

IPU ROUND TABLE ON COMMON PRINCIPLES

Self-assessment as an M & E tool from a gender perspective

In 2012, the IPU membership unanimously adopted a Plan of Action for Gender-Sensitive Parliaments. The Plan defines gender-sensitive parliaments as those that respond to the needs and interests of both men and women in their structures, methods, operations and work. In 2016, based on pilot self-assessment projects with a number of parliaments, the IPU developed a self-assessment toolkit.

Introduce the Gender Sensitive Parliament tool

The tool kit helps parliaments in their work to achieve gender sensitivity through thoroughly reviewing its structures, operations, methods and work. IPU's Plan of Action identifies seven key areas

- equality in participation,
- strong legal and policy frameworks,
- gender mainstreaming tools,
- gender-sensitive parliamentary infrastructure and culture,
- women's and men's shared responsibility for gender equality,
- political parties as gender equality champions,
- gender-sensitive recruitment and staff development policies.

Opportunity each parliament to develop an approach that suits them and also choose the areas they would like to focus on. Enables topical issues to be selected and issues that may be sensitive areas for political or other reasons can be avoided.

The intention is not to rank parliaments. It is rather to help them identify their strengths and weaknesses in order to determine priorities for strengthening the institution.

The toolkit guides parliament through the process, gathering evidence and data, building a shared understanding and agreeing areas for an agreed plan of action.

Insufficient time to go further into detail so I will give a few case examples.

Country experience

Kenya

Gained the data through discussions groups of staff and MPs. One agreed area for action was training for staff groups. A mixed group of staff took part in training over two days with two Kenyan trainers and me. Outcome led to

- Introducing gender perspective into preparation of legislation
- Changes to staffing of parliament – female security staff

Djibouti

In 2016, the President of the National Assembly requested the support of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in capacity building leading to the desire to develop a strategic plan. This led to facilitate activities related to the development of the strategic plan including self-assessment using the IPU toolkit on gender sensitivity and also on the SDGs.

Workshops over several days, MP & staff facilitated by IPU experts. The process led to MPs agreeing where a change or action was needed.

Outcomes:

- Change to electoral law and quotas
- Support and training for female MPs
- Establishment of a gender caucus and women's caucus

Georgia

Prior to self-assessment, survey completed by MPs which provided data on different perceptions and staff collated relevant data. Formal event with discussion on issues. Outcomes included

- the Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia has been established as a permanent body;
- Following on the initiative of the members of Gender Equality Council of the Parliament of Georgia the Parliament passed legislative amendments to regulate sexual harassment in the workplace and public spaces.

Serbia

Small group discussions were held over two days.

In Serbia, amendments to the electoral law brought the gender quota from 30% to 40% prior to the 2020 elections.

Conclusions

IPU conclusion on the overall impact of self-assessment activities include:

- Comparative information and good practices on parliamentary mechanisms to promote gender issues have been produced and are available to parliaments and parliamentary staff.
- Concrete elements for gender-sensitive parliaments have been identified and promoted.
- Parliamentary reforms were undertaken in several parliaments to enhance their gender-sensitivity

Important to understand that

- Self-assessment exercises take time and require thorough understanding of basic concepts related to gender
- Assessments can also be politically sensitive, must be led by the parliament to ensure effective follow-up on recommendations resulting from the assessment.
- Men & women must be involved.