
CONSOLIDATED REPLY - E-DISCUSSION: ELIMINATING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN POLITICS (10-14 December 2007)

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LAUNCH MESSAGE:

Dear International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics Members:

Violence or the threat of violence has been identified by members of the iKNOW Politics community - as well as through global and regional meetings of women politicians and their supporters sponsored by iKNOW partner organizations - as a significant impediment to women's political participation. While crimes of violence against women in politics are receiving increasing international attention, the attention is often limited to high profile cases, while the overall scale of such violence – including violence occurring at the local level - remains underreported and under documented. It is in this context that we launch the E-Discussion on Eliminating Violence Against Women in Politics.

The discussion aims to strengthen the knowledge base on violence against women in politics by addressing the following questions:

- What evidence has been collected on the dimensions and frequency of violence against women in politics (proportion of women that have been threatened/attacked)? / How can we collect further evidence?
- What are the sources of violence against women in politics? (within political parties, by opposition parties, by members of the public?) What are the causes of violence against women in politics, including root causes, and other contributing factors?
- How can we tell if women are targeted with violence because of their gender or because of their political affiliations/ideologies (i.e. would a man who made the same statement face the same threats)?
- How does violence against women in politics manifest itself in different cultural contexts? In conflict and post-conflict countries?
- Where have effective measures (including legislation, policies, programmes and other effective remedies) been put in place to combat violence against women in politics? Which actors must be involved in implementing these measures?

We anticipate a lively and constructive debate.

Best regards,

The International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics Team

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SUMMARY OF RESPONSES:

Members shared their experiences and perceptions of violence against women in politics from around the world, from **Kenya** to **Ecuador**, from **Sweden** to **Iraq**, from **Southeast Asia** to **South Eastern Europe**.

Root causes of violence against women in politics were identified as persisting cultural stereotypes, abuse of religious and traditional practices, patriarchal societal structures in which economic, political and social power are dominated by men, and the role women have historically played as the followers of male political leaders (as supporters of men from the opposite side, transformed into victims during times of violent conflict). Importantly, it was also highlighted that women become targets of violence based on their positions in promoting transformative politics (in which women demand the role of equal partners and agents of crucial political and social change).

The violence takes on **wide range of forms**, both physical to psychological. Identified forms of violence against women in politics included: hindering women in their duties or silencing them, character assassination and defamation, harassment by the media, insults and slander, sexual violence, assault, economic control at the domestic or political level (freezing of municipal accounts in the case of Bolivia), domestic violence, degrading treatment, illegal alternating of positions, and targeting of relatives and supporters.

- A member from the National Program for Civic Education in **Mali** noted that women who engage in politics in that country are the victims of violence at all levels: social, economic and political. At the **domestic** level, women in politics are often beaten by their spouses, and even when supported by their spouses, are often insulted by other family members. They are also made the object of **sexual harassment within political parties**. For example, owing to the fact that the majority of women engage without compensation for their political work, women in politics are often stigmatized as “debauched women” (implying that they must be earning an income by other means). The member could not provide statistics on cases of violence against women politicians in Mali, as such a study has not to her knowledge been conducted in that country. If such statistics existed, she said, they would help to substantiate the teaching aids used by the National Program of Civic Education which aims, inter alia, to combat violence against women.
- In the election campaign in **Kenya**, **255 cases of assault on women** have been reported thus far. The Federation of Women Lawyers in Kenya also has data collected during the 2002 elections. In addition to the physical acts of violence, it was noted that in Kenya a woman contesting will be **subjected to questions that a man would not**, such as “Has your husband allowed you to contest?” and “Who will fill in for you when you go for maternity leave?,” and that a man who allows his wife to contest is stigmatized as “weak.”
- A woman MP from **Sweden** reported that she had endured **harassment based on her positions on the rights of homo, bisexual and transsexual people**, as well as her investigations into authoritarian organizations. While the member reported that the security section of the House of Parliament had been helpful in regard to ensuring her physical security, little could be done about **psychological harassment from the press** given the need to protect freedom of speech.
- In regard to women’s’ perceived role as supporters of male political leaders, a member writing from South Eastern Europe reported on the cruel consequences of male dominated politics in the **Balkan** conflict of the 1990s. In the conflict resulting in the break up of the former Yugoslavia, violence against women, including **systematic mass rape**, was used as a tool in the political power fights between men. Due to the increasing power of global women’s movement, some of the perpetrators were caught and punished. However, the recognition of mass rape in war as a crime against humanity by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia did not change the situation, but only made it more visible and ended international impunity. Similarly, it was noted that the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission for **Peru** found that in the internal armed conflict in that country **rape was a crime committed almost exclusively against women** (527 of the 538 reported cases). Women soldiers and revolutionaries were particularly targeted as victims of sexual violence.
- In regard to **women’s role in transformative politics**, in the context of the **Balkan** conflict it was noted that women human rights activists and pacifists who spoke against the wars were **demonized as national traitors** and called “witches,” and asked to “talk less and to give birth more.” When women become better organized and more difficult to silence, **men used their informal networks and the media, and instrumentalized women loyal to them to defeat women with transformative political agendas**. For example, in 1995-1996 when Social Democratic women in Slovenia succeeded in getting 40% quota rules into their party statute and convinced its parliamentary representation to file for an amendment to electoral legislation to include the quota, party leaders from other parties did not directly oppose the amendment. Rather, they mobilized their most visible women MPs to speak against the amendment by promising to give them eligible constituencies in the forthcoming national election. The amendment was overruled, but the women who supported it were betrayed: they did not get the promised constituencies and not one of them was reelected.

Given the wide range of forms of violence against women in politics, **responses** to counter crimes of violence and the threat of violence must be similarly varied. Some **measures to combat violence against women in politics** were identified as:

- **Forming interest based solidarity groups** between women (cross-party caucuses, or bridging between women in a national party and those in the international family of the party) has proved an effective means of building the strength and voice of women to counter violence or threats of violence. In **South Eastern Europe**, women have organized around include equal political representation, zero tolerance for violence against women, paid family leave, reproductive health, and affordable child care. In **Kenya**, women parliamentarians have organized to successfully pass a legislation guaranteeing a 15% reduction on tax charged on sanitary towels, an affirmative action law, as well as the Sexual Offenses Act of 2006; however none of these have had effective implementation.
- **Organizing parallel women's electoral campaigns** can help to activate women voters and force all parties to take into account that the majority of the electorate are women, and that electoral promises must take their needs into account.
- In **Ecuador**, the Association of Women at the Municipal Level offers a **call center with legal and political advisors** to provide free advice on issues related to human rights and human development. In addition, testimonies have been collected at various meetings from town councilors who have been hindered in their positions by gender, ethnic or social discrimination. The testimonies have informed the development of a **draft legislation against harassment and political violence based on gender**, proposed on 30 November 2007 to an audience of 100 town councilors and civil society representatives.
- Similarly, the Association of Councilwomen of **Bolivia** (ACOBOL), alarmed by reports of harassment and violence endured by women councilors in the course of their duties, has taken positive action. Around 180 cases were reported to ACOBOL through September of this year (see [table](#) updated through June 2007), the vast majority of which derive from **rural areas** and indigenous populations. A **statistical information system** has been developed, and a **reporting process** is being developed, to track these cases. Informed by these cases, ACOBOL has also supported the development of a **draft legislation against harassment and political violence based on gender** (see [text of the legislation](#)). Up to now, not one of the cases reported has resulted in an effective sanction, nor in the passage of the draft law (The legislation was discussed by the House of Representatives in 2006 without positive conclusion). To help prevent harassment and political violence, a **Network of Women against Violence** has been created, composed of the Committee for the Political Rights of Women, the Union of Women Parliamentarians, the Association of Women Town Councilors, and other relevant actors. Some of these parties have participated in a series of **technical analysis meetings** which have resulted in the development a technical report on the draft law to correct discrepancies in the Bill identified by the House of Representatives.
- A **Declaration Opposing Violence against Women in Politics**, signed in September 2007 by eminent women leaders of South Asia attending an International IDEA sponsored conference, calls for a minimum **33% quotas** for women at all levels of political, policy and decision-making processes across South Asian countries, and for **direct elections for women in all elected positions**, including reserved seats, emphasizing that indirect elections/nominations make women subservient to party leaders.
- Quotas must be accompanied by other measures for gender empowerment, including **measures to ensure the physical security of women in politics**. As one member pointed out, in **Iraq**, where the quotas for representation of women in the new Constitution are amongst the highest in the world, the challenges women face on the ground include security and safety issues to reach the House of Parliament (MPs have been raped and killed), restrictions on their mobility (based on interpretations of religious law as not permitting women to go out unaccompanied by men, etc), and use of violence against women as a political weapon. However, it was also noted that women in conservative religious parties do not seem to face the same mobility restrictions as the others. In **Argentina**, women access places in the list thanks to the 30% quota law,

however Senate meetings are held at times inconvenient to women and it is only very recently that the Senate issued a policy on maternity leave.

- The importance of **sensitizing and training election monitors** and **placing monitors in all constituencies where there are women candidates** was underlined based on the experience of Kenya.
- The link between gender based violence and **economic empowerment of women** was highlighted by a World Bank study which found that women in Colombia who suffer violence have 14 percent lower earnings than women who do not.
- **Creating awareness of 1325 at the grassroots level** was also suggested as a means toward creating a culture of non-violence.

The discussion underlined the **need for additional collection of evidence (statistics, cases and testimonies)** on women who have endured violence or threats of violence in the course of their political careers. It was recommended that a global study be initiated.

Barbro Westerholm, Member of Swedish Parliament, wrote:

The type of violence I have met has been harassment because I have been working with the rights of homo, bi- and transsexual people and also with questions concerning manipulative, authoritative, destructive organisations. The security section of the Swedish House of Parliament has been very helpful with regard to physical security. However psychological harassment, articles in mass media etc., we cannot do much about. The right freedom of speech is very important in our country.

Sonja Lokar, CEE Network for Gender Issues, Budapest, Ljubljana, Tallinn/Gender Task Force, Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, wrote:

Violence against women in politics is related to the roles that different politics try to impose on women and/or that women try to create for themselves in political processes. Up until the end of the 20th century, the political approach to women, regardless to the ideological orientation of their actors, was the approach of male political dominance over women. Male dominated politics defined women's roles in private and public spheres. The final limit of these male dominated politics prescribed women roles not as (as mostly seen) limited to the roles of sisters, wives and mothers, but to roles of MALE POLITICAL LEADERS' FOLLOWERS. Women as citizens and even party members were expected to accept that male dominated politics treats them as objects and in the times of violent conflicts, transform them into VICTIMS. In this context, violence against women in politics is always only a tool, a weapon against the men from the opposite political side: women are killed, tortured, raped, made refugees, persecuted as warriors or political activists in the situation of armed conflicts, or as candidates for elected posts in violent electoral situations not because they are women, but because they SUPPORT the men from the opposite side. Making rape in war a crime against humanity in 1995, did not change this context, it only made this type of the male dominated politics VISIBLE and ended its international IMPUNITY.

What I wish to underline is, that the progress around the worst sorts of violence against women in politics was possible only because, at the end of the 20th century, the global women's movement was for the first time in the history of humankind, strong enough, organized enough, and ambitious enough to dare to question and even to reject women roles proscribed by the male dominated politics and to offer the project of transformative politics. In transformative politics, women are not only the followers, they reject to be mere objects and even more to be victims of the male dominated politics, they ask for the role of equal partners, agents of crucial political and societal change.

I am from South Eastern Europe; I have seen the cruelest consequences of male dominated politics in the nineties of the 20th century in the Balkans. The violence against women was not

even fully documented. But due to the power of the global women's movement, its victims were not totally overlooked: some of them got some support, and some satisfaction - as some of the perpetrators were caught, prosecuted and punished. I firmly believe that this process will go on and that it will become more and more difficult to use the violence against women as a tool for political power fights between powerful men. What interests me much more is the question of the violence which is triggered on women because they try to put in place so called transformative politics.

This violence is as old as the written human history. Its most dramatic examples, when some women succeeded in making their ideas politically visible enough to be perceived dangerous for the gender power balance in politics, ended up with their physical elimination: Antiguan from the times of old Greeks, Olympia de Gouge from the time of French Revolution, Indira Gandhi yesterday, Politkovska today, are tragic women politicians who paid with their lives because they tried to put in practice transformative politics. There are many less tragic and less visible examples of the violence against women who came out with the agenda of transformative politics.

The violence against them takes the forms of well known domination techniques: making women invisible, patronizing, ridiculing them, putting blame and shame on them, double punishing of the women in the style: damned if you do, damned if you don't. If all of these don't scare these women off, then they are exposed to open verbal assaults and offenses, to hate speech. Women human rights activists and pacifists in Serbia who spoke against the wars and for the self-determination of Kosovo, were publically demonized as national traitors, the best renowned feminists in Croatia were publically named "witches", women in the parliament in Croatia were asked to "Talk less and to give birth more", in Slovenian parliament one male parliamentarian suggested to "control what the women parliaments have between their legs," suggesting that "maybe they were not women at all...."

When the women with transformative political agendas within political parties and in civil society become better organized and more difficult to silence, men in power use their informal networks and media, and instrumentalized the women loyal to them, to defeat the women with transformative political agendas. In 1995/6 when social democratic women in Slovenia succeeded in getting firm 40% quota rules in their party statute and forced its party parliamentary faction to file an amendment on the quota in the electoral legislation, party leaders from all other parliamentary parties did not stand against this amendment. Rather, they promised to give their most visible women MPs eligible constituencies in the forthcoming national elections if they spoke against this amendment in the parliament. Several women MPs did it. The amendment was overruled. But the women MPs who spoke against the quota amendment were betrayed, they did not get eligible constituencies, and not one of them was re-elected.

The most common tool to get rid of experienced women who fight for transformative politics is the introduction of age (youth) and beauty eligibility qualifications.

How can women with the transformative political agendas counter these forms of violence against women in politics?

In the South East Europe, these women found the following answers to this question:

- Get strongly organized and create common interest-based solidarity between women from your own party and women in the international family of your party.
- Form cross-cutting alliances and networks with women in other political parties, Trade Unions, Ngos, academia and media - examples of good practice of this kind are the Macedonian Women's Lobby, the Coalition for Parity in Slovenia, Women for Changes in Serbia, or the Ad Hoc Women Coalition in Croatia.

- Form broad-based issue coalitions to advocate and lobby for concrete policies from your transformative politics agenda. Equal political representation (in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in Macedonia, in Serbia, in Slovenia, in Croatia, in Bulgaria), zero tolerance for violence against women (in all SEE countries), paid family leave (in Slovenia, in Serbia, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in Macedonia), reproductive health (in Slovenia, in Macedonia), affordable child care (in Slovenia) are amongst the issues proved to be good for such broad coalitions.
- Organize parallel women's electoral campaigns in order to activate "women voters" and force all the parties to take into account that the majority of the electorate everywhere are women and that the parties' electoral promises must target their needs and expectations. (Women for Changes in Serbia in 2000, Ad Hoc Women Coalition in Croatia in 1996 and 2000, Coalition for Parity in Slovenia in 2002 and 2004).

Alyson Kozma, Senior Program Officer, Women's Political Participation Programs, National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, wrote:

Thanks for raising this important issue. There is a lot of good discussion around issues of violence against women in general, but there seems to be less discussion about violence targeted at women political activists. While the root causes of violence against women in both the public and private spheres are often the same, violence against women seeking to exercise their political and civil rights has a particularly chilling effect on democracy. It's important to recognize that a spectrum of violence against women exists, which may range from women receiving threats for their civil society activism in Mexico, facing intimidation when they try to effect change from within their political posts in Afghanistan, or being singled out and targeted in the United States. Within this spectrum of violence, economic and social forces conspire to discourage women's political participation. It's important to identify and discuss the ways in which women are subjected to gender-based violence in a direct attempt to control them and inhibit their political participation so that we can effectively counter these efforts. I think this e-discussion is a great start.

Dr. Barbarita Miranda, Clinical Psychologist, Member of the Ecuador Association of Women at the Municipal Level (AMUME), wrote:

English/[Español](#)

1. When and why did AMUME become interested in the topic of violence and harassment against women involved in politics?

AMUME has a natural interest in this issue as an organization that worked for over ten years for the defense of human rights of women serving as local authorities and in political positions. The approach of the program is the CALL CENTER with legal and political advisors and others for human development.

2. What evidence has been collected/gathered about the extent and frequency of violence against women involved in politics (proportion of women who have been threatened/attacked, where and how)? And, how do you plan to continue documenting these cases in the future?

In the different local and regional events on political participation, testimonies have been collected from town councilors who, in their positions, have been hindered by gender, ethnic, or social types of discrimination. These testimonies have informed the development of the LAW AGAINST HARRASSMENT AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE BASED ON GENDER, proposed November 30th, 2007 in Montecristi Manabí, in the presence of 100 town councilors and representatives, as well as female representatives from national NGOs.

3. How did the idea first come about to initiate the draft bill development process for the Law Against the Harassment and Political Violence Based on Gender? What are the key points of the text? Is it possible to differentiate when a woman has been the victim of violence due to gender or if the violence was because of her political affiliation or ideology? (Would a man in the same situation face the same threats?)

I don't think so. It all began with the gender solidarity group, SORORIDAD, which does not look at one's political affiliation or ideology, but rather the condition of violence, threats and persecution that the victim has encountered, and works to defend their human rights. The illegal cases of dismissal that put pressure on the finances of administration commissions, directs responsibility exclusively to the women. If AMUME advises well, its function is not to sanction but rather to defend human rights.

4. Who forms a part – besides AMUME – of this project and what have been the biggest challenges encountered at the different levels in the process?

A Technical Secretary and Administrator from AMUME, a General Board Member whose president is the vice-mayor Margarita Carranco of Quito, and additional representatives from other provinces of the country.

5. In what phase is the project in now with the Constituent Assembly? What future plans do you have to see that draft bill becomes a law and with what means do you have or what means do you propose to employ in order to implement the law?

As Human Development Advisor, I have a psychological vision of how women have been affected and have suffered harassment and political violence, and will take the approach of publicly emphasizing how one's self-esteem is affected as an emotional and physical condition because of this type of discrimination.

6. Based on your experience and research, what are the sources of violence against women in politics (from their political parties, from opposition political parties, members of the public, their partners, their family)? What are the causes of this violence, including structural and other contributing factors?

Sources include a male-dominant and chauvinist structure embedded in economic, political and social power: one can observe that political power discriminates against women and isolates them to the private sector. And from the observed incidents in the public sphere, political opposition parties, and local authorities, are also sources. Finally, the private sphere, sources include partners and families who do not believe that women should play a political role.

Concluding Comments:

It is important to keep in mind that the area of human development which aims to give importance and attention to these cases (transitioning to the sites of conflict) offering emergency attention in the relationship between the Legal and Political adviser following the case.

Dra. Barbarita Miranda Psicóloga Clínica, Miembro de la Asociación de Mujeres Municipalistas de Ecuador (AMUME):

Muchas gracias por aceptar intercambiar información con iKNOW Politics en base a su trabajo y valiosas experiencias. El texto con sus respuestas y comentarios será compartido en nuestro primer debate e intercambio virtual moderado, sobre Eliminación de la Violencia contra la Mujer Involucrada en Política, el cual se llevará a cabo entre el 10 y 14 de Diciembre.

1. ¿Cuándo y por qué comienza el interés de AMUME en el tema de la violencia y acoso a la mujer involucrada en política?

Al ser una organización que funciona más de diez años y ha trabajado en defensa de los derechos humanos de las mujeres que ejercen como autoridades locales y tienen cargos políticos.

El programa de acercamiento es el CALL CENTER con sus asesoras legales, política y de desarrollo humano.

2. ¿Qué evidencias han recogido sobre las dimensiones y frecuencia de la violencia contra la mujer involucrada en política (proporción de mujeres que han sido amenazadas/atacadas, dónde y cómo)? Y, ¿cómo piensan seguir documentando éstos casos en el futuro?

En los diferentes eventos locales y regionales convocados sobre la participación política se han recogido los Testimonios de las Concejales que en pleno ejercicio de sus cargos han sido impedidas por discriminación de género, de grupo étnico o social, que han servido de insumos para la elaboración de la LEY CONTRA EL ACOSO Y VIOLENCIA POLITICA EN RAZON DE GENERO, propuesta el 30 de Noviembre, 2007 en Montecristi Manabí, con una presencia de 100 concejalas y demás representantes de mujeres representantes de ONGs del país.

3. ¿Cómo surge la idea de iniciar el proceso de elaboración del Anteproyecto de Ley Contra el Acoso y Violencia Política en razón de Género? ¿Cuáles son los elementos claves del texto? ¿Es posible diferenciar cuando una mujer ha sido víctima de violencia por género a diferencia de por su afiliación política o ideológica? (¿un hombre en la misma situación encara las mismas amenazas?).

Creo que no, pues inicia con la solidaridad de género SORORIDAD, que no mira su afiliación política o ideológica vigente o no, sino su condición de violencia, amenazas y persecución que ha sido víctima, y pro de la defensa de los derechos humanos. Como los son los casos ilegales de destitución por ejercer presión en las comisiones de administración de fondos financiera, responsabilidad destinadas exclusivamente a las mujeres. Si bien la AMUME asesora, su función no es la sanción sino en pro de la defensa de los derechos humanos.

4. ¿Quiénes forman parte -además de AMUME- de éste proceso y cuáles han sido los mayores retos que han encontrado en el camino a diferentes niveles?

5.

Una Secretaría Técnica y Administrativa de la AMUME, un Directorio General cuya presidenta es la Lcda. Margarita Carranco, Vicealcaldesa de Quito, y demás representantes en el de otras provincias del país.

6. ¿En qué situación se encuentra el proyecto en este momento frente a la Asamblea Constituyente? ¿Cuáles son los planes que tienen a futuro para que el Anteproyecto se convierta en ley y qué mecanismos tiene o piensan proponer para su implementación?

Dado que en mi caso soy la Asesora del Área de Desarrollo Humano, logré una visión psicosocial de cómo han sido afectadas las mujeres que han sufrido acoso y violencia política, y destacar públicamente cómo se afectó su autoestima como su condición emocional y física por este tipo de discriminación.

7. Basándose en su experiencia e investigaciones, ¿de dónde proviene la violencia contra la mujer en política (en sus partidos políticos, de partidos políticos opositores, miembros del público, sus parejas, familia)? ¿Cuáles son las causas de ésta violencia, incluyendo las estructurales y otros factores que pueden contribuir?

De una estructura dominante y machista enquistada en el poder económico, político y social, y observa en el poder político que discrimina a la mujer y la aísla a lo privado. De lo observado su incidencia en el ámbito público, se ve en los partidos políticos opositores, y autoridades locales; en el ámbito privado sus parejas y familia que no cree que es el rol que debe cumplir.

Comentarios concluyentes:

Importante tomar en cuenta el Área de Desarrollo Humano cuya finalidad es dar contención y otros casos atención, (desplazamiento a los sitios de conflicto) brindando atención emergente y en interrelación con la asesora Legal y Política según el caso.

Iliana Estabridis, Coordinator of the Program on Sexual Violence Against Women in Situations of Armed Conflict, Peru, wrote:

English/[Español](#)

Political Participation of Women in Contexts of Armed Conflict

The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, presented before the Peruvian state and Peruvian people in August 2003, reveals that the internal armed conflict which took place in Peru between the years 1980 and 2000 claimed more than 69,000 victims and resulted in around a million displaced people. In regard to the impact of the armed conflict on women, according to the data in the Final Report, rape was a crime committed almost exclusively against women; of the total of reported cases – 538 – 527 related to women, with 11 cases against men. It has been affirmed that agents of the State and subversive forces are the parties that are primarily responsible for this crime; the Armed Forces were responsible for 83.46% of the rapes.

“Memories of Women” (in the armed internal conflict) [Crisóstomo Meza, Mercedes. *Memorias de Mujer*, Lima. Edited by the Project Counseling Service, 2004] brings together relevant information from the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and other sources with respect to the political role of women during the armed internal conflict. In the case of the civil population, “It was the mothers, wives, daughters and sisters of the disappeared and assassinated who began active searches and pressing charges” before human rights organizations, prosecutors, judges of human rights violations, and through the media in order to speak out about the facts.

Women organized themselves in order to develop strategies to protect their own lives and the lives of their families and communities, as well as to demand truth, justice and reparations for the assassination, imprisonment, displacement, or disappearance of their husbands, sons and/or parents.

During the armed conflict, the women assumed for the first time positions of political representation in the community, which before were only occupied by men; they began to occupy positions as presidents of the community, mayors and/or leaders of social organizations. Frequently they were victims of violence; they were threatened, assassinated or disappeared when they were about to achieve some objective for their organization.

Other women, chose to be soldiers in Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso) or the Revolutionary Movement of Tupac Amaru (MRTA). 40% of Shining Path soldiers were women; the women were organized in the Popular Movement of Women (Movimiento Popular de Mujeres); they held positions in the Central Committee of Shining Path; they formed part of the death squadrons and, frequently, it was a woman who was in charge of giving the coup de grace to the police and soldiers that Shining Path decided to assassinate. These women were victims of sexual violence and rape in particular, especially when they were detained and imprisoned in military bases.

According to the Peruvian criminal authorities, women represented a third of the total number of persons accused of terrorism.

Nowadays, many soldiers of the subversive groups find themselves confined in Santa Mónica prison, others have separated themselves from the group and some have even welcomed the Law of Repentance. Many of the women were detained by the Armed Forces in ambushes, they were raped and then simply disappeared. Others were recruited to the force by the subversive

groups; they were obliged to be the bodyguards of the high political commands and soldiers and were subjected to the forced partnerships, abortion and other acts of sexual violence.

In the post-conflict phase, women participate in the spaces of decision-making (development of agreed-upon plans and participative proposals); they occupy positions as local congress women, mayors of local governments; or as members of the committees of local coordination and the committees of regional coordination; some militate in political parties, but still they don't assume management positions. They are leaders of female organizations and of mixed-gender organizations and they communicate their interest in participating in the political sphere.

Iliana Estabridis, Coordinadora de Programa, Violencia Sexual contra las Mujeres en Situación de Conflicto Armado, Peru:

Participación Política de las Mujeres en Contextos de Conflicto Armado

El Informe Final de la Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación - IF – CVR, presentado ante el Estado y la sociedad peruana en agosto del 2003, revela que el conflicto armado interno vivido en el Perú entre los años 1980 y 2000, tuvo un total de víctimas que supera las 69 mil y, se calcula en medio millón el número de personas desplazadas. En lo relativo al impacto del conflicto armado en las mujeres, según las cifras de la CVR, la violación sexual fue un crimen cometido casi exclusivamente contra ellas; el total de casos reportados es de 538, de éstos 527 corresponden a mujeres y 11 corresponden a varones. Se ha constatado que han sido agentes del Estado y fuerzas subversivas los principales responsables de la comisión de ese delito; las FFAA son responsables del 83,46% de las violaciones sexuales.

“Memorias de Mujer” (en el conflicto armado interno) (Crisóstomo Meza, Mercedes. Memorias de Mujer, Lima. Editado por Consejería en Proyectos, 2004) reúne información relevante del IF - CVR y de otras fuentes respecto al rol político de la mujer durante el conflicto armado interno. En el caso de la población civil “Fueron las madres, esposas, hijas y hermanas de los desaparecidos y asesinados quienes iniciaron los procesos de búsqueda y denuncia” ante los organismos de derechos humanos, las fiscalías, los jueces de derechos humanos y los medios de comunicación para hablar de los hechos.

Las mujeres se organizaron para desarrollar estrategias de autoprotección de sus vidas, la de sus familias y comunidades; para exigir verdad, justicia y reparación frente al asesinato, encarcelamiento, desplazamiento o desaparición de sus esposos, hijos y/o padres.

Durante el conflicto armado, ellas asumieron, por primera vez, cargos de representación política en la comunidad, que antes sólo eran desempeñados por los hombres; comenzaron a desempeñarse como presidentas de la comunidad, alcaldesas vara y/o lideresas de organizaciones sociales. Con frecuencia fueron víctimas de violencia; fueron amenazadas, asesinadas o desaparecidas cuando estaban por lograr algún objetivo para su organización.

Otras mujeres optaron por militar en Sendero Luminoso - SL - o el Movimiento Revolucionario Tupac Amaru – MRTA. SL manifestó que el 40% de su militancia estaba conformada por mujeres; ellas estaban organizadas en el Movimiento Popular de Mujeres; ocupaban cargos en el Comité Central de SL; formaban parte de los escuadrones de aniquilamiento y, con frecuencia, era una mujer la encargada de dar el tiro de gracia a los policías y militares que SL decidía asesinar. Estas mujeres eran víctimas de violencia sexual y de violación sexual en particular, especialmente cuando eran detenidas y recluidas en las bases militares.

Según las autoridades penales del Perú, las mujeres representaban la tercera parte del total de personas acusadas de terrorismo.

Actualmente muchas militantes de los grupos subversivos se encuentran recluidas en el Penal Santa Mónica, otras se han desvinculados y algunas se han acogido a la Ley de arrepentimiento.

Muchas de ellas fueron detenidas en emboscadas por las Fuerzas Armadas; las violaron y las desaparecieron. Otras fueron reclutadas a la fuerza por los grupos subversivos; fueron obligadas a ser guardaespaldas de los altos mandos políticos y militares y sometidas a unión forzada; aborto y otros actos de violencia sexual.

En el post conflicto las mujeres participan en los espacios de toma de decisiones (elaboración de planes de desarrollo concertados y presupuestos participativos); se desempeñan como regidoras y alcaldesas de los gobiernos locales; o como miembros de los comités de coordinación local - CCL - y los comités de coordinación regional – CCR; algunas militan en partidos políticos, pero aún no asumen cargos de dirección. Son lideresas de organizaciones de mujeres y de organizaciones mixtas y, comunican su interés por participar políticamente.

Isabella Waterschoot, UNICEF Pakistan, wrote:

What about Women in Politics in Iraq?

Hello and thank you for such a great opportunity.

My query originates after reading an article this morning in the Guardian UK - Freedom Lost - Women in Iraq (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/Iraq/Story/0,,2226600,00.html>)

Under the new constitution in Iraq, the quotas of representation in Parliament are amongst the highest of the world.

On the ground, however, the situation is rather different:

- Security and safety issues to actually reach the building. (MPs raped, killed)
- Restrictions of mobility for women (Shia law) women cannot be out if not accompanied by a man;
- Article 41 of the Constitution Family law in passing of being removed in favour of religious and sects customary laws;
- Resurgence of tribal codes which will affect women negatively,
- Women representation in conservative religious parties which do not seem to face mobility restrictions as faced by the others;
- Resurgence of son preference Vs girl in the family;
- Diaspora activity in neighbouring countries;
- Use of Violence against women (VAW) as a political weapon (as in conflict) sometimes in retaliation of Abu Gharib.

I know this is a newspaper article which does not provide many references except for an UNAMI report on the rise of incidence of VAW.

What is the opinion of the experts on this? I want to generate a discussion and a debate of this, as this situation is not only resurging in Iraq it is very mainstreamed in the Middle East, Central Asian and South Asia countries to name just a few. It also suggests that Islam is not women-friendly, which is a wrong interpretation as we know looking at experiences of other Islamic republic or Sunni Islamic countries.

Sandra Navarro, Public Affairs Specialist/Political Campaigns, Ecuador, wrote:

What a shame the violence against women in politics that we are currently experiencing. I was pleased to read Dr. Barbarita Miranda's article but I was surprised by the fact that she did not mention the cruel injustice that is going on at this moment against a Regional Governor in Ecuador's Amazon Region, Mrs. Guadalupe LLori. She was mistreated, hit, and the press has accused her of terrorism and sabotage against Ecuador.

The events began the fourth of December with a strike. The reasons: Dayuma is a gas region; the exploitation of gas from this region corresponds to a percentage of 50 cents to the barrel.

President Rafael Correa during his presidential campaign offered to raise the percentage to \$ 1 (one dollar), a promise he has failed to fulfil. When the residents of Dayuma, during a peaceful protest demanded this change, soldiers violently rounded up the demonstrators. The cruellest actions have already been committed. A Human Right's commission needs to negotiate the freedom of all of the demonstrators and especially that of the female politician, a representative elected by popular vote for the Provincial Regional-Governorship, who is now imprisoned.

How ironic that in this week of defence of female politicians, these events take place, illegal and unjust events against a representative of our gender.

Sandra Navarro, Relacionista para campanas politicas, Ecuador:

Qué lastima que el ejemplo de la violencia en contra de las mujeres.

políticas lo estemos viviendo en este momento. Me agradó leer el artículo de la Dra. Barbarita Miranda, pero me sorprendió el hecho que no comentara para nada la injusticia cruel que está viviendo en éste momento la Prefecta de la zona de la Amazonía del Ecuador, la Sra. Guadalupe LLori. Ella ha sido vejada, golpeada, se encuentra presa acusada de terrorismo y sabotaje contra el Estado Ecuatoriano.

Los sucesos comenzaron el pasado 4 de diciembre por un paro, las razones: Dayuma es una zona petrolera. Por la explotación del petróleo, le corresponde un porcentaje de \$ 0.50 centavos de dólar por barril.

El presidente Rafael Correa en época de campaña, ofreció subir ese porcentaje a \$1 (un dólar), cosa que ha incumplido. Los habitantes de Dayuma, en una protesta pacífica reclamaban por esto. Los militares apresaron a los manifestantes golpeándolos. Los actos más crueles han sido cometidos. Una Comisión de Derechos Humanos está negociando la libertad de todos los manifestantes y en especial de ésta mujer política, representante elegida por votación popular para la Prefectura Provincial, ahora está presa.

Qué ironía que ésta sea la semana de la defensa de las mujeres políticas, y sucedan estos actos que no solo van en contra de una representante de nuestro género, sino que están marcados por la ilegalidad e injusticia.

Jannette Rizzo, Periodista/Sicología Social, Argentina:

iKNOW Politics: ¿Qué evidencias has(n) recogido sobre las dimensiones y frecuencia de la violencia contra la mujer involucrada en política (proporción de mujeres que han sido amenazadas/atacadas, dónde y cómo)? Y, ¿cómo piensas(n) seguir documentando éstos casos en el futuro?

Jannette: Las evidencias encontradas son investigaciones y proyectos realizados por las organizaciones que se han agrupado para generar un marco jurídico legal para la protección de la mujer que sufre "violencia", de Chile y Argentina. Las dimensiones y frecuencia no se pueden evaluar ya que aún no existen entes regulatorios de investigación sobre la "MUJER EN EL PODER", por lo general las historias contadas son escritas por las mismas mujeres que hoy se encuentran liderando un país. El protocolo que protege a una presidenta no informa públicamente la cantidad de veces y frecuencias de amenazas que ellas sufren, solo podemos enterarnos cuando el periódico informa sobre un hecho puntual del líder.

¿Dónde y Cómo? En mi experiencia sucede en ambientes masivos públicos, y en la actualidad como ha ocurrido en el transcurso de este año 2007, la Sra. Presidenta de Chile recibió amenazas vía correo electrónico, y fue publicada por la prensa nacional. Esto también es usado para mujeres empresarias expuestas a espacios públicos.

En el Futuro, les haré llegar una investigación con entrevistas y mi experiencia personal.

iKNOW Politics: Basándote en tu experiencia e investigaciones, ¿de dónde proviene la violencia contra la mujer en política (en sus partidos políticos, de partidos políticos opositores, miembros del público, sus parejas, familia)? ¿Cuáles son las causas de ésta violencia, incluyendo las estructurales y otros factores que pueden contribuir?

Jannette: La violencia contra la mujer en la política proviene de los opositores y miembros del público.

Causas: Abuso de Poder Militante, Contextura Física el hombre es más fuerte y la mujer débil, la represión, Formas culturales, educacionales, la economía, crisis en la administración de gobiernos, machismo, cambios de roles, pobreza, etc.

iKNOW Politics: ¿Es posible diferenciar cuándo una mujer ha sido víctima de violencia por género de por su afiliación política o ideológica? (¿un hombre en la misma situación encara las mismas amenazas?).

Jannette: Si es posible ya que por género es muy frecuente la violencia por falta de formación educacional y económica, la mujer en la política por lo general tiene estudios terciarios y avanzados que las coloca en un rango distinto culturalmente y económicamente. No permiten ser sometidas, en cambio por género no contar con esta formación se someten ante el miedo de ser castigadas.

iKNOW Politics: ¿Cómo se manifiesta la violencia contra la mujer involucrada en política en contextos culturales diversos? ¿En países y situaciones de conflicto y pos conflicto?

Jannette: se manifiesta provocando violencia física por la potencia de su cuerpo es denunciada como recurso de poder otorgado por el modelo hegemónico de masculinidad patriarcal. Falta de educación y formación desde el núcleo familiar. En países latinos es muy frecuente que el hombre no acepte ser condicionado por una mujer y más situaciones de conflictos políticos las críticas son que no sirve una mujer en el poder porque es muy sensible y vulnerable.

iKNOW Politics: ¿En qué país (o países) existen medidas efectivas (incluyendo legislación, políticas, programas, entre otras) para eliminar la violencia en contra de las mujeres en política? ¿Qué actores deben ser parte en la implementación de éstas medidas?

Jannette: No existe efectividad en las medidas instaladas en la legislación de países que la ejercen, es más puedo aclarar, que el acceso a la justicia no está bien implementado ya que para hacer una denuncia la mujer debe llegar en estados críticos de vida, porque lo contrario el poder jurídico no le da importancia a las amenazas que sufren las mujeres, ya que la respuesta; es la ley dice: "se considera una denuncia con antecedentes tangibles y demostrables" no existe la prevención...

Los actores de cambio son el Gobierno – Estado para una reforma en la legislación es la prevención y educación.

No pertenezco a ninguna organización. Soy una ciudadana que trabaja en el entorno de la comunicación. Muchas gracias por la oportunidad que ustedes ofrecen. Y que bueno que podamos integrar a más mujeres con estos problemas que involucran a la humanidad.

Keita Mariam Toure, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist, National Program of Civic Education, Mali, wrote:

English/[Français](#)

Violence Against Women in Politics, Mali

Thank you for offering the opportunity to initially share our own experiences, in order to have an overall vision resulting from the varied contributions coming from all continents.

In Mali, women who engage in politics, the leaders, are generally victims of violence at all levels of life: social, economic, and political...

At the family level: A woman engaged in politics is viewed very negatively because of her engagement, but this also lends to additional charges that must also be taken into account. Here, I do not refer to the sociocultural restraints that hinder the participation of women in public life. Women in politics are beaten by their spouses, by second wives, when they take a different political side from their spouses and other members of the family. Often even when they are supported by their spouses, they must still face insults and blows from in-laws.

Within the political parties, women are often the object of sexual harassment for their position. Owing to the fact that the majority engage without incomes, women in politics are often stigmatized as “debauched” women.

It is difficult for me to today to provide you with you statistics on cases of violence committed against women who engage in politics for the simple reason that I am not aware of such study in our country. Can it be that the conclusions of this discussion will recommend that such a global study be initiated, at the national level and in every region?

I am, as part of my official responsibilities, in a National Program of Civic Education which aims, as one of its specific objectives, to combat the 12 types of violence against women. If a database existed with statistics, cases, and testimonies of women, the teaching aids for the target groups would be better elaborated.

If anyone in this discussion is aware of such a study conducted in another country, I would like to hear about it.

Keita Mariam Toure, Experte Nationale en suivi évaluation, Programme National d'Education à la citoyenneté, Mali:

Violences faites aux femmes en politiques: Mali

Bonjours à toutes et à tous,

Je suis heureuse de l'opportunité que vous nous offrez pour d'abord parler de nos expériences propres ensuite pour nous permettre d'avoir cette vision d'ensemble à travers les contributions aussi variées venant de tous les continents.

Pour ce qui est du Mali, les femmes qui s'engagent en politique, les leaders en général sont victimes de violence à tous les niveaux de la vie sociale, économique, politique...

Au niveau familial:

Une femme engagée est très mal vue du fait même de son engagement car cette option lui donne des charges supplémentaires qui doivent être désormais partie intégrante de son calendrier. Je ne parle pas des contraintes socioculturelles qui sont des freins à la participation de la femme à la vie publique.

Les femmes qui font de la politique ont été battues par leurs maris, leurs coépouses parcequ'elles ne sont pas simplement du même bord politique que leurs conjoints et les autres membres de la famille. Souvent lorsqu'elles sont comprises par leurs époux, c'est la belle famille qu'elles doivent affronter avec le lots d'injures de bastonnades souvent.

Au sein des partis politiques, les femmes pour leur positionnement sont souvent objet de harcèlement sexuel. Du fait qu'elles s'engagent sans revenus pour la plupart beaucoup tombent dans ce lot qui fait que l'on stigmatise toutes les femmes qui font la politique avec la formule "femmes engagées en politique=femmes dévergondées"

Il m'est difficile aujourd'hui de vous donner des statistiques sur les cas de violences faites aux femmes qui s'engagent en politique pour la simple raison qu'une telle étude je n'en ai pas connaissance chez nous. Peut être que les conclusions de cette discussion recommandera t-elle d'initier une telle étude dans le monde, sur le plan national et par sous région?

Je suis de part ma fonction dans un Programme National d'Education citoyenne et l'un des objectifs spécifiques de ce programme est entre autres autres la lutte contre les 12 violences faites aux femmes. Si une telle base documentaire existait sur les statistiques, les causes, les témoignages des femmes les outils pédagogiques à l'intention des groupes cibles seraient mieux élaborés.

Si quelqu'un dans cette discussion à connaissance d'une telle étude quelque soit le pays , je souhaite qu'il m'en refencie.

María Eugenia Valverde, General Manager of the Association of Councilwomen (Concejalas) of Bolivia (ACOBOL), wrote:

[English/Español](#)

iKNOW Politics: When and why did ACOBOL become interested in the topic of violence and harassment against women involved in politics?

María Eugenia: By 2000, when ACOBOL had already been operating for one year under ACOBOL's first presidency headed by Gloria Aguilar, attention was called to the problems confronted by women, the most noticeable and shocking of which were the reports of harassment and violence that the *Concejalas* endured while trying to do efficient work. So in November 2000, in a Seminar of Councilwomen (Concejalas) in the House of Representatives, together with the Vice-minister of Gender Affairs and Family, the harassment and violence that councilwomen of various rural municipalities were being subjected to all over the country was publically denounced.

During the Seminar, the Vice- Ministry of Gender Affairs and Family recalled that the CPE, the Electoral Code, the Quota Law, the Decree of Equal Opportunities and other normative instruments guarantee the participation of women.

On the 22 February 2001, through an initiative of ACOBOL and the Commission of Decentralization and Popular Participation of the House of Representatives, a “public audience” was held in a small gathering of Parliament in which the cases of the municipalities of Ballivián, Puerto Pérez, and Achacachi were denounced. The President of the Commission of Decentralization and Popular Participation, Aldo Quaglino, promised the Parliament’s participation in the protection of the reporting *Concejales*.

From this point, the President to ACOBOL was able to implement the first steps and advances for the formal declaration of the Law with the backing of Commission’s report, and at this point the work was begun which would soon become the draft bill of the “Law Against Harassment and Political Violence Based on Gender.”

After 2002, this work was linked to the institutional level with the cooperation of the Ex–Vice Minister for Women, the Ministry of Rural, Indigenous, Gender and Family Affairs, the Union of Female Parliamentarians of Bolivia, the Women’s National Political Forum and others, in addition to international cooperation on the collection and sharing of information.

After 2004 workshops for the dissemination of the law were conducted, creating an impact on the draft bill in the Senate.

In 2005, the law was discussed twice in the House of Representatives without any positive results. It is, however important to note that, due to pressures from various allied institutions, the “Committee for the Rights of Women” was founded with the objective of coordinating actions to defend the political rights of Bolivia’s *Concejales* and Mayors. Several events took place including a book distribution and an international seminar on the Political Rights of Women where candidates for the Republic’s Vice Presidency made agreements.

On June 25th, 2006 in Sucre, it was resolved (under resolution 004/06 approved by the Fourth National Assembly of Bolivia’s Federation of Municipalities, and during the presidency of Jacqueline Rocabado de Martínez of ACOBOL) that:

Art. 1: Supporting and assuring the necessary guarantees for the exercise of the duties of Bolivia’s *Concejales* on behalf of FAM-BOLIVIA and the municipal associations in defence of the rights and interests of all the women, partners, *Concejales* and Mayors of Bolivia strengthening their duties toward full equality and human development.

Art. 2: Denouncing and making public the municipal governments and the municipal authorities that commit acts of discrimination, violence, harassment, intimidation, illegal alternating, etc. against human rights and the full exercise of the duties of Bolivia’s *Concejales*.

Art. 3: The Presidents of the Association of Municipalities in each of the regional departments will remain in charge of carrying out of the present Resolution.

Subsequently a series of strategies will be prepared for the presentation of the Law, before public audiences, as called for by the Commission on Social Politics, including:

The Bill No. 422/07: “*Law against the harassment and political violence due to gender*” is a legislative initiative presented by Civil Society during the Legislative term, 2005-2006 with the signature PLSC-004/05-06. It was reinitiated and responded to by the 2006 legislative session with No. 277/06-07 by representative Elizabeth Salguero Carrillo.

The said draft bill was brought to the attention of the Executive branch, with a response received on 14 June 2006, and was resubmitted to the Commission of Social Politics on the 19 June 2007.

The response from the Executive Branch, coming from the Justice Minister and signed by the Minister Casimira Rodríguez Romero, with an Analysis added on her behalf and with a recommendation for *APPROVAL WITH OBSERVATIONS* of the said draft bill.

On August 16th, 2006 in the 75th Ordinary Session of the Honourable House of Representatives, the full House discussed the draft law 277/2006-2007: "Against Harassment and Political Violence Based on Gender." Following a lecture by the Commission of Social Politics it proceeded to approve the overall legislative initiative, stopping to further discuss details in regard to judicial incongruities and an unsuitable conceptual framework.

After being able addressing these observations, the President of the House of Representatives decided, with the Full session of the House, to establish a joint Commission to link between the Commissions on Social Politics, on Human Development and Constitution, and on Justice and Judicial Oversight, with the goal of correcting the discrepancies and developing a report to validate the legislative initiative.

To this end, several technical analysis meetings were held on August 30th and 31st, September 4th, and at the end of November 2006, where the Bolivia's Union of Female Parliamentarians, Bolivia's Association of *Concejales*, the Committee for the Law Against Political Violence Based on Gender, the Gender and Family Committee, and the Commission on Development and Social Politics developed a technical report on the draft Law correcting the discrepancies pointed out by the full House of Representatives.

iKNOW Politics: What evidence has been gathered about the dimensions and frequency of violence against women involved in politics (the proportion of women that have been threatened/attacked, where and how)? And, how do they hope to continue documenting these cases in the future?

María Eugenia: Until September of this year, in the central office of ACOBOL about 180 cases were reported (this number is missing the data until December 2007). This does not mean that there are not other cases, simply those that were not reported. However, with the promotion of the Law against Harassment and Political Violence, the reported cases have visibly increased.

The ACOBOL has come up with several strategy-plans, one of which is the statistical information system against harassment and political violence. A network has also been created on the prevention of harassment and political violence.

Some of the cases have been affirmed. Nevertheless the prevention network, the formal reporting processes, and the case tracking processes are still in the development phases. Cases continue to be documented, following the initiation of the statistical information system on cases of harassment and violence.

TABLE: CASES OF HARASSMENT AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE BASED ON GENDER. CASES ATTENDED AND RECEIVED BY ACOBOL AND THE DEPARTMENTAL ASSOCIATIONS OF CONCEJALAS. Table N° 29 [Source: ACOBOL (Updated data to June 2007)].

DEPARTAMENT	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	TOTAL
Chuquisaca	0	0	0	2	2	0	1	2	7
La Paz	32	43	25	3	3	7	10	3	116
Cochabamba	4	8	0	0	2	1	5	0	19
Oruro	9	2	4	0	2	0	0	1	18
Potosí	3	2	3	2	0	0	2	1	13
Tarija	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
Santa Cruz	1	6	2	0	2	4	0	0	15
Beni	0	4	0	0	3	1	0	0	8
Pando	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	49	65	34	7	15	14	18	7	168

After five years of political violence, we can observe that the cases of harassment and political violence against *Concejales* and Mayors in Bolivia during the studied period between 2000-2005, can be seen in: Chuquisaca with 18 cases of violence, La Paz with 50 cases, Oruro with 8 cases, Potosí 10 cases, Cochabamba 11 cases, Tarija with 3 cases, Santa Cruz 8 cases, Beni 9 cases and Pando with 0 cases. Additionally one can see that this type of violence and harassment is more prevalent in the west than in the east. This does not mean, however, that cases of discrimination don't exist in these cities, but rather than they have not been report up until now. We estimate that the number of cases is four times more than those reported.

The violence against mayors and *Concejales* is expressed in various ways. The acts of violence can be physical, or psychologically damaging during their municipal term. Through the end of the reporting period, 117 cases of violence were reported of which 43 cases (33%) report pressures of some sort. In regard to acts of violence 23 cases represent 20%; hindering of duties: 23 cases (19%), freezing of municipal accounts: 9 cases (8%), discrimination: 8 cases (7%), defamation and slander: 7 cases (6%), illegal alternating of the town councilship: 2 cases (2%), excess of authority and reimbursement of finances: 2 cases, figures which are less representative but not nonetheless important as they are humiliating for the women that represent their communities in a municipal position.

In order to continue documenting the cases an information system has been designed and will be implemented with the support of the *Network of Prevention and Attention*.

iKNOW Politics: Can you describe the development process of the Law Against Harassment and Political Violence Based on Gender? What are the key points of the text? What has to be done for its approval? What mechanisms are available or might be proposed for its implementation?

María Eugenia: It is a process that began after the reported cases and the proposal of the Law Against Harassment and Political Violence Based on Gender that came out of ACOBOL in the beginning of 2001.

The elements that cause controversy in the text of some articles are indicated below:

Article 6 (Acts of harassment and political violence) These are understood to be acts of harassment and political violence due to gender, namely those acts that:

- a) Restrict or impede the full exercise of the political rights of women in reference to their positions as elected authorities and in the exercise of the duties for the public positions of President of the Republic, Vice President of the Republic, Constituent Assembly member, Senator, Representative, Mayor, *Concejala*, Municipal Agent, Regional governor, Regional councillor - and in general all elected authority.
- a) Abuse community justice against the elected authorities in public positions, impeding or restricting the exercise of their political rights.

Article 7 (Aggravating circumstances) The authority that has knowledge of some of the described actions in the previous article, taking into account aggravating circumstances, circumstances in the commission of the crime, will be referred to the judicial branch for trial.

- a) *When the harassment or political violence, had it been instigated or promoted by the heads of the political parties, groups of citizens and indigenous group, in which case the sanction established in article 130 will be applied, Public Instigation for Committing a Crime of the Penal Code.*

Suggestion: consult with deputies and commissions of parliamentarians.

Article 11 (Applicable sanctions)

- I. Duties of the institution where the act was committed.
- II. *Acts of harassment and political violence committed by political leaders, or heads of political parties and/or citizen groups, including all the territorial heads or those in between party leaders and the national leader, will be sanctioned according to Chapter Ten, of the Infractions and Sanctions of the 1983 Political Parties Law and the Sixth Chapter of Infractions and Sanctions of the Law 2771 of Citizen groups and Indigenous People without prejudice of civil or penal responsibility which corresponds and the process before the National Electoral Court.*

The Article 197 is incorporated under Title III Electoral Misdemeanours and Crimes, Chapter 1 Stipulations from the Law No. 1984, July 8, 1999, Electoral Code and the following text:

“Article 197 from *(CRIME OF HARASSMENT AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE)* The citizens that practice violence and/or political harassment conform to the established stipulations in the law against harassment and political violence. They will be sanctioned with 24-hour arrest. If this act implies a crime, the accused will be additionally sanctioned according to the Penal Code. If the act was committed by a public functionary, the person will additionally be immediately removed from their position.

For the approval it is necessary to make the said observations by women of parliament, submit it for approval in detail from the House of Representative and the *POLITICAL WILL* of the Congress. This requires the formalities within the caucuses, support of the female representative of the all the political parties and especially the *Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS)* party and the encouraging of female substitutes the day of the draft bill's approval.

The strategy:

- To count on the commitment of the social organizations; that they understand the bases, the concept and the magnitude of the problem of harassment and political violence based on gender.

- To count on the commitment of the *Concejales* of MAS through political impact (approval of the law) and implementation on their part
- Certain activities with the caucuses of MAS and of other political parties, groups of citizens and indigenous people.
- To obtain 5000 signatures at the national level in support of the law.
- Mobilizing the support of men and women in a general mobilization in Bolivia and Latin America countries.
- Constructing strategic alliances.

The strategy will go through a real situational analysis and a process construction of strategy and possible solutions so that it is successfully approved.

The new political constitution clearly indicates that:

Art. 15. Section I – **All persons have the right to life, and to physical, psychological, moral and sexual integrity.** No one will be tortured or will suffer cruel, inhuman, or humiliating treatment. The death penalty is prohibited. II It is the right of all persons, and in particular a **woman’s right not to suffer physical, sexual, or psychological violence whether in the family setting or in society.** III. **The state will adopt the means necessary to prevent, eliminate and sanction gender and domestic violence,** as well as to prevent all actions or omissions that aim to degrade the human condition, to cause death, pain, physical, sexual or psychological suffering whether in the public environment or in the private.

We will make this a new, valuable country perspective.

iKNOW Politics: From your experience, is it possible to differentiate when a woman has been the victim of violence due to gender as opposed to for reasons of political affiliation or ideology? (Does a man in the same situation face the same threats?)

María Eugenia: It is not possible to differentiate the political violence committed by men because there is a mix between violence based on gender and violence that arises from political affiliation. But yes, that which we can differentiate is the harassment and the political violence as explained in the following:

Article 4 (Political Harassment) From the effects of the present law, political harassment is understood as an act or a group of acts committed by a person and/or mediator against a woman or against her family with the purpose of impeding and/or inducing an action or omission against the fulfilment of her duties, rights or functions, by means of pressure of persecution, harassing, or threats carried out through various mediums.

Article 5 (Political Violence). Political Violence is understood as the actions and/or aggressive behaviour committed by a person by or through an intermediary which causes physical, psychological or sexual pain against a woman or her family, in exercise of the political representation, in order to impede or in restriction of her position or which induces a certain decision against her will, against her principals or against the law.

	POLITICAL HARRASSMENT	POLITICAL VIOLENCE
SIMILARITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Against women and/or her family • Done by a person or through intermediaries (third parties) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Against women and/or her family • Done by a person or through intermediaries (third parties)
DIFFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pressure: persecution, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical,

	harassing, threats • Action by an evident or simulated medium	psychological or sexual damage • Action or aggressive conduct
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That is to say that the acts categorized in article 6 of the Law begin in harassment and often end in violence.

Article 6 (Acts of harassment and Political violence) Acts of harassment and political violence based on gender are understood as those that:

- a) Restrict or impede the full exercise of the political rights of women in reference to her position as elected authority and in the exercise of the duties for the public positions of President of the Republic, Vice President of the Republic, Constituent Assembly member, Senator, Representative, Mayor, *Concejala*, Municipal Agent, Regional governor, Regional councillor and in general all elected authority.
- b) Restrict or impede a woman from the effective fulfilment of the duties and established responsibilities for the public position to which she was elected, either as principal representative or as substitute, avoiding or limited the use of the resources that challenge the State's Political Constitution and the laws of the country.
- c) That restricts, through whatever medium, the attendance to the ordinary or extraordinary sessions, or any other activity related to women participating in decision making processes, either as principal representatives or substitutes, or that impedes or suppresses the right to voice and vote in equal conditions as men.
- d) Inducing by means of force or intimidation to the elected authorities or in exercise or no of the duties, to endorse all types of documents and/or guarantee decisions contrary to her principals and public interest, as to induce or pressure them to renounce their positions for which they were elected.
- e) To provide the National Electoral Court with false information about the identity or sex of their candidates.
- f) To provide the elected authority, whether principal representative or substitute, with false, wrong, or imprecise information, which induces an unsuitable exercising of duties.
- g) That discriminate against the elected authority when one is pregnant gives birth or in the post-partum phase, impeding or denying the exercise of the mandate and the enjoyment and exercise of her social rights and recognized maternity by the law.
- h) That discriminate against the elected authority because of social condition, cultural, idiomatic, racial or economic.
- i) That impose, based on gender, the carrying out of activities and work unconnected with the duties and general characteristics of authority.
- j) That abuse communal justice against the elected authorities for a public position, impeding or restricting the exercise of their political rights.
- k) That impede the reincorporation of women to her duties when one makes use of a justified discharge.

The strategies that are constructed with respect to the topic should be directed to the prevention, negotiation, and solution of conflicts in the phase of harassment, and not in the phase of violence,

during which the Law is essential for the sanction and eradication of both phases of the culture and Bolivian idiosyncrasies.

iKNOW Politics: We know that you have worked with cases of female peasants and indigenous people. How is the violence manifested against women involved in political in different cultural contexts?

María Eugenia: An important proportion of the women *Concejales* correspond to the municipalities of rural areas and the rural area that is populated by peasants, and in many cases, indigenous and diverse cultures.

Without doubt, the situation of discrimination and the absence of opportunities for women are much more visible with peasants, indigenous and native communities. The scarce participation in the levels of power and positions of decision-making is worrisome but even more worrisome are the 180 cases of violence and denounced political harassment.

As a result of the reporting of acts of violence and political harassment against elected authorities for a public position, such as *Concejales* or Mayors, victims are abused because of their habits and customs and the case of communal justice, they have been impeded and restricted in the full exercise of their political rights. These facts have come from the promulgation of the Law's project that expects to protect in an effective way, all the female elected authorities before whatever type of excesses, discrimination or aggression against their human rights, politics and citizens in the exercise of their mandate.

However, this forced acknowledgement of communal justice exercised through violence and political harassment against female authorities (which in the majority of the cases (in 99%) comes from the rural and indigenous areas), reinforces patriarchal, machista, ancestral practices of the rural and indigenous communities of Bolivia.

Precisely in the moments that deal with the configuration of the social and democratic state of rights with the full acknowledgement of the native people with their different demonstrations in their social relations and, in one of these relationships, the communal justice as an expression which defines the mechanisms of how to deal with conflict which help to develop the communities in order to resolve controversies which arise among its members (Extracted from the presentation of the Seminar of Communal Justice System of the *Instituto de la Judicatura de Bolivia*), the ACOBOL with the support of the roundtable of Communal Justice expects to carry out an investigation in order to analyze the problem, to delegate responsibilities, achieve compatibility and/or better understand of the management of conflicts/negotiations among the community systems and state judicial systems in order to guarantee and strengthen the political participation of female in rural areas and native indigenous persons.

It is a matter of finding the mechanisms that, within the state, law and community justice, allow for the inclusion, the respect and the evaluation of elected female authorities, strengthening the idea of the state as a political community based in the consideration of the universal norms that harmonize different customs based in environments unlimited by opposition. The challenge is to achieve congruence at the local-municipal level, where one has the most impact on one's habits and customs, and the national-state-municipal level, where positive legal norms dominate, so that the ethnic-cultural diversity is manifested in the system of political and social representation in harmony, equality (*chacha-warmi*) and justice for all.

With respect to your customs and habits, your cultural rights from the communities what are the best or highest expressions of justice that are established by the national-state government?

These political and social norms of the community, pre-established as their own mechanisms that define behaviour and attitudes of its inhabitants, which experiment other realities, other ways of life and of conflict resolutions, communities many times far away, with different way of

negotiating-resolving controversies, applying their own violence or non-violence normative system toward women, it is due to the absence of the state, due to its irreverence (lack of knowledge of the legal norms about violations), love of customs or due to that which is excluded from the state?

Among regular customs, daily resolution of conflict that has focused historically on the private-domestic environment and political-community environment, where all are structured, recognizable, illegitimate, institutionalized and defined by the men in undermining women, in order to face any general type of community problem. However in the political-municipal environment, the resolution of conflicts based in power problems (relations and exercise) of gender and politics between men and women of the municipal government are not completely defined. For this reason, it is justified and satisfies the absence of social-political experience, lack of knowledge, no acknowledgment of the value of gender in the relatively new environment for the community members in the handling and exercise of power and of peasant and indigenous leadership, in sanctions based in the habits and customs that hurt the integrity of the female elected authorities or better said, that which reaffirms the prevalence and power men have over unprotected women in both systems.

iKNOW Politics: Based on your research from where does the violence against women in politics (in their political parties, opposition political parties, members of the public, their partners, or family) come? What are some of the causes of this violence including the structural and other factors that contribute?

María Eugenia: The women who have suffered different actions that damage or prevent their political participation at the municipal, departmental, or national level, are not left with a mechanism by which they can defend themselves due to the fact that they are authorities in a disadvantageous situation with respect to the common citizens, which the law does not consider.

It is important to note that the political participation of the women is protected in Agreements, Treaties, International Pacts and other referred-to national legislation, however the law of the Republic has not incorporated nor implemented concrete actions for the effective exercise of the political rights.

The harassment and political violence comes from *Concejales* that belong to the same parties as the harassed *Concejales*, from men and women of other parties, from union representations, from citizen groups, from indigenous people, from other social and communal organizations and from the civil society in general (when they are carrying out their general assemblies and councils). Similarly, it can be seen that one of the most important cause for the harassment and political violence in the custom and fulfilment of duties occurs during the function of prosecution to work with the town council and of the mayor that the female *Concejala* is in charge of.

The prosecution links to the transparency in the handling of public municipal resources in addition to the fulfilment of associated norms in the State's resource monitoring system.

iKNOW Politics: Concluding commentary

Would you please comment about the *Network of Women Against Violence* and the importance of networking?

María Eugenia: Of all the reports made to ACOBOL and other similar institutions, not one resulted in an effective sanction; and neither in the approval of the draft Law. The Committee for the Political Rights of Women, composed of public institutions, organizations for cooperation and organizations from civil society, such as the Vice-ministry of Justice, the Vice-ministry of Women, Public Defenders, Union of Female Parliamentarians (UMPABOL), the Association of *Concejales* of Bolivia (ACOBOL), Democratic Development and Citizen Participation, Women's National Political Forum, Women's Coordinator, Women's Articulation for Equality and Equity (AMUPEI),

and others have together developed activities to combat violence and discrimination against women in the exercise of political participation, with the aim of preventing such practices and finally eradicating them.

This committee does NET rely on statutes nor regulations, it only fulfils the work of social monitoring of cases of harassment and political violence.

María Eugenia Valverde, Gerente General de la Asociación de Concejalas de Bolivia (ACOBOL):

Muchas gracias por aceptar intercambiar información con iKNOW Politics en base a su trabajo y valiosas experiencias. El texto con sus respuestas y comentarios será compartido en nuestro primer debate e intercambio virtual moderado, sobre Eliminación de la Violencia contra la Mujer Involucrada en Política, el cual se llevará a cabo entre el 10 y 14 de Diciembre.

iKNOW Politics: ¿Cuándo y por qué comienza el interés de ACOBOL en el tema de la violencia y acoso a la mujer involucrada en política?

María Eugenia: En el año 2000, cuando ACOBOL tenía recién un año de funcionamiento, durante la primera Presidencia de ACOBOL a cargo Gloria Aguilar, se pusieron en evidencia los problemas por los que pasaban las Concejalas del país. Lo más notorio e indignante fueron las denuncias de acoso y violencia que sufrían al tratar de realizar un trabajo eficiente. Es así que en noviembre del 2000, junto a la Viceministra de Asuntos de Género, Generacionales y Familia, se denuncian públicamente el acoso y violencia que se ejercía contra Concejalas de diferentes Municipios Rurales del país, en un seminario de *Mujeres Concejalas* realizado en la Cámara de Diputados.

En éste evento, la Viceministra de Asuntos de Género, Generacionales y Familia, recordó que la CPE, el Código Electoral, la Ley de Cuota, el Decreto de la Igualdad de Oportunidades -y otros instrumentos normativos-, garantizan la participación de la mujer.

El 22 de febrero del 2001, a iniciativa de ACOBOL, la Comisión de Descentralización y Participación Popular de la Cámara de Diputados, concedió una audiencia pública desarrollada en el Parlamento. En esa oportunidad, se denunció los casos de los Municipios de Ballivián, Puerto Pérez y Achacachi. El Presidente de la Comisión de Descentralización y Participación Popular, Aldo Quaglini, comprometió la participación del Parlamento en la protección de las Concejalas denunciadas.

Para ese entonces la presidenta de ACOBOL pudo realizar las primeras gestiones y acción afirmativas a favor de promulgación de la Ley, con el respaldo del Informe de la Comisión, y se empieza a trabajar una norma que pronto se transformaría en el Anteproyecto de "Ley contra el Acoso y la Violencia política en Razón de Género".

A partir del 2002 se coordina un trabajo conjunto a nivel interinstitucional, con el Ex Viceministerio de la Mujer, Ministerio de Asuntos Campesinos, Indígenas, Género y Generacionales, la Unión de Mujeres Parlamentarias de Bolivia, el Foro Político Nacional de Mujeres -además de la cooperación internacional-, para su sistematización y difusión.

En el periodo del 2003-2004 se realizan talleres de difusión sobre la Ley, incidiendo en la Cámara de Senadores. Por lo que se produjo su revisión en el 2004.

En el año 2005 se trata de incidir dos veces en la Cámara de Diputados sin resultados positivos, aunque cabe resaltar que debido a presiones de varias instituciones aliadas, se origina el "Comité Impulsor por los Derechos de las Mujeres", con el objetivo de que juntas, unidas y fortalecidas se coordinen acciones con la misión de defender los derechos políticos de las Concejalas y Alcaldesas de Bolivia. Se realizan así diferentes acciones: cartillas de difusión, un

Taller Internacional por los Derechos Políticos de las Mujeres -donde los candidatos a la Vicepresidencia de la República firman compromiso-, desayunos de trabajo a cargo de las nueve Asociaciones Departamentales de Concejalas (en todos los departamentos para comprometer a las autoridades locales y departamentales en la defensa por los derechos de las mujeres y garantizar sus funciones).

En Sucre, el 25 de junio de 2006, se resuelve (resolución 004/06 aprobada en la IV Asamblea Nacional de la Federación de Municipios de Bolivia FAM- BOLIVIA, y en la presidencia de Jacqueline Rocabado de Martínez de ACOBOL) que:

Art. Primero, Respalda y otorga las garantías necesarias al ejercicio de las funciones de las Concejalas de Bolivia de parte de la FAM-BOLIVIA y de las Asociaciones Municipales a razón de defender los derechos e intereses de todas y cada una de las mujeres, asociadas, Concejalas y Alcaldesas de Bolivia, fortaleciendo su gestión hacia la equidad y el desarrollo humano.

Art. Segundo, Denunciar y hacer público a los gobiernos municipales y a las autoridades municipales que cometan actos de discriminación, violencia, acoso, amedrentamiento, alternancia ilegal, etc., en contra de los derechos humanos y del ejercicio pleno de las funciones de las Concejalas de Bolivia.

Art. Tercero, Quedarán encargados del cumplimiento de la presente Resolución los Presidentes de las Asociaciones de Municipios de cada Departamento.

Posteriormente se prepararon una serie de estrategias de presentación de la Ley, ante las audiencias públicas, solicitadas por el Comité Impulsor a la Comisión de Política Social. En su redacción contempla la siguiente descripción:

Proyecto de Ley N° 422/07: "*Ley contra el acoso y la violencia política en razón de género*", una iniciativa legislativa presentada por la Sociedad Civil en la Legislatura 2005-2006, con la signatura PLSC-004/05-06. Fue replanteada y repuesta en la legislatura 2006 con el Nro. 277/06-07, por la diputada Elizabeth Salguero Carrillo.

Dicho Proyecto de Ley fue elevado en consulta al Poder Ejecutivo, obteniéndose respuesta en fecha 14 de junio de 2006, remitiéndose la misma a la Comisión de Política Social (en fecha 19 de junio del 2007).

La respuesta del Poder Ejecutivo, procedente del Ministerio de Justicia y firmada por la entonces Ministra Casimira Rodríguez Romero, anexa un análisis que en sus conclusiones y recomendaciones sugiere la APROBACIÓN CON OBSERVACIONES del referido Proyecto de Ley.

En fecha 16 de agosto de 2006, en la 75ª Sesión Ordinaria de la Honorable Cámara de Diputados, el Pleno Camaral trató el proyecto de ley 277/2006-2007: "Contra el Acoso y Violencia Política en Razón de Género". Luego de una lectura del informe positivo de la Comisión de Política Social, se procedió a aprobar *En Grande* dicha iniciativa legislativa, deteniéndose en el tratamiento en su estación *En Detalle*, por haberse establecido incongruencias jurídicas y una inadecuada pertinencia conceptual.

A fin de poder salvar estas observaciones, la Presidencia de la Honorable Cámara de Diputados decidió conjuntamente con el Pleno Camaral, conformar una Comisión Conjunta entre las Comisiones de Política Social, Desarrollo Humano y Constitución, Justicia y Policía Judicial, con la finalidad de poder subsanar las observaciones y elaborar un informe conjunto y preconsensuado que viabilice dicha iniciativa legislativa.

En este sentido, se realizaron varias reuniones de análisis técnico en fechas 30 y 31 de agosto. El 4 de septiembre, y a fines de noviembre del 2006, donde participaron la Unión de Mujeres Parlamentarias de Bolivia, ACOBOL, el Comité Impulsor para la Ley contra la Violencia Política en Razón de Género, el Comité de Género y Asuntos Generacionales y la Comisión de

Desarrollo y Política Social, elaborándose un informe técnico del proyecto de Ley que subsana las observaciones realizadas por el pleno Camaral.

iKNOW Politics: ¿Qué evidencias han recogido sobre las dimensiones y frecuencia de la violencia contra la mujer involucrada en política (proporción de mujeres que han sido amenazadas/atacadas, dónde y cómo)? Y, ¿cómo piensan seguir documentando éstos casos en el futuro?

María Eugenia: Hasta septiembre de este año, en la oficina central de ACOBOL, se han recibido aproximadamente 180 casos de denuncia (falta la actualización de los datos a diciembre del 2007). Esto no significa que no hayan otros casos más. Simplemente no se los denuncia. Aunque con la promoción de la Ley contra el Acoso y Violencia Política, las denuncias se han incrementado.

La ACOBOL ha generado varias acciones estratégicas en torno a la problemática. Una de ellas, es el sistema de información estadística contra el acoso y la violencia política. Además, se ha conformado la *Red de Prevención Contra el Acoso y Violencia Política*

Algunos de los casos se han constatado *in situ*. Sin embargo, la Red de Atención y Prevención, la boleta de denuncia y la forma de seguimiento a los casos aún está en construcción. Se seguirán documentando los casos, a partir del funcionamiento de un sistema de información estadística.

CASOS DE ACOSO Y VIOLENCIA POLITICA EN RAZON DE GÉNERO ATENDIDOS Y RECEPCIONADOS POR ACOBOL Y LAS ASOCIACIONES DEPARTAMENTALES DE CONCEJALAS

Cuadro Nº 29

DEPARTAMENTO	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	TOTAL
Chuquisaca	0	0	0	2	2	0	1	2	7
La Paz	32	43	25	3	3	7	10	3	116
Cochabamba	4	8	0	0	2	1	5	0	19
Oruro	9	2	4	0	2	0	0	1	18
Potosí	3	2	3	2	0	0	2	1	13
Tarija	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
Santa Cruz	1	6	2	0	2	4	0	0	15
Beni	0	4	0	0	3	1	0	0	8
Pando	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	49	65	34	7	15	14	18	7	168

Fuente: **ACOBOL (DATOS ACTUALIZADOS A JUNIO 2007)**

Luego de un quinquenio de violencia política, podemos observar -en la tabla adjunta- los casos de acoso y violencia política contra Concejalas y Alcaldesas de Bolivia (en el periodo estudiado 2000 al 2005): Chuquisaca 18 casos de violencia, La Paz 50 casos, Oruro 8 casos, Potosí 10 casos, Cochabamba 11 casos, Tarija 3 casos, Santa Cruz 8 casos, Beni 9 casos y Pando 0

casos. También se puede distinguir que este tipo de violencia y acoso se presenta más en el occidente que en oriente, pero no significa que no existan casos de discriminación en estas ciudades, mas bien indica que no han sido denunciados hasta ahora. Se estima que el número de casos es 4 veces más de los denunciados.

Son variadas las formas en la que se expresa la violencia contra Alcaldesas y Concejales. Desde actos de violencia física y psicológica a daños en su gestión municipal. A la fecha, para el periodo estudiado, se han denunciado 117 casos de violencia de los cuales 43 casos (33%), representan denuncias por presiones de diferente índole. Sobre actos de violencia 23 casos representan el 20%; impedimento del ejercicio del cargo 23 casos (19%); congelamiento de cuentas municipales 9 casos (8%); discriminación 8 casos (7%); difamación y calumnia 7 casos (6%); alternabilidad ilegal de la concejalía 2 casos (2%); exceso de autoridad y resarcimiento de gastos de amparo suman dos casos -datos menos representativos aunque no menos importantes y denigrantes para las mujeres que representan a su comunidad en la gestión municipal-.

Para continuar documentando los casos, se ha diseñado un sistema de información que deberá ser implementado con ayuda de la Red de Prevención y Atención.

iKNOW Politics: ¿Cómo se da el proceso de elaboración de la Ley Contra el Acoso y Violencia Política en razón de Género? ¿Cuáles son los elementos claves del texto? ¿Qué hace falta para su aprobación? ¿Con qué mecanismos cuenta, o piensan proponer, para su implementación?

María Eugenia: Es un proceso que se inicia a partir de los casos denunciados y la propuesta de Ley contra el Acoso y Violencia Política en Razón de Género, que sale de la ACOBOL, a inicios del 2001.

Los elementos que causan polémica giran alrededor de la redacción de algunos artículos que se señalan a continuación:

Artículo 6 (Actos de acoso y violencia política)

Se entiende por actos de acoso y violencia política en razón de género a aquellos que:

- l) Restrinjan o impidan el ejercicio de los derechos políticos de la mujer en su condición de autoridad electa y en ejercicio de sus funciones para los cargos públicos de Presidenta de la República, Vice Presidenta de la República, Asambleísta Constituyente, Senadora, Diputada, Alcaldesa, Concejala, Agente Municipal, Prefecta, Consejera Departamental y en general toda autoridad electa.

Sugerencia:

Que solo diga hasta prefecta y toda autoridad electa

- m) Abusen MAL USO justicia comunitaria en contra de las autoridades elegidas para un cargo público, impidiendo o restringiendo el ejercicio de sus derechos políticos.

Artículo 7 (Agravantes)

La autoridad que tenga conocimientos de alguno de los actos descritos en el artículo anterior, tomara en cuenta los siguientes agravantes, los cuales en la configuración de un delito, serán remitidos a la justicia ordinaria para su juzgamiento:

- b) *Cuando el acoso o violencia política, hubiera sido instigada o promovida por los jefes de partidos políticos, agrupaciones ciudadanas y pueblos indígenas, en cuyo caso se aplicará la sanción establecida en el artículo 130, Instigación Pública a Delinquir del Código Penal.*

Sugerencia: consultar con los diputados, comisiones de parlamentarios

Artículo 11 (Sanciones aplicables)

- III. Funciones de la institución donde se cometa el acto.
 - IV. Los actos de acoso y violencia política cometidos por militantes, *o jefes de partidos políticos y/o agrupaciones ciudadanas, incluidos todos los jefes territoriales o sectoriales comprendidos entre los militantes y el jefe nacional*, serán sancionados conforme al Capítulo Décimo, de las Infracciones y Sanciones, de la Ley 1983 de Partidos Políticos y el Capítulo Sexto Infracciones y Sanciones, de la Ley 2771 de Agrupaciones Ciudadanas y Pueblos Indígenas. *sin perjuicio de la responsabilidad, civil o penal que corresponda y el proceso ante la Corte Nacional Electoral.*
1. Se incorpora el Artículo 197 bis en el Título III FALTAS Y DELITOS ELECTORALES, CAPITULO PRIMERO ESPECIFICACIONES, de la Ley No.1984 de 8 de Julio de 1999 Código Electoral, el siguiente texto:

“Artículo 197 bis (DELITO DE ACOSO Y VIOLENCIA POLITICA).- El/los ciudadano/s que ejerzan violencia y/o acoso político conforme a lo establecido en la ley contra el acoso y la violencia política serán sancionados con arresto de **24 horas**. Si este acto implica la comisión de un delito, además será sancionado conforme al Código Penal. Si el acto fuese cometido por un funcionario público, también será destituido de su cargo inmediatamente”.

Para su aprobación hace falta subsanar las nuevas observaciones realizadas por mujeres del parlamento, agendarla para su aprobación en detalle en la Cámara de Diputados y VOLUNTAD POLITICA en el Congreso. Lo cual requiere de gestiones dentro de las bancadas, apoyo de Diputadas de todos los partidos políticos y especialmente del Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS), así como de la habilitación a mujeres suplentes en el día de la aprobación del proyecto de ley.

La estrategia actual:

1. Contar con compromiso de las organizaciones sociales, que comprendan la fundamentación real, la concepción y magnitud del problema sobre el acoso y la violencia política en razón de género.
2. Contar con el compromiso de las Concejalas del MAS, a través de la incidencia política (apropiación de la Ley) y gestión -por parte de ellas-.
3. Gestión con las bancadas del MAS y de otros partidos políticos (agrupaciones ciudadanas y pueblos indígenas).
4. Lograr unas 5000 firmas a nivel nacional de apoyo al Proyecto de Ley.
5. Conseguir el apoyo de hombres y mujeres en una movilización general, en Bolivia y América Latina.
6. Construir alianzas estratégicas.

La estrategia pasa por un análisis situacional actual y por un proceso de construcción de estrategias y soluciones posibles para el éxito en su aprobación.

Actualmente, la nueva Constitución Política del Estado indica claramente que:

Art. 15. Sección I.- **Toda persona tiene derecho a la vida, a la integridad física, psicológica, moral y sexual.** Nadie será torturado ni sufrirá tratos crueles, inhumanos, degradantes y humillantes. Está prohibida la pena de muerte. II Todas las personas, en particular **las mujeres tienen derecho a no sufrir violencia física, sexual, psicológica, tanto en la familia como en la sociedad.** III **El Estado adoptará las medidas necesarias para prevenir, eliminar y sancionar la violencia de género y generacional.** Así como toda acción u omisión que tenga por objeto degradar la condición humana, causar muerte, dolor y sufrimiento físico, sexual o psicológico, tanto en el ámbito público como privado.

Por tanto haremos valer esta nueva perspectiva país.

iKNOW Politics: Según su experiencia, ¿es posible diferenciar cuando una mujer ha sido víctima de violencia por género a diferencia de por su afiliación política o ideológica? (¿un hombre en la misma situación encara las mismas amenazas?).

María Eugenia: No es posible diferenciar, porque hay una mezcla entre violencia por género y violencia producida por filiación política. Lo que sí se puede diferenciar es el acoso y la violencia política, como explicamos a continuación:

Artículo 4 (Acoso Político) A los efectos de la presente disposición, se entiende por acoso político al acto o conjunto de actos cometido por una persona, por sí o a través de terceros, en contra de una mujer o de su familia, con el propósito de impedir y/o inducir a una acción u omisión, en el cumplimiento de sus funciones, derechos o deberes, mediante actos de presión a través de persecución, hostigamiento o amenazas efectuadas por cualquier medio.

Artículo 5 (Violencia política) Se entiende por violencia política a las acciones y/o conductas agresivas cometida por una persona, por sí o a través de terceros, que causen daño físico, psicológico, o sexual en contra de una mujer y/o de su familia, en ejercicio de la representación política, para impedir restringir el ejercicio de su cargo o inducir a tomar decisiones en contra de su voluntad, de sus principios y de la ley.

	ACOSO POLÍTICO	VIOLENCIA POLÍTICA
Similitudes	■	■
	■	■
	■	■
	■	■

Es decir que los actos tipificados en el artículo 6 del Proyecto de Ley, comienzan en acoso y terminan muchas veces en violencia.

Artículo 6 (Actos de acoso y violencia política) Se entiende por actos de acoso y violencia política en razón de género a aquellos que:

- n) Restrinjan o impidan el ejercicio de los derechos políticos de la mujer en su condición de autoridad electa y en ejercicio de sus funciones para los cargos públicos de Presidenta de la República, Vice Presidenta de la República, Asambleísta Constituyente, Senadora, Diputada, Alcaldesa, Concejala, Agente Municipal, Prefecta, Consejera Departamental y en general toda autoridad electa.

Sugerencia:

Que solo diga hasta prefecta y toda autoridad electa

- o) Restrinjan o impidan a una mujer, el cumplimiento efectivo de las funciones y atribuciones establecidas para el cargo público para el que fue elegida, ya sea como titular o suplente, evitando o limitando el uso de los recursos que le franquea la Constitución Política del Estado y las leyes del país.
- p) Eviten por cualquier medio, la asistencia a las sesiones ordinarias o extraordinarias o a cualquier otra actividad que implique la toma de decisiones a las mujeres electas como titulares o suplentes, o impidan o supriman el derecho a voz y voto en igualdad de condición que los varones.
- q) Induzcan mediante fuerza o intimidación a las autoridades electas o en ejercicio o no de sus funciones, a suscribir todo tipo de documentos y/o avalar decisiones contrarias a sus principios e interés público, así como inducir las o presionarlas a presentar renuncia al cargo para el que fueron elegidas.
- r) Proporcionen a la Corte Nacional Electoral, información falsa acerca de la identidad o del sexo de sus candidatas/as.
- s) Proporcionen a la autoridad electa, titular o suplente información falsa, errada o imprecisa que induzca al inadecuado ejercicio de sus funciones.
- t) Discriminen a la autoridad electa por encontrarse en estado de gravidez, parto o puerperio, impidiendo o negando el ejercicio de su mandato y el goce y ejercicio de sus derechos sociales y de maternidad reconocidos por ley.
- u) Discriminen a la autoridad electa por su condición social, cultural, idiomática, racial o económica.
- v) Impongan por razón de género, la realización de actividades y tareas ajenas a las funciones y atribuciones generales de toda autoridad.
- w) Abusen *MAL USO* justicia comunitaria en contra de las autoridades elegidas para un cargo público, impidiendo o restringiendo el ejercicio de sus derechos políticos.
- x) Impidan la reincorporación de una mujer a sus funciones cuando haga uso de una licencia justificada.

Las estrategias que se construyan en torno a este tema deberán estar dirigidas a la prevención, negociación y solución de conflictos en la fase del acoso y no así en la fase de violencia. La Ley es imprescindible para su sanción y erradicación, en ambas fases, de la cultura e idiosincrasia Boliviana.

iKNOW Politics: Sé que han trabajado también con casos de mujeres campesinas e indígenas. ¿Cómo se manifiesta la violencia contra la mujer involucrada en política en contextos culturales diversos?

María Eugenia: Una proporción importante de las mujeres Concejales corresponden a los municipios del área rural, y el área rural está habitada por población campesina, en muchos de los casos, indígenas y de culturas y diversas.

Sin duda alguna la situación de discriminación y falta de oportunidades de las mujeres es mucho más visible con las campesinas, indígenas y originarias. Es preocupante su escaso grado de

participación en los niveles de poder y toma de decisiones, pero mucho más los casi 180 casos de violencia y acoso político denunciados.

A raíz de denuncias de acciones violentas y de acoso político, en contra de las autoridades elegidas para un cargo público, como Concejalas y Alcaldesas, víctimas del mal uso y/o abuso de sus costumbres y en último caso de la justicia comunitaria, han impedido y restringido el pleno ejercicio de sus derechos políticos. Estos hechos han derivado en la promulgación del proyecto de Ley que pretende proteger de forma EFECTIVA a todas las autoridades mujeres electas ante cualquier tipo de excesos, discriminación o agresión contra sus derechos humanos, políticos y ciudadanos en el ejercicio de su mandato.

Sin embargo este reconocimiento forzado de la justicia comunitaria ejercido a través de la violencia y acoso político contra mujeres autoridades que en la mayoría de los casos (en un 99%) provienen del área rural e indígena, refuerza prácticas patriarcales, machistas y ancestrales de las comunidades rurales e indígenas de Bolivia.

Precisamente, en momentos en los cuales se trata la configuración del estado social y democrático de derecho con el pleno reconocimiento de los pueblos originarios con sus diferentes manifestaciones regulatorias en sus relaciones sociales y una de ellas, la justicia comunitaria como expresión que define los referentes y mecanismos de tratamiento de conflictos que desarrollan las comunidades para resolver controversias que surgen entre sus miembros (Extractado de la presentación del seminario de justicia comunitaria del Instituto de la Judicatura de Bolivia) la ACOBOL con el apoyo de la mesa de Justicia Comunitaria pretende realizar un estudio/aproximación para analizar la problemática, definir competencias, lograr una compatibilización y/o mejor comprensión del manejo (de respuesta) de conflictos/negociación entre los sistemas comunitario y estatales-jurídico para garantizar y fortalecer la participación política de las mujeres campesinas e indígenas-originarias.

Se trata entonces de encontrar mecanismos, que dentro, del estado de derecho y la justicia comunitaria permitan la inclusión, el respeto y la valoración a mujeres autoridades electas, fortaleciendo la idea de estado como comunidad política basada en la preponderancia de normas universales que armonicen con usos y costumbres en ámbitos delimitados y no contrapuestos. El desafío es lograr la congruencia entre la dimensión local-municipal, donde se tiene mayor incidencia de usos y costumbres y la dimensión nacional-estatal-municipal, donde prevalecen las normas legales positivas, para que la diversidad étnico-cultural se manifieste en el sistema de representación político y social en armonía, en equidad (chacha-warmi) y justicia para todas (os).

Por tanto son sus usos y costumbres, sus derechos culturales de las comunidades la mejor o mayor expresión de justicia que la legal-municipal establecida por el gobierno nacional-estatal?

Estas normas políticas y sociales comunitarias pre-establecidas como mecanismos propios que definen sus comportamientos y actitudes de sus pobladores, que experimentan otras realidades, otras formas de vida y de resolución de sus conflictos, comunidades muchas veces lejanas, con diversas formas de negociación-solución de controversias, aplicando su propio sistema normativo-comunitario violento o no hacia las mujeres, es debido a la ausencia del estado, a su irreverencia (desconocimiento-violación de normas legales), apego a sus costumbres o es debido a que se sienten excluidos del estado?

Entre sus costumbres habituales, cotidianas de resolución de conflictos se ha centrado históricamente en el ámbito privado-doméstico y político-comunal, donde estos están estructurados, reconocidos, ilegítimizados, institucionalizados y definidos por los hombres en desmedro de las mujeres, para afrontar en general todo tipo de problemas comunitarios. Sin embargo en el ámbito político-municipal, la resolución de conflictos basados en problemas de (relaciones y ejercicio) poder, de género y política entre hombres y mujeres del gobierno municipal no está del todo definidos. Por tanto justifica y satisface su falta de experiencia político-social, desconocimiento, falta de aceptación y valoración del género en este ámbito

relativamente nuevo para los comunarios en el manejo y ejercicio del poder y del liderazgo campesino e indígena, en sanciones basadas en sus usos y costumbres que dañan la integridad de las autoridades femeninas electas o más bien reafirman su dominio y poder sobre mujeres políticas desprotegidas en ambos sistemas?

iKNOW Politics: Basándose en sus investigaciones, ¿de dónde proviene la violencia contra la mujer en política (en sus partidos políticos, de partidos políticos opositores, miembros del público, sus parejas, familia)? ¿Cuáles son las causas de ésta violencia, incluyendo las estructurales y otros factores que pueden contribuir?

María Eugenia: Las mujeres que han sufrido diferentes acciones que perjudican o evitan su participación política a nivel municipal, departamental y nacional y que han llegado hasta la renuncia, no encontraron una instancia que pueda asumir su defensa, debido a que al ser autoridades se encontraban en una situación de desventaja en relación a las ciudadanas comunes, sin que la ley contemple ninguna disposición al respecto.

Es importante señalar que la participación política de las mujeres se enmarca en Convenios, Tratados y Pactos Internacionales, y otros referidos a la legislación nacional. Sin embargo las leyes de la República no han incorporado e implementado acciones concretas para el ejercicio efectivo de los derechos políticos.

El acoso y la violencia política proviene generalmente de Concejales y Concejalas que pertenecen a los mismos partidos de las víctimas así como de hombres y mujeres de otros partidos, de representaciones sindicales, de agrupaciones ciudadanas, de pueblos indígenas, de otras organizaciones sociales y comunales, y de la sociedad civil en general (cuando realizan sus asambleas generales y cabildos).

Se detectó que una de las causas más importante para el acoso y violencia política en el uso y el cumplimiento de funciones, es cuando una Concejala (o cualquier Concejal) realiza la función de fiscalización a las tareas del Concejo y del Alcalde.

La fiscalización se relaciona con la transparencia en el manejo de los recursos públicos municipales, además del cumplimiento de normas asociadas al sistema de control de los recursos del Estado.

iKNOW Politics: Comentarios concluyentes

¿Podría comentarnos sobre la *Red de Mujeres Contra la Violencia* y la importancia del trabajo en redes?

María Eugenia: Debido a que las denuncias realizadas a ACOBOL y otras instituciones no llegaron a una sanción efectiva, y tampoco la aprobación del Proyecto Ley, se crea el Comité Impulsor de los Derechos Políticos de las Mujeres, compuesto por instituciones públicas, organismos de cooperación y organizaciones de la sociedad civil, tales como el entonces Viceministerio de Justicia, el Viceministerio de la Mujer, Defensor del Pueblo, Unión de Mujeres Parlamentarias (UMPABOL), Asociación de Concejalas de Bolivia (ACOBOL), Desarrollo Democrático y Participación Ciudadana, Foro Político Nacional de Mujeres, Coordinadora de la Mujer, Articulación de Mujeres por la Equidad y la Igualdad (AMUPEI), y otros. Conjuntamente hemos desarrollado actividades en contra de la violencia y la discriminación de las mujeres en el ejercicio de la participación política, con la finalidad de prevenir esas prácticas y finalmente erradicarlas.

Éste Comité no cuenta con estatutos ni reglamentos, solo cumple una labor de control social y seguimiento a los casos de acoso y violencia política.

Gracias por invitarme a participar del debate. El tema me interesa mucho ya que mi tesis de doctorado se centra en "Las mujeres en la política. Género y poder."A pesar de no estar

focalizada en la violencia específicamente, creo que podría responder algo sobre estas cuestiones.

Silvia Kamien, Psychologist, University of Business and Social Sciences, Argentina, wrote:

English/[Español](#)

Thank you for inviting me to participate in the debate. The issue is quite interesting as I am elaborating my doctorate thesis on the subject of “Women in Politics. Gender and power.” Although it is not focused specifically on politics, I think I could respond to some of the questions.

iKNOW Politics: What evidence has been collected on the dimensions and frequency of violence against women in politics (proportion of women that have been threatened/attacked)? How are you planning to collect further evidence?

Silvia: I do not have documentation on cases of violence (threats, etc) but I can say that in the total of in-depth interviews I have conducted with women involved in the political world (with different levels of commitment: from political affiliates to high level governmental executives), all of them have faced situations of violence. Within their own parties, by their partners/spouses, within their families.

iKNOW Politics: Based on your experiences and investigations, what are the sources of violence against women in politics? (within political parties, by opposition parties, by members of the public, spouses/partners?) What are the causes of violence against women in politics, including root causes, and other contributing factors?

Silvia: According to my research, the situations of violence against women in politics are multiple and diverse. Briefly I could say:

- In parties or public sphere, many women access places in the lists thanks to the Law on Quotas (30% in Argentina). Without this positive action, women were used to voting internally, with their voices not being taken into account; parties structures still put women in traditional stereotypes which assume that the public world and power are not places that women can manage. By way of example, Senate meetings are held in times that are not appropriate for women. It is only very recently that the Senate has issued a policy allowing maternity leave.
- In the family: Many of the interviewees noted that they faced great conflicts in their close family, where their interest for political activity is despised and perceived as just a youth-rebellion cause. Many of them have been the subject of pressure aiming to make them resign from their activity because of its supposed incompatibility with their life as a woman. (Traditional stereotype: maternity and couple).
- Similar conduct is observed with partners/spouses, aggravated in the case of children. It is only on rare occasions that males share the political development of their female partners without rivalry. Critics against women (partners) are stronger when not fulfilling their conservative expectations.

According to my hypothesis, causes should be analyzed researching on the subjective construction, both masculine and feminine. I think the problem is there, rooted in cultural stereotypes that place obstacles in the path of women. .

iKNOW Politics: How can we tell if women are targeted with violence because of their gender or because of their political affiliations/ideologies (i.e. would a man who made the same statement face the same threats)?

Silvia: Women in politics report, according to my research, being victims of discrimination (violent conduct) based on gender regardless of their political affiliation. Moreover, they report that it is perpetrated by their own partners who ridicule their positions or believe they can be easily bribed through seduction or other neutralizing and paralyzing conduct. Another chapter should be for harassment or sexual abuse against women in politics (inflicted to silence or change their legitimate desires to be involved in politics).

iKNOW Politics: How does violence against women in politics manifest itself in different cultural contexts? In conflict and post-conflict countries? Where have effective measures (including legislation, policies, programmes and other effective remedies) been put in place to combat violence against women in politics? Which actors must be involved in implementing these measures?

Silvia: Unfortunately I don't have precise data on these issues, but in Argentina programmes are being developed in which legislation has been drafted to denounce any kind of violence against women. Obviously there is much to be done and the invisible violence is the one of the obstacles.

Atte. Lic. Silvia Kamien, Psicóloga - Doctoranda en Psicología de UCES, Universidad de Ciencias Empresariales y Sociales. Bs. As. Argentina (Tesis : Mujeres haciendo Política):

iKNOW Politics: ¿Qué evidencias has(n) recogido sobre las dimensiones y frecuencia de la violencia contra la mujer involucrada en política (proporción de mujeres que han sido amenazadas/atacadas, dónde y cómo)? Y, ¿cómo piensas(n) seguir documentando éstos casos en el futuro?

Silvia: No tengo documentación sobre casos de violencia (amenazas, etc.) pero sí puedo decir que sobre el total de las entrevistas en profundidad a mujeres que transitan el mundo de la política (distintos niveles de compromiso: desde militantes hasta ejecutivas altas del gobierno); en todas se encuentran situaciones en las que han sido violentadas. Dentro de los partidos; por sus parejas; dentro de sus familias.

iKNOW Politics: Basándote en tu experiencia e investigaciones, ¿de dónde proviene la violencia contra la mujer en política (en sus partidos políticos, de partidos políticos opositores, miembros del público, sus parejas, familia)? ¿Cuáles son las causas de ésta violencia, incluyendo las estructurales y otros factores que pueden contribuir?

Silvia: Según mi investigación, son diversas y múltiples las situaciones de violencia contra las mujeres en la política. Muy sintéticamente diría:

- En los partidos o ámbitos públicos, muchas mujeres acceden a lugares en las listas gracias a la Ley de Cupos (30 %) en Argentina. Sin esta acción positiva las mujeres sólo son utilizadas para votar en internas, no son tenidas en cuenta sus voces; las estructuras de los partidos pivotean aún con la idea del estereotipo tradicional de la mujer y asumen que el mundo público y del poder no son ámbitos en que las mujeres sepan manejarse. De este modo y sólo como ejemplo, las reuniones se desarrollan en horarios poco propicios para ellas, en el Senado es reciente la licencia por maternidad, etc.
- En la familia: en sus familias de origen, mucha de las entrevistadas relatan grandes conflictos en los que su interés por la actividad política fue despreciado y percibido solamente como un acto de rebeldía joven. Muchas de ellas han sido sometidas a presiones con el objetivo de que renunciaran a su actividad, que mostraban incompatible con la vida de las mujeres. (Estereotipo tradicional: maternidad y pareja).
- En las parejas se observan similares conductas, agravadas si hay hijos. Raras veces los varones acompañan el desarrollo político de sus compañeras sin que aparezca la

rivalidad, la desvalorización y la crítica por no estar cumpliendo con sus expectativas conservadoras con respecto a ellas.

Según mi hipótesis las causas deben ser analizadas investigando sobre la construcción de la subjetividad, tanto la masculina como la femenina. Creo que es allí, y debido a los estereotipos culturales en donde encontramos una de las causas para que el camino de las mujeres sea difícil de transitar.

iKNOW Politics: ¿Es posible diferenciar cuando una mujer ha sido víctima de violencia por género de por su afiliación política o ideológica? (¿un hombre en la misma situación encara las mismas amenazas?).

Silvia: Las mujeres en la política denuncian, según mi investigación, haber sido víctimas de discriminación (conducta violenta) por violencia de género cualquiera sea su filiación política. Es más, lo denuncian con respecto a sus propios compañeros, quienes desvalorizan sus ponencias o creen que pueden ser fácilmente sobornadas a través de la seducción u otras conductas neutralizadoras y paralizantes. Un capítulo aparte merecería el acoso y/o abuso sexual que hace que las mujeres se retraigan y callen sus legítimos deseos de actuar en política.

iKNOW Politics: ¿Cómo se manifiesta la violencia contra la mujer involucrada en política en contextos culturales diversos? ¿En países y situaciones de conflicto y pos conflicto?

¿En qué país (o países) existen medidas efectivas (incluyendo legislación, políticas, programas, entre otras) para eliminar la violencia en contra de las mujeres en política? ¿Qué actores deben ser parte en la implementación de éstas medidas?

Silvia: Lamentablemente no poseo data precisa sobre estas cuestiones, pero en Argentina se está trabajando en programas en donde ya se ha llegado a legislar y por ende a denunciar cualquier tipo de violencia ejercida contra la mujer. Obviamente falta mucho por recorrer ya que es la violencia invisible la que obstaculiza y dificulta su denuncia.

Margaret Mburu, Tabasco Community Network: The Engendering Peace Process Initiative, Kenya, wrote:

1. What evidence has been collected on the dimensions and frequency of violence against women in politics (proportion of women that have been threatened/attacked)?

Nothing much is recorded but I believe that Federation of Women Lawyers in Kenya has some data which I was part of collecting in the year 2002 during elections.

2. How can we collect further evidence?

As we continue monitoring and collecting data on violence against women, our citizens need to be given information on such issues as:

- Components of electoral process
- Offences and petitions in elections
- Electoral violence
- Rights and obligations of elected persons
- Rights of voters
- Engendering the electoral process; and
- The role of civil society in elections.

Election monitoring during election year can help in providing this data. This is to ensure that we monitor the reaction of masses, and especially the opponents, as soon as a woman expresses her intention to vie for a seat. This may be done through:

- Training monitors on types and roles of monitoring; quality and skills and code of conduct for monitors.
- Collecting evidence
- Common issues such as lack of access to areas and pressure to take sides
- Specific fact- finding situations and techniques
- Report writing- issues to consider and important elements; and
- Placing monitors in all constituencies where we have women candidates

3. What are the sources of violence against women in politics? (Within political parties, by opposition parties, by members of the public?) What are the causes of violence against women in politics, including root causes, and other contributing factors?

The thinking that gives rise to armed conflict has its roots in the unequal power relationship between women and men. There is a continuum of violence, from domestic violence to violence in the political and economic spheres, and this must be systematically challenged.

The socially defined ideas about masculinity and femininity have been used to promote and sustain violence.

4. How can we tell if women are targeted with violence because of their gender or because of their political affiliations/ideologies (i.e. would a man who made the same statement face the same threats)?

We live in a society that excuses a man for every mistake as being “manly.”

A woman contesting will also be subjected to questions that a male counterpart will not. For instance we will want to know:

- Has your husband allowed you to contest?
- Where is your husband so he can confirm to us that he has permitted you?
- Who will be in charge when you go for maternity leave?

A woman who comes out strong is branded with names, while a man who does the same is seen as a brave person.

Men who have allowed their wives to contest are also branded as weak and controlled by their wives. This will make a man resist any attempt by his wife to contest.

There is also a lot of discrimination against women by the political parties despite their promises in their manifestos, which is reflected when it comes to party nominations. Parties have a feeling that if they nominate a woman, they will lose because a man will be preferred, unless of course the woman has proved herself before.

5. How does violence against women in politics manifest itself in different cultural contexts? In conflict and post-conflict countries?

It is good to note that no war was ever started by a woman, however it is the women and children that suffer most in conflict situations – as we can see from the pictures in the Kenyan papers. Of the more than 16,000 people displaced in Kuresoi, women make at least 70%. If we check in the camps where we have refugees, the same case applies.

- They are refugees and IDPs
- They have to ensure families survive even when resources are being destroyed.
- They have to assume all the roles
- Girls are withdrawn from schools and married off.

- Social services, health care, etc. are cut and women have to struggle to provide for themselves and their families
- More resources are diverted to military and this increases poverty, which again impacts negatively on women.

Yet women seldom have any say in the political decisions which lead to armed conflict. Women's experiences and recommendations for peace are also not listened to by decision makers.

Building a culture of peace means a shift in our thinking about human nature including what it means to be a man or a woman. Therefore the struggle to build a culture of peace is impossible without a gender analysis. The experience of both women and men in times of conflict are different. We also respond to conflict differently. We therefore must delink violence from ideas of masculinity and passivity from ideas of femininity.

6. Where have effective measures (including legislation, policies, programmes and other effective remedies) been put in place to combat violence against women in politics? Which actors must be involved in implementing these measures?

Giving an example of Kenya, our women parliamentarians have managed several legislations including legislation on affirmative action, legislation guaranteeing a 15% reduction on tax charged on sanitary towels, and the Sexual Offences Act of 2006, but these have not had effective implementation. Before the 2002 elections, we had only 8 women in parliament. After conducting an extensive gender-based civic education, we got 18 women in parliament. This time we hope to get more since we already have over 100 nominated already. I should say this is a major step towards achieving our goals.

Since the days of colonialism, we have only known violence as the only way to get even. But we must accept that violence begets violence. We must strive to promote active non-violence and empower women to actively participate. This will also ensure that women are in touch with the grassroots support all the time, and not just a few months before elections.

Women have to move the women's agenda as a block, and not as parties. A few months we lobbied for 50 seats for women in parliament. This was rejected by both the government and the opposition, and dismissed as too many, only for the opposition to offer fewer seats in their manifesto.

Women have to target men and negotiate to make men understand the benefits of involving women in all sectors. A good example is the issue of sanitary towels, which no man would even think of discussing it in parliament. This is because it is a women's issue and men have nothing to do with it. The issue, however, impacts men's lives indirectly as women don't own resources and thus it is still the men who give the money to buy.

Creating awareness on the UNSCR 1325 among women at the grassroots level will also help toward creating a culture of non-violence.

Liliam Landeo, Program on Indigenous People for Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia, Oxfam America, wrote:

English/[Español](#)

In the Andean Region (Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia) which is where I do my work, the exclusion and discrimination of indigenous people is evident. However, indigenous women confront triple discrimination: for being poor, indigenous, and women. These factors, together with different cultural ways of organization, effectively limit women's political participation. In the case of communities of rural farmers one ought to keep male-machismo in mind. These contexts are

quite unfavourable for indigenous women, and create great challenges for the women themselves.

For this reason, in recent years indigenous women have attended sessions, each time with greater presence and participation, of the different levels of the political sphere: There are a lot of women in municipal governments, cantonales, cabildos, and communities or ayllus: that is to say that starting from the local level upwards. There is a crisis, with each level it is more evident, of the lack of women in positions of political decision-making. And the ascent is not easy, and definitely not pain-free.

It is the case, for example, of various representatives of indigenous organizations that find themselves fulfilling certain tasks in the "Directorship of Women" or "coordinating a project of women within the organizations," their community, family and partners do not look favorably upon their separation from the community and familial sphere. This has meant that many of them endured physical mistreatment, creating an obstacle to their continuing in their positions, as well as social censorship within their own communities.

Another problem is that female rural farmers who fulfill the functions of congresswomen at the municipal levels, but who have a limited sphere of influence, confront psychological violence from mayors and male congress members who do not support their work. In spite of all of this, the women persist, but they confront violence in their own houses due to the positions that they hold, and frequently they are away from the home, having to leave their children, a fact which is not looked upon favourably by the family nor by their partners.

This forces women to live with two kinds of violence: physical mistreatment in their homes and the psychological mistreatment in their communes.

Liliam Landeo , Programa de Pueblos Indígenas de Oxfam América para Perú, Ecuador y Bolivia:

En la región andina (Ecuador, Perú y Bolivia) que son las áreas donde realizo mi trabajo es marcado la discriminación y exclusión de los pueblos indígenas. Sin embargo de ellos, las mujeres indígenas enfrentan la triple discriminación: por ser pobres, indígenas y mujeres lo que aunado a distintas formas culturales de organización limitan de manera efectiva su participación política. En el caso de comunidades campesinas se debe también tener en cuenta el machismo. Estos contextos poco favorables para las mujeres indígenas se constituyeron en un desafío y reto para ellas mismas.

Por ello en los últimos años asistimos a la cada vez mayor presencia y participación de las mujeres indígenas en distintos niveles de la esfera política: Son muchas en los gobiernos municipales, cantonales, cabildos y comunidades o ayllus, es decir que desde lo local hay una emergencia cada vez mayor de mujeres en espacios de decisión política. Sin embargo este ascenso no es fácil ni menos doloroso.

Es el caso por ejemplo de varias dirigentas de organizaciones indígenas que si bien se encuentran desempeñando labores en la "Dirigencia de la Mujer" o "coordinando un proyecto de Mujeres dentro de las organizaciones, su comunidad, familia y pareja no ve con buenos ojos este alejamiento de la esfera comunal y familiar, esto les ha significado a muchas de ellas maltrato físico, impedimento de continuidad en su cargo y censura social al interior de sus comunidades.

Otro caso es el de las mujeres campesinas que desempeñan funciones de regidoras en los Municipios locales y aun siendo muy reducido su ámbito enfrentan la violencia psicológica de parte de los Alcaldes y regidores varones que no apoyan su trabajo ni menos tienen el mismo trato personal ni presupuestal que los varones. A pesar de ello ellas persisten, pero también enfrentan la violencia en sus propias casas ya que debido al cargo que tienen, frecuentemente se alejan de sus hogares dejando a sus hijos lo que no es bien visto por la familia y sus parejas.

Esto también las obliga a vivir con dos tipos de violencia: el maltrato físico en sus hogares y el maltrato psicológico en sus comunas.

Cristina Tamasauskas, Fundación Comunidad 2000, Venezuela, wrote:

Agradezco la oportunidad que ustedes nos brindan en poder contactarnos internacionalmente y dar nuestro pequeño aporte en referencia sobre "La Violencia Contra La Mujer en la Política"

Al referirnos a la recopilación de pruebas sobre "La Violencia Política contra La Mujer" todas ellas las visualizamos desde la reflexión histórica, desde los hechos narrados en la cultura de cada uno de los pueblos que forman nuestro globo terráqueo, en el trato y el rol ocupado por la mujer en sus diferentes estadios de ser humana (Niña, Adolescente y Mujer). Desde esta óptica podemos inferir que la mujer ha ocupado una posición de violencia discriminatoria dentro de un sistema políticamente violento, nos referimos al "Sistema Patriarcal" imperante, éste, hasta nuestros días, desde hace cinco mil años o desde hace dos mil siete años dependiendo de la cultura y el calendario en que reflejemos la investigación o recopilación de estos datos, y el fundamento de las políticas públicas en que se sostiene el Estado por cada gobierno de estos pueblos.

La visión de estas pruebas las detectamos desde que nos concientizan o nos concientizamos, de nuestros derechos básicos y fundamentales a que tenemos derecho como seres humanas y optamos por la toma de decisión de la denuncia en todos nuestros espacios en casos de opresión y discriminación a los cuales nos oponemos y estamos dispuestas en afrontar al ejercer nuestra práctica de la política. Por lo que señalamos que la dimensión y la frecuencia de la violencia contra la mujer en la política han sido inversamente proporcionales a los aportes dados por las mujeres, nosotras, a la evolución del estado societal.

Dado que los espacios públicos y privados donde se realiza la interrelación de los géneros también están enmarcados dentro de este concepto androcentrico de la sociedad en este sistema patriarcal, no nos extraña que la práctica política en los partidos políticos estén consustanciados de este mismo prejuicio de violencia y para ello nos hacemos del ejemplo histórico que nos brinda en el momento, esa mirada androcéntrica que provocó en la Francia del siglo XVIII, durante la Revolución Francesa, se defendiera la Libertad y el Derecho de ciudadanía para los varones olvidando la defensa de los mismos derechos para las mujeres. Una mujer, Olimpia de Gouges, se atrevió entonces a alzar la voz y reclamar a través de su texto: Declaración de los Derechos de la Mujer y la Ciudadana los mismos derechos para las mujeres. El precio que pagó por su osadía fue la decapitación.

Estableciendo así, el primer documento que se refiere a la Igualdad jurídica y legal de las mujeres en relación a los varones. Esto, constituye por si mismo un alegato brillante y radical en favor de las reivindicaciones femeninas, una proclama auténtica de la universalización de los derechos humanos y un paso más a la visualización de las pruebas de las grandes dimensiones y frecuencias de "La Violencia contra La Mujer en la Política" que pueden y deben ser aceptadas hoy. Al igual de servir de fundamento histórico de cuales son las fuentes originales de la violencia contra La Mujer en la política. La intimidación, la exacerbación y el acoso son los factores y mejores aliados de los varones que colocan solidariamente entre el desarrollo del camino político de la mujer y el desarrollo de la plataforma conceptual e ideológica del partido político donde hacen vida.

La construcción de un instrumento político con paridad de género, es decir, un partido político que se fundamente en los principios de la equidad y la igualdad de género debe pasar por la transformación de este sistema patriarcal en un sistema totalmente democrático que privilegie la justicia social en el ejercicio de la inclusión de los derechos colectivos y difusos y del reconocimiento de las diferencias del ser societal.

Seema Jalan, Senior Manager, Policy and Government Affairs, Women's Edge Coalition, wrote:

Thanks to iKNOW Politics for suggesting this important topic for discussion. At my organization, Women's Edge Coalition, we work to promote women's economic opportunity, but have come to focus on the issue of gender-based violence because of its direct link to women's poverty and economic and political development.

It is generally known that gender-based violence is an extreme human rights violation, but the policymakers and other audiences we work with in the U.S. do not necessarily realize the pervasiveness of the problem and that it is also a major impediment to women's political and economic participation, to civil society building, and to the overall economic and political stability of countries. For example, a World Bank study found that women in Colombia who suffer physical violence have 14 percent lower earnings than women who do not, costing the nation an equivalent of 0.85 percent of the 2003 Colombian Gross Domestic Product.

One of the ways we are working to address gender-based violence is through S.2279, the International Violence Against Act. In partnership with Family Violence Prevention Fund and Amnesty International USA, we've led a coalition of about 150 groups from across the women's, faith-based, development, humanitarian, health, HIV/AIDS, education, legal reform, UN and other communities to develop a piece of U.S. legislation with U.S. Senators Biden and Lugar to integrate efforts to prevent and respond to violence against women across U.S. foreign assistance programs.

The intention is for U.S. international assistance efforts to collaborate with multi-lateral partners and overseas groups to scale up and design programming to address gender-based violence in a comprehensive, multi-sectoral way because stand-alone programs are not enough. (If you are interested in reading more about this effort, please visit www.womensedge.org). I would be very interested in learning about other complementary efforts by the iKNOW community and if/how we can link our work.

Chris Spence, National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, wrote:

The following YouTube videos (Everywoman- Kenya Election Violence- 14 Dec 07) provide incredible first-hand reflections on this topic:

Part I: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v2oVUcafvfs>. During the election campaign in Kenya so far 255 cases of assault on women have been reported. Everywoman catches up with Flora Tera who was assaulted in September. In the studio Shiulie talks to Margaret Hutchinson from the Education Centre for Women in Democracy and Linet Miriti from UNIFEM

Part II: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eiSyVn5CebI>. In the second part of our programme on the assaults on women candidates in Kenya's elections Shiulie continues her discussion with Margaret Hutchinson from the Education Centre for Women in Democracy and Linet Miriti from UNIFEM. We also have an update on some of the stories Everywoman has covered over the course of 2007

Haley Horan, Bahar Salimova, and Rosanna Andía, iKNOW Politics, wrote:

We would like to highlight that research conducted by the iKNOW Politics team on the topic of violence against women in politics has elicited results that include a fair amount of press coverage on incidents of violence against women candidates and politicians, but relatively little on corresponding national responses (in this respect, we were especially pleased to receive the contributions on the draft Laws on Harassment and Political Violence Based on Gender proposed in Bolivia and in Ecuador) - and likewise little on policy work or research conducted by international organizations, NGOs or other key actors in this specific area.

Targeted work of international NGOs in the area includes that of International IDEA, an iKNOW Partner organization, which sponsored a regional conference entitled "Invisible Faces of Violence on Women in Politics: Breaking the Silence," from 18-20 September 2007 in Kathmandu, Nepal. The conference resulted in the adoption by the eminent women leaders of South Asia participating in conference of a "Declaration Opposing Violence against Women in Politics". (see www.idea.int/asia_pacific/opposing_violence.cfm).

The Declaration notes that "Women in politics are subject to a range of violence and intimidation and practices that adversely affect their active participation in decision-making processes. Such forms of violence include but are not limited to (honour) killings, actual violence and threat of violence, psycho-social torture, humiliation, degrading treatment, intimidation, character assassination and harassment, targeting women, their relatives and supporters. Abuse of religion, culture, traditions and patriarchal practices subvert and undermine the interest of women and inhibit and not only prevent the scope of their political participation in decision-making processes but also negate the overall development of South Asia." The Declaration demands a "minimum 33% quotas for women at all levels of political, policy and decision making positions across South Asian countries" and calls for direct elections for women in all elected positions including reserved seats, noting that indirect elections/nominations make women subservient to party leaders.

A similar workshop discussing the impact of violence against women in politics was sponsored in the Arab States region by the Open Society Institute and the V-Day Karama Program. (See http://www.soros.org/initiatives/women/news/karama_20060213?skin=printable). Findings of this workshop stressed inter alia the economic perspective, highlighting the links between violence against women and economics.

Under the umbrella of eliminating violence against women, where much important work is being done, additional specific responses to combat violence against women politicians and candidates (which may include training of election monitors to document incidents, drafting, passage and enforcement of related legislation, the development of a global database - informed by collection of reports at the local, national and regional levels - documenting incidents of incidents of violence and intimidation, as proposed by one discussion contributor, and other related measures) must be elaborated and implemented.

The iKNOW Politics team has prepared the following list of resources as background information for the E-Discussion on Eliminating Violence against Women in Politics.

Specific: Violence Against Women in Politics

Declaration opposing violence against women in politics in South-Asia. South Asian Regional Conference on Invisible Faces of Violence on Women in Politics: Breaking the Silence 18th -20th September 2007. http://www.idea.int/asia_pacific/opposing_violence.cfm

General:

Violence Against Women: Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (1993).

UNIFEM Internet Campaign to Eradicate Violence Against Women
<http://www.saynotoviolence.org/>

The United Nations Secretary-General's in-depth study on all forms of violence against women [Arabic | Chinese | English | French | Spanish | Russian].
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/vaw/SGstudyvaw.htm>

How Parliaments Can and Must Promote Effective Ways of Combating Violence Against Women in All Fields. Resolution adopted by the 114th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (Nairobi, 12 May 2006) <http://www.ipu.org/conf-e/114/114-3.htm>

Additional Resources:

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Case studies on violence against women in politics. Women Watch Group, India.

<http://womenwatchgroup.com/>

Cries of Women in Politics

<http://sapint.org/fileDownload.php?file=200710151553547.pdf&filepath=http://sapint.org:80/uploads/publications/200710151553547.pdf> [Examples from South Asian Countries]

Breaking the Silence : First Issue of the Newsletter [2007-10-16]

<http://www.sapi.org.np/resources/more.php?ID=37&type=Reports>

New Trends in Women's Political Participation in Africa

<http://democracy.stanford.edu/Seminar/AiliTripp.pdf>

Where are women in Mideast politics http://www.metimes.com/Opinion/2007/11/21/op-edwhere_are_women_in_mideast_politics/7230/

CASE STUDIES AND FROM THE MEDIA:

1. Afghanistan: Peace and Security Undermined: Suspension of Malalai Joya from Parliament

http://www.equalitynow.org/english/actions/action_2105_en.html

2. Stop Violence Against Women in Pakistan <http://hrw.org/campaigns/pakistan/defenders.htm>

[Cases of women in Pakistan who were abused and harassed]

3. INDIA: Woman faces death threats and harassment due to her political affiliation, while police remain inactive <http://www.ahrchk.net/ua/mainfile.php/2006/2074/>

4. Philippines: Another woman leader killed in Bataan http://www.defendingwomen-defendingrights.org/philippines_killed_in_bataan.php

5. Bahraini Authorities Impose Media Blockade on Women Activist Ghada Jamsheer

http://www.defendingwomen-defendingrights.org/bahraini_mediablockade.php

6. Pakistani Women's Rights Activist Mukhtar Mai silenced by the Pakistani authorities

http://www.defendingwomen-defendingrights.org/pakistan_womenrights.php

7. Afghanistan: "One Month in Afghanistan: A Step Backwards for Women in Afghanistan"

<http://www.wluml.org/english/newsfulltxt.shtml?cmd%5B157%5D=x-157-554302>

8. India: Village women leaders fight back http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/5160846.stm

9. Kenya: Women Battle Violence And Rivals for Seats

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200710152041.html>

10. Finding a voice in Morocco - <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/2647173.stm>

Estimados(as) participantes del Foro de Discusión:

El equipo de iKNOW Politics ha preparado una lista de recursos e información complementaria sobre violencia contra las mujeres involucradas en política. Esperamos que encuentres éstos recursos e información interesantes y útiles en el contexto del debate. A continuación la lista de recursos sugeridos.

Específicos

Anteproyecto de Ley Contra el Acoso y Violencia Política en Razón de Género, Ecuador-2007
<http://www.iknowpolitics.org/es/node/3951>

Proyecto de Ley Contra el Acoso y Violencia Política en Razón de Género (Modificado), Bolivia
<http://www.iknowpolitics.org/es/node/3950>

Acoso Político: un tema urgente que enfrentar
<http://www.iknowpolitics.org/es/node/3970>

Propuesta: Compatibilización del sistema comunitario y judicial para fortalecer la participación política de las mujeres campesinas e indígenas
<http://www.iknowpolitics.org/es/node/3973>

Referenciales y Estudios de Casos

1. Los siguientes documentos pueden ser encontrados en el sitio web de la Asociación de Concejalas de Bolivia (ACOBOL)
<http://www.acobol.enlared.bo>

- Gobernabilidad, género y participación política de las mujeres en el ámbito local
- Mujeres en todos los espacios
- Experiencia y estrategias de incidencia política desde las mujeres
- Enfoque de Género y Prioridades de las mujeres en el presupuesto general del presupuesto del Estado
- Bolivia: Avances y Obstáculos de la participación y representación política de las mujeres
- Constitución de Mujeres
- Carta europea de igualdad de mujeres y hombres en la vida local

2. En el sitio web de la Asociación de Mujeres Municipalistas de Ecuador (AMUME) encontrará los recursos citados a continuación:

http://www.amume.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=84&Itemid=37

- Estilos de vida sin violencia 2003
- Cartilla de Difusión "Ley contra el Acoso y la Violencia Política en Razón de Género" 2006
- Boletín Equidad 2007, 2006
- Guía de información y Prevención Contra el Acoso y la Violencia Política en Razón de Género
- Guía de Liderazgo para la participación política de las mujeres en el ámbito local.

3. Para informarse sobre el proceso Boliviano de elaboración de la Ley Contra el Acoso Político, visite la página de La Articulación de Mujeres por la Equidad y la Igualdad (AMUPEI)
<http://www.amupei.bo/interior.php?contentUId=193>

Thanks to all that contributed! If you have more information that you would like to share with the network on this topic, please send it to: connect@iknowpolitics.org

iKNOW Politics Website: <http://portal.undp.org/server/nis/4644624878589455>

E-Discussion page: <http://intra.undp.org/bdp/workspaces/governance-network/index.htm>