Gender Assessment and Plan of Action for USAID/Romania

A project funded by the Office of Women in Development, Bureau for Global Programs, Field Support and Research, U.S. Agency for International Development under contract number FAO-0100-C-00-6005-00 with Development Alternatives, Inc.

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by

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Development Alternatives, Inc.

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ACRONYMS

American Center for International Labor Solidarity	ACILS
Automated Directives System	ADS
Center for Euroregional Democracy	CED
Center for Institutional Reform and the Informal Sector	IRIS
Center for International Private Enterprise	CIPE
Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women	CEDAW
Civil Society Organization	CSO
Department of Justice	DOJ
European Union	EU
Female Headed Households	FHH
Gross Domestic Product	GDP
Government of Romania	GOR
International Organization for Migration	IOM
National Democratic Institute	NDI
Nongovernmental Organization	NGO
National Magistrates Institute	NMI
Pro-Democracy Association	PDA
Purchasing Power Parity	PPP
Romanian Judges' Association	RJA
Southeast European Co-operative Initiative	SECI
Small and Medium-sized Enterprise	SME
Strategic Objective	SO
Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats	SWOT
United Nations Development Programme	UNDP
United States Agency for International Development	USAID
Women in Development Technical Assistance Project	WIDTECH

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since the fall of Communism in 1989, Romania has struggled through severe economic and social hardships. Unemployment is high, poverty rates have doubled, gross domestic product (GDP) has declined, and health indicators have fallen. Recently, however, substantial improvements have been made. Economic growth has increased, free and fair elections have been held, and maternal mortality has been halved. USAID/Romania has made substantial contributions in all of these areas. USAID/Romania is currently planning its new strategy for the coming five years, determining how it will build on these successes and help address some of the remaining problems in the country. This assessment is part of this strategic planning process, analyzing how gender relations and roles affect the achievement of USAID's objectives and assessing how the proposed activities affect the relative status of men and women in the country.

This assessment shows that USAID/Romania has been and continues to be committed to ensuring the promotion of equal rights and opportunities for women and disadvantaged groups in the country. Numerous programs and successes in all three strategic objective areas have addressed gender discrepancies specifically. For example, in the area of economic growth, USAID and its partners are aware of and support credit opportunities for women business owners. USAID funded a study of women's entrepreneurship that has provided extensive baseline data on women's involvement in business in Romania. USAID also is funding an activity that has a mandate to target and support women's business associations specifically. In the democracy sector, USAID has funded workshops to develop women's involvement in political parties, has supported training and networking opportunities for women activists, and provided internship opportunities for youth. The progress made in the area of reproductive health also has been impressive. Maternal mortality has been halved, abortion rates have declined dramatically, and more men and women are aware of and use modern contraceptives.

Although this progress is commendable, there are still areas in all three strategic objectives of USAID's program in Romania, as well as in the special interest area of combating domestic violence and trafficking, that could benefit from gender analysis and integration. Below is a summary of the main issues uncovered in the assessment. More detailed descriptions and extensive recommendations are provided in the main body of this assessment.

SO 1—Accelerated Private Sector Growth

Legal, Regulatory, and Bureaucratic Reform. USAID has funded an extensive study of the bureaucratic constraints on private enterprise. Future activities will focus on streamlining these processes to improve the business environment. Women and men sometimes have different experiences dealing with bureaucratic processes. These potential differences have not yet been investigated in Romania. An assessment of these differences may help shape the streamlining efforts to ensure that improvements address the issues faced by both male and female entrepreneurs.

Pension Reform. Changes in the pension system, designed to make it more sustainable, may have an unanticipated negative impact on women. The move to a system based on contributions decreases women's benefits because women have fewer years of formal sector employment and lower salary histories than men. Women under the new system will continue to have lower retirement ages. Fewer years of contributing to the system combined with data that indicate women on average earn 83 percent of what men earn will result in women having lower average pensions than men. More worrying, however, is the increase in the number of women moving from formal, paid employment to the informal sector or into unpaid family labor—situations in which it is unlikely that contributions will be made into the social, health, and pension systems, resulting in a growing number of women potentially facing old age without any pensions. Although many of these women have husbands whose pensions they can rely on, women's survivor benefits are significantly lower than those men (50 percent); and women on average live longer than men, resulting in more women relying on these reduced benefits. If these issues are not addressed before the reforms are finalized, there could be serious implications for elderly women in Romania in the near future.

Business Associations. Data indicate that although women are slightly underrepresented in association management they are actively involved with associations at other levels. Associations, therefore, provide a potential outlet for promoting women's civic participation, as well as for improving their business skills. Additional support for women entrepreneurs could be provided through these associations. Developing additional programs such as mentoring programs for women's business associations and gender integration training for other business associations (to help them understand and address the needs of both their male and their female members) could build on and develop women's involvement in this sector.

Water Users Associations. This is part of a new agricultural development activity designed to promote the development of water users associations to take over private ownership of irrigation assets and develop cooperative marketing and distribution networks among small land holders. As the associations are developed, USAID needs to be sure that efforts are made to ensure that both men and women know about the purpose of the program, when meetings are being held, and why they should attend. USAID also should make sure that implementers learn what both male and female land holders' concerns are, that efforts are taken to accommodate men's and women's different schedules, and that women have an equal voice in the associations' decision-making processes.

Credit for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises. Although 31 percent of USAID's loans go to businesses owned by women, data indicate that women borrow significantly less than men for their businesses. Most of USAID's credit implementers provide credit through local associations. To encourage the development of the associations, loans are available only to members of the associations. Although USAID's partners are conscious of the need to ensure their practices do not discriminate against women, most of them collect sex-disaggregated data only on the number and value of loans disbursed and the number of jobs created. Additional data that might be useful in analyzing whether any of the lending practices discourage or encourage women are not collected, such as

application rates, approval and denial rates, and repayment rates; membership of the association; and the associations' decision-making processes.

Agricultural Development. This is part of the new agricultural development activity designed to increase farmers' access to credit through the development of crop insurance programs and warehouse receipts systems. Although both of these programs should assist all farmers, male and female, some steps can be taken to ensure that women and men are included in program participation and in decision-making processes to the greatest extent possible. Simple steps such as advertising the program in places where women frequently go and scheduling meetings during times when women are free of housework and childcare duties can help encourage women's participation. Implementing organizations also should analyze men's and women's farming practices, crop preferences, equipment usage, access to factor and input markets, and access to distribution systems, which might affect their access to or interest in the program.

Land Privatization. Land privatization in Romania is based on restitution of nationalized land to its prior owners. USAID's involvement in the privatization of the remaining 20 percent of state-owned lands is limited. USAID will encourage those with private claims to the remaining land to sell those claims in an effort to consolidate land ownership into larger parcels, increasing the efficiency and competitiveness of the agricultural sector. To ensure there are no gender discrepancies, the activity needs to study the concerns of both male and female holders of land claims and ensure that public awareness campaigns address the needs of both. The activity also should examine property rights of family members to ensure that the processes developed to encourage the sale of land claims protect the rights of family members.

SO 2.3—Improved Democratic Governance at the Local Level

Local Government Assistance. Women are significantly under-represented in local governments in Romania. Reasons include an abundance of housework and family duties that leaves no time for public service, negative public attitudes toward women's ability to lead, a reluctance of women to submit themselves to public scrutiny, discomfort at involving themselves in under-the-table dealings, and political parties' resistance to promoting women to positions of leadership. USAID is developing a new program to improve democratic governance at the local level, including budgeting and public management, municipal finance and credit, economic development, citizen participation, and citizen information and association building. Improving local governance brings governance closer to the people, thereby increasing citizens' participation in decision making. Men and women in the same communities often have different concerns and priorities for their local government. It is critical, therefore, that gender issues are taken into consideration in the design of these activities so women's voices are heard. Activity designs need to include provisions to ensure that local budgets reflect the priorities of women and men in the community, that women participate in discussions of local economic development for their communities, that information disseminated by government reaches both men and women, and that associations reach out to and include both male and female members.

Political Parties. Women are under-represented not only at the local level but also at the national level of governance. It is very difficult for women to work their way up the political party system, thereby gaining positions of authority and leadership. USAID/Romania is implementing programs that target some of these problems. Implementing partners are working with women in political parties to develop their skills; young party members, including men and women, have been sent on study tours to develop their understanding of political party systems; and university students have participated in internship programs with the government. Additional support for increasing women's roles in political parties, at the local level, will increase women's voices in local government, thereby improving democratic governance. USAID could encourage political parties to be more transparent in their internal processes, train party leadership in the importance of including women in the party structure and how they can use this to attract women voters, and continue supporting additional training activities for women party members and activists to continue to build their skills so they will be ready to assume leadership when the opportunities arise.

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). Although women are also underrepresented at the management level of CSOs, they are actively involved in CSO activities throughout the country. Throughout the region, CSOs are beginning to develop from purely charity-based organizations to voices of advocacy, providing another way for citizens to influence governmental decision making. Aside from the business associations discussed above, USAID/Romania is supporting CSOs mainly through partnership programs with both U.S. and Serbian CSOs. Although partnership grants do not require applicants to address gender issues, many of them have. One partnership program initiated a seminar to educate Romanian and Serbian female political activists on networking, lobbying, and advocacy strategies—attracting significant media interest in the process. Other grants have included gender integration strategies, for example, by using participatory approaches to community development efforts, but neglected to keep track of and report on men's and women's relative participation in and results from the projects. Future partnership activities should ask applicants to identify the relevant gender issues and describe how they will address them. Because of significant role of women in CSOs, additional support for CSOs could provide an important outlet for women's political participation. Training for staff and management in gender integration issues, partnerships and internships with more advanced CSOs, and other activities could help develop the more nascent organizations and promote women's leadership roles in the more developed ones.

Labor Unions. Labor unions have provided an important forum, at both the local and the national levels, for promoting human rights in Romania, especially women's rights in the workplace. Because many of the largest unions are in female-dominated professions, such as education and health, women have been activity involved. Three Labor Resource Centers, opened with USAID funding, have developed special women's programs to address some of the workplace issues of concern to female employees, such as sexual harassment and gender discrimination in hiring practices. Activities organized at the local level have led to important changes at the national level. Continued support for labor unions could provide an important outlet for women's civic participation and for promoting women's rights. In addition, support for partnerships and collaborative efforts

between the more advanced labor unions and other CSOs in the communities could help develop the CSOs' advocacy skills.

Ethnic Relations Program. USAID/Romania is developing a new activity to support the Roma community. Roma in Romania have distinctly lower human development indicators than the general population: lower literacy rates, higher unemployment, and lower health indicators. Roma are reported to be victims of discrimination in hiring practices and even at health clinics. This activity will support efforts to provide the Roma with social and economic opportunities equal to the rest of the population. Roma culture is very traditional, with distinct roles for men and women. Once it is clear what sorts of activities will be supported, it is very important that the new activity conduct an in-depth gender analysis of the Roma population. USAID/Romania's reproductive health programs already have significant experience working with the Roma population. The programs have developed special interventions that have been successful in addressing the significant reproductive health problems of Roma women. Lessons learned from their experience should be incorporated into this new activity.

SO 3.4—Improved Effectiveness of Selected Social and Primary Health Care Services for Targeted Vulnerable Groups

Reproductive Health. Communist-era pro-natalist policies making both birth control and abortion illegal had a devastating effect on the reproductive health of Romanian women. In the past decade, the Government of Romania and USAID/Romania have had commendable success in improving the reproductive health of the population. Maternal mortality has been halved, abortion rates have declined, and people's awareness and use of modern contraceptives are increasing. USAID-funded activities also have had successes in targeting particularly vulnerable populations such as the Roma communities and adolescent girls. Some work has begun to focus reproductive health messages on men. More activities targeted to men could help bring about greater increases in knowledge and use of modern methods of contraception, further decreasing the abortion rate, improving maternal mortality, and reducing the number of children entering institutions.

Health Reform. The former system of cradle-to-grave services for all citizens is no longer sustainable. The health care system is transitioning from a system of mandatory payroll contributions to a national health insurance program, financial incentive schemes for health care providers, and social services and transfers based on income testing. Individuals and families not covered by their employer may make voluntary contributions to the program or pay fees for services rendered. The revised unemployment insurance program will provide health insurance coverage for the unemployed but only for a limited time. People not included in any of these categories and unable to pay for their own coverage can apply to the government for a poverty certificate, which entitles them to free services. However, many of the poor do not know how, or are unable, to obtain a poverty certificate and find themselves without access to health care. Although these reforms affect both men and women, women are particularly vulnerable for many reasons: they are more likely than men to work in sectors that do not make social insurance contributions, and they are more likely to face long-term unemployment. At the

time of this assessment, health indicators were beginning to fall, with maternal mortality figures for the first quarter of 2001 double those of the same period in 2000. Although a causal linkage cannot be made, the potential negative effects of the reforms on women's health clearly warrant further investigation.

Institutionalized Children. USAID has funded extensive programs to address issues of children left to the care of the state. During the Communist era, families were encouraged to have children. Yet many could not afford to care for these children and turned to state-run institutions to provide for them. USAID activities have focused on preventing unwanted pregnancies (see Reproductive Health, above); developing alternatives to institutional care, such as adoption and foster care; and providing counseling and economic and material support to help families keep their children at home. These programs have met with considerable success. Although the number of children turned over to the state is still rising, the number placed in institutions is declining and the number entering foster care is on the rise. Sex-disaggregated data about these children were unavailable. Without data, it is impossible to know if there are gender-based differences or preferences in the rates at which children are turned over to the state or the rates at which they are adopted or taken into foster care. Additional studies of institutionalized children after they reach independence also could provide valuable information. Some of those working with these children feel that the girls are particularly vulnerable, that they often are taken advantage of by stronger children, and that they are subject to forced prostitution. The United Nations Development Programme is working with Romania to develop gender statistics for the country. USAID should encourage UNDP to include statistics on institutionalized children in its new project.

Labor Redeployment. USAID is advising the Romanian government on its labor redeployment policies and providing funding for local economic development programs. The new labor reforms have involved a revision of the unemployment insurance program. It is unclear if a gender analysis was conducted of the new policies to see if they would have differential affects on women and men. The most obvious change affecting women is the reduction of long-term unemployment benefits. Because women are over-represented in the ranks of the long-term unemployed, they will be more likely to be the ones losing their benefits. This problem becomes a particularly acute in light of the health care reforms, which eliminate free health care for all. The reformed unemployment insurance provides for health care benefits only for a limited time. The long-term unemployed therefore will lose not only their unemployment cash transfers but also their access to health care. An in-depth gender analysis of the unemployment insurance program would be beneficial in identifying other potential unintended gender-biased impacts of the reforms.

The economic development program provides grants to support the community's priority development projects. The program utilizes participatory techniques to develop community-led committees, which develop and implement the projects. Participation by women on these committees has been 30 percent on average. It is not clear what methods, if any, have been utilized to encourage women's participation. A study of the methods used would be useful not only to encourage higher levels of participation by women on future committees but also to uncover lessons that can be applied to other citizen participation projects, such as the upcoming local government program.

Domestic Violence. Domestic violence is an acknowledged problem in Romania (the 2000 Gender Barometer survey funded by the Open Society Foundation Romania noted that more than one-half the female respondents knew someone who was a victim of domestic violence). Domestic violence is a complex issue that requires integrated solutions. In Romania, as in other countries, victims sometimes fear additional violence from their partner if they report and prosecute assaults; they may be pressured by family members not to press charges or may be encouraged to reconcile; the police often consider domestic violence a family matter and are unlikely to make an arrest; the procedural requirements to file a complaint in domestic violence and rape cases are involved and place unnecessary burdens on the victims; the abuser often remains at home until the complaint is heard, which could be weeks or even months; and a housing shortage in Romania may force people to stay in an abusive relationship because they have nowhere else to go. A lack of public support for victims, inadequate legislation, untrained and often insensitive police officers, a lack of social, emotional, and economic support for victims, and a lack of counseling services for perpetrators are all areas that need to be addressed to prevent domestic violence and protect the human rights of the victims.

Trafficking. A related crime of violence against women is trafficking. In response to growing international concern, the U.S. Congress passed the victims of Trafficking and Violence Act of 2000, which subjects countries to sanctions if they do not meet minimum standards to address trafficking issues or make significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance. The U.S. Department of State determined that Romania has not complied with minimum standards. Romania therefore has been placed in the lowest tier, putting it at risk of sanctions—specifically, termination of non-humanitarian, non-trade-related assistance as well as potential U.S. opposition to development-related assistance from international financial institutions. The United States already is providing significant assistance to Romania to improve its anti-trafficking measures, especially working on cross-border investigations. Additional support is needed to prevent trafficking from continuing: promoting public awareness, improving legislation, providing support for reintegration of victims, and helping the Romanian government meet the minimum standards required by the Act so U.S. assistance to Romania is not curtailed.

INTRODUCTION

USAID/Romania's current strategy period ends in 2002. The new strategy, which will be submitted in fall 2001, will guide the program directions and activities of the Mission for the next five years. USAID is committed to ensuring that gender issues are fully incorporated into this planning process. The Agency guidelines mandate that gender analysis be undertaken during the strategic planning and program development processes. This assessment is to address how gender relations affect the achievement of sustainable results and how proposed results affect the relative status of women. Addressing these questions involves taking into account not only the different roles of men and women but also the relationship and balance between them and the institutional structures that support them.

The specific purpose of this gender assessment is to:

- Review and assess gender issues in Romania and identify key areas in which gender issues must be considered;
- Provide an outline under each strategic objective and intermediate result of the key role of gender;
- Provide technical advice on the development of the Mission's new strategic plan, results framework, and indicators to reflect the key role of gender considerations in the achievement of USAID goals;
- Assess the Mission's program portfolio for gender considerations;
- Assess potential gender issues in a future portfolio;
- Produce recommendations for possible entry-points to incorporate gender considerations in ongoing activities and potential new programs;
- Include recommendations on how to develop gender-sensitive indicators of program impact and on approaches for the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data; and
- Design a gender action plan to:
  - Outline the steps for mainstreaming gender in Mission policies and activities,
  - Recommend how to operationalize the consideration of gender from the perspective of both Mission technical offices/divisions and Mission management, and
  - Outline the steps to be taken in the coming year to integrate gender in to the Mission's portfolio.

In addition, the assessment team facilitated two gender briefings for USAID/Romania staff and implementing partners. One session explained the policy and program rationales for integrating gender and summarized the findings of the assessment; the other explained the Automated Directives System (ADS) guidelines and directives on gender to USAID staff.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The assessment was developed within the framework of the *1996 USAID Gender Plan of Action* and the *USAID Europe and Eurasia (USAID/E&E) Bureau's Strategic Framework*. The latter states that U.S. foreign policy interests in the region include the integration of gender considerations to promote equal access and opportunities, equal rights, and equal protection in U.S. foreign assistance programs. The strategy notes that "integrating gender considerations will accelerate and strengthen the economic and political reform process." This approach is precisely outlined in the USAID/E&E Bureau paper, *Mainstreaming Gender: More Effective and Better-targeted Development.*

The assessment team's approach parallels that of USAID, emphasizing the following:

- Addressing gender issues results in more effective and efficient development programs.
- Gender is not just another word for women; rather, gender means assessing issues regarding men as well as women.
- Mainstreaming gender means analyzing and adjusting for potential gender differences and integrating them throughout the planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of programs and projects.

The assessment also takes into account agency guidelines on planning and procurement—Automated Directives System (ADS), Series 200 and 300. The assessment responds specifically to ADS 201, which calls for the analysis to determine if gender issues are a determinant for achieving anticipated results or program sustainability.

This gender assessment and plan of action for USAID/Romania were developed using the following terminology:

- "Gender" refers to the economic, social, political, and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female.
- "Gender integration" means taking account of both the differences and the inequalities between men and women in program planning, implementation, and assessment.
- "Gender analysis" is the methodology used to identify and understand the dimensions and relevance of gender issues and gender-based constraints and to undertake measures to ensure gender mainstreaming. Gender analysis should be undertaken alongside other analysis, evaluation, or assessment and should look at the differences between men's and women's roles, rights, opportunities, and constraints.

METHODOLOGY

To understand the needs and issues in Romania and to determine how gender issues may affect the Mission's programs, goals, and objectives, the assessment team reviewed an extensive array of pertinent documents. A complete listing is included in Annex A. The following are categories of documents reviewed:

- USAID Mission portfolio review documents such as the FY 2003 Results Review/Resource Request and new strategy concept papers and frameworks;
- Reports from implementing organizations;
- UNDP's reports for Romania, including the 2000 Human Development Report, the 2001 Poverty Report, and the 2000 report on Women and Men in Romania; and
- Other Romania-specific reports, such as the report on women's entrepreneurship—Romanian Businesswomen in the Third Millennium—and the Gender Barometer, a survey of the public's opinion on men's and women's roles in society.

The team also conducted individual interviews and group sessions with the following relevant stakeholders (see Annex A for a complete listing):

- Mission staff, including all Strategic Objective (SO) teams;
- Majority of implementing partners;
- Women's business associations and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs); and
- Other donor organizations.

BACKGROUND

Since the overthrow of Nickolai Ceausescu in 1989, the citizens of Romania have experienced a particularly challenging transitional decade, characterized by an increase in poverty, faltering confidence in nascent democratic institutions, and a depreciation in the social benefit system once provided by the state. Coping with its Communist legacy, which left behind an economy in shambles, Romanians forged ahead establishing a market-oriented economy and democratic governance. However, privatization was slow and failed to substantially improve the economy. Eleven years after transition began, gross domestic product (GDP) remains at 77 percent of its 1989 level.[1] Additional statistics paint an equally dim picture:

- Extreme poverty rates doubled from 1995 to 1999. In the Europe and Eurasia Region, only Moldova, Russia, and Albania have higher poverty rates.[2]
- Annual GDP growth rates experienced a decline from 1997 to 1999.[3] GDP per capita (US$ at purchasing power parity) decreased from 6,095 in 1995 to 6,000 in 1999.[4]

Table 1: Poverty in Romania, 1995-2000

Year	Poverty Rate	Extreme Poverty Rate
1995	25.3	8.0
1996	19.9	5.1
1997	30.1	9.5
1998	33.8	11.7
1999	41.2	16.6
2000	44.0	--

Source: Teliuc, Pop, Teliuc (2001). From Poverty in Romania, page 12. Poverty rate estimates were derived from the Integrated Household Survey, and the definitions used are the same as in National Strategy for Poverty Prevention and Alleviation. Source: Romanian government, 2001.

However, prospects for a turnaround look promising. As Romania prepares to join the European Union (E.U.) and pursues the economic, political, and social policies necessary to meet E.U. requirements, the reform process is becoming more consolidated. In 2000, positive economic growth was charted, a trend that has continued into 2001;[5] free and fair elections were conducted at both the national and the local levels; and during the last eight years, the maternal mortality rate has been halved.

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1 Poverty in Romania, UNDP.
2 Ibid.
3 National Human Development Report Romania, 2000, UNDP.
4 Ibid.
5 Early Warning Report, UNDP and the Romanian Academic Society.

In spite of these positive trends, the adverse effects of the transition may be affecting particular groups of the population more than others. Groups most affected by poverty include children; youth; families with many children; and single-parent households, especially those headed by women.[6] (Although very few families in Romania are led by a single parent, in 1999 over four-fifths of all single-parent families with one or more children were headed by mothers.[7])

Women constitute just over half of Romania's population and are very active in the labor force. Unlike women's economic activity in many of the country's neighbors, women's economic activity in Romania has actually risen slightly since the transition. At the end of 2000, women made up 46 percent of the total employed [8] compared with 44 percent in 1990-1999.[9] In recent years, more and more workers have lost their jobs in factories and become unpaid laborers on small family farms. Education levels for women are on par with male counterparts, and unemployment levels remain relatively balanced between the male and female populations. Although on the surface Communism left women on relatively equal footing with men, discrepancies remain, especially in rural areas where traditional values and norms prevail and power and decision making continue to be the domain of men. Among Romanians, there appears to be a lack of consensus as to whether gender problems truly exist within society. Many men and women believe men's and women's status is equal, and discrepancies that exist are attributed to inherent and immutable cultural norms within Romanian society. In a recent public opinion survey conducted by the Soros Foundation, the population was split approximately 50/50 when asked if there is real equality of rights between men and women in Romania.[10]

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[6] National Human Development Report Romania, 2000, UNDP.
[7] Women and Men in Romania, UNDP.
[8] Household Labour Force Survey, 2001. (Note: This figure includes the category of unpaid family workers. It should also be noted that an increase in men's unemployment does not necessarily mean women's employment increased, simply that men's unemployment increased.)
[9] World Bank, Genderstats (http://genderstats.worldbank.org).
[10] Gender Barometer, Open Society Foundation Romania.

ECONOMIC TRANSITION

Unemployment is an acute problem for both men and women in Romania. Throughout the 1990s, women's unemployment rate was consistently higher than men's until 1997.[11] However, by the end of 2000, men's unemployment (59 percent) surpassed that of women.[12] Long-term unemployment rates (unemployed for more than 12 consecutive months), however, were higher among women and young people; 61 percent of unemployed females and 48 percent of unemployed youths were among the long-term unemployed.[13] Should this trend continue, women might represent the majority of the chronic unemployed. This could have further implications as the government curtails social benefits, including limiting cash transfers and health insurance to 18 months of unemployment. This situation leaves the chronic unemployed, especially heads of households (the majority of which are female-headed households), more prone to poverty.

Losses of job opportunities and declining incomes often lead to a growing informal economy. In Romania, it is estimated to have more than tripled in size between 1992 and 1998. In 1999, the Romanian National Institute of Statistics (NIS) estimated this sector accounts for 21 percent of GDP, although higher estimates also exist.[14] The number of women involved in the informal sector in Romania has not been established; however, based on regional trends, it is assumed to be high. In some instances, employers who are eager to avoid providing legally required maternity leave or other social benefits increasingly employ women without formal labor contracts, a situation that deprives them of social insurance coverage, health care, and pensions.[15]

According to a recent study funded by USAID, more women work in agriculture (45 percent) than in manufacturing (19 percent) and trade (10 percent), with a small share in the banking system, stock exchange, insurance companies, and investment companies. Women's professional employment clusters around sectors financed by the state: education, health, social services, trade, hotels and restaurants, and light industry. In these activities, earnings are generally up to one-third lower than the average salary level in the economy as a whole. Men predominate in better-remunerated sectors, such as mining and quarrying, energy, metallurgy, chemistry, transport, and communications. The financial, banking, and insurance institutions are an exception, paying salaries over two and one-half times higher than the national average.[16]

Women and men also tend to occupy substantially different positions within organizations, both public and private. Women generally work in technical and administrative positions that have a lower level of power and responsibility, whereas men are more likely to hold visible, decision-making positions as managers and high officials. Four times as many men as

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[11] Women 2000: An Investigation into the Status of Women's Rights in the former Soviet Union and Central and South-Eastern Europe, International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights.
[12] Household Labour Force Survey, 2001.
[13] Men and Women in Romania, UNDP, and National Human Development Report 2000.
[14] Poverty in Romania, UNDP.
[15] Women in Transition, UNDP.
[16] Women and Men in Romania, UNDP.

women are in leadership and are senior public administration officials.[17] Given the high level of women's education, this segregation by gender cannot be attributed to women's lack of skills but to cultural attitudes that place women in subordinate roles rather than in high-profile positions.

Another barrier to women's full employment is the absence of childcare infrastructure and pre-school programs once provided by the state. This phenomenon is caused primarily by the closing of schools and preschool institutions and the introduction of fees at a time of decreased household incomes. The situation has forced women to increase their share of reproductive work in the household and constrains their participation in the public sphere and the productive labor market.

DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION

Romania, although slower than many other East European countries in making the transition to a democratic society, has made tremendous strides in developing political pluralism, credible electoral processes, an effective and efficient government, rule of law that protects citizens' basic freedoms, and political participation. Challenges do remain, and to strengthen democratic institutions and practices throughout Romania, attention must be paid to improving governance at both the national and the local levels. Institutionalizing the rule of law, increasing citizen's confidence in governing institutions, and ensuring the inclusion of all groups of society are some of the fundamental components of a participatory and transparent governance.

Like most former Eastern Bloc countries, Romania actively promoted a quota system for women in politics during the Communist period. Given the number of women in visible political positions at all levels of the Communist Party, one would deduce that women were well represented under Communism, equal to their male comrades. On the contrary—many felt that women in power failed to represent the voice of ordinary women, reflecting instead the interests of the *nomenclature* and ruling party. Furthermore, although highly educated, women during the Communist era often were promoted not based on merit but to fill government quotas. As a result, some women were unsuitable and unable to successfully perform the required duties of their position and subsequently lost the confidence of both colleagues and the general populace.

Immediately following the reform, women's political participation in Romania sharply declined, which exposed the superficial nature of the Communist quota system and its failure to change society's confidence in women's leadership skills. According to the recent survey—Gender Barometer, conducted by the Open Society Foundation Romania—when women and men were asked who is more capable to lead, over half of the respondents, both male and female, answered that men are more capable to lead than women.[18]

[17] Ibid.
[18] Gender Barometer, Open Society Foundation Romania.

Official figures from the most recent national elections held in November 2000 report slight increases in the number of women in elected positions. From 1992 to 1996, the number of female members of Parliament increased by 2.3 percent, and by 2000 the number jumped up 9.5 percent.[19] Ministries led by women include the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises and Cooperation, the Ministry of Education and Research, and the Ministry of Health and Family. From 1996 to 2000, at the local level women were elected into 3 percent of mayoral positions, 6 percent of local councilors, and 5 percent of county councilors.

Table 2: Percent of Women in the Romanian Parliament between 1992 and 2000[20]

Year	Chamber of Deputies		Senate	
	% (number)		% (number)	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
1992	4 percent (13)	96 (326)	2 percent (3)	98 percent (140)
1996	7 percent (25)	93 (315)	1 percent (2)	99 percent (141)
2000	11 percent (38)	89 (317)	7 percent (9)	93 percent (131)

As can be seen in Table 2, women's political participation is gradually increasing. However, to substantially increase women's participation, it is necessary to identify constraints to women's full political participation. These include:

- **Negative Public Attitudes toward Women in Power.** In addition to the promotion of unqualified women to meet quotas, an additional factor that contributes to women's negative attitudes toward female public figures is the "Elena Ceausescu Syndrome"—her ruthless and offensive political persona gave women in politics a bad image.

- **Women's Triple Burden of Housework, Childcare and Family Nurturing, and Earning Wages Outside the Family.** Although men are increasing their contribution to household duties, women are the primary providers of the family and home. This leaves women little free time and prevents many from participating in civic activities.

- **The Party System Based on Electoral Lists.** For a woman to attain political office, she must make it to the top of the party list. Whether someone is promoted is entirely up to the discretion of the party members, most of whom are men, working through closed personal networks. Furthermore, financial support often leverages candidates to the top of party lists, and women candidates tend to be less well financed.

- **Lack of Self-Confidence.** Many women stated this is a major hindrance to women's participation in politics. Women often do not believe they have the strength or skills to compete with men for political positions or to operate in the public eye.

[19] Ibid.
[20] Romanian Businesswomen in the Third Millennium, Chamber of Commerce.

- **Women's Hesitancy to Expose Themselves to Public Life.** As referenced above, many women involved in public activities stated that women often believe their primary role is in the family sphere, leaving the public sphere activities to men.

- **Women's Distaste for the Informal Networks Commonly Associated with Politics.** Increasingly, politics has become synonymous with informal networks wrought with corruption and dishonesty, which many women find unappealing and discourages their participation.

Throughout the region civil society organizations (CSOs), including non-governmental organizations and associations, have provided an entrée for women's participation in public and community life. Romania's CSO sector, although still in its developing stages, reports 4,000-5,000 viable, active organizations, of which approximately 80-90 are women's organizations.[21] These organizations focus on a wide variety of issue-areas and range in their capabilities. Professional associations appear to be taking the lead in forging the path toward a strong civil society and have been active in pushing through new legislation, such as the Freedom of Information Act.

Data on participation in CSOs is limited. Anecdotally, women's and men's participation appear to be relatively equal in CSO activities. However, according to a USAID-funded study, Romanian Businesswomen in the Third Millennium, management trends mirror those found in the business sector—women hold only 25 percent of management staff positions; 12 percent hold the highest position whereas 33 percent hold secondary positions. From this data, it appears that although women may be heavily involved in CSO activities, they do not predominate in the decision-making level. This could prove significant to women's role in policy making as the NGO sector transforms from primarily charity and donation-based organizations to organizations that take on advocacy roles on important issues, such as social policy development and human rights protection.

A flourishing democracy in Romania hinges on its ability to institute the rule of law. The Romanian Constitution guarantees the equality of all citizens. Romania is a signatory to many protective international treaties, including the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which it ratified in 1982. However, Romania has failed to ratify the optional protocol of the Convention that would recognize the competence of an international committee to receive and consider claims of a violation of any of the rights affirmed by the Convention.[22] Currently, there is no specific provision within the Romanian legislation that addresses equal opportunities for men and women. However, a revised draft law that was originally debated by the Parliament in the spring/summer 2001 will be reintroduced for approval in fall 2001. This draft law, Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, contains specific provisions on equal opportunities in employment and work and on sexual harassment. An Inter-Ministerial Commission for Equal Opportunities (made up of representatives from 22 ministries) was recently formed to consider the new legislation.

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[21] Directory of NGOs, Civil Society Development Foundation.

[22] Women 2000: An Investigation into the Status of Women's Rights in the Former Soviet Union and Central and South-Eastern Europe, International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights.

Romania has been introducing new laws that address gender-based discrimination. Domestic labor law protects individuals' right to work and to receive social benefits without gender bias. Although the legal framework is relatively satisfactory in this field, the level of implementation remains low and is not used as a daily practice.[23] Recently, other gender-sensitive legal provisions have been adopted. In labor law, these include paid leave to take care of children up to two years old and paternal leave and, in criminal law, protection for women from rape by their husbands and stricter punishments for domestic violence offenders.

SOCIAL TRANSITION

Social policies pursued by the Ceausescu regime emphasized a comprehensive employment-based social security system, coupled with pro-natalist policies that outlawed birth control and abortion. As Romania's economic vitality faded in the 1970s and 1980s, the level and quality of social services started to decline, leaving increasing numbers of unemployed and poverty-stricken citizens without adequate social services. Illegal and unsafe abortions led to some of the highest maternal mortality rates in the world, over 80 percent of which were attributed to unsafe abortions.[24] With a virtual absence of contraceptives, many families, wrought by poverty and despair, placed their children in institutions.

During 1990-1998, the maternal mortality rate was halved; however, in 1998 maternal mortality stood at the rate of 41.4 deaths per 100,00 live births, still one of the highest in Europe.[25] The use of modern contraceptives is on the rise, although they remain relatively expensive and are not readily available to the general populace. Increasing poverty and family disintegration has led to an increase in the number of abandoned children. In 1999, 2,910 children were abandoned, 1,700 more than in 1994.[26] In addition to child abandonment, neglect, violence, and abuse within the family have emerged as equally serious problems for Romanian society.

In post-Communist Romania, leaders have been struggling to maintain an adequate level of social services while adopting tight austerity measures. Although higher than 1989 figures, at 7 of GDP, pubic expenditure for health and education remains well below regional figures. The deterioration of the social sector has had serious ramifications on the health of both men and women.

Men's life expectancy at birth has fallen in the 1990s, whereas women's experienced a slight increase in the 1990-1995 period. Average life expectancy for women stands at 73.3 years compared with 65.5 years for men, well below the level of most European countries. A recent UNDP study reports that throughout the past decade Romania's mortality rate has continued to grow, with men's rates outweighing women's, reaching one of the highest levels of the last

[23] Ibid.
[24] Reproductive Health Survey Romania, 1999.
[25] Women and Men in Romania, UNDP.
[26] Poverty in Romania, UNDP.

50 years in Romania. In 1990, the mortality rate (per 1,000 inhabitants) was 10.6; by 1997, it had increased to 12.7 and declined to 11.8 in 1999.

Table 3: Cause-specific Death Rates in 1990 and 1998
(rate per 100,000 inhabitants)[27]

Causes	1990		1998		Increases 1998/1990 (percent)	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Total	1151	980	1321	1077	14.8	9.9
Disease of the Circulatory System	604	650	734	743	21.5	14.3
Neoplasm	166	119	207	143	24.7	20.2
Respiratory System Diseases	117	78	89	54	-24.0	-22.9
Accidents, Poisoning, Traumas	116	39	111	35	-4.3	-10.3
Digestive System Diseases	62	39	92	35	-4.3	-10.3
Genital and Urinary Diseases	19	11	14	9	-26.3	-18.2
Other Causes	67	44	74	41	10.4	-6.8

Additional gender-differentiated health indicators involve young males (aged 15-24), who in 1999 had a mortality rate 4 times higher than young females as a result of homicide, almost 4 times higher because of traffic accidents, and over 5 times the number of suicides. Young people, mainly men, are frequently involved in alcohol-related violence and fatal road accidents.[28] Sexually transmitted diseases are high among young people, including syphilis, which not only affects sexually active persons but also children of infected mothers. Syphilis and gonorrhea were prevalent among men, while women suffered from chancre (syphilis-related), genital herpes, and tricomoniasis. Anemia is a serious problem for women. In 1996-1997, there was a 40.1 percent incidence of anemia among pregnant women.

[27] Women and Men in Romania, UNDP.
[28] Ibid.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

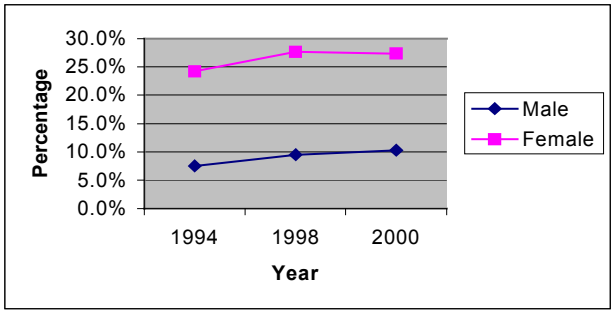
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: ACCELERATED PRIVATE SECTOR GROWTH

USAID/Romania's new Strategic Objective 1 will aim to increase private sector growth by focusing on improving the legal, regulatory, and policy framework for private enterprise in order to streamline and clarify the business environment; strengthening business associations and government bodies that impact and regulate the business environment; improving the effectiveness of private sector companies; increasing the productivity and competitiveness of the agricultural sector; and improving the process of privatization of state-owned enterprises. The Mission has developed four intermediate results, which it will pursue to achieve accelerated private sector growth:

- Improved policy/legal/regulatory framework supportive of market expansion;
- Strengthened institutional capacity of private sector associations, government sector counterparts, and NGOs to serve market economy goals;
- Improved competitiveness of private sector companies and markets; and
- Improved processes of transferring state-owned assets to private ownership.

Although women and men both participate actively in the economy of the country, the decline of the industrial sector and subsequent migration of the population have led to some distinct differences in how they currently participate that has important policy implications. Women provide more unpaid labor than men, and, according to the UNDP Human Development Report 2000, women make up 45 percent of the active workforce (Table 4)

Table 4: Unpaid Family Workers as a Percentage of Employed Population

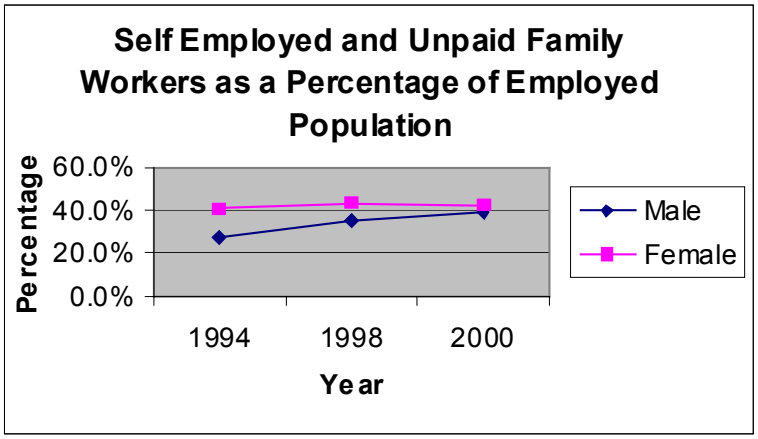


Looking more closely at the sectors in which women participate, one finds that there has been an increase in the number of women working in unpaid positions, such as on family farms and as self-employed workers. These are both vulnerable categories of workers who, under the new reform schemes, are not likely to receive social, health, and unemployment benefits (Table 5). When unpaid family work is counted as employment, women had a slightly lower unemployment rate than men (6.7 percent for women compared with 7.7 percent for men in 1999), but women had a higher rate of long-term unemployment, and higher levels of unemployment among the younger and older segments of the population. Women's and men's participation is also concentrated in different sectors of the economy—women are most often found in the lower-paying professions such as education, health, light

industry, and trade. On average, women earn lower salaries than those of men, with an average salary 83 percent of men's.[29]

In 1999, women made up 42 percent of employees in industry; 53 percent in trade; and 70 percent in financial, banking, and insurance services (these numbers include state-owned enterprises). Although women are still predominantly employed at the non-managerial level, 50 percent of registered companies included women as partners, share holders, or administrators. Thirty-two percent of the people involved in private sector businesses, as partners, shareholders, or administrators, are women, and they represent 21 percent of those holding similar positions in state-owned enterprises. However, women's equity investment in these businesses is significantly lower, making up only 12 percent of the total equity invested. Not surprisingly, the majority (69 percent) of women's entrepreneurial activity is in retail trade, and data indicate a tendency for women to invest either alone or in partnership with other women. Over 95 percent of these businesses are micro-enterprises, although in recent years there has been an increase in women's ownership of small and large enterprises.[30]

Table 5: Self-Employed and Unpaid Family Workers as a Percentage of Employed Population



IR 1.1: Improved Policy/Legal/Regulatory Framework Supportive of Market Expansion

Legal, Regulatory, and Bureaucratic Reform

USAID is funding activities to streamline bureaucratic processes and improve the legal and regulatory framework for private sector businesses. As a part of this effort, USAID funded an extensive study of the regulations and bureaucracy affecting the small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) business environment in Romania.[31] Because these processes and

[29] Human Development Report, UNDP.
[30] Romanian Businesswomen in the Third Millennium, Chamber of Commerce.
[31] Red Tape Analysis, IRIS.

constraints were assumed to be the same for men and women, no information was gathered about the sex of the owner of those businesses surveyed. Therefore, the study did not look at differences between male and female- owned or -managed businesses to determine if the assumption was correct or if male and female entrepreneurs experience differences in dealing with the bureaucracy when starting and managing a business. In a roundtable discussion with representatives from 15 women-owned or -managed business associations, women did not report differences in dealing with the regulatory and bureaucratic framework, believing it equally difficult for men and women. However, a recent study indicated women-owned businesses may be less likely to meet bureaucratic requirements. One requirement for businesses is to submit a balance sheet once a year to the Ministry of Finance with a copy to the Chamber of Commerce. According to a study done by the Chamber of Commerce on women's entrepreneurial activity in Romania, the total number of registered companies that submitted the required balance sheet to the Ministry of Finance increased to 87 percent. However, of those companies in which women are involved, far fewer met this requirement, with only 65 percent submitting the required balance sheets.[32]

It should be noted that the study was not analyzing gender differences in dealing with bureaucracy, nor is it clear if this disparity is statistically significant. The authors do not believe that this demonstrates that there are additional difficulties for women in dealing with the bureaucratic process, but only that it illustrates a need to investigate the gender dimensions of the red tape problem in Romania. USAID's activities to streamline processes and increase transparency in implementation should be beneficial for entrepreneurs of both sexes, but it is important to understand if there are differences in order to effectively streamline the processes for all businesses. Many of the planned reforms involve the Chambers of Commerce—leading business organizations in the country and the places where businesses complete the majority of the registration requirements. The national Chamber is run by a women, and the organization has a large representation of women on staff and in management. The organization has shown an interest in promoting women's entrepreneurship, and USAID has supported—for example, through funding the study on women's businesses mentioned above.

Pension Reform

USAID also is working on pension reform in Romania. Pension reform has potentially significant differential effects on men, women, and disadvantaged groups. Under the former system, women received significant benefits. Women were allowed to retire seven years earlier than men, and they were given credit for two years of maternity leave for every child (more if the child had disabilities or health problems). Given lower retirement ages and longer average life expectancy of women, their average returns from the former retirement system probably exceeded those of men. The former system, however, was not sustainable. New reforms call for an increase in the retirement ages for both men and women (maintaining a lower age for women) and a system of benefits based on the last salary earned and the number of years of total employment. Although women will retain their maternity

[32] Romanian Businesswomen in the Third Millennium, Chamber of Commerce.

benefits, their lower minimum retirement ages and higher incidence of long-term unemployment will probably result in fewer years of total employment. Combined with women's lower income rates (83 percent of men's, on average), the result will be lower benefits on average for women than for men. In addition, because women are moving out of formal employment and into family businesses or the shadow economy (sectors that do not generally contribute to pension schemes) at a rate that appears to be higher than men's, they are far more likely to find themselves without a pension at all. Although most women in Romania marry and would be able to rely on their husbands' pensions, survivor benefits are limited, providing only 50 percent of their spouses' retirement incomes. Given the greater likelihood of women outliving their husbands (because of longer life expectancy), the impact of these changes on women could be substantial.[33] To date, USAID's support for pension reform through the Financial Services Volunteer Corps has not included a gender analysis to investigate the ramifications of the pension reforms on men and women. Continued support for pension reform in Romania should take a look at the potential long-term impact of the reforms for men and women, especially given the current changes in employment structure in the country.

Bank Supervision

USAID is also supporting a bank supervision program. In previous years, the emphasis was on training the national bank auditing staff. Because of the high numbers of women in the banking sector, USAID-funded training programs have included high percentages of women (85 percent). The objective of the activity in future will be to train banks on preparations for auditing. The activity itself does not appear to have any significant gender issues because bank supervision will improve the integrity and security of the banking sector for all citizens. Again, because of the high participation level of women in this profession, it is expected that there will be large numbers of women in the training programs.

Recommendations

- Request current implementing partners to examine potential differences in business women's and men's experience with bureaucratic procedures and red tape. If possible, IRIS could identify the sex of the ownership of a limited sample from the previous study and reanalyze the sample for gender differences. Alternatively, a limited supplemental survey could be conducted or focus groups held. Any additional study should try to determine if women encounter additional difficulties in dealing with red tape. Does it take longer for women-owned businesses to complete the necessary documentation or to receive government approvals or licenses? Do women business owners handle the bureaucratic processes themselves, or do they tend to ask male employees or relatives to handle it for them? Are there issues of corruption and bribery that male and female business owners deal with in different ways? Do male- and female-owned businesses pay the same or different amounts of official or unofficial fees?

[33] Information on the planned pension reforms from an interview with Dan Anghel, USAID/Romania.

- Analyze the pension reforms to sex-disaggregate impact, looking especially at replacement rates and contribution levels for men and women under the new system. Consider changes to the proposed legislation to ensure that women and disadvantaged groups have adequate protection for their retirement. The research of the World Bank in this area could be a useful reference ("Gender in Pension Reform in the Former Soviet Union," Castel, P and Fox, L, September 1999).

IR 1.2: Strengthened Institutional Capacity of Private Sector Associations, GOR Sector Counterparts, and NGOs to Serve Market Economy Goals

Business Association Development

USAID is funding many activities that work with private sector associations. In particular, USAID supports the development of business associations, including agribusiness associations, and provides other support, such as provision of credit to their members. Some of the activities include sector-wide advocacy and marketing campaigns that will be of benefit to the entire sector. Others are member-specific activities that benefit only those businesses that are members of the associations.

The activities that impact on the entire sector should affect all businesses involved in the sector regardless of gender. However, it was not clear to the assessment team how the associations sought input from their members in the decision-making processes and implementation of activities. There could be implications if male and female members have different priorities and one group is being left out of the decision-making process.

Similarly, those activities that benefit only member businesses could have gender implications, depending on the demographics of the membership of the association. Anecdotally, all implementers felt there was equal representation among men and women in the associations. However, the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE) recently conducted a baseline assessment of the associations with which CIPE works and found that women made up 39 percent of the management, held 37 percent of the seats on the board of directors, and worked in 75 percent of the administrative positions. If the numbers are broken down by sector, including tourism, information technology, and manufacturing but not including general women's business associations, there is a significant decrease, with women making up between 25 percent and 28 percent of managers and between 19 percent and 27 percent of board members.

Although women are not equally represented in the management in these associations, they are significantly involved in business associations across a range of sectors. Continuing to develop the effectiveness and influence of business associations in Romania may be an effective way of promoting women's involvement in the sector and perhaps increasing women's political influence through the associations' advocacy work. Increasing the associations' awareness of gender issues and training their management on why and how to identify issues and reach out to their female membership might help accelerate the process.

Most of the other implementing partners do not track information related to the gender make-up of the associations with which they work. Therefore, it is not clear if there is a representative sample of men- and women-owned businesses among the associations' members from different sectors or how many of the associations include both men and women in decision-making positions. It might be useful, especially in the case of activities that provide services only to members of partner associations (most notably many of the credit providers), to analyze the gender make-up and decision-making processes of those associations.

Water Users Associations

USAID is funding a new activity to promote the development of water users associations. Associations will be supported in taking over private ownership of irrigation assets and in developing cooperative marketing and distribution networks for agricultural production. Although all land-owners and land-lease holders will be eligible for membership in the associations, special attention will need to be paid to ensure that the membership structure is open to both male and female land owners. In addition, it will be important to look at the decision-making processes to ensure that women's voices are heard.

Recommendations

- Business Associations:
  - Activities working with or through business associations (most notably USAID's credit program implementers) should gather gender-disaggregated information from the associations on their membership to better understand both the potential impact of their activities on members and how the association members will best help achieve USAID's objectives.
  - Provide training on gender integration for business associations with which USAID and its implementing partners work. The training should focus on the importance of analyzing gender issues related to their activities to better understand and therefore address the needs of both male and female members and the effectiveness of investments.
  - Develop creative ways of pairing women's business associations and those managed by women with some of the more-developed business associations in Romania. This mentoring would facilitate their learning how to provide better services to their members and how to better advocate government for change. This might also provide a way of helping women business owners develop more extensive and influential networks by bringing them in closer contact with some of the more-developed businesses and associations in the country.

- Water Users Associations:
  - The implementing partners should be encouraged to track information on the percent of men and women who (1) are members of the association, (2) are in decision-making positions, and (3) participate in meetings.
  - Consider the timing and venue of meetings to accommodate the schedules of both male and female members.
  - Make special efforts, through focus groups, surveys, and interviews, to learn the irrigation and water use concerns and needs of women in the community.
  - Training could be provided to the associations on gender integration, focusing on the importance of analyzing gender issues, understanding the needs of their female (and minority) members, and explaining why addressing their needs leads to better programs for everyone.

IR 1.3: Improved Competitiveness of Private Sector Companies and Markets

To improve business competitiveness, USAID is providing macro-level support to the financial markets in Romania; investment capital for private sector projects; and firm-level assistance in the form of the provision of credit, technical assistance for agribusinesses, and support for business associations (see IR 1.2, above).

Capital Markets Development

The financial markets activity will work toward reducing corruption, improving corporate governance and transparency, training the legal actors who will enforce the regulations, and supplying technical assistance for the introduction of new financial instruments. Special attention will be given to protecting investors, both large and small, individual and institutional. In general, the gender-differentiated impact of financial reform is an area where further study is needed. More detailed gender-disaggregated data on patterns of borrowing, savings and investment and monitoring their trends over time are needed to determine how reforms in financial sector affects men and women differently.[34]

Credit for SMEs

Recent studies indicate that women-owned and -managed businesses tend to borrow less than their male counterparts. In 1999, 44 percent of businesses overall, 47 percent of

[34] For more on this issue, see Baden, S.: Gender issues in financial liberalisation and financial sector reform. 1996.

microenterprises, 25 percent of small firms, 5.6 percent of medium-sized firms, and 23 percent of large enterprises are owned (partially or in full) or managed by women (see Table 6). Overall, these companies borrowed less than average. In 1999, although involved in 44 percent of the businesses, they took out 34 percent of the total number of the total loans and only 2.7 percent of the total loan value. By size of company, woman-owned and -managed firms took out 14 percent of the loans to microenterprises, 8.1 percent of the loans to small firms, 2.3 percent of the loans to medium-sized firms, and 0.9 percent of the loans to large enterprises, significantly lower in all cases than their representation in the total number of companies.[35] Although this may indicate only a reluctance of women to borrow money, it may also represent a barrier to women's access to credit.

Table 6: Loan-seeking Behavior of Women-Owned and Managed Businesses as a Percentage of the Total by Category (1999)

Loan Seeking Behavior of Women-Owned and Managed Businesses as a Percentage of the Total by Category (1999)				
Size of Business	Percent Owned or Managed by Woman/Women	Percent of Profits	Percent of Loans	Percentage of Loan Value
Total	44.3%	9.6%	34.2%	2.7%
Micro	47.0%	33.9%	45.9%	14.4%
Small	24.5%	18.4%	25.7%	8.1%
Medium	5.6%	6.1%	4.7%	2.3%
Large	22.5%	3.1%	9.7%	0.9%

Romanian Businesswomen in the Third Millenium, 2001.

Further analysis is needed to determine the causes. Interestingly, nearly all of the business associations and credit institutions interviewed mentioned women's lack of confidence, in themselves and in their business skills, as a major constraint to women's involvement in the sector and to women's expanding their businesses and seeking credit. USAID is currently conducting an assessment of 300 micro, small, and medium-sized companies that have received USAID-funded loans. One third of these 300 companies are owned by women, and USAID is planning to ensure that the data are disaggregated and analyzed by gender.

USAID's implementing partners all track data on the number of loans made to female-and male-owned businesses, and they sex-disaggregate data on the number of jobs created. Currently, 31 percent of USAID-funded micro and small loans go to woman-owned businesses (30 percent micro, 40 percent small), creating 3,415 jobs since their inception, 21 percent held by women. In 2002, the loan portfolio will change. The main micro-credit programs will continue to provide loans to men and women for loan amounts up to US$20,000. An additional microcredit program has recently begun that is lending

[35] Romanian Businesswomen in the Third Millennium, Chamber of Commerce.

predominately to women (95 percent), but for very small loan amounts (US$700-$1,300). The small loan program is ending and a new activity beginning, but the details of the products to be offered through the new activity have not been clarified.

None of the implementing partner organizations collects gender-disaggregated data on loan application rates, approval or denial rates, or repayment rates. This information would help implementers understand the point at which intervention may be helpful to increase lending to women. For example, if women's application rates are significantly lower than men's, outreach to women borrowers may be needed. If application rates are high but approval rates are low, perhaps women borrowers may benefit from training or technical assistance in completing the applications or in analyzing their business needs.

Most of the organizations offer loans to members of the local associations through which they work. Although this is a creative strategy to promote the associations, the organizations do not maintain information on the gender make-up of these associations. Therefore, the assessment team was unable to determine if this strategy had an unintentional gender bias. In a roundtable discussion, representatives of women-managed and -owned business associations as well as the implementing organizations reported women face no special barriers to accessing credit. There is, however, not enough information currently available to confirm or deny this claim. Additional information about the associations and more sex-disaggregated data about the loan programs could help clarify constraints and identify news ways of reaching women borrowers.

In Romania, land privatization has been mainly through restitution of nationalized land to its prior owners or their heirs. According to internal USAID/Romania documents, approximately 80 percent of agricultural lands have been privatized. Legally, both male and female heirs have an equal claim to property.[36] What actually happens in practice and if there are significant differences in male and female ownership of property are not clear. How property is divided in the case of divorce also is not clear. What impact this has on women's ability to borrow has not been analyzed. However, in the credit programs USAID funds, access to collateral did not appear to be an issue because most of the activities had group guarantee mechanisms available for those without collateral. A discussion of USAID's land privatization activities appears below under the IR 1.4, Land Privatization.

Agricultural Development

Through its new Agricultural and Agribusiness Development Activity, USAID is planning to assist farmers to access credit by encouraging the development of crop insurance schemes as well as a warehouse receipts system in order to use agricultural commodities as collateral. Program design and monitoring of these programs should include gender concepts to ensure that the program includes both male and female farmers in program participation and in decision making. The Recommendation section that follows provides suggestions on how to design the new activity to ensure women's participation at all levels.

[36] Interview with Carmen Podani, USAID/Romania.

Recommendations

- Credit: More information should be gathered about the loan-seeking behavior of men and women to see if the low percentage of loans to women-owned enterprises reflects barriers to women's access.

  — Regarding the USAID-funded credit program, sex-disaggregated information about the associations' member businesses and the gender balance in leadership positions, application rates, denial rates, and default rates would be helpful tools. Organizations could also examine outreach mechanisms to determine if, and to what extent, women and disadvantaged groups are learning about the program to ensure as wide an audience as possible for their programs.

  — The SME assessment should include questions specifically addressing issues such as risk aversion and concerns regarding credit. Data should be collected from those who sought and received credit as well as others to ensure adequate representation of the larger business community.

- Business Development:

  — Consider the development of women's leadership and business skills development training programs to improve the business management ability of women and develop their confidence to pursue business opportunities. Include a segment on credit, providing basic information on how to analyze a business's credit needs, what credit should and should not be used for, how to plan for repayment of the loan, and how to apply for a loan.

  — Support for business internships for young women may also help develop the confidence of women in their abilities and build their business and leadership skills.

  — Support activities that promote images of successful women entrepreneurs and business executives. This may help build confidence in women to undertake new business initiatives or expand their smaller businesses. This would also promote more positive images of women in the media and public acceptance of women entrepreneurs (see Media Programs, page 38). Activities could include television interviews, newspaper articles or a news series, poster campaigns, and local contests for successful women entrepreneurs (as is being held by one local Romanian business women's NGO), and other creative ways of promoting women's success in business to the public.

- Agribusiness:

  — In advertising the crop insurance and warehouse receipts system, the implementing organization should be sure that mechanisms used include venues and times convenient to men and women, taking into consideration such factors as preferences men and women have in print media, television programming choices, and viewing

times; the frequency that men and women go to locations where advertisements are located (for example, women may be more likely than men to see a flyer posted at the school or health clinic); and household duties that may take preferences over scheduled meetings if they conflict.

- The new activity should conduct an analysis of men's and women's farming practices, noting particularly differences in access to farming inputs, differences in crop preferences, access to and use of distribution systems, and other issues that may affect access to and interest in a warehouse receipts system.

- The new activity should conduct an analysis of the interest of men and women in accessing credit for the agribusiness, their interest in a crop insurance program, and any differences they may have in their tolerance of risk in order to better understand how to promote the program for both male and female farmers.

IR 1.4: Improved Processes of Transferring State-owned Assets to Private Ownership

Energy and Industry Privatization

Since the fall of Communism, numerous state-owned enterprises have been privatized. These privatizations and factory closures have resulted in massive lay-offs, migration of the population, increasing unemployment, and increasing poverty. Although the government does track employment and unemployment by gender and sector, there do not appear to be statistics available regarding the gender break-down of the unemployment generated by the privatizations of state-owned enterprises. This information would have demonstrated if the privatizations affected one segment of the population more than the other and if assistance and redeployment programs may have been targeted accordingly.

Currently, USAID/Romania is involved in three activities that support privatization of state-owned assets. The energy privatization program is working at a macro level to restructure the electricity and gas sectors and to improve efficiency. Although the activities in the energy sector were designed to benefit the entire population, it is important to monitor how the privatization of the energy sector affects different segments of the communities in general and the gender-differentiated access to this service in particular. Further study is needed to identify gender issues in this sector.

USAID is also funding an activity to assist 10 other state-owned companies in the privatization process. The companies have been pre-selected by the GOR and include a variety of sectors. USAID will fund expert reviews of each firm: Strength, Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analyses; a technology assessment to determine equipment and technology needs; and an assessment of the business management and organizational structure. Prior to selecting the firms, some attention must be paid to the

gender impacts of the activity by examining staffing patterns of the targeted firms to understand the impact of potential downsizing activities.

Land Privatization

In the agribusiness sector, USAID will advise the GOR on the privatization of the remaining 20 percent of agricultural land still under state control. The emphasis will be on allowing private interests to purchase the remaining agricultural land in order to encourage the formation of larger land parcels to reduce land fragmentation and increase the efficiency and competitiveness of the agricultural sector. Although the private claims to land do not appear to have gender discrepancies (see IR 1.3, above), further study is needed to determine how well women have been able to take advantage of the new land privatization process and use their land claims for economic benefits. The new activity needs to pay special attention to ensure that public awareness campaigns reach both men and women and address their potentially different concerns. The activity should also examine the property rights of family members and family decision-making patterns to ensure that mechanisms are included to promote the sale of land that will ensure the protection of the property rights of all family members. Given the fact that over 40 percent of women's employment is in this sector, it will be important to examine the impact of privatization of land on women's employment in the sector.

Recommendations

- The new activity should include necessary provisions to ensure the protection of all family members in the sale of land assets. Public awareness campaigns for the activity should be designed, taking into consideration differences between men and women's print and broadcast media preferences.

General Recommendations for SO 1

— More effort should be made in all of the Mission's programs to sex-disaggregate all individual- and firm-level data.
— In future, all studies involving people and business-level interviews or surveys should gather information on the gender of the ownership of the business and should analyze the results accordingly to determine if there are gender differences in experience.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2.3: IMPROVED DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

USAID/Romania's new Strategic Objective 2.*3 is promoting the goal of effective, accountable, and responsive democratic governance through the achievement of two intermediate results*:

- IR 2.3.1: Adequately funded service-oriented local government units; and
- IR 2.3.2: Better correlation between citizen interests and local governmental actions

In order to achieve improved democratic governance at the local level, democracy programs will focus on:

- Improving local government's openness to inputs from citizens on setting public policy priorities;

- Expanding the internal operations and financial resources of local government units in order to implement policy;

- Improving performance in local government accountability vis-à-vis the citizens; and

- Increasing the capacity of civil society organizations and political parties to mediate citizens' interests.[37]

IR 2.3.1: Adequately Funded Service-oriented Local Government Units

Local Government Assistance

Overall, women are under-represented in both elected and appointed positions in local government units in Romania. From 1996 to 2000, 3 percent of mayors, 6 percent of local councilors, and 6 percent of county councilors were women. In appointed positions, there were no female prefects and there was only 1 sub-prefect. Women typically do not head local government departments but predominate in middle-management positions, especially in traditionally female sectors—health and social services, finance, and public relations. Despite some oscillations during the last two years, women held only one-fourth of the total number of leadership positions—both in public administration and in the social, economic, and political domains.[38] Specifically, in 2000 they made up 12 percent (5 of 42) of the prefect's office directors, 17 percent (7 of 41) of county council secretaries, and 15 percent (15 of 100) of municipal council secretaries.

Although other constraints do exist, many attribute women's low levels in leadership positions to the inordinate amount of time women spend on household activities. According to a survey conducted by the Soros Foundation, the majority of individuals surveyed stated that women are too engaged in domestic work and do not have time for leadership and executive positions.

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[37] USAID/Romania, Draft Democracy and Governance Strategy Paper, 2001.
[38] Women and Men in Romania, UNDP.

Although data are not recorded on men's and women's participation in professional associations (not on membership, staff, or volunteers), women's participation at the local level in both professional associations and CSOs is thought to be high. Anecdotal reports affirm that these environments provide a nurturing milieu for up and coming women. It was mentioned that the recently formed Federation of Local Government Authorities might provide an environment conducive to instigate such a group in the future.

To date, the Local Government Assistance Program has made a comprehensive effort to bring about the devolution of power, responsibility, and fiscal authority to Romanian local governments. To achieve effective, responsive, and accountable local governments, the program focused on five activity areas: Municipal Finance and Credit, Budgeting and Public Management, Economic Development, Citizen Participation and Citizen Information, and Association Building. The majority of ongoing local government activities focus on training and technical assistance for elected and appointed officials and employees in the aforementioned areas. Sex-disaggregated data on training participants are not recorded; therefore, it is difficult to assess whether women and men have equal access to and participation in training programs. The implementing partner consciously pushes for a gender balance in training programs.

In the new strategy, Democracy and Governance activities will focus on effective, accountable, and responsive local governance. Anecdotally, it is believed that the most active members in communities are women. Women are active in communes, in their neighborhoods and residence block groups, and in school activities. Women are also active in local government associations. Often, decisions that are made at the local level are those that women care most about—decisions that affect their daily lives and the lives of their children. Decentralization of government functions to the local level often helps to redress gender inequalities because decentralization increases grassroots citizen participation providing a greater chance that women's voices will be heard.

Table 7 provides examples of questions that, if answered and analyzed, might help ensure that gender considerations are adequately addressed in future local governance programs.

In a program based primarily on training and technical assistance, these issues can be integrated into training to ensure that locally elected and appointed officials and civil servants, men and women alike, are aware that gender differences may exist within their programs. As local governments become more responsible for the provision of public services, there is an increasing need for good governance. Good governance addresses the allocation and management of resources that respond to collective problems. Men and women may access and use public services differently, prioritize different issues, become informed from different sources and by different means, and be differentially affected by local government fiscal decisions. For example, recent trends indicate that, as a result of the current health reforms, there may be an increasing number of uninsured women, especially in rural areas. These women may prioritize health coverage higher than men in the community, and they may require an approach to service provision that differs from that for men. If local policy makers fail to acknowledge that differences exist, they may fail to efficiently serve their constituencies.

Table 7: Gender Issues that May Affect Local Government Initiatives

Activity Area	Potential Gender Issues
Budgeting and Public Management	▪ Who attends budget hearings and who participates? Does one gender participate more than the other? Do women and men prioritize different issues relevant to public spending? ▪ If budget hearings are held, are they held at times convenient for both men and women? ▪ By what means are public hearings advertised? Do women and men have equal access to that information? ▪ Will budget decisions have differential effects on men and women?
Economic Development	▪ Who decides how local resources are allocated? ▪ Will women benefit from the creation of new jobs? How will this effect household dynamics? ▪ What is the gender make-up of local business and association partner organizations? Are both women and men represented? To what extent?
Citizens Participation and Citizens Information	▪ Are women and men equally informed about life in the municipalities? ▪ How is information disseminated? Do women and men attain information by different means, from different sources? ▪ Do male and female citizens participate on an equal level in local government activities? In citizens' groups? In NGO activity? ▪ Is one gender more active in lobbying efforts? ▪ In the administration, is one gender more open to active citizen participation? Why?
Association Building	▪ What is the management structure of associations? Is management gender segregated? ▪ Are the most powerful associations dominated by one gender or another? What kinds of support are needed to encourage women to form associations around their interest areas? ▪ Do certain associations have greater access to government officials? If so, does gender play a role?

Recommendations

- In all studies, assessments, evaluations, and survey tools disaggregate all individual-level data by sex. Special attention should be paid to data providing information on the dynamics of gender relations: what is changing, where, and at what rate? Statistics form the basis for analyzing the current gender relations, for developing forecasts, and for assessing policies in the making. Furthermore, data can also be used to raise awareness.

- Be proactive and let partner organizations, government officials, and donors know these issues are important to USAID and the Democracy and Governance Team. Many of the partners stated that USAID's vocal support of the issue would help push the envelope.

- Use the local government program as an opportunity to develop citizen participation and dialog with government on national issues by mounting local-level public information campaigns about draft civil code items (Equal Opportunity Act, Freedom of Information Act, pension reform, and health care reform).

- Integrate gender-awareness training into other training programs for local government units.

- Encourage implementing partners, when designing strategies, to examine how varying policies and strategies can differentially affect and reach both genders.

- If local interest exists, provide support for the creation of a women's caucus among key members of local government, associations, and labor unions.

IR 2.3.2: Better Correlation between Citizen Interests and Local Governmental Actions

Political Parties

Women are under-represented as elected officials at both the national and the local levels. In the most recent elections, women made progress at the national level, capturing a little over 10 percent of the parliament seats, up from 3.5 percent in 1992.[39] This percentage places Romania 60th out of 178 countries with regard to female participation in the national legislature.[40] Women's rate of active participation in political parties and in election campaigns and activities is unknown because there are no sex-disaggregated data.

A major constraint facing female party members is the party (electoral) list system, in which the party leadership decides who is on the party list submitted to the electorate. Predominantly male, party hierarchies are closed, adhere to undemocratic principles, and lack accountability. They do not offer promise of upward mobility for women. A few women have made it to the top of party lists, but this is the exception rather than the norm. As a male parliamentarian commented, "The political scene is already taken by permanent candidates; to be able to convince, a women has to be twice as good as the male candidates."[41]

A survey of parliamentarians, conducted by USAID's implementing partner, National Democratic Institute (NDI), assessed parliamentarians' attitudes toward women and women's issues. The responses indicated that parliamentarians and political parties acknowledged they must appeal to women voters in order to win. However, they were unsure how to develop a strategy to win over undecided women voters, aside from focusing on family issues. The majority of respondents agreed there were too few women represented in parliament and believed the reason why few women candidates are nominated is because women are not interested in running for elections. This may be true, in part, but until political parties make their internal processes more transparent, it will be impossible to know whether women are not running because they do not want to or because they cannot make it past the front door. USAID and its partners could encourage political parties to be more transparent, as well as provide training for them on how to reach out to women voters and why and how to promote women within the party leadership.

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[39] Romanian Businesswomen in the Third Millennium, Chamber of Commerce.
[40] Inter-Parliamentary Union, (Website: http://www.ipu.org).
[41] Survey of Parliamentarians on Women's Issues, National Democratic Institute (NDI).

Recognizing the need to develop women's roles in the political party structure, NDI developed a women's political participation program in various communities throughout Romania to conduct professional training for candidates and campaign staff.[42] Female candidates and staff were allowed to choose the participants, and, as it turned out, they selected more men than women. The women, usually in subordinate roles in the parties, used this opportunity to gain clout and to leverage their position within the party by inviting powerful men to the training. Although this provided a mechanism for women to strengthen their position in the party, it did not address NDI's objective of providing training opportunities for women in the parties. NDI believes a women-only environment is less competitive and fosters much-needed networking among politically active women. Many other politically active women identified a similar need for networking. Therefore, NDI has altered the program to focus on women only.

Many individuals involved in democracy programs identified the need to reach out to young women. Young women are interested in political activities but are unaware how to get involved. When women reach their mid-late 20s, get married, and start a family, priorities may change. They may have less time for civic activities, and as a result, they may lose interest if they have not already been drawn into the political process. Some of USAID's programs are already addressing this issue. Because of the rigid hierarchical structure endemic to Romanian political parties, NDI used a comprehensive selection process to attain a diversified group of the best and brightest. Among key selection criteria were equal representation from the main political parties with a focus on participants outside of Bucharest, the capital city, and equal gender representation. This helped ensure that young male and female politicians, with innovative ideas and commitment to reform, were selected to go on a study mission.

A USAID-funded Romanian NGO, Pro-Democracy Association (PDA), also implemented projects to increase civic participation and awareness in Romania, many targeting youth. An internship project placed 40 university students as interns in public institutions at both the national and local levels. No official sex-disaggregated data were taken; however, anecdotally they reported more women were involved than men and that in general university women are more politically active than their male counterparts.

Civil Society Organizations

Women are actively involved in the activities of CSOs at all levels, local and national, and in varying sectors. However, according to a USAID-funded study, Romanian Businesswomen in the Third Millennium, management trends mirror those found in the business sector, with women holding only 25 percent of management positions (12 percent of these hold the top position while 33 percent hold secondary positions).[43] Preliminary data gathered from a recent study on associations conducted by CIPE confirms that in selected sectors, women make up 39 percent of management, 37 percent of seats on the Board of Directors, and 75

[42] The program was funded through National Endowment for Democracy (NED).
[43] Romanian Businesswomen in the Third Millennium, Chamber of Commerce.

percent of the administrative positions. From this data, it appears that women are prominent at the execution rather than the decision-making level. This could prove significant to women's roles in policy making as the NGO sector transforms from primarily charitable and donation-based organizations to organizations that take on advocacy roles on important issues, such as social policy development and human rights protection. Women's high level of involvement in the sector indicates that CSOs can provide an important outlet for women's advocacy efforts but work still needs to be done to strengthen women's role in management and leadership.

At present, the USAID Democracy Office's civil society strengthening programs have revolved around cooperative partnerships between Romanian and Serbian CSOs as well as Romanian and U.S. CSOs. The Romanians for Serbian Democracy program is designed to support Romanian activities that engage Serbian counterparts in developing democratic processes and institutions. Under the program, the Center for Euroregional Democracy (CED) organized the first Euroregional seminar for women in politics, aimed to educate political activists in Romania and Serbia about networking, lobbying and advocacy strategies, and attracting media interest to women in politics. Stemming from an earlier NGO fair sponsored by CED in 1999, an additional project incubated by CED will partner the Women's Association of Romania with the Businesswomen's Club in Serbia to create an infrastructure for regional partnerships that advocate for women. Initial activities sparked a collaboration among women's organizations; however, it is unknown if these relationships are sustainable. CED has a strong relationship with the Timişoara Branch of the Association for the Promotion of Women in Romania and has worked together on advocacy campaigns to increase women's participation in local government.

The Romanian-American Sustainable Partnership Umbrella Grants Program provides grants to partnerships between U.S. and Romanian non-profit groups and institutions to implement projects that fall within USAID's three strategic areas. The program's objective is to increase sustainable partnerships among U.S. and Romanian organizations that in turn will improve local partners' organizational and financial capacities.

The program strengthens local organizations, empowers their members, and increases organizational capacity and sustainability. Requesting partner organizations to provide demographic information on their organizations would allow USAID to better understand the program's relative impact on the NGO sector and also add to the pool of information on Romanian CSOs. This program, however, has not given attention to gender in the grantee selection process. The organizations' activities do not promote gender equality, nor do the organizations give consideration to women's NGOs for participation in this program.

For example, a partnership supported an environmental clean-up project in a Romanian mining community. The project employed a participatory approach with a voluntary community development team organizing the activities. Although both men and women participated in the project, there was no information available about the team's decision-making processes. Had the project reported on both the demographic make-up of the project participants and the decision-making processes, one could then deduce women's and men's relative contribution to community development, in addition to the relative impacts of

community development projects on men and women. This information could be useful when developing and designing new programs involving community development and CSO activities at the local level.

Labor Unions

Labor unions also have provided a forum for discussions and activities regarding gender issues. In Romania, women account for almost half of the total employed, and out of that number, 57.6 percent are salaried employees. There are no available figures to gauge the number of unionized female laborers. Unions are organized by industry, and because many of the largest unions are in female-dominated industries, such as education, nursing, and textiles, women's active participation in labor unions is critical. The main objective of labor unions is to provide a mechanism through which members can address labor concerns, such as collective work agreements, health and safety problems at work, and salary adjustments. In Romania, although the general provisions protect a citizen's right to work and to receive social protection without gender bias, there are areas, especially in the application of laws, workplace discrimination, and sexual harassment, where changes should be made. Women's involvement in the labor unions has already begun to address these issues.

Romania ratified the U.N. Convention concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation, which according to the Constitution has become a part of domestic legislation. This and other domestic legislation satisfactorily provide women with de jure rights; however, implementation and enforcement of these laws are inadequate, and, as a result, women's rights are not ensured. According to a study conducted in Transylvania within the Soros Foundation Gender Discrimination Monitoring Project, women reported being refused jobs because they were either too young or too old and therefore not trainable, and they were told that childbearing and child raising would negatively affect their economic efficiency. The survey also analyzed job offers posted in two main local newspapers. Many of the job advertisements specifically requested either males or female candidates—men as administrators, women as secretaries.[44] Theoretically, an institution could be brought to court for violating legal prescriptions regarding labor law; however, cases are still difficult to prove in court.

Sexual harassment is not covered by the criminal law, and men and women are not protected in their social and professional life. According to a public opinion survey, most of the people who had been asked for sexual favors in exchange for material and professional advances were women. [45] This situation can produce discriminatory effects with regard to women employees, who not only are not protected against acts of sexual harassment but also can be fired as a result of rejecting their supervisors' advances.[46]

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[44] Women 2000: An Investigation into the Status of Women's Rights in the former Soviet Union and Central and South-Eastern Europe, International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights.
[45] Gender Barometer, Open Society Foundation Romania.
[46] Report on Women 1997, UNDP.

The three Labor Resource Centers opened by ACILS and funded by USAID have developed women's programs to meet the needs identified by female labor union members. The Labor Resource Centers—in Lasi, Cluj, and Bucharest—have organized pressure groups, consisting of female labor union members and NGO representatives who felt there was need to take action on women's labor issues. The groups began work at a local level and soon targeted issues at the national level. A major concern among female union members was the absence of a gender clause addressing specific protections for women, like gender-based discrimination, equal opportunities, and sexual harassment in the collective labor agreement. In the past, trade unions have ignored this aspect in negotiating the collective labor contract.[47] The pressure groups drafted amendments to the labor agreements regarding these issues. Stemming from the lobbying efforts of the pressure groups, proposed amendments, excluding the amendment on sexual harassment, which was turned down, will be presented at the next round of collective labor agreement negotiations. The nurses' union has already negotiated its collective agreement and the amendments, put forward were passed.

The Solidarity Centers plan to continue lobbying efforts to promote the law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (see Democratic Transition, page 10), which will be reintroduced to parliament this Fall. If the law is passed, they plan to conduct public awareness campaigns in labor unions to inform workers of the law and its specific provisions. Furthermore, parliament has recently approved an amendment to the penal code, which includes an article that will punish sexual harassment in the workplace. Continued support for labor unions, and for women's programs within them, can provide an important outlet not only for supporting women's rights but also for developing women's advocacy skills and coalition building.

Ethnic Relations Program

Over the past few years, there has been considerable improvement in inter-ethnic relations in Romania. This positive trend, however, has had little effect on one of Romania's largest and most problematic minority, the Roma community. The Mission has recognized this and is developing a new activity to address this issue.[48] The goal of this activity will be to ensure that ethnic minorities, specifically Roma, enjoy equal social and economic opportunities and better conditions for the preservation of their national identity.[49]

The Roma population in Romania accounts for 1 million to 1.8 million people, making it the largest Roma population in Europe.[50] Although negative stereotypes and discrimination of Roma communities have been well documented, whether the problems of Roma women and men differ has not. Figures from 1993, the most recent report found, show that nearly 71 percent of Roma women were unemployed, whereas only 22 percent of Roma male

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[47] Ibid.
[48] In the new Strategy, the Democracy Team envisages funding an Ethnic Relations Program, which will most likely fall under IR 2.3.2.
[49] USAID/Romania, Draft Activity Approval Paper, 2001.
[50] Ibid.

household heads report unemployment and only 4 percent receive unemployment benefits.[51] The poverty rate is significantly higher for Roma communities than other population groups. Because most Roma live in rural areas, isolated from towns or villages, they have limited access to public services—water supply, electricity, gas supply, and roads.[52] Given the fact that gender roles in Roma communities are traditionally defined and women are primarily responsible for the household maintenance, difficult access to services can especially impact women's daily lives.

In many Roma communities, traditions prohibit women from attending school and encourage early marriage (13-14 years old) and early childbirth (14-15 years old). Large families are desirable, and many groups discourage the use of any type of contraceptive. Women are less likely to have gone on to secondary school and university than men.[53] The percentage of Roma children who did not complete basic school education rose from 36 to 44 percent in 1998.[54] The 1993 figures report that nearly 60 percent of all women and almost 45 percent of all men cannot read. Lack of education compounded with little information regarding modern contraceptives and limited access to health care may have profound impacts on the health of Roma women.

According to a World Bank study, informal sector activity is an important source of income for both Roma men and women. The types of activities vary widely, from lucrative trade and work in neighboring countries to more marginal subsistence occupations ranging from seasonal employment in agriculture to gathering and trading herbs and mushrooms and recycling used materials. Some Roma may prefer more flexible and entrepreneurial informal sector activities and self-employment to wage labor.[55] The same study identified that discrimination in hiring practices often discourages Roma's active participation in the formal labor force. Without formal labor contracts, employers do not make payroll contributions for social insurance, health care, or pensions. Not surprisingly, Roma households are significantly more likely to receive social assistance and unemployment benefits than insurance-based health care or pensions.[56]

Recommendations

- Political Parties:
  - Encourage political parties to be more transparent in their internal processes.

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[51] The Economic, Democratic and Social Status of Men and Women, Aguirre International.
[52] Women 2000: An Investigation into the Status of Women's Rights in the Former Soviet Union and Central and South-Eastern Europe, International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights.
[53] Roma and the Transition in Central and Eastern Europe: Trends and Challenges, World Bank.
[54] Women 2000: An Investigation into the Status of Women's Rights in the former Soviet Union and Central and South-Eastern Europe, International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid.

- Encourage political parties to reach out to women voters and to promote women to positions of leadership within the party.

- Support activities for women and youth to strengthen political parties. A "road show" program, which could target women and youth in the urban and rural areas from around the country, is a good way to increase the capacity of disenfranchised party members and simultaneously train and promote future women leaders.

- Support a women's caucus (women league of voters) with a women's agenda that can prioritize issues important to women. The Humanist Party and the Social Democratic Party have started a women's caucus, but it is still in the nascent stages. Be sure to engage active women leaders at the local level—that is, CSO leaders, government officials, labor union leaders, and the like.

- To target youths, investigate the development of a civic education program. Ensure that civic education curricula are inclusive of gender and ethnicity issues.

- Civil Society Organizations:

  - Integrate gender awareness issues, where relevant, into training curricula and processes for sub-grantees in CSO-strengthening activities.

  - Encourage implementing partners to collect information on the demographics of sub-grantee organizations (management, staff, volunteers, beneficiaries, and members) to better understand the relative contribution of men and women to civil society and the relative impact of USAID programs on men and women.

  - Continue to support linkages between media and CSOs, which could lead to greater gender awareness of social issues, both in the media and in society as a whole. A project that partnered media and CSOs on domestic violence or trafficking, for example, may help sensitize the media to the issues and educate CSOs on how to work fruitfully with the media (see Media Programs, page 37).

  - Train CSOs and particular advocates for women's rights and issues in the effective use of media for public awareness and increased visibility of gender issues.

- Labor Unions:

  - Continue to support union activities that promote awareness raising and advocacy within the union on women-specific labor rights.

  - Support linkages with local labor unions and CSOs. Since labor unions appear to be taking a proactive role in many issues related to women's rights, tap this momentum and organize lobbying efforts for upcoming legislation (that is, Equal Opportunity Act for Men and Women).

- Ethnic Relations:
  - Conduct an in-depth gender analysis of the target population in the planning and design stage of the new activity to ensure that potential differences, and ways to address them, are taken into account.
  - Analyze the strategies and lessons learned from the USAID-funded reproductive health programs targeted at the Roma communities.
  - When applicable, incorporate Roma men and women in policy and project development to ensure the project's sensitivity to Roma culture and ethnic identity. Because of their traditional roles, women may not speak as freely in a mixed groups setting; it may be necessary to additionally meet with women-only groups to obtain a female perspective.

Other Democracy Activities

Although the Democracy and Governance Team does not envision continuing activities that entail training for journalists and is not sure if it will fund activities in Court Reform/Mediation and Criminal Law Reform in the new strategy period, the team assessed the current activities in these areas to examine what gender considerations exist and how the Mission has addressed gender in these sectors.

Media Programs

At both the national and the local levels, women hold less than 20 percent of leadership positions in the print and audio-visual media. The presence of women is even lower in the national print media, especially newspapers.[57] Women make up the majority of rank and file reporters but are often discouraged from seeking management positions. Men are managers. Therefore, men decide what is newsworthy, what issues are prioritized, and how those issues are covered. Anecdotal accounts imply that close ties between the political and business elite and the major media owners, often involving non-transparent financial arrangements, further dampen women's desire to attain top management positions.

According to a study conducted in 1997 on women in the media, women are portrayed as sexual objects, as aggressors (mothers killing babies and husbands), as victims of aggression, as performers, and as housewives. Successful women who excel in civic and business activities are rarely portrayed. These stereotypes are promulgated not only by male reporters but also by their female colleagues.

Additionally, because competition for viewers among media outlets is high, they resort to sensational reporting to attract the public's attention. For example, issues like violence

[57] Ibid.

against women, rape, trafficking, and domestic violence receive extensive coverage. However, these topics are treated as general interest stories and commercialized; victims are blamed; and the symptoms and root causes, which led to these violent behaviors, are never addressed. If public attitudes about domestic violence and trafficking in women are to be changed, the media must adhere to higher standards of journalism. Irresponsible reporting—such as publishing the names and addresses of repatriated trafficking victims or hiding the faces of accused traffickers but exposing the faces of the trafficked victims on a news broadcast—can neutralize any work being done to change public attitudes toward these vexing societal problems. (See Domestic Violence and Trafficking, page 47.)

USAID's local media partner conducts training for journalists and media outlets on journalistic practices and standards, organizes a media internship program for Roma youth, and sets up and supports journalist associations. As a matter of practice, data on training and internship participants are not disaggregated by gender. However, given the large number of women in journalism, the local media partner is confident the majority of participants are women.

The media internship program for Roma youth provides an entrée for Roma boys and girls into the mainstream media. This opportunity was especially enlightening for Roma girls, many of whom experience double discrimination, first, as girls in their local communities and, second, as Roma outside their local communities. Anecdotally, Roma female participants were amazed to see they could perform equally to boys and be treated accordingly. Both Roma girls and boys left the program empowered with new skill sets and increased confidence.

Recently, the media partner organized groups for women journalists to discuss gender issues in the media (gender segregation in the media and stereotypes in news coverage) and to develop strategies to tackle identified problems. Unable to reach any concrete conclusions, the groups stopped meeting. However, the Association of Women Journalists has begun to investigate and evaluate journalistic practices surrounding the coverage of domestic violence. The association has a weak organizational capacity but may be a potential partner for a domestic violence and trafficking campaign.

Court Administration, Mediation, and Criminal Law Reform

The court administration and mediation programs focus on training and technical assistance to the Ministry of Justice, judicial associations (National Magistrates Institute [NMI] and Romanian Judges' Association [RJA]), district courts, judges, and young lawyers. Training components include judicial processes, key laws, judicial ethics, alternative dispute resolution, and court administration reform. Training for the associations has briefly addressed human rights and the implementation of international conventions, and, last month, a short training was conducted on the new provision to the criminal code regarding domestic violence. According to a former Romanian judge, judges have little knowledge about how to integrate international human rights statutes into Romanian court proceedings. Law schools do not devote adequate time to this topic; there is a lack of resources on human rights law;

and, as a result, even young lawyers are unprepared to address human rights violations. To strengthen the rule of law in Romania and ensure eventual enforcement of the E.U. *acquis communitaire* (E.U. law), training should address these important human rights issues.

The criminal law reform project provides technical assistance and training to Romanian judges and prosecutors on criminal law procedures. The project is beginning to take a special interest in trafficking in women. The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) is working closely with the Southeast European Co-operative Initiative (SECI) to develop strategies to combat this phenomenon. The DOJ will advise the Ministry of Justice on the recently drafted anti-trafficking law, which will fill the void for such legislation in the Romanian criminal code. The anti-trafficking law, expected to pass this year, will model the *U.N. Trafficking Protocol* and provide a holistic legal framework in which to punish trafficking offenders.

The DOJ does not disaggregate data on training participants by sex. In many of its earlier training courses, however, it noticed a consistent "sea of male faces" in attendance. Aware that more than half of the judiciary is female (63 percent), DOJ acknowledged the problem. The Romanian judiciary was selects participants. On the next training invitation, DOJ requested a 50/50 gender balance for training participants. At the next training session, half the participants were women; there were no complaints and no questions asked. As this anecdote illustrates, qualified women do exist—they are often just hidden behind the shadows of men.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3.4: IMPROVED EFFECTIVENESS OF SELECTED SOCIAL AND PRIMARY HEALTH CARE SERVICES FOR TARGETED VULNERABLE GROUPS

Poverty in Romania continues to rise, with certain groups more vulnerable than others. Especially vulnerable are families with multiple children; single-parent families; the Roma population; and the unemployed, self-employed, and peasant populations. Children are especially vulnerable with 50 percent of those aged 7-15 living in poverty.[58] Women make up a large percentage of single-parent households, unemployed, or unpaid family workers, making them particularly at risk.

Single-parent families with children, although rare in Romania, have poverty rates of 52 percent for families with one child and 76 percent for families with two children, compared with a national poverty rate of 39 percent (using a subsistence minimum poverty level calculation).[59] Over four-fifths of single-parent families with children were headed by a woman.[60]

With increases in poverty have also come declines in some health statistics and increases in the numbers of abandoned children. In particular, the HIV/AIDS infection rate has increased from 5.0/100,000 in 1990 to 27.1/100,000 in 1999 with 23.5/100,000 of these being pediatric

[58] Poverty in Romania, UNDP.
[59] Ibid.
[60] Women and Men in Romania, UNDP.

cases.[61] Romania has one of the highest rates of pediatric AIDS in Europe, with some reports indicating that Romania has more than 50 percent of Europe's total number of pediatric AIDS cases.[62] Infant mortality, although decreasing, at 18.6 (per 1,000 live births) is still high enough to be of concern. The number of abandoned children is also rising but has undergone a dramatic shift away from institutionalized care and toward foster care and adoption.

USAID's activities focus primarily on services and support for primary health care reform and reproductive health programs—in particular, reduction of sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS, and support for and prevention of institutionalized and abandoned children. There is also a focus on improving government policy and regulations in the provision of social and primary health care services. USAID also is involved in labor redeployment through support for policy formulation and funds for local economic development activities.

IR 3.4.1: Improved Mobilization, Allocation, and Use of Social Sector Resources

Reproductive Health

In reproductive health, USAID has been piloting programs to integrate reproductive health services into the primary health care system. Currently, services are available only from special family planning clinics, which are located in the main urban centers in each region (*judet*). In rural areas, the family planning clinic may be far away and require more time and money to access than most of the villagers are willing or able to spend. The closest and most accessible health service provider for rural communities is the local dispensary. USAID is encouraging the decentralization of family planning services to dispensaries to make family planning services and devices more accessible. In addition, at a policy level, USAID is encouraging the GOR to redirect resources from an expensive hospital-based system to preventive, primary care services. These activities will improve access to health care and family planning services for men and women.

Health Reform

The health care system in Romania is severely underfunded. The health care budget in 2001 is only $71 per capita. Currently, hospitals consume 70 percent of these meager funds, leaving little funding for primary and preventive health care.[63] USAID has funded a pilot program to reform the health-financing system, testing a case-based reimbursement system in 23 hospitals. USAID plans to provide additional technical assistance and training for the roll-out of this new system throughout the country. Other activities to support health reform may

[61] Human Development Report, UNDP, 2000.
[62] USAID/Romania, from World Health Organization, 1999.
[63] Internal USAID/Romania documents.

be undertaken if funding is available. There is need to monitor the gender-differentiated impacts that the health reform will have on men and women.

Institutionalized Children

For child welfare, USAID is encouraging the use of alternatives to institutional care in order to redirect funds to prevention programs. Studies have shown that foster care costs 50 percent less per child than institutionalization.[64] The absence of sex-disaggregated child welfare statistics makes it difficult to determine the level of gender-based discrimination in the conditions of children (see IR 3.4.2). Further study needs to be conducted to ensure that both boys and girls equally benefit from future USAID initiatives.

Recommendations

See IR 3.4.2, Recommendations, page 44.

IR 3.4.2: Increased Access to Quality Integrated Services

Reproductive Health

Under Communism, family planning services were illegal, resulting in high rates of maternal mortality, many directly attributable to unsafe abortions. USAID and the GOR have supported numerous programs over the years to improve the reproductive health of the population. Improvements in the main indicators have been dramatic. The maternal mortality rate has been halved, falling from 83.6 per 100,000 live births in 1990 to 41.8 in 1999.[65] Although the maternal mortality rate is still one of the highest in Europe, the improvement is significant. The decline in maternal mortality directly attributable to abortion has dropped from 69 percent of maternal deaths in 1990 to 45 percent in 1998.[66] Abortion rates have also declined, falling from 182 per 1,000 women aged 15-49 in 1990 to 60 per 1,000 women in 1997.[67] However, the USAID-funded reproductive health survey shows that abortion rates remain high among certain population groups, including adolescent woman with only primary or secondary education and Roma women.[68]

USAID is currently funding programs to increase awareness and use of modern contraception. Many of these programs target vulnerable groups, such as adolescent girls and Roma women, in creative ways to meet their particular needs. Overall, the programs to promote awareness and use of modern contraceptive methods appear to be working. USAID

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[64] Interview with Lucia Correll, USAID/Romania.
[65] Human Development Report 2000, UNDP.
[66] Women and Men in Romania, UNDP.
[67] Reproductive Health Survey Romania, CDC and ARSPMS, 2000 preliminary report.
[68] Ibid.

has funded three reproductive health surveys—in 1993, 1996, and 1999—to assess the impact of its activities and to better understand the dimensions of the remaining problems in order to appropriately focus future activities. Women's awareness of modern contraceptive methods has increased from 94 percent in 1993 to 99 percent in 1999 and of traditional methods from 85 percent to 93 percent in the same period. Use of modern contraception has increased substantially from 14 percent in 1993 to 30 percent in 1999 for married women and women in unions.[69]

In 1996 and 1999, the survey included a sample of men to understand their reproductive knowledge and behavior. Their awareness, with the exception of condoms, is lower than women's awareness of all methods. Men's reported use of contraceptives is slightly higher than women's, but men's use of modern contraceptives is lower.[70] This may indicate a window of opportunity because increasing men's awareness of modern methods might result in greater increases in usage of these methods. Although most of the USAID-funded family planning service activities were focused on women, there have been some notable changes. A number of AIDS prevention programs focused on youth, and some of the mass media family planning information campaigns have targeted men, including a widely publicized male responsibility campaign. The new reproductive health activity is expected to build on this momentum, including male-focused programming.

Institutionalized Children

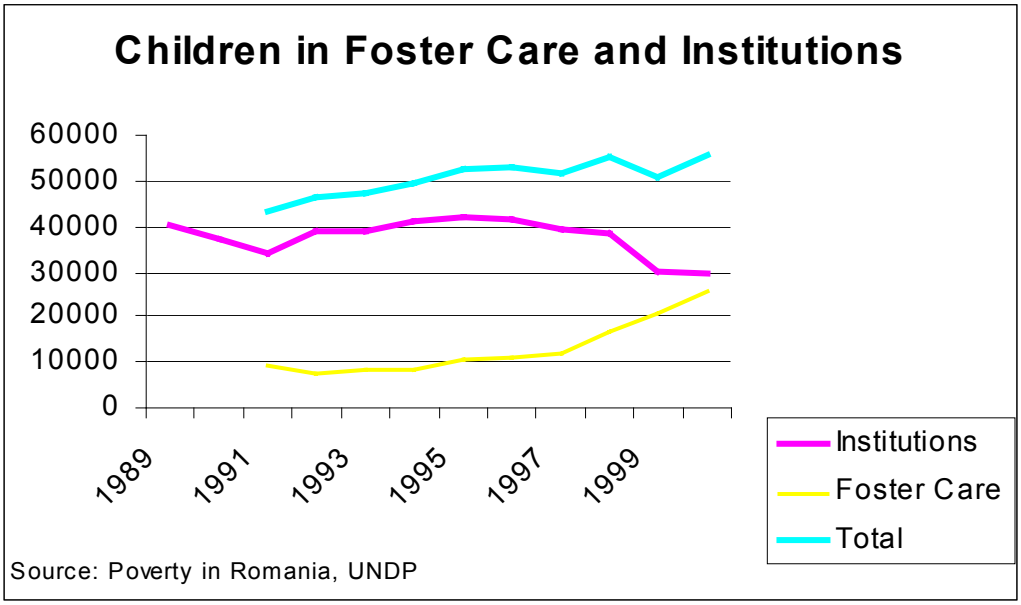
USAID has funded extensive programs to address the needs of children left to the care of the state. During the Communist pro-natal era, families were encouraged to have children, contraceptives and abortion were illegal, and incomes were low. Unable to provide for their children, many families turned to state-run institutions to care for their children. USAID's activities have focused on the promotion of family planning to prevent unintended pregnancies; counseling for pregnant woman and families; economic and material support; and alternatives to institutional care, such as foster care and adoption. Many USAID-funded activities have made a conscientious effort to include both mothers and fathers in their support and counseling services. Unfortunately, as poverty levels have increased, the number of children being turned over to the care of the state also has been increasing. However, the success of the activities can be seen in Table 8; there has been a significant decline in the number of institutionalized children and steady increases in the use of alternative care.[71]

Unfortunately, no data were available to help understand the gender dimensions of the problem. Romania does not have statistics available on the gender breakdown of the children handed over to the state, the number and sex of children in institutions or foster care, and the rates at which boys and girls are adopted, or information on how well they fare after attaining their age of independence. This information would help to determine if there are differences in the rates at which children are given up by their families and gender preferences in foster care or adoption, and the support services that may be needed for re-integrating the children

[69] Ibid.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Poverty in Romania, UNDP.

into society on adulthood. Many of those interviewed felt strongly that there were no gender differences such as those cited above, with the exception of problems in reintegration, believing that once returned to society, girls were particularly vulnerable to being abused and taken advantage of, often forced into prostitution (see Trafficking, page 50).

Table 8: Children in Foster Care and Institutions



Labor Redeployment

In the area of labor redeployment, USAID is funding a local economic development program that provides grants to communities to support community priority programs. In December 1999, USAID funded a gender analysis of local economic development in Romania.[72] The report explained why women's participation was necessary to program success and gave recommendations on how to solicit input and participation of women in the community. The assessment team was unable to determine which, if any, of these recommendations were implemented or if special steps were undertaken to encourage female participation. The local economic development programs are run by community committees, and participation in these committees is tracked and sex disaggregated. Participation on the committees has been 30 percent women. An analysis of the participatory methods used may help identify ways to increase women's participation in the program in the future. Results from the analysis may also help identify ways of encouraging women's participation in other development activities—in particular, those geared toward developing citizen participation in decision making such as the upcoming local government program.

[72] Barriers and Opportunities for Integrating Gender Considerations into Local Economic Development in Romania, WIDTech.

Recommendations

- Reproductive Health:

  — USAID has already begun to target male audiences for their reproductive health activities. It might be useful to analyze the results of these initial efforts and focus future efforts on approaches found to be particularly successful in changing male family planning usage, thereby increasing overall usage in the population. A good resource is the Reproductive Health Outlook website, which contains a special section on targeting men in reproductive health programming (www. rho.org/html/menrh.htm.

  — USAID/Romania plans to conduct an assessment of the many reproductive health activities it has funded to ensure that important lessons learned can be incorporated into the new reproductive health activity. This is a wonderful opportunity to look more in-depth at the gender issues involved. The analysis should look specifically at how different approaches worked for different sub-groups: men, women, youth, rural, urban, Roma. Analyzing the successes (or problems) of the models tested may provide some suggestions on how to best target these populations in future.

  — Continue activities that target subgroups with particularly high abortion rates such as the Roma and adolescents.

- Institutionalized Children:

  — In the search for sex-disaggregated statistics on children who are wards of the state, the assessment team learned that there was a lack of good data available in general on these children. USAID could work with the Authority on Child Welfare to develop better management information systems to keep track of the children in their care. UNDP has prepared a document on gender statistics for Romania. The document contains an action plan for collecting a wide range of gender statistics in the future; information on institutionalized children is noticeably lacking. USAID may be able to encourage UNDP to include institutionalized children in its plans.

- Labor Redeployment:

  — Analyze the community participation methods used in the local economic development program to determine how they could encourage higher levels of participation by women. The lessons learned should be applied to other programs, particularly the new local government program, as appropriate.

IR 3.4 3: Citizens Better Informed about Social Service, Rights, and Responsibilities

USAID's activities to promote the knowledge and use of modern contraceptives, increase knowledge of alternatives to institutionalization for children, and increase awareness of labor redeployment programs all require that information get to both men and women. All activities should carefully examine the target audience or audiences to determine where people are most likely to get the information, how the message can best be delivered for the audience, and whether they have power to act upon information. Men and women may be more receptive to different messages, especially as regards sensitive issues like family planning and child abandonment.

Recommendations

- All public information campaigns (for reproductive health, child welfare, and labor redeployment) should pay careful attention to gender issues when developing their messages and their outreach approach. They need to determine if messages need to be tailored differently for men and women or for other disadvantaged groups like the Roma. They need to determine what outreach methods will most effectively reach their target audiences and if there are differences in where the targeted men and women might see or hear the messages.

IR 3.4.4: Improved Legal, Regulatory, and Policy Framework

The years since the fall of Communism have brought numerous changes to the provision of social and health care services in Romania. Under the Communist regime, all citizens received free health care and a wide range of social services regardless of their income. This cradle-to-grave system of social protection and health care services was costly and unsustainable. Recent reforms have attempted to shift to a system based on payroll contributions to a national health insurance program, financial incentives for health care providers, and social services and transfers based on income testing.

In the area of health care reform, the most recent program has moved toward a system of mandatory public insurance, paid into by public and private sector employers. Provisions were made for the registered unemployed to receive coverage for up to two years. Poor families who are not covered under the employment or unemployment schemes can request poverty certificates to allow them to access the medical system without charge. Otherwise, individuals must make voluntary contributions to the insurance plan or pay special fees to access health care services. Many of the poor are not able to obtain poverty certificates and have found themselves without access to health care in the last year. Although this situation affects a growing population of women and men, women participate less than men in the formal economy, represent a greater number of people in the category of unpaid family workers (who, because of their high incidence of poverty are not likely to be able to make voluntary contributions to the health care program), and are more likely to face long-term

unemployment. As a result, women may be more likely to find themselves excluded from the new health care system. In fact, the toll on women's health may have already begun, with maternal mortality figures for the first quarter of 2001 already double those of the first quarter last year.[73]

Labor Redeployment

On issues of labor redeployment, USAID has been involved at a policy level in helping the GOR reform its unemployment insurance program and in helping develop services for the unemployed. The GOR keeps extensive statistics on the employment of the population, most of which appear to be sex disaggregated. These data show that there are gender differences in employment and unemployment patterns in Romania. Although not specifically mentioned in the new legislation, the new unemployment programs include some gender aware policies. For example, in the employer incentive program, eligible employment categories include some sectors that have predominately male employees, such as maintenance and repair of infrastructure and some that are predominately female, such as social services. The U.S. Department of Labor representative was unsure if the GOR considered issues of gender in its policy formulation or if the budget projections include gender analysis to see the effects of the new policies on different segments of the population. A detailed analysis could help identify potential gender issues. One of the most significant changes in the legislation involves a reduction in the length of eligibility for benefits. As women are over-represented in the ranks of the long-term unemployed, this could have significant implications—especially for households in which women are the primary or only breadwinners. In addition, benefits such as contributions to the state social insurance fund and health insurance program also end sooner than in the past. As a result of changes in the health care reform system, this could effectively eliminate access to primary health care services for the long-term unemployed. Not only does this group include a disproportionate number of women, but the reforms in combination also have potentially negative consequences for the reproductive health and infant health of the country (see IR 3.4.1, page 41).

Recommendations

- Analyze the impact of the new health care reforms on men and women's access to services. Work with the GOR to develop ways of meeting the health care needs of those who fall through the cracks.

- Undertake an in-depth gender analysis of the unemployment benefit program. The analysis should consider differences in average length of employment and unemployment, salary differentials, and the impact of reductions in health insurance benefits.

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[73] At the time of this assessment (July 2001), rumors were circulating that as a result of the maternal mortality data the government may implement a new incentive scheme to encourage doctors to provide reproductive health services to the poor.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND TRAFFICKING

Domestic Violence

In Romania, violent offenses against the family doubled between 1993 and 1998.[74] Over 90 percent of reported offenses are committed against women and children. Social disintegration coupled with poverty leads to neglect, violence, and abuse. Domestic violence follows no socio-economic pattern—abuse crosses all cultural, social, and economic lines. In the Gender Barometer survey, more than half of the women polled said that, among friends, relatives, and colleagues, they had heard of cases of battered wives and female partners. The numbers were even higher among young people (ages 18-29, 64 percent).[75] Anecdotally, it has even been said that many women who institutionalize their children do so because they are afraid of raising them in abusive households; they are afraid for their children's safety.

Table 9: Persons Accused of Offenses against the Family, 1993-1998[76]

Year	Females (percent)	Males (percent)
1993	9	91
1994	8	92
1995	8	92
1996	7	93
1997	8	92
1998	8	92

*Including family desertion, child abuse, and other offenses.
Source: Institute of Crime Research and Prevention (police records).

Domestic violence is acknowledged as a serious problem, more so than in many other countries in the region. This may be attributed to last year's article in *Playboy* magazine, "How to Beat Your Wife," which incited strong reaction from Romanian women's organizations and put the issue on the public's radar. However, social stigmas associated with domestic violence still exist. Society views it as a personal, family issue and not an issue to be laundered in public. Other reasons why domestic violence cases are rarely in the legal system include:

- Victims may fear more violence from their partner if they report and/or prosecute assaults.
- Victims may be pressured by family members not to press charges or may be encouraged to reconcile. If the parties reconcile, the case is dismissed.

[74] Poverty in Romania, UNDP.
[75] Gender Barometer, Open Society Foundation Romania.
[76] Table taken from *Women 2000: An Investigation into the Status of Women's Rights in the Former Soviet Union and Central and South-Eastern Europe*, International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights.

- Police may only counsel the couple at the scene of the crime, without making an arrest. Only in the most serious cases will police make an arrest.

- The procedural requirements to file a complaint in domestic violence and rape cases are complicated and place serious burden on the victims. If the victim does go through with the complaint, it is likely that the abuser will remain at home until the complaint is heard—sometimes for weeks or even months.[77]

- The housing shortage in Romania may force people to stay in an abusive relationship because they have nowhere else to go.

There is no specific language within the Romanian criminal law that provides protection to victims of domestic violence (that is, restraining orders). Cases fall within the protections applicable to any assault and battery victim.[78] Sentences hinge upon the level of injury as determined by the number of days of medical treatment required. Abuse is sometimes difficult to prove, and the procedures to file a complaint place the burden on the victim. Furthermore, there are unclear procedures for arrest, investigation, and prosecution, and therefore law enforcement officials are unsure how to handle cases. Just recently, however, there have been changes to the penal code that increase the penalty for violent acts committed by members of the same family.

Romania is a signatory to many international conventions that explicitly outlaw violence against women. According to the constitutional principle, international treaties and covenants regarding human rights are part of the internal law; these conventions should be perceived as effective legal solutions when handling the violation of women's human rights by means of violence. However, very seldom do courts decide a case based on international legal provisions regarding women's human rights or human rights in general. Consequently, specific domestic violence legislation is needed.[79]

Law enforcement officials play an important role in domestic violence cases. Romanian police often do not take the issue seriously and rarely make arrests. According to research conducted by the Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights on domestic violence in Romania in 1995, Police Academy interviewees expressed the opinion that violence within the family is not a problem in Romania because of the "cult of the woman," according to which women are so loved and appreciated by men, they would do nothing to hurt them.[80] Female police officers are rare, and most are routed to desk jobs; the all-male environment compounds insensitivity to the problem.

Individuals who suffer from domestic violence, in addition to legal protections, also require psycho-social assistance. As a result of a lack of resources, there are few shelters and

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[77] Lifting the Last Curtain: A Report on Domestic Violence in Romania, Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights.

[78] Women 2000: An Investigation into the Status of Women's Rights in the Former Soviet Union and Central and South-Eastern Europe, International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights.

[79] Ibid.

[80] Lifting the Last Curtain: A Report on Domestic Violence in Romania, Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights.

counseling services for victims of domestic violence are few and far between; those that do exist allow victims to stay only for 24 hours.[81] The NGO sector has begun to offer counseling services and minimal material support, but because of the high operating cost of shelters, most initiatives are not sustainable and fail to meet the ever-increasing need. A few NGOs have attempted to increase the sensitivity of police officers to domestic violence and train them on how to properly deal with cases. One local NGO offers counseling assistance for victims of domestic violence through a hotline program. Direct cooperation with the county police was set up so victims would be properly assisted through the police investigation. Other NGOs have conducted successful public awareness campaigns, which include public service announcements aired on national and local television networks.

Domestic violence is a complex issue that requires integrated solutions. Lack of public support for victims, inadequate legislation, insensitive police officers, a lack of social, emotional and economic support for victims, and a lack of counseling services for perpetrators are all areas that need to be addressed to prevent domestic violence and protect the human rights of the victims.

Trafficking

Trafficking in women in the Europe and Eurasia Region is recognized as an increasingly alarming issue, by European and Eurasian governments and by international, regional and local organizations. Romania is a source and transit country for women and girls sold for sexual exploitation to the former Yugoslav states, Albania, Italy, Japan, Macedonia, Greece, Turkey, and Southeast Asia, among other destinations.

Romanian Situation

To the extent data exists on trafficking in women in Romania, the problem is severe and requires immediate action. In the past 18 months, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has repatriated 300 victims of trafficking. Of these cases, the demographic profile of individuals most susceptible to trafficking is young girls, aged 15-25 (the highest percentage coming from the 18-20 year old bracket), from the Moldova region of Romania. The majority of these young women are from urban areas and have not graduated from high school. Many of these young women have histories of abuse and suffer from a general feeling of not belonging, either to their families or their communities, which increases their vulnerability. In addition, those trafficked reported a lack of friends and a lack of communication with their parents.[82]

Of the women who have been repatriated through the IOM's repatriation program, the majority of victims were returned from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, and Albania.

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[81] Women 2000: An Investigation into the Status of Women's Rights in the Former Soviet Union and Central and South-Eastern Europe, International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights.

[82] IOM, Impreuna Impotriva Traficului de Fiinte Umane, 2001.

Women, desperate for money and promised a better life in the West, a job, or a marriage proposal, become trapped and forced into sex slavery. Some are unaware they will become prostitutes; others are aware but are so desperate financially they succumb to tempting offers of money and freedom. They are all unaware they will be stripped of their personal freedoms.

Mass media reports daily on trafficking incidences. However, stories are sensationalized, the phenomenon per se is not addressed, and no background information is given as to why and how it occurs or on the legal measures the state is taking related to the issue. The emphasis is on the exotic.[83] Irresponsible reporting, like publishing the names and addresses of repatriated trafficking victims or hiding the faces of accused traffickers while exposing the faces of the trafficked victims on a news broadcast, can neutralize any work being done to change public attitudes toward these vexing societal problems. As a result, among the general population, awareness of the issue is low, if not distorted.

Trafficking in women is complex and can involve multiple crimes—forced labor, illegal confinement, bodily and physical injuries, battery, rape, falsified documents, and blackmail and illegal border crossing—and is perpetuated by cross-national organized crime networks. Currently, there is no specific law that addresses the criminal offense of trafficking in women. Offenses fall under the code of pandering and can be punished by imprisonment from two to seven years.[84] To properly punish this serious offense, a law must be in place that defines trafficking as a crime with punishments that are similar to those meted out for crimes of serious physical violence and that provide protections and shelter for witnesses.

Furthermore, when women subjected to trafficking are repatriated, under current law they can be prosecuted for a variety of crimes, including prostitution, illegal border crossing, indecent behavior, and vagrancy. Trafficking continues to be viewed by the police and judiciary as illegal migration for the purposes of prostitution rather than a flagrant violation of human rights.[85]

To combat trafficking, efforts must be made through preventative and punitive measures. First, there is a need to foster awareness nationwide among Romanian women and their families, relevant authorities, government officials, and the general public of the dangers and consequences related to trafficking. Additionally, the media must be sensitized to the issue so they report on it responsibly.

In addition, trafficked women face serious health risks associated from sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS through sexual contact or drug abuse. Shelters and social assistance programs should be in place to provide health, legal, and psychological assistance to victims. Local organizations currently involved in anti-trafficking attempt to increase public understanding of trafficking, generate public policy debates on trafficking-related issues, and develop plans to open shelters and assistance hotlines for the victims of

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[83] Ibid.

[84] International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights, *Women 2000: An Investigation into the Status of Women's Rights in the Former Soviet Union and Central and South-Eastern Europe*, New York and Vienna, 2000.

[85] UNICEF, *Trafficking of Human Beings in Southeastern Europe*, 2000.

trafficking. Some organizations involved in these activities are ARTEMIS, CED, and Reaching Out. Target groups include the media, CSOs, policemen, health care workers, elected officials, sociologists, and psychologists.

International Responses and USAID Support

In response to growing international concern, the U.S. Congress passed the victims of Trafficking and Violence Act of 2000, which requires the Secretary of State to submit a report to Congress with respect to the status of severe forms of trafficking in persons.[86] In the ensuing report, published in July 2001, the U.S. Department of State placed Romania among the countries with the worst records of addressing issues of trafficking in women. According to the Act, Romania has not fully complied with the minimum standards and is not making significant efforts to bring the country into compliance, placing it in the third and lowest tier. As a third-tier country, if Romania does not improve its record on combating trafficking in human beings, it will be subject to certain sanctions, principally termination of non-humanitarian, non-trade-related assistance. They could also be subject to U.S. opposition to certain development-related assistance from international financial institutions, specifically the International Monetary Fund and the multilateral development banks, such as the World Bank.[87]

Given the recent attention to the issue, both nationally and internationally, the Romanian government is attempting to take a proactive role to curtail trafficking, but so long as the large disparity between eastern and western European countries persists, these desperate migration attempts are likely to persevere. In 2001, the government appointed a National Coordinator to combat trafficking and an Anti-Trafficking Task Force, which made 20 arrests in 2001. A draft law ratifying the U.N. Protocol, which criminalizes human trafficking and provides support for victims, is now in Parliament.

Anti-trafficking legislation is necessary to prosecute traffickers effectively. However, as a result of the complexities surrounding trafficking, the numerous crimes, and the multiple parties and countries involved, special criminal procedures are required, especially for cross-border investigations. To make an impact, programs need to focus not only on the drafting and passage of the law but also on educating and training law enforcement officials, prosecutors, and judges on the procedural requirements to ensure effective implementation. Law enforcement efforts are getting strong support from the U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS).

Other U.S. government efforts to combat trafficking in Romania include The Stability Pact for Southeast Europe's Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings, which was established to enhance international coordination efforts and to intensify the development of concrete actions in the region to prevent trafficking, protect victims, and prosecute traffickers. In

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[86] U.S. Department of State, Trafficking in Persons Report, July 2001 (Website: http://www.state. gov).
[87] Ibid.

2001, the United States is providing funding to support the Stability Pact's Trafficking Task Force Secretariat so that countries of origin, transit, and destination can work together to combat the rapidly growing regional problem.

Under the Southeast European Co-operative Initiative (SECI), the United States provided funding to the FBI and the INS to place agents in the field to advise law enforcement officials in Romania, as well as in Bulgaria, Macedonia, Albania, and Bosnia and Herzegovina on establishing task forces to combat trafficking in human beings. The specialized task forces are to operate nationally but coordinate regionally via the legal and technological mechanisms of the SECI Anti-Crime Center in Bucharest, Romania.

USAID/Romania provided a sub-grant to a local NGO, Center for Legal Resources, to hold a regional forum on trafficking and to develop follow-up action plans for cross-border NGO activity. USAID funds soon will fund three additional anti-trafficking activities: publication of the Regional Anti-Trafficking Law Enforcement Manual, the Pro-Familia ListServ Project (through the Public Diplomacy, Democracy small grant program), and the New Beginnings Project to develop safehouses and life skills standards and training (through the Romanian-American Sustainable Partnership Program).

Numerous international and regional organizations, including the IOM, UNICEF, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Soros, and the European Union, have acknowledged the gravity of the situation in the region and are developing strategies to help combat the phenomenon and to deal effectively with the tragedies in its wake. Regional and international organizations are focusing their efforts on creating cross-national strategies to combat the problem, including repatriating and providing social services for repatriated individuals and developing trans-national criminal procedures. Numerous reports show that many victims of trafficking are falling back into the trafficking cycle because of gaps in service and support provision.[88]

Additional funding for anti-trafficking efforts must be made available to prevent trafficking from continuing, to provide support for victims, and to help Romania meet the minimum standards for prevention required under the Trafficking and Violence Act so U.S. assistance to Romania is not curtailed. Because other support is already being provided for law enforcement programs, additional efforts should be directed primarily to community awareness, prevention, and rehabilitation.

Recommendations

- Provide financial and technical assistance for local NGO activities that provide support services to victims of trafficking and domestic violence for women and children, such as counseling, shelters, health care, hotlines, legal assistance, economic opportunities (micro credit or employment training), and childcare services.

[88] Ibid.

- Investigate linkages between Romanian and U.S. organizations (possibly through the Romanian-American Sustainable Partnership Umbrella Grants Program) whose activities focus on prevention of violence against women and assistance for female victims of violence.

- Encourage the development of an official government and NGO working group on violence against women (including domestic violence and trafficking) to coordinate efforts and share lessons learned.

- Explore opportunities for establishing projects that increase women's economic opportunities, especially targeting young women (the group most prone to trafficking).

- Support relationship-building efforts among organizations providing support services for victims with the local police to both assist the victims through the legal system and to aid the police in their investigations.

- Provide training for judges, police, prosecutors, and investigators in the following areas: legal issues surrounding human trafficking, how to deal with the victims of domestic violence and trafficking, proper procedures in investigating and prosecuting cases of domestic and sexual violence, and approaches to presenting information on domestic and sexual violence to courts. Providing this training through local NGOs that provide services for victims would assist with the relationship building described above.

- Provide support for the analysis and drafting of legislation on violence against women.

- Work with USAID/Kiev and USAID/Chisinau to access their information on domestic violence and trafficking, including data, videos, and the like.

- Support information dissemination campaigns on the risks of trafficking; legal means of migration and employment; the methods employed by traffickers and the risks to victims; and available social, psychological, and legal services for victims.

- Support activities that develop partnerships between the media and NGOs on target issues, such as domestic violence and trafficking, might help to sensitize the media to the issues while educating NGOs on how to work fruitfully with the media.

- Examine whether Romanian-Serbian partnership activities (IR 2.3.2) might provide a good foundation for future cross-national NGO cooperation on violence against women, specifically trafficking in women.

GENDER INTEGRATION IN MISSION PROGRAMS AND PROCEDURES

The above review of SO and IRs has identified entry points for increasing attention to gender in program planning and implementation. However, gender integration cannot be realized without having the structures in place to guide and maintain these efforts.

USAID regulations require that Missions consider gender in the planning, design, and procurement phases of activity development. As part of the 2001 strategic planning process, USAID/Romania has considered gender in the development of its goals and objectives. Although there are many examples of the USAID/Romania Mission being proactive and taking gender into consideration during design and planning process, gender considerations have not yet been integrated into the process Mission-wide. The Mission must take additional steps to ensure that the issues identified in the strategic planning process are followed up on during program implementation. Currently, the Mission's main advocate for gender integration is a member of the Economic Growth SO Team. Although she considers gender advocacy an important role, she lacks information about the work of other SO teams to work with them effectively on a regular basis. Rather, information is solicited from the teams as needed to meet reporting requirements but not to pursue gender integration into the Mission's processes and programs.

The assessment team recommends that the Mission organize a committee to address gender issues within the Mission's portfolio in a comprehensive manner. The core team would consist of representatives from the three SO teams and the Mission's representative for trafficking and domestic violence. An expanded team could include the USAID Program Development Officer; U.S. Embassy personnel involved in gender issues; other donor personnel, especially UNDP; and staff of one or two of USAID's implementing partners. The team would need to be headed by a USAID staff member who has the support of the Mission Director to ensure gender issues are given appropriate consideration and resources. The current gender advisor, who has had USAID training in gender integration issues, could serve this role.

The team's objectives would be to:

- Ensure the integration of gender issues into USAID/Romania programming, including reviewing new activity designs and drafting sections on gender integration and evaluation criteria for procurement documents;

- Ensure all contracting mechanisms, including consultants' scopes of work, explicitly request and use of gender expertise;

- Review activity implementation and sex-disaggregated data to ensure that appropriate follow-up on the commitments listed in the Action Plan is being taken by activity managers (see Annex C);

- Function as an analytical body to raise issues and propose programming that addresses targeted gender issues (such as trafficking and domestic violence);

- Serve as a coordinating body for gender issues among technical teams in the mission; and

- Devise strategies and concept papers addressing gender issues for the Mission's consideration.

Although a Gender Committee will be an effective way to address gender issues in Mission's programs and to develop or direct relevant activities, the Mission also needs to be sure that gender considerations are taken into account during the implementation of regular Mission processes and procedures. Staff become very busy with the day-to-day implementation of programs and often do not consider other issues until required to do so. As with other issues, gender considerations, regardless of people's good intentions, can easily be forgotten if they are not integrated into other Mission-required processes and procedures. The office in charge of these processes, usually the Program Office, needs to be sure gender has been included appropriately before giving its approval by:

- Adding the consideration of gender issues to the activity approval memo format to ensure that teams do not forget to include an analysis of gender considerations when developing new activities;

- Developing a comprehensive repository (possibly housed with the Program Office) for the data the Mission tracks as part of its performance monitoring plans. Data would be updated once a year as part of the R4 portfolio review process. The officer(s) in charge of maintaining the database would be responsible for ensuring that all relevant data is sex disaggregated;

- Including an analysis of gender considerations as part of the annual portfolio review process;

- Including a section on gender considerations in each annual activity monitoring report; and

- Including an analysis of gender considerations into each new scope of work (except in cases where the analysis included in the activity approval memo justified omitting this). The scope of work should include not only a description of the relevant issue but also relevant evaluation criteria for addressing the issues.

ANNEX A

SCOPE OF WORK

SCOPE OF WORK

USAID/ROMANIA GENDER TEAM
STATEMENT OF WORK
JUNE 29, 2001

BACKGROUND

Since the inception of the USAID Mission to Romania program, the Mission has recognized the challenges to the equal advancement of both men and women. In an effort to build upon existing programming and current activities in the country, the Mission intends to institute more targeted strategy development to reflect the key role of gender considerations in the achievement of its goals and strategic objectives.

Currently the Mission is working towards the achievement of seven strategic objectives and crosscutting activities, which encompass all program resources managed by the Mission. The seven objectives are grouped into the three strategic assistance areas on which USAID/E&E Missions focus: (1) market transition, (2) democratic transition, and (3) social transition. The seven SOs are:

- SO 1.3—Development and Growth of Private Enterprises;
- SO 1.4—A More Competitive and Market-Responsive Private Financial Sector;
- SO 1.5—A More Economically Sustainable and Environmentally Sound Energy Sector;
- SO 1.6—Increased Environmental Management Capacity to Promote Sustainable Economic Growth;
- SO 2.1—Increased Better-Informed Citizens Participation in Political and Economic Decision-Making;
- SO 2.3—More Effective and Accountable Local Government; and
- SO 3.2—Improve the Welfare of Children and Women in Romania.

Attached is a short description of the strategic objectives.

USAID/Romania is currently developing a new five-year country strategy, to be submitted to USAID/W in the fall of 2001. Under the new strategy, three major strategic objectives are envisioned, revolving around the themes of economic growth, democratic governance and social service provision. In order to ensure that gender considerations are adequately addressed in the new strategy, incorporated into subsequent implementation

of the strategy, and included in program and organizational structures, the Mission requests support for a Gender Assessment and Action Plan.

The Assessment and Action Plan will follow the guidelines of the current USAID Revised Automated Directives System (ADS), Functional Series 200, Programming Policy. (Strategy language follows. Summary of full document is attached.)

ADS 201.3.4.11 paragraph b, Technical Analysis for Strategic Plans

Gender Analysis. Strategic Plans must reflect attention to gender concerns. Unlike other technical analyses described in this section, gender is not a separate topic to be analyzed and reported on in isolation. Instead, USAID's gender mainstreaming approach requires that appropriate gender analysis be applied to the range of technical issues that are considered in the development of a given Strategic Plan. Addressing these questions involves taking into account not only the different roles of men and women, but also the relationship and balance between them and the institutional structures that support them.

PURPOSE OF WORK

The purpose of this Scope of Work is to obtain the services of a team of two consultants to outline the program areas in which gender issues are of greatest essence, formulate detailed recommendations on how gender considerations can be integrated more systematically into the Mission's new strategy and current and future country programs, and train mission staff and implementing partners on gender considerations.

TASKS

The primary tasks of the team are to:

1. Carry out a **Gender Assessment**, including:

- Review and assess gender issues in Romania (through both document reviews and meetings/interviews) and identify key areas in which gender issues must be considered.
- Assess the Mission's program portfolio for gender considerations.
- Assess potential gender issues in a future portfolio and/or strategic framework.
- Produce recommendations for possible entry-points for incorporating gender considerations in ongoing activities and potential new programs.

  The Assessment is to be organized and shaped by:

  — USAID/Romania's future strategic plan.

- E&E Bureau's approach to mainstreaming gender.

- Agency guidelines and directives. For example, the most recent ADS on gender in planning (200) and procurement (300).

2. Based on the Gender Assessment, design a **Gender Action Plan** which lays out the steps for mainstreaming gender in Mission policies and activities. The Action Plan should:

- Address the operationalization of gender considerations from the perspective of both technical offices/divisions and Mission management.

- Fully address the requirements of Agency guidelines and directives.

- Include *but not be limited to* the following elements:

  - The Gender Assessment described in Task 1, above.

  - Technical advice on development of the Mission's new Strategic Plan, Results Framework and indicators to reflect the key role of gender considerations in the achievement of USAID goals.

  - An outline under each strategic objective and intermediate result of the key role of gender.

  - Recommendations on how to develop gender-sensitive indicators of program impact and approaches for the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data. (See ADS 201.3.4.b.)

3. Facilitate two **gender briefings** for USAID/Romania's staff and implementing partners. The agenda and participants for each session will be determined in collaboration with the Mission Gender Advisor and the Program Office. Topics covered will include the policy and program rationales for integrating gender, as well as Agency guidelines, with particular emphasis on ADS directives. Each session will last from 45-60 minutes.

4. Meet separately with teams, team leaders, activity managers or others involved in activities that have and/or should have strong gender components to provide more in-depth advice and assistance. Based on preliminary findings, at the end of the first week in country, the Assessment Team will work with the Gender Advisor and Program Office to identify those requiring more in-depth assistance.

5. Review draft narratives of the new country strategy and make recommendations for strengthening the incorporation of gender into the drafts.

METHODOLOGY

Prior to departure for Romania, review documents to be forwarded to team members by the Mission, G/WID, WIDTech, and E&E Gender Advisor. These will include: Mission policy and planning documents, such as the current R4; background information on gender issues in Romania, such as UNDP reports and other in-country data; gender assessments previously carried out by USAID/Romania; gender assessments and gender action plans from other countries or regions which can be used as models by the team; and USAID policy and procurement guidelines.

In carrying out the data collection phase of the work, the team shall interview the following and collect related information:

- Members of the Missions' SO Teams, the Program Office, and other Units as identified by Mission.

- A sample of USAID implementers, as identified by the Mission in advance (in order to facilitate appointments) and approved by the Mission.

- A small sample of USAID-funded NGOs, as identified by the Mission in advance (in order to facilitate appointments) and approved by the Mission.

- Major donors or other international organizations which have important gender programs in Romania, as identified by the Mission in advance (in order to facilitate appointments) and approved by the Mission.

All work shall use the gender approach of the latest Agency documents on integrating gender and E&E materials such as the USAID/E&E Strategic Framework and Integrating Gender fact sheet.

DELIVERABLES

Gender Assessment and Action Plan. The Gender Assessment and Action Plan will use the data from interviews and secondary sources to assess the appropriate technical areas for gender emphasis and make recommendations for future actions for gender integration, described above as the first and second tasks. The combined document could also be the basis for further technical assistance, provided by USAID/Washington.

- The team will provide an oral debriefing of the findings and recommendations to be included in the Gender Assessment and Action Plan toward the end of their second week in Romania.

- Preliminary draft documents shall be submitted to the Mission upon completion of fieldwork, before departure from Romania. An electronic copy shall be forwarded to the Mission, WIDTech, and the E&E Gender Advisor. The three recipients will

provide written comments to the Team Leader electronically within 5 working days of receipt.

- The final Gender Assessment & Action Plan, incorporating above comments shall be submitted to the Mission, WIDTech, and E&E not later than 10 working days after receiving the above comments.

Gender Briefings. The Assessment team will facilitate 2 sessions or meetings for Mission staff and implementing partners. Each session will be from 45-60 minutes. Topics covered will include why integrating gender results in more effective development and Agency policy, planning, and procurement guidelines. Provide individual or small group briefings, as required, to activity managers/teams requiring additional guidance.

Strategy Input. Provide recommendations for strengthening the incorporation of gender into the new draft strategic plan.

ESTIMATED LEVEL OF EFFORT

It is anticipated that the services of a team of two consultants will be required for up to 46 working days total. The Team Leader shall be the more senior of the two. Each consultant will have up to 3 days for preparation beforehand, 2 days for travel, 14 days in country, and 3 days (second consultant) or 5 days (team leader) at home to complete the draft and final documents. The Team Leader will be given 2 extra days for the additional work of coordinating the writing, editing, and approval process of the report. A six-day workweek will be authorized overseas to be used if necessary. Total LOE will be up to 46 days, including travel.

PERFORMANCE PERIOD

Work will begin on/about July 15th, 2001, and be completed by August 31, 2001.

TRAVEL AND PER DIEM

- Air travel to and from Romania and the homes of the consultants.

- Seventeen days of per diem in country for each consultant, for a total of 34 days per diem in country (six-day work week).

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The consultants will work closely with the USAID/Romania Gender Advisor and Program Office. In addition to providing the background information and organizing meetings described above, they will also organize entry and exit meetings of the consultants with the Mission Director or her representative. WIDTech will provide overall direction as necessary. All TA deliverables will be provided for comment to the Mission, WIDTech, and E&E/Washington. The USAID/Romania Gender Advisor will provide oversight while in country.

Attachments:

- Short description of the strategic objectives.
- Gender Provisions of the USAID Revised Automated Directives System (ADS), Functional Series 200 (Programming Policy), June 6, 2001

ANNEX B

PERSONS CONTACTED

PERSONS CONTACTED

Jun Suhling, U.S. Department of Labor
Alberta Ashrook, IRIS
Ioana Avadani, Center for Independent Journalism
Cristina Balanescu, World Vision
Alina Bernecker, DHF
Dr. Merce Casco, John Snow Inc.
Adriana Cozma, UNDP
Sorina Cucuta, Association of Women Entrepreneurs
Monica Dan, ARAS
Dr. Irina Dinca, Youth for Youth Foundation of Romania
Ramona Gotteszman, Holt International
Anca Harasim, American Chamber of Commerce in Romania
Dr. Barbara Koo, SECS
Dina Lghin, Equal Opportunities for Women
Mark McCord, CIPE
Terri Monk, CHF
Liana Naum, Member of Parliament, PDSR
Dolores Neagoe, EU
Shannon O'Connell, NDI
Virginia Otel, Leading Business Women's Association of Romania
Despina Pascal, Axa International Consulting
Dr. Dana Podaru, PSI Romania
Luana Popa, Association of Manager Women
Luana Popa, Romanian Mangeresses Association
Angela Popescu, Romanian-American Enterprise Fund
Liliana Popescu, Civic Education Project
Oana Bahnaru Preda, Pro Democratia Association
Denis Provost, Canadian Embassy
Lee Rosner, World Learning
Dr. Cornelia Rotaru, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Romania
Ana Maria Sandi, The World Bank
William Scott, RADA
Marliena Stoian, ANTREC—Romania
Adriana Stoica, World Learning
Dr. Raluca Teodoru, Youth for Youth Foundation of Romania
Roxana Tesiu, Open Society Institute
USAID/Romania Humanitarian Assistance Team Members
USAID/Romania Economic Growth Team Members
USAID/Romania Democracy Team
USAID/Romania Local Government Team
Roxana Vitan, Romanian-American Enterprise Fund
Jane Wimmer, Bethany

ANNEX C

GENDER WORK PLAN FOR ROMANIA

GENDER WORK PLAN FOR ROMANIA

STEPS FOR MAINSTREAMING GENDER IN MISSION POLICIES AND ACTIVITIES

USAID regulations require that Missions consider gender in the planning, design, and procurement phases of activity development. As part of the 2001 strategic planning process, USAID/Romania has considered gender in the development of its goals and objectives. Although there have been many other examples of the USAID/Romania Mission being proactive and taking gender into consideration during design and planning process, gender considerations have not yet been integrated into the process Mission-wide. The Mission must take additional steps to ensure that the issues identified in the strategic planning process are followed-up on during program implementation. Currently, the Mission's main advocate for gender integration is a member of the Economic Growth Strategic Objective team. Although she considers gender advocacy an important role, she lacks information about the work of other strategic objective teams to effectively work with them on a regular basis. Rather, information is solicited from the teams as needed to meet reporting requirements but not to pursue gender integration into the Mission's processes and programs.

The assessment team recommends that the Mission organize a committee to address gender issues within the Mission's portfolio in a comprehensive manner. The core team would consist of representatives from the three strategic objective teams and the Mission's representative for trafficking and domestic violence. An expanded team could include U.S. Embassy personnel involved in gender issues; other donor personnel, especially UNDP; and staff of one or two of USAID's implementing partners. The team would need to be headed by a USAID staff member who has the support of the front office to ensure gender issues are given appropriate consideration and resources. The current gender advisor has had USAID training in gender integration issues and could serve this role.

The team's objectives would be to:

- Ensure the integration of gender issues into USAID/Romania programming, including reviewing new activity designs and drafting sections on gender integration and evaluation criteria for procurement documents;

- Review activity implementation and sex-disaggregated data to ensure that appropriate follow-up on the commitments listed below is being taken by activity managers;

- Function as an analytical body to raise issues and propose programming that addresses targeted gender issues (such as trafficking and domestic violence);

- Serve as a coordinating body for gender issues among technical teams in the mission; and

- Devise strategies and concept papers addressing gender issues for the Mission's consideration.

STEPS TO OPERATIONALIZE THE CONSIDERATION OF GENDER IN MISSION PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES

Although a gender committee will be an effective way to consider gender issues in the Mission's programs and to develop or direct activities as needed to address these issues, the Mission also needs to be sure that gender considerations are taken into account during the implementation of regular Mission processes and procedures. Staff become very busy with the day-to-day implementation of programs and often do not consider other issues until required to do so. As with other issues, gender considerations, regardless of people's good intentions, can easily be forgotten if they are not integrated into other Mission required processes and procedures. The office in charge of these processes, usually the Program Office, needs to be sure gender has been included appropriately before giving its approval by:

- Adding the consideration of gender issues to the activity approval memo format to ensure that teams do not forget to include an analysis of gender considerations when developing new activities;

- Developing a comprehensive repository (possibly housed with the Program Office) for the data the Mission tracks as part of its performance monitoring plans. Data would be updated once a year as part of the R4 portfolio review process. The officer(s) in charge of maintaining the database would be responsible for ensuring that all relevant data is sex disaggregated;

- Including an analysis of gender considerations as part of the annual portfolio review process;

- Including a section on gender considerations in each of the annual activity monitoring reports; and

- Including an analysis of gender considerations into each new scope of work (except in cases where the analysis included in the activity approval memo justified omitting this). The scope of work should not only include a description of the relevant issue but should also include relevant evaluation criteria for addressing the issues.

STEPS TO BE TAKEN IN THE COMING YEAR TO INTEGRATE GENDER INTO THE MISSION'S PORTFOLIO

Objectives and Commitments (2002)

SO 1 Task/Objective for 2002	Person Responsible	Due Date	Description of Completed Task and What Remains for Next Year
SO 1			
All SO 1 Sectors			
Sex-disaggregate all people- and firm-level data.			
In future, all studies involving people/business-level interviews or surveys should gather information on the gender of the ownership of the business and should analyze the results accordingly to determine if there are gender differences in experience.			
Business Association			
Request current implementing partners (IRIS, CIPE) to examine potential differences in business women's and men's experience with bureaucratic procedures and red tape. If possible, IRIS could identify the sex of the ownership of a limited selection of survey's from the previous study and reanalyze the selection for gender differences. Alternatively, a limited supplemental survey could be conducted or focus groups held. Any additional study should try to determine if women encounter additional difficulties in dealing with red tape. Does it take longer for women-owned businesses to complete the necessary documentation or to receive government approvals or licenses? Do women business owners handle the bureaucratic processes themselves, or do they tend to ask male employees or relatives to handle it for them? Are there issues of corruption and bribery that male and female business owners deal with in different ways? Do male- and female-owned businesses pay the same or different amounts of official or unofficial fees?			

SO 1 Task/Objective for 2002	Person Responsible	Due Date	Description of Completed Task and What Remains for Next Year
Analyze the pension reforms in order to gender-disaggregate impact, looking especially at replacement rates and contribution levels for men and women under the new system. Consider changes to the proposed legislation to ensure that men, women, and disadvantaged groups have adequate protection for their retirement. (The research of the World Bank in this area could be a useful reference [Gender in Pension Reform in the Former Soviet Union, Castel, P and Fox, L, September 1999]).			
Activities working with or through business associations (most notably, USAID's credit program implementers) should gather gender-disaggregated information from the associations on their membership to better understand the potential impact of their activities on members and how the association members will best help achieve USAID's objectives.			
Provide training on gender integration for business associations with which USAID and its implementing organizations work. The training should focus on the importance of analyzing gender issues related to their activities to better understand, and therefore address, the needs of both male and female members.			
Develop creative ways of pairing women's business associations and those managed by women with some of the more-developed business associations in Romania so women's business associations and those managed by women can learn from the more-developed associations how to provide better services to their members and how to better advocate government for change. This might also provide a way of helping women business owners develop more extensive and influential networks by bringing them in closer contact with some of the more-developed businesses and associations in the country.			

SO 1 Task/Objective for 2002	Person Responsible	Due Date	Description of Completed Task and What Remains for Next Year
Water Users Associations			
The implementing partner should be encouraged to track information on (1) the gender make-up of the members of the association, (2) the gender breakdown of the decision-making positions, and (3) gender breakdown of members participating in meetings.			
Consider the timing and venue of meetings to accommodate the schedules of both male and female members.			
Make special efforts, through focus groups, surveys, and interviews, to learn the irrigation/water use concerns and needs of women in the community.			
Provide training to the associations in gender integration, focusing on the importance of analyzing gender issues, understanding the needs of their female (and minority) members, and explaining why addressing their needs leads to better programs for everyone.			
Credit /SME Development			
To gather more information about loan-seeking behavior of men and women, USAID-funded credit implementers should sex-disaggregate information about the associations' member businesses, application rates, denial rates, and default rates. Organizations could also examine outreach mechanisms to ensure information about the loan programs is reaching as wide an audience as possible.			
To gather more information about loan-seeking behavior of men and women, the SME assessment could include questions specifically addressing issues such as risk aversion and concerns regarding credit.			

SO 1 Task/Objective for 2002	Person Responsible	Due Date	Description of Completed Task and What Remains for Next Year
Design training programs in women's leadership and business skills development to improve the business management ability of women and to develop their confidence to pursue business opportunities. Include a segment on credit, providing basic information on how to analyze a business's credit needs, what credit should and should not be used for, how to plan for repayment of the loan, and how to apply for a loan.			
Develop a business internship program for young women to help develop the confidence of women in their abilities and to build their business and leadership skills.			
Develop activities that promote images of successful business women. Promoting images of successful women entrepreneurs and business executives may help build confidence in women to undertake new business initiatives or expand their smaller businesses. This would also promote more positive images of women in the media and public acceptance of women entrepreneurs. Activities could include television interviews, newspaper articles or a news series, poster campaigns, local contests for successful women entrepreneurs (as is being held by one local Romanian business women's NGO), and other creative ways of promoting women's success in business to the public.			
Agribusiness			
In advertising the crop insurance and warehouse receipts system, the implementing organization should be sure that mechanisms used include venues and times convenient to men and women, taking into consideration factors such as differences that men and women have in print media preferences, television programming choices and viewing times, the frequency at which men and women			

SO 1 Task/Objective for 2002	Person Responsible	Due Date	Description of Completed Task and What Remains for Next Year
go to locations where advertisements are located (for example, women may be more likely to see a flyer posted at the school or health clinic where women are more likely to bring the children), household duties that may take preferences over scheduled meetings if they conflict.			
The new activity should conduct an analysis of men's and women's farming practices, noting particularly differences in access to farming inputs, in crop preferences, in access to and use of distribution systems, and in other issues that may affect access to and interest in a warehouse receipts system.			
The new activity should conduct an analysis of the interest of men and women in accessing credit for agribusiness, their interest in a crop insurance program, and any differences they may have in their tolerance of risk to better understand how to promote the program for both male and female farmers.			
SO 2.3			
In all studies, assessments, evaluations, and survey tools, sex-disaggregate all people-level indicators when appropriate. Special attention should be paid to data providing information on the dynamics of gender relations: how things are changing.			
All SO 2.3 Sectors			
Notify partner organizations, government officials, and donors that gender issues are important to USAID and the Democracy and Governance Strategic Objective Team. Many of the partners stated that USAID's vocal support of the issue would help push the envelope.			
Integrate gender awareness issues, where relevant, into training curricula and processes. Encourage implementing partners, when designing strategies, to examine how varying policies and strategies can differentially affect and reach both genders.			

SO 1 Task/Objective for 2002	Person Responsible	Due Date	Description of Completed Task and What Remains for Next Year
Local Governance			
Use the local government program as an opportunity to develop citizen participation and dialog with government on national issues by mounting local-level public information campaigns about draft civil code items (Equal Opportunity Act, Freedom of Information Act, pension reform, and health care reform).			
Integrate gender-awareness training into other training programs for local government units.			
Encourage implementing partners, when designing strategies, to examine how policies and strategies can differentially affect and reach both genders.			
If local interest exists, provide support for the creation of a women's caucus among key members of local government, associations, and labor unions.			
Political Parties			
Support programs that aim to reform political parties' internal decision making.			
Encourage political parties to reach out to women voters and to promote women to positions of leadership within the party.			
Support a women's caucus (women league of voters) with a women's agenda that can prioritize the issues important to women. The Humanist Party and the Social Democratic Party have started a women's caucus, but it is still in the nascent stages. Electoral reform could be a good issue to get women to rally behind.			
Support political party strengthening activities for women and youth. A "road show" program, which could target women and youth in the urban and rural areas from around the country, is a good way to increase the capacity of disenfranchised party members and simultaneously to train and promote future women leaders.			
To target youths, investigate the development of a civic education program. Ensure that civic education curricula are inclusive of gender and ethnicity issues.			

SO 1 Task/Objective for 2002	Person Responsible	Due Date	Description of Completed Task and What Remains for Next Year
Civil Society Organizations			
Integrate gender awareness issues, where relevant, into training curricula and processes for sub-grantees in CSO strengthening activities.			
Encourage implementing partners to collect information on the demographics of sub-grantee organizations (management, staff, volunteers, beneficiaries, members) to better understand the relative contribution of men and women to civil society and the relative impact of USAID programs on men and women.			
Continue to support linkages between media and CSOs, which could lead to greater gender awareness of social issues, both within the media and society as a whole. A project that partnered media and CSOs (on domestic violence or trafficking) may help to sensitize the media to the issues and educate CSOs on how to work fruitfully with the media.			
Train CSOs and particular advocates for women's rights/issues in the effective use of media for public awareness and increased visibility of gender issues.			
Labor Unions			
Support union activities that promote awareness raising and advocacy within the union on women specific labor rights.			
Support linkages with local labor unions and CSOs. Since labor unions appear to be taking a proactive role in many issues related to women's rights, tap this momentum and organize lobbying efforts for upcoming legislation (i.e., Equal Opportunity Act for Men and Women).			
Ethnic Relations			
Conduct an in-depth gender analysis of the target population in the planning and design stage of all ethnic relation activities to ensure that potential differences between genders, and ways to address them, are taken into account.			
Analyze the strategies and lessons learned from the USAID-funded reproductive health programs targeted at the Roma communities.			

SO 1 Task/Objective for 2002	Person Responsible	Due Date	Description of Completed Task and What Remains for Next Year
When applicable, incorporate Roma men and women in policy and project development to ensure the project's sensitivity to Roma culture and ethnic identity. As a result of traditional roles, women may not speak as freely in a mixed groups setting; it may be necessary to meet with women-only groups to attain a female perspective.			
SO 3.4			
SO 3.4 All Sectors			
All of the public information campaigns (for reproductive health, child welfare, and labor redeployment) should pay careful attention to gender issues when developing their messages and their outreach approach. They need to determine if messages need to be tailored differently for men and women, or other disadvantaged groups like the Roma. They need determine what outreach methods will most effectively reach their target audiences and if there are differences in where the targeted men and women might see or here the messages.			
Reproductive Health			
Analyze the results of the initial reproductive health activities targeted to male audiences and focus more future efforts on approaches found to be particularly successful in changing male family planning usage, thereby increasing overall usage in the population.			
USAID/Romania is planning to conduct an assessment of the many reproductive health activities it has funded to ensure that important lessons learned can be incorporated into the new reproductive health activity. This is a wonderful opportunity to look more in-depth at the gender issues involved. The analysis should look specifically at how different approaches worked for different sub-groups: men, women, youth, rural, urban, and Roma. Analyzing the successes (or problems) of the models tested may provide some suggestions on how to best target these populations in future.			

SO 1 Task/Objective for 2002	Person Responsible	Due Date	Description of Completed Task and What Remains for Next Year
Continue activities that target subgroups with particularly high abortion rates such as the Roma and adolescents.			
Institutionalized Children			
Work with the Authority on Child Welfare and UNDP to develop better management information systems to keep track of the children in their care, especially encouraging the tracking of gender-disaggregated information on the children. UNDP has prepared an action plan for collecting a wide range of gender statistics in Romania; institutionalized children are noticeably lacking. USAID may be able to encourage UNDP to include institutionalized children in its plans.			
Labor Redeployment			
Analyze the community participation methods used in the local economic development program to determine how they could encourage higher levels of participation by women. The lessons learned should be applied to other programs, particularly the new local government program, as appropriate.			
Undertake an in-depth gender analysis of the unemployment benefit program. The analysis should consider differences in average length of employment and unemployment, salary differentials, and the impact of reductions in health insurance benefits.			
Health Reform			
Analyze the impact of the new health care reforms on men and women's access to services. Work with the GOR to develop ways of meeting the health care needs of those who fall through the cracks.			

SO 1 Task/Objective for 2002	Person Responsible	Due Date	Description of Completed Task and What Remains for Next Year
Trafficking and Domestic Violence			
Provide financial and technical assistance for local NGO activities that provide support services to victims of trafficking and domestic violence for women and children, such as counseling, shelters, health care, hotlines, legal assistance, economic opportunities (micro credit or employment training), and childcare services.			
Explore opportunities for establishing projects that increase women's economic opportunities, especially targeting young women (the group most prone to trafficking).			
Investigate linkages between Romanian and U.S. organizations (possibly through the Romanian-American Sustainable Partnership Umbrella Grants Program) whose activities focus on prevention of violence against women and assistance for female victims of violence.			
Provide support for the analysis and drafting of legislation on violence against women.			
Encourage the development of an official government and NGO working group on violence against women (including domestic violence and trafficking) to coordinate efforts and share lessons learned.			
Support relationship-building efforts among organizations providing support services for victims with the local police in order to assist the victims through the legal system and to aid the police in their investigations.			

SO 1 Task/Objective for 2002	Person Responsible	Due Date	Description of Completed Task and What Remains for Next Year
Provide training for judges, police, prosecutors, and investigators in the following areas: legal issues surrounding human trafficking, how to deal with the victims of domestic violence and trafficking, proper procedures in investigating and prosecuting cases of domestic and sexual violence, and approaches to presenting information on domestic and sexual violence to courts. Providing this training through local NGOs that provide services for victims would assist with the relationship building described above.			
Work with USAID/Kiev and USAID/Chisinau to access their information, including data and videos.			
Support information dissemination campaigns on the risks of trafficking, legal means of migration and employment, the methods employed by traffickers and the risks to victims, and available social, psychological and legal services for victims.			
Support for activities that develop partnerships between the media and NGOs on target issues, such as domestic violence and trafficking, might help to sensitize the media to the issues while educating NGOs on how to work fruitfully with the media.			
Examine whether Romanian-Serbian partnership activities (SO2.1) might provide a good foundation for future cross-national NGO cooperation regarding trafficking in women.			

ANNEX D

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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