



## **Reinforcing Gender Awareness and Gender Equality**

### **Terms of Reference**

#### **1. General framework**

The main purpose of EU development policy is to stimulate sustainable development in order to eliminate poverty. The close relationship between the different sectors of 'good governance' and poverty cannot be in doubt. One of the main sectors in this frame is to foster the increased participation of women in political life.

#### **2. Purpose of the contract and activities**

##### **2.1. General**

This contract involves two main types of strategies concerning gender equality and awareness:

- A. A direct approach of female organizations
- B. As part of workshops with members of the Legislative Assembly

The following subjects are the main issues in this programme:

- Training in the identification and abolition of common obstacles to women's participation in leadership positions
- Training in enhancing women's self-confidence to enable them to stand for leading positions in their constituencies
- Training in the identification of ways in which constituencies can encourage and support women to participate in leadership at the local as well as the national level
- Awareness-building and training in reflection on past elections to identify mistakes that could be avoided in future elections (including local ones)

Although Liberia is by far not the only country where women are disadvantaged, their deprivation here is much more than in most other places, given the fact that they bore the consequences of long years of civil strife. At the same time they are playing a significant role in obtaining peace in Liberia. The gender-programme of this Project serves to improve this situation. Activities target future female leaders in the political field, thus providing for future elections on national as well as on communal level. Since the participation of women is a decisive factor in a country's development only adequate representation in national and local parlia-

ments can guarantee a gender-sensitive policy. This is an investment in the future and thus most important for sustainability.

## **2.2. The Liberian Situation**

There are at least nine female gender experts working mainly in Monrovia (UNIFEM, UNMIL, USAID a.o.) and more stakeholders concentrating on a strong support for active participation of women in politics especially regarding the upcoming elections in October this year. The activities are mainly concentrated in Monrovia. The main target group for all of them is COPPWIL (Coalition of Political Parties' Women in Liberia) that is also the main beneficiary of the Minister for Gender and Development Ms. Varba Gayflor.

## **2.3. Strategy so far**

The strategy for the first conference/workshop (16.-18.6.2005) was:

- Including a Liberian partner and so get access to ongoing > COPPWIL
- Not to choose Monrovia as the venue but to go outside and select women from different counties as participants
- To contract esp. women as facilitators who hold important positions in the ongoing political setup (female parliamentarians, chairperson from the National Election Commission, female lawyers and judges, Minister for Gender and Development, female professors from the University)
- Use of simple language in order to enable the participants from the counties as active partners in the discussions
- Not to introduce a new gender expert at this stage trying to get a picture of the situation and later analyze where an expert could make a positive input go to the counties and meet the participants and evaluate the outcome of the conference/workshop
- To form a strategy-group as advisor for future activities

It can be said in general that this strategy was successful in all aspects. It especially enables to define the field of support of a gender expert in the said framework of the whole Project.

## **2.4. Working schedule and expected output**

### **A. General**

The expert will work in close cooperation with the Project Coordinator and the project's Gender Officer.

The expert should especially concentrate on the work with women in three counties since it is in the counties where the understanding of gender awareness and equality is lacking. It is common knowledge that the situation in the districts is even worse. It is

also not sure whether any political demands from these levels have their counterparts in the capital and are taken into consideration. The target groups are esp. in the three counties and in some of the districts.

Like in most African societies there are a number of traditional female organizations in the villages as well as in bigger areas not alone based on tribal relationship. It would be of great interest to know how far these groups can be politicized or if they are already. Since these are grassroots movements they usually have an easy access to women. It is not sure whether these groups can function as a target for the project concerning future activities.

A strong influence on political and social life esp. in the villages has so called secret societies. The results of the elections in Sierra Leone were for a great part conditioned by them. In Liberia two of them are known to be active: Sande and Poro. They are not secret in the sense that members are not known. It is rather the opposite, esp. with their leaders. It will also be of great interest to know which role they are playing in the upcoming elections and how far their members are represented in other organizations esp. in political parties.

B: Working schedule in detail

1. Arrival of expert between beginning and mid-August 2005
2. Briefing in Monrovia and introduction to the project's partners and some key-players
3. Stay in two counties between a week and ten days, organizing workshops and training with the female activists (everything is running mainly on short notice)
4. Stay for two weeks in Gbarnga and organize meetings with party women and members from traditional female organizations
5. Participate in the project's first workshop on 'good governance' and evaluate the Liberian gender officer
6. Stay in Monrovia for report writing

## **2.5 Outputs and organizational issues**

A: Outputs

Written report (snip)

(snip)

In addition, the expert will be making written proposals towards a manual on a further strategy for the Gender-Section of the Project. Recommendations are esp. awaited for the next Gender-Workshop.

B: Services of the project towards the expert

(snip)

C: Technical obligations of the expert

(snip)