



CHEMONICS INTERNATIONAL INC.



Women in Development IQC

**Women's Legal Rights Initiative**

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**Annual Report on Best Practices, Lessons Learned and Success Stories  
Illustrations from Albania, Guatemala and Southern Africa**

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## ACRONYMS

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| CAO       | Citizens Advocacy Office (Albania)   |
| CEDAW     | Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women  |
| CICAM     | Centro de Investigacion, Capacitacion y Apoyo a la Mujer/Center for Research, Training and Support for Women (Guatemala) |
| CONAPREVI | National Coordinator for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Violence Against Women (Guatemala)                      |
| EGAT/WID  | Office of Women in Development, USAID  |
| GL        | Gender Links (South Africa)  |
| IOM       | International Organization for Migration   |
| NGOs      | Non-government organizations   |
| OSCE      | Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe  |
| SADC      | Southern Africa Development Community  |
| SEPREM    | Secretaria Presidencial de la Mujer /Presidential Secretariat for Women's Affairs (Guatemala)                            |
| SIDA      | Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency   |
| UNIFEM    | United Nations Development Fund for Women  |
| USAID     | U.S. Agency for International Development  |
| WAC       | Women's Advocacy Center (Albania)  |
| WLR       | Women's Legal Rights Initiative  |
| WNGOC     | Women's NGO Coalition (Botswana)   |



## SECTION I

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### Introduction

#### **A. Background to the Women's Legal Rights Initiative**

Over the past decade, the expansion of democracy has generated new challenges and issues for societies in general, and for women in particular. Democratic reform should enable all citizens to participate fully in all aspects of life and society in order to benefit equitably from political change. Unfortunately, legal and customary barriers often prevent women from exercising their full legal rights, and utilizing existing laws and protections. Many citizens—both men and women—are unaware of existing laws and legislation that are designed to assure equal rights and protections to women in society. Continued subordination of women, poverty and poor economic conditions, globalization of the market for sex workers and cheap labor, lack of awareness of human rights and access to remedies can all combine to produce continuing exploitation, abuse, and the inability of women to achieve the full implementation of their rights and capabilities.

To address these challenges, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), through the Office of Women in Development (EGAT/WID), awarded the Women's Legal Rights Initiative (WLR) task order to Chemonics International Inc. and its subcontractors, the Center for Development and Population Activities (CEDPA), MetaMetrics Inc., Partners of the Americas (POA), Edelman Communications Inc. (ECI), and Development and Training Services Inc. (DTS). The Women's Legal Rights Initiative is an initial three-year project with a possibility of a two-year extension. Working in collaboration with USAID's WID office, Regional Bureaus, and Agency missions worldwide, the Initiative seeks to strengthen and promote women's rights by enhancing opportunities for women to take part fully in the economic, social and political workings of their societies. To achieve these goals, the WLR team is coordinating with international donors and local stakeholders to provide strategies for identifying obstacles and constraints that block women's exercise of internationally mandated human rights, to discern gaps that exist in order to address and rectify inequities, and to document best practices in knowledge and practice related to women's legal rights.

Following a period of assessment and analysis, and working in collaboration with USAID missions, the WLR initiative identified its initial focus countries and regions for the project - Guatemala, Albania, the Southern African region.

#### **B. Purpose of the Report**

This report outlines four best practices recommended by the WLR legal specialists for the design and implementation of a women's legal rights initiative. The recommended practices are illustrated with examples from organizations in the WLR focus countries and regions, Guatemala, Albania and Southern Africa. Using a variety of methods each of these organizations has successfully implemented an element of one of the four best practices presented.

Identifying and sharing “best practices” in international development may not mean transplanting a program or strategy wholesale from one country to another. Culture, tradition, religion, geography, the various social, economic, political, and legal systems – all must be taken into account before attempting to replicate any single program or project. Yet, “best practices” in one place can be a model for another and principles may be transferable and adapted in different contexts. Not all practices and lessons are positive, but the lessons learned from even less than successful programs may allow others to evaluate, adapt, and implement programs that benefit from others experiences. Each year, the Women’s Legal Rights Initiative will share both best practices and lessons learned during the implementation of the WLR project. These may include highlighting model legislation, government mechanisms and programs, public awareness campaigns and civil society advocacy efforts whose goals are to advance women’s legal rights. This year the best practices shared are those that the WLR legal specialists have identified as essential to strengthen women’s legal rights and to develop a women’s legal rights initiative. These practices are to construct a legislative framework; enhance justice sector capacity; strengthen civil society organizations; expand public awareness.

As part of Year One of the Women’s Legal Rights Initiative, the WLR teams conducted assessment and analysis trips to Guatemala, Albania, and Southern Africa. During these trips, WLR team members met with USAID Missions, international donors working in the countries, government representatives, and members of civil society. Through interviews, on-site observations and meetings, the teams were able to collect information, identify mechanisms, programs and activities in each of the countries that may be examples of the four “best practices” for others. Additional secondary research on the selected practices was conducted as well. Since this is the first year of the project, this initial Report on Best Practices, Lessons Learned and Success Stories will focus on existing programs, legislation, and activities that are being implemented in the identified countries to help advance women’s legal rights. In subsequent years, it is expected that the Report will also highlight best practices, lessons learned and success stories from the Women’s Legal Rights Initiative itself as its new initiatives begin to be implemented and documented by the WLR team and its implementing partners.



## SECTION II

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### Best Practices, Lessons Learned, and Success Stories

This section discusses best practices, lessons learned, and success stories as they relate to the following areas in Year One focus countries:

- Legislative Framework
- Justice Sector Capacity
- Civil Society Advocacy
- Public Awareness.

Contact information for key organizations that are cited in this section is provided in Annex A; Annex B includes bibliographies.

#### **A. Improve Legislative Framework to Protect Women's Legal Rights**

Achieving women's legal rights requires gender responsive legislation and constitutional guarantees that create the basis for nations to protect and guarantee the rights of women. Indeed, most national constitutions around the world now grant equal rights to all their citizens. As noted by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), however, the ways in which constitutions incorporate women's human rights vary a great deal from country to country. There need to be strong constitutional and legal frameworks so that governments acknowledge the rights of all citizens. Governments demonstrate responsiveness by designing mechanisms to implement these rights, and they should be held accountable to their citizens if they do not protect, defend and implement rights as fully as possible.

In addition to their own national constitutions and laws, 174 nations have ratified the international women's rights treaty known as the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) as of May 2003, and another group has signed but not fully ratified CEDAW. Many nations have signed and ratified such other international instruments as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights as well as various regional instruments. By doing so, they have given these international instruments equal legal status with their national laws. However, implementation of legal rights based on these international covenants is severely lacking. Moreover, there are gaps in the legal framework that may prevent women from full participation in the political system, deny them protection against domestic violence, or block them from owning and inheriting property.

The Women's Legal Rights Initiative is identifying national and local efforts to improve legislation that protects women's rights and creates mechanisms to help implement this legislative framework. Examples of some of these efforts follow.

## 1. Guatemala

***Congressional Commission on Women, Minors and Family.*** A creation of Congress, the Commission on Women, Minors and Family has recently been working on reforms of the Guatemalan criminal code as it affects women's rights and crimes against women, particularly sexual harassment and domestic violence. Responding to initiatives by SEPREM and CONAPREVI<sup>1</sup> and increasing consensus within civil society, the Commission accepted these reforms and as of June 2003, they are pending in Congress. These efforts demonstrate collaboration between the offices of the executive branch and a commission of Congress as they respond to government initiatives as well as the interests of civil society to reform legislation to protect and advance the rights of women.

***Social Development and Population Law.*** Passed in October 2001 and covering a broad range of issues, this law makes support of reproductive health programs a policy of the state and a policy that would need to be respected and continued with future changes in government administrations. In a country where women have high fertility and maternal mortality rates, this reproductive health policy assures funds for contraception and makes reproductive health education obligatory in the schools. Through this law, Congress may assign funds specially for the implementation of reproductive health policy and not rely on funds from international aid donor programs alone.

## 2. Albania

***Family Code.*** A new Family Code was adopted in Albania in 2003 that has guarantees of rights for women in various areas including divorce and property. Implementation of the Code, however, requires significant efforts to raise public awareness of its provisions. For instance, the new code contains important guidelines regarding the ownership of property. Under the new law, parties may decide at the time of marriage which of the parties will hold title to specific property. Though intended to protect women's property rights, this new requirement could be ripe for manipulation and abuse. Ironically, women could be pressed to disavow property rights at the time of marriage resulting in women's rights being severely diminished rather than enhanced. The public, judges and lawyers must be aware of potential abuses so that the Code is properly implemented and rights protected. Proper utilization of the new law could lead to the empowerment of women and improve their economic and social status, thereby decreasing the likelihood that they might face economic difficulties, one of the main reasons a growing number of Albanian women fall prey to traffickers.

## 3. Southern Africa

***South Africa: Domestic Violence Law of 1998.*** Replacing an earlier Prevention of Family Violence Act 133 of 1993, the Domestic Violence Act of 1998 recognizes that domestic violence is a serious social evil and obstacle to achieving gender equality. It gives a broad definition to domestic violence, and includes any form of abuse, not only physical abuse. The Act offers protection to any victim of domestic violence who is in a domestic relationship with an abuser. The Act places a duty on members of the police to inform a victim of her or his rights at the

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<sup>1</sup>See Section II.B. for descriptions of SEPREM and CONAPREVI.

scene of the incident of domestic violence. Police must adhere to guidelines issued by the National Commissioner of the South Africa Police Service; failure to follow the guidelines may result in disciplinary proceedings against the police officer in question.

***Botswana: Department of Women's Affairs, Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs.*** The Department of Women's Affairs in the Botswana Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs has a mandate to coordinate and facilitate all work related to women. The Department published a report entitled: Report on a Review of All Laws Affecting the Status of Women in Botswana, September 1998. The Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) provided financial support to the Department of Women's Affairs in order to conduct this review. As a result of this publication, the following laws were amended: Affiliation Procedures Act, Penal Code of 1998, Criminal Procedure Code, Deed Registry Act, Employment Act, Citizenship Act, and Public Service Act of 2000. The Department has also published a simple review of its national action plan for the general public entitled National Gender Programme, Popular Version, July 1999 that is based on the Beijing Platform for Action.

## **B. Enhance Justice Sector Capacity to Enforce Women's Legal Rights**

The implementation of women's human rights lies with the judiciary and within the wider judicial/legal system. The existence of laws does not in itself mean that women's human rights will be implemented and enforced. It is only when the courts as well as the other judicial players including lawyers, prosecutors, law enforcement, and service providers fully understand the rights of women, that they can be expected to enforce these rights through the judicial and legal process. In too many places, judges have not been trained and are unaware of human rights legislation, treaty obligations, and how they may apply the international human rights treaties to their own domestic case decisions. Too often, the justice systems face inefficiency, lack of independence, corruption, intimidation of judges, prosecutors, police and witnesses, lack of knowledge and lack of will to have the desire and capacity to enforce rights that exist on paper. Also, tradition and customary law sometime impede the implementation of human rights of women throughout a country. In the identified WLR countries there are new efforts to try to enhance the judicial sector capacity that may be models for others.

### **1. Guatemala**

***National Coordinator for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Violence Against Women (CONAPREVI).*** In November 2000 the Guatemalan government announced the formation of CONAPREVI, which is charged with promoting and executing public policies for the prevention and eradication of violence against women. It is chaired by the Secretary for Women's Affairs, and includes public representatives from the judiciary, the Prosecutor's Office, the National Statistics Institute and three representatives from the private sector Network Against Violence Against Women. CONAPREVI is an example of government and civil society working together to develop a uniform and simplified process for victims to file complaints of domestic violence, and to collect meaningful data and statistics on the frequency, severity and consequences of domestic violence.

**Justice Centers.** The Guatemalan Supreme Court established a Judicial Modernization Program to create a framework under the 1996 peace accords for new approaches to governance. With the support of USAID, Guatemala has developed justice centers as a new operational model. These structures bring together police, prosecutors, judges, public defenders, local civil society and private lawyers to solve problems in a collaborative framework. The core element of the justice centers is people coming together in a voluntary effort to break with traditional structures. The results so far are impressive. The centers show improved client service, access to justice, and quality of service, all with greater transparency. This, in turn, has advanced procedural due process and human rights.

## 2. Albania

**Train-the-Trainers Police Training Institute.** Organized for the teaching staff at the Police Training Institute and Police Academy in Tirana, this Train-the-Trainers program utilized materials developed by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. The training was implemented by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Mission in Albania and the National Network Against Gender Violence and Trafficking, in coordination with the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The training aimed to: enhance efforts to combat trafficking and violence against women; ensure witness protection; and maintain effective police procedures. There is also specialized training by British police to train Albanian police in the area of victim protection. Under this training, when possible, female police officers will be used to process trafficking cases and work with victims.<sup>2</sup>

## 3. Southern Africa

### **Malawi: Ministry for Gender and Community Services “Women & Law in Malawi.”**

Traditional cultural practices and customary law continue to be heavily debated topics in Malawi. With structural change in 1995-96, the government abolished traditional courts, but still today these courts continue to exist. Consequently, the Ministry for Gender and Community Services has initiated various efforts to increase understanding concerning the legal framework that should exist. The Ministry produced a booklet entitled *Women and Law in Malawi*, which introduces the international Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). This booklet uses simple language and is targeted to people in rural areas. It identifies nine major legal areas and more than one hundred laws in Malawi that may be covered under the CEDAW umbrella.

**Botswana: Unity Dow Citizenship Case.** In 1991, Unity Dow, a lawyer and activist, instituted court proceedings against the Government of Botswana challenging the constitutionality of legislation that denied married women the right to pass on Botswana citizenship to their children. Prior to 1984, women had this right, but the new 1984 Citizenship Act repealed it, even though men married to non-citizens could pass on the right of citizenship. Dow was married to a non-citizen of Botswana and two of her three children were born in Botswana after the passage of the 1984 legislation. Thus, these children were denied citizenship. Using certain provisions of the Botswana Constitution as well as the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights and the

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<sup>2</sup> MSI report *Anti-Trafficking Programs in Albania*, Management Systems International, Final Report, February 18, 2003, prepared by Alexis A. Aronowitz.

international Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, even though CEDAW had not been ratified by Botswana, Dow argued that women are entitled to the same rights to nationality as men. Despite government appeal, Dow won the case and a new non-discriminatory law was passed in 1995. This case is an example of how the judicial process is a powerful tool for change. Botswana's regional and international obligations were brought into focus and legislation, which was in direct contradiction to international obligations, was overturned. Since the Dow decision, Botswana has ratified both CEDAW and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

### **C. Strengthen the Ability of Civil Society Organizations To Advocate for Women's Legal Rights**

In the WLR countries there are fairly well developed civil society organizations that work on a variety of issues related to women's legal rights. Many are quite active, particularly on issues of violence against women. Activities leading up to the UN Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China in 1995, and the energy of women's non-government organizations (NGOs) following Beijing to hold governments accountable for their signatures on the Beijing Platform for Action, have helped develop the capacity of NGOs to advocate more intentionally than ever before. Increased access to communication and the globalization of strategies and campaigns have made NGOs increasingly effective. Yet, many civil society organizations need further development in order to contribute effectively to a country's political, economic, and social development. More women are demanding that their voices be heard at all levels of decision making and that their rights be advanced and protected by governments in the social, political, economic, legal and judicial systems. Exciting and effective civil society advocacy is taking place throughout the world. Best practices from one country may readily be adapted to another. NGOs are often open and anxious to share their strategies and techniques, as was evidenced at the NGO Forum in Beijing, and are willing to learn from others. The WLR teams identified a number of civil society advocacy programs that illustrate various methods used to implement this best practice.

#### **1. Guatemala**

***Convergencia Civico Politica de Mujeres.*** Founded in 1994, Convergencia Civico is a network of professional women who united to increase the participation of women in public life, inform and train the public on gender-related issues, and form similar networks in rural areas. They encourage citizen participation and civil society advocacy, and work toward strengthening women's contributions in the economy and monitor gender budgeting. Working with state agencies, associations and other NGOs, Convergencia provides leadership in areas of women's health, violence against women, education and job creation.

***Coalition-building to advocate for the Law of Social Development and Population.*** Generally, according to the US Department of State Country Profile, efforts to mobilize broad-based citizen groups in Guatemala around particular issues have been uncommon. Yet one such coalition was organized and effective. Members of government, political parties, NGOs, women's organizations, and some churches formed an effective coalition to support the passage of the

Law of Social Development and Population<sup>3</sup>. This coalition sought to gain support in Congress and monitor the progress toward passage of the Law. Although challenged by some indigenous groups and the Catholic Church but supported by other international donor organizations, this ad hoc coalition is considered an example of effective coalition building to advocate on women's health and human rights in Guatemala.

***American University Washington College of Law - Women and International Law Program.***

From 1997-1999, the Women and International Law Program launched the "Transforming Women's Legal Status in Latin America" project to address significant problems of violence against women and gender bias in legal systems throughout the region. The project sought to build bridges between academic institutions, women's legal groups, and advocates in Latin America and representatives from North American law schools and faculty. Exchanges, research, training and developing curriculum and teaching methods from a gender perspective were part of the project. Although no longer still operating in Central America, the project provides a model for future development of gender-sensitive curricula, pedagogy, and institutional strategies for training of those in the judicial and legal systems.

## **2. Albania**

***Women's Advocacy Center (WAC).*** Founded in 1997 by the Association of Women Jurists, WAC provides legal services, conducts training programs, and publishes a periodical on issues affecting women's legal rights. WAC has provided legal assistance and support services to more than 1,000 women in Albania. They have worked in cooperation with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to improve the system for training police in Albania and with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in the development of a business enterprise that provides jobs to victims of traffickers. WAC has been active in providing protection to victims and organizing a Balkans regional conference focusing on trafficking as a social, legal, and administrative problem. They recently obtained funding from the Soros Foundation to develop an awareness campaign on the new Albanian Family Code.

***Vlora Women's Hearth.*** The Vlora Women's Hearth is an NGO working against trafficking in Albania. Their work has three focus areas including a shelter for victims of trafficking, public awareness campaigns aimed at the prevention of trafficking, and rehabilitation and reintegration services for victims. Through their cooperation with the Citizens Advocacy Office<sup>4</sup>, they provide legal consultation for victims who choose to file charges with the police. They have conducted roundtable discussions with police, prosecutors, judges, and the media in order to find solutions and methods of collaboration. In addition, they monitor and evaluate the police referral process. The Hearth Center has worked in cooperation with UNICEF and Management Systems International (MSI) in their anti-trafficking program. In their awareness and prevention campaigns, they have used folders, posters, radio presentations, television debates and seminars as tools for increasing public awareness. They have also conducted activities in schools with children at the lowest levels, aimed at the most vulnerable groups. Vlora Women's Hearth also

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<sup>3</sup> See II.A.3 above.

<sup>4</sup> See Section II.E below.

provides screening, shelter and immediate assistance, including support in finding jobs, to repatriated Albania women and girls.<sup>5</sup>

### 3. Southern Africa

***Botswana: Women's Shelter Project.*** The only shelter in Botswana, the Women's Shelter Project of the Kagisano Society was born as a result of the Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women. Women come from all over the country to the Shelter, which has never been without clients. As young people realize that domestic violence is not acceptable, they too are utilizing services provided by the Shelter. The Shelter receives help getting the word out about their services through other NGOs, the government's Women's Affairs Department, and local stakeholders. Local police provide protection by referring people to the shelter and patrolling the area around it.

***Botswana: Legal Aid Clinics.*** Emang Basadi Legal Aid and Counseling Center. The only legal aid office in the country targeting women and children, they have so many potential clients that they limit their services to low-income women. Through their counseling center they provide counseling services to victims of domestic violence. They will also invite members of the extended family for consultation in order to resolve issues. Their civil education component works to sensitize the community to domestic violence and advocates simplifying laws for the public. Emang Basadi has conducted research and produced reports on Land and Property Grabbing (2002), and Political Education Project: A Strategy That Works (1998).

University of Botswana Law School Clinic is the only law clinic to be staffed by volunteer law students. The majority of cases addressed are divorce cases. Many of the divorce cases involve domestic violence, and the High Court has been increasingly responsive to these cases by acknowledging the rights of the victim and the responsibility of the perpetrator. Following divorce, many men default on maintenance for child support and alimony; the clinic addresses many of these cases as well. Approximately 110 Law students provide services in the clinic. All 4th and 5th year students are required to participate and they receive class credit for their work in the clinic.

***Mozambique: Muleide.*** Muleide is an NGO that provides legal aid services for both men and women. In addition to domestic violence cases, currently many of the cases addressed involve HIV/AIDS discrimination and other labor and employment issues. If possible, they try to resolve cases using alternative dispute resolution within the family or place of employment because of the lengthy court process.

***South Africa: University of Western Cape Community Law Center.*** The University of Western Cape Community Law Center has produced a pre-trial handbook entitled A Guide to Pre-Trial Consultation in Rape Cases written by Samantha Waterhouse in 2002, to help women understand the court process in the cases of rape. It explains how the criminal trial works and what women can expect when giving evidence. The handbook is also an excellent tool for legal and judicial personnel involved in the process, and contains detailed notes to enable rape counselors to understand the emotional demands that a trial places on survivors. This information can help to

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<sup>5</sup> MSI report, *IBID*.

reduce the potentially traumatic impact of the criminal justice process and help improve the evidence submitted in court. The Community Law Center has also developed training materials for police from the 12 SADC countries and provides gender sensitivity training for police and prosecutors.

***Mozambique: T-shirt Campaign.*** This campaign was sponsored by four NGOs to focus on the new Family Code in Mozambique. The four lead NGOs were: Uniao Nacional de Camponeses (UNAC); Muleide; Associacao Mocambicana de Mulher na Comunicacao Social (AMICS); and Associacao Mocambicana das Mulheres de Carreira Juridica (AMMCJ). These NGOs have coordinated an extensive review of the law and have advocated for its passage. They distributed T-shirts with slogans supporting the Code for people to wear as they demonstrated at Parliament. The campaign has been successful through the first stage of passage of the Family Code, but it must still undergo further process before final passage. The NGOs are now working on passage of a new domestic violence law.

***Botswana: Women's NGO Coalition (WNGOC) Fundraiser.*** In an effort to raise money for the WNGOC Coalition as well as to raise public awareness of their work, the WNGOC sponsored a Dinner and Dance with the Botswana Police Band providing the entertainment music in August 2003. The public information about the Dinner Dance raised awareness about WNGOC's efforts to educate and work in rural communities in Botswana.

#### **D. Increase Public Awareness of Women's Legal Rights**

Public awareness is critical to creating change in the way a society operates and governs itself, particularly when it comes to longstanding discriminatory practices that have strong traditional and cultural roots. Women, particularly in rural areas, often have no awareness of the rights that have more recently been guaranteed to them by new constitutions, legislation and international conventions. Even for women who know of CEDAW and similar instruments, they may be unaware of services and processes that will afford them access to justice against violence and discrimination. Academic institutions, public organizations, the media, individual citizens, and even government representatives need to learn about human rights and share this information with others, both in formal and informal settings. Public awareness of women's legal rights is being raised through legal literacy campaigns, legal information and aid centers, and media campaigns. Women need to be trained in political and legal participation, advocacy, coalition-building and networking to ensure that the general public becomes more aware of women's legal rights in each country.

##### **1. Guatemala**

***CICAM.*** In a public awareness campaign, CICAM developed a poster on domestic violence that demonstrates the steps necessary to file a claim. It walks a woman through each phase of the process, identifying legal aid clinics, courts, and other services available to women. The poster placed in strategic places for the public raises not only the awareness of domestic violence, but also emphasizes that the legal and judicial system has places and services where remedies may be sought.



## 2. Albania

***Citizens Advocacy Office (CAO).*** The CAO is one of the largest and most active NGOs in Albania and plays a leading role in the Anti-Corruption Coalition, a network of NGOs. They are currently opening satellite offices in a number of cities throughout Albania. CAO provides legal and psychological support to victims of corruption and trafficking and has handled more than 1,000 cases in the past year. They collaborate with the International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX) on the Hapur media program designed to inform the public about important issues affecting the country.

***IOM media clips.*** The International Organization for Migration conducted an 18-month awareness-raising campaign aimed at potential victims of trafficking. Two media clips emphasize the message “you are not for sale”. One in particular portrays a young bride and targets those young women who are trafficked through marriage proposals. A music video is another method of public awareness. The IOM is leading anti-trafficking campaigns for children in primary and secondary schools.

## 3. Southern Africa

***Mozambique: Women’s Forum.*** The Forum is a network of national and foreign organizations and institutions – government and non-governmental organizations, trade unions, women’s sections of political parties, donor agencies and others that work on behalf of women.

Independent, non-partisan and non-religious, its common focus is respect for human rights and advancing the status of women. It also works through its network of organizations to strengthen gender awareness, influence decision-makers, and exchange information. Through its activities on information and lobbying, it provides posters, pamphlets, seminars, research, information campaigns, and an Internet website. Its trainings focus on a wide range of topics including lobbying and advocacy, capacity-building, project preparation and management, and media. It also coordinates with other sectors on various lobbying and advocacy campaigns.

***Mozambique: Women Lawyer’s Association.*** Reaching out via the media, the Women’s Lawyer’s Association in Mozambique has a radio program on legal rights where people can call in or write for assistance. They particularly provide legal aid services to vulnerable groups, including domestic violence victims and indigent women. They were part of the “Everyone Against Violence (TCV)” campaign from 1996-2002 that provided legal assistance in police stations. As a result, police who used to say that domestic violence was a private matter, now forward cases to them.

***South Africa: Tapes on Buses.*** One of the key needs in public awareness campaigns is to reach the people where they are in their daily lives. A good example of this is a project by Gender Links (GL) in South Africa. GL produced audiocassettes about the rights of women and violence against women. Not just lectures, the cassettes are produced in interesting formats such as plays and short dramatic presentations. These cassettes are distributed to taxi and bus drivers, and played while men are riding the buses as they go to work in the mines or to other village meetings. The cassettes are produced in local languages and GL has produced other audio-visual materials to accompany the tapes for distribution.

***Botswana, Mozambique and South Africa: 16 Days Against Violence / 16 Days Of Peace Campaigns.*** NGOs around the world identify with the Sixteen Days of Activism Against Gender Violence that runs from 25 November to 10 December each year. The 25th of November was declared the International Day for Prevention of Violence Against Women by the United Nations in 1991, and the last day of the campaign, December 10th, is known as International Human Rights Day. A very active NGO in South Africa, Gender Links (GL) specializes in gender, media, governance and development and coordinates the Sixteen Days of Peace Campaign in South Africa. Examples of the various events and activities include:

- Media briefings, interviews and messages, including suggestions for topics such as: “real men do not abuse,” “sexual harassment in schools,” “world peace begins at home,” “violence in teen courting,” and “sexual violence is a justice issue”
- Public marches and demonstrations
- Collaboration with men through Men’s Forum and other NGOs on such projects as workshops, story-telling, poetry, drama, radio, door-to-door campaigns, and testimonials targeting men’s groups as well as schools and youth organizations
- Collaboration with various government departments such as the Department of Justice, South African Defense Force, Department of Social Development, and the Government Communications and Information Service in South Africa
- Enlisting the participation of the President and top officials for endorsement and public awareness events, such as in South Africa where President Thabo Mbeki visited schools and distributed whistles to children with the request that they ‘blow the whistle against violence’
- Pledge campaigns contained in brochures with the Sixteen Days of Peace logo, which include a tear-off pledge. An example of one pledge is from the South African Department of Defense: I reject violence against women and children. I pledge to expose, oppose and combat all violence directed at women and children – in whatever form – wherever I encounter it, be it in my home, my workplace or in my community.”
- Courts in local communities are ‘open’ and women particularly are encouraged to go into court so they can observe a court session and see the process as observers, rather than in response to a traumatic and threatening situation where they are personally involved.

- In South African bus stations, where so many of the public gather, Gender Links put together public displays on women killed in violence and the impact of their deaths and this violence of families and society. Displays included personal items, such as clothes and shoes.

## SECTION III

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### Summary and Conclusions

#### **A. Using Best Practices, Lessons Learned, and Success Stories through the Women's Legal Rights Initiative**

During Year One, The Women's Legal Rights Initiative identified, in collaboration with Missions, EGAT/WID, and Regional Bureaus, regions of the world and specific countries where the Initiative would begin its work. As a result of a consultative process, Guatemala, Albania and Southern Africa were selected for Year One. The WLR team conducted country assessments and analyses, and developed country action plans. Now, along with identified partners, they are ready to begin implementing those action plans. Because this is its inaugural year, the WLR team presents four best practices identified by the WLR legal specialists as critical to the design and implementation of a Women's Legal Rights Initiative. The four recommended practices are illustrated with examples of successful methods used by organizations in Guatemala, Albania and Southern Africa to implement these practices.

It is important to note that methods to implement these "best practices" in one context do not automatically transfer to another. Politics, culture, religion, tradition, and many other issues may factor in to the effectiveness of one method in another place and time. Yet experiences may be used to stimulate creative thinking, transfer models, and encourage the adoption of techniques that have proven effective elsewhere. Too often people, institutions, and organizations continue to reproduce over and over again the same programs and approach, because that is "the way we have always done it". Sharing "best practices" and the variety of methods used to implement them allows us to see how others are working to accomplish similar goals, and to gain from their experiences, both the successes and the lessons learned. Through this Report on Best Practices, Lessons Learned and Success Stories, it is hoped that others might gain insight into examples of governmental mechanisms and legal frameworks, methods being utilized to enhance judicial capacity and legal systems, civil society advocacy techniques, and public awareness campaigns.

#### **B. Future Reports**

The Women's Legal Rights Initiative will produce annual reports on best practices, lessons learned and success stories during the life of the project. With each year it is anticipated that model "best practices" will increasingly come from the work and implementation of the WLR project itself. The report will be seeking to identify ways in which the project experiences are resulting in:

- measurably increased mobilization of leadership to promote women's legal rights
- broadened local community participation to improve women's legal status
- measurably improved knowledge to implement policies, strategies, and programs for women's legal rights.

At the end of the third year of the project, there will be a comprehensive “Best Practices in Women’s Legal Rights Report,” which will be translated into French, Spanish, Portuguese, and Russian, and disseminated widely to the international partner and donor community.

## **ANNEX A**

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## **ANNEX B**

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