



REGIONAL CONSULTATION ON GENDER EQUITY AND EQUALITY

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Latin American and the Caribbean

FINAL REPORT

TEAM RESPONSIBLE FOR GENDER
CONSULTATION IN LATIN AMERICA

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Erotegui, Claudia Mejía, Rosa Inés Ospina,
Eva Maria Samqui, Molvina Zeballos

REGIONAL CONSULTATION ON GENDER EQUITY AND EQUALITY

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Presentation

The process of consultation and debate about the rights of women and gender equality has been really intense and significant. It was developed in recent months among social organisations of Latin America, including women's and feminist's movements with the largest tradition in the region. In itself, this already brings hope since the door has been open, with consensus and exchanges, to a topic which faces huge resistances in the ideological and political spheres.

Here a synthesis follows, it is extremely rich and if sensibly used, it shall benefit not only women's organisations and movements but the whole spectrum of social entities. From the knowledge and agreements built, three agreements should be specifically emphasized:

The first one, it is a relevant and useful debate that should be sustained and expanded. To that effect, it should be conveniently placed in the central agenda of all kinds of social organisations and movements in the region. It is not possible any longer to conceive the strengthening of social organisations without the incorporation of this dimension in the core of its work.

Secondly, there have been advances beyond any doubt, but a lot has still to be done. It is particularly critical that all political aspects of the debate should be taken up again, i.e., those dealing with power discrepancies between men and women, both in society and within organisations themselves. So it is urgent to place the search for autonomy, not only political, but physical and economical, as parameters to follow-up the adoption and development of the second Istanbul principle.

And a third verification is that, for this task to be effective, it should become a public agenda. To that effect, partnerships, shared strategies and support are necessary among all civil society organisations, always respecting and promoting organisation autonomy and the women's movement.

It is up to the organisations that this becomes a really valuable contribution. We, men and women who have done this work feel really proud of the performed tasks. We invite men and women from social organisations in our continent and worldwide to use this material, to discuss it, to convert it into a tool of change and a lever for transformation.▮

THE TEAM RESPONSIBLE FOR GENDER CONSULTATION



Introduction

The Open Forum for CSO Development Effectiveness is a unique space for CSOs (Civil Society Organisations) worldwide to engage in a global and fully participatory process towards defining and introducing a framework of mutually shared development effectiveness principles where to debate their identity and role. It tries to reach agreements on a series of mutually shared principles which direct the work of the organisations as development actors. This process started in late 2009, and will run until the end of 2011, culminating at the 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan, South Korea.

In the first Open Forum Global Assembly held in Istanbul, Turkey, in September 2010, among the **Istanbul Principles**, it was established as the second guiding principle of the work of CSOs:

***Embodying Gender Equality and Promoting Women's Rights:** CSOs are effective as development actors when they promote and practice development cooperation embodying gender equity, reflecting women's concerns and experience, while supporting women's efforts to realize their individual and collective rights, participating as fully empowered actors in the development process.*

Within this outline, during the first semester of 2011, consultations were made on gender equality, with women's organisations and mixed organisations working on development, in 4 regions of the world: Asia Pacific, Latin America, Eastern Europe and Africa. Contributions from a regional perspective shall be harmonized and consolidated in a global report and a set of recommendations on how to incorporate gender equality, and at the same time promote women's and girls' rights to warrant CSO development effectiveness.

Consultation on gender equality in Latin America had a starting point and reference in the text: *Eight thesis of work from the Latin American feminist and women's movement for a debate on development effectiveness*, as a result of the first round of regional consultations of the Open Forum and taken by the Open Forum Global Assembly in Istanbul, 2010. This consultation was made using 3 channels: (i) virtual survey answered by 300 CSOs operating in 20 countries of the region; (ii) national face-to-face meetings (including subnational workshops) in 5 countries with the participation of about 560 people, mostly women (Argentina 55, Bolivia 200, Colombia 153, Mexico 32 and Nicaragua 120); and (iii) a regional meeting in Bogotá, with 50 people from 16 countries, on 27 April, 2011.

In this document, the results are presented from the total gender consultation in the region. It is organized in four parts: the first one proposes a brief conceptual framework from which the results are read, systematized and interpreted, specially the results from the virtual survey; the second one presents the results of the virtual survey organized in five chapters; the third one summarizes the products of the regional workshop which had important contributions from the national reports; and the fourth one has the conclusions and general recommendations obtained from the set of results.

I. Framework for reading the results of the survey



Sexual differences and gender

Biological differentiated features of men and women have been the basis of the most elementary classification of mankind in two groups. However, gender category derived from biology is insufficient to explain the system of social relations based on differences and built in each society throughout history. As a consequence, social analysis frequently attributed social and cultural determinants to biology and hid political intentions, which had serious consequences for women and for social development.

Gender category was coined in social sciences in the 60's and 70's to design an essential social quality of the gender based distinctions¹. From then on, the roles socially assigned to each gender and the configuration of social models (cultural) based upon this differentiation were studied, which transcended biological differences, and gave rise to a large array of studies proving the social and cultural implications of being a man or a woman in any society. After the incorporation of this concept in the social analysis, it has been easier to prove inequalities between men and women which underlie in the social arrangement, and to contemplate possibilities of constructing more harmonic societies. An example of these inequalities is the important uncompensated burden of work on women, at their homes and caring for the families, made invisible by economic sciences as they resist to recognize it as work, and thus hide one of the social factors which establishes more differences between men and women in our present society, that generates disadvantages in the access to other benefits, and not to mention the exploitation and subordination features it contains.

Patriarchal Culture

A cultural element determining the subordinate role assigned to women through gender division of labour, and which systematically reproduces discrimination practices proved by gender category is the prevalence of patriarchy. A patriarchal culture implies the exercise of power, both in public and family affairs, exclusively by adult men. Consequently men

1 *Discurso Genero y mujer. Castellanos et al, Centro de Estudios de Genero, U.Valle, 1994. P 20*

exercise full authority and the government of all social institutions: State, economy, family, whereas women are considered incapable of governing, are excluded from these realms and subordinated to men. This concept derives from the arrangement in the Old Greece, where city-states were governed by patriarchs (pater familias), adult men who exercised the exclusive privilege of citizenship, whereas women, slaves and children were considered incapable of governing themselves and had to give in to masculine authority.

Despite in modern age, and with the establishment of liberal democracy, modern democratic systems have broaden sovereignty to all social groups, it was only in the 20th century that many countries recognized full citizenship to women. Still, the pressure of patriarchal policies establishes a large difference between men and women. In the decision making spheres of the economy, and in the decisions pertaining to their own bodies and intimate life, women's autonomy is still far from being a reality, obstacles persist that hinder their development and consequently the development of society.

Equality as an economic, physical and political autonomy of women

CEPAL study *“What kind of State? What kind of Equality?”* clearly puts forward the relation between the effectiveness of women's rights and the exercise of their autonomy in three main dimensions: economy, their own bodies and decision making at all levels.

“Women must have autonomy in their private and public lives if the exercise of their human rights is to be guaranteed. The capacity to earn their own income and control assets and resources (economic autonomy), the right to exercise control over their own body (physical autonomy) and their full participation in the decisions affecting their lives and their community (autonomy in decision-making) are the three pillars for building gender equality and advancing towards parity, as demonstrated and analysed in the Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean.

What kind of State? What kind of equality? In order to answer these questions it is necessary to take into account realities in key areas for equality such as paid and unpaid work, time use, poverty, gender-based violence, the participation of women in decision-making spheres, health and sexual and reproductive rights. Not only does this information show differences between the sexes, which are very relevant for understanding the gaps, it also measures strategic elements relating to women's autonomy.”²

There is a clear interrelation among the different spheres of action where women lack autonomy when the same study explains:

The subordination of women is apparent in the labour market, as reflected in the sexual division of labour and discrimination, which, given their limited physical and political autonomy, prevent women from making their own reproductive decisions, taking action to put a stop to violence against them and participating in public and private decision-making

2 Cepal 2010 p. 35

*mechanisms. Differences in income and in the total number of hours worked reflect the prevailing gender inequality in the region.*³

As concluded from the above, equality and the full exercise of women's rights are linked to autonomy, what implies the enjoyment of freedom, independence and equal conditions in all areas of social life, in the management of their own bodies, intimate life, social relations, labour relations and in general in the exercise of full citizenship.

In this order of ideas, the categories of political, economic and physical autonomy show a direction to analyze women's situation and to achieve equality. Besides, the concept of women's empowerment refers to the process of structured social forces to promote political, social and cultural change, towards the achievement of equality.

Empowerment of Women

Empowerment is understood as the process of recovering, collecting and giving full potential to women's and their allies' capacities, to deploy a social force towards change and the construction of a society "based upon and as guarantor of" equality between men and women, with an even distribution of obligations, responsibilities and benefits in their social groups.

It is a process which should allow the transformation of power relations supported by patriarchal vision. As K Young's words say: *"In an obvious sense, empowerment means that people take control of their own lives: achieve the ability to do things, set their own agendas, change events, in a way which previously did not exist. But for feminists empowerment is more than that: it comprises the radical alteration of processes and structures which reproduce the subordinate position of women as gender."*⁴ (underlining not on original text)

With reference to empowerment as a dynamic feature, Unicef points out that "the empowerment process is self-propelled and self-reinforcing; success at one level gives better basis for success at other levels"⁵. It also puts forward several levels of empowerment, from the improvement of life conditions to the incidence in government decisions at national and international level.

Class, ethnics and other differences in the work with women

A gender approach has showed society and their leaders the mechanisms, many times subtle, some times evident, which maintain women's subordination and consequently generate obvious discriminations in the access to power, resources and the benefits of development. Even more worrying is the double discrimination suffered by women, when they are part of social or ethnic groups also excluded by dominant groups. Different studies demonstrate

3 Cepal 2010 p. 35

4 Power and empowerment of women, in M Leon compiling, TM editors, 2000, P.10 .

5 Conceptual framework of equality and empowerment of women, in Power and empowerment of women, in M Leon compiling, TM editors, 2000, P.182

how women are the poorest among the poor and many times the most discriminated in minority ethnic groups. The search for women's equality therefore demands paying special attention to this double discrimination, both in the suitability of strategies (language, educational level, geographical access, etc.), and in the agendas and objectives, because warranting women's rights also means the eradication of discrimination and subordination of their own ethnic group or social class.

And so it is expressed by Villoro (1997) *"The unequal situation of women constitutes a special case among all social discriminations. In effect, different from other cases, they do not form a social class, nor a specific group, they are not a community, neither a social nor racial minority, they are in the cross-section of all groups and peoples, and in all of them they are an inseparable half. The overthrow of all conditions which have allowed social and political inequality would be, after the liberation of slaves, the largest emancipating revolution."*

Development effectiveness and gender inequalities

Development is a process of constant search for better answers and solutions to the needs and aspirations of people. This aims to warrant the necessary conditions to the full realisation of all members of society as human beings, within a sustainable arrangement.

As it has been previously pointed out, subordination and inequality conditions of women is a barrier for the development process; these conditions impede the enjoyment of the basics for human development, i.e., they impede the enjoyment of fundamental rights. For this reason, protecting women's needs, solving inequalities which oppress women and warranting the full exercise of their rights are priorities in development. The State, the civil society, and their agencies, should assume this responsibility, taking into consideration the profound differences of their respective social and public functions. ▶

II. Presentation of the virtual consultation results⁶



The virtual consultation was answered by 300 civil society organisations⁷. It contains 17 questions: the first five are closed answer type, the next 12 are open answer. This structure introduces a greater level of complexity when it comes to reading and interpreting the richness of the answers and contributions. Therefore, based upon the reference framework described herein, analysis categories were built for four large question groups and the conclusions:

CHAPTER 1. Profile of CSO which answered the virtual consultation

- Coverage countries (Question 1)
- Types of organisation (Question 2)
- Men/Women proportion in the staff working or membership of CSOs (Question 3)
- Men/Women proportion of the staff working or membership of social movements (Question 4)
- Existence of a women's or gender area or line of work (Question 5)
- Percentage of staff working in the Women's or Gender area (Question 6)

CHAPTER 2. CSO's agenda on Women and Gender

- Contributions of CSOs to contend patriarchal culture and to build gender equity (Question 7)
- Contributions of CSOs to the strengthening of women's grassroots or community organisations (Question 9)
- Topics or areas to be developed so women can have access to decision making levels (Question 11)
- Women's and gender work approach from a class and ethnic perspective (Question 10)
- Urgent topics in the women's agenda (Question 16)
- Elements for better effectiveness of the international instruments which consecrate and promote women's rights (Question 15)
- Exemplary experiences (Question 17)

6 To carry out this survey, a free software was used called "SurveyMonkey".

7 Actually there were 306 answers but 6 of them were invalid.

CHAPTER 3. Strategies to intensify the work of CSO for equality among women and men

- Harmonisation of agendas for joint work in topics of gender equality (Question 14)
- Internal changes in the CSO to avoid patriarchal practices and promote empowerment of women (Question 12)
- Accountability (Question 13)

CHAPTER 4. Limitations of CSOs to fulfil their aims (8)

CHAPTER 5. Synthesis of the central elements extracted from the virtual survey data.

Chapter 1

Profile of CSOs participating in the survey

Question 1. In which countries or countries does your organisation operate

The survey has options for 21 countries and “others”. It allows multiple options. The list contains South American countries (except Brazil because the system assimilated the Spanish speaking countries), Central America and the Caribbean. The inclusion of Spain is explained because some Spanish CSOs also work in Latin America. *(See Chart 1.1 Coverage of organisations per country).*

Question 2. How would you define your organisation – multiple option is possible.

Classification categories used in the question:

The design of the survey tried to distinguish, in terms of work objectives, the organisations specialized in women’s work from the rest, the geographical settings, the legal nature, the organisational level or degree. But as it is a self-administered survey, answers were the result of several interpretations, in most cases more than one option was marked. *(See Chart 2.1 Type of organisation)*

- **Women’s**, in some cases because they perform work with women, and in other cases due to staff composition –men or women working in the organisation. In other cases, the preference was a definition of NGO, social movement or other definition and “women’s” was omitted.
- **Mixed**, which makes reference in some cases to the staff who work in the CSO, and in other cases it refers to the target areas which is not exclusively women.
- **Community** was interpreted in several ways: as organisations from groups of people with a sense of belonging, when the beneficiaries are grassroots or popular sectors.
- **Local** whether the origin is local or the extent of its actions involves local issues. But also local issues can be assumed nationally (in contrast to international), city, region or specific area.

- **National NGO** if it is a formally recognized NGO in the country. (Not always opposed to social movement and in some cases both options are marked).
- **International NGO** when it is an organisation with its main office in another country or working in several countries. Also indicated was the situation when the organisation performs work or has an agenda dealing with international decisions, when it participates in international networks, etc.
- **Second or third level** joins several grassroots or first level organisations, several NGOs or movements, when they belong to networks, partnerships, coalitions, etc.

Chart 1.1

Coverage of organisations per country

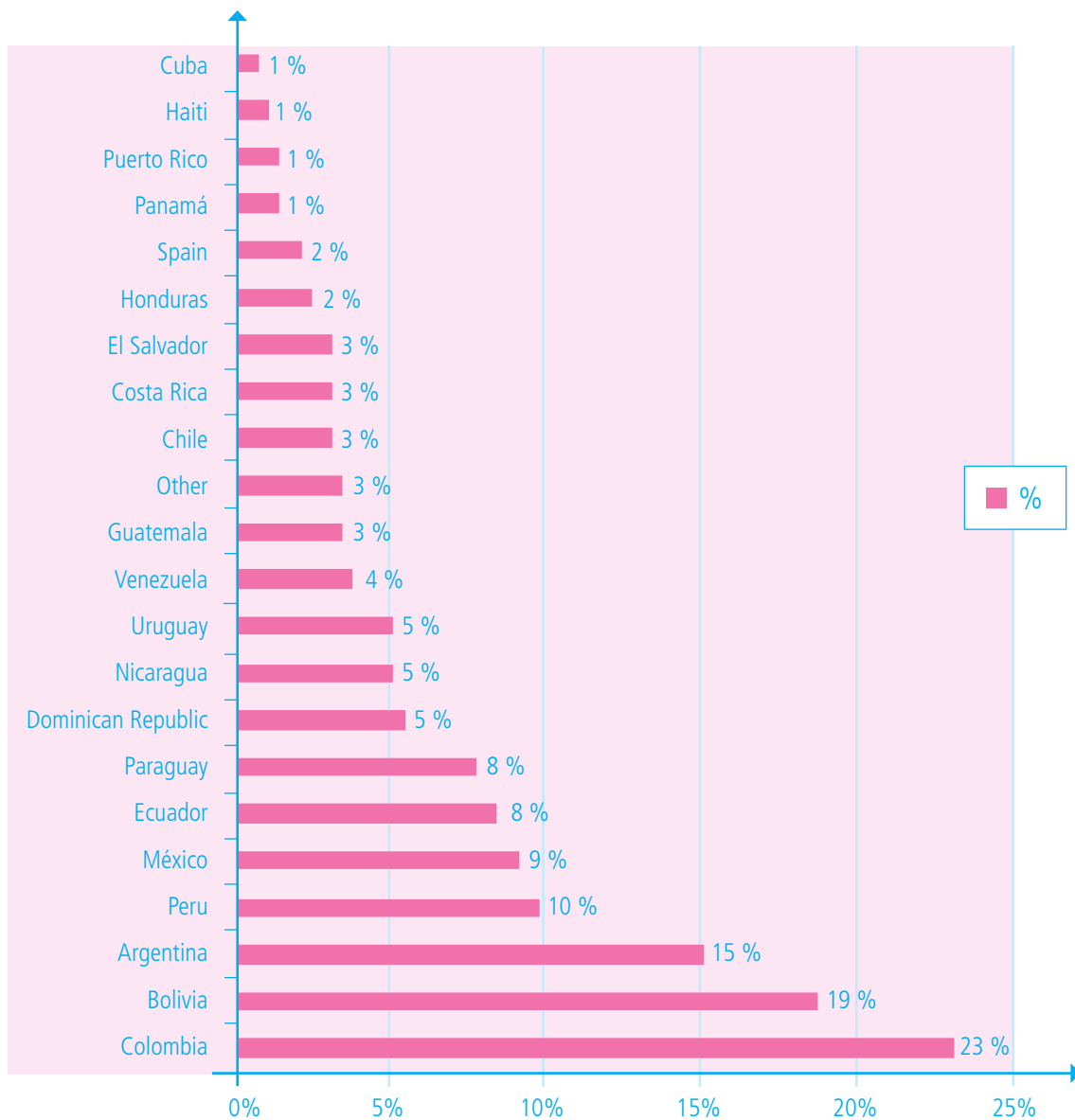
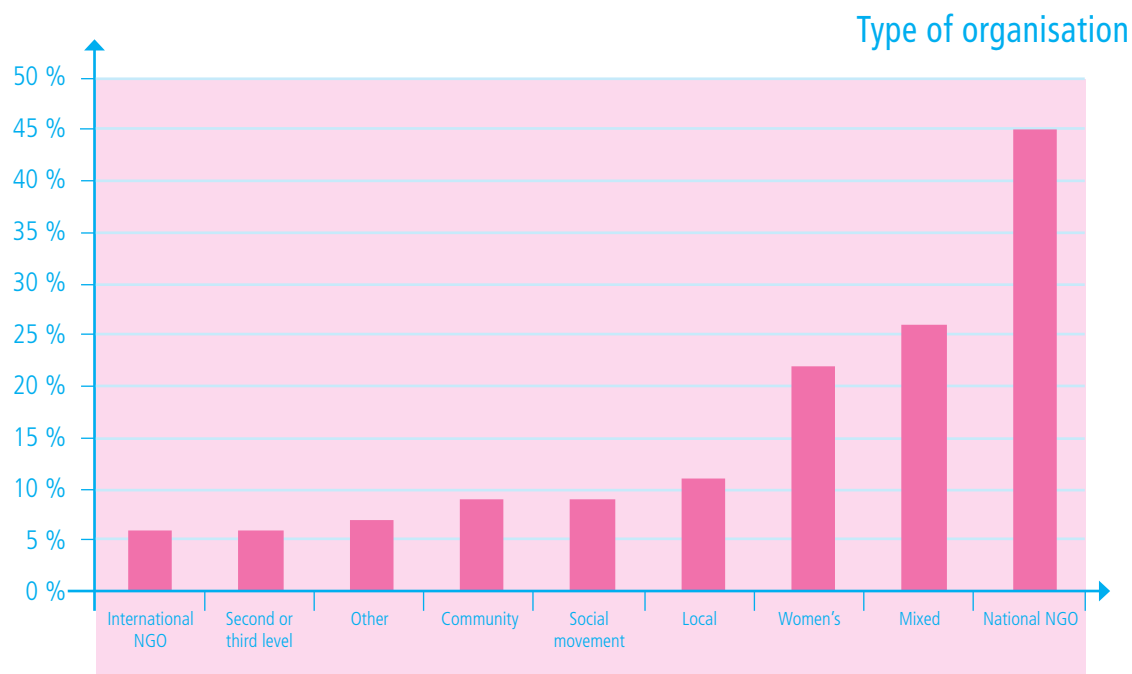


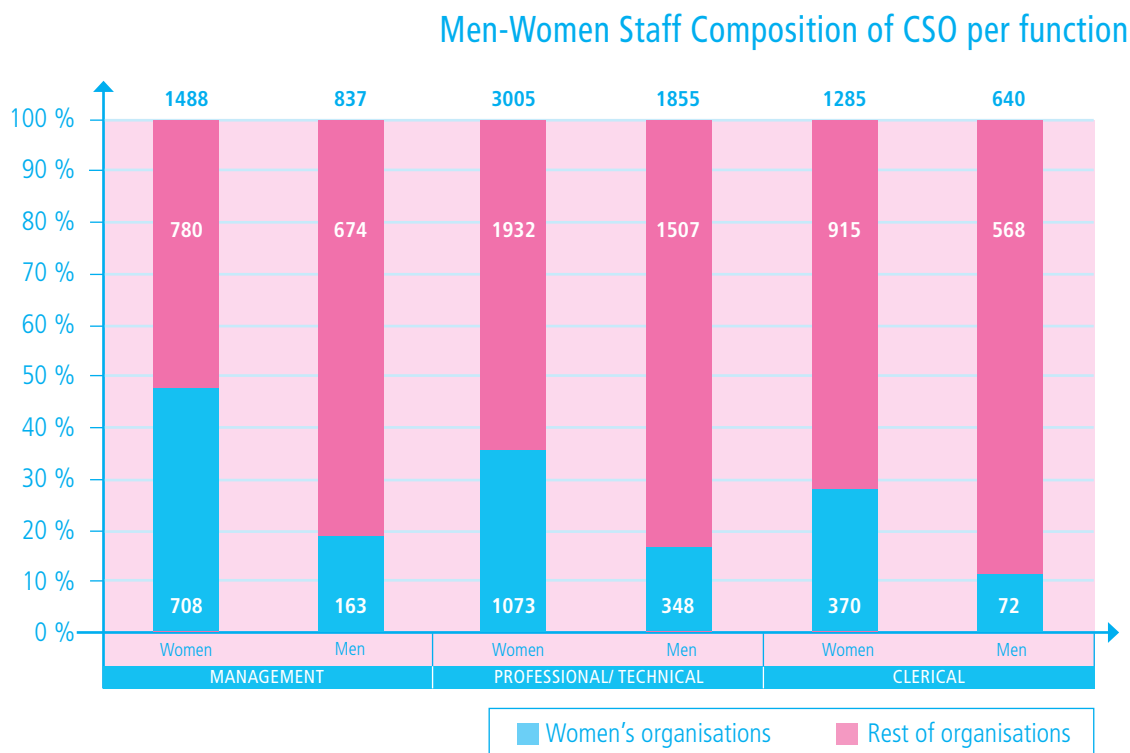
Chart 2.1



Question 3. Please say the total number of people working in your organisation, how many men and how many women.

The survey shows two charts to disaggregate per functions: Management, Professional or Technical, and Clerical.

Chart 3.1

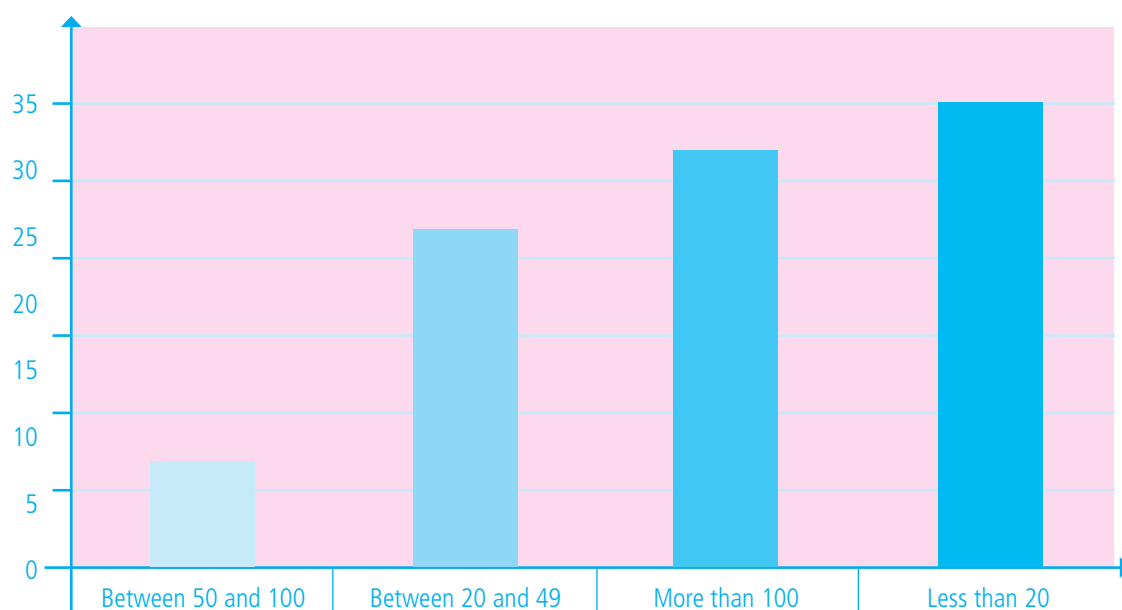


Question 4. If your organisation is a social movement, please indicate the total number of members (individuals) of your organisations, how many are men, and how many women, specifying: Management, Secretarial, Base.

Note: Though only 18 CSOs answered YES, that they actually are a social movement, 86 answered the number of members and 4 more marked 0 in all options. In this chart the size of the social movement is highlighted.

Chart 4.1

Social Movement per Rank of Members



Question 5. If your organisation is not fully committed to women’s work, does it have a program, a line of work or section/department specially devoted to women’s work and/or gender?

Table 5.1

Women’s or Gender Areas in CSOs devoted to women’s work

	# OSC	%
THEY DID NOT ANSWER	84	28%
THEY HAVE	147	49%
THEY DO NOT HAVE	69	23%

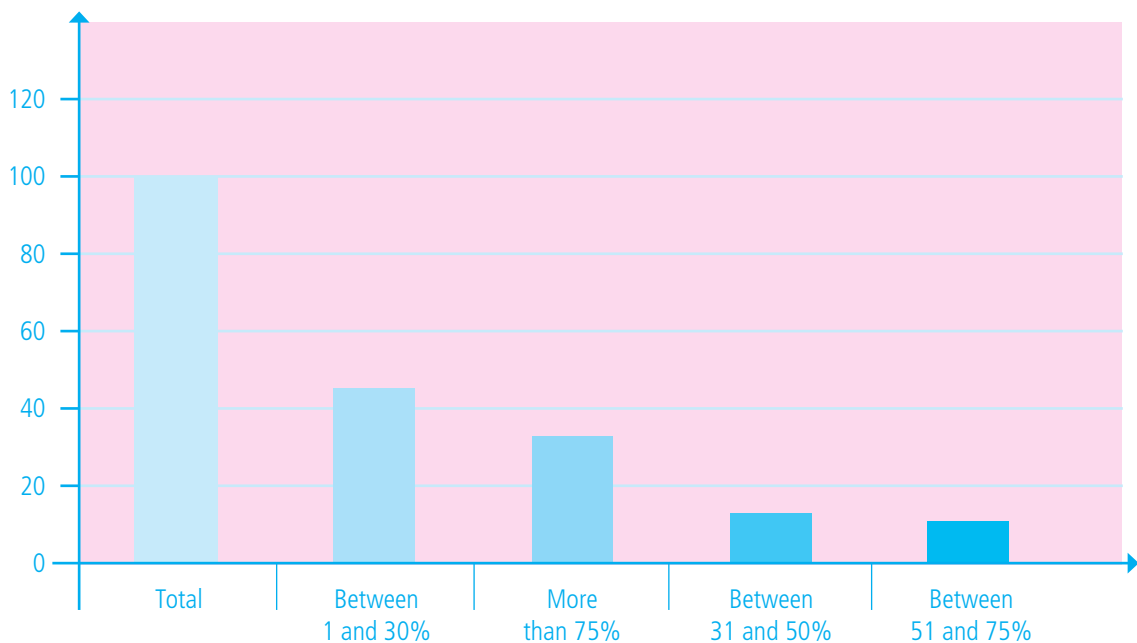
Question 6. If you do have one, what percentage of the staff in your organisation works in that program, line of work or section?

Note: Some organisations which answered they did NOT have a gender program, answered to this question with the percentage of staff assigned to this area.

Table 6.1

Staff assigned to Women’s and Gender area, compared to total staff in the organisation

Staff in women’s and/or gender area	# CSO	%
Between 1 and 30%	81	45%
Between 31 and 50%	22	12%
Between 51 and 75%	18	10%
More than 75%	58	32%
Total	179	100%



Chapter 2

CSO agenda and priority topics to achieve equality between men and women

This chapter contains 7 questions that deal with priority topics of the CSO agenda. These are open questions, classified to the effects of the analysis with a common matrix based on autonomy types: political, economical and physical, each one being disaggregated in several components.

Categories for the analysis of questions about CSO agendas

Political Autonomy

1. **Society sensitisation on gender equality.** Men and women becoming aware about gender inequality and the importance of cultural change. Use of the media to shape opinion in favour of women's equality; courses, workshops and diverse training modalities.
2. **Development of capacities for political participation.** A set of activities and strategies which contribute to women's qualifications, awareness and several competences and knowledge types to have critical and constructive participation in all social life settings. Leadership promotion and training, citizenship preparation.
3. **Organisational strengthening.** Referred to the organisation processes of women, growth numerically, in action and management capacity, the organisational economic and financial stability, articulation and relations with other organisations and peer groups and movements.
4. **Construction of agendas for women's equality.** Actions heading to organisational aims and strategies, oriented to achieve women's equality and human rights. Elaboration of plans and programs according to the priorities in each context (includes improvement of life conditions, looking after immediate needs, and specific routes against class, ethnic or any other form of discrimination)
5. **Access of women to decision making positions and instances.** Power and government, in the private and public sector. It includes electoral participation, parity representation, among others.
6. **Capacity to influence public policies.** Consensus, demands, pressure for the implementation of policies and programs for women's development, so women's voice is expressed in local, national and international governing bodies, and their needs and priorities are provided for. Policy monitoring, auditing, accountability requirements. Institutional instances to work for women's equality.
7. **Information systems, studies, research.** To support women's equality cause.

Physical Autonomy

8. **Sufficient awareness, knowledge, education and information about sexual and reproductive rights.** Importance of responsible and civilized relations between men and women.
9. **Demanding guarantees and effectiveness from the State on women's rights.** Through regulations, policies, measures and services to protect all women.
10. **Adequate health and social services, within easy access to guarantee women's rights.** Effective maternity support. Women's needs should not be reduced to maternity alone.
11. **Effective measures to eradicate violence against women. No tolerance to violence against women.**
12. **Actions to protect and restore women's sexual and reproductive rights.**

Economic Autonomy

13. **Access to income and production assets.** (Training, work, land, capital, property, etc.), business initiatives to generate income, projects to improve life conditions.
14. **Control on resources and production assets.** Equity in the use and consumption of these at home.
15. **Elimination of double working day.** Through shared family work and better social services.
16. **Policies and measures against discrimination of women in labour settings.** In compensation, hiring, promotions, etc. Protection of women's pension rights, occupational health, professional risks.
17. **Others.**

Question 7. List the main 5 contributions (in the economic, political and/or social agenda) that your organisation is making to challenge patriarchal and male chauvinist culture in your country and to construct equality between men and women.

Chart 7.1 Contributions to construct equality. (See page 17)

Question 8. List the main 5 contributions that, in your opinion, CSOs must make to strengthen women's organisations (grassroots or community).

Chart 8.1 What CSOs should do to strengthen women's organisations. (See page 18)

Question 9. Point out the 5 main topics or spheres of actions to be promoted to effectively contribute to place women, from their local and national settings, in the decision making instances that affect them.

Chart 9.1 1 Topics to be developed to place women in decision making instances. (See page 19)

Chart 7.1

Contributions to construct equality

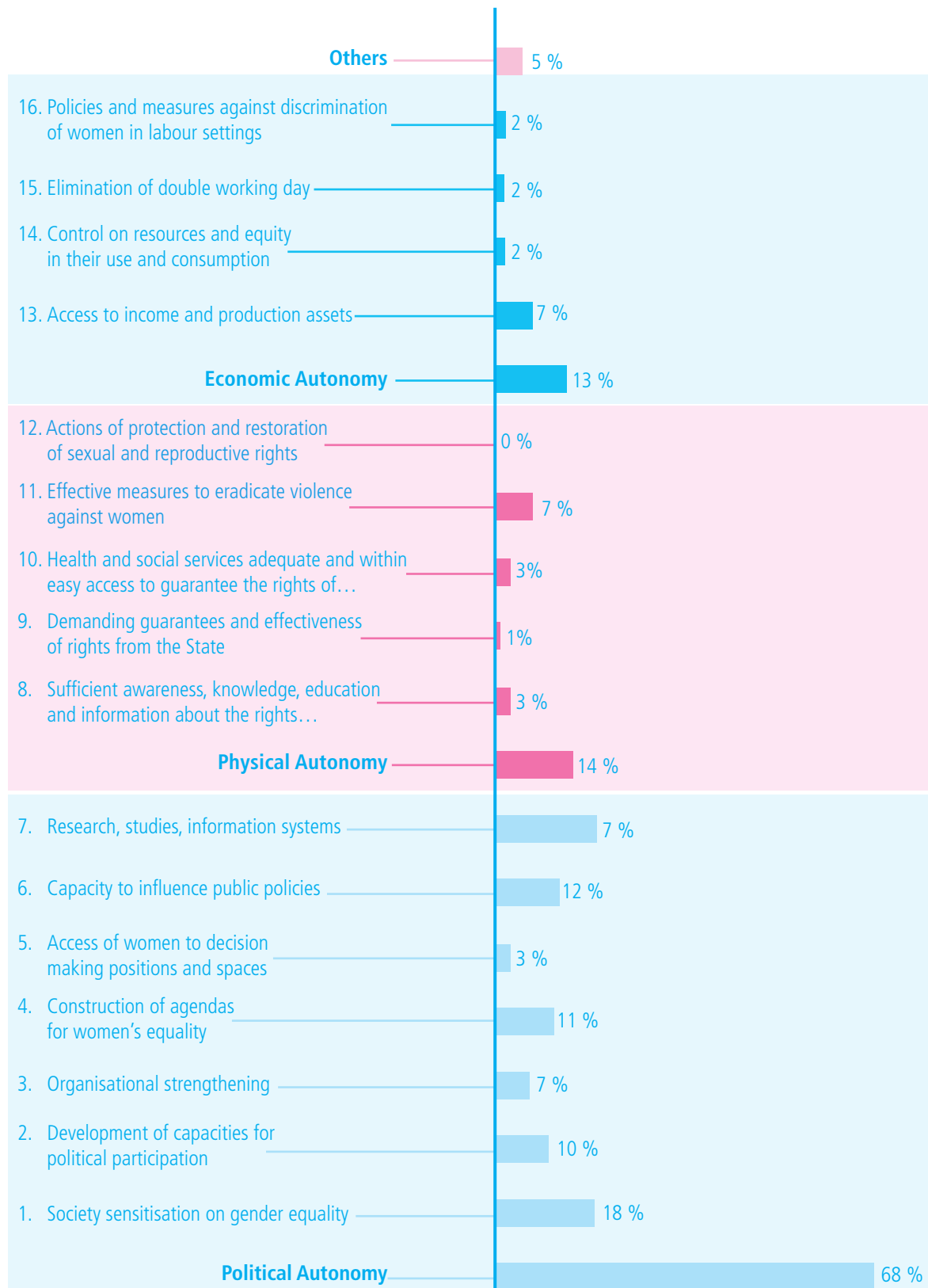


Chart 8.1

What CSOs should do to strengthen women's organisations

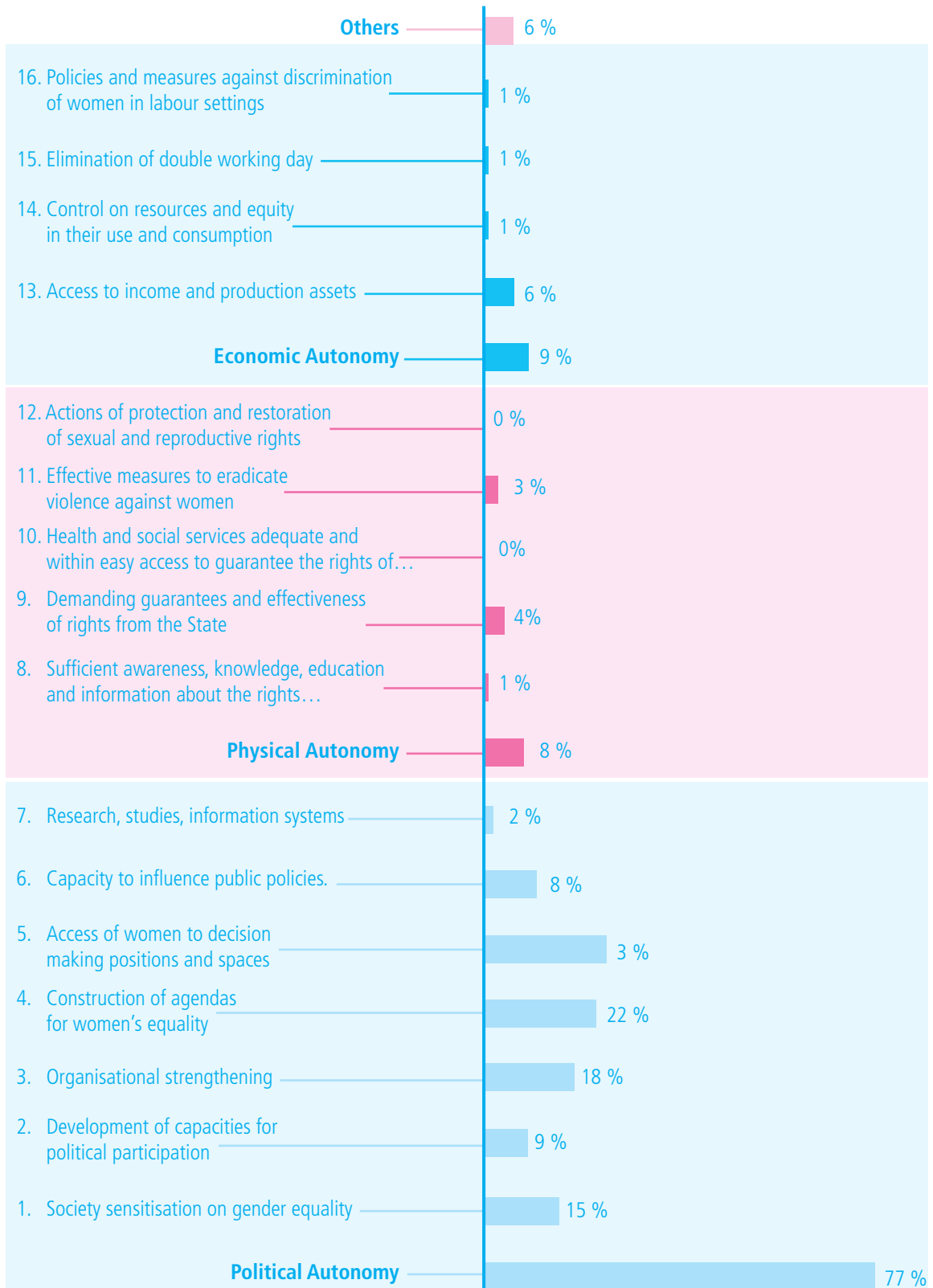
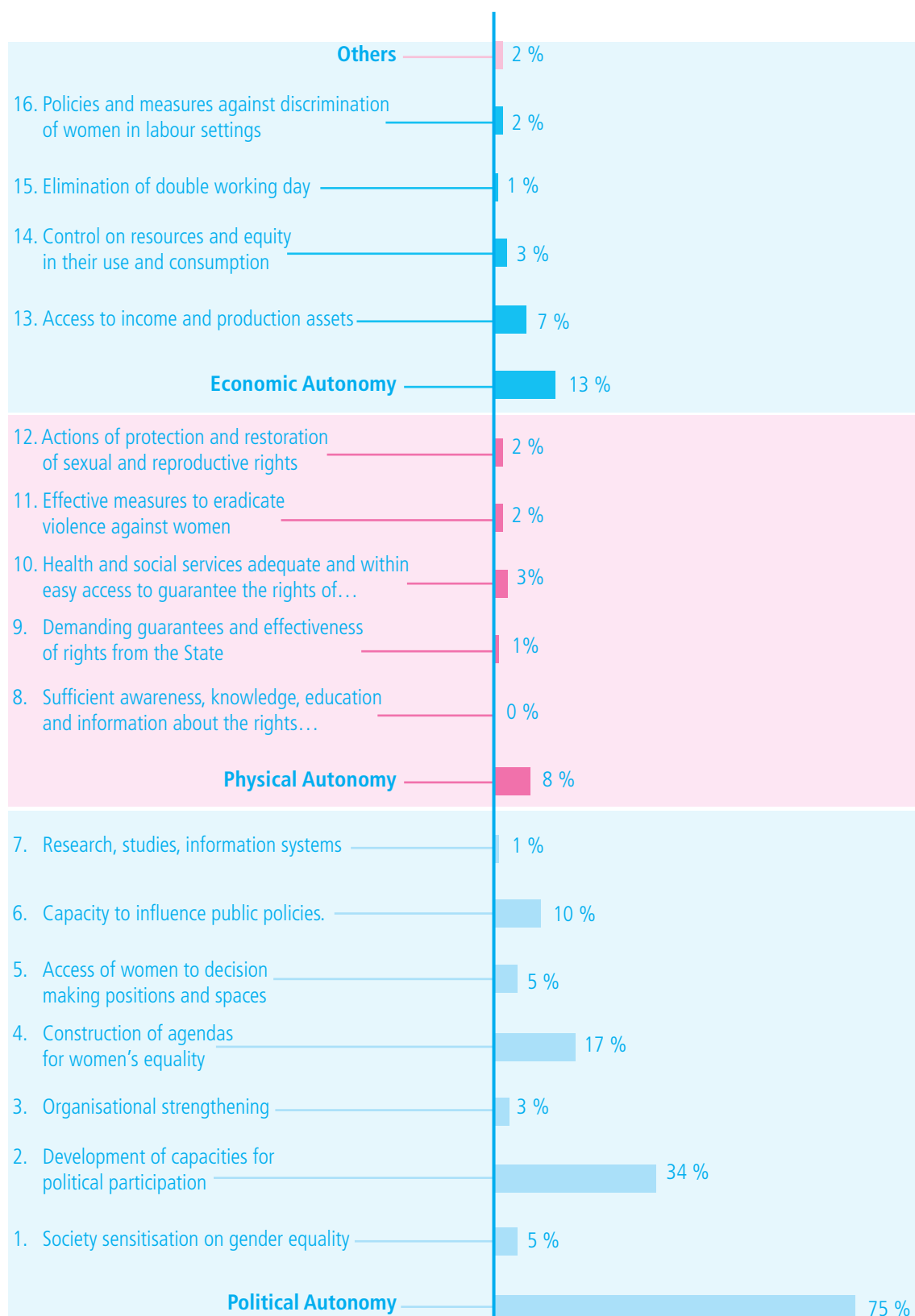


Chart 9.1

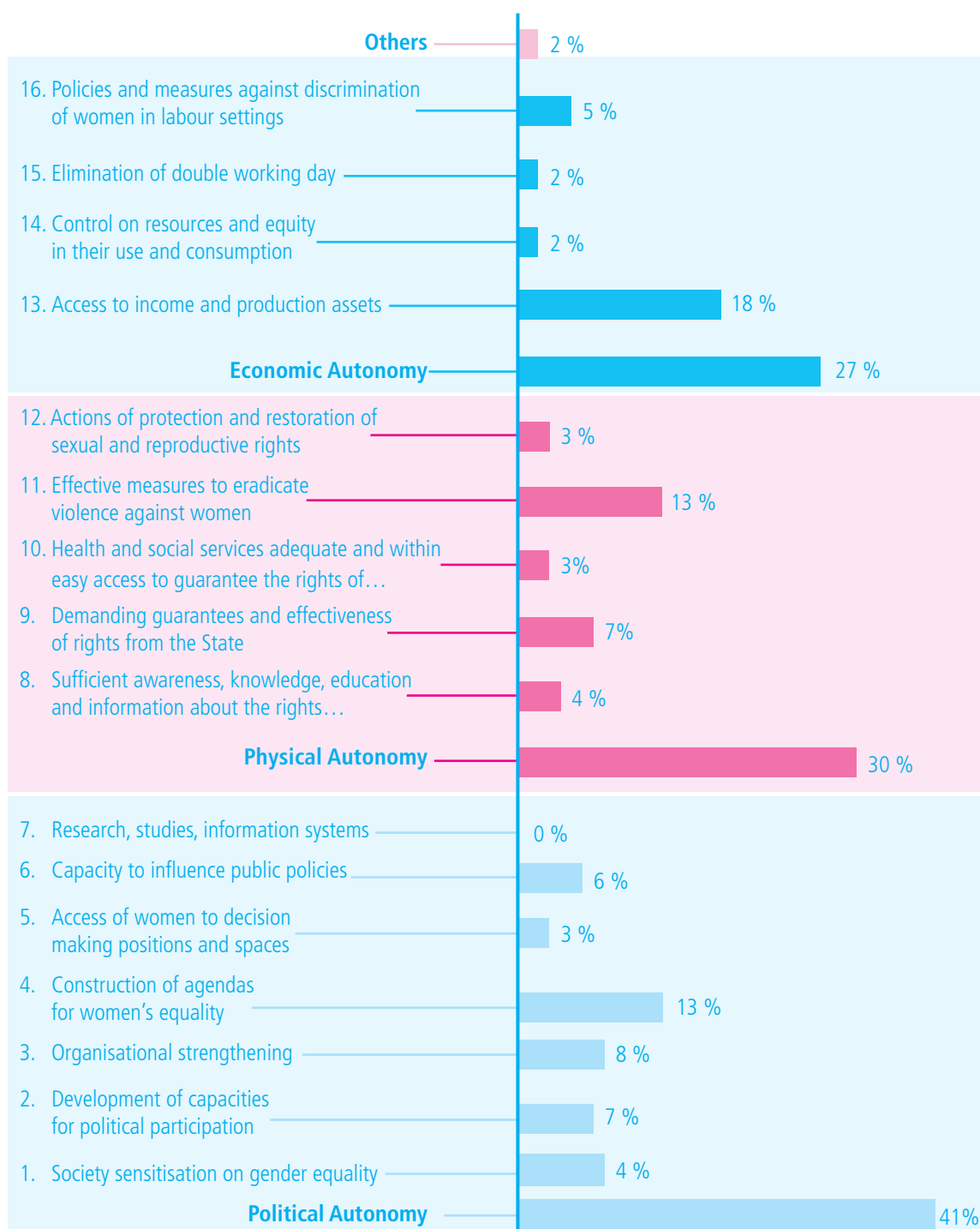
Topics to be developed to place women in decision making instances



Question 10. List the 3 most urgent topics of women’s agenda, specially grassroots and community, which are to be demanded from governments and international co-operation to guarantee equality, fair treatment and empowerment of women

Chart 10.1

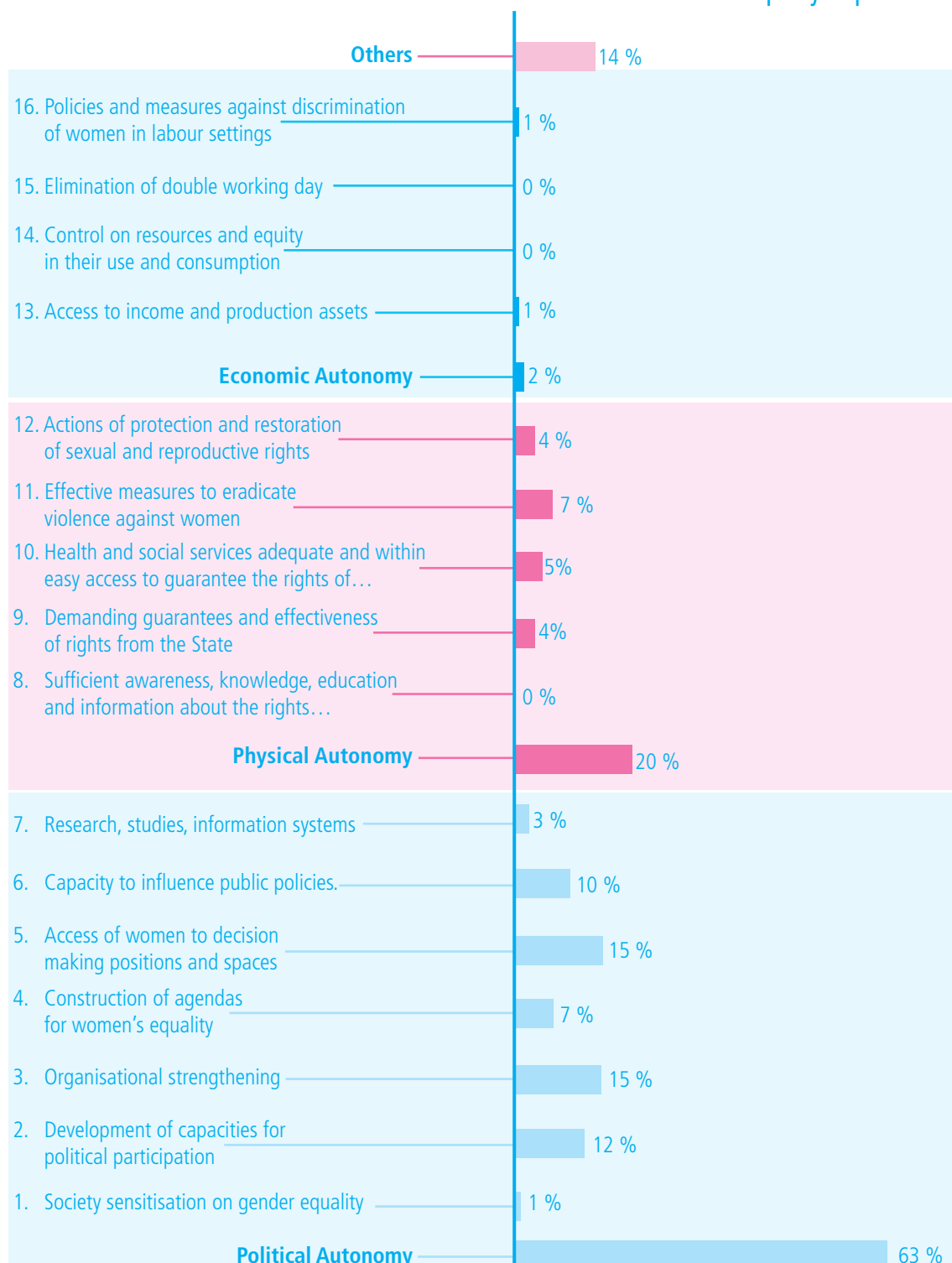
Urgent topics for equality and empowerment of women



Question 11. Briefly describe an inspiring experience of institutional policies that has effectively contributed to the strengthening of women in your country (maximum 250 words)

Chart 11.1

Exemplary experiences

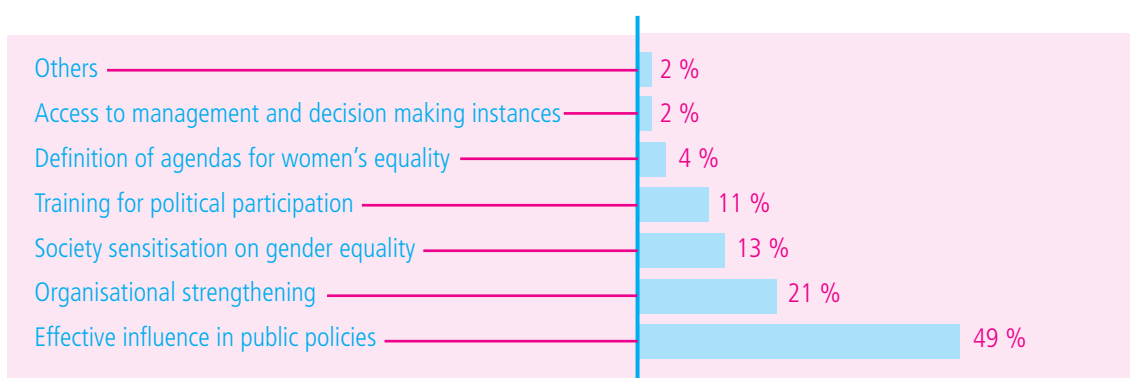


Question 12. List the 5 main elements needed so that international instruments which recognize and promote women’s rights become efficient and are translated into effective public policies in your country.

Actions to achieve international instruments effectiveness in favour of women’s rights and their implementation in public policies are linked to the empowerment of women and achievements in political autonomy. Consistent with the orientation of the answers, a matrix was designed to disaggregate the components of political autonomy and empowerment.

Chart 12.1

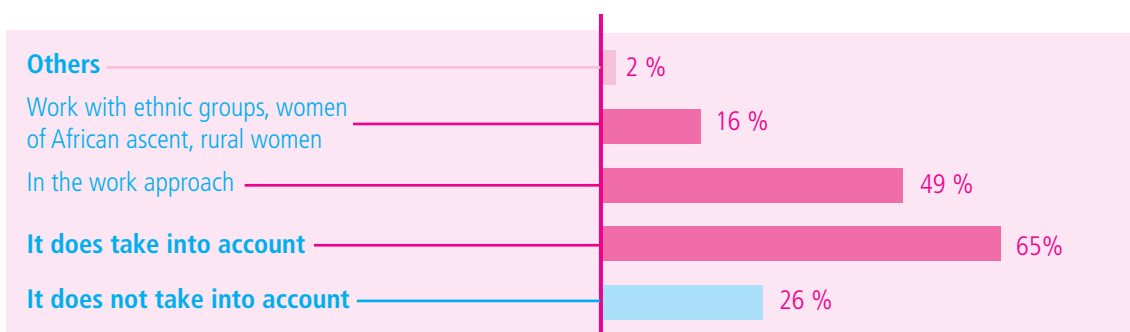
Elements to make international instruments which recognise and promote women’s rights effective in the countries.



Question 13. Briefly explain the importance or the value your organization assigns to social class differences and racial ethnical origin approach among women, to ensure the effectiveness of development actions (maximum 100 words)

Chart 13.1

Importance of social class differences and racial ethnical origin approach in the effectiveness of development actions



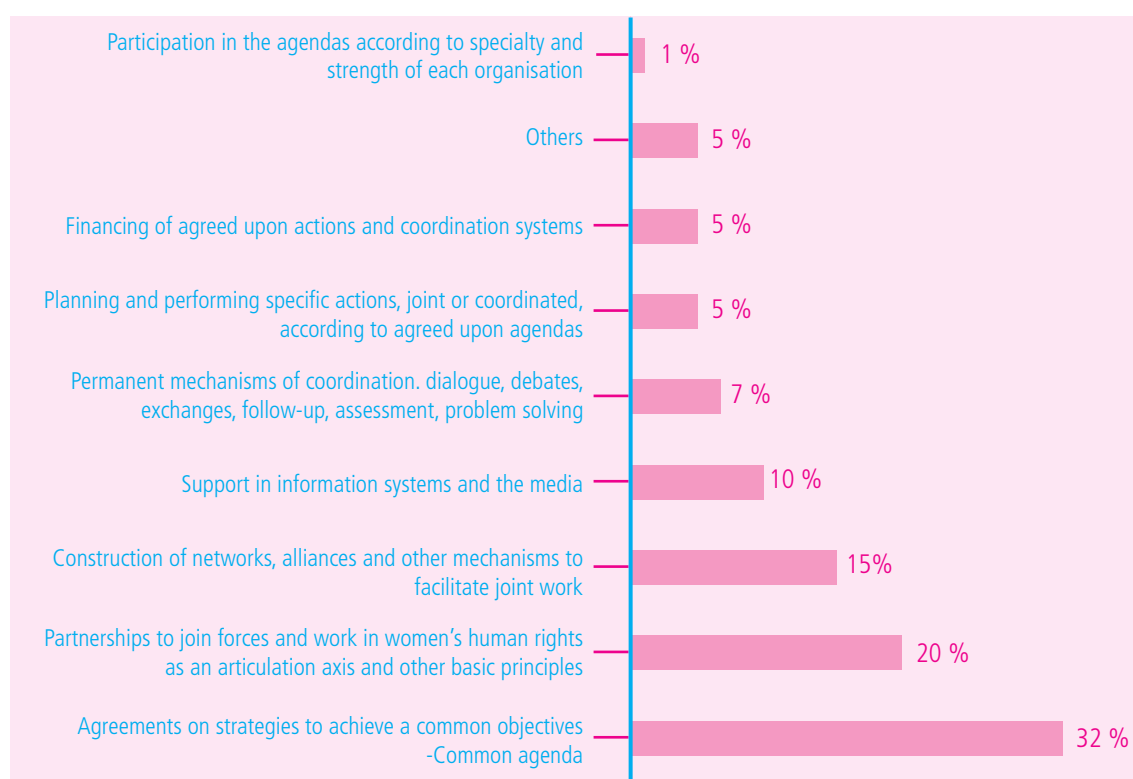
CHAPTER 3

Strategies to intensify the work of CSO to achieve equality among men and women

Question 14. List the 3 main strategies your organization would put forward to conciliate or harmonize the different women's and feminist agendas with the agendas of other organized expressions, to effectively achieve women's empowerment and their inclusion, within a framework of democracy strengthening and development effectiveness.

Chart 14.1

Strategies to harmonise agendas for the joint work of CSOs towards development and democracy

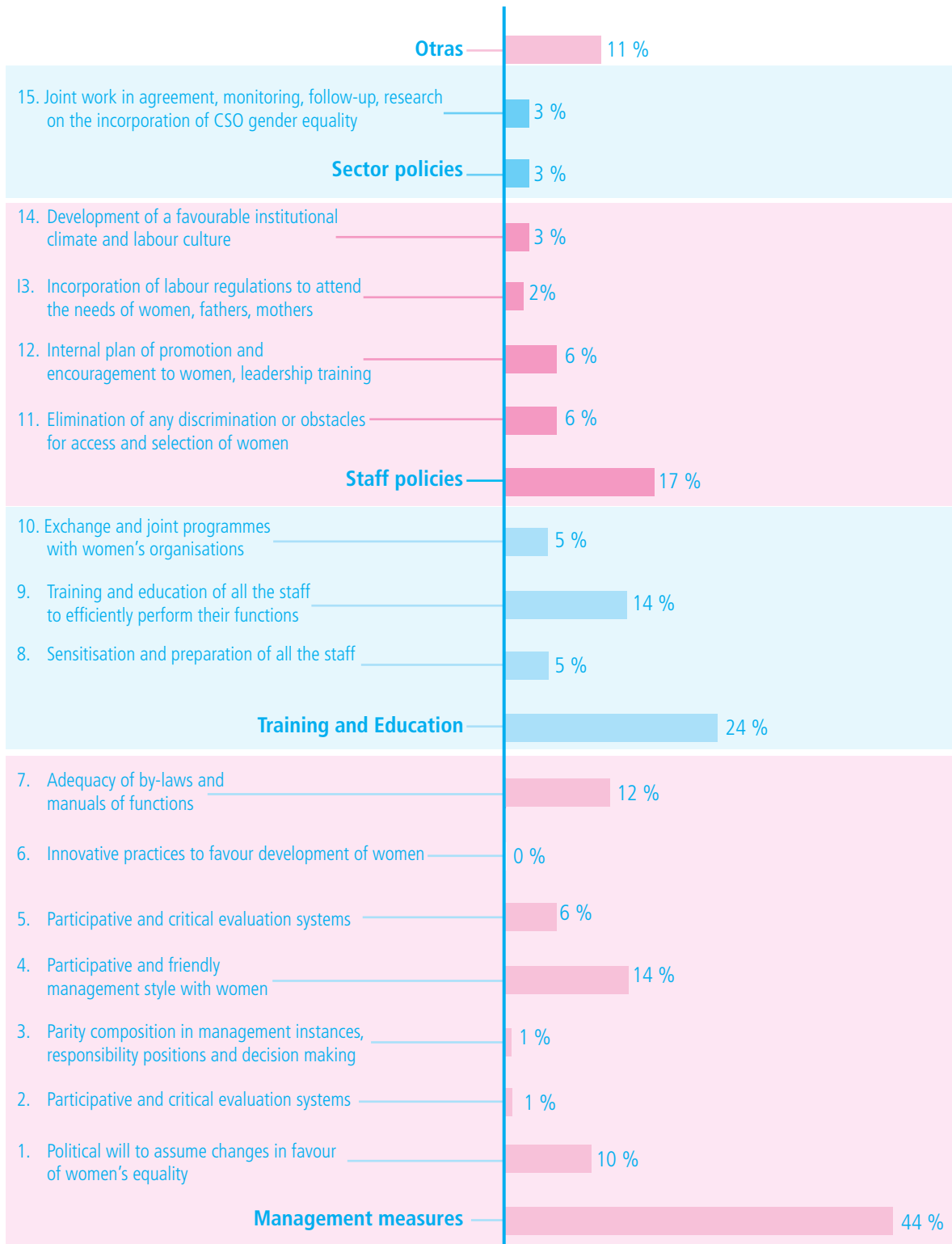


Question 15. How can CSOs promote and adopt gender equity and women's empowering into their functioning? List 3 strategies which should be promoted by mixed social organizations, formed by women and feminists, to prevent and modify practices reproducing patriarchal culture into CSOs, including social movements and organization struggle for justice and democracy.

Answers were classified in three groups: Management, Training and Staff Policies. There is the consideration that changes in subordination relations must be a clearly defined aim in the organisations. As such, it must be assumed at management or executive level of the organisation, translated into staff policies and the necessary training actions must be developed. Additionally, the force of the organised sector which shares this objective is considered to be a strong point for change.

Chart 15.1

Measures to incorporate gender equality and empowerment of women into CSOs and social movements



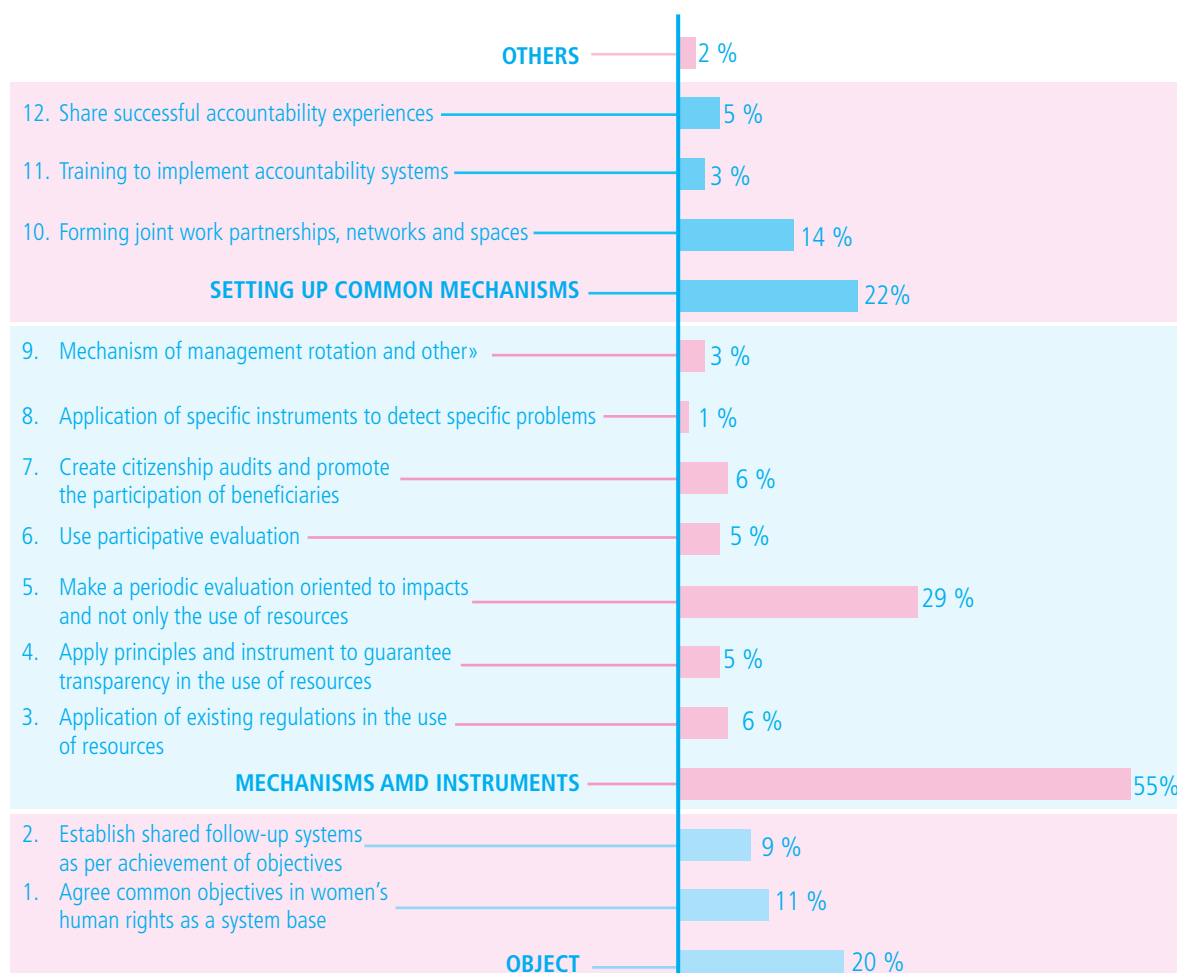
Question 16. Briefly explain how mutual accountability could be ensured, among CSOs in general and those specifically devoted to women’s and gender issues, including community based organizations and grassroots, to make sure all assume their responsibility as advocates of gender equality (maximum 100 words).

The basic components of a common accountability system, as the question suggests, could be defined around the following questions: About what they are accountable (common objectives), Before whom (beneficiaries of programs, peers, cooperation agencies, among others), how (proposals of mechanisms and instruments, among them participative ones are emphasised), what for (ensure that all assume their responsibility in the achievement of women’s equality). What happens if the result is not satisfactory? An issue to be included in the system’s design, otherwise the system could result innocuous.

In the following chart, answers are grouped in three categories: accountability objectives, mechanisms and instruments, and the setting of a shared system.

Chart 16.1

Proposals and strategies to promote mutual accountability, given the responsibility assumed to promote gender equality



Chapter 4

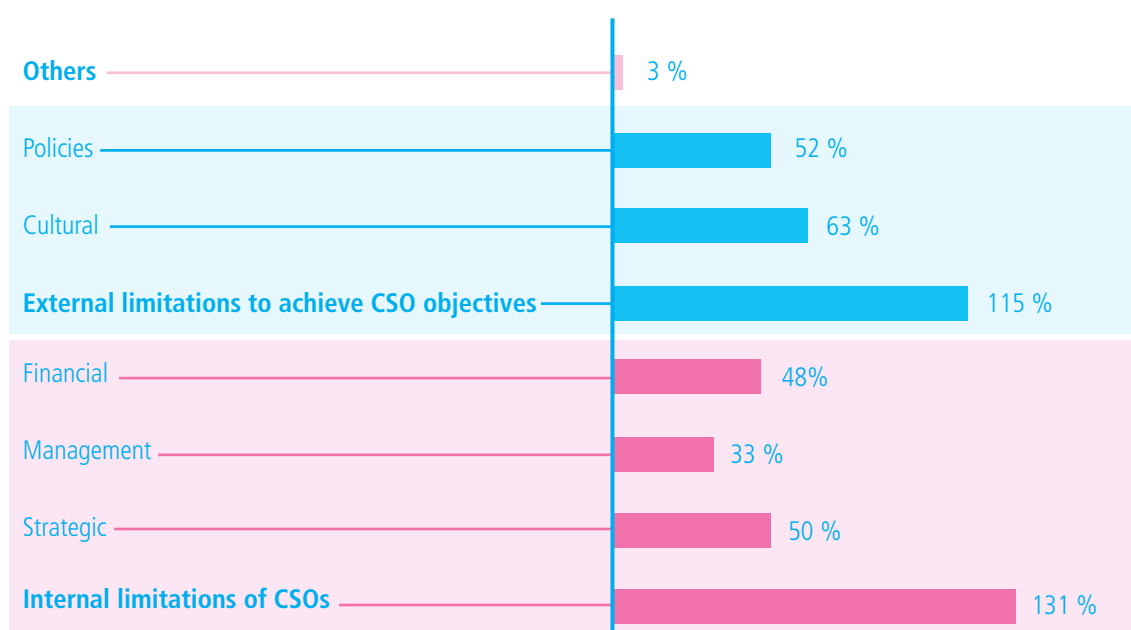
Limitations of CSOs to fulfil women's equality objectives

Question 17. List the 3 main limitations that, in your opinion, women's NGOs face to fulfil their objectives.

Classification matrix of the answers took into account internal and external causes, or problems faced by women's NGOs, to facilitate corrective actions emerged as a result of this diagnosis.

Chart 17.1

Limitations of women's NGOs to fulfil their objectives



Chapter 5

Synthesis of the central elements extracted from the survey

1. With reference to the survey coverage. Countries with a larger participation were Colombia (22,8%); Bolivia (18,2%) and Argentina (15,2%); and those with the least participation were Cuba and Haiti. This could be explained to a certain extent by the influence of national organised civil societies in the Open Forum discussions, participation of women's organisations in this process, and the strength of civil society in each country. In any case a large coverage of regional countries gives legitimacy and validity to the regional consultation, whenever the variation of

largest and smallest representation does not reach a quarter of the total. An interesting sample was obtained, though not representative in pure statistical terms, of the CSO work in the Latin American reality in relation to gender equality and the significance of women's rights.

The absence of Brazil deserves an explanation, the survey was conducted in Spanish and Brazil was not included in the answer options. However, in the category "other countries" there are 3 surveys conducted in Portuguese and there could be organisations working in Brazil which answered the survey in Spanish. It should be taken into account that the survey does not enquire about the country of origin of the organisation, but about the country where it operates.

2. The range of organisations which accepted to participate in the virtual consultation confirms the existence of CSOs working in different settings, with varied memberships, of diverse nature, or at least interested in working for women's equality. It means that a joint work could be promising. It should be pointed out that 60% of organisations (which responded to question 3) are formed at least by 20 people, what also supports the prioritisation of innovative strategies of a joint and coordinated work to give the best results, when forming a social force struggling for change.
3. Women's participation in CSOs is larger compared to men's participation. It does not mean we should neglect encouragement and promotion policies to recruit women and facilitate their access to management positions. If to this scenery we link the results of question 12 about implementation of gender equality within the organisations, the inference is that the emphasis now would not be in the proportion of recruited women, but in the equal distribution of power within the organisation and management decisions to orient strategies to more effectiveness women's equality.
4. The existence of lines of work devoted to women's equality is relatively well known by CSOs, but still there are many organisations (23%, question 5) which do not include this topic as an essential element of development policies. Furthermore, since there is a large number reporting they devote a good proportion of their staff and effort to equality struggles, a serious reflection should be encouraged about the effectiveness of strategies being used.
5. With respect to CSO contributions to the construction of women's equality, attention is drawn to the fact that 70% of mentioned contributions are related to political autonomy, and among them, sensitisation and influence in public policies are the most mentioned ones, whereas economic autonomy and physical autonomy are scarcely mentioned. The concern is not giving strategic priority to the political aspects, which could be viable, but difficulties posed by labour inequality and physical violence are so substantial that CSOs cannot recognise advances or contributions in that area. Without a disregard to sensitisation work, it can be perceived it has more social acceptance than the elimination of the double working day or the recognition of uncompensated work. It also indicates that CSOs can have more expertise in influencing policies than in facing an essential women's freedom issue, which is the eradication of violence against women.
6. The same analysis applies to the question of strengthening grassroots or community women's organisations. Actions chosen are organisational strengthening and sensitisation on women's

equality, followed by development of capacities for participation and influencing policies, whereas physical and economic autonomy issues are not significant in the answers.

7. It must be taken into account that question 2 about type of organization, only 26 (9%) self report as community organisations, whereas 134 (45%) are registered NGOs. If we consider that organised women are the most important social force promoting cultural change towards gender equality, we should deepen the analysis on the organizational forms adopted by women and the influencing dynamics, with no assimilation beforehand to traditional NGOs. That is why it is noticeable that pronouncements associated to physical autonomy (elimination of double working day or eradication of violence against women) do not impact the answers, when they could actually be important mobilisation banners.
8. With reference to women's participation in decision making instances, also privileged are preparation for women's participation, setting up of agendas in that direction and influence in public policies. It is important to appreciate the large obstacles for participation, such as the overburden of uncompensated work and caregiver obligations, the permanent threat of violence against women and being more prone to poverty, to mention some. So women's equality cannot be built without questioning the privileges of a ruling minority, when the large majority suffers oppression and exclusion. This is a challenge for the CSOs as a whole and their development strategies.
9. With regard to the most urgent demands to the State and international cooperation on the road to equality and empowerment of women, results of the survey are more distributed in the three autonomies: political, physical and economic. The largest percent is the access of women to income and production assets (18%), followed by the eradication of violence (13%), and the same construction of agendas for equality. Consequently, priority topics to make demands to the State are identified, but this priority does not coincide with contributions reportedly made by CSOs, which are concentrated in organisational strengthening and participation in decision making instances.

It could be inferred that CSOs in general establish a sphere of action for women on behalf of women, and with women in the direction of the State, to facilitate their access, but physical autonomy and economic autonomy lie in the hands of women's organisations. However, if CSOs in general do not add leadership in physical and economic actions, how could women alone succeed if their movements and organisations are only emerging and much more threatened? As it is revealed in the first items of the survey. Virtual consultation refers to the question: Where is women's strength positioned to make those claims? bearing in mind the weakness observed in women's community organisations and social movements

10. The question asking for exemplary experiences reinforces the CSO tendency to privilege organizational strengthening, training, participation in decision making instances and influencing public policies. It could be stated that is their niche. Not very significant appear the topics of violence against women, physical autonomy, and economic autonomy is virtually nonexistent.

11. What is to be done for international instruments to be effective, which consecrate and promote women's rights, reflects the special "vocation" of influence in public policies (20%) and submitting proposals to responsible instances (16%), followed in order: financing and articulation with social movements, partnerships, and joint work.

Mobilisation around the eradication of violence and economic autonomy (e.g. due recognition to caregiver work and the elimination of double working day) are weak topics in CSO agenda. They could be massive mobilisation banners for women, as they are vital issues of their existence. With no disrespect to the advances in political autonomy, these conquests must be articulated with the achievement of economic and physical autonomy to really impact the roots of inequality which perpetuate domination.

12. As far as class and ethnic differences approach in women's work, the survey shows that 26% do not consider them and 65% do consider them, or they work with groups suffering class or race discriminations. Results do not allow more deductions on these problems, it should be a topic to be developed with other type of research and of course within the specific context of each country.
13. Articulation of agendas. It is important to understand that the accountability system is not only a problem of mechanisms but a conception of the actors' responsibility in a democracy, interacting with beneficiaries and financing sources, upon the understanding that both have a say from their own perspectives. A large percentage of answers focus the mechanisms, but there is an important emphasis in working together with common objectives, and willingness to establish partnerships.
14. In the incorporation of gender equality and empowerment of women within the organisations, the component of sensitisation and training again has highest significance (14%), together with parity composition in decision making instances, followed by adequacy of functions. Innovative practices favouring empowerment of women barely reach one register.
15. Finally, in internal difficulties, the most reported is the lack of resources and in external difficulties, cultural practices which impede women's participation. It is important to mention some concerns expressed in the answers about the little capacity and effectiveness of some women's organisations, and in a different sense, the way they interact, which is perceived as women's radicalism and constitutes an obstacle in the relation with the State and with other organisations in general.
16. In general terms, the survey shows the strengths of CSOs taken together, and the gaps in women's equality achievements. Topics such as a shared accountability system, gender equality within the CSOs, articulation of agendas, class and ethnic approach in women's work are perceived as less adequate by CSOs. Others, like training and influence in policies are more generalised. A reflection must be made on the relevance of hanging on to stronger and surely more comfortable areas, or taking the risks of interacting with women themselves in other areas, with innovative practices, specially in economic and physical autonomy, as mentioned before.

III. Regional workshop and national reports

Gender consultation ended up with the Regional Workshop on Gender for Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Bogotá on 27th April, 2011, with 50 participants from 17 countries. The workshop had the national reports from Argentina, Nicaragua, Bolivia, Mexico and Colombia, and the preliminary results of the virtual survey. Group work was implemented on that basis, and proposals on the programmed topics were put to the consideration of the plenary session.

We must lay emphasis on the diversity, deepness and extent of the national reports, what show a regional functioning signed by common features in conceptual areas and in practical and strategic advances, but also by important differences at national level insofar critical topics and proposals. A special recognition deserves the case of Bolivia, which presented a video with the dimensions and scope of the national gender consultation, participation and dialogue among the diverse actors, and the theoretical and political statements from the work. Additionally, a very complete text was produced, published on the UNITAS Web site, which reports on the work done. The publication of the complete text of all the countries work is impossible, so the most significant contributions from each country follow, extracted from the presentations made at the regional workshop:

A. ARGENTINA. Three regional consultations in the country (Buenos Aires, Cordoba, General Roca - Patagonia) with the participation of 55 people. A call was launched to all type of organisations; among them some participant organisations were women's only.

Favourable factors for the advancement in gender equality agenda:

- Existence of a democratic system which respects human rights.
- Elaboration of distributive public policies which favour inclusion and the exercise of rights, sanctioning of non discriminatory laws, such as the gay marriage law.
- CSOs are the most encouraging factors of participative processes, with a non-profit making approach, and they can influence cultural change.
- Social organisations make claims, put pressure, exercise control and are sentinels in the compliance of public policies in their territory.
- CSOs promote gathering opportunities and exchange spaces for women.

Pending tasks to guarantee gender equality effectiveness:

- Focus on cultural change.
- Contradictions in many CSOs which do not practise gender equality premises but it is present in their own discourse.
- Debate linking gender and development is still recent within organisations.
- Justice is influenced by patriarchal culture and the Church.

- Mass media reproduce this patriarchal culture, so there is a challenge to create alternative communication means.
- Double and triple working day for women is one of the conditions that hinder equitable development.
- Reproductive work continues to be “naturally” a feminine space.
- The State uses women’s labour and their time to execute public policies, without a recognition for that work.
- We establish the rights, but we don’t know how to make them effective.

Priorities:

- Situations of poverty and social vulnerability that affect women in particular.
- Boys and girls in a situation of economic and social vulnerability.
- Trafficking in human beings.
- Sexual and reproductive rights.
- Gender violence. Despite the existence of laws against gender violence, patriarchal culture is prevalent in ministerial districts, courts of law and public institutions.
- Guarantees of equality in labour opportunities and job stability. Women continue to have access to executive posts with more difficulties and they face obstacles.

B. NICARAGUA. A national consultation mainly with women’s organisations, oriented by the virtual survey questions. 120 people participated. Their main conclusions make reference to:

- There are political limitations in the dialogue between CSOs, the government and the State, as a consequence of CSO persecution.
- There are aid programmes for self-sufficiency and the generation of income for women, but these initiatives need a process of sensitisation.
- Dialogue spaces must be generated specially between the United Nations system and women’s CSOs.
- As an internal reflection, at the Civil Coordinating Group of Nicaragua other agendas are privileged to the detriment of the development of women’s agenda.
- Nicaragua needs a public policy for women and girls which integrates all actors.
- There is the need to apply a gender approach from the coordinating group, to impact citizenship and give hierarchy to the approach.

C. BOLIVIA. In this consultation, more than 200 people participated. It was fed by sub-national consultations. Their main conclusions make reference to:

- Power relations subordinate participation and women’s contributions to development, they obstruct structural transformation processes demanded by Bolivian society.
- Reflection made by social organisations came from the analysis of strategies more effective in the promotion of women’s rights and gender equality. It is recognised the importance to incorporate gender equality in policies elaborated and executed by the State, NGOs, donors and social organisations.
- Social organisations established that discrimination between men and women is a product of colonialism and power relations generated by the system. Very important to understand that culture constantly transforms, and that at present Bolivian society must reinvent and nourish its culture from the roots of indigenous peoples, picking up their values and philosophical knowledge linked to complementariness, shared responsibilities and unity among men and women in a community life.

- Then again, for NGOs and international cooperation, the incorporation of women's rights and gender approach has been a process requiring alliances with social and political actors, both local and national, governmental and from the international cooperation. At the beginning gender issues were included as a prerequisite and later there was a trend of gender projects and, in some cases, efforts are still being made to include this perspective; but in some NGOs, technical staff is not adequately qualified to work in the area, a drawback to be overcome.
- To approach it, guidelines were given to NGOs and institutions to work within the communities, problems were identified and several strategies were proposed. So far, it is visualised that NGOs include gender approach in health and education areas, but still weak is the incorporation in productive work, in political training and organisational strengthening.
- The advantageous present political context is recognised, which facilitates empowerment processes and opinion tendencies to question the situation of women and their reproductive role assigned, to comprehend that it is not a feminine responsibility only, but a State and society responsibility as a whole.
- It is essential to articulate feminist proposals in a political proposal. A state of Law which tries to deepen the extent of democracy in all its senses and contents cannot avoid its historical responsibility in the struggle for substantive equality between men and women in our society, as it cannot sustain or feed, by action or omission, a sexist and deeply endocentric system based in masculine caudillos as synonym of humanity.
- The reflection has generated many questions for a dialog among the actors: the phrase should be 'women in movement' (contrasted to women's movement), articulate agendas, add up forces and the question about "good living".

D. MEXICO. The consultation was based on the main questions of the survey and was made with 32 people in different groups.

Problems and challenges

- Women's rights are at risk and their backwards move is worrying (conservative governments and policies)
- A male chauvinist culture is prevalent in the media and it impacts society.
- Women do not attend training workshops.
- Working only with women can increase violence against them. We meet violence face to face and from there we assume it.
- We fail to make mixed and women's organisations understand what gender perspective means, in concrete terms and everyday life.
- In indigenous and farmers context, we find it difficult to have an incidence in the hierarchy system, where women's participation continues to be minimal.
- Strategic needs of women must be translated into changes in everyday life, so women can actually be in possession of them.
- The presence of women in top public or responsibility positions does not necessarily guarantee advancement.
- Lack of sensitivity within the CSOs themselves, regarding respect and recognition of women's rights. Power relations are reproduced.
- Alliances and partnerships are needed to intensify women's incidence work in public policies, the academic world, mass media, other organisations, which are potential areas of opportunities.
- The new generations pose a challenge, as they should be involved
- It is necessary to establish good practices to change gender relations in couples, the family and society.

- Good labour practices should be installed (schedules, salaries, decision making, spaces for children, etc.)

The most urgent topics in women's agenda:

- Access to healthcare services by women. Gender based preventive healthcare for chronic, degenerative illnesses does not exist. A culture and service is prevalent that reinforces the traditional role of women and the resources allocated continue to be marginal
- Regarding violence against women, legal framework and punishment against aggressors must be defined, because violence attacks the right of life.
- Regulate, favour the access of women to natural resources: Land, and water resources (for fishing)
- A new labour economy. It must ruled and regulated to have a different division of labour, where women had more and better job opportunities and development.
- The State must care for women who suffer social violence and organised crime, such as widows and orphans, the product of a situation generated by the government itself.
- Promotion of political participation of women in public spaces
- Cooperation agencies which establish the requirement of gender approach must orient CSOs to do it. Cooperation is not offering the necessary tools, does not recognise it is costly for organisations because they must self-care, how conflicts are solved in women's organisations, in mixed organisations, how to comply with large institutional agreements, if they assume it, they should provide instruments.

E. COLOMBIA. Five sub-national consultations were made with the participation of 152 people.

Inclusion of gender perspective in CSOs

- Women must be recognised in their ample diversity and they should be able to propose affirmative actions
- It is necessary to use approaches to show the exclusions concealed by traditions and habits, such as ethnic bias, urban vs. rural culture, disabilities, and sexual diversity, among others
- In the case of women, they have not been granted full citizenship.
- Advancement should be made in the intensification and ownership of new masculinities.
- When the differential and gender approach is included as a concern of the cooperation, insights and proposals are broadened to handle problems more comprehensively –poverty lack of democracy, discrimination.
- Cooperation must flow in a context of secular states, which respect women's rights independently from their religious way of life.
- CSOs have been including gender perspective in their actions, but internally in the organisations, debates and practices should be promoted about power, autonomies, democracies and relations between men and women; their own transformations should emerge as a consequence. This approach meets head-on with that individual who adopts the approach in everyday life, recognising the false division between public and private issues.
- Including women in projects does not always mean the transformation of power and discriminatory relations that have victimised women. The wide-ranging realisation of their rights is necessary to have a significant pledge.
- When women mobilise and press for their rights to inclusion, other sectors of the population feel, and so they have expressed it, that they are not fulfilling their own rights; women's achievement should not generate arguments for other men and women, above all it should be an incentive for the advancement of these sectors in the realisation of their own rights.

State institutional context

- Political electoral interference should be removed from the recognition of women's rights, with the emphasis on a differential approach in politics.
- A reflection is necessary on the role of women's offices in regions and localities, some show important advances and civil society coordination, whereas others just have bureaucratic and clientele roles.

Some strategies

- Continue with the research processes and documentation of discrimination on women and perform new studies about their participation and social, economic and transforming contributions.
- Train in the strategic and political importance of transforming the relations between men and women, in all sceneries and levels.
- Promote a gender approach into CSO internal functioning, identifying needs and aspirations of men and women, in a territory and from the perspective of the organisation's mission.
- Strengthen CSOs through the incorporation of gender dimension and sensitisation from a feminist perspective, which allows the understanding of power relations; with men and women identifying the cultural factors that obstruct relations and equal opportunities.
- Promote a dialogue and the feedback of good practices among national, regional and local CSOs
- Implement mechanisms and educational instruments which allow a non-sexist education and campaigns to promote inclusive language
- Continue with the promotion of sexual and reproductive health, which respects the rights of women of all ages, and wipes out any form of violence and economic, social or cultural blackmail, and prevents infectious transmissible diseases.
- Make agreements within CSOs to construct affirmative joint proposals in favour of women to be submitted to local boroughs. These should attend women's problems and not limit their development.
- Influence and lobby to have Law 1257, year 2008, implemented and applied, which rules on any form of violence against women
- Promote the economic autonomy of women and do away with discrimination in employment, income and roles.
- Put into practice methodologies and pedagogies which facilitate the treatment of gender issues, from intimate and personal perspectives
- Intensify strategies of justice and compensation to women victims of armed groups, demanding the compliance of domestic and international legislations
- Build indicators of citizenship empowerment of women which allow the visualisation of these advances in cooperation projects
- Reinforce actions so formal and alternative media, and also the ICTs, link to discussion spaces and modify their forms and contents; the media should also know about policies which include women's rights.
- Active and representative intervention of CSOs in citizenship participation spaces, such as the Women's Community Councils, Social Policy Council, among others; these should place in citizenship agenda women's issues and transcend to the construction of a public policy.

With all these contributions for the virtual survey and for the national consultations, and the intense and constructive group and plenary discussions, there was a consensus to have conclusions and the recommendations of the Open Forum regional gender consultation in Latin America.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations of the gender consultation in Latin America



The gender consultation resources were the survey, national meetings and the regional meeting, and its departing point was the document: Eight thesis of work from the feminist and Latin American movement for a debate on development effectiveness. These were elaborated in 2010 as a result of the first round of regional consultation and reaffirmed: *“Women’s and Feminist Movements have managed to establish equity and respect of women’s human rights as a central component of democracy and development. Several international instruments consecrate these rights and encourage governments and society to adhere to them. The development effectiveness agenda cannot be unrelated to these commitments.”* As a result of intense and rich debates facilitated by different consultation modalities, some key ideas came up and they show the way ahead to continue an in-depth study:

1. The first challenge shall be a thorough and systematic study of these topics. When the consultation results are analysed, it is seen than CSO ownership of the second Istanbul principle has meant and effort and commitment for many organisations and it opens a space for their significant transformation. But the richness of the responses and contributions collected poses a challenge which we only begin to tackle. This first exercise, with all its limitations, does not allow thus far an in-depth analysis and conclusions of the way in which Latin American Civil Society Organizations agendas, practices, discourse, and values perceive, adopt and contribute towards equity among men and women, but it constitutes a valuable input to advance in the debate.
2. The contribution of women’s and feminists organisations is recognised in the promotion of women’s partnerships. Women’s organisations are a basic condition to see their presence and have their voices heard in public spaces, the elaboration of public policies, the promotion of participative budgets and the monitoring of public policies. In general it is recognised that without women’s active involvement in all spaces and at all levels, it is impossible to conceive the defeat of their discrimination and inequality.

Gender agenda must regain a political character to guarantee development effectiveness

3. The need that gender equality agenda regains a political character using the knowledge accumulated by CSOs and above all by women. The work to influence policies, training, leadership training, and political participation generated a “know-how” in which CSOs should feel comfortable. But to achieve a whole set of countries public agenda going beyond the

mere claim of women's political participation, the collection of CSOs should place women's agenda in the centre of their own agenda, with all its dimensions and requirements, even the more challenging topics such as patriarchal practices, the exercise of power, physical and economic autonomy. Both the survey and the conclusions of the national meetings showed certain CSO weakness to assume the work in those dimensions, it does not seem to be a priority in their agendas, though they expressed the needs to have training. In fact, a superficial gender conceptualisation is inferred, and they identify it with women, without questioning the essential gender based elements of discrimination and subordination of the division of labour, supported by a patriarchal structure.

4. Public agenda emphasis on work about women's political autonomy is not sufficient. What organisations linked to the gender consultation report is that they mostly work in women's participation in power and decision making instances, and they report important advances on that. Though participation is far from parity, several women are heads of state, and others in important positions in the Executive Power, in parliament, in the judiciary and the private sector. Likewise, in gender consultation the increasing presence of women is notable in executive posts in CSOs and in democratic spaces related to the CSO sphere of influence, even at community level. However, the spaces gained by women could well result functional to the patriarchal regime, as democracy is refurbished with the participation of women, specially their electoral presence, without really questioning many of the practices supporting patriarchy and subordinations. The persistent demand on women to assume all caregiver tasks in their families and homes, without financial recognition, and the abhorrent violence against women, often associated to their being women, show that women's access to these decision making instances is still harmless to patriarchal culture, or at least insufficient to eliminate it.
5. Society as a whole must advance in the consolidation of women's economic and physical autonomy. Without ignoring the importance of political autonomy achievements –they are essential according to CSO report– the work towards economic and physical autonomy is still pending on the agenda. There is a direct correlation between economic dependence and physical, psychological and cultural submission and becomes the foundations of women's subordination and discrimination. In this order of ideas, any political participation ignoring these conditions is not effective to achieve women's equality. It could contribute to formal but not necessarily real democracy, and cannot guarantee women's rights. Sensitisation of society is not enough, new social practices are required, both to denounce physical and economic oppression and to construct new relations.

In the **search of economic autonomy**, there are urgent needs to eliminate the double working day of women, it is a public interest issue, a priority in economics and should never be solved indoors in family terms. In other words, the social, political and economic recognition of caregiver tasks, have until now been the exclusive responsibility of women, and have consequently been undervalued. We should challenge salary discrimination, the lack of opportunities to generate income and *decent work* for women. It is necessary to pay attention to women's ownership and capacity to manage their own capital wealth (have and hold rights, and not merely passive). This unbalance is neither individual nor private, it is a public issue and it is the State's responsibility that half of the population can have their rights guaranteed.

In the **search of physical autonomy**, it is indispensable to respect women's bodies and recognize that only women can decide over their own bodies. People should recognise that

women's sexual and reproductive rights must be guaranteed, and all forms of violence against women must be eliminated. Women's rights are not specific problems to be cared for in particular or marginal programmes, but central elements of public and citizenship security programs. Eradication of violence is a strategic topic, since aggression and fear are used to dissolve and persuade against any rise or disobedience that would change the domination patterns over women. It is also a public and government area, because it would be absurd to expect a solution "in the intimacy of their own homes", where women suffer the greatest disrespect for their sexual and reproductive rights as well as threats and aggressions.

Ownership of gender equity and equality principle into civil society organisations

6. CSOs are not free from inequalities and have patriarchal practices which hinder and contradict this challenge. The recapture of a political nature must insist on all the aspects that impede women to be subjects of law and must accept a redistribution of power starting within the CSOs themselves. Not only gender equity speeches are needed but an institutional practice which warrants parity and power distribution within CSOs.
7. Need to develop a conceptual body, methodologies and instruments which allow to effectively assume a gender perspective within CSOs. It is interesting to verify that in the organisations which answered the virtual consultation, women are a clear majority in executive and professional posts (above 50%), but a weakness persists in most organisations to incorporate equality principles in their activities. Only with such training, will it be possible to follow-up the organisations effectiveness in this area.
8. Strengthening of a political dialogue with the large NGOs from the North. In different work discussions, it was clear that the call was not only launched to Latin American CSOs to systematically include their commitment with gender equality. NGOs from the North must commit themselves with the agenda to recapture a political nature and they must be ownership accountable of the 2nd Istanbul principle.

Strengthen the autonomy and capacity of women's organisations and movements

9. It is necessary to be vigilant that gender perspective ownership by the collection of CSO organizations should not disregard the autonomy of women's organizations as political subjects in their struggles. In fact, certain tension is identified between the cross-sectional inclusion of gender perspective within CSOs in general, and the strengthening strategies of women's organizations in particular. Therefore, the strengthening of civil society commitment with gender equality cannot be in detriment of resources, spaces and opportunities for women's and feminist organisations. Women's rights agenda cannot substantially advance without the protagonist role of women and their autonomy. To that effect, the modification of gender division of labour is indispensable. It is necessary to increase the efforts towards the strengthening of political and organizational capacity, and to have access to financial resources of women's organizations and movements.

10. More articulation and interaction among CSOs and social movements for women's rights and equality. The consultation shows relative strengths of CSO and less development of social movements. Also expressed is a concern about the distance between CSOs and social movements. The dynamics and nature of social movements is very different from that of CSOs, therefore strategies to strengthen them must suit those features. CSOs are not to substitute social movements but to strengthen them, and in that sense features of this interaction are to be revised, to intensify the impact of both instances, bearing in mind that women's participation in this processes does not necessarily mean formal organisations.
11. The need to strengthen a gender agenda with new perspectives of rights linked to the struggle against racism and ethnocentrism. Something that drew attention in the consultation results was that 65% of CSOs do have an approach to class and ethnic differences. But it is a topic insufficiently investigated and assumed by society. It is necessary to open a dialogue, exchange experiences and debate, extend it to the discrimination in sex orientations or options. In this, a marked lack of interest is perceived in many organisations to include it in their agendas, or just respect it as a right. It should be emphasised that any discrimination holding back the exercise of sexual rights is an obstacle to people's equality and therefore it is the concern of development actors.

Broadening the joint work of csos for gender equality

12. This new scenery requires the acceptance and construction of common agendas and strategies between women's organisations and the rest of CSOs. In the face of the new challenges and as a product of the analysed experience, CSOs perceive the need to build alliances of different nature, between CSOs in general and women's organisations. The relevance of coordinating actions was emphasised, in local spheres and to a lesser extent in the need to reinforce debates and construct common agendas at national and international levels. Among other things, the dispersion of interventions and efforts should be overcome, as it goes against the impact of their actions, their influence should be intensified and the scarce resources should be rationalised.
13. Most consulted organizations value the role of the State as grantor of women's rights. States have responsibilities in the adherence to international instruments, resolutions and recommendations representative of international jurisprudence in favour of equality. The consultation shows that in general terms there is insufficient knowledge of these instruments and insufficient emphasis is given to enforce them. Therefore, the need is asserted to develop monitoring capacity, incidence and pressure to abide by international instruments, and provide the organizations with tools. This could also include the transfer of experience among organisations from different countries, and instances of regional articulation can play a decisive role.
14. Construction of shared accountability systems on the work of CSO gender equality As part of the ethical principles and democratic profiles of the organisations participating in the consultation, the importance of the 5th principle is clear. Principle of the Istanbul Declaration that promotes CSO transparency and accountability to all their interest groups. A central element in the construction of spaces and shared work mechanisms is the generation of

trust and respect among organisations and the rest of society. Unmistakably it does not only refer to reporting on the resources used and received, but a more all-encompassing way to be accountable for proposed objectives and the advances in the construction of equality conditions for women, within and outside organisations. Coherence is to be achieved between practice and speech, in relation to the search of equality between men and women.

**Access to all kind of resources:
a condition for development of the 2nd Istanbul principle**

15. Have the necessary and sufficient resources to approach the big challenge of warranting equality conditions for women Finally, an overwhelming majority of CSO participants in the consultation marked an uncompromising urgency to have the adequate funding for women's and civil society organisations to have their political, articulation and influential capacity increased. Here it is recognised not only the necessary presence of international cooperation, but also the reorientation of regionally generated public and private resources to strengthen CSOs. Insofar most Latin American countries are being considered medium income countries, it is urgent to understand that resources for development are also in Latin America, but concentrated in few hands. The search for equality between men and women also means challenging the concentration of wealth and social exclusion.

The consultation allows to conclude that equality issues between the two genders and women's rights are already a problem installed within many CSOs as development actors. It is evident, it must be noted, the challenge we face as civil society to ensure, on the one hand the effective conveying of gender approach into the organizations, and on the other hand to secure the change of perceptions and imaginaries which would in turn secure women's right and the development of equalitarian societies.



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