

Project Name Mexico-Gender Equity Project: ProGenero...  
(LIL)

Region Latin America and the Caribbean

Sector Institutional Development (BI)

Project ID MXPE66938

Major Implementation Agency SEDESOL, General Directorate of  
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#### Country and Sector Background

1. Gender is not a sector, but rather a cross-cutting theme. ProGenero is designed to focus on gender stereotypes, expectations and institutional procedures that lead to inequalities and unfair access to resources and productive opportunities.

2. Mexico has made significant progress in terms of addressing the salient gender issues with which many other Latin American continue to struggle. Nonetheless, gender is still an important economic and social development issue in Mexico with inequalities persisting. A clear message emerging from a series of gender studies conducted by the Bank on education, labor market participation and earnings, micro-enterprise development, and ejido reform in Mexico, is that gender roles--in particular, women's domestic responsibilities and the expectation that men will provide the primary source of household income--have a significant impact on the acquisition of human capital and the differential abilities of men and women to participate in the Mexican economy. For self-employed women, the sectoral distribution and other characteristics of female-owned micro-enterprises is strongly influenced by the need to combine income generation with domestic work. Men, meanwhile, are more likely to work when they have young children, and to use older children and other household members as sources of unpaid labor for income-generating activities.

3. Gender roles have also have negative impacts on men. While the female labor market participation has increased, male participation has declined. Recent studies in Mexico suggest that as in other countries, when men's employment decreases, their status within their families is undermined, leading to social isolation and the loss of self esteem. Another gender issue persistent in both rural and urban areas is violence. Existing evidence shows that women and children are more likely to become victims of violence both inside and outside of the home. While the increase of women's participation in the labor market has challenged gender roles in Mexican society, the disproportionate access to credit for women's micro-credit

enterprises and persistent violence indicate that gender-related issues are a continuing concern for equitable social development in Mexico.

4. The Secretariat for Social Development (SEDESOL) promotes temporary and permanent employment, including access to credit and to productive projects in conditions of equity for men and women. However, inequality in access persists. The ProGénero Project seeks to support the efforts of the GOM in areas of gender and poverty alleviation in order to achieve more balanced, equitable gender roles among Mexican men and women in their daily, community life.

#### GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE ON GENDER

5. The social policy of the Government of Mexico (GOM) is based on several different pillars, including the development of family capital, promotion of productive social development, enhancement of social participation, and fostering gender equity.

6. In 1995, GOM launched the Plan Nacional de Desarrollo 1995-2000 (National Development Plan), which included as one of its objectives, the advancement of the status of women. More recently, in 1999, SEDESOL included in its mandate the goal to ensure that women comprise 50 percent of its beneficiaries. This is an enormous challenge that ProGénero seeks to help the GOM to address.

Learning and development issues to be addressed by the project:

7. The guiding principle of the proposed project is that it will apply a "true" gender perspective by addressing the consequences of gender expectations and roles on both sexes and considering the linkages between the genders rather than focusing solely on women. The LIL will provide important lessons on how communities can play a central role in the promotion of unbiased gender policies and anti-violence interventions. The successful implementation of this LIL will make a substantial contribution to the design of more effective projects that improve the well being of poor men and women by increasing gender equity and addressing norms, expectations, and values that lead to gender inequality and discrimination.

8. The LIL will build on and promote experimentation within already existing institutions and initiatives rather than creating new ones. Intensive monitoring and evaluation of the LIL will focus on the most effective roles government and local communities can play in development interventions. The LIL will support efforts to institutionalize a gender perspective in SEDESOL to ensure improved gender equity in the access to opportunities and resources of development programs.

#### Project Objectives and Strategy

9. The development objective of the Mexico Gender Equity Project--ProGenero, a Learning and Innovation Loan (LIL), is to facilitate the mutual learning and piloting of community based initiatives to promote gender equity and improved access to government supported income generation programs in the context of Mexico's strategy for poverty reduction and social sustainability.

10. To achieve its objective, the project will support the following activities: (a) strengthen the Secretaría de Desarrollo Social, Secretariat of Social Development--SEDESOL's capacity to incorporate a gender dimension in its poverty reduction and service delivery programs; (b) improve the

access of female producers to Fondo Nacional de Apoyo a las Empresas de Solidaridad (National Fund to Support Solidarity Small Enterprises - FONAES) through capacity building and technical assistance; (c) advance leadership opportunities for women and men by supporting community-based approaches to gender; and, (d) increase gender awareness and understanding among critical stakeholder groups.

#### Project Description

The project will consist of three components:

(a) Institutionalization of Gender Approach in Poverty Alleviation Programs. The institutionalization of a gender perspective in SEDESOL is important to ensure improved gender equity in the access to opportunities and resources of social and economic development programs. There are two sub-components: (a) capacity building and studies; and (b) institutional strengthening of Gender and Development Division.

(b) Community Based Gender Development. The objective of this component is to promote equitable, community-based actions to improve equity in opportunities for men and women, peaceful sociability, and respect to the dignity of all social groups, regardless of sex and ethnicity. There are three sub-components: (a) support to productive activities; (b) leadership capacity building; and (c) the Convive Program, a small demand-driven grants program.

(c) Gender Awareness. This component will promote awareness with regard to the value of equitable relations between men and women by transmitting new ideas and successful experiences that can be replicated throughout urban and rural Mexico. There are three sub-components: (a) promotional campaign of ProGenero; (b) sectoral media campaigns; and (c) recognition and honors to promote successful innovative gender experiences in the private and public sector.

#### Project Costs and Financing

11. Total estimated project costs are US\$3.87 million with a proposed loan of US\$ 3.06 million equivalent, US\$0.70 government contribution, and US\$0.11 beneficiary contribution.

#### Project Coordination and Implementation

12. The project would be implemented over a period of two years (2000-2002). SEDESOL's Direccion General de Evaluacion y Seguimiento (Monitoring and Evaluation General Directorate - DGES) will have oversight responsibility for ProGenero. The Division de Genero y Desarrollo (Gender and Development Division - DGD) within the DGES will coordinate the administrative and logistical aspects of project implementation. The DGD was created in July 1999 to oversee and coordinate international gender initiatives related to SEDESOL's programs, such as Beijing +5. Rather than create a new institution to function as the Project Coordinating Unit, the DGD will have this role. The DGD will be responsible for all project implementation activities, including accounting, disbursement, monitoring and evaluation, coordination, and supervision. The DGD is managed by a General Coordinator who will be supported by specialists on communication, strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation and financial administration, in addition to administrative support. Since the DGD is a relatively new division, the project will

support technical assistance to strengthen its institutional capacity as part of the Institutional Strengthening Component.

13. Although the DGD is responsible for project implementation, supervision and accountability, it will work collaboratively with the DGES, other SEDESOL Directorates and government agencies, and in close coordination with states, municipalities and local communities.

Monitoring and evaluation arrangements

14. The proposed LIL will pilot and learn from both community-based and institutional approaches to promoting gender equity. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) will analyze different types of interventions and incentives to create models that can be replicated in other areas, sectors, and countries. The system will be guided by causality criteria to assess the process and results in each step to support decision-making. The indicators will be complemented by qualitative data to enhance participation, incorporate beneficiaries' perceptions, and create an opportunity for them to provide feedback. The M&E will be systematically documented to enhance the learning process and exchange experiences with other projects. The M&E system follows the logical framework of the LIL, assessing component performance, outputs, and impacts.

Environmental and Social Aspects

15. The main stakeholders in the proposed LIL are SEDESOL staff in central and regional offices, NGOs, community-based organizations, women's productive organizations, and beneficiaries of SEDESOL projects in the areas where the LIL will be implementing pilot activities. The LIL will finance a baseline study and a monitoring and evaluation system designed to evaluate the impact of pilot activities. ProGénero is designed to strengthen and enhance the capacity of community-based organizations and learn from different pilot approaches to achieve this objective. In cases where indigenous communities are in the pilot areas, strategies have been incorporated to enhance their equal participation in the projects. The Task Manager is a social scientist and the project team includes a social scientist who contributed to design of the monitoring and evaluation system. The LIL is designed to approach gender equity as an innovative learning experience and therefore, the majority of the social analysis will be carried out during implementation.

Environmental assessment:            Environmental Category   [ ] A    [ ] B  
[X] C

16. No environmental impacts are anticipated from the proposed project activities.

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Note: This is information on an involving project. Certain components may not be necessarily included in the final project.

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