

## IPU's Gender Partnership Programme

Inter-Parliamentary Union  
[www.ipu.org](http://www.ipu.org)



## Democracy and gender equality

The achievement of democracy presupposes a genuine partnership between men and women in the conduct of the affairs of society in which they work in equality and complementarity, drawing mutual enrichment from their differences.

Article 4, Universal Declaration on Democracy, 1997



## In a few words

- The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) is the oldest political international organisation. Was created in 1889.
- Brings together some 160 national parliaments.
- Its objective is to strengthen democracy through parliaments.



## Democratic parliament

- A democratic parliament is a parliament that is:
  - representative, both socially and politically, of the people;
  - transparent, i.e. open to the nation;
  - accessible to the public so that they can contribute to work in parliament;
  - a parliament that is itself accountable to the people both for the performance in office and the integrity of its members;
  - and a parliament that is effective in carrying out its core functions.



## Democracy and effective participation of minorities

"Adopt and implement laws to end discrimination and provide for the effective participation of minorities and indigenous peoples in decision-making, including in parliament, while taking care to secure the effective participation of minority and indigenous women."

*The Chiapas Declaration (November 2009) adopted by the International Parliamentary Conference on Parliaments, minorities and indigenous peoples: Effective participation in politics*



## Objectives of the Gender Partnership programme

1. *Why* increase the number of women in parliament?



## Objectives of the IPU Gender Partnership programme

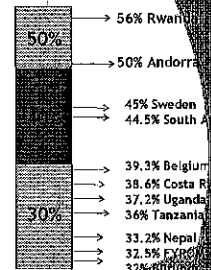
*What do we aim to achieve?*

- ① To increase the number of women in parliament;
- ② To support and enhance women parliamentarians' and women's input to the work of parliament;
- ③ To enhance Parliament's capacity to address and defend women's rights and equality between men and women.



## Women in Parliament

1995: 11.3% women in parliaments  
 2011: 19.3% representation of women in parliament  
 More than 30% of parliaments with over 30% women MPs have experienced a recent democratic transition



## Women in Parliament: Top and ...

- Rwanda and Andorra have a majority of women in Parliament;
- 44 houses in 37 countries have more than 30% of women members; (majority for developed countries, proportional systems, with special measures and having just ended a transitional period)
- Nine chambers in nine countries have no women



## Factors influencing women's access to parliament

- Public/private life balance
- Culture/mentalities/stereotypes/education
- Role of political parties
- Funding
- Electoral systems



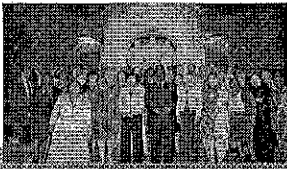
## Women in high-level decision making positions

### Executive (2010)

- 9 women out of 151 Heads of State (6%)
- 11 women out of 192 Heads of Government (5.7%)

### Parliament (2011)

- 14% of Speakers are women (40 / 187)
- 22% of Deputy-Speakers are women



## Objectives of the Gender Partnership programme

2. *Why* build the capacity of women MPs?



## From one journey to another

When women enter Parliament, they enter a new world, with its own set of rules and functioning, which has been historically dominated by men.

Once elected to Parliament, women face a new set of challenges: **the beginning of a new journey**



## Objective and subjective obstacles

### 2. Behaviour and attitudes

- conservative attitude of men MPs and population – see limited public role for women
- a lack of awareness of women's and gender issues
- below the belt remarks/sexist attitudes



## Objective and subjective obstacles

### 1. Rules and practices

- getting to know and master the rules
- unwritten rules
- Old boys' club
- political party manoeuvres with which women are not familiar
- confrontational debates
- tendency to have women's abilities always challenged as a way of discrediting their work



## Objective and subjective obstacles

### 3. Practical obstacles

- Juggling political and family responsibilities
- Lack of childcare support and facilities
- Financial limitations
- Strain on personal life

### 4. Personal fears and difficulties

- Lack of self-confidence
- Advancing in a mainly male domain



## Objectives of the Gender Partnership programme

3. *Why* build the capacity of Parliament to address gender issues and promote women's rights?



## How?

- ⊙ **Research and information:** Provide comparative information on women in politics
- ⊙ **Capacity building:** Support women in accessing and transforming parliament
- ⊙ Support to **gender mainstreaming** in parliaments
- ⊙ Support parliaments in addressing key **gender concerns** – women's rights and combating violence against women



## Objectives of the Gender Partnership programme

- ⊙ Research has consistently shown that the main drivers of change for gender equality are women.
- ⊙ Time to share this responsibility with men and parliament as a whole
- ⊙ Need for gender-sensitive parliaments: i.e. parliaments that serve as models for and champions of gender equality.



## Access to information

- Provision of comparative data on women in politics:**
- Annual analysis – Progress and setbacks of women in parliament
  - Monthly updated statistics
  - Global Map on Women in Politics (2010)
  - Global survey on Equality in Politics (2008)
  - Global survey on gender-sensitive parliaments (2011)
  - The representation of minorities and indigenous peoples in parliament: A global overview (2010)



## Access to information/Creating knowledge

- Database on Electoral Quotas for women: [quotaproject.org](http://quotaproject.org) (IDEA, Stockholm university, IPU)
- iKNOWPolitics: [www.iKNOWPolitics.org](http://www.iKNOWPolitics.org) (IDEA, IPU, NDI, UNDP, UNWOMEN)



## Support to building legal frameworks

- Trainings of CEDAW and women's rights
- Trainings on electoral systems and electoral quotas (Algeria)
- Expert mission on electoral systems and quotas (Tunisia (2011))
- Support to transitional processes (Rwanda)
  1. Training on engendering the Constitution
  2. Setting up a coordination mechanism
  3. Consultations with Civil society
  4. Drafting of a women's bill/charter



## Legal reform

•Democratic transitions offer a window of opportunity to redress inequalities of the past and advance gender equality

*Majority of post conflict states and states in transition have used the reconstruction period to design and adopt a legal framework that guarantees respect for gender equality and facilitates women's access to decision making positions (gender equality guaranteed in the Constitution; reference to CEDAW in Constitution, adoption of temporary special measures to promote women's political participation etc.)*

•Gender equality recognized as core element of sustainable democratic transitions



## Support to women in parliament

### BURUNDI

- Trainings on legislative drafting and public speaking
- Consultations and brainstorming sessions with civil society organisations
- Study on legislative priorities
- Awareness raising campaigns on legislative priorities
- Technical support to the women's caucus

### JORDAN

- Training on communication and relation with the media
- Cooperation between women MPs, women ministers, women in the media

### RWANDA

- Training of women and awareness-raising in constituencies



## Transforming Parliament into gender-sensitive institutions

- Support to parliamentary committees on gender issues
- Support to women's caucuses
- Support to gender mainstreaming initiatives/gender-sensitive budgeting
- Carrying out gender audits/assessments of parliaments



Thank you



## Next steps

- ① Networking among minority women - ex: via iknowpolitics
- ① Societal awareness - ex. promote role models of minority women in politics
- ① Gender-disaggregated data on minorities, including their political participation
- ① Research on the intersection between special electoral measures for women and minorities

