Promotion and Development of Guatemalan Women; and the Equal Opportunities Plan.<sup>6</sup>

However, these advances often remain at a declaratory stage, and do not end up affecting real life in Guatemala. For example, when the Commission for Electoral Reform (Comisión de Reforma Electoral, CRE) was created in 1997–8, women's organisations unsuccessfully demanded that their active participation in the leadership of political organisations and in candidatures for publicly-voted posts be recognised and regulated. In this context, the issue of representative quotas is still not considered important.

Minimal progress has been made in fulfilling the Peace Accords with regard to human rights and improving the socio-economic situation. The lack of political will shown by successive governments and the ruling elites is one of the main obstacles. Further problems include the globalisation of organised and common crime, drug activity, corruption, kidnapping and other crimes; and the organised gangs which operate with complete impunity and have assumed effective control, which further weaken the state.<sup>7</sup>

At the conference on 'The Guatemala Peace Accords Ten Years Later: An Analysis and the Outlook for International Cooperation', held at the European Parliament in May 2009,<sup>8</sup> the Guatemalan state's pending task was summarised in terms of the need to place the Peace Accords at the centre of the political agenda and to use them as a guiding framework for the state's political activities. This should include a fiscal reform which gives the state the necessary resources to fulfil the Accords.

<sup>5</sup> Magali Quintana Saravia, Ana Lucía Blas and Marco Antonio Barahona, op.cit. pp. 3,5 and 6.

<sup>6</sup> For more information on these advances, see Magali Quintana Saravia, Ana Lucía Blas and Marco Antonio Barahona, op.cit. p.18.

<sup>7</sup> Conclusions from the international conference 'The Guatemala Peace Accords Ten Years Later: An Analysis and the Outlook for International Cooperation', available in Spanish at <http://www.gruposur.eu.org/A-diez-anos-de-los-acuerdos-de-paz>.

<sup>8</sup> more This symposium was attended by the Guatemalan government; Guatemalan and European governmental and non governmental organisations; the Guatemalan Attorney General's Office for Human Rights (Procuraduría de Derechos Humanos); and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

In September 2007, Guatemala held its sixth general elections since the beginning of the country's democratic opening. 14 parties presented candidates for the Presidency of the Republic. Álvaro Colom, supported by the National Unity of Hope party (Unidad Nacional de la Esperanza, UNE), won the elections, and took up the presidency on 14 January 2008.

The UNE's Government Plan outlined state strengthening as the guiding framework for the development process. In this sense, the government recognised that implementing public policies requires better inter-institutional coordination; promoting the participation of all territorial and civil society actors as a whole; and providing the necessary resources through the proper administration of tax income. Furthermore, the strategy must create links with the community; focus on benefits; allow for decentralised decision making; include appropriate, good quality management indicators to evaluate implementation results; and accept heterogeneity.<sup>9</sup>

However, in practice, the majority of these precepts have remained at the conceptual level, while weakness, inefficiency and ineffectiveness characterise the management of the objectives outlined. After 22 months, these objectives have not been fulfilled, while others do not even form part of the government's discourse. The current government seems to be 'improvising', or 'reacting' to the circumstances, rather than following clear lines of action.

In December 2009, after a ten-month consultation process, the Executive finally approved the Action Plan of SEPREM's National Policy for the Promotion and Integral Development of Women 2008–2023. Another sign of the government's inaction is the insufficient budget assigned to SEPREM, and the cuts which exceeded 20 per cent in 2009. Moreover, the general budget at national level, and that assigned to the municipalities, still do not reflect the gender perspective required by the mainstreaming objective expressed in the Government Plan.

Although the presidential programmes for rural development (PRORURAL) and social cohesion benefit a large number of women, the government's selection criteria are political and are not in harmony with the National Policy for the Promotion and Integral Development of Women 2008-2023.<sup>10</sup> One of the most frequent criticisms is the lack of transparency of social cohesion programmes, particularly *Mi Familia Progres*a ('My Family is Making Progress'), since the civil servants in charge are reluctant to hand over lists detailing information about the beneficiaries of the conditional cash transfers.

## 2. Specific state building processes

Many different reforms are made during state building processes which have an impact on women's citizenship. In Guatemala, since the approval of the 1945 Constitution, the subsequent 1965 and 1986 Constitutions and the 1996 Peace Accords, women have achieved changes ranging from the right to vote to the establishment of laws, regulations and authorities in recognition of their rights and the promotion and development of equity. This has been a slow, fluctuating and inefficient process, since the measures pay more attention to the formality of the law and do not tackle the problem of the situation of women, which requires the construction of an inclusive state.

Therefore, at the workshop held to define the approach to the subject matter of this research,<sup>11</sup> the following areas were chosen:

- Civil law, as the closest to women's needs, since it encompasses the rights relative to people as citizens (identification), the family (affiliation, marital status and inheritance, amongst others) and property (record of properties and societies);
- Political parties, as the mediators between the state and civil society, and within society itself;
- SEPREM, as the state body responsible for advancing women.

<sup>9</sup> UNE, El Plan de la Esperanza (Guatemala: UNE, 2007) p.1.

<sup>10</sup> Government of the Republic of Guatemala, Política Nacional de Promoción y Desarrollo Integral de las Mujeres 2008–2023 (Guatemala: SEPREM, 2007), p.24.

<sup>11</sup> See the list of women actors interviewed

The selection was based on the following criteria:

Firstly, although Guatemala has one of the highest rates of violence against women in the world, with approximately 4000 thousand crimes reported between 2000 and 2009,<sup>12</sup> the area of women's access to civil law was chosen since this protects people's individual rights, and women's limited access to it has traditionally been one of the major obstacles to their ability to exercise citizenship. The failure to register women prevents them from accessing the documentation needed for legal identification, which leads to their exclusion when they seek to access the law and other citizen services.

Secondly, political parties were considered from the point of view of the incorporation of women into partisan structures. The 11 parties which are currently represented in the Congress of the Republic have been included,<sup>13</sup> since it is the members of Congress who bring about participatory politics by intervening in the presentation and approval of state laws and regulations; analysing and approving the national budget; exercising control over the performance of the civil service; and monitoring the actions of the Executive by putting questions to it.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, women need to participate in a broad, active and deliberative way within the decision making ranks of parties in order to give rise to affirmative actions and egalitarian rules that result in a greater number of women being elected to decision-making posts and the appointment of women to high-ranking posts.

Thirdly, the creation of SEPREM on 17 May 2000 is the product of more than a 15-year fight by women's organisations, which aimed to establish a high-ranking government body that would assess and coordinate public policies and promote women's rights and their comprehensive development.

The National Policy for the Promotion and Integral Development of Women and its Operative Plan, known as the Equal Opportunities Plan (Plan de Equidad de Oportunidades, PEO), are the tools which define the vision, mission, strategies and objectives which identify the institutions responsible and the specific actions that they must develop within set time frames.

The effective performance of SEPREM is the cornerstone of advances in integral measures that promote a gender-based approach, and their mainstreaming within the state. According to gender expert Violeta Alfaro de Carpio, 'The institutionality of SEPREM, the National Policy for the Promotion and Integral Development of Women and the Operative Plan are the most important, since they provide a means to introduce women's demands and strengthen mechanisms to advance women within the state'.<sup>15</sup>

### 3. Challenges for women's citizenship

The standard definition of citizenship is the relationship between the individual and the state in which they live. However, this definition has recently been expanded to understand citizenship as the individual's relationship to both the state and society, reflecting the fact that people experience citizenship through the lens of their group membership and identity. Citizenship is both a status and a practice – people have citizenship rights and obligations but also act as citizens.<sup>16</sup>

For the purposes of this research, the central components of citizenship are defined as follows:

- Possessing rights, which includes formally having rights – civil and political, and economic, social and cultural – and being able to exercise them in a substantive way.

<sup>12</sup> Gabriela Barcaglioni, 'Una ley modelo para la región', available at <http://www.artemisnoticias.com.ar/site/notas.asp?id=29&idnota=6415>.

<sup>13</sup> The Guatemalan party system comprises 20 political parties, of which 11 are represented in the Congress of the Republic following the November 2007 elections: Encounter for Guatemala (Encuentro por Guatemala, EG); the Union of the National Centre (Unión del Centro Nacional, UCN); Centre for Social Action (Centro de Acción Social, CASA); the Unionist Party (Partido Unionista, PU); National Unity of Hope (Unidad Nacional de la Esperanza, UNE); the Grand National Alliance (Gran Alianza Nacional, GANA); the Patriotic Party (Partido Patriota, PP); the Democratic Union (Unión Democrática, UD); the National Advancement Party (Partido de Avanzada Nacional, PAN); the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unit (Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca, URNG); and the Guatemalan Republican Front (Frente Republicano Guatemalteco, FRG).

<sup>14</sup> Government of the Republic of Guatemala, *La Constitución Política de Guatemala y su interpretación por la Corte de Constitucionalidad* (Guatemala: Constitutional Court, 2008), p.170.

<sup>15</sup> All quotations from interviews included in this report are translated from the original Spanish.

<sup>16</sup> Clare Castillejo, op. cit

•Participating in politics, which includes the necessary competence to participate in formal and informal political processes.<sup>17</sup>

Greater participation in politics allows women to demand greater rights, and achieving these gives them grounds for greater participation in political processes and to make their voice heard.

In Guatemala women have been recognised as citizens since the 1985 Constitution. However, their situation is marked by poverty, illiteracy, monolingualism in Mayan languages, lack of access to education, sexism, exclusion and inequality; these factors prevent the vast majority of Guatemalan women from exercising their right to citizenship. Most of the female population continues to suffer significant injustices in comparison with men, particularly indigenous women and those who live in rural areas.<sup>18</sup>

The Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM), included in the 2006 Human Development Report, shows that the level of advancement in women's standing in society is 44.1 per cent of that of men, which situates Guatemala between Samoa (in 89th position out of 109 countries, with 43.1 per cent) and Qatar (in 88th position, with 44.5 per cent).<sup>19</sup>

Guatemala is a multiethnic, multicultural and multilingual society, made up of 23 ethno-linguistic groups which are largely concentrated in rural areas. Indigenous women usually communicate in their native language; only in the past 15 years have some started to learn Spanish. This has been a barrier to obtaining state services provided in Spanish, especially access to justice.

Therefore, eliminating illiteracy has become a constant aim for governments and an objective to be fulfilled within the Millennium Development Goals, with the support of international cooperation. According to the National Literacy Training Committee (Consejo Nacional de Alfabetización, CONALFA), in 2006 the overall level of illiteracy in Guatemala had decreased from 31.67 per cent in 2000 to 23.9 per cent, showing a clear improvement among rural indigenous women.<sup>20</sup> The creation of the Directorate General of Bilingual and Intercultural Education (Dirección General de Educación Bilingüe Intercultural, DIGEBI) in 1995 is considered an advance, insofar as it positively recognises and values the country's cultural diversity.

Economic equity is a pending challenge. According to the 2006 National Survey of Living Conditions (Encuesta de Condiciones de Vida, ENCOVI), women accounted for 53.4 per cent of the population working for less than the minimum wage.<sup>21</sup> In spite of the fact that Guatemalan women's economic and labour force participation has increased in recent years, there is still a significant gap between their participation and men's (35 and 67 per cent respectively). Women's average salary is lower than men's, even when they have attained the same level of education and post.<sup>22</sup> According to the Global Human Development Report 2006, women's average income is a third of men's.<sup>23</sup> Wage discrimination is accentuated by the extremely intensive workday that most women of low and middle economic levels carry out, since they also take charge of domestic tasks. Modifications to the Labour Code regarding this topic have been postponed on the Congress' agenda.

<sup>17</sup> Clare Castillejo, op.cit

<sup>18</sup> Las Women account for 51.1 per cent of the total population of 12.9 million inhabitants; the rural population amounts to 51.9 per cent of the total population, of which 52 per cent are women. According to 2006 figures from the Guatemalan National Statistics Institute (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, INE), 51 per cent of Guatemalans live in poverty and 15.2 per cent suffer extreme poverty, with women among the most affected. In rural areas, extreme poverty reaches 32 per cent. This scourge affects the indigenous population above all, with 29 per cent affected, in comparison with 15 per cent among the non-indigenous population; female-headed households are the most affected (36.8 per cent). Studies by the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) report that in 2008 the poverty level increased by three points, while extreme poverty increased by five. The wealthiest 20 per cent of the population receives 64.1 per cent of total income, while the poorest 10 per cent receives 1.7 per cent of it. 15 per cent survives on less than one dollar per day, and 37 per cent on two. The minimum agricultural and non-agricultural wage is 1,810 quetzals (Q), or USD 226. In 2004, indigenous women's average monthly income in the informal economy in urban areas was around Q1,800 (approximately USD 225), compared with Q437 (approximately USD 54) in the most remote departments, such as el Quiché.

<sup>19</sup> The GEM, created by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), is a social indicator that measures the level of opportunities open to women; in so doing, it also measures inequalities in three dimensions of women's participation.

<sup>20</sup> *La tasa global de analfabetismo* (Guatemala: CONALFA, 2006).

<sup>21</sup> *Encuesta de condiciones de vida. Población económicamente inactiva* (Guatemala: INE, 2006).

<sup>22</sup> Karin Slowing Umaña and Gustavo Arriola Quan, 'La dimensión económica de las exclusiones de género a finales del siglo XX', Cuaderno de desarrollo humano 2001/7 (Guatemala: United Nations System in Guatemala, 2001).

<sup>23</sup> USD 2,130 (PPP) for women and 6,604 for men.

Furthermore, the increasing number of women affiliated to political parties face the challenge of sexism. In the 2007 general elections, only 19 women were elected as congressional deputies out of a total of 158, and 6 women were selected as mayors out of 333 posts for councillors. The same process of exclusion is seen in the proportion of women in high-ranking posts within the Executive. In the president's cabinet, no women currently hold any of the 13 ministerial posts in the Executive.<sup>24</sup> In 2009, there were six women in 39 vice ministries; women held six out of 14 presidential secretary posts, including SEPREM;<sup>25</sup> and they held eight out of 21 posts as sub secretaries.

The Guatemalan Forum for Women in Political Parties and the Commission on the Full Citizenship of Women of the Permanent Forum of Political Parties are authorities which aim to strengthen women's leadership and join forces to promote an agenda to advance women in politics, independent of partisan ideologies. They have succeeded in influencing partisan proceedings in order to gain support for the approval of laws such as the Law Against Femicide and Other Forms of Violence Against Women in 2008 and, more recently, the Law Against Sexual Violence, Exploitation and Human Trafficking in 2009. Alliances have been established with the Women's Commission (Comisión de la Mujer) of the Congress of the Republic in order to continue supporting an agenda in favour of eight important laws, including the Parity Law.<sup>26</sup>

Both the National Policy for the Promotion and Integral Development of Women 2008–2023 and the PEO will need to respond to women's citizenship demands technically. Therefore, the implementation of the Policy (and the strengthening of SEPREM) presents both a challenge and an opportunity for the process of consolidating and developing Guatemalan women's citizenship.<sup>27</sup>

## Section II: The results

### 4. Women's access to civil justice

'Access to justice' is understood as the right of all persons to turn to effective procedures to obtain a fair resolution to their claims, within a reasonable timeframe, in an impartial way and in accordance with the criteria established in the law.<sup>28</sup> This right is recognised in the Political Constitution of the Republic of Guatemala, which also establishes that the country's Judicial Body is in charge of administering justice.

Municipal affairs courts, which form part of the districts (comunas), also offer their services in all the towns and cities of the Republic.

In some Mayan communities justice is applied according to the indigenous peoples' own justice system. The competent authorities are the indigenous mayors (alcaldes indígenas) and the assistant mayors (alcaldes auxiliares), the latter of which are also called communitarian mayors (alcaldes comunitarios) in the Municipal Code. The system is efficient, immediate and free. Therefore, some women in indigenous rural areas turn to these mayoral offices to resolve their problems.

In addition, in some municipalities, non-governmental organisations called defensorías<sup>29</sup> (Defence organisations or Ombudsman offices) are in operation, which indigenous women turn to in order to resolve family problems. These organisations also offer legal assistance with judicial proceedings before the system of official justice.

<sup>24</sup> Ana María Molina, Minister of Education, resigned in September 2009.

<sup>25</sup> Informe de Gobierno, 2008.

<sup>26</sup> Interviews with Patricia Camposeco, president of the Commission on the Full Citizenship of Women of the Permanent Forum of Political Parties, and Margarita Urrutia, former president of the Guatemalan Forum for Women in Political Parties, Guatemala, October 2009.

<sup>27</sup> Magali Quintana Saravia, Ana Lucía Blas and Marco Antonio Barahona, op. cit. p.17.

<sup>28</sup> Ana ASIES and OHCHR Guatemala, Acceso de los pueblos indígenas desde el enfoque de derechos humanos: perspectivas en el derecho indígena y en el sistema de justicia oficial (Guatemala: ASIES and OHCHR Guatemala, 2008), p.15.

<sup>29</sup> These authorities providing support include the Office for the Defence of Women (Defensoría de la Mujer) within the Office of the Human Rights Ombudsman (Procuraduría de Derechos Humanos); the Wajxaqib Noj Indigenous People's Defence Organisation (Defensoría Indígena Wajxaqib Noj); and the Guatemalan Women's Group (Grupo Guatemalteco de Mujeres, GGM), among others.

The Office for the Defence of Indigenous Women, a governmental institution, also offers free legal assistance to the women in its 22 departmental and 34 municipal offices.<sup>30</sup> Dominga Vázquez Julajuj, a DEMI regional delegate, explains that ‘the most frequent cases concern maintenance payments for wives and children; to date, DEMI has dealt with 154 such cases’.

However, this support is incomplete since it covers the initial phase of giving guidance and facilitating the search for documents to back up cases, but rarely the assistance needed during the trial itself.

The ‘Bufetes Populares’ (legal institutions attached to Universities)<sup>31</sup> are another source of free legal advice; these are in high demand and are therefore insufficient, in part due to the delay in assigning lawyers, which can take up to a month.

The branch of Guatemala’s legal system concerning ordinary civil law regulates relations between individuals within the spheres of the family, goods and obligations, where women can be rights holders. But this process is discriminatory.

However, as a result of the actions led by women,<sup>32</sup> important changes have been made to legislation, including reforms to the marriage regulations in the Civil Code relative to marital representation; the administration of marital patrimony; the obligation that both spouses have to look after their children while they are minors; as well as the abolition of the ban on women undertaking activities outside the home if their husbands are opposed to it.

Furthermore, women’s right to justice has not been a constant reality given the obstacles to it, which include the high concentration of legal and support services in the Guatemalan capital and the department capitals, to the detriment of the rural populations.

The Spanish language constitutes the biggest barrier for monolingual indigenous women, the Garinagu and the Xincas. The Constitution establishes Spanish as the official language in article 143, and laws and legal documents are written in this language.

The special rapporteur on Women’s Rights of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), who visited Guatemala from 12–18 September, outlined the following in the working report presented to the Commission: ‘Access to justice continues to be a significant problem for indigenous women. Even if the state has made some progress in this regard, such as, for example, taking on interpreters or bilingual civil servants – judges and their assistants – in some courts in the Republic situated in areas where the majority of the population is indigenous, these efforts are still clearly insufficient. In many regions indigenous women are not able to be understood in their own language, whether they face the justice system as victims, or the accused of an alleged crime’.<sup>33</sup>

According to Rosalina Tuyuc, ‘The main problem is that the legal system is monolingual, so those who administer justice do not understand when women outline their situation. Many indigenous women are sentenced without them knowing the reason why. Another difficulty is the trial itself, which is very long and very expensive. A woman who is dependent on the little that she has in her home is not going to be able to pay for it. There is a lack of knowledge among the population in general, but especially among women about the steps that must be followed at a trial. There are many violations of due process, as well as “string-pulling” among the well connected in the judicial sphere, which directly affects women’.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Interview with Ana Gladis Ollas, women’s ombudsman (Defensora de la Mujer) at the Procuraduría de Derechos Humanos, Guatemala, September 2009.

<sup>31</sup> Estas ‘bufetes populares’ are university authorities where Law students gain their obligatory professional experience under supervision, prior to obtaining their professional qualification; there is one at each of the five Guatemalan Universities that offer degrees in Law.

<sup>32</sup> Judicial actions taken by María Eugenia Morales de Sierra, deputy human rights ombudswoman (procuradora adjunta de Derechos Humanos), and Hilda Morales Trujillo 2009.

<sup>33</sup> Los Relatoria Especial de la Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos sobre los Derechos de la Mujer. Informe de visita a Guatemala, septiembre de 2004.

<sup>34</sup> Former congressional deputy and director of the National Coordinator of Widows of Guatemala (Coordinadora Nacional de Viudas de Guatemala, CONAVIGUA), which was founded during the internal armed conflict and was comprised of indigenous women.

Discrimination occurs in the appointments to posts in the Supreme Court of Justice, where the magistracies and courts are largely filled by men. In history, only one woman has been President of the Supreme Court of Justice.

Recently, the Judicial Body's Unit for Women and Gender Analysis (Unidad de la Mujer y Análisis de Género), created in 2006, was revitalised; its activity is still limited by the lack of budgetary support. In conjunction with the School of Judicial Studies (Escuela de Estudios Judiciales), courses have been introduced on gender and differential attention to women, above all in cases of aggression and femicide.

Few judges have been made aware of gender issues. Alda Facio points out that 'if man is perceived as the human model, institutions such as the law are created socially to respond to the needs and interests of men. Enacting laws directed at women is not the same as enacting laws with a gender perspective. The latter implies taking into account power relations between the sexes, which co-determine other social, ethnic, economic and cultural relations, among others'.

Turning to Justice of the Peace courts (juzgados de paz) requires hiring the services of lawyers, so only the women with sufficient economic resources have the opportunity to access justice, while those with scarce economic resources, who live in rural areas and are indigenous, do not.

All of the above serves to discourage women from going to the authorities. The female leaders of the Huehuetenango focus group point out that women are disheartened by the lack of access to and attention from the official justice system, which affects their self-esteem. They say that 'whatever is done, the situation is not going to change; justice doesn't exist, it is for decoration, and turning to the system is a waste of time'.

Another effect of the lack of attention is secondary victimisation, even in the family sphere, whereby women become the target of adverse comments in society and are reproached for any actions taken. They then feel guilty for having broken the silence, demanded their rights and denounced injustices. In some cases their families are also affected by these actions.

Similarly, those who wish to turn to the official justice system must have their identity documents. For various reasons some women do not, for example if they were not registered at birth. Moreover, the poor state of government facilities, lost or damaged books, and the incorrect allocation of forenames and surnames when birth certificates are registered also cause numerous difficulties, ranging from obstacles to enrolling girls in schools, to the exercise of universal suffrage.<sup>35</sup>

Ana Silvia Monzón, coordinator of the initiative Más mujeres, mejor política ('More women, better politics'), summarises the problem as follows: 'Access to justice is a historic deficit. Institutions have not fulfilled the role that is required; this is related to the hierarchical power structure, which is heavily concentrated in a few hands. Justice has the face of a wealthy man who handles resources. So many of us do not believe in justice; there is no certainty that if something happens to us, it will be reported and a result reached. Impunity is widely tolerated. Seeking justice implies self-confidence, knowledge, time and money. The institutions do not work and women end up despairing. Added to this is the problem of the extent of organised crime and corruption, which means there is less justice.'

## 5. Women's political participation

Women's participation in political parties started with the 1944 revolution; the right to elect and to be elected was granted to literate women in the 1945 Constitution, and universally to all women 20 years later. However, in spite of women's increased political participation, the parties do not currently reflect a proactive attitude towards the inclusion of women in their philosophical outlook, nor in their partisan structure. Few women hold executive posts in partisan authorities, and fewer still in the three state powers. Therefore, the Guatemalan government's legislation, programmes and budgets scarcely reflect women's needs and interests.

<sup>35</sup>This information was obtained through interviews with judges, given the lack of records in the Judicial Body.

In analysing the political parties' ideological framework, this study concludes that the majority lack ideological distance and are at the centre of the political spectrum, apart from URNG, which is openly socialist.<sup>36</sup> During the interviews conducted for this report, all the political parties declared themselves to be democratic, nationalist, based on respect for human rights, and oriented towards guaranteeing the common good and security. With regard to gender equity, only URNG includes it in its principles. Within their proposals, PP refers to the subject in terms of 'women's participation'; URNG reiterates it as 'gender equity and respect for the dignity of women'; EG mentions 'gender equity and multiculturalism within education policy'; and UNE mentions 'gender theory as a horizontal axis of government'.<sup>37</sup>

In the interviews conducted with political party secretaries, the responses to the question of whether women's participation is promoted in their parties were as follows: according to PAN, 'women must earn their place as all men do', but they are limited because 'they do not have time'; for CASA, 'women do not participate because they are not used to dedicating 24 hours to partisan work, which is how it has to be'; GANA suggests that 'women are very loyal', 'spaces are available in political parties, it's the women who don't approach', inclusion is a reality and 'everyone is called upon and invited to work for the political party and create a more inclusive country with their presence'; UD declares that in the parties 'women open up spaces just as men do, with their work'; for PU, 'women's votes are more reliable, they say who they are going to vote for and then they do so'; and FRG considers that 'it is not necessary to mark women's demands as a separate issue, they are included within the same format which resolves all of the country's issues'.

Women in leading posts in political parties believe that the philosophical basis of parties does not promote women's integration. According to Leticia Jerez, 'in some parties women's participation only exists in writing, it is not fulfilled; the mention is superficial and deceptive since the ideology is not transmitted to the internal structure of the parties in practice; instead, it seems to be an offering so that women become affiliated and contribute their work to suit the purposes of the party leaders'. According to Doris Morales, women are more prepared to participate, above all in parties which have ideologies, principles and values with which they identify 'by their own conviction and choice about what women believe and want'.<sup>38</sup>

Women leaders of parties from Chiantla and Huehuetenango expressed their view that parties are not concerned with transmitting their ideology to women. 'There is no training about the party itself.' This problem is illustrated in Nora Alvarado's comment that on many occasions women vote for the candidate and not for the party because 'they do not know the partisan principles and therefore they do not identify with a party, or their desires and needs are not reflected in the ideology', hence 'they vote for the person that have seen during the campaign'.

The women who head local organisations point out that party ideologies 'do not reflect or make visible' women's needs and demands. Karina Alvarado reiterates that 'the majority [of the parties] do not mention anything about women, nor do they promote within their proposals inclusive actions or projects that reflect women's needs'.

Furthermore, Guatemalan politics faces the challenge of a high level of volatility and the presence of 'flash' parties, which are named as such on account of their timely appearance in many cases, and of the frequent appearance of parties which result from the merging or division of others, as well as the rapid disappearance of some parties.<sup>39</sup> Of the 11 parties considered in this study, seven have been formed in the last six years, including those which occupied the top four positions in the 2007 elections.<sup>40</sup>

In Guatemala, congressional deputies are characterised by their tendency to change allegiances. According to the leaders of focus groups, 'parties are formed by men for themselves, and when the parties do not correspond to their personal interests, they have a wash, put on a new shirt and appear in a new party'.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>36</sup> See note 13 for a list of the 11 parties currently represented in the Guatemalan Congress.

<sup>37</sup> ASIES, *Monografía de Partidos Políticos 2004–2008* (Guatemala: ASIES, September 2008).

<sup>38</sup> Interview with political leaders. Guatemala, October 2009.

<sup>39</sup> Álvaro Artiga-González, *La política y los sistemas de partidos políticos en Centroamérica*, El Salvador: FUNDAUNGO, 2000, pp.15–17

<sup>40</sup> ASIES, *Momento* 23/6, 2008

<sup>41</sup> Focus group, Mazatenango community leader, September 2009.

'They visit us to sing our praises and delight us, and when they get into power [...] they act as if they don't remember you if they've seen you.'<sup>42</sup> 'They come with the tale that unity is the most important, but they are the first to divide families and towns'.<sup>43</sup>

This all contributes to the dispersion of votes, the reduction in the quantity and quality of representation, as well as the low level of citizen identification with parties.<sup>44</sup> In this regard, the majority of women in the three focus groups, when asked about the parties that they know, listed the parties that have been in power in the last two governments (Christian Democracy, which lasted for 53 years until July 2008, and FRG). Furthermore, they gave the names of presidents rather than their parties. 'They only remember a few since there are many parties and they change each election.' They also mentioned those associated with actions aimed at the rural population and those deputies and/or mayors who were elected by their town. Only five per cent responded that they remember the names of the parties that took women into account and fulfilled their promises. When the same question was posed to the women leaders of political parties, only four of the 11 interviewed could name precisely all the parties present in the Congress of the Republic.

In terms of party affiliation by gender, of the 11 parties considered in this study, women account for almost 50 per cent of EG's members, while FRG is the party with the largest proportion of men, accounting for 71 per cent of the members.

Regarding the inclusion of women's right to participation, and as a reflection of reality in Guatemala, the 11 parties considered each have some kind of authority in charge of women's issues. But the average proportion of women's representation in the National Executive Committees (NECs) is less than 20 per cent in relation to the number of party members. The proportions are better in FRG and URNG. PU presents the biggest contrast, since 42 per cent of its members are women, but women only account for 8.5 per cent of its NEC.<sup>45</sup>

Of the minority parties, CASA only has four women in its NEC, and these hold posts as substitute or less important members. In contrast, 50 per cent of EG's National Executive Committee are women, which allows for equal participation within the party. This is reflected in that fact that Nobel prize-winner Rigoberta Menchú stood as the party's presidential candidate in the last elections.

Of the majority parties, 25 per cent of UNE's NEC is made up of women, while PP's only includes five women. EG and PP have women as general secretaries. Regrettably, fewer than half of these women leaders take a gender approach, which does not contribute to advancing other women within party ranks.

Of the 11 parties interviewed, UNRG is the only one which promotes quota methods. The party's regulations establish that 30 per cent of its NEC must be made up of women and their appointment to decision-making posts is promoted. In the 2007 general elections, they nominated Walda Barrios Klée as their candidate for the vice presidency.

According to the women leaders of political parties, the wrongful representation of women in parties is often due to sexism. Doris Morales, a CASA representative, points out that there are more nominations for men; only one in ten nominations is for a woman. Some attribute the exclusion of women to members' personal interests. 'We have to earn the posts and fight to show the leaders our qualities, which none of the men have to do'.<sup>46</sup>

Normally women are relegated to low profile posts while men enjoy better positions within the party. According to Karina Alvarado, 'men always monopolise the best and do not allow women to reach the top positions on the lists'. The participants in the Suchitupéquez focus group maintain that men doubt women's capabilities and therefore exclude them: 'they think that we are not capable because we are women'. However, they

<sup>42</sup> Focus group, Huehuetenango community leader, August 2009.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> ASIES, *Reformas a la Ley Electoral y Desarrollo Institucional de los Partidos Políticos en Guatemala*, ASIES. Octubre y noviembre 2008.

<sup>45</sup> ASIES, *Monografía de Partidos Políticos 2004–2008*.

<sup>46</sup> Conversation with women leaders of political parties in the department of Guatemala, October 2009.

highlighted that when there are women in the parties, the men feel threatened: 'they are afraid of women's capabilities, therefore they assign them posts with little power'.

In the 2007 elections, only 19 women were elected – affiliated to EG, PP, GANA, CASA and UNE – out of a total of 158 delegations, and only six women were elected as mayors out of 333 such posts. According to the Supreme Electoral Tribunal's statistics on the total list of candidates for posts by popular vote, 86.7 per cent of the positions were for men, and 13.3 per cent for women.

Studies situate the Guatemalan case within the electoral and party systems classed as 'reactive and exclusionary', which arise in some divided societies. As a result, the women excluded 'cannot find a satisfactory institutional means through which to channel their requests that would contribute to the system's legitimacy within these groups'.<sup>47</sup>

In this sense, the women who took part in this study assert that partisan organisations ignore women's needs and think they can buy women's votes with domestic goods, without understanding that what women want is 'real actions for the development of governments, training so that they can better exercise their rights, and productive projects aimed at the harmonious progress of families', which 'are and should be' the main motives of partisan organisations when they enter into power.<sup>48</sup>

Further obstacles to women mentioned by those interviewed include the lack of support in the domestic environment; limited time due to the overload of work and domestic responsibilities; low self-esteem; lack of formal education; lack of understanding about their rights and of political training; the limited number of organisations that support women's political participation; and limited economic resources of their own. They recognise that parties 'do not help us at all, since they are for men; they only use us for their propaganda and to gain more votes'.<sup>49</sup>

The lack of solidarity is also worth mentioning. According to Patricia Camposeco, a partisan leader, 'Perhaps as women we still do not support one another, since it is hard to accept women's leadership among us; our cultural handicap has been instilled in us, which makes us doubt our peers' capabilities'.

Faced with an exclusionary environment, in which women's demands do not receive fair treatment as women seek to increase their projection and participation, quota systems are advocated to redirect and compensate for the low level of women's representation.

With this aim, in 2004 the organisation Women's Civic and Political Convergence (Convergencia Cívica Política de Mujeres), the National Office for Women (Oficina Nacional de la Mujer) and other women's groups formed the Commission for Political Equity (Comisión por la Equidad Política). This pushed for a reform of the Political Parties' Electoral Law, proposing changeability and quotas.

In spite of obtaining the support of members of virtually all the parliamentary groups such as the New National Alliance (Alianza Nueva Nación, ANN), UNE, PAN and FRG, the initiative was not passed. In June 2009, a revised and updated version was presented by the organisation Women's Civic and Political Convergence and the Political Association of Mayan Women (Asociación Política de Mujeres Mayas, MOLOJ) to the Women's Commission of the Congress of the Republic; this initiative has still not been resolved.

SEPREM, during the current government mandate, has not directly monitored women's participation in political parties. Recently, SEPREM coordinated with the Technical Secretary of the Women's Commission of the Congress of the Republic which supports women legislators in order to analyse policies from a gender perspective, as well as to formulate a legislative agenda for women. This contains eight proposals, including most notably the Parity Law and the above-mentioned Quotas Law.

<sup>47</sup> Instituto Interuniversitario de Estudios de Iberoamérica y Portugal, III Perfil de Gobernabilidad de Guatemala (Salamanca: University of Salamanca, 2005), pp.55–6.

<sup>48</sup> Huehuetenango focus group, August 2009.

<sup>49</sup> Conclusion of the Mazatenango focus group, September 2009.

In the local sphere, SEPREM has provided women's organisations with technical support in Huehuetenango, Chimaltenango, Sololá, Quetzaltenango, Suchitepéquez, Chiquimula and Escuintla to assist their integration as representatives into the CODEDEs, and the promotion of the electoral process for the Women's Councils of the CODEDEs and COMUDEs

## 6. State commitment to coordination

In the national and international spheres, women's organisations have carried out a series of actions to tackle the subjects of women's development and gender discrimination. These efforts have been backed by international agreements and treaties, through which the Guatemalan state has undertaken specific commitments to give a response to the problem. SEPREM was created to this end, and its mandate includes assessing and coordinating the Executive's authorities in the sphere of public policy to promote the integral development of women and a democratic culture. Its effectiveness is crucial to ensure women's full incorporation into the country's development.

So that SEPREM's mandate could be fulfilled, the Guatemalan government approved the National Policy for the Promotion and Integral Development of Women and the Equal Opportunities Plan 2001–2006. At this end of this period, its performance was evaluated with the wide participation of representatives from civil society, political parties, networks, and rural, business and women's sectors of the linguistic communities in Guatemalan towns.

The recommendations arising from the evaluation and the new conditions generated by the implementation of the Policy provided a framework for a new participatory process. As a result, the Policy was updated, becoming the National Policy for the Promotion and Integral Development of Women 2008–2023. A decisive change has been the incorporation of an ethnic-cultural vision with specific cross-cutting actions. It is important to note the valuable contribution provided by DEMI, which strengthened the content of the evaluated policy, with specific proposals derived from the Articulated Agenda on Mayan, Garinagu and Xinka Women (Agenda Articulada de las Mujeres Mayas, Garifunas y Xinkas).

Implementing the National Policy for the Promotion and Integral Development of Women requires the implementation of the PEO. However, even though this is an immediate priority, the drafting of the PEO was still being finalised as of the end of August 2009, which has prevented inter-institutional coordination on the actions outlined in the National Policy. To date, only three of the ten global thematic areas (health, education and economy) and two of the four spheres of intervention (social development and economic development) have begun to be tackled, and even then only partially, through isolated actions.<sup>50</sup> According to Sonia Escobedo, SEPREM secretary, when the PEO comes into force (date unknown as of 30 October 2009), the Secretariat will prioritise the areas of equitable economic and productive development; socio-political participation; equality in the development of comprehensive healthcare; equality in education; and institutional mechanisms, taking into account cultural belonging in these areas. To maximise its coverage and impact, SEPREM will coordinate with DEMI. The area on eradicating violence against women, which has been delegated to the National Council for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Violence Against Women (Consejo Nacional para la Prevención de la Violencia Intrafamiliar y contra las Mujeres, CONAPREVI) also forms part of the priority agenda for work and coordination with DEMI.

The women who benefit from SEPREM's programmes resent the lack of continuity in the government's actions in defining its activities. Vicenta Castillo, leader of Huehuetenango, describes the situation as follows: 'Perhaps what SEPREM's facilitators have told us is true, that the Secretariat lacks a sufficient budget and is therefore limited in its work, but we believe that it should at least speak to all the state departments, to make them see that we women are not mere statues, that we are citizens with rights and that they ought to respect us, starting with the authorities'.

SEPREM's unit for Institutional Strengthening (Dirección de Fortalecimiento Institucional) coordinates its work technically with the government ministries and institutions. The established mechanism is the

<sup>50</sup> Interview with María Verónica Sajbin Velásquez, director of Strengthening at SEPREM, September 2009.

Consultative Council (Consejo Consultivo), but this has not been convened since November 2007. 'The Secretariat interacts directly and individually with the technical areas of the institutions responsible for the thematic areas on which it works'.<sup>51</sup> Coordination with the Secretariat of Programming and Planning for the Presidency (Secretaría de Programación y Planificación de la Presidencia, SEGEPLAN) is carried out by the management of both institutions.<sup>52</sup>

Ana María Ruiz, deputy director of International Cooperation at SEGEPLAN, affirms that the organisation's direct participation has had a decisive impact, speeding up the international community's provision of resources for SEPREM; this information was endorsed in an interview with Juana María Camposeco from Swedish cooperation.

Of the ongoing actions coordinated by the 2004–2008 administration that were successfully reintroduced, the following stand out: the design and implementation in conjunction with INE of a statistical disaggregation system that would guarantee the obtaining and provision of reliable data regarding the female population; the incorporation of the gender perspective into government budgets; and training for the Ministry of Economy's staff to enable them to implement this perspective in reality. In 2008 and 2009, SEPREM coordinated some actions with specific authorities in the Executive, such as the Special Programme for the Protection of Women Employed in Private Homes (Programa Especial de Protección a Empleada de Casa Particular, PRECAPI) with the Secretariat for Social Welfare run by the president's wife (Secretaría de Obras Sociales de la Esposa del Presidente, SOSEP) and the Guatemalan Institute for Social Security (Instituto Guatemalteco de Seguridad Social, IGSS); support for the Social Cohesion Programme, through the donation of bags of food, with the Secretariat for Food and Nutritional Security (Secretaría de Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional, SESAN); and access for women to a credit line, with the Ministry of Economy and micro, small and medium-sized businesses (MSMEs). However, no written record of inter-institutional coordination with these authorities was found.

In the political sphere, SEPREM supports women's participation in decision-making processes at local level through the presence of women in the Development Councils and in the presidency's programme *Gobernando con la Gente* ('Governing with the People'). They work with the Association of Women in the Municipal Government of Guatemala (Asociación de Mujeres en el Gobierno Municipal de Guatemala, ASMUGOM) and the National Association of Women Mayors, Trustees and Councillors (Asociación Nacional de Alcadesas, Síndicas y Concejalas, ANASIC), with whom they are embarking on steps to institutionalise the Municipal Office for Women (Oficina Municipal de la Mujer, OMM) through the reform of the Municipal Code. With the consensus of more than 100 mayors, progress has been made with the opening of 86 Municipal Offices for Women from January 2008 to March 2009, with just over 190 offices in operation.

The director of SEPREM's unit on the Promotion and Political Participation of Women has affirmed that she works directly on the formative aspect of the women who head the 100 Municipal Offices for Women and 16 Women's Commissions of the Development Councils at the departmental and municipal level, so that they learn about their rights, women's situation and condition, and political impact. However, leaders such as Damaris Lemus of the Municipal Office for Women in Santo Tomás La Unión in Suchitepéquez, and María Isabel López from Barillas in Huehuetenango, mention that the training provided does not provide sufficient working knowledge.

In intensive sessions with women representatives of local ministries, development councils and civil society organisations to evaluate SEPREM's effectiveness on inter-institutional coordination for the strengthening of women's full citizenship, 20 per cent of those interviewed considered that SEPREM is little known in their towns. They also think that it does not impact on the programmes being implemented; its participation in the Development Councils is weak; and it does not promote the presence and determination of women in the local sphere.

Almost half of the women interviewed considered that SEPREM's main obstacles include most notably its lack of institutional presence; the frequent staff turnover; lack of continuity in its participation in spaces of intervention; lack of sufficient financial resources; lack of local political support; the confusion of SEPREM with SOSEP; and the exclusion of local geographical areas.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Interview with Lizzete Zamora de Arroyo, director of International Cooperation, SEPREM, September 2009.

The women interviewed stated that they know of other state institutions with a greater presence at local level, such as DEMI, which is better known for its defence of women and for providing administrative support before the courts. They described other institutions such as the Social Investment Fund (Fondo de Inversión Social, FIS), the National Fund for Peace (Fondo Nacional para la Paz, FONAPAZ), the Ministry of Agriculture (Ministerio de Agricultura, MAGA) and SESAN as discriminatory in their attention to women, apart from those which are affiliated to the government party.

The vast majority of the women interviewed, who belong to grass roots organisations (municipal and communitarian), recognise that in order to strengthen SEPREM in its role as institutional coordinator and to bolster the exercise of women's full citizenship, SEPREM's mandate must be recognised at local level; the necessary financial resources must be assigned to it; and it must benefit from the government's full political support. Other women interviewed, the leaders of organisations in departments and the capital, recommended that SEPREM be transformed into a ministry, with a budget corresponding to its mandate, and participation in all government departments.

In their overall assessment of SEPREM, the participants deem it to be little known as a governmental institution. Apart from possibly providing training on rights and the payment of transfer costs for acts and consultations, SEPREM does not have much of a presence in concrete actions to make women's rights known and it does not impact on training women in political roles. For Jesusa Paúl Sanan from Mazatenango, 'When I found out that there was an office that supported women, I thought, now we are finally going to make progress, especially in terms of learning about political matters; but with time I realised that they only give us some training from time to time, we are still not respected and we are still not productive. Women need and demand training, but training that prepares us to participate in the political sphere in all its dimensions, not just constant repetition of the fact that we have rights. Men have politics, they have justice, and they do not need a secretariat, since everything is for them. I have not seen real changes'.

The women interviewed point out that SEPREM's work must be seen as a first step, and that change in governments should not affect the maintenance of a systematic agenda in support of the exercise of full citizenship for women. Luisa Fuentes from Santo Tomás in Suchitepéquez and Micaelina Dominga from Concepción Huista in Huehuetenango agree that it is important to remind SEPREM 'that it must leave aside the electioneering thinking of parties who get into power and press ahead with work throughout the whole of Guatemala, because women are waiting for real support; many died without knowing they had rights, many of us are in the midst of the building of the nation, and many more are being born; all of us merit our rights in full. SEPREM's work must be done with and for women, who must see it as an investment, not as an obligation, and less still as charity [...]'.<sup>53</sup>

## 7. International actors

International cooperation has increased its support to Guatemala since the peace process with a series of actions in the spheres of finance, diplomacy, politics, trade, technology transfers, grants and training, amongst others. This necessitated an agenda agreed on by both the government and cooperation in terms of security and justice, human rights and reconciliation, civic-military relations, interculturality, a fiscal pact, social expenditure, rural development, and reforms to the electoral system and political parties. This agenda has been subject to modifications according to different governments' priorities, but it has been consistent in its lack of a perspective on gender equity. Most of the scarce resources directed at women within the government have been aimed at establishing authorities such as DEMI and, later on, SEPREM and CONAPREVI. Although these authorities formally fulfil national and international commitments, they lack the sufficient funds to fulfil their mandates.

Guatemala, as one of the signatory countries to the Agreements made at the Monterrey, Rome, Doha and Paris conferences, amongst others, comes under a new framework of relations regarding financing for development.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Claudia Pineda and Nils-Sjard Schulz, 'The Nicaragua Challenge. Donor Harmonisation: Between Effectiveness and Democratisation. Case Study II', FRIDE Working Paper 48, January 2008, p.3.

The follow-up programme to the Peace Accords, signed in December 2006, coincides with the implementation of this new vision of cooperation, and the governments of Álvaro Arzú (1996–2000), Alfonso Portillo (2000–2004), Oscar Berger (2004–2008) and Álvaro Colom (2008–2012) have agreed with the international community to gradually develop new bases for cooperation. Transparency has been promoted in programmes and actions through the creation of spaces for dialogue, such as cooperation committees and forums with varying levels of success.

During the current government, committees on sectoral coordination, meso-dialogue and those of the ministerial units for cooperation have worked. Emphasis has been placed on the Council for International Cooperation, in which SEGEPLAN, the Guatemalan Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, MINEX) and the Ministry of Public Finance (Ministerio de Finanzas Públicas, MINFIN) participate, which progressed the formulation of an International Cooperation Policy and its strategy. Another important action is the mapping of international cooperation in the different territories, which identifies the programmes and projects run by official and decentralised cooperation in the 22 departments of the Republic. The aim is to establish a baseline for cooperation at territorial level, develop it with the priorities defined in the development plans, and promote local harmonisation.

The Development Assistance Database (DAD) is an automated information system on international cooperation in the country. It is not yet fully operational, but it provides tools for continual feedback from development workers regarding their projects and progress. SEGEPLAN is planning a user help centre, so that anybody can have access to this data, in compliance with transparency regulations.

The Guatemalan government has assumed the commitments made at the conferences in Nairobi, Beijing, Vienna and Cairo and those derived from the Peace Accords, and incorporated them into legislation, but to date this has been a slow and incomplete process. Since 2000, SEPREM is responsible for monitoring these agreements and must coordinate with governmental entities and bodies regarding the actions necessary for their fulfilment. The National Policy for the Promotion and Development of Guatemalan Women becomes the public policy instrument that guides and directs the government in its actions to improve women's situation and condition.

The dimension of political support can be seen in the allocation of resources in the national budget. Since its creation, SEPREM has had one of the lowest budgets. In 2000, it was assigned Q514,178; afterwards, during Oscar Berger's government, it was assigned Q17.65 million in 2007; this was increased to Q20.27 million for 2008, later to rise to Q28 million. In 2009, Álvaro Colom reduced the budget from Q28.1 to 22 million, a reduction of 21 per cent, which demonstrates the current government's lack of interest in women's equality<sup>54</sup> and makes SEPREM more dependent on international cooperation.

Political, technical and financial support from international cooperation since SEPREM was established has been provided through the following modalities:

1. Bilateral financial cooperation: resources are credited to the national budget and are handled according to guidelines and procedures established in the Law on Budgets.
2. Multilateral cooperation: financial resources are provided and administered by international cooperation agencies; work plans are drawn up jointly.
3. Technical cooperation (direct agreements with SEPREM): technical support, oriented towards providing consultancy and specialised training on topics related to gender equity, both to SEPREM staff, and to other institutions of interest to the Secretariat.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>54</sup> Mario Polanco, Gobierno debe mejorar la calidad del gasto a favor de las mujeres (Guatemala: Grupo de Apoyo Mutuo or GAM, November 2009).

<sup>55</sup> Interview SEPREM, Informe de gestión 2004–2008 (Guatemala: SEPREM, December 2007), p.67.

To lead cooperation towards strategic interests, and to coordinate and align its support for the fulfilment of the 2001–2006 Policy, SEPREM established the Forum for Donors in 2004,<sup>56</sup> which was permanently in operation until the end of 2008. Under the current government and until the end of 2009, the Forum had only been convened on two occasions for meetings of an informative nature. Meetings about signed agreements have taken place between the Secretariat and specific donors, and in some cases with the support of SEGEPLAN.

The work tool devised in support of the Forum for Donors is the Multiannual Operative Cooperation Plan (Plan Operativo Multianual de Cooperación, POM), to be created over five years. This initiative would merge with the PEO in operation. Spain and UNFPA joined on suitable terms.<sup>57</sup> Since SEPREM's current PEO is not known, information cannot be provided on its progress. Representatives from the Swedish cooperation, when interviewed, confirmed that they continue to support the POM's thematic areas.<sup>58</sup>

Among the initiatives in operation is the Inter-Agency Gender Board (Mesa Interagencial de Género), headed by UNFPA, which aims to oversee the mainstreaming of the gender perspective in the actions of agencies and to promote the institutional strengthening of gender in Guatemala. In addition, successful, creative initiatives have been launched, such as *Más mujeres, mejor política* ('More women, better politics'),<sup>59</sup> which is currently co-financed by other donors outside the system, such as Sweden and the United States.

Under the same criteria, the United Nations system, UNDP, Spanish cooperation, and the Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund have united under the initiative *Ventana de Género* ('Gender Window of Opportunity') to support SEPREM. This programme runs from 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2011, and the total sum assigned to it is USD 7.2 million.

The programme supports interventions in the spheres of training; institutionalisation, monitoring and evaluation, and access to resources and opportunities; economic empowerment and political participation and security; and the fight against violence, discrimination and racism against women. The intended result is to strengthen SEPREM, DEMI and local governmental mechanisms aimed at advancing women; and to integrate the National Policy for the Promotion and Development of Guatemalan Women and the PEO into the planning and budgets of state institutions at national and local levels.<sup>60</sup>

Most of the development workers interviewed declared that institutionalising the gender perspective in Guatemala is essential if state policies are to be established that guarantee inclusion and equity so that women can exercise full citizenship. This requires the mainstreaming of the gender perspective across all state authorities, mechanisms and instruments, but above all it requires the necessary resources to be assigned to this. Therefore, the support given to SEPREM by development workers is aimed at strengthening its competences; widening its services in the seven departments with the highest proportions of indigenous inhabitants and lowest levels of development; and technical support for the elaboration of the PEO.

Some of the actions carried out by international cooperation include technical missions; support for and analysis of clearly defined problem areas; field research to determine women's situation; and the mapping of organisations, their capacities and women's undertakings. Forums for analysis and discussion, workshops,

<sup>56</sup> Grupo With the participation of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA); the Chilean International Cooperation Agency (Agencia de Cooperación Internacional de Chile, AgCI); the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID); the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA); the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA); the European Commission Delegation in Guatemala; the Chilean Embassy; the Royal Netherlands Embassy; the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO); the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM); the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA); the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW); the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA); the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights (UNHCR); the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO); the International Organisation for Migration (IOM); and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

<sup>57</sup> SEPREM, Programa multianual, institucionalización de la política nacional de promoción y desarrollo de las mujeres guatemaltecas y de la equidad de género en los procesos prioritarios del Gobierno y en las estructuras del organismo Ejecutivo. 2006–2009 (Guatemala: SEPREM, August 2006), p.4.

<sup>58</sup> Informe Interview with Juana Camposeco, gender official for Swedish cooperation, October 2009.

<sup>59</sup> Interview with Julieta Solórzano, coordinator of the Inter-Agency Gender Board, November 2002.

<sup>60</sup> SEPREM, Interview with Mariel Aguilar, director of the 'Gender Window of Opportunity' programme, November 2009.

seminars and exchanges are further activities that form part of technical and financial cooperation. All of these actions are aimed at both SEPREM and DEMI in recognition of the fact that the multiculturalism of Guatemalan women calls for differentiated measures.

Institutionality in the regional and local sphere is supported as part of the cooperation programmes directed at local development. The beneficiaries are the Municipal Offices for Women and the women's organisations within the Development Councils; civil society women's organisations; and the women who hold public posts. The main countries and organisations that provide assistance include the European Union, Germany, Holland, Italy, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Japan, the United States, UNDP, DED, UNFPA, and other donors such as the Peace and the Third World Foundation, the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD), and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung Foundation, amongst others.<sup>61</sup>

The increasing, uncontrolled gender violence of the last five years, and the lack of response from the judicial system, have attracted support from international cooperation. However, most resources are oriented towards the legal side of the problem, leaving the civil sphere devoid of specific support. Legislative reform and the incorporation of the gender perspective into justice providers is a product of wider programmes directed at the whole judicial system, such as the recently constructed gender unit. The most significant donors are: the Spanish International Development Cooperation Agency (Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo, AECID), Interamerican Development Bank (IDB), SIDA, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), the European Commission (EC) and the European Union (EU), the Netherlands and USAID, amongst others.<sup>62</sup>

There is no exclusive programme for women's participation in political parties or the incorporation of the gender perspective into these. There are programmes that include technical support for the elaboration, lobbying for and presentation of laws favourable to women in the Women's Commission of the Congress and for civil sector organisations. Financing and technical support are also available for forums for analysis and training on women's rights, and their promotion and political participation in electoral processes. Technical support is also provided to women legislators and women elected to local posts. All of these programmes focus particularly on indigenous women, the Garinagu and the Xinca. These programmes are headed by the Spanish cooperation, the EU, NIMD, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, SIDA, the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Foundation and other important funds managed by UNDP and UNFPA with cooperation funds from different countries aimed at strengthening democracy, providing support for the political system, and promoting governability and governance.

One of the difficulties encountered during this research has been the scarce information obtained on the total sums allocated to each of the topics, as well as the total quantity allocated to gender issues overall. Both the women civil servants in charge of SEGEPLAN's cooperation who were interviewed and the representatives of cooperation agencies had difficulty in giving these figures, since the programmes define total amounts by thematic area and not by actions.

Apart from the financing contributed by the 'Gender Window of Opportunity' programme, Swedish cooperation has designated approximately 78 million Swedish krona to three cooperation programmes, and Spanish cooperation has provided 'just over one million euros per year in the last three to four years'.<sup>63</sup> When asked for the data in terms of percentages of the overall total, none of those interviewed provided information.

The biggest obstacle that those providing assistance face is the lack of sustainability of the processes, initiatives and capacities set up in partner authorities. Priorities change with every turnover in civil servants, and many of the capacities – tools that have been arduously created and implemented – are unfortunately rejected.

<sup>61</sup> Interview with Ana María Ruiz, deputy director of International Cooperation at SEGEPLAN, October 2009.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Interview with Francisco Sancho, general coordinator of Spanish cooperation, November 2009.

For women's full citizenship to be achieved, according to most of the men and women interviewed, the challenge expressed by the UNFPA representative remains '[...] the patriarchal culture, which is what determines the role of women and, in this society, subordinates and disempowers them. This leads to the issues of violence, economic independence, political participation. In 2009 progress has been made, of course. It is true that women are no longer in the position that they were ten years ago, but the gap continues to be huge.'

During the interviews, there was a wide consensus with regard to the government's conduct. As the Chilean ambassador mentioned, '[the government] ought to promote public policies aimed at building equality through health, education, justice, economy, lands', and for that 'it must apply a sufficient budget with a gender and ethnic perspective', as the general coordinator of Spanish cooperation has stated.

Opinions were also recorded on the attitude of women towards the government's inactivity and inefficiency in dealing with inequality and exclusion. The director of the 'Gender Window of Opportunity' programme stated: 'we must work together in spite of our differences, agree on a shared political agenda and fight for it'. Or in the words of a representative of Swedish cooperation, 'women must find their own voice and speak out, especially poor, rural and indigenous women'. Another representative of the 'Gender Window of Opportunity' programme emphasised that 'we need to learn how to use opportunities correctly and get the state to work in our favour'.

Regarding the opportunities that women currently have, Heleen Schrooyen of NIMD thinks that 'women themselves, who have shown their capacity for effective organisation, must promote gradual changes that take place from within the sphere of the family, such as making violence unacceptable; before, women were hit because the husband got angry and it was his right, or so it was said. That's no longer the case, if a man hits a woman now he is no longer a hero, and even though the topic is still discussed quietly, they are no longer seen as heroic figures fulfilling divine precepts'.<sup>64</sup> This sets the standard for a changing culture evolving towards respect for women's rights, which has a positive effect on social attitudes

Development workers perceive that young women, particularly indigenous women, constitute the major force for change. This is demonstrated by their high academic performance and their leadership in mixed youth organisations. 'They are active and determined in demanding their rights. Guatemala, where 70 per cent of the population is under 30, has a clear demographic bonus offering an investment opportunity for change; it is now or never, and the opportunity must be taken because it is a means of preventing violence; building a more equitable and less discriminatory society; and undoing the discrepancies of the last forty years'.<sup>65</sup>

Most of those interviewed consider the Women's Commission of the Congress as an opportunity, 'as the authority which influences the incorporation of equity into legislation and mandates, above all in terms of transparent budgets, the national and municipal general budget, investments and expenditure, and actions in favour of alternative economies for women'.<sup>66</sup>

The organisations and countries providing assistance are in agreement above all that 'SEPREM should be strengthened as the guiding framework for women's policies, because if the National Policy for the Promotion and Integral Development of Women (2008–2010) is successfully implemented throughout the entire state, better policies with a gender perspective will be introduced, which will be an advance in all respects for women'.

## Conclusion

La Mainstreaming and effectively implementing the gender perspective is a pending task in Guatemala, both at state level and among society.

In recent decades, in particular since the Peace Accords, progress has been made in the legal sphere; with the creation of institutions associated with the defence and promotion of women's rights; and even with the participatory process of designing plans and policies oriented towards improving equal opportunities.

<sup>64</sup> Interview with Mariel Aguilar, coordinator of the 'Gender Window of Opportunity' programme, November 2009.

<sup>65</sup> Interview with Nadine Gasman, UNFPA representative, November 2009.

<sup>66</sup> Interview with Francisco Sancho, general coordinator of Spanish cooperation, November 2009.

However, the substantive change in social behaviour and interrelations, and in the structuring of a more inclusive state, exists more in theory than in practice. The lack of political will to guarantee the full exercise of women's citizenship is reflected in alarming facts and figures showing restrictions to their most basic rights, including limited access to justice in the civil sphere, as well as the lack of budgetary allocations to implement plans and policies, which therefore end up severely lacking in content and effectiveness.

The efforts of women's organisations and other national and international actors must be reinforced, united and redirected so that the political, economic, social and cultural system as a whole becomes more sensitive and conducive to gender equity. A good basis for this is in place, as there is a clear view of the strategic vision and commitment necessary; but the priority areas and the most viable ways forward need to be rethought. The process is underway.

## Key recommendations by research area

### Women's rights: women's access to civil justice

#### Recommendations for the state

##### General:

- Advance and deepen the institutional strengthening of the civil justice sector with a gender approach by modernising its services, increasing their transparency, and refining and widening them.
- Mainstream the gender and ethnic approach throughout the judicial system.

##### Specific:

- Review and simplify judicial processes.
- Rid the system of justice operators accused of corruption, abuse or discrimination.
- Incorporate a system for analysis, control and monitoring with a gender approach and differentiated statistics into the civil justice sector.
- Ensure that interpreters (both men and women) are present in courts which take cultural differences into account.
- Create a gender focal points system in the regional authorities which coordinate with the gender unit regarding the analysis and monitoring of proceedings involving women.
- Increase the number of women at all levels of the justice operators in an equitable way.
- Educate justice operators about the national reality of women's situation.
- Devise, incorporate and disseminate handbooks on judicial proceedings in all the languages used throughout Guatemala.

#### Recommendations for women's organisations

##### General:

- Be vigilant and exacting before discriminatory proceedings which exclude women.

##### Specific:

- Promote women's rights in local languages.
- Manage and promote formative processes giving access to justice in local languages.
- Oversee the process of modernisation and inclusion of women's demands into the Guatemalan justice system.
- Ensure that women who work and are users of the justice system are respected.

## Women's political participation

### Recommendations for the state

#### General:

- Speed up reforms to the Political Parties Law and, in particular, the approval of the regulatory framework for the Quotas Law.
- Speed up reforms to the Law on the Municipal Code.
- Nominate a larger number of women to decision-making posts in state and government structures.

#### Especific:

- Condition funds granted to political parties so that they effectively incorporate women into their organisations.
- Strengthen actions aimed at instilling and disseminating knowledge about women's rights at all levels; educating citizens; political impact; and technical support for women and their organisations.
- Spread the advances in women's participation so that a new political culture regarding women's performance in democratic societies is clearly visible.

### Recommendations for women's organisations

#### General:

- Participate actively in the country's political processes with a proactive attitude committed to gender equity.

#### Especific:

- Promote equity through training on women's human rights.
- Clearly display breaches of women's rights in all spheres.
- Devise and/or modify laws that favour women's equal participation.
- Actively monitor modifications to the Political Parties Law.
- Oversee women's political training in grassroots women's organisations.
- Build alliances among women's organisations to support women candidates running for elected posts.
- Provide monitoring and gender consultancy for women in political posts.
- Promote an agreed demand agenda aimed at all of the political parties.

### Recommendations for political parties

#### General:

- Recognise women as subjects with equal rights.

#### Especific:

- Incorporate the Quotas Law and other affirmative actions into partisan structures.
- Revise the ideological framework for the effective inclusion of women.
- Create and/or strengthen specific authorities for women at all party levels.
- Establish equity in the election criteria and proceedings for posts in the Executive Committees.
- Include sanctions against abuses and injustices committed against women.
- Promote the population's mediation and representation in partisan structures in practice.

## State commitment to coordination regarding women's citizenship

### Recommendations for the state

#### General:

- Strengthen SEPREM politically, technically and economically and make sure it fulfils its mandate.

Espefifio:

- Incorporate SEPREM into the government's three departments.
- Promote mechanisms for intergovernmental relations at technical levels.
- Make sure that SEPREM's women representatives participate actively in the Development Councils system.
- Incorporate gender equity into all of the state budgets.
- Make the division of data by sex and age obligatory throughout all government plans and programmes.
- Apply affirmative actions in government authorities.

Recommendations for SEPREM

General:

- Push for prompt approval of the PEO, and initiate its implementation in an organised, efficient and effective way.

Specific:

- Assist and participate permanently in all coordinating authorities. Set up a coordination committee with state organisations.
- Set up a coordination committee with international organisations.
- Implement SEPREM's budget in an effective and organised way.
- Speed up the administrative processes to increase SEPREM's budgetary ceiling.
- Make the most of the departmental headquarters and their civil servants to support and coordinate women's organisations.
- Influence the Development Councils effectively to formulate public policies and projects with a gender perspective.
- Organise and promote an equitable system with guarantees in government programmes.
- Train and empower women in all spheres of their human rights.

## Recommendations for international actors

General:

- Formulate strategies and concrete actions for mainstreaming gender in all the programmes and projects being developed in Guatemala, ensuring equitable budgetary allocations to enable their implementation.
- Create specific programmes for women's political empowerment.
- Provide technical and economic support to the strengthening of the civil justice system to improve women's access to justice.
- Strengthen processes for monitoring and achieving objectives in state mechanisms for women, especially SEPREM.
- Negotiate and reach an agreement on an inter-institutional monitoring system that makes the actions of programmes and projects implemented in Guatemala more transparent.
- Denounce corrupt or unethical practices committed by the counterparts to Guatemala's superior authorities.
- Demand the fulfilment of actions and/or goals keeping to specific time frames and resources.
- Take on Guatemalan staff in leadership posts for projects and programmes run by international actors, privileging women and indigenous people.
- Improve inter-agency agreements to avoid duplicating efforts and make the most of the objectives achieved to optimise them.
- Educate foreign civil servants about Guatemala's history, customs and cultural practices, and sanction those who show adverse attitudes.
- Make sure that successful practices to be transferred take into account an ethnic and gender perspective.

## ANNEX

**List of actors consulted****Selection of project spheres and criteria, Guatemala City, 26 de junio de 2009**

Mercedes Asturias de Castañeda, President of the Guatemalan Association for the Advancement of Women (Asociación Mujer Vamos Adelante, AMVA).

Violeta Alfaro de Carpio, Gender consultant/Editorial Expresa.

Margarita Urrutia, Coordinator of the Guatemalan Forum for Women in Political Parties (Foro Guatemalteco de Mujeres de Partidos Políticos, FMGPP).

Margarita Caté, Councillor for the municipality of San Andrés Itzapa, Chimaltenango.

Isabel Luna, Integrated Foundation for Sustainable Development and the Environment (Fundación Integral de Desarrollo Sostenible y Medio Ambiente, FIDESMA), San Andrés Itzapa, Chimaltenango.

Dora Beckley, Independent consultant in Gender and Rural Development.

Gabriela Núñez, Doctor in Gender Studies and Director of the Guatemalan Association for Girls' Education (Asociación Eduquemos a la niña).

Angélica Orozco, Representative of the Guatemalan Forum for Women in Political Parties (FMGPP).

Carmen López de Cáceres, Barrister and Solicitor, Women's Civil and Political Convergence (Convergencia Cívico Política de Mujeres).

Dora Amalia Taracena, Executive coordinator, Women's Civic and Political Convergence.

Malvina Armas, Barrister and Solicitor, Women's Civic and Political Convergence.

Cristina Tabico, Outreach coordinator, Political Association of Mayan Women (Asociación Política de Mujeres Mayas, MOLOJ).

**In-depth interviews, Huehuetenango, 21–23 August 2009**

María Guadalupe García, Representative of women's organisations to the CODEDE in Huehuetenango  
Carolina Gutiérrez, SEPREM regional delegate in Huehuetenango.

Rosmely González, Councillor I, municipality of Huehuetenango.

Isabel Francisco, Candidate for Mayor in two electoral periods in the municipality of Santa Eulalia for its own political party.

Magali Esteban Agustín, Coordinator of the Municipal Office for Women in Malacatancito.

Micaelina Dominga Ramírez, Coordinator of the Municipal Office for Women in Concepción Huista.

María Isabel López, Coordinator of the Municipal Office for Women in Barillas .

**Focus group, Huehuetenango, 23 August 2009**

Candelaria Gloria Castillo, Hunta Mulujjubal Association (Asociación Hunta Mulujjubal), Jacaltenango.

Vicenta Castillo, Women's Association for Integrated Development (Asociación Femenina de Desarrollo Integral).

Romelia Luis Velásquez, Women's Commission, Santa Bárbara.

Marta Castro, Chalchitan New Life Development Association (Asociación de Desarrollo Nueva Vida Chalchiteca), Aguacatán.

Micaelina Dominga Ramírez, Coordinator, Municipal Office for Women, Concepción Huista.

Ludy Magdalena López, Women Building a Future (Mujeres Construyendo Futuro), Todos Santos Cuchumatán.

Micaela Elena Méndez, Popti Women's Group (Grupo Mujeres Poptí), Jacaltenango.

Gladis Pérez Pú, Mayan-Mam Communitarian Association for Integrated Development (Asociación Comunitaria de Desarrollo Integral Maya-Mam, ACODIM-M), San Gaspar Ixchil.

## Civil servants at SEPREM headquarters, Ciudad de Guatemala, 27 August–4 September 2009

Patricia María Verónica Sajbin, Director of Strengthening.  
 Alba Gordillo Aguirre, Deputy Director of Strengthening, Sacatepequez.  
 Bertha Leonor Falla Alonzo, Director of Planning.  
 Sonia Escobedo, Presidential Secretary.  
 Samara Fabiola Ortiz Martínez De Morales, Deputy Director of CONAPREVI.  
 Ana Lorena Robles, Communications Director (In her place I was received by Presidential Secretary Sonia Escobedo).  
 Gloria Nineth Rodríguez Sirin, Deputy Director of Planning Techniques.  
 Linsleyd Vennetia Tillit Montepeque, Director of Promotion.  
 Lissette Maribel Zamora Tejada de Arroyo, Director of Cooperation.

## In-depth interviews, Suchitepéquez, 1–2 September 2009

Dina Patricia Hidalgo, Coordinator of the Municipal Office for Women in Santa Bárbara, Suchitepéquez.  
 Damaris Lemus, Coordinator of the Municipal Office for Women in Santo Tomás la Unión, Suchitepéquez.  
 Rubines Reyes Lucero, Representative of women's organisations to the CODEDE in Suchitepéquez.  
 Amarilis De León, Councillor for the municipality of Santo Domingo in Suchitepéquez.  
 Silda de León, Councillor for the municipality of Samayac in Suchitepéquez, and Coordinator of the Women's Commission (COMUDE).  
 Hilda Salas, SEPREM departmental delegate for Suchitepéquez and Retalhuleu.

## Focus group, Mazatenango, 2 September 2009

Dorma Estela de la Cruz, Women's Civil Association (Asociación Civil de Mujeres Mauriceñas), Santo Domingo.  
 Jesús Raúl Sanán, Organisation of Women from Belén (Organización de Mujeres de Belén), Santo Domingo.  
 Isidra Alvarado, Civil Association of Women of Jesus (Asociación Civil Mujeres de Jesús), Cuyotenango.  
 Amarilis de León, Municipal Council, Santo Domingo.  
 María Esther Juárez, Women's Civil Association (Asociación Civil de Mujeres Superación), Santo Domingo.  
 Antonieta Ramos, Active Women Civil Association (Asociación Civil Activas Mujeres), San Lorenzo.  
 Luisa Fuentes Pérez, Women's Association for Social Work (Asociación de Mujeres Obras Sociales), Sto. Tomás La Unión.  
 Amanda López, ACDIMAR, Mazatenango.  
 Ruth Daniela de Tot, ACIDEC, Cuyotenango.  
 María Marta Orsibial, Samayac.  
 Vilma P. Fernández, Women's Civil Association – A New Day (Asociación Civil de Mujeres Un Nuevo Día), San Lorenzo.  
 Lilian Hernández G., Association of Women United for Progress (Asociación de Mujeres Unidas para El Progreso), Aldea Barrio 2 San Antonio Suchitepéquez.  
 Lidia Fuentes, Women's Association for Social Work, Sources of Friendship (Asociación Civil Mujeres Obras Sociales Fuentes de Amistad), San Pablo, Jocopilas Suchitepéquez.  
 Leticia G., Councillor I, Samayac.

## Interviews, Zacapa, 10 de septiembre de 2009

Reyna de Vargas, Party representative for Vision with Values (Visión con Valores, VIVA).  
 Cynthia Vázquez, Party representative for VIVA, Zacapa.  
 Karina Alvarado, Party representative for GANA.  
 Zaida Dubón, Coordinator, Municipal Office for Women, Gualán.  
 Patricia Camposeco, Secretary for Women (National Executive Committee, or NEC), Unionist Party.  
 Ingrid de León, National Office for Women, Zacapa.

## Political Party leaders, Guatemala, 17 August–17 September 2009

### **Guatemalan Republican Front (FRG)**

Efraín Ríos Montt, General Secretary.  
 Iván Arévalo Barrios.  
 Luis Fernando Pérez.  
 Deputy Zury Ríos Ávila, Recording secretary, Member of the NEC.

### **National Unity of Hope (UNE)**

Luis Maura Estrada, Secretary for Women.  
 Nora Judith Alvarado, Recording secretary for the Institute for Political Training and Education (Instituto de Formación y Capacitación Política).  
 Luis Blanca de León Régil, Deputy.

### **Democratic Union(UD)**

Manuel Conde Orellana, Secretary General.

### **Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unit(URNG)**

Percy Méndez, Assistant II to the Secretary General  
 Ángel Sánchez, Municipal Affairs Secretary, NEC.

### **Grand National Alliance (GANA)**

Jaime Martínez Lohayza, Secretary General.  
 Manuel Barquín  
 Virna López, Recording Secretary for the NEC.  
 Noé Orellana Cajas  
 Juan Francisco Cárdenas  
 Silvana Ayuso, National Secretary for Women, NEC.  
 Marcela Longo  
 Juan Francisco Cárdenas

### **Unionist Party (PU)**

Martínez, Héctor Cifuentes, Assistant to the Secretary General .  
 Rolando Peláez  
 Rosa María Cabrera Ortiz, National Secretary, Professional Branch, NEC.  
 Patricia Castro de Camposeco, National Secretary for Women, NEC.  
 Alfonso Álvarez, Secretary for Youth.

Job García, A.V. Departmental secretary and NEC Finance secretary.  
 Héctor Morales, Communications Secretary.  
 José Domingo Sical  
 Xiomara Trioubieller, Secretary for the Elderly, NEC.  
 Oscar De León, Secretary for Youth.

#### **Patriotic Party (PP)**

Valentín Gramajo, Secretary for Acts and Agreements.

#### **Union for Nationalist Change (UCN)**

Mario Amílcar Estrada Orellana, Secretary General.

#### **National Advancement Party (PAN)**

Hugo Morán Carranza, Assistant Secretary General.  
 Sandy Recinos, Recording Secretary, NEC.

#### **Centre for Social Action (CASA)**

Mario Mazariegos de León, Secretary General.  
 Lili Cameros, Municipal Secretary for Women.

#### **Encounter for Guatemala (EG)**

Bilda Marley Flores, Secretary for Women, NEC.  
 Karina Flores, Municipal Secretary for Women.

### **Forum for Full Citizenship and Forum for Women in Political Parties Guatemala City, 24 September 2009**

Luz Villacorta de Carvajal, NEC Training Commission, GANA.  
 Leticia de Jerez, Departmental Secretary for Women, VIVA.  
 Nora Judith Alvarado, NEC, Recording Secretary for the Institute for Political Training and Education, UNE.  
 Emma de Martínez, NEC, Consultant for the National Secretariat for Women, FRG.  
 Xiomara Gonzalez, NEC, Metropolitan Secretary for Women, UCN.  
 Ingrid Elizabeth de León, NEC, representative for the DCG.  
 Raquel Palma, Member of the Metropolitan Secretariat for Women, UCN.  
 Dora Alicia Morales, NEC, Former candidate for position as CASA deputy.  
 Lili Cameros, Secretary for Women, Municipal Executive Committee, CASA.  
 Lorena Flores, NEC, Secretary for Women for PP.  
 Patricia Castro de Camposeco, NEC, National Secretary for Women for PU .

### **Justice sector, July–September 2009.**

#### **SOLOLA**

Aura Estela Ramos, Official at the Office for the Defence of Women, the Elderly and Children within the Office of the Human Rights Ombudsman (Procuraduría de los Derechos Humanos, PDH), Sololá.  
 Josefina Chavajay, Departmental liaison for the United Nations Joint Programme, Sololá.  
 Diana Ventura, Promotor of SEPREM.  
 Arturo Estrada, Judge – Family and Work Law.  
 Dominga Vásquez Julajuj, DEMI regional delegate.

### **HUEHUETENANGO**

Elvira Carolina Gutiérrez Palacios, SEPREM regional representative.

María Guadalupe García Hernández, Representative of women's organisations to the CODEDE. Leader of the women's group MAMA MAQUIN, municipality of Nentón.

Erick Villatoro Letona, Departmental assistant at the Office of the Human Rights Ombudsman (PDH).

Elmer González González, Barrister.

Byron Roderico Herrera Mérida, Departmental delegate for the Presidential Commission on Human Rights (Comisión Presidencial de los Derechos Humanos, COPREDEH).

### **IZABAL**

Marta Alicia Monterroso, President of the Association 'New Dawn, Ray of Hope for United Families' (Asociación Nuevo Amanecer Rayo de Esperanza para familia Unidas).

José Manuel de León Villatoro, Justice of the Peace, Los Amates.

Mirza Sagastume de Hernández, Coordinator of the Municipal Office for Women.

### **GUATEMALA**

Hilda Morales Trujillo, Consultant for CONAPREVI.

Edna Lorena Valenzuela Castañeda, User of the Defence Unit for Women (Fiscalía de la Mujer) of the Public Ministry.

Silvia Monzón, Feminist lawyer, Director of the programme Más mujeres, mejor política ('More women, better politics').

Walda Barrios, National Union for Guatemalan Women (Unión Nacional de Mujeres Guatemaltecas, UNAMG).

Rosario Escobedo, Head of the organisation Sector for Women (Sector de Mujeres).

Enma Elizabeth Catú, Representative of the Young Mayan Women's Movement (Movimiento de jóvenes mayas, MOJOMAYAS).

Ortencia Marina Simón Chalí, Director of the Political Association of Mayan Women (Asociación Política de Mujeres Mayas, MOLOJ).

Rosalina Tuyuc, Director of the National Coordinator of Widows of Guatemala (Coordinadora Nacional de Viudas de Guatemala, CONAVIGUA).

Oto Arenas, Director of a university-based Lawyer's Office (Bufete Popular).

Vilma Dónis, Member of the organisation PROMUJER.

Delia Castillo, Gender consultant, Judicial Body.

Ana Gladis Ollas, Women's Ombudsman at the Office of the Human Rights Ombudsman (PDH).

Quetzalí Raquel Cerezo Blandón, Barrister and solicitor, Director General of the Movement for Equity (Movimiento por la Equidad) in Guatemala.

Rebeca Orellana, Women's Programme (Programa Mujer) of the National Youth Network for Political Impact (Red Nacional de Jóvenes para la Incidencia Política, Incidejoven).

Rutilia Yatz, National Youth Network for Political Impact (Incidejoven).

### **TOTONICAPAN**

Jerónimo Vásquez, President of the Board of Directors, 48 Cantones.

Oscar Villagrán, Secretary, Family Court.

José Amílcar Cifuentes Alfaro, Extension agent, PRORURAL.

Joel Fernando Álvarez Camey, Barrister.

Dora García, Coordinator of the Public Defence Institute (Instituto de la Defensa Pública Penal, IDPP).

### **SAN MARCOS**

Flor de María Dell, Family Judge of First Instance.

Olga López Coronado, DEMI regional delegate.

Haidy del Milagro Castillo López, Assistant at the Office of the Human Rights' Ombudsman (PDH).

**QUETZALTENANGO**

Tita Urquizú, Director of the Municipal Office for Women.  
 José Ignacio Camey, Public Defence Institute (IDPP).  
 Natividad Batz, DEMI regional delegate.

**ALTA VERAPAZ**

Olga Mirtala López Mérida, Legal consultant for DEMI.  
 Hugo Herculano Pop, Barrister.  
 Norma Chomo, Head of the Municipal Office for Women.  
 Hugo Marlon René Ac Nuila, Regional consultant at the Presidential Commission on Human Rights (COPREDEH).

**BAJA VERAPAZ**

Lucía González Bolvito, DEMI departmental delegate.  
 Angel Felipe Martínez Moya, Justice of the Peace.

**QUICHE**

María Elena Ajanel, TDepartmental technician for the project supporting the consolidation of women's participation and organisation in municipal governments in Guatemala.  
 Margarita Ren Suy, Assistant at the social unit at DEMI.

## International cooperation, Guatemala City, 17 October–2 November 2009

Juana Camposeco, Gender Official for Swedish cooperation.  
 Julieta Solórzano, Coordinator of the Inter-agency Gender Committee.  
 Nadine Gasman, UNFPA Representative.  
 Mariel Aguilar, Director of the Ventana de Género ('Gender Window of Opportunity') programme.  
 Heleen Schrooyen, Senior Policy Officer (Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy, NIMD).  
 Heberto Herrera López, Programme Coordinator (NIMD).  
 Virginia Barrios, Project Coordinator (Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Foundation, KAS).  
 Rubén Hidalgo, Assistant to the Representative in Guatemala (KAS).  
 Jorge Mario Saavedra, Chilean Ambassador in Guatemala.  
 Camila Márquez Araujo, Second Secretary and Consul, Chilean Embassy in Guatemala.  
 Gretel Guerra, Head of Gender for Spanish Cooperation.  
 Francisco Sancho, General Coordinator of Spanish Cooperation.  
 Angel Pacheco, Head of Spanish Cooperation's Social Cohesion Programme.  
 Ana María Ruiz, Deputy Director of International Cooperation at SEGEPLAN.