

ACTION SHEET



Transparency and gender model: eliminating barriers for women

EUROSociAL + and the TAIN are promoting the gender perspective in transparency and access to public information policies.

Line of action:
GOOD GOVERNANCE

Policy Areas:
DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE
GENDER EQUALITY
POLICIES

Scope:
REGIONAL



EUROSociAL+ and the TAIN based on peer-to-peer exchange, a demand-driven approach and a focus on results.

The actions are in line with the objectives of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 16.6 “develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels” and 16.10 “ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements”. The transparency and gender model also promotes connections between SDG 16 and SDG 5, which aims to “achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”.

THE TRANSPARENCY NETWORK

The Transparency and Access to Information Network (TAIN) was created in 2011 with the aim of promoting transparency policies and building institutional capacity. The TAIN is a space for dialogue and cooperation that promotes the exchange of experiences for the design, implementation and evaluation of transparency and access to information policies.

The Network is made up of 32 institutions from 17 countries in Latin America (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Costa Rica, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the Dominican Republic and Uruguay) as well as Spain.

SUPPORT FROM EUROSOCIAL+

The EUROSociAL+ Cooperation Programme between Latin America and the European Union has contributed to improving the TAIN by promoting the sharing of good practices among institutions in Latin America and the EU. In particular, through its democratic governance area, EUROSociAL+ has supported the development of three key models for enhancing the right to access information in the region: a document and archive management model, a model for measuring results, and a methodology for the mainstream application of the gender approach.

These initiatives have been implemented through collaborative strategies between

Content differences in public information queries reflect gender roles between women and men.

DIAGNOSIS ON ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND GENDER

The Transparency and Gender Model has been carried out as an intersectoral action, led by the EUROSociAL+ democratic governance area with the support of the gender equality area. Its objectives are to improve knowledge on the

Consortium led by

position of Latin American women regarding exercise of the right to access information and to create a methodological model to incorporate the gender perspective into transparency policies.

To articulate the initiative, a working group formed by guarantors of the right to information in Uruguay, Chile, El Salvador, Mexico and the Secretariat of Transparency in Colombia was created within the framework of the TAIN.

The action began with a diagnosis in the region, which yielded the following conclusions:

- Differences in access to information by sex are insignificant: women account for a slight majority of users of the Right of Access to Public Information (RAPI) in Chile (55%), in Mexico, they use it in the same proportion as men, they are slightly in the minority in Uruguay (48%) and this difference is more substantial in the case of El Salvador (44%) and Brazil (40%).
- There are differences in the type of queries made by women and men in all countries. Women make more queries about basic services, subsidies, scholarships, social programmes and health, while men enquire more about financial, labour and political issues. There is, therefore, a correlation between the reasons for queries and the existing distribution of gender roles.
- The differences within the female population vis-a-vis their social conditions identify sectors with specific difficulties accessing the RAPI: indigenous women, women in poverty, rural, elderly and disabled women.
- Sensitive relationships between certain factors and women's access to the RAPI have been identified: strength of the RAPI system, education, use of ICT, employment

and work, among others. It has been confirmed that women use the internet to the same extent or more than men; that is to say, in Latin America the first digital divide has been overcome.

- With the exception of Mexico, the region's RAPI systems have not yet incorporated the gender approach into their regulations, the guarantor body or into policies and programmes in this area.
- A weakness has been detected in the attention given to gender equity policies in terms of access to the RAPI.

The diagnosis was presented and discussed at a workshop held in Mexico in May 2018, which also generated inputs for incorporating the gender approach in Model Inter-American Law 2.0 on Access to Public Information of the Organization of American States (OAS).

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND GENDER MODEL

From this first diagnosis, a model was proposed for incorporating the gender approach into right of access to information systems, with five key areas:

1. Regulations that support the mandate and create the system's basic institutional structure. This entails the inclusion of guidelines for incorporating the gender approach in the different elements of each national regulation, as well as in the Model Law on Access to Information 2.0 of the OAS.

2. Institutions on which the system is based. The model generates guidelines for incorporating the gender perspective into the different institutional components of the RAPI systems: a) guarantor bodies, which usually act as system coordinators: having specific gender entities, strategic mainstreaming, incorporation into policies and/or action plans to undertake the process of incorporating the gender perspective at the institutional level; and b) bodies established in the entities involved and advisory bodies and advisers, such as transparency committees, operating units and responsible officials.

3. System operation and application policies. Incorporation of the gender approach into requests for public information: a) in the response given by the entity to the request raised: how can the person be advised from a gender perspective, particularly if it is a woman in a vulnerable situation, and that the registry be disaggregated by sex, respecting

confidentiality; b) in terms of responses to requests for information: have personnel trained in gender issues and disaggregated responses by sex; and c) in the reaction of the person requesting the information, in response to an unsatisfactory response, and the resolution adopted in response to the appeal.

4. Instruments for monitoring and evaluating system performance. Inclusion of these mechanisms in the evaluation models of the different countries and in the regional TAIN indicators system: a) incorporating the gender approach in diagnostics, research, user surveys, perception and user satisfaction; b) incorporating the gender approach in advertising about the RAPI; c) disaggregating information by sex; and d) using inclusive language.

5. Organic information systems and external consultation. Perception and satisfaction of the user population. The inclusion of the gender approach in information systems will be sought, both in their internal operation and their consultation and external perception. The proposal has three levels: a) areas where work is needed; b) specific proposals for action in each area; and c) additional useful advice that can maximise the effective incorporation of the gender approach.

The model will be implemented in Chile, Mexico, Colombia, El Salvador and Uruguay

NEXT STEPS

The Model will be applied, adapted to each context, in Colombia, Chile, El Salvador; Mexico and Uruguay, by means of different action plans or policies by the RAPI guarantors. This process will open a dialogue with the Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women.

It will be considered a gender mainstreaming strategy, which involves prioritising the most relevant and pertinent aspects in each country from a progressive perspective in time, being able to take advantage of opportunities that arise to make substantive progress.

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