



UNDP Africa, Africa Policy Unit

# ANALYTICAL LIMITATIONS IN DEMOCRATISING GENDER POLITICS IN AFRICA:

*A think piece on gender ideology and agency in the post-ideological era*

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## I. Introduction

The end of the Cold War ushered in a new phase of globalisation. The terrain of human well-being is still contested, but the parameters had shifted dramatically. The market was now triumphant; there emerged a large consensus on its superiority over other economic systems. The remaining bastions of socialist and mixed economies capitulated to it. The old ideological divide with its strong economic orientation, no longer separated the protagonists. Instead, cultural discourses provided and nourished the divisions, representing a re-alignment of alliances. The collapse of communism was seen as a triumph of human well-being and democracy.

There is a particular paradox in this 'rationality' which emphasised structural adjustment, whose economic agenda could only be fulfilled through state coercion to quell popular discontent, in the aftermath of removing out of subsidies for essential goods, while those directed towards governance reform emphasised democracy and the protection of human well-being. However, in many places the which structural adjustment had caused, making human well being and democracy problematic. The overall framework of political transition in a globalised era have significantly transformed and changed the rules of government and the national/global contexts under which communities and societies are managing empowerment.

In addressing the subject of democratising gender relations in sustainable manner, one is confronted first and foremost with the necessity of the resumption of dialogue on endogenously derived models of development that will look into women, men and children's capacity. The internal and external challenges are great, but I am content, that we are all surely committed to a

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programme of action that is responsive to defined needs, and compatible with resource constraints. This paper is an attempt at bringing out the analytical limitations inherent in current development debate that are enveloped in poverty alleviation. Five major areas are discussed: naive realism, narrowing democratisation of gender relations to terms of not very well considered,

social action; inattention to problems of articulation or production of gender relations and sustainable livelihood systems and process within locally grounded sociopolitics rather than simply as formal or abstract possibilities; ambiguity as to whether women are agents or objects of change? a nearly exclusive concern in certain mainstreaming perspectives that may retard rather than promote empowerment and inadequate treatment of the role of international agencies.

The paper analyses democratisation of gender politics processes in light the significant constitutive or regulative effects on the plenitude of particular representations. It argues that gender must be allowed to attain coherence and integrity even as it comes into play in varied contexts of activity. While it may be tied to the initiatives and leadership of assignable organisations or groups in its emergence and development, it nonetheless gains currency as a relatively autonomous system that other, competing, politics can also participate in and operate. As a set of distinctly general categories and mechanisms of gender thought, discourse and practice, the democratisation of gender takes the diversity of particular political ideas and activities into itself and makes them a vital part of its conceptual and institutional economy. It mediates and channels specific actors and their activities by means of an objectification and generalisation that works on and through them. It attempts to present the dearth of current ideological rectitude by asking

- **Does gender enter democratic transition processes in Africa as an external ideology, constructing and deploying its concepts in sterile abstraction from the immediacies of indigenous traditions, beliefs and values?**
- **In the case of Africa in particular, do ideas addressing gender equality come into play in total opposition to, or in co-operation with historic national values and sentiments?**
- **In the struggle over the establishment of democratic rules of political engagement, do leading parties in transitional regions equate the articulation of their partisan ideas and agendas with the production of broad-based concepts, norms and goals which should govern their leadership of democratising gender for sustainable livelihoods?**
- **Do gender relations processes signify a new kind of political activity - an activity mediated and guided by objective and critical democratic standards, rules and principles?**

In this light, openness of democratisation of gender politics process can be understood as a dynamic two-way operation. Generic forms on particular contents and particular contents on generic forms in which the deployment of the conceptual and institutional machinery of gender relations is at the same time the representation of specific needs, interests, motivations, claims, rights and obligations by individuals and groups. Going beyond structuring or rearranging African political actors and institutional activities in their spontaneous, often turbid reality, this operation should result in their transformation into forms of transparent agency and practice within a democratic political system.

## Section I.

### **SETTING THE STAGE FOR ANALYSING GENDER AND DEMOCRACY**

Current discussions and analyses of gender-related empowerment and their management are generally are marked by several limitations. These include:

- (1) a tendency to narrow gender relations thinking and practice to the terms and categories of immediate, not very well considered, social action, a naive realism, as it were;**

- (2) inattention to problems of gender articulation or production of endogenous gender relations systems and process within locally grounded sociopolitics rather than simply as formal or abstract possibilities;
- (3) Ambiguity as to whether civil society exists in the strength its historical mandate signifies and is it an agent or object of democratic change and the role of the state?
- (4) a nearly exclusive concern in certain institutional perspectives on gender relations with generic attributes and characteristics of political societies and organisations and consequent neglect of analysis in terms of specific strategies and performances of organisations; and
- (5) Inadequate treatment of the role of international agencies in relation to gender and the global and indigenous aspects or dimensions of democratisation of gender.

## *I*

### *The notion of naive realism in democratising gender relations*

The notion of naive realism is invoked here to point to certain conceptual shortcomings in current perspectives on gender relations and sustainable livelihood security reform. These shortcomings can be seen as outcomes of more or less conscious attempts of indigenous governments and their international backers to quickly get their hands on "urgent" or "practical" matters of democratisation of gender politics without worrying much about "abstract" theory. One manifestation of naive realism is the pre-emptive "socialisation" of democratic ideas and practices, as demonstrated, for example, by the definition, conceptualisation and "validation" of popular participation in the regional and local elections everywhere.

A process which often spawns an attendant rhetorical over-simplification of difficult concepts, this socialisation is disabling as a method of both grasping gender relations and sustainable livelihood security ideas and rules in all their openness and complexity, and making the ideas tractable to transparent and sustainable institutional practice. Another manifestation of the naive realist approach is the simple equation of partisan elaboration of gender relations and sustainable livelihood security ideology with the production of ideas, values and goals in civil society. Here, our attention and thought are diverted from the critical destination between, on the one hand, a system of abstract categories as a construct of an explicit rationalisation, a formal conceptualisation and design, and, broad and diverse domains of ideology and purposefulness in the plenitude of social experience, on the other. We are discouraged from acknowledging the distance and tension between these two spheres of democratisation of gender politics.

Instead, one is led to believe that ideological construction in one sphere is reducible to ideological construction in the other. As the statements "constitution must be a creation of the citizenry..." and "... law should come from the populace rather than palace" suggest, for example, the form of a putative attribution of authorial agency in the making of a democratic constitution to what intellectuals refer to as "an organisational underdeveloped, democratically inexperienced and largely a civil society that has been rendered illiterate by successive regimes that fostered ignorance as a sources of people's disempowerment.

Implicitly or explicitly, the Western liberal democratic model is often taken as the acme of democratic governance. The target that most African countries set themselves in the process of democracy is the attainment of institutions and practices that have been the basic ingredients of the Western democratic tradition. But keen observers have not been oblivious to the limits of this declared paragon of democracy, pointing to its formal character and the struggle in recent decades of marginalised groups with an "alternative, participatory vision of democracy" to achieve what has come to be known as the "empowerment" of the common man.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, a direct and participatory form of democracy is presumed to be the hallmark of the perceived African pre-colonial democratic tradition, more specifically of "village democracy". The pre-colonial social organisation that we all believe lies the answer for indigenous knowledge systems and social accord has also been portrayed in diametrically opposite fashion: as an age of barbarism and arbitrary rule by colonialists, and as one of egalitarianism by African nationalists.<sup>2</sup> Both positions apparently suffer from selective presentation of the facts.<sup>3</sup> **The former position need not detain us here. The latter we have to address.** It is obvious that the idea of a uniform and pan-African egalitarian socio-political system throughout pre-colonial Africa is an untenable position. In the first place, Africa has seen empires and military dictatorships as well as village democracies. Secondly, even the so-called village democracies had either an unmistakable stamp of gerontocracy about them or were quite often disrupted by the intervention of powerful individuals or groups relying on military prowess or invoking spiritual powers.

In sum, naive realism within existing perspectives and projects of democratisation of gender politics emphasises the immediacies of institutional and political activity to the neglect of the constitutive and regulative concepts and norms that define, structure and validate gender relations and sustainable livelihood security institutions and practices. It attempts to establish a direct relation to social experience, largely by passing the intangible yet no less significant terrain of critical political thought. Its immediate turn to the practical tasks of inducing women, men and children to participate in ostensibly gender relations and sustainable livelihood security activities such as elections, the full meaning of which is often beyond the grasp of the participants, tends to become a substitute for the making of transparent and open rules of political engagement.

## ***II***

### ***Inattention to problems of articulation of democratic systems***

When it is not dissolved into the immediate reality of political, often partisan or ethnocentric activity, democracy is likely to be represented as "pure" principle that needs only proper "application". Practitioners and analysts of democratisation in the continent tend to quickly pass over the particular nature of democracy in fragmentary presence in much of Africa, "adjusting" it against an ideal-general conception of what it might be. On the implicit, theoretically complacent assumption that formalistic, rhetorical modes of circulation of governance and sustainable livelihood security ideas and values nearly exhaust their articulation there, one often rushes to

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<sup>1</sup> Eboe Hutchful, The International Dimensions of the Democratisation Process, paper presented at the Seventh General Assembly of CODESRIA, Dakar, 10-14 February 1992.

<sup>2</sup> Abdoulaye Bathily, Pouvoirs et dynamiques de changement politique en Afrique: de l'Ere pré-colonial aux Indépendances, paper presented at the Seventh General Assembly of CODESRIA, Dakar, 10-14 February 1992, pp. 2-4.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 4, 7-13; J.-F. Bayart, La problématique de la démocratie en Afrique noire. 'La Baule, et puis après?', *Politique africaine*, no. 43 (October, 1991), p. 8.

matters of "implementation". Consequently, critical problems concerning the philosophical and practical entrenchment of governance and sustainable livelihood security system and process receive scant attention.

The fundamental issues of how the concepts, standards and practices of democratic rule could be generated and sustained under historically hectic conditions, and the manner in which they are likely to gain systemic integrity and autonomy as well as broad social currency are inadequately addressed.

This relative inattention leads analysts and practitioners to make internal observations and assessments in terms of the democratic or undemocratic performances of African polities without raising the question of setting up or securing the polities as democratic systems in the first place. For example, in the face of the fact that past African constitutions had never actually been effectively established, especially as democratic structures, they are criticised for failing "to protect the rights of the poor or citizenry".<sup>4</sup> Citizen action, democracy and gender relations must actually exist, take definite shape and structure and become a working process, before particular criticisms, claims and demands can be based on it.

Insofar as existing perspectives on political reform neglect to pose the problem of articulation of democracy and empowerment management as a relatively autonomous mode of analysis (in which they impose ideology upon our polities, governments and socialites from the outside), they would consist of a set of activities in which universal, mainly Western, concepts and standards of governance are neatly "applied to", as distinct from produced or re-produced in, Third/Fourth World contexts and conditions. Even at the level of application alone, it is largely overlooked that international models may enter Government and societies through a proliferation of programmes and mechanisms that hinder the growth of open and effective transition process, that they may retard the development of indigenous democratic-system experience and capacity.

Whether governance for sustainable livelihood security is defined in terms of individual freedom or collective rights, government endorsed policy or citizen action, private value or public norm, the upshot of the relative inattention to problems of articulation of open democratic systems and processes in itself makes gender relations at once the most concrete of idea systems. Within current projects of political reform, gender relations is either conventionalised or sterilised on terrain of theory and often vacuously formalised on the ground of practice. **It enters African politics and society in relatively abstract and plain form, yet is expected to land itself to immediate and vital African polity's socio-political experience.** It suggests itself and seems within reach only to elude and appears readily practicable only to resist realisation.

### ***III***

#### ***Women in civil society: Agents or objects of democratisation?***

The hypotheses I would like to address here are

- Social transformation is most likely managed when initiatives emanate from civil society rather than other organisational sectors i.e. the state, NGOs or international

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<sup>4</sup> This is like attempting to assess failure to make a move in a game by reference to a set of rules which had never been in force.

sectors. Women's political interests in civil society must become formally organised if they are to push through a transition to peace and stability.

- The effectiveness of organisations in civil society at promoting democratic reforms and local governance depends on their **autonomy, capacity, complexity, and coherence**. The organisation, which displays the greatest strength on these dimensions, is likely to become the lead organisation in civil society in promoting democratic reform.
- More than partisan organisations, gender relations require neutral organisations that can arbitrate between contending actors when this reaches an impasse.

In the current drive for gender justice, civil society and institutions within it are "foregrounded" as the arena, agents and instruments of the movement. Internal and external demands for and the need to reform the indigenous state into a system of transparent practices have placed a heavy emphasis on social institutions as autonomous actors within democratic projects. This is particularly the case regarding NGOs, but it also applies to other voluntary agencies in society. While the co-operation of governments or would-be governments must be secured for transitions to democracy, it cannot be expected that pressure for regime transformation will come from above. The most likely and most effective initiative will come from below, outside the decrepit, authoritarian state, in civil society. Society yields the spontaneous interests, demands and institutional mechanisms of governance and sustainable livelihood security.

From this perspective, the state has only a limited role to play. Its function will not be to manage society's empowerment, but to create the enabling conditions for endogenous mechanisms to work efficiently. Institutions and groups in civil society must be allowed to form and run themselves. When they begin to address longer socio-economic and political issues beyond their limited sectional concerns, or to co-operate with the state on certain matters, they should be able to do so in terms of their specific interests and competence, not as mere instruments or extensions of governments.

Alternatively, the "under-development of civil society" and the "incapacities" of institutions within it are seen as major barriers to endogenous action. Some assert that the activities of some social institutions may have the salutary effect of bringing into transparency the work of government, and of opening up state institutions and practices to public suiting. But the overall weakness of African civil societies is often cited as a fundamental structural constraint to governance and sustainable livelihood security. Rather than offering agents and arenas of transitions to democracy, African civil societies are generally seen as objects and problems of reform. Indicators of their weakness include low levels of economic, technological, professional and cultural development and high levels of illiteracy.

On account of this view, the state assumes a large role in democratisation. It is assigned the task of nothing less than "**cultivating civil society**" itself through political education and mobilisation and other means. Government is not pushed to the background as **society activates itself and leads the struggle for reform**. Rather, the former acts on the latter, promotes and manages the participation of individuals and groups in democratisation. We have here, then, two divergent representations of civil society accompanied by somewhat disturbing conceptions of the role of the state in the African passage to democracy.

- **The perception of society as producer of the spontaneous interests, demands and institutional resources of democratic change to some degree conflict the view of civil societies as weakly developed. Hence, social and institutional structures in need of cultivation and support by the state.**
- **The conception of the state as creator of the enabling environment for the free democratic activities of individuals and groups diverges from the view of government as political educator, mobiliser and democratiser of civil society.**

Moreover, these conflicting perspectives commonly tend to confuse representations of "civil society" and "the state" as conceptual or ideal categories with actual communities and regime fuelling the democratic processes. The categories are often conflated into the immediate stuff of African political and social experience. This is not to deny that there are representations of civil society and the state in current perspectives on democratisation where the elements categorised are more evidently those of really existing African social formations. It is to note a disabling analytical tendency in which the actualities of African politics (tribalism, the government of individuals and groups rather than the rule of laws and so on) tend to be pre-empted and displaced by the very conceptual categories used to describe them otherwise.

#### ***IV Overlay of generic institutional variables***

Institutional approaches to the study of gender governance call for analysis of the effectiveness of non-governmental institutions in contributing to the reforms in terms of the generic characteristics of the organisations. The characteristics include **autonomy, capacity, complexity, cohesion and a combination of these**. Presumably, the more organisations and institutions are endowed with these attributes, the greater their strength, and the more likely they are to promote governance and sustainable livelihood security. Let us then look at the hypotheses<sup>5</sup>

- **The prospects for good governance based on gender equality depends on the extent that the state apparatus contains organisations that are autonomous (from the executive branch), capacious, complex and cohesive.**
- **The organisation, which displays the greatest strength on these dimensions, is likely to become the lead organisation in the state promoting gender relations.**
- **Other organisations within the state (the legislature, bureaucracy, and judiciary) contribute to gender relations to the extent that their office-holders assert professional standards. The prospects for gender relations are heightened to the extent that the judiciary exhibits independence by arbitrating neutrally in rule disputes between state (the executive branch) and organised plaintiffs in society.**

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<sup>5</sup> Global Coalition for Africa / Africa Leadership Forum. (1993) "**Transition to democracy: a cross national study.**" Research Design and Methodology. Paper prepared by Michael Bratton and Nicholas van de Walle of Michigan State University and consultants to GCA. Revised version.

The stress on standard organisational dimensions and traits in explaining governance and sustainable livelihood security transitions, which borders on over-emphasis, is problematic. We can here identify three problems with it.

First, **it assumes or requires a level of development and strength of institutions societies** (prior to democratic transition or maturity) beyond that of the developing societies in question. This is particularly the case with countries severely impoverished and weakened by chronic under development, the ravages of civil war, political instability and massive social dislocation (Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, Liberia and Rwanda), but it also holds for other African countries. The emphasis on generic organisational attributes begs the crucial question of how African societies not very well endowed with strong indigenous institutions characterised by autonomy, capacity, complexity and cohesion will make successful transitions to democracy.

Second, it makes the rather **questionable connection between the strength of institutions and the likelihood of their promotion of democratic transition.**

- ◆ **Why should one equate, for example, the cohesion of an organisation with what that organisation actually does, or how it might behave politically?**
- ◆ **Should we suppose that an institution, say, African Governments, will allow, in virtue of its autonomy and capacity, environmentally-conscious “opposition” groups in society to claim and win a share of power?**
- ◆ **It is possible to draw an analytical distinction between an organisation's structural characteristics, which are relatively independent of specific contents, and its political functioning (activities, operative ideology, leadership style, policies, etc.)?**

In assessing the effectiveness of indigenous organisations in contributing to democratic change, the measure of the ideas and practices articulated by the organisations and the strategies and forms of that articulation must not be neglected. One should be alive to the possibility that actual performances of autonomous and complex institutions may be indifferent, or even contrary to democratic principles, notwithstanding the formal profession of such principles by the institutions in question.

Third, **the stress on generic traits of government and non- government institutions in explaining empowerment and their management largely overlooks substantive gaps in organisations' knowledge of governance and sustainable livelihood security ideas and practices** as a source of problems of empowerment generation along with structural incapacities of organisations. While differences in general institutional characteristics provide a significant measure of effectiveness of contribution to gender relations and political reform, they cannot account for improvements in governance and sustainable livelihood security impact which can be made within an organisation through institutional learning and practice. Through particular strategies, performances and self-evaluations, governmental and non-governmental agencies can make significant contributions to gender relations even when the generic endowments they bring to the task are limited. Capacity building for gender relations is important. But it is also important that institutions in civil society and the

state make the most effective use of whatever actual capacity they have for promoting governance and sustainable livelihood security change.

V.  
***Inadequate analysis  
of the role of external agencies***

Multilateral, bilateral and non-governmental external agencies have in recent years taken a large number of initiatives aimed directly or indirectly at helping Africa "democratise" its way out of economic chaos and political instability. In doing so, they rely on a wide variety of programmes, institutional mechanisms and policies. Indeed, growing external involvement in projects of democratisation and economic recovery has resulted in increasingly challenging problems of conceptualising and understanding the role and function of international agencies.

The growth of foreign interventions seems in marked contrast to the limited thought and effort exerted by democratisers of African polity to put the interventions in coherent theoretical or strategic perspective.

- **What is the overall rationality or significance of the great traffic of international programmes and projects of democratisation of gender politics and development, the proliferating activities that seem to show little regard for economy of co-ordination; not to mention new forms of 'participatory research' into social engineering that seem to haunt the rural landscape indefinitely?**
- **How far and in what ways do various international agencies, programmes, mechanisms, forms of knowledge and technical assistance feed on one another in helping set the boundaries of governance and sustainable livelihood security reform?**

The important issues that these questions suggest are not sufficiently addressed, or even raised, in much of the current discussion of political transitions. Insofar as the activities of external agencies are not understood and engaged in partly as indigenous societal potentialities developing gradually into actual structures, functions and characteristics of government and societies, their democratic (and developmental) impact may diminish with their proliferation. This can mean little more than a weakly co-ordinated multiplication of programmes and projects which have immediately recognisable or measurable effects in limited areas, but which seem to suspend rather than serve the ultimate goals of democratisation of gender politics of African political systems.

The strategic co-ordination of diverse international activities supportive of governance and sustainable livelihood security transition (and development) can become a challenge both for the international agencies involved and for the Governments. This is in part because of limitations in the individual characteristics of the activities - for example, their narrowly technocratic orientation. It is also because of shortcomings in the relational and contextual articulation of external programmes and projects, their limited generalisability and variability. These, then, are some of the analytical limitations that characterise existing perspectives on transition to democracy. African governments and societies undoubtedly depend on international assistance in their projects of reform. Such assistance is vital for the projects in many areas and at many levels. Yet it must be recognised that external support creates problems as well as opportunities for democratisation of gender politics on Africa.

In confronting the imperatives of political change, nothing is more challenging for our polities than the strategic co-ordination of diverse global and local elements, relations and activities within themselves, nor has anything greater potential for enabling them achieve successful transitions to democracy. This leads us to some fundamental issues of distinction of terms and definition of concepts that are required to arrive at a common understanding of the problems.

## Section II.

### ***The analytical limitations: Transition as the dynamic interaction of strategy and process!***

#### ***I. Articulation of strategy and process in democratising gender politics***

It is easy to follow the current trend within the international community and advocate democratising gender politics as a desirable form of government for Africans. Nor is it difficult to make normative judgements about how the ruling strata should behave if democracy is to grow in the continent: "the rulers must be accountable to and controlled by the women, men and children". But it is not so easy to conceptualise democracy, within which gender relations is grounded, as a working process which is balanced against strategy, to determine what makes for real, as opposed to vacuously formal, governance and sustainable livelihood security process. This is particularly the case where ruling strata tend to view the relations of their particular political agendas with their broader governing roles and responsibilities as relatively simple and direct, unproblematically reducing the latter to the former.

As a way of contributing to the overcoming or lessening of these difficulties we may theorise democratic transition as the dynamic interaction of strategy and process. It is possible to see it in as the playing out of objective and critical standards, rules and concepts of political conduct in the goals and activities of all participants. The issue here is not simply one of "application" of rules to particular activities. Nor is it one of dissolving agent-catered strategies of reform into "objective" principles and norms. It is rather the production or articulation of process elements and forms within and through the strategic (and non- - strategic) activities of various participants. Highlighting the mutually constitutive and regulative articulation of strategy and process, we shift the centres of analysis away from the two as separate formations that enter only external relations with each other.

This shift of analytical focus serves to emphasise the critical point that the task of broadly structuring democracy, within which gender relations is grounded, as a political system is more important than that of promoting it within the specific transition programme of a particular government or ruling party. The latter, which may manifest itself in a variety of efforts ranging from constitution drafting efforts to convening elections, is or should be only a second - order concern compared to the former, which is primary specific reform measures taken under the leadership of a given African ruling party are important in democratic transition.

There are, of course, historical limits. Ideologically fledgling and institutionally weak democracies in economically distressed contemporary Africa could not be expected to exhibit as wide a variety of elements and forms of articulation as does historically sedimented, robust democracy in highly developed countries. But there is still, within the limits imposed by history,

more potential for openness of democratic transition process in nation-states any single participant strategy can actualise. Transition process openness or transparency can be analysed at two distinct but closely related levels:

- ◆ **Agency**: referring to the full range of significant participants and their activities and relations in political reform. Participants include potential as well as actual and international as well as domestic actors
- ◆ **Ideology** relating to complexes of ideas, beliefs, goals and issues that can come into competitive and co-operative play in governance and sustainable livelihood security reform. It includes alternative definitions of transition problems and varying solutions offered for them.

## *II. Political Agency*

To restate the basic point, the extent and nature of openness of governance and transition to sustainable livelihood security are conditioned by the breadth of the range of available participants and the degree of uncertainty and complexity that characterised their agency and functional relations. There are, however, countervailing currents and pressures within the intersection of participating organisations and groups, which tend to work against or limit transition process openness. These forces of process closure manifest themselves in the structure of the network of participants and in participants' activities. The forces may or may not be transparent to the consciousness of the actors that channel them.

At the structural level, a certain hierarchy of agency and activity is evident within the network of transition participants, such that some actors assume primary position relative to others that are by comparison limited players. Certain international agencies, notably the World Bank and the IMF, range their activities and influence across the network extensively while others are localised. This hierarchy of agency effectively places some participants in the reform network in positions of subordination. It also places limits on the range of agents and forms of democratic political practice, which can be networked through domestic and international support. Thus, although their legally recognised existence and growth are crucial for gender relations, civic groups tend to be neglected or marginalised. Often, they are forced into the background (or underground) or into partial or total exclusion.

There is a strong political incentive for emergent regimes even today, connected to real or imagined threats of violent opposition to their claim of leadership of democratic transition, to engage in activities which short-cut or pre-empt the development of an open and level political playing field. These activities include

- ◆ The reduction of an entire environment of democratic change to a specific partisan programme of democratisation of gender politics, with all the pre-emptions, displacements and substitutions of political agency and activity this implies and effects of process closure it contains.
- ◆ The truncating of the protracted and complex passage from declared reform intentions to effective and open political process may also involve the use of public media and institutions available to governing elite to villainise forces of popular protesters and exclude them partially or entirely from the formal transition process as necessary for maintaining peace and stability during democratic reform.
- ◆ And of course it is always possible for the flux of transition events to turn overly "orderly" very quickly through the activities of governing elite.

Such highly volatile and turbulent countries as Rwanda, Burundi, Somalia and Liberia may be particularly worrisome to the international community, but the concern extends generally to African countries in transition. External participantsn political reform are likely to want to balance the ends of democratisation of gender politics against the need to maintain peace and stability. And this concern often leads them into close co-operation with incumbent governments, into identification with particular transition strategies of particular regimes rather than broad-based transition processes. Whatever its positive impact, this in turn has the effect of limiting the openness of democratic transitions.

Also, the proliferation of varied aid conditionalities tied to specific policies and sectors - structural adjustment programmes to be implemented, gender relations reform measurers to be taken, administrative codes to be followed, human rights to be protected, environmental regulations to be adhered to and so on - often outpace the development of coherent transition standards, rules and concepts by and within African nation-states. Local transition process has generally failed to match global action. With all the multiplicity of different, not very well co-ordinated, international development and democratisation programmes, projects, mechanisms and activities, it has been a bit difficult to maintain a sense of direction: in both a strategic and process sense.

### ***III. Political Ideology***

Beyond the sphere of political agency, possibilities and problems of governance and sustainable livelihood security transition openness can be grasped in terms of the related domain of ideology. Ideological elements and constructs might be seen as the very constitutive structure of process openness and closure. Political transitions will commonly be characterised by a number of distinctive and shared additional elements, including concepts and rules of government, national and cultural values, traditions of political discourse and arguments, and modes of representation of specific interests, needs and issues. These elements, or complexes of elements, will tend to assume varying forms and to enter into shifting relations of competition, co-operation and hegemony during political reform. Generally, the broader the range of ideological elements at play in a transition and the more varied and uncertain their relations, the greater the possibilities of process openness and transparency that exist.

In the sphere of ideology, openness of democratic process is concerned in part with allowing free expression of diverse ideas and beliefs and permitting unrestricted taking of positions by citizens on specific issues. It has to do with creating conditions for the existence of the broadest possible range of opinions and sentiments.

- **Are all ideas and values allowed to contend?**
- **Are there laws or unwritten "codes" which prevent or hinder intellectual and cultural freedom?**
- **Do the views and perspectives of opposition groups have a significant and legitimate place in democratic projects and processes?**
- **Is good faith criticism of a particular democratisation of gender politics strategy of a particular governing stratum construed by the ruling stratum in question as negation of democratisation as such?**

Questions such as these are important in examining and assessing the ideological openness of transitions to gender relations and sustainable livelihood security. But, as important

as it is, this is only one context or level or analysis of the breadth and depth of transition process on the terrain of ideology. There is another level of analysis, concerned with the extent and nature of openness of distinct ideological constructs to one another, with modes of articulation of given sets of ideas and values and of representations of specific issues relative to others. The concern here is not so much the number and diversity of ideas, values and opinions allowed to gain currency during transition as modes of their competitive and co-operative articulation. For example,

- . **Does gender relations enter transition processes as an external ideology, constructing and deploying its concepts in sterile abstraction from the immediacies of indigenous traditions, beliefs and values?**
- . **In the case of Africa in particular, do ideas addressing gender equality come into play in total opposition to, or in co-operation with historic national values and sentiments?**
- . **In the struggle over the establishment of democratic rules of political engagement, do leading parties in transitional regions equate the articulation of their partisan or ethnocentric ideas and agendas with the production of broad-based concepts, norms and goals which should govern their leadership of national transitions to gender relations and sustainable livelihood security?**
- . **Do gender relations processes signify change in terms of the transformation of the immediate stuff of ethnic or partisan politics into a new kind of political activity - an activity mediated and guided by objective and critical democratic standards, rules and principles?**

In the light of these questions, it is possible to draw a conceptual distinction between two levels of articulation of ideology in democratisation of gender politics process and to note the implications of their relations for process openness. There are

- ◆ First, a representation of specific interests, identities, needs, wishes, goals, claims, demands and so on, different in different individuals, groups and communities. These are to be distinguished from
- ◆ A second level of production and circulation of democratic ideology where broad-based concepts, principles and rules take shape and come into play.

For convenience, we can designate ideological elements at the former level of particular representations or contents, and those at the latter level of explicit general forms. Particular representations have to do with ideologically loaded articulations of interests, needs and activities that may appear or become so immediate as to be taken for spontaneous realities. Explicit general forms of democracy refer to systemic categories and institutional mechanisms they objectively mediate and generalise particular representations.

- a) One way is to think of it in terms of concrete instances and abstract system. A system of gender relations and sustainable livelihood security concepts, principles, rules and procedures provides objective standards to which every instance of representation of interests, needs, demands, intentions and so on must conform. In this light democratisation of gender politics appears as a process in

which a global structural model of ideology is applied to local, African, contexts. It is seen as the extension of the ideological and institutional contents of the model toward African projects of gender relations and sustainable livelihood security reform.

- b) This conceptualisation may not be entirely mistaken, but it is far from satisfactory. Generic democratic forms are not simply "pure" ideology devoid of practical content; and particular constructs are not merely points of "application" of systemic gender relations and sustainable livelihood security elements which are wholly external to them and in whose articulation they have no role to play. If general forms are seen as pre-given standards to which every instance of representation of particular interests must conform, the effect will be the restricting the openness and transparency of the transition to gender relations and sustainable livelihood security.
- c) For that will mean pushing ideas and values produced in the plenitude of social experience to the background and accord primacy to a mere system of abstract categories. It will mean giving primary place to the ideologies of politicians, activities and intellectuals. It must also be noted here that the conceptual and institutional mechanisms of gender relations cannot "come alive" in local contexts merely as generic forms. They make themselves felt only to the extent individuals, groups and communities address through them their felt needs and concerns and the circumstances they face or particular political actors.
- d) So alternative way of looking at the relation between general forms and particular contents in democratic process would give precedence to the latter over the former. Within this perspective, specific organisations and groups appear to have more leeway articulating systems of abstract categories according to their particular interests and intentions. Gender relations, as a system of universal concepts and practices will necessarily be instantiated in contexts, but only in line with the specific democratic aims and strategies of particular governments or political parties rather than within a simple application of its concepts in their pre-given abstract form. Instead of being applied to local contexts, global forms or models of gender relations provide ideological materials for democratic construction in those contexts.
- e) This perspective has merits. It can work as a corrective to the view of democratisation of gender politics as a mere extension of a system of abstract categories to concrete instances. However, the issue here is not one of simply giving primary to specific contents over general forms. The concepts and principles of gender relations may allow particular interests and intentions to permeate them, yet should take shape through such particularities as distinct, relatively autonomous articulations.
- f) It is important to recognise here that there are various ways of connecting particular interests and goals to global concepts and principles of gender relations, and that certain ways may be restrictive of gender relations and sustainable livelihood security process openness and transparency. In some cases, to tie gender relations and sustainable livelihood security systems to specific ideological intentions and constructs, like projects of ethnic self-determination, is

not to appreciate the systems' inherent breadth and complexity; it is, rather, to operate at levels and within forms of knowledge of gender relations that encompass only a limited part of the systems' full range.

- g) The relation between explicit general forms and particular representations in transition process can best be grasped as their dynamic, mutually constitutive or regulative articulation. It is well to recognise that the former does not have effective generality or objectivity of their own, independently of particular elements and contents. If they were totally independent, the forms will be vacuous and practically irrelevant. And specific representations are not passive external targets of application of generic forms of gender relations but in part constitutive of them. In other words, neither one nor the other level of democratisation of gender politics has elements, features and functions that it owes entirely to itself. Articulation and structuring of elements occur, or should occur, continually across the two levels.
- h) Thus, democratisation of gender politics here entails conceptualisation in global categories that are invested with varying local meanings that are themselves in part actualisation of trends in international political (and development) thought. The openness, transparency and complexity of democratisation will depend on the extent to which and how global and local levels or dimensions are articulated with each other. This means that the attempt to subsume democratisation of gender politics by some particular political agenda or ideological intention ("indigenisation", "ethnic self-determination" and so on) must, therefore, limit rather than enhance openness of transition process. If what explicit general forms signify is no particular transition strategy but the very process of democratisation of gender politics itself, then any particular agenda or intention must, to the extent it is democratic, allow general forms to work themselves out through it. Conversely, gender relations and sustainable livelihood security strategy or strategies must take on generic elements, dimensions and functions of gender relations and sustainable livelihood security process.
- i) Democratisation of gender politics processes, in order to have significant constitutive or regulative effects on the plenitude of particular representations, must be allowed to attain coherence and integrity even as it comes into play in varied contexts of activity. While it may be tied to the initiatives and leadership of assignable organisations or groups in its emergence and development, it nonetheless gains currency as a relatively autonomous system that other, competing, organisations can also participate in and operate. As a set of distinctly general categories and mechanisms of gender thought, discourse and practice, transition process takes the diversity of particular political ideas and activities into itself and makes them a vital part of its conceptual and institutional economy. It mediates and channels specific actors and their activities by means of an objectification and generalisation that works on and through them.
- j) In this light, openness of democratisation of gender politics process can be understood as a dynamic two-way operation of generic forms on particular contents and particular contents on generic forms in which the deployment of the conceptual and institutional machinery of gender relations and sustainable livelihood security is at the same time the representation of specific needs,

interests, motivations, claims, rights and obligations by individuals and groups. Going beyond structuring or rearranging African political actors and institutional activities in their spontaneous, often turbid reality, this operation should result in their transformation into forms of transparent agency and practice within a democratic political system.

In terms of the articulation of strategy and process in the African transition, a major problem is that there is too much readiness on the part of the "democratising" forces for unilateral action without meaningful and adequate understanding, let alone agreement, on critical issues with organisations and constituencies outside the government. The rather intrusive manner in which the Governments promote positions on vital issues of reform contravenes the ideals, standards and rules of democracy, which seemingly they uphold. This detracts from the openness, credibility and effectiveness of the African democratisation process. It also encourages individuals and groups in the opposition to alienate themselves from the process, rather participate in it and work to improve it.

Recognition of this problem would constitute a significant development of its democratic practice. It would be a major opening for the mutual incorporation of uncertain state strategies and process in a more dynamic and complex articulation of democratic transition in Africa. However, other societies with identical features have managed to install and maintain multi-party democratic system. While it is too early to decide how the system of governance will evolve, there is **no reason to believe that democracy is doomed in Africa. A skilled and committed state leadership can mitigate conditions that are hostile to democracy.** Towards this end it is imperative that

- We promote a fundamentally new value system based on justice, peace and the integrity of creation. It will be a system that recognises the rich resources of human communities, their cultural and spiritual contributions and the wealth of nature. It will be radically different from the value system on which the present economic and political orders are based and which lies behind the current crises. It is a new understanding of sharing in which those who have been marginalised by reason of sex, age, economic and political condition, ethnic origin and disability and identifying with the poor and oppressed and their organised movements in the struggle for justice and human dignity in church and society. This enables women, men and children to organise themselves and realise their potential and power as individuals and communities, working towards the kind of self-reliance and self-determination, which are an essential condition of interdependence, be open to one another, as friends on the basis of common commitment, mutual trust, and forgiveness, keeping one another informed of all plans and programmes and submitting ourselves to mutual accountability and correction. This implies participation in the struggles of women, men and children for justice, and thereby overcome all barriers between different faiths and ideologies, which today divide the human family.
- **Shard values, vision and resources of community-** to a fundamentally new value system based on justice, peace and the integrity of humanity. To a new understanding of sharing in which those who have been marginalised to take their place at the centre of all decisions and actions as equal partners and to identify with the poor and oppressed and their organised movements in the struggle for justice and human dignity in church and society.
- **Demanding common tasks build a community and the momentum for radical women, men and children's participation:** To bear witness to the mission of God by identifying

exposing and confronting at all levels the root causes, and the structures, of injustice which lead to the exploitation of the wealth and women, men and children of the third world and result in poverty and the destruction of creation. This entails working for a new economic and political order to enable women, men and children to organise themselves and realise their potential and power as individuals and communities, working towards the kind of self-reliance and self-determination which are an essential condition of interdependence.

- **Realism of what it means to be human means shared values, vision and resources:** To be open the basis of common commitment, mutual trust, confession and forgiveness, mutual accountability and correction; to promote through words and deeds the holistic mission of the church in obedience to God's liberating will and to participate in the struggles of women, men and children for justice, and thereby overcome all barriers between different faiths and ideologies which today divide the human family. (Strengthen then the process of détente and integrating the resources freed by this process for cost sharing).
- **Primacy of partnership between the human community:** Women, men and children from communities, from grassroots movements and marginalised groups should become much more part of the democratisation sharing process; The vision of a new community that embraces and inspires all our relationships must remain with us. The commitment we seek is not to any one system but to a continuous search for the realisation of that vision in our churches and communities.

## **Annex 1.**

### Potential Principal Questions and Check-list Points

<b>Principal question</b>	<b>Check-list points</b>
I. Is there legal protection of <b>gender</b> in constitutionally defined rights?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are fundamental <b>gender</b> rights enshrined in a constitution or its equivalent?</li> <li>2. Has legislation protecting such <b>gender</b> rights been passed and is it enforced?</li> <li>3. Is legislation protecting and enforcing such <b>gender</b> rights outside of the control of the executive branch?</li> <li>4. Are there known or recorded instances of such <b>gender</b> legislation being overruled by executive orders or other legislation granting the government sweeping powers?</li> </ol>
V. Are women, men and children generally informed of their rights and have access to the legal system?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is information about gender-related rights generally available in an easy to understand fashion?</li> <li>2. Do advice centres or other civic institutions staffed by paralegals exist, or is there some other means by which citizens can obtain information about their rights?</li> <li>3. Is there a system of legal aid, or a way in which poor women, men and children can obtain legal services?</li> <li>4. Do customary or traditional rights correspond to legal rights, particularly in the case of women?</li> </ol>
VII. Are all public expenditures gender sensitive and made public?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is there a general budgetary process which takes place over a specific time frame?</li> <li>2. Are budgets for all sectors made publicly available in a timely manner?</li> <li>3. Is there a system of recording public expenditures in all sectors?</li> <li>4. Are public expenditures recorded and such records publicly available?</li> </ol>
X. Are there legal and regulatory frameworks to control corruption and rent seeking?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are there laws against bribery and rent seeking?</li> <li>2. Are there regulations in governmental departments to make corruption more difficult?</li> <li>3. Is there a system of checks and balances to ensure that such regulations are adequately enforced?</li> <li>4. Are there recorded or known instances of corruption and rent seeking at senior levels which have gone unpunished?</li> </ol>
II. Is government spending on military and security greater than spending on social sectors?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are military and security budgets made public?</li> <li>2. Are military expenditures made public, and are they consistent with budget estimates?</li> <li>3. Is security and military spending consistent with perceived need?</li> <li>4. Is a higher proportion of public funds spent on the military than on social sectors?</li> </ol>

V. Is there decentralisation of resource generation and allocation?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are provincial and local authorities able to collect revenue and program if for their own use, or are all revenues passed to the central government?</li> <li>2. Do local authorities develop their own budgets?</li> <li>3. Can local authorities develop their own budgetary priorities and program funds accordingly?</li> <li>4. Are local government budgets, revenues and expenditures made public and subject to audit?</li> </ol>
I. Is there a civil service, with appointments based on merit?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is there a civil service with minimum entry requirements, or are large sectors of the population guaranteed a job i the public sector?</li> <li>2. Is there a clear system of promotion based on merit, with checks and balances to ensure that this is implemented, or is it assumed that promotion is based on other factors?</li> <li>3. Are specific functions clearly described, and chains of command clearly delineated?</li> <li>4. Are there widespread recorded or known instances of promotion or appointment because of patronage or bribery?</li> </ol>
II. Are governmental officials subject to the rule of law?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are there regulations prohibiting acceptance of bribes or kickbacks?</li> <li>2. Are such regulations enforced or are they widely circumvented?</li> <li>3. Are there recorded instances or public officials being brought to trial for misconduct?</li> <li>4. Are there widely known instances of officials being guilty of law breaking but not being prosecuted?</li> </ol>
III. Is the compensation for civil servants comparable to that of other sectors?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is the salary paid to civil servants similar to that which they could earn in other sectors, or is it significantly lower or higher?</li> <li>2. Are there alternative employment opportunities for civil servants?</li> <li>3. Are the benefits and access to government structures that the civil service affords significant attractions?</li> <li>4. Is the civil service the preferred profession for whatever reason?</li> </ol>
IV. Is civil service career development independent of the executive branch or political party in power?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is there a system of political appointment at all levels of the civil service, and is such system publicly known and acknowledged, and political appointments generally known?</li> <li>2. If there is a publicly acknowledged system of political appointment, is it felt to be excessive and undermining of the career structure?</li> <li>3. Are most senior positions held by career civil servants, or are they political appointments?</li> <li>4. Is the party in power able to allocate positions to its members without legislative approval of competence?</li> </ol>
V. Are the military and security forces under civilian control?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is there a military government, or are a number of government ministers or other high ranking officials also members of the military?</li> <li>2. Do laws apply to the military and the security forces the same as to other citizens, or they subject to special military law?</li> <li>3. Are there instances of the military or security forces being held accountable for their actions?</li> <li>4. Does the legislature approve military and security actions, or are such actions decided only by the military, or the military and the executive branch?</li> </ol>
I. Are political parties allowed to exist legally and constitutionally?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Can political parties exist, and can they generate revenue?</li> <li>2. Are there regulations governing what political parties can and cannot do, and do these apply uniformly to all political parties?</li> <li>3. Are all political parties allowed to campaign in all geographic areas?</li> <li>4. Is there legislation which effectively impedes political parties being formed, because it requires certain minimum numbers, funds, or geographic representation?</li> </ol>
II. Is there constitutional and legal provision for freedom of speech, media, assembly and association?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are these "freedoms to" broadly permitted, or are they subject to a variety of restrictions which effectively curtail public liberty?</li> <li>2. Are special permissions required before such freedoms can be implemented, and if so are they applied impartially to all interest groups?</li> <li>3. Is there an independent press and media?</li> <li>4. Is the governmental censorship of the press, or are there recorded or known instances of press freedom curtailed due to fear of governmental redress?</li> </ol>
III. Is there an elected legislature which is responsible to the electorate?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are members of the legislature elected through open ballot?</li> <li>2. Does the legislature understand its role, or does it either generally acquiesce to governmental demands or consistently try to oppose the government?</li> <li>3. Are elected officials required to spend a minimum amount of time in their electoral district?</li> <li>4. Are there systems in place whereby public opinion can be made known to members of the legislature?</li> </ol>

<p>IV. Does the legislature have oversight over governmental policy?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Can the executive branch implement decisions without legislative approval of broad policy measures?</li> <li>2. Do members of the legislature have sufficient access to information and technical resources to enable them to make informed decisions, for example, is there a research service or library available and do they have technical staff?</li> <li>3. Is the legislature responsible for drafting legislation, does it approve legislation drafted by the executive branch, or does it do both?</li> <li>4. Is there provision for individual members of the legislature to introduce new legislation or amendments to existing legislation on specific subjects?</li> </ol>
<p>V. Do opposition groups have legitimacy, and do they play a role in the political process?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is the concept of a "loyal opposition" generally understood by both the opposition and the public?</li> <li>2. Is there provision for opposition groups to be involved in the political process, for example by members of minority parties being elected to the legislature?</li> <li>3. Does the dominant national party also automatically control local government, or are local government officials elected?</li> <li>4. Do opposition parties have clearly articulated political platforms, or are they dominated by individuals?</li> </ol>
<p>I. Are there a range of countervailing intermediary civic organisations that function freely and openly?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is the non-governmental sector well developed, with organisations serving a variety of sectors of the population, rural as well as urban?</li> <li>2. Are there organisations which function as political pressure groups or which lobby for specific interests?</li> <li>3. Do labour unions and professional associations exist and do they promote the rights of their members?</li> <li>4. Do independent institutions such as policy or political and economic think tanks exist?</li> </ol>
<p>II. Are legislative decisions made public?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are legislative records kept and decisions published?</li> <li>2. Are sessions of parliament or the legislature open to the public?</li> <li>3. Is there press and media coverage of the parliament or legislature?</li> <li>4. Is there a system of disseminating legislative information beyond the capital city or major urban centres?</li> </ol>
<p>III. Do processes for popular participation exist?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are there established and recognised ways and means for the public to voice concern or express opinion to policy makers?</li> <li>2. Are such things as opinion polls or attitude surveys undertaken?</li> <li>3. Are there means by which communities can express their development priorities at the local level?</li> <li>4. Are local government officials elected?</li> </ol>
<p>IV. Are non-governmental organisations financially and operationally independent of the government?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do non-governmental organisations receive subsidies from the government?</li> <li>2. Do most non-governmental organisations have independent boards of directors, and operate according to a constitution or other set of binding principles?</li> <li>3. Does legislation permitting non-governmental organisations to earn revenue, collect membership contributions, or receive donations from the public or local or foreign institutions exist?</li> <li>4. Are most non-governmental organisations self-financing?</li> </ol>
<p>V. Are non-governmental organisations and institutions legally allowed to exist and free from governmental control?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are non-governmental organisations legally allowed to exist, and are there any restrictions placed upon them?</li> <li>2. Are there known or recorded instances of governmental interference with non-governmental organisations?</li> <li>3. Does the government encourage the formation of non-governmental entities and seek their opinion on key issues?</li> <li>4. Do non-governmental organisations act as intermediaries between the government and their members?</li> </ol>
<p>I. Is there constitutional and legal provision for private ownership of property?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is legislation conducive to the private ownership of property, or does it make it difficult and only possible in certain circumstances?</li> <li>2. Is private ownership of both property and land for any purposes allowed, and can such property and land be sold or otherwise passed on by the owners?</li> <li>3. Are there property and land ownership records which can be publicly consulted?</li> <li>4. Do the regulations and administrative procedures which need to be followed facilitate or impede private ownership of property and land?</li> </ol>

<p>II. Is there constitutional and legal provision for private investment?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is provision made in the constitution for private investment, and does legislation conducive to private investment exist?</li> <li>2. Is private investment permitted in all sectors, or is it controlled?</li> <li>3. Is the regulatory environment conducive to small scale business, the informal sector and women entrepreneurs, or does it in effect discriminate against them?</li> <li>4. Is information about investment options easily available and is the tax structure conducive to small scale private investment?</li> </ol>
<p>III. Are there political conditions on access to credit?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is the amount of money available for credit controlled by the government?</li> <li>2. Are the restrictions on credit eligibility such that only a small percentage of the population qualifies?</li> <li>3. Is credit generally available, to both men and women, in rural as well as urban areas through a variety of mechanisms, or is it restricted?</li> <li>4. Are there governmental restrictions on what credit can be provided for?</li> </ol>
<p>IV. Is the banking system's ability to support private investment curtailed by governmental regulations?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is there a functioning banking system?</li> <li>2. Is the banking system subject to arbitrary political manipulation?</li> <li>3. Are there governmental restrictions on lending for private sector investment or purchase of property or land?</li> <li>4. Do government regulations on interest rates or tax on private deposits exist, and do they negatively affect private sector activity?</li> </ol>
<p>V. Are regulations governing investment, and import and export procedures clear and easy to understand?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are there administrative regulations governing investment and import and export procedures, and are these publicly available?</li> <li>2. Are the regulations supportive of, and conducive to, private sector activity, or are they designed to exercise control over it?</li> <li>3. Are the regulations consistent, or are there instances in which one set of regulations are contradicted or overruled by another set?</li> <li>4. Are the regulations uniformly enforced, or are there known or recorded instances of their being waived in certain instances?</li> </ol>
<p>VI. Is the implementation of government regulations and licensing procedures slow and complicated?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is there a facility for "one stop" procurement of licenses or other required documents, or is it necessary to visit a variety of different departments or offices?</li> <li>2. Are officials generally familiar with regulations, and able to expedite the process, or are they uninformed and need to seek guidance on a case-by case basis?</li> <li>3. Are there known or recorded instances of bribes or other payment being required to obtain licenses or other documents, even though regulatory procedures have all been followed?</li> <li>4. Is it possible to obtain licenses or other documents within a relatively short time frame, or does it take a long time and require repeat visits by the person applying for the license?</li> </ol>