# Seminar: Strengthening Women's Citizenship in the Context of Statebuilding



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Clare Castillejo

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Cover photo of meeting in Sierra Leone: courtesy of the Club of Madrid

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# Background

This seminar was part of the inception phase of a FRIDE research project that will investigate how women's experience of citizenship in fragile states is affected by state-building processes and identify how such processes can be used as opportunities to strengthen women's citizenship. This research project will run from November 2008- November 2010 and the debates, knowledge and questions generated by the seminar will be used to inform the design of this project. A summary of this research project and a list of seminar participants are attached as Annex 1 and 2.

The seminar had the following specific aims:

• To bring together researchers, policy makers and civil society representatives to reflect on possibilities for strengthening women's citizenship through state-building processes.
• To identify policy options for the international development community to promote women's citizenship within its support for state-building in fragile states.
• To identify priorities for policy relevant research on women's citizenship and state-building, and particularly opportunities to link knowledge on state-building to knowledge on gender equality.
• To strengthen networks among researchers, policy makers and members of civil society working on women's citizenship in fragile states.

The seminar began with an overview of theoretical approaches and regional experiences of women's citizenship, and was then structured to address the three core elements of citizenship – rights, political participation and the ability to hold the state to account. It ended by examining the role of donors in supporting women's citizenship in fragile state contexts and the way forward for research in this area.

# Report of Seminar Proceedings

## Opening session: Challenges for women's citizenship in fragile states

This session introduced some theoretical approaches to women's citizenship and examined the challenges for women's citizenship in three different regional contexts.

The session began with a presentation by **Clare Castillejo** outlining the main theoretical approaches to women's citizenship and why state-building processes are opportunities to strengthen women's citizenship. She described how the concept of citizenship has been re-defined in order to capture women's experiences, in particular the fact that women face a particularly large gap between formal and substantive citizenship, and often experience citizenship at local level or as mediated through community membership.

Castillejo highlighted some of the opportunities offered by state-building processes to strengthen women's political participation, rights and ability to hold the state to account and suggested some policy options for doing this. In particular, she argued that state-building strategies must include strengthening women's citizenship as an explicit aim; must engage with customary institutions that have most influence over women's lives; must address the economic and social barriers that prevent women from turning formal citizenship into substantive citizenship; and must support women's organisations to articulate their needs and participate at every level. More knowledge is required on how states can be constructed that are accountable and responsive to women citizens.

There followed presentations addressing the challenges for women's citizenship in three distinct regions.

Hussainatu Abdullah spoke about West Africa, Carmen de la Cruz about Latin America, and Annette Weber about the Greater Horn of Africa. While these presentations revealed very different contexts, some common themes emerged.

All three presenters identified women's exclusion from the public sphere as a central barrier preventing women from acting as full citizens. Abdullah described how, in West Africa, women's relegation to the domestic sphere means that they are not seen as political actors and their needs are not included in the national development project. De la Cruz described how, in Latin America, issues related to the family are considered "private matters", thereby denying women important rights at family level. Weber discussed how, in Southern Sudan and Eritrea, women were able to play a public role during conflict, but following peace settlements were returned to the private sphere and excluded from newly emerging power structures.

The issue of women's access to rights was a common theme. Abdullah outlined the challenges for women's rights and legal reform in West Africa posed by the existence of three different legal systems – formal, Islamic and customary. She described how constitutional reform can be an opportunity to significantly strengthen women's formal rights, but that in some cases (such as Nigeria) certain elements of women's rights have been deemed too sensitive to address in the constitutional reform process. De la Cruz argued that while strong national and regional women's movements in Latin America have made significant progress in pressing for women's formal rights, the challenge is now to make these rights substantive, as in practice many women lack access to justice and impunity for gender violence remains widespread.

A highly divergent picture emerged of women's political participation in the three regions. Abdullah described the low levels of women's political participation in West Africa that result both from economic and social barriers and from actions by male leaders to block women's participation, which they

view as a challenge to male power. She gave the example of Sierra Leone where quotas for women have only been provided at the lowest level of local government, despite recommendations for parliamentary quotas. Moreover, women's informal political activities are unrecognised, further marginalising their contribution to politics. In contrast, De la Cruz described how in Latin America, women's political activism has been a strong force for change, the women's movement is well linked to other political movements, and there has been significant progress in facilitating the integration of Latin American women into politics - although not top-level decision-making bodies. Weber stressed the importance of understanding women's participation in both formal and informal governance systems, pointing out that in Southern Sudan, there is a 25% quota for women in elections, but they remain completely excluded from the informal governance systems where the most important decisions are made.

All three presenters discussed how women's citizenship has been re-shaped by conflict and how women have played an important role in conflict and peace-building, only to be excluded from post-conflict power structures. Weber outlined how, in Southern Sudan and Eritrea, women's participation as combatants gave them a higher status and role in decision-making during the war, but that they were pushed back into the domestic sphere following peace. Hussainatu described how women's experiences of conflict and peace-building in Sierra Leone and Liberia have informed the post-conflict agenda for the women's movement, but that recommendations made in transitional justice processes for women's political inclusion have not been implemented. According to De la Cruz, in Latin America, the women's movement has been an important force, challenging conflict and violence and pressing for democracy. All agreed that while conflict and peace-building are opportunities for women to transform their gender roles, such transformations are not necessarily lasting and women must continue to maintain the pressure after peace.

The discussion raised the following key points:

- The potential role of regional bodies in promoting women's citizenship (following the example of SADC).
- The challenges of reforming customary law to respect women's rights.
- The possibilities for greater affirmative action to bring women to power.
- The need for women to "keep up the pressure" after peace to ensure that they are included in state-building processes and the power structures of the new state.

## Session two: Strengthening women's rights through state-building processes

This session explored the opportunities and challenges for strengthening women's rights and access to justice through state-building processes.

The session began with a presentation by **Gaby Ore Aguilar** who described how conflict exposes women to extensive rights violations, for example through the suspension of normal legal protections, territorial control by non-state actors, impoverishment and displacement. Women's gender, political and ethnic identity is both the basis for the rights abuses they suffer during conflict and is re-shaped by this experience, becoming the basis for women collectively to mobilise for justice.

Ore argued that women's access to post-conflict justice is particularly limited. Women's negative experiences of the justice system and lack of trust in the state often make them wary of involvement in justice processes, while economic constraints are a major barrier to women seeking justice. If post-conflict state-building processes are meaningfully to deliver rights for women, they must move beyond simply improving women's access to pre-conflict justice structures. Instead, "gender justice" must be a central aim of legislative and justice sector reform; the state must develop a

shared vision together with women of what type of state should be re-built; and power and accountability structures must be transformed.

**Jamesina King's** presentation addressed the situation for women's rights in post-conflict Sierra Leone. She described how women's experience of conflict and role in peace-building gave women greater awareness of their rights. Following the conflict women mobilised to make claims for rights, with some success, especially in the area of legal reform. However, over time women's activism has weakened and government has become less responsive to women's voices.

King outlined how post-conflict transitional justice and state-building in Sierra Leone affected women's rights and argued that the potential of the transitional justice processes to strengthen women's rights was not fully realised. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) made important recommendations for legal and governance reform to strengthen women's rights, but the government failed to implement many of these recommendations and donors did not fund them. The Special Court did not provide the expected capacity building to the national justice system.

Institutions with responsibility for women's rights have been created in Sierra Leone, including a Gender Ministry and Human Rights Commission. However, these are weak and under-funded and there is little political will within the more powerful state institutions to address women's rights. King argued that donors have also failed to promote women's rights within their support for state-building. In particular they have not provided sufficient funding to women's organisations, have subsumed women's issues under sectoral strategies and have failed to address women's economic and social rights. King stressed that promoting women's rights in Sierra Leone requires addressing formal and informal institutions, building political will and challenging the culture of patriarchy and discrimination.

The discussion raised the following key points:

- The need to continue to press for women's rights during "normal" times and not just in periods of conflict, crisis or elections
- That strengthening women's rights in post conflict contexts requires a holistic approach which goes beyond standard legal and justice reforms to address informal systems, economic and social rights, and non justice sectors.
- The potential of customary justice systems for women's rights. In particular, the contradiction that customary justice is more accessible to women, but also more rooted in discriminatory gender power relations.
- The importance of legal aid systems in making formal rights accessible to poor women.
- The need for donors to adopt a long term and comprehensive vision for women's rights, not just support projects and short term measures.

## Session three: Strengthening women's political participation through state-building processes

This session explored how state-building processes related to governance and political reform can provide opportunities to enhance women's political participation at every level and across a broad range of governance institutions.

**Helen O'Connell** opened the session with a presentation that addressed the different roles of the state and civil society in promoting women's political participation. O'Connell described how democratisation and decentralisation processes have opened up spaces for citizen engagement, but that marginalised women often remain excluded. Likewise, governance reforms have strengthened accountability and rights, but have not been gender sensitive. O'Connell argued that the "good governance" agenda is focused on administrative efficiency rather than deep political change and that more action is required to strengthen local democracy

and increase women's political participation. She suggested that states can promote women's rights and political participation through a conducive legal and policy environment, committed senior political leadership, and greater transparency.

O'Connell described the importance of women's civil society organisations in building democracy and ensuring women's political participation. She outlined the numerous roles these organisations play, including advocating, educating, monitoring, and supporting women to stand in elections. Although strong women's organisations are vital for building real democracy and ensuring women's participation, financial support for women's organisations is being reduced and this work is under threat. O'Connell stressed that a critical mass of women in positions of power is required to transform discriminatory politics and policies.

**Magali Quintana** explored the evolution of women's political participation in Guatemala. She described how women were largely excluded from politics before the conflict, but civil society activism for peace and engagement in the peace process provided new spaces for women to participate and have a greater voice in decision-making. The peace-building process also led to greater recognition of women's rights and the creation of specific state institutions with responsibility for both women's issues and indigenous women's issues. As the women's movement in Guatemala became stronger during the 1990s, it moved from expressing women's needs to demanding women's political rights.

Quintana described how women in Guatemala are increasingly involved in party politics and stand for election in significant numbers, especially at local level. However, many women involved in politics feel the role they are given within political parties is one of supporting policies designed by male party leaders and that they have little power to influence decision-making. While some high level political posts are now held by women, these are a small minority. Serious barriers to women's political participation remain in terms of poverty, lack of time, lack of self confidence and education, mistrust of the political system, and

patriarchal culture.

The discussion raised the following key points:

- Whether it is the number of women in politics, or their role, ability and commitment, that constitute the most important factors in bringing about policy changes that benefit women. It was agreed that equal numbers are a matter of justice.
- The tensions in the relationship between northern NGOs and southern women's movements and the need for northern NGOs to support, rather than take the space of, southern organisations.
- That strengthening women's political participation requires addressing women's participation in informal institutions and at household and community level. Donors are beginning to recognise this, but it is difficult for them to find ways to work with informal institutions, especially where civil society is weak.

## Session four: Building a state that is accountable to women

This session explored the barriers that prevent states from being accountable to women and examined how state structures and institutions can be developed that are accessible and accountable to women.

**Hanny Cueva Betata** began the session with an overview of some of the challenges posed by state accountability to women. She pointed out that the lack of progress on the Millenium Development Goals (MDGs) related to women's empowerment (e.g. MDG 3 and 5) reveal that states do not face consequences for failing to uphold women's rights. Moreover, standard models for building state accountability by strengthening the voice of citizens to make demands, or providing citizens with choice over state services, do not work for women, as their access to public spaces to express voice, and to the market to exercise choice, is mediated by men. However, evidence shows that initiatives designed specifically to strengthen the voice of women and create a constituency that demands

gender equality can help build state accountability to women, as can the inclusion of women at all levels of decision-making.

Cueva Betata argued that state accountability to women requires the inclusion of women at all levels of decision making and in all oversight procedures, as well as systems for assessing public officials on their performance in promoting women's rights. In order to build state accountability to women, institutional reform is required at three levels: there need to be normative and legal changes to set gender equality standards; procedural changes to instruct and incentivise implementers to deliver on gender equality; and the establishment of performance measures and corrective procedures to ensure that there is corrective action when gender equality policies are breached.

**Amelia Ward** described the role played by women's groups in advocating for peace during the conflicts in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea and the importance of regional women's networks in addressing the regional nature of the conflict. Women's involvement in peace-building opened up greater space for women's voices to be heard and stronger demands for government accountability to women following the establishment of peace.

Ward described the high level political commitment to women's issues within the Liberian government and current efforts to rebuild the Liberian state as one that is more accountable to women, including through establishing a Ministry of Gender and mainstreaming gender issues within the national poverty reduction strategy. However, although new forums have been created for women to participate in decision-making and exercise voice, other factors including poverty, exclusion, lack of awareness and extremely high levels of gender-based violence prevent many women from participating in such forums. Ward stressed that Liberian women require basic economic and social security, as well as accessible information about legal rights, political processes and institutions, in order to be able to hold

the government to account.

Janah Ncube spoke about challenges to building state accountability to women in Southern Africa. Ncube argued that in Southern Africa there is little real separation between the government and state and that governments are often more accountable to donors, powerful political parties and patronage networks than to citizens. In order to ensure state accountability on women's rights there needs to be both "bottom up" demand from citizens and "top down" pressure from international and regional institutions. Ncube argued that at national level there needs to be support for more women to enter parliament, as well as a strengthening of parliament's role to enable it to hold the executive to account on women's issues. At international level, donors must insist that partner governments allocate significant resources to women's issues, and regional bodies and the United Nations must pressure states to uphold the treaties to which they are signatories (including CEDAW).

Ncube stressed that the women's movement in Southern Africa has a vital role to play in expressing women's concerns, holding the government to account, and providing a space from which women can move into formal politics. However, it needs to become more collaborative and professional and also desperately requires more funding from donors. Finally, Ncube argued that state building is about power and that those who hold power determine what type of state emerges. At the moment, this leaves women – the most powerless in society – with little influence in the state-building process.

The discussion raised the following key points:

• What types of institutions can best provide poor women with a mechanism to hold governments to account (e.g. Ombudsperson). How accountability for gender equality can be built into such institutions' mandates.
• Whether women politicians can successfully run for office with a campaign based on women's issues. More broadly, to what extent women politicians act

as a channel for women citizens to hold the government to account regarding their concerns.
• How the changing relationship between donors and partner governments in the context of the Paris Declaration – particularly increases in the use of general budget support - affect the ability of donors to promote gender equality policies by partner governments.

## Session Five: What role for international donors?

This session explored how donors can support stronger citizenship for women in fragile states. In particular, how donors can integrate gender equality issues into their support for governance reform, institution strengthening and other state-building activities, and how they can ensure that women's rights and participation remain a priority for the international community and partner governments within complex fragile state environments.

Annemieke Santos opened the session by outlining some ways in which the international community can support the development of states that are responsive and accountable on gender in post-conflict contexts. She argued that the international community should promote women's political participation at every level, including women's involvement in peace talks, women candidates for elections and women's civil society activity. The international community must also promote national implementation of international human rights commitments and adopt a gender sensitive approach to Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration and Security Sector Reform processes, in order that the legal, justice and security institutions include women and uphold their rights. Santos stressed that donors should ensure that development aid provides the basic economic and social rights that are a requisite for women's empowerment and participation.

Santos identified some of the challenges for the international community in promoting gender in its

conflict and post-conflict assistance. Although donor governments have policy commitments to promote gender equality (including that of National Action Plan on Security Council Resolution 1325) this policy commitment is often not matched by political will. In addition, many donor staff working on conflict, peace-building and governance reform have little knowledge of gender issues. Santos highlighted a number of current opportunities to strengthen the focus on women's citizenship within the international agenda. These include the discussions on aid effectiveness in fragile states that were generated by the Accra High Level Forum in September 2008; United Nations reform processes; the establishment of the Peace Building Commission; and current discussions regarding a gender action plan for the European Commission. Santos stressed that international actors should be held to account on gender equality.

**Sophie Monseur** gave an overview of how donors can support women's citizenship in fragile states. This includes supporting women's formal citizenship, for example through legal reform, or women's involvement in peace processes and constitution drafting; as well as supporting women's citizenship as practice, through economic empowerment, education, health, political participation and protection from violence. Monseur outlined the European Commission's three pronged approach to promoting women's citizenship: policy dialogue on gender equality with partner governments; gender mainstreaming within the European Commission's security, humanitarian and development assistance (including within new aid modalities); and specific programmes at country level to empower women. Monseur identified some of the future challenges for donors' work on women's citizenship as the need for better coordination on gender equality approaches between security, humanitarian and development operations; addressing discriminatory social relations; and building substantive citizenship.

The discussion raised the following key points:

• The effect of high levels of donor support on the accountability relationship between states and citizens, including women citizens.
• The effect of northern government's non-aid policies on women's rights in southern countries (including trade, security and migration policies).
• The need to address northern actors that generate gender inequality in the south.
• The potential effect of the economic crisis on donor support for the gender equality agenda within development.
• How donors can address gender equality within informal institutions, for example through a mix of aid instruments and support to civil society.
• Building incentive structures and accountability systems within international organisations to ensure staff deliver on gender policy commitments.
• The role of bilateral donors in holding multilateral (especially UN) organisations to account for their actions on gender equality in post conflict settings.

# Session six: Summary and the way forward

This session drew together some of the main points from the day's discussion, identified gaps in analysis, and pointed to possible areas for future research on women's citizenship in contexts of state-building.

**Evelien Kamminga** summarised the key issues that had arisen during the discussions and argued for a broader and more practice-based approach to the main elements under discussion (citizenship, state-building, rights and political participation), as well as a greater focus on the informal institutions and processes that are so central to women's lives.

Kamminga pointed out that the discussions had often used a restrictive conception of citizenship as simply a formal relation to the state. She argued that in order to understand the complexity of women's citizenship, there needs to be a greater focus on citizenship as practice, asking how women claim entitlements and engage with power and authority at multiple levels and

within a specific local context, as well as how entitlements change during and after conflict. Kamminga also stressed that state-building should not be seen simply as the construction of state institutions, in isolation from civil society. In fact, understanding state-building requires an understanding of the nature of local civil society, the relationship between civil society and the state, and the changes to this relationship and to the power of different actors that are brought about by conflict and reconstruction processes.

Kamminga pointed out that during the discussions on rights and justice, the focus had remained largely on the formal justice system, with customary systems dismissed as inevitably oppressive for women. She stressed that it is important to understand the multiple ways that women seek justice and negotiate different legal systems, as well as to recognise that customary systems can have more to offer women because of their flexibility and focus on livelihoods. Instead of dismissing customary justice systems, the emphasis should be on linking these to formal justice systems in order to strengthen women's access to rights at every level. In terms of women's political participation, Kamminga stressed that this must be understood as both formal and informal citizen action, not just participation in formal political systems. In relation to both justice and political participation it is important to look not only at women's access to these systems, but also at the gendered nature of justice or political outcomes.

Finally, Kamminga outlined some areas where further research on women's citizenship could add value. These included the following:

• Exploring the processes through which women become "active citizens", with a sense of entitlement and an identity that is based on having rights. In particular, asking how state-building processes affect - and are affected by - the development of women's "active citizenship".

• Examining how women's entitlements, and the routes they use to claim these, change during and after conflict. In particular, documenting the citizen action of women during and after conflict and asking how this action has altered women's access to decision-making spaces and processes, and ability to influence decisions that affect their lives.

• Examining how the interface between formal and customary legal systems shapes women's access to justice and outcomes from justice. In particular, asking how the changes in the relationship between the formal and informal systems that take place in the context of state-building affect women's ability to claim their rights.

• Understanding how state-civil society relations are constructed in different contexts and how these relations are altered by conflict and post-conflict state-building processes. In particular, asking what such changes in state-civil society relations mean for women's civil society organising and citizen action and the ability of women to have their voices heard.

# Annex 1

## Women's citizenship research project summary

*This two year research project will investigate how women's experience of citizenship in fragile states is affected by state-building processes and will identify how such processes can be used as opportunities to strengthen women's citizenship – specifically to enhance women's rights, participation in governance and relationship to the formal state. Its findings will be addressed to donors and national policy makers working in fragile states.*

### Aims:

This project aims to inform and promote state-building processes in fragile states that result in stronger citizenship for women. It will do so through the fulfilment of the following objectives:

- Generate new evidence on how state-building processes impact women's citizenship in different types of state-building contexts.
- Provide evidence-based recommendations to international donors and national policy makers working in fragile states on how they can integrate the promotion of women's citizenship into state-building strategies.
- Stimulate greater dialogue between researchers and policy makers working on governance and state-building and those working on gender equality.
- Strengthen the capacity of researchers in Africa, Latin America and Europe to undertake research and advocacy on issues of women's citizenship and state-building.

### Rationale:

There is currently great interest within the international development community in how to build accountable and responsive states. Much research is being undertaken on this issue and this is being used to inform national state-building processes – and donor support for these processes - in a wide range of fragile state contexts. However, these state-building approaches have so far lacked any substantial gender analysis. In particular, they have not engaged with existing knowledge about women's relationship to the state and experiences of citizenship; asked how state-building processes impact women and men differently; or explored how these processes could be used to enhance state accountability and responsiveness to women.

In many fragile state contexts women's relationship to the state is fundamentally different to that of men. For example, this relationship is often more limited, exists only at local level, or is mediated through family, community or customary institutions. This means that women face specific barriers in claiming their rights, participating in governance and holding the state to account – in effect in acting as full citizens.[1]

The intensive state-building processes that are often undertaken in fragile and post conflict states have the potential to transform the structure of the state and its relationship to its population, and thereby to profoundly alter the nature of women's citizenship. Depending on the approach of those driving the state-building agenda these processes can be used to either enhance or undermine women's rights, participation in governance and relationship to the state. It is therefore important that state-building processes are designed in such a way that they actively strengthen women's citizenship and improve states' accessibility, accountability and responsiveness to women. In order to do this the national policy makers and international donors that are involved in state-building require knowledge on:

- women's experiences of citizenship and relationship to the state in different types of fragile state contexts;

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[1] While there are many definitions of citizenship, this research project defines citizenship as rights, participation in governance and the ability to hold the state to account. This formulation draws on definitions that are widely used within the literature on women's citizenship.

- the impact of different state-building processes on women and how these can be used to strengthen women's rights, participation in governance, and ability to hold the state to account;
- how national policy makers and international donors can practically promote women's citizenship within their state-building strategies and actions.

FRIDE's project will help provide this knowledge by generating evidence and analysis on the above topics and offering practical recommendations for national policy makers and international donors involved in state-building. FRIDE's project will also seek to strengthen the gender analysis within state-building theory by elaborating connections between existing debates on state-building and on gender equality, and by facilitating greater dialogue between researchers and policy makers working in these two areas.

## Country studies and partners:

The project will be based on five country case studies in Africa, Latin America and Europe. These will include countries that have recently emerged from violent conflict and state collapse and where processes of state reconstruction are now underway, as well as countries that have experienced prolonged social conflict, inequality and poor governance and are now engaged in extensive state reform.

The focus on these two different types of state-building contexts will facilitate comparison and the identification of commonalities and differences, as well as enable experience sharing and learning between research partners working in different contexts.

The research will be conducted by a FRIDE research team, together with partner organisations in each country. These will be organisations with expertise in gender and governance research, as well as excellent national networks. The first case studies to be conducted will be Sierra Leone and Guatemala where research partnerships are already established with Campaign for Good Governance (Sierra Leone) and Asociación de Investigación y Estudios Sociales (Guatemala).

## Activities:

In each country field research will be conducted on how state-building processes affect the three central elements of citizenship: women's rights and ability to claim these rights; women's participation in formal and informal governance processes; and women's ability to access the state and hold it accountable. This research will examine how women's experiences of citizenship are being altered by a variety of state-building processes, including constitutional reform, development of oversight institutions, legal and justice reform, security sector reform, democratisation, and decentralisation of governance. The findings will be used to generate country specific and cross-country comparative reports and policy briefs, and to develop recommendations for national policy makers and international donors involved in state-building.

As the research is intended to influence actual state-building strategies and actions in fragile states, advocacy with national policy makers and donors (at both country and headquarters level) is a central component of the project and will take place throughout the life of the project. This will be done through ongoing informal discussion and formal dissemination events at national and international level.

At both international and national level the project will seek to increase dialogue between the research and policy communities working on state-building and those working on gender equality. It will do this by building strong links within both communities, elaborating connections between these two areas within its research and advocacy, and bringing representatives from these two communities together at project seminars and workshops

There will be a strong focus throughout the project on capacity building and south-south learning, with continual contact between research partners throughout the project. The African, Latin American and European research partners come from different types of state-building contexts and have different

areas of specialisation and knowledge, and this diversity will provide rich opportunities for experience-sharing and learning.

### Outputs:

For each case study country there will be reports on the impact of state-building on women's rights and participation in governance, as well as briefs for policy makers and donors on opportunities to strengthen women's citizenship through national state-building processes.

At cross-country comparative level there will be reports on the possibilities for enhancing women's rights and participation in governance through state-building in different types of fragile state contexts, as well as policy briefs for international donors on the options for strengthening women's citizenship through donor support for state-building processes.

Research outputs will be disseminated through national and international level seminars, meetings with national policy makers and donors, presentation of findings at conferences and within networks of which FRIDE and partner organisations are members, and through FRIDE and partner organisation websites.

### Audience:

The primary audience for the research will be international donors that support state-building processes in fragile states and national policy makers engaged in state-building in the four case study countries. In addition, the research will aim to influence the international research communities working both on issues of governance and gender, and to inform the activities of civil society organisations that promote women's citizenship in fragile states.

### Timeframe:

The project will run for 24 months starting from November 2008. The inception phase is already underway and pilot research was conducted in Sierra Leone in June 2008.

- Nov – Dec 2008: Methodology design and consultation
- Jan 2009 – March 2010: Country level research, report writing and dissemination
- April – July 2010: Preparation of cross-country findings and reports
- Aug – Oct 2010: International level dissemination and advocacy activities

# Annex 2
## List of participants

*Abdullah,* Hussainatu, Independent Scholar and Consultant, Dakar, Senegal

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# FRIDE

This FRIDE seminar brought together experts working on gender and governance issues to explore how women's experience of citizenship in fragile states is affected by state-building processes and identify how such processes can be opportunities to strengthen women's citizenship. The seminar was part of a two-year FRIDE research project that examines policy options for strengthening women's citizenship in the context of state-building.

There is currently great interest in how best to support state-building processes that result in the development of states that are accountable and responsive to their populations. Yet within this debate there has been little analysis of how state-building processes impact women and men in different ways, or can be used to strengthen the state's accountability and responsiveness to women. In many fragile state contexts women's relationship to the state is fundamentally different to that of men and they face specific barriers in claiming rights, participating in governance and holding the state to account — in effect, in acting as full citizens. However, the intensive state-building processes that follow conflict can transform political relationships and state structures, and therefore have the potential to profoundly alter the nature of women's citizenship.

Drawing together existing debates on state-building and on women's citizenship, this seminar explored women's experience of state-building in different countries and asked how state-building processes can be used to strengthen women's rights, political participation and relationship to the state, and how the international community can promote women's citizenship within its support for state-building.

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