

Gender Issues to Consider in the USAID/Bolivia Country Strategic Plan

By Debbie Caro, May 28, 2003

The Mission is to be commended for its strong emphasis on poverty reduction and social inclusion that set the framework for developing equitable programs for all Bolivians, regardless of ethnicity, age, or gender. The Democracy (SO), Health (SO), and Alternative Development (SPO) Narratives demonstrate a commitment to gender integration in their IRs and supporting activities. While the Environment and Economic Opportunities SO narratives do not address gender issues explicitly, the IRs and activities offer opportunities for gender integration as part of their overall commitment to participatory processes and equitable outcomes. Below are suggestions on how to strengthen the integration of gender concerns and measure impact of the Missions strategic objectives on men and women, and boys and girls.

Part I: The Bolivia Development Context

- Tables I and 2: page 4 and 5 – As the CSP argues for addressing poverty and demonstrates that poverty is most prevalent in rural Bolivia, I suggest that where possible social indicators be broken down by sex and by rural urban. The Mission argues for investment in trade as a means to generate employment for the poor, therefore some attempt should be made to present urban and rural employment and unemployment statistics by sex in Table 1 as a baseline, so as to be able to measure the impact of the trade program on income generation for Bolivia's poor. Other indicators closely tied to employment are literacy and educational attainment. For e.g., in Table 2, literacy rates are disaggregated by sex for Bolivia as a whole but not disaggregated by sex for rural and urban rates. Both literacy and educational achievement in Bolivia are virtually comparable for urban men and women, while there are considerable disparities between rural men's and women's literacy and educational attendance and completion rates. This is particularly important in light of the Mission's request for education resources.
- P. 11 (overall comment): If the Mission's strategic vision is to truly to reduce poverty and increase human development, especially for the neediest Bolivians, then it must demonstrate a commitment to measuring the impact of its programs specifically on the neediest and most excluded populations in Bolivia. In general, the indicators and targets presented in the SO narratives do not convincingly demonstrate how the Mission will ascertain whether it is the poor rather than more fortunate Bolivians who have benefited from USAID investments. In order to make the case more convincingly, the Mission should either emphasize that the areas in which it will invest are areas with high concentration of poverty, or that its investments specifically target poor individuals throughout the country. In either case, impact measurement should demonstrate how the programs have benefited a specific target group i.e., % of people with 5 hectares or less who have secure title; % of microentrepreneurs receiving loans who earn less than 50% of the minimum salary, % of rural children under 5 who are fully vaccinated, % of people seeking legal representation by the Public Defender's Office who are represented in legal proceedings, etc). These are all measures of people level

impacts that can be disaggregated by sex, age, and ethnicity when relevant. This is an issue that the Mission should consider addressing as the SO Teams further develop their impact indicators.

SO-1: Increased Confidence in Democratic Institutions and Processes

- The Democracy SO Team did an excellent job in identifying gender and ethnic inequalities in participation and access to national and local governmental and judicial institutions. In further developing the supporting programs and indicators, they might consider further identifying specific barriers to access, how to address them, and measure their removal. For instance, if seniority on political party candidate lists tends to locate all women and indigenous candidates at the bottom of the lists, their chances of getting elected are minimal. Also, if women's and indigenous representatives are constrained by participating effectively in Congress because of low levels of education and unfamiliarity with the legislative process, the SO team might consider addressing these limitations directly as well as developing processes for assessing progress in their removal.
- I suggest a rewording of IR 3: "Local Governments are more Effective, Efficient, and ***Equitable*** in Responding to Increased Citizen Demands" An alternative wording of Sub IR 3.3.2 is: " Civil society participation in local governance is ***more inclusive*** [instead of expanded] and increased."
- Indicators: Can the SO level indicators be disaggregated by sex and ethnicity? It would be worthwhile to identify differences in perception and how they change over time.

Strategic Objective 2: Increased Income for Bolivia's Poor

- There is no clear statement about how gender differences in access and benefits will be addressed under this SO. As the targeting of the poor in this SO is specifically by area rather than population, it is incumbent on the SO Team to discuss how different segments of populations in rural and underserved areas will be included in the activities and to what extent they will benefit from them. For instance, the wording of IRs 1 and 2 " Increased Access to Financial Services in Underserved Areas" and "Increased Access to Agricultural Technology and Marketing Services" raises the question of "access for whom?" IRs 3 and 4 raise a different question and that is who will benefit from the investments and to what extent? If the goal is to benefit the poorest and most socially excluded portions of the population, will there be some assessment of has benefited from the jobs and income generated by the investments rather than a simple accounting of # of jobs created or level of revenues generated?
- IR 4 and sub-IR 2.1 look exactly the same.
- Indicators for Sub IRs 2.2.1 and 2.2.2 can be disaggregated by sex.
- Indicators that measure who has access to services for IRs 2.1 (indicators 1 and 2). Indicator 2 can also be disaggregated by sex and by product and loan size.
- Similarly indicators for IR 2.2 (indicator 1) can be sex disaggregated.
- There are no people-level impact indicators for the Title II program under IR 2.4. Measures of who has access to roads and irrigation, as well as who benefits from them and how should be considered.
- This SO should include a similar statement to that included in the Alternative Development SPO: ***Gender***:. The strategy recognizes the need to ensure both women and men have unimpeded

access and privileges in membership of producer associations, community committees, and other aspects of economic and community life. Of particular interest is ensuring that girls are encouraged to attend school beyond the primary years and have unimpeded access to such schools so as to provide them with more equal opportunities for finding employment in the formal sector [my addition]. The current paragraph under this SO does not convincingly demonstrate how women will benefit equally with men from the programs as no measures or specific strategies are mentioned on how to incorporate women into activities. Although many women participate in Microfinance programs, there should be some analysis to ascertain to what women benefit from these programs relative to men who participate. Is there gender-based segmentation in the market, with women occupying the programs with lower loan sizes and greater time commitments for accessing loans? Are men excluded from lower level loan programs that they might also benefit from?

Strategic Objective 3: Improved Health of Bolivians, Contributing to Their Quality of Life

- The Health SO does a very good job of focusing their intended impacts on the people level. The discussion of gender at the end of the narrative does touch on the major gender issues in health, however there is no reflection of gender integration as an explicit objective in the indicators which are all macro-level and population based. The SO Team should consider developing some lower level indicators to measure the more explicitly the social inclusion aspects of their SO.
- Experience has demonstrated the importance of including men in Sexual and Reproductive Health activities as well as involving them in the care and health of their children. The SO does not explicitly address this issue.
- Suggested rewording of IR 2 “Health service networks are capable of resolving [rather than can; or an other alternative is “Health service networks resolve health problems”] health problems.” It depends whether the SO Team wants to measure how many problems have been resolved or measure the capacity of the services to resolve the problems. Suggested changes to sub-IR 3.2.1 “Knowledge *of* [instead of on] health threats increased.”

Strategic Objective 4: Forest, Water and Biodiversity Resources Managed for Sustainable Economic Growth

- I could not find any specific mention of how gender relations might either impact on the achievement of this SO or how the intended outcomes might affect men and women differently as required by the ADS. This was surprising given how successfully gender considerations were incorporated into BOLFOR, especially in its community-based management activities that seem to be a major focus of the new SO. A description of what was achieved and how similar steps will be incorporated into this SO would strengthen the narrative. It is not necessary to have an add on paragraph as long as the narrative includes some indication that it addresses the two questions posed by the ADS (see above).
- The following indicators can be sex disaggregated to ascertain who is participating and benefiting from the programs.
Community Indicators:
 - Involvement of stakeholders in decisions about project and conservations management [who is involved and who makes decisions?].

- Participation of communities in alternative economic activities...[again, who is participating from the communities in these activities and who benefits directly from their participation?].

Tourism Indicators:

- Annual ecotourism income [who receives it –average income (M/F) from tourism)
- Revenue by trained stakeholders [who is trained and who earns income after training?]

Municipal indicators:

- Training opportunities for municipal officials/leaders [who are considered leaders and officials and who is trained?].

Strategic Objective 5: Illicit Coca in Bolivia Eliminated

- The paragraph on gender does a good job of capturing some of the important issues under the SO, especially equity in membership in producer groups and cooperatives that are the principal recipients of technical assistance in agriculture and marketing. The emphasis on education is also very important as it is key to opening opportunities outside of the Chapare.
- P.52 The paragraph that deals with activities to foster non-farm businesses might included some additional examples that are more likely to be owned and run by women, such as stores, restaurants, kiosks of dry goods, candy, etc, as well as food processing.
- P. 53 –Youth leadership should include both boys and girls.
- Indicators can be sex disaggregated for: IR 5.1 indicator 2; IR 5.1.2, indicator 3; IR 5.1.3, indicator 2 should note any difference in cost to employers of male and female labor.