

Mapping Women's Participation in Local Governance

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Abstract

Women's participation in local level governance structures is an important, but under-researched area. Despite the importance it holds, local government has proven challenging to research in an internationally comparative perspective for two main reasons. First, there is significant diversity in local governance structures. Each country has its own system of local government, sometimes with internally disparate types and forms of local councils, bodies and executive structures. Second, this wide range of governance structures has been difficult to capture with comparable data. There is no repository of systematically-collected, comparable information for each country on women's participation at the sub-national level. UN Women has therefore been interested in the question, "is it possible to develop a methodology which will enable a more comprehensive understanding of women's access to, and participation in, local governance institutions, processes and leadership positions?" The intention of the presentation is to seek feedback on a proposed methodology for future development and refinement, and ultimately, data collection.