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# GUIDANCE NOTE

## Strategies and good practices in promoting gender equality outcomes in parliaments

United Nations Development Programme

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**As an essential institution in the democratic landscape of a country, parliament has an obligation to reflect the diverse needs, interests and experiences evident across all societies.**

**Parliament also has an obligation to ensure that all outputs – legislation, recommendations, debates or motions – actively work to eliminate all forms of discrimination.**

**Women's inclusion and effective participation in parliament is a key indicator of an open society – one that accepts the right of all people to contribute to the determination of their own future. Women's presence in decision-making is also critical in ensuring that their particular needs, interests and experiences are captured in the decision-making process.**

## Introduction

An effective parliament is an integral part of any democracy and a strong indicator of an open society.

Supporting a parliament to ensure it operates democratically can have a major impact on all aspects of the lives of citizens, including the empowerment of women and girls. It is through parliament that laws are passed, funding allocated, human rights guaranteed, transparency is promoted in government and international conventions are adopted and implemented.

While women comprise at least half the population in most societies, this proportion is not matched in positions of leadership and decision-making. Globally, women represent less than a quarter of all national parliamentarians (23 per cent, as of April 2016), 17 per cent of the world's Ministers, and as of August 2015, 11 women served as Head of State and 10 served as Head of Government. Among other things, this means that women's views and perspectives are marginalized or ignored in the work and policies of political institutions, including parliaments.

Women's political participation and leadership are in many cases hindered by a range of institutional or structural constraints, underpinned by cultural and attitudinal barriers that suggest women should not have a role in public life. Electorates and media organisations perpetuate negative gender stereotypes about women's competence to run for political office; certain kinds of electoral systems reduce the opportunity for women to compete with men on an equal footing; political parties resist the inclusion of women in their candidates; and women are frequently less able to mobilise the same amount of resources – financial and human – required to fund an electoral campaign.

These challenges notwithstanding, women have the right, enshrined in a number of human rights instruments, to political participation and leadership (see Annex 1). Indeed, studies have clearly asserted that women are important agents of policy and cultural change in parliaments.<sup>i</sup> For these reasons, global, regional and national commitments to increasing the number of women in politics have been made and reaffirmed for decades.

A key strategy in the promotion of women to parliament has been the adoption of electoral gender quotas (reserved seats, candidate and political party quotas). When appropriately designed and effectively implemented, quotas have made a significant difference to the numbers of women elected, improving what is commonly referred to as women's 'descriptive representation'.

Once elected, however, women have continued to face obstacles in performing their parliamentary roles and thereby their 'substantive representation.' Parliaments, as institutions, are often steeped in norms, practices and policies that discriminate against women and which make it difficult for women to effect change, including policy change, from within. From relatively simple concerns such as sitting hours to more complex issues such as the adversarial nature of the debates or the means by which experts and citizens are consulted, the rules and processes of the parliament can provide a significant barrier to women MPs.

## Purpose and objectives

Identifying good **practices** in the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment through parliamentary bodies in national legislatures has been an increasing focus of study, as more legislatures have employed different and innovative approaches. This Guidance Note explores the strategies and good practices used by the UNDP in supporting parliaments in their own promotion of gender equality. This Guide is intended to inform future internal discussions and decision-making by examining the different modalities through which UNDP has been promoting gender equality in its parliamentary development support and providing direct support to legislative bodies to promote gender equality. It aims to assess the strengths and weaknesses of this work. More specifically, the Guide:

- contributes to the body of knowledge on parliamentary structures that promote gender equality;
- captures and analyses existing programming approaches including good practice and lessons learned from UNDP;
- positions UNDP to better support Country Offices (and their partners) in mainstreaming gender equality throughout parliamentary assistance programs and to share good practices that can be leveraged for future success; and
- offers recommendations to the UNDP on how to enhance gender responsiveness of their parliamentary development support and thereby increase women's parliamentary participation.



Skills training held for female community activists in Khyber Pass. Photo: UNDP/Pakistan

## Methodology

To date there has been little systematic tracking of UNDP's gender and parliamentary development programming in Country Offices and limited baseline data to measure results in this area. Consequently, a study was undertaken to provide an overall picture of UNDP's recent, current and planned work to support and strengthen legislative bodies to promote gender equality. Information was sought on UNDP programming on gender sensitive parliamentary development through a survey of UNDP Country Offices. The questionnaire was divided in three parts:

- I. General questions on parliamentary development programming and CO information on gender mainstreaming;
- II. Specific questions related to programming on gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment in parliamentary development; and
- III. Partnerships and lessons learned.

Country Offices were asked to elaborate on the nature of programming implemented to promote gender equality in parliaments, and to share lessons learned in that process. Responses to the questionnaire were both quantitative and qualitative. A total of 28 country offices (including one regional hub) responded to the questionnaire.<sup>ii</sup> A response rate is difficult to gauge precisely, because not all UNDP country offices provide gender responsive parliamentary assistance. UNDP works in 70 country offices in the area of parliamentary development, it is estimated that around 40 include a component on women's political participation.

This survey is contextualised by reviewing the gender mainstreaming strategies and collaboration partnerships of existing bodies established across parliaments worldwide to promote gender equality. This research was compiled using the relevant literature and the IPU's database on specialised bodies dealing with gender equality.

## Structure of the Guidance Note

This Guidance Note is divided into three parts:

**Part A** presents a range of strategies to ensure gender equality outcomes can be reached in parliaments, and outlines the key features of parliamentary bodies mandated to promote gender equality across the world.

**Part B** is a review of assistance provided to parliaments on gender equality by the UNDP and explores the nature of activities implemented, where demand for the programme originates from, funding dedicated to this area of programming and where it commonly fits on the UNDP's 'gender marker' score.<sup>iii</sup>

This is followed by a more in-depth discussion of the support currently provided and planned to be provided to gender equality focused parliamentary bodies, and to gender equality advocates who support those bodies. This investigation also identifies knowledge products developed to assist in the implementation of these programmes. Finally, this section considers the partnerships developed to provide technical assistance, and considers their effectiveness through lessons learned.

**Part C** looks at the lessons learned from these programmes and presents recommendations for the UNDP at global, regional and country office levels.

## Part A: Strategies to ensure gender equality outcomes in parliaments



Women in Papua New Guinea take part in a *Practice Parliament* training. Photo: UNDP/ Papua New Guinea.

### Introducing Gender Sensitive Parliaments

A number of strategies have been devised to address the challenge of supporting elected women MPs and in improving the gender sensitivity of parliament. The Inter-Parliamentary Union's 2011 [Gender Sensitive Parliaments](#) report highlights good practices that can improve the conditions under which women MPs operate within a parliament, and which aim to ensure that men also see gender equality and women's empowerment as transformative development goals. In addition to the important need to increase the number of women in parliament – including in leadership positions – these include:

- adopting gender mainstreaming strategies to ensure that the parliament as a whole considers all of its policies and process from a gender perspective;
- establishing dedicated gender equality infrastructure, such as a parliamentary committee on gender equality or a women's parliamentary caucus; and
- ensuring that linkages to gender equality advocates outside the parliament are strengthened and that communication is regular and institutionalised.

These three important and mutually reinforcing factors aid political institutions in the promotion of gender equality. First, parliaments need to implement the strategy of **gender mainstreaming** across both the processes and outputs of the parliament. Gender mainstreaming is a United Nations-recognised strategy to promote gender equality and involves an assessment of the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policy or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. Gender mainstreaming in parliaments ensures that women's and men's concerns, needs and experiences are taken fully into account in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all activities.



Through this process, the parliament seeks to reduce the gaps in development opportunities between women and men and work towards equality between them as an integral part of the organization's strategy, policies and operations, and the focus of continued efforts to achieve excellence. This strategy can be mandated in the rules of procedure or a strategic plan, but always requires the cooperation of all members of parliament and parliamentary staff.

An essential aspect of gender mainstreaming is the inclusion of women in the discussion and deliberation of issues that are typically male-dominated, such as security, defence, counter-terrorism, legal policy and justice. These issues and relevant committees can have a higher impact on the decision making process of the state and the rule of law in the country, and it is important that women also have a say on those issues.

Second, parliaments require **dedicated mechanisms** that focus the attention of the parliament on the goal of gender equality (or parliamentary gender equality bodies). These may be gender equality committees, a multi-portfolio committee that has also responsibility for gender equality, or a women's caucus. It could be a technical gender unit or research service. Gender equality focused parliamentary bodies vary widely in design, structure, activities and degrees of formality. Some structures, such as cross-party women's caucuses, are recognized as important forums for representing women's interests across political party lines. Parliamentary committees represent a more formal mechanism to enable both male and female MPs to influence legislative and policy agendas, both through reviewing bills to ensure they are gender sensitive, but also by holding inquiries into gender equality issues.

Finally, gender equality outcomes cannot be achieved without the **support and collaboration** of bodies outside the parliament who monitor the parliament's progress in reaching these goals and supply necessary data and technical advice. "Policy and legislative change on gender equality issues ... has frequently been the result of concerted, collaborative efforts between women inside and outside parliament,"<sup>iv</sup> in particular, through the efforts of civil society organisations (CSOs) in advocating and lobbying for gender equality issues with MPs.

Women's movements and organizations often facilitate the establishment of women's parliamentary bodies, providing women MPs with expertise and first-hand knowledge of gender issues, and connecting them to the electorate. Furthermore, women's movements often serve as the institutional memory of past achievements, current realities, and lessons learned in the struggle for women's rights and gender equality.<sup>v</sup>

An important tool of strengthening the role of women in parliaments by CSO's is also the involvement of women parliamentarians in their board/executive committee.

**Gender mainstreaming within the legislative branch is the internal transformation of the institution ("how work is done"), of its results ("what is legislated" and "what content the legislation has") and of its links ("who it has a dialogue with", "who it controls", "to whom is it accountable").**

These three factors are mutually reinforcing in the sense that none are sufficient without the others. The strategy of gender mainstreaming cannot be effective without institutionalised mechanisms and collaborative partners to take responsibility for its implementation, and to ensure accountability.

## Mapping parliamentary gender equality bodies

As of November 2015, the IPU has recorded 144 parliamentary bodies dealing with gender equality across 116 countries.<sup>vi</sup> These bodies are categorised either as parliamentary committees, or women's parliamentary caucuses. A further category, not compiled by the IPU, might also be added in the form of technical gender units or research services. These are further explained below, considering their constitution, working methods including options for gender mainstreaming, and relationships with external bodies.

## *Dedicated gender equality committees*

Parliamentary committees concerned with gender equality are distinguished by their remit. Some have an exclusive focus on gender equality while others include gender equality as one of many topics considered by their members (that is, 'multi-portfolio' committees). A strength of all parliamentary committees dealing with gender equality is that they are all permanent committees of their respective parliaments. That is, each of these parliaments has chosen to dedicate resources to the issue of gender equality rather than appoint a select or ad hoc committee to deal with issues on an as needs basis. For example, in Pakistan, an annual budget is allocated to ensure smooth functioning of the committee.

Examples of dedicated gender equality committees include the Belgian Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Men and Women, the Canadian House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women, the Indian Committee on the Empowerment of Women, the Spanish Committee on Equality, the Dominican Republic's permanent Gender Committees in both the House of Representatives and Senate, and the Task Forces on the Rights of Women and Equal Opportunities for Men and Women in both the French Senate and the National Assembly. These are permanent bodies of their parliaments, constituted under internal rules, with membership reflecting the representation of political parties (or parliamentary party groups) in the parliament. As is the case with any parliamentary committee constituted by standing orders, dedicated gender equality committees may **hold public hearings and consult with their policy communities** to determine the effects of policies, programmes and legislation on women and men, girls and boys. Ministers and government officials may be brought before the committee to answer questions.

Dedicated parliamentary committees can make an important contribution to gender mainstreaming. These committees have had considerable success in **initiating gender equality laws**, and in **ensuring other legislation does not discriminate** against women and girls, men and boys. The French Task Force drafts reports containing recommendations on the bills and draft laws submitted to it. These reports are made public. Where necessary, the Task Force makes proposals on enhancing legislation and regulations in areas that fall within its sphere of competence.

Most important are the **relationships established** between the committee and the women's machinery bodies. In the Republic of Korea, for example, a number of women's machinery bodies and research institutes have established good working relationships with Korean parliamentarians and the Standing Committee on Gender Equality and the Family, resulting in initiatives such as the inclusion in 2006 of a gender budgeting clause in the *National Finance Act*. In the Dominican Republic the Permanent Gender Committee of the House of Representatives has a strong association with women's civil society movements, academia and the Ministry for Women. In Moldova, the Women's Committee has sought expertise, specifically on temporary special measures, from the Gender Equality Platform comprised of 19 prominent NGOs. The Mexican Committee enjoys close collaborative relations with the National Institute of Women and the Commission on Human Rights (Comisión de Derechos Humanos) including with respect to the regular organisation of joint forums, seminars and workshops, and the release of publications. In Monaco, the Committee regularly seeks the opinion of NGOs involved in women's issues and these groups may request that the Committee include certain issues on its agenda.

Dedicated gender equality committees have also been tasked with auditing national women's machinery. In India, the Committee may assess the reports, organisation and functioning of the National Commission for Women as well as other statutory organisations with regard to welfare programmes for women. The Nigerian Committee oversees budget appropriations and budget implementation by the Ministry of Women and Youth Development. In Pakistan, the Committee's audit reports are sent to the Minister for action (implementation and report).

## *Multi-portfolio committees that include gender equality*

Multi-portfolio committees that include gender equality as one of their areas of competence and interest exist in most parliaments. Sectoral interests such as the family or children, health, social affairs, labour, education and welfare are commonly combined with women or gender equality.

The IPU data suggests that there are two predominant sub-groups of multi-portfolio committees that include gender equality concerns: those that have a heavy emphasis on social affairs and the family (such as the Committee on Families,

Women and Children in El Salvador; the Committee on Family and Social Policy in Poland, and the Norwegian Parliament's Standing Committee on Family and Cultural Affairs), and those that are more interested in human rights, and legal and constitutional matters. In this latter category are the Estonian Constitutional Committee; the Irish Joint Committee on Justice, Defence and Equality; Rwanda's Political and Good Governance Commission; and Zambia's Committee on Legal Affairs, Governance, Human Rights and Gender Matters.

The analysis suggests that the lack of gender exclusivity can have both positive and negative implications. A clear advantage to the multi-portfolio committee is that its members will be able to apply gender mainstreaming methods to a broader range of issues. Moreover, in theory, there is the **potential for members** of the multi-portfolio committee **to implement mainstreaming strategies** to their work on other committees of which they are members. This is the principle at play in Sweden where all parliamentary committees are responsible for considering gender equality issues within their respective fields of work. In addition, the *Riksdag Act* sets out that the Committee on the Labour Market has special responsibility for overseeing issues relating to equality between women and men in working life. A practice has also developed whereby gender equality issues that do not belong within any other committee's area of responsibility are referred to the Committee on the Labour Market, which also prepares appropriations falling within expenditure area 13, 'Integration and gender equality'.

The case of Sweden, however, is an exception. It is more often the case that multi-portfolio committees are **expected to address gender equality issues as one set, among a large number of others**. In practice, this simply means that the committee has less time to dedicate to specific gender related concerns. Moreover, many of these committees may not specifically mandate a focus on gender equality – that is, the social affairs variant may link women to these other issue areas at the expense of gender equality.

### *Membership and leadership of committees*

Parliamentary committees with a gender equality remit are commonly comprised of more women than men members, and women are far more likely to chair the dedicated committees than multi-portfolio committees. While it is important for women to hold positions of leadership, in the interest of gender balance and gender mainstreaming, it could be argued that there is **scope to improve the participation of men** in these committees<sup>vii</sup> as well as women's leadership across other parliamentary committees, including those with responsibility for security and defence).<sup>viii</sup> In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cyprus, Nepal and Romania, men chair the gender equality committee, which can send an important message that gender equality is about ensuring that women and men are not discriminated against or disadvantaged. Opportunities to share the leadership positions among men and women, as is the case in Bosnia and Herzegovina where the chair is held by a man, and the deputy chair is held by a woman.

In some countries, the committee's membership is not restricted to parliamentarians. In Nepal, for example, it is composed of a group of six people: one representative from each of the three main political parties, one from the Ministry of Women, Children and Youth, one from the Human Rights Commission and one woman representative. Members are appointed by the parliament on the recommendation of the Speaker. In addition to the 13 parliamentary members of the Croatian Committee on Gender Equality, there are three appointed members (two women and one man) from NGOs, scientific and professional institutions in the field of the promotion of gender equality and the protection of human rights.

### *Women's caucuses*

A second type of gender-focussed parliamentary body is a women's parliamentary caucus. These caucuses can bring women together from different parliamentary chambers, across party lines and can also engage other partners including civil society organisations and the private sector.<sup>ix</sup>

There is an extensive US literature on women's caucuses in State legislatures in particular, replete with varied and sometimes contradictory definitions ranging from 'voluntary associations' to 'institutionalised bipartisan associations', meeting either regularly or 'as required', and with functions sometimes including the hiring of staff.<sup>x</sup>



From an international perspective, caucuses tend to reflect women legislators' needs and political leverage, as well as the parliamentary system and the political culture of a specific country. Their purpose, decision-making mechanisms, attributes, operations, and areas of activity are commonly decided by those establishing the caucus.<sup>xi</sup> Women's caucuses have also evolved over time, for example, by setting rules for the election of leaders long after their creation, developing a formal agenda previously non-existent, or even becoming institutionalised as a gender equality committee.<sup>xii</sup>

Women's parliamentary caucuses do not always restrict their membership to women MPs. Some include men in a clear attempt to ensure that gender issues are not only advanced by women. Such bodies can also include the participation of civil society organisations or representatives of international organisations.

A study conducted by the OSCE in 2013 found that among its Member States, women's parliamentary bodies existed as cross-party women's caucuses (in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Kosovo,<sup>xiii</sup> Kyrgyzstan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Poland, Slovak Republic and the United States of America); internal party women's caucuses (in Austria, Canada and Norway); voluntary associations, clubs or networks (in Andorra, Denmark, Finland, Kazakhstan, Norway, Serbia, Sweden, Tajikistan and the Ukraine); issue-focused groups (in Canada, Estonia, and the United States); and as a platform involving civil society/others (in Georgia).<sup>xiv</sup> In Latin America, Gonzalez and Sample identified women's parliamentary caucuses in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Guatemala, Peru and Uruguay; an 'ad hoc commission' in Colombia; a bicameral commission and women's parliament in Mexico.<sup>xv</sup> The IPU has recorded the presence of women's caucuses across Sub-Saharan Africa in Angola, Burkina Faso, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Malawi, Mali, Niger, Rwanda, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

Women's caucuses have been created to serve a number of purposes and functions, some of which are covered above in the general arguments for gender-focused parliamentary bodies. First, they may seek to ensure that **gender equality issues are mainstreamed** across the work of the parliament. Women's caucuses can help monitor the implementation of relevant legislation and policy and try to ensure that concerned individuals and groups are involved in review of that legislation or policy.<sup>xvi</sup> Women's caucuses have also had some success in **pursuing legislative amendments** to improve the participation of women in politics. The Women's Parliamentary Club in the Assembly of Republic of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia achieved an amendment to the Election Code that ensures that every third place on the candidates' election list is allocated to the less represented gender.

More distinctively, women's caucuses **serve a social function** and provide **support to their members** in the form of mentoring, training, capacity-building, confidence-building, networking, discussions and information sharing. For example, the Network of Women Deputies of the Finnish Parliament organizes seminars and informal events that promote information exchange and raise awareness of gender issues. The Rwandan Women Parliamentarians' Forum similarly functions as a space through which women build and reinforce each other's capacities to deliver on their parliamentary work, through creating measures and organizing actual training programmes aimed at enhancing individual capacities in a way that is tailored to fill in their skills and knowledge gaps.

Finally, they **facilitate communication and dialogue** within and across parties on a range of issues. Some success has been reported in gaining support across party lines, but most particularly on topics such as violence against women, non-discrimination, healthcare, and children's rights.<sup>xvii</sup>

The formality and structure of women's caucuses varies considerably. Some caucuses have a formal structure, including a permanent membership and leadership structure and formalised meeting procedures such as set meeting times, voting procedures and circulated agendas. Others have a more informal structure. Informal caucuses – those without formal rules, meeting procedures, budgets and support staff – have been able to bring women together when an issue of significance arises.<sup>xviii</sup>

A major challenge confronting women's parliamentary caucuses is **political party discipline**, or the requirement that members of parliament remain loyal to the decisions of their party. This has, in many instances, meant that women MPs have found it difficult to work together on policy issues and present co-sponsored legislation.

**Sharing leadership positions among the party groups** has proved one way to counteract the effect of party discipline. In Kosovo,<sup>xix</sup> the seven-member governing Board was comprised of a member from each party group, while in Ukraine, the leadership was shared among three co-chairs, each also a member of a different party group.

To contribute to the development of legislation on gender issues, women's caucuses often **rely on the assistance and support of women's groups outside the parliament**. They hold roundtable discussions with non-governmental organisations and research institutes so as to identify the key gender issues associated with particular legislation.

Thus, the relationship between the women's movement and a women's parliamentary body provides a link to crucial information.<sup>xx</sup> Non-government organisations and think tanks with gender expertise are able to **collate research and statistics** that will help a women's parliamentary group formulate an argument, or legislative amendment, to achieve positive change.

Women's parliamentary bodies, however, also need to **build relationships with the 'power brokers'** in the parliament (including the Executive and the Opposition), and with the relevant parliamentary committee tasked with gender mainstreaming.<sup>xxi</sup> This is important because women's parliamentary bodies are rarely vested with the power to make the changes they seek.

Therefore, formalising relationships between the women's parliamentary body and the relevant, authoritative committee or other organ of the parliament can prove a successful strategy in implementing gender mainstreaming strategies and circumnavigating the challenges posed by party discipline.

### *Gender technical units and parliamentary research services*

Gender focused parliamentary bodies may also exist in the form of 'technical units' or research services. In Costa Rica, the Technical Unit on Gender Equality and Equity aims to promote gender mainstreaming in all legislative functions of the Legislative Assembly. It does this by:

- coordinating and promoting gender training and awareness-raising for technical, administrative and legislative staff, providing practical tools for mainstreaming gender in legislative work;
- promoting and coordinating action for institutional planning that requires gender mainstreaming;
- providing expert advice on gender to all technical-administrative legislative entities in mainstreaming gender in the legislative process; and
- creating strategies for communication and coordination with civil society and organisations that facilitate public participation in gender mainstreaming in the various processes of the Legislative Assembly.<sup>xxii</sup>

Research services are equally important. The German Bundestag has established formal links with the dedicated unit on gender equality at the Humboldt University of Berlin, ensuring access to quality gender analysis for parliamentarians and staff. The Australian Parliament, which has not established a cross-party women's caucus nor a dedicated gender equality committee, nonetheless provides a range of gender-sensitive research services, on request, to Members of Parliament from its Parliamentary Library. The library collects and compiles sex-disaggregated data across a range of indicators, including women's representation in all Australian parliament, background and previous experience, partisan affiliation – some of which is publicly available, and others which are produced only for the use of Members and Senators.

### *Conclusion*

There are a variety of mechanisms that have – and can be – established within parliaments to take responsibility for the promotion of gender equality outcomes. This variety mirrors the diversity of parliamentary and political systems around the world. To be effective, gender equality mechanisms must be context appropriate and suit their political environment.

In examining the 'enabling factors' that contribute to the establishment of a women's parliamentary body, the OSCE 2013 study considered the parliamentary and electoral system; the political context; the existence of legal or voluntary quotas;

and the role of women's organisations. The study found that as women's parliamentary bodies had been established in various types of parliamentary and presidential systems, and in parliaments that had been elected through all kinds of electoral systems (proportional representation, mixed and majoritarian), these factors alone did not determine whether a body is established, let alone its effectiveness. By contrast, the degree of multi-party cooperation or polarisation and the strength of political party discipline can have a significant impact on the establishment of women's parliamentary structures – and the form they take. Less polarised parliaments are able to establish cross-party caucuses for example, while parliaments that are composed of highly disciplined political parties are more likely to need a structured committee system where the rules are clear and adjudicated by parliamentary staff. Alternatively, a more informal network may emerge in politically contested environments.

The existence of temporary special measures (legal or voluntary) did not appear to be a pre-condition for the establishment of a women's parliamentary body. However, quotas can provide a common purpose or issue around which MPs focus the work of their caucus or committee, and this focus has proven to be a strategy for success. Likewise, the relationship of the body to the women's movement can also serve to define what kind of body will be created.

Irrespective of the type of body chosen, without the appropriate support, tools and knowledge, these mechanisms will have varying degrees of success in transforming parliaments into gender sensitive institutions that achieve gender equality outcomes. In some cases, gender mainstreaming is applied as a systematic approach by these institutional mechanisms. In others, the tools required to apply a mainstreaming strategy broadly are absent, as is the political commitment. In all cases, however, gender equality outcomes are best served when women's organisations are included in their promotion – as providers of information, and as accountability holders.

The next two Parts of this Guidance Note consider the efforts made by the UNDP to support existing parliamentary structures interested in promoting gender equality.

## Part B: UNDP Parliamentary Assistance on Gender Equality

Using the responses to the questionnaire distributed among UNDP Country Offices, this section examines the nature of assistance provided to parliaments, both current and planned, as well as the partnerships required to implement this programming. This section has benefited significantly from the examples provided by a number of Country Offices, highlighted in the boxes below.

### Parliamentary assistance on gender equality

Encouragingly, of the 28 UNDP Country Offices who responded to the survey, almost 90 per cent had provided gender targeted parliamentary assistance in the last five years. The demand for this assistance originates, for the most part, from the national parliament, although in some cases, requests have come from donors and civil society advocates.

Table 1 identifies the activities commonly employed in providing this assistance. In all cases, this was undertaken through training seminars and workshops. Also quite prevalent are capacity building programs for parliamentary staff and recently elected women MPs – including on outreach with constituents; technical assistance in legislative drafting; and the deployment of gender experts.

Responses from Country Offices revealed that there have been considerable efforts made to encourage parliaments to establish a women’s parliamentary caucus. In addition, women MPs are often supported in attending global and regional conferences, such as IPU and CPA meetings, as well as WIP study tours and summits. Some offices are working on discrete policy areas, such as teenage pregnancy in Sierra Leone (see Box 1), and innovative activities such as improving data collection in Chile.

An interesting finding is that only a **few Country Offices reported undertaking gender audits or assessment exercises** to understand the current capacity levels of the parliament (including members and staff) and identify gaps for future programming.

Assessing gender equality and how women’s participation is being actively promoted means considering all policies, decisions and actions taken by the parliament from a mainstreaming perspective (Annex 3 provides a checklist of questions that can be used in an audit or assessment). In the Dominican Republic, for example, UNDP supported an assessment in 2012, and since then, the Country Office has been working on recommendations emanating from the study. Among other things, the assessment pointed to a need to strengthen the Gender Committee. Gender training, undertaken in partnership with academia, has been offered to parliamentarians and technical staff.

**Table 1: Nature of assistance provided**

Training MPs through seminars and workshops	(n) 28	100.0%
Capacity building for parliamentary staff	26	92.9%
Support for recently elected women MPs	20	71.4%
Technical assistance in legislative drafting	18	64.3%
Procurement and logistical support	12	42.9%
Strengthening women MPs’ outreach with constituencies	11	39.3%
Deployment of gender experts	11	39.3%
Peer-to-peer exchanges/mentoring	10	35.7%
Technical assistance in research skills	9	32.1%
Monitoring, evaluation and audit	6	21.4%
Gender audit/mapping exercises	4	14.3%
Resources mobilization and fund management	4	14.3%
Other	6	21.4%

## Box 1: Gender-targeted programming interventions

**Sierra Leone Country Office:** The Committee on Social Welfare was supported for the first time to visit schools and local communities to oversee the work of the Ministry of Social Welfare in tackling teenage pregnancies in the wake of the EVD cases.

**Lao PDR Country Office:** The project provides technical support to the Lao PDR National Assembly's Women's Parliamentary Caucus, which includes developing a gender and social inclusion checklist [incorporated in the draft Law Making Manual] to be used in analysing bills and amendments to the laws; comparative analyses of good practices from other countries on gender mainstreaming and parliamentary processes; NA-stakeholders' dialogue and seminars on gender and social inclusion issues; and outreach activities to various districts/villages to promote adopted laws especially on Gender Based Anti-Violence Law.

**Kosovo<sup>1</sup>:** The Strategic Plan, which is currently in drafting stage, will serve as the main reference document for all structures of the Assembly in the parliamentary development processes during the period of 2015-2020, in parallel with the Law on Assembly and the Rules of Procedure. The gender dimension of the Strategic Plan has been discussed and will be incorporated. Specific activities planned include mainstream gender equality throughout the implementation of the Strategic Plan and enhancing the gender sensitivity of, and gender equality among, parliamentary staff.

**Chile Country Office:** We have also worked on elaborating reliable comparative data on the situation of women in the political arena in Chile.

**Moldova Country Office:** A dedicated gender session was introduced in the Induction Training of new MPs delivered in 2015. Critical support was provided to all 13 newly elected women Parliamentarians in building and cultivating a favourable public image by providing tailor made training programmes and individual coaching on public speaking, personal branding, building strong media presence and relations, and making use of social media platforms to engage more closely with constituents. In training women MPs, UNDP also engaged the nine women parliamentarians who had previously been elected but had not yet benefited from this training.

**Nigeria Country Office:** The project supported the Gender Technical Unit (GTU) in the National Assembly which is run by a group of gender focused CSOs in Nigeria. The GTU assists women parliamentarians through provision of technical support in analysing draft bills from a gender perspective, updates women parliamentarians by providing necessary information, data and facts on various issues relevant to their work, and serves as a resource centre on gender issues.

## Funding

The funding levels attracted by parliamentary assistance vary considerably across the country offices that responded to the survey (see Table 2). In some countries, projects have attracted millions of dollars (ranging from 2.8 to 6.3 million), while in others, parliamentary projects appear to be funded for discrete activities only, attracting at the most USD 10,000 in a given year. An interesting trend, from the data provided, is that, on average, there has been an increase in funds mobilised for parliamentary assistance over the past five years.

Table 2: Funding reported on parliamentary assistance projects promoting gender equality (USD)					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<b>Max per CO</b>	2,800,000	2,500,000	2,455,000	6,344,494	6,202,751
<b>Min per CO</b>	15,600	40,700	15,000	10,000	10,000
<b>Total</b>	5,666,071	7,154,595	10,054,995	14,429,161	14,861,639
<b>Average</b>	515,097	596,216	558,610	721,458	743,082

There is some ambiguity, however, about the extent to which these funds also serve to promote gender equality outcomes, or whether they are part of a broader programme of parliamentary assistance. Country Offices were asked to report the 'gender marker rating' over the past five years (see Table 3).

Table 3: Project Gender Marker Rating (2011-2015)										
	2011		2012		2013		2014		2015	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
0) Outputs are "not expected to contribute noticeably" to gender equality	2	7.1%	1	3.6%	2	7.1%	2	7.1%	0	0.0%
1) Outputs will contribute "in some way" to gender equality, but not significantly	3	10.7%	3	10.7%	5	17.9%	4	14.3%	5	17.9%
2) Outputs have gender equality as a "significant" objective	11	39.3%	11	39.3%	11	39.3%	11	39.3%	13	46.4%
3) Projects/Outputs have gender equality as a "principal" objective	1	3.6%	0	0.0%	1	3.6%	2	7.1%	2	7.1%

For each year considered, most projects achieved a ranking of 2, meaning outputs have gender equality as a “significant” objective. Very few projects have gender equality as a “principal” objective, and more projects are either not expected to contribute to gender equality outcomes, or expected to do so “in some way” but “not significantly”.

This points to a need to revisit the extent to which parliamentary assistance projects implemented by the UNDP are systematically gender mainstreamed. It also raises the question of balance between gender mainstreaming activities and gender-targeted activities, both of which can be complementary features of parliamentary assistance projects.

## UNDP Support to parliamentary gender equality bodies

Country Offices were asked about the specific activities implemented in supporting gender equality focused parliamentary bodies. For each thematic area (or output), a number of activities were listed. As noted earlier, capacity building and trainings are most commonly undertaken (see Table 4).

Table 4: Activities undertaken to support parliamentary committees on gender equality		
Output	Activity most commonly implemented	Activity least commonly implemented
<i>Strengthening committee capacity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capacity building for parliamentary staff;</li> <li>Capacity building of MPs (e.g. negotiation skills, communication skills)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of gender checklists</li> </ul>
<i>Legislative reviews from a gender perspective</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing comparative analyses of good practice laws from other countries/jurisdictions;</li> <li>Capacity building for parliamentary staff on legislation reviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Substantive support on thematic areas (e.g. GBV, gender, and education)</li> </ul>
<i>Gender responsive budgeting</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training and development of context-specific knowledge products</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technical support to budget committees or parliamentary groups monitoring the budget</li> </ul>
<i>Support for members of the committee</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workshops on gender awareness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mentorships with MPs (e.g. more senior MPs or MPs from other countries)</li> </ul>



Three other outputs were listed in the survey: strengthening a gender equality committee’s outreach with constituencies; promoting CEDAW ratification, monitoring and compliance; and assessments and mappings. Less than half the country offices that responded to the survey commented on these types of interventions. Limited support has been provided on ‘constituency relations’, on monitoring government responses to CEDAW Committee recommendations, and the development of context-specific tools to undertake gender assessments or mappings. Country Offices rarely reported the deployment of experts to facilitate mapping exercises, or support for implementing the recommendations arising from these assessments.

## UNDP Support to gender advocates working with parliamentary bodies

Country Offices were also asked to nominate the kinds of interventions frequently undertaken when working with ‘gender advocates’. While some meetings with women’s organisations were noted, for the most part, UNDP staff elaborated on their work in gender sensitising elements of the media, as well as training women MPs in the use of social and traditional forms of media.

### Box 2: Assistance to gender equality focused parliamentary bodies

**Lao PDR Country Office:** In accordance with the Law on Laws, for every draft law that will be tabled for review and adopted on by the National Assembly, an impact assessment is required. UNDP Lao PDR provided support by organising a series of training seminars on how to conduct impact assessments of various legislative measures for women parliamentarians, especially the Women’s Parliamentary Caucus.

**Moldova Country Office:** The UNDP Democracy Programme and Women in Politics Programme has provided training to three committees (Human Rights, Budget & Economy, and Social Protection) as well as the Legal Department of the Parliament.

**Table 5: Activities undertaken to support gender advocates in working with parliamentary committees on gender equality**

Output	Activity most commonly implemented	Activity least commonly implemented
<i>Committee consultations and outreach on gender equality</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gender awareness training in specific policy areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training on parliamentary processes for CSOs (e.g. writing submissions, appearing before a committee, initiating a petition)</li> </ul>
<i>Network building and information exchanges between CSOs and MPs</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate interactions, both formal and informal, between parliamentary committees/ women’s caucuses and CSOs</li> <li>Trainings for MPs on the role of civil society</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capacity building for CSOs in presenting gender analyses, including sex disaggregated data to MPs</li> </ul>

### Box 3: Supporting gender equality advocates

**Nigeria Country Office:** The Gender and Constitution Reform Network (GECORN) in 2012 played a significant role as the voice of women's groups during the constitution review process, which lasted for over two years. Although the Constitution was not ultimately reviewed, the process provided an opportunity for women's groups and CSOs to establish networks with women parliamentarians both at the national and state level. The annual Women in Parliament summit that the project supported for three consecutive years further strengthened this network among women parliamentarians and women's CSOs.

**Somalia Country Office:** The support to committees in this area includes the delivery of training on gender sensitive legislation and budgeting. Advocacy and support to outreach missions that also include meeting with women's groups and civil society leaders.

**Moldova Country Office:** In 2015, five regional dialogues were facilitated between Moldovan MPs and women's NGOs, particularly women from marginalized groups.

**Chile Country Office :** We work side by side with women's organisations and CSOs in helping them approach MPs – we participate in arranged meetings as well to provide technical support.

**Togo Country Office:** Appui aux OSC à développer des micro-projets de formation et de sensibilisation des femmes sur l'équité genre et le leadership.

## Future programming plans

UNDP Country Offices elaborated a number of interesting programming plans for the future. These related to:

- training in the rules of procedure and drafting gender sensitive rules of procedures;
- Specific policy issue support – e.g. 'inheritance, marriage and child protection';
- Data collection;
- Support to political parties in implementing quota legislation; and
- Supporting women's caucus and their connection to sub-national and local legislatures.

### Box 4: Programming planned in the future

**Pacific Centre:** Assistance in interpreting the Standing Orders that specify that gender analysis is mandatory for all committee reports (legislation reviews, inquiries etc.).

**Lao PDR Country Office:** The National Assembly's draft Rules of Procedures (ROP) are currently being reviewed by the NA Standing Committee. The Project has supported the elaboration of some sections of the ROP by assisting with the drafting of the Decree on the National Assembly's conference procedures and improving NA secretariat support on research, management and modern parliamentary skills. Once the ROP are approved, UNDP in Lao PDR can help support the capacity development of NA Parliamentary Women's Caucus and its secretariat staff to improve their legislative skills and procedural knowledge, which would in turn enable them to become better legislators and advocates of gender mainstreaming within the NA.

**Panama Country Office:** In May 2015, a resolution was passed by the presidency of the National Assembly to create a unit for gender equality. Once staff is assigned to this unit, UNDP will be in a position to provide strategic advice and technical assistance for the development of their objectives and functions.

#### Box 4 continued | Programming planned in the future

**Somalia Country Office :** The engagement with the Women’s Caucus will be maintained to support its efforts to develop an effective advocacy strategy to ensure gender is taken into account in the Constitutional Review. The targets groups will include the Parliamentary Oversight Committee (OC), Independent Constitutional Review and Implementation Commission (ICRIC); Parliamentary Committee of Human Rights, Women and Humanitarian Affairs; MPs, in particular women; women’s groups and civil society leaders; Ministries of Constitutional Affairs (MoCA) and of Women and Human Rights Development (MoW).

**Myanmar Country Office:** In the remaining two years of the programme, UNDP will support the development of induction training for newly elected MPs that will include a component on gender. Further support will be provided to develop gender sensitive research through the research services which UNDP has supported developing and establish with the support of House of Commons and in partnership with the IPU. Through the committee development activities UNDP will provide gender-focused training for both staff and MPs.

**Kosovo:** A project is planned with the overall objective to advance the capacities of women legal drafters in integrating a gender perspective in all new laws and regulations to be enacted in Kosovo.<sup>1</sup> The planned activities relate to the identification of elements in existing laws that do not reflect principles of gender equality and gender mainstreaming, and to propose amendments that ensure such principles are reflected in new laws. Strengthening gender mainstreaming in legislative oversight will also be undertaken.

Importantly, it was widely recognised that Country Offices require targeted and specialised support from colleagues in headquarters and regional hubs (see comments in Box 5). A priority form of assistance was “financial support”. Country Offices also nominated “advisory support” and assistance in identifying experts on gender and parliament. Comments elaborated that experts need to be well versed in the specific context of the country, as well as in the parliamentary process. Another area to work on is in training UNDP staff, and specifically gender focal points.

#### Box 5: Support required from UNDP headquarters and regional hubs

**Indonesia Country Office:** Support for resource mobilisation would be most useful for our work in the future. The Strengthening Women’s Participation and Representation in Governance in Indonesia (SWARGA) project was forced to focus on one pillar out of three due to lack of finances (see case study on SWARGA, p. 21).

**Myanmar Country Office:** It is important that the specialists/experts have parliamentary experience and can provide relevant and realistic support. Support also needs to be reflective of context and this needs to be carefully developed and designed together with the country offices.

**Somalia Country Office:** Training for UNDP country office staff, particularly national staff, is required in order to strengthen their knowledge and skills on women’s political participation so that longer-term support is provided by them to the counterparts. Also, advisory support from the Regional Bureau in the development of policy documents and sharing of documentation, case studies, and access to knowledge sharing platforms would be a strong added value.

**Lesotho Country Office:** There is a need for training of UNDP Country office staff who work directly with Parliament in order to enable them to keep abreast of the latest developments in the field, in addition to technical assistance provided by HQ.

**Nigeria Country Office:** Patriarchy and religious interpretations further complicates the issue. Hence, much is required from the regional team/HQ in sharing experiences from different parts of the world with a similar context to gradually change the existing mind set.

**Panama Regional Office:** We have developed tools and methodologies, we have supported at least eight countries (from the creation of gender units, legislative review, development of gender policies and action plans for parliaments, gender assessments for parliaments), but this work is always integrated into other initiatives of promoting women’s political participation or gender equality.

## Knowledge produced

Table 6 suggests that only a minority of Country Offices prioritised assistance in the form of knowledge products and guides that consolidate lessons learned in other countries, although knowledge sharing platforms such as iKNOW Politics and AGORA were rated more highly.

While this may be because knowledge is frequently produced and shared at the regional and global levels, Country Offices also reported the development of their own range of knowledge products, including:

- videos (e.g. Indonesia; Moldova (Video 1 and Video 2))
- manuals on gender mainstreaming (Nigeria),
- research reports on the status of women in politics (Bhutan) or on specific issues such as violence against women (Lao PDR), and
- compilations of lessons learned (Panama, as part of the ATENEA project; and [Kosovo.xxiii](#)).

Table 6: Priority areas of support from UNDP headquarters and regional hubs		
	(n)	
<b>Financial Support</b>	<b>22</b>	78.6%
<b>Assistance in the identification of experts on gender and parliaments</b>	<b>21</b>	75.0%
<b>Training for UNDP country office staff</b>	<b>20</b>	71.4%
<b>Training/workshops/conferences for national stakeholders</b>	<b>20</b>	71.4%
<b>Support through knowledge sharing platforms, such as iKNOW Politics and AGORA</b>	<b>18</b>	64.3%
<b>Support in the development of Terms of Reference</b>	<b>8</b>	28.6%
<b>Knowledge products</b>	<b>3</b>	10.7%
<b>Other</b>	<b>2</b>	7.1%

The **Moldova Country Office** produced guidelines for MPs and Parliamentary Constituency Offices on how to engage with women constituents – particularly those from marginalised groups – to ensure that voices of women are heard and taken into account by legislators.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, a tool for developing capacities in gender mainstreaming in parliaments was produced, based on experiences developed in Latin America and the Caribbean. [Parliaments and Gender Equality: Gender Mainstreaming in Legislatures](#) outlines a process to generate legislative changes to attain gender equality and encourages others to advance towards a full exercise of the individual and collective rights of both female and male citizens. A range of products have been developed in Spanish, including:

- [Beyond Numbers: Women Transform Legislative Powers in Latin America and the Caribbean](#)
- [Who Promotes Equality in Parliaments? Experiences of wings, commissions, technical units and mixed groups in Latin America and the Caribbean](#)
- [Equality Wings, Committees and Technical Units: Entry Points for Institutionalizing the Parliament's Work for Gender Equality in Latin America](#)

## Delivering in partnership

UNDP Country Offices are clearly collaborating with UN Women and other UN agencies and programmes in the delivery of gender equality parliamentary assistance. This assistance, however, also relies on relationships built with women's organisations, bilateral donors, and national (and international) organisations (see Table 7).

Table 7: Partners in gender equality parliamentary assistance		
	(n)	
UN Women	18	64.3%
Women's organizations	13	46.4%
Other UN agencies/programmes	10	35.7%
Bilateral donors	10	35.7%
National NGOs	10	35.7%
International NGOs	8	28.6%
Academic institutions	6	21.4%
IPU	5	17.9%
Other international organizations	4	14.3%
iKnow Politics ( <a href="http://www.iknowpolitics.org">www.iknowpolitics.org</a> )	4	14.3%
Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA/CWP)	3	10.7%
NDI	2	7.1%
Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA)	2	7.1%
Regional parliamentary assemblies (e.g. SADC Parliamentary forum, Parlatino, European Parliament)	2	7.1%
AGORA	2	7.1%
Other	6	21.4%

**ATENEA is an initiative to accelerate women's progress in political participation in Latin America and the Caribbean. In collaboration with UN-Women and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, Atenea was designed to generate dialogue among national actors to achieve political parity through the creation of a national and regional political parity index and national action routes to accelerate progress.**

As partners, regional and sub-regional parliamentary institutions were highlighted in certain regions, particularly as they promote discussions on gender issues. For example, the Panama Office noted that the Central American Parliament (Parlacen) has its own women's caucus and women's committee. Similar organisations exist in other regions and opportunities exist to broaden collaboration and ensure women's full and effective participation in these as well.

A number of key lessons were shared in the CO responses to this question on partnerships:

- Alliance building is important in developing a more comprehensive understanding of the political climate;
- While partnerships are useful in securing more funding, there is a need to clarify the roles of each partner in the relationship;
- Relationships tend not to be permanent, but rather are activity-based;
- Men must be regarded as essential partners to ensure their “buy in”;
- When dealing with parliaments, consistency is important, as is regular communication and follow up.

#### Box 6: Lessons learned on partnerships in delivering parliamentary assistance

**Chile Country Office :** We have supported CSOs with data collection and [submissions]. The main lessons have been the importance of being in touch with the political debate and creating alliances with specific political actors.

**Myanmar Country Office:** Peer-to-peer partnerships between parliaments are important. Staff from other parliaments have supported the development of the Strategic Plan and the implementation of the Committee Development Plan through placement of staffers in the Myanmar Parliament committees.

**Moldova Country Office:** In Moldova, UNDP partnered with the National Bureau of Statistics to build the capacity of parliamentary staff, specifically the research unit of the Parliament and selected standing committee advisors, on using of sex-disaggregated statistics the Parliament’s work.

**Honduras Country Office:** It is better to join forces and resources with partners in order to extend coverage of the electoral processes.



## Case study: The SWARGA Project in Indonesia

Over the past fifteen years, Indonesia has undertaken a series of constitutional, political and institutional reforms to promote democracy order. Among these reforms has been a greater emphasis on women's political participation. Women's parliamentary representation increased from 11.8 per cent in 2004 to 18 per cent in 2009, falling slightly in the 2014 elections to 17 per cent. Despite some encouraging progress, women still face barriers to enter Parliament and civil service, and under-representation for women remains a national challenge with substantial regional disparities. To address these challenges, UNDP and the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection built on previous efforts and jointly implemented the Strengthening Women's Participation and Representation in Governance in Indonesia (SWARGA) project in 2008. The project aimed to increase women's representation within the parliament; strengthen the capacity of both individual women as well as women's caucus and networks of women in the parliament so that women parliamentarians can better serve their constituents, including the needs of women; support the development of an informed and engaged civil society so that public perceptions about the role of women in democratic governance are more balanced; contribute to bureaucracy reform efforts in support of female friendly career and gender focal point mechanisms through policy and technical support; and provide evidence and contribute to knowledge building on the issues affecting women's participation in politics and government, and utilize best practices and lessons learned for improved policy and programming.

### Key Achievements

- List of potential women activists in politics developed and disseminated to promote better representation in the electoral list (up to 30% of party candidates);
- Trainings conducted with 490 legislative candidates for the 2014 elections on personal branding, creating individual action plans, and promoting women through the national and provincial media;
- Secretariat of the Indonesian Women's Parliamentary Caucus (KPP-RI) strengthened to better serve its members;
- Women's Parliamentary Network (WPN) established in 2010, with priority in provinces with low representation of women including Aceh, Bali, Nusa Tenggara Barat, West Sulawesi, Bangka Belitung and South Kalimantan.

Source: [UNDP in Indonesia](#)

## Part C: Lessons learned in parliamentary assistance promoting gender equality



Women parliamentarians of the Afghan Lower House (Wolesi Jirga or “House of the People”) attend their inauguration ceremony in Kabul, Afghanistan’s second parliamentary inauguration since 2001. Photo: Eric Kanalstein/UN.

Part C concludes with lessons learned from parliamentary assistance provided by UNDP, and makes recommendations aimed at the global, regional and country levels.

### Parliamentary assistance provided by UNDP

In certain contexts, UNDP support has contributed to a range of positive outcomes including gender analysis of legislation, greater prevalence and collection of sex disaggregated data, gender sensitisation of strategic plans and rules of parliamentary procedure, greater levels of confidence among women candidates and MPs, and stronger mentoring programmes for women MPs (see comments in Box 7). In tandem with a range of other factors, UNDP’s efforts have also contributed to the promotion of women to positions of leadership within parliaments and the election of increased numbers of women.

### Lessons learned

Not all Country Offices, however, have been able to promote successful gender equality outcomes. Country Offices responding to the questionnaire offered frank analyses of their work, and shared numerous lessons learned. These revolve around three key areas. Implementing gender equality focused parliamentary assistance requires:

- a positive, enabling environment for the promotion of gender equality, acknowledging that this requires political will and commitment;
- the design of context-specific and evidence-based appropriate activities and implementation modalities; and
- the involvement of a wider range of stakeholders.

## Box 7: Positive lessons

**Moldova Country Office:** With UNDP's programme of support, the Parliament carried out a Gender Audit and is currently working on drafting the Gender Equality Action Plan.

**Pacific Centre:** UNDP assistance in drafting Standing Orders ensured a provision that made gender analysis mandatory for all committee report thus leading to gender being considered whenever Parliament undertakes any work.

**Kosovo<sup>1</sup>:** Comparative analyses of legislation for social policy-related draft laws, including gender equality related legislation (such as the Law on Gender Equality, the Law on Parental Leave, the Law on Breastfeeding) have offered MPs and interested groups a broader set of policy choices and have advanced women MPs' capacity to critically contribute to parliamentary debate and policy-making. The Committee's review of the Law on Gender Equality resulted in a number of recommendations to the Executive. Among the recommendations that were implemented in the revised Gender Equality Law of 2015 was a new quota for women's participation in legislative, executive and judicial bodies, as well as public institutions. The 40/60% quota was replaced with a 50/50% quota.

**Suriname Country Office :** For the May 2015 elections UNDP Suriname partnered with the parliament and a civil society organization to raise awareness on gender equality in politics. Under this initiative, a total of 17 female politicians were trained and equipped with the requisite capacities to mount public campaigns. Each of the women in turn, served as mentors to an additional 3-5 women who lobbied for a place on the list of selectees for the various political parties contesting the elections. Through these collaborative efforts, the percentage of women now in Suriname's parliament is 25% (up from 9% in 2010).

**Senegal Country Office:** UNDP's innovative trainings to strengthen the capacities of women parliamentarians, including in the area of constructing arguments, have enabled them to be better equipped for public speaking in parliamentary debates and to systematically use data and indicators to substantiate their analysis. The trainings which have focused on enhancing behavioral change have led to remarkable changes with regard to the level of attendance of women parliamentarians and their attitudes. They have also been appointed to senior positions at the National Assembly, including in the Bureau.

## 1) Creating an enabling environment

UNDP offices suggested that the overall enabling environment in which gender equality assistance is provided requires more political 'buy in' – not only from the political leadership in country, but from the UNDP's leadership. Addressing gender equality through programming involves political, rather than purely technical, commitment. A clear manifestation of political will is increased resource mobilisation for gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment. There is scope to increase both.

**Myanmar Country Office:** In preparing for strengthening the level of activities related to gender it has been very clear that there needs to be a clear understanding and ownership from the parliament, both staff and MPs, for the support to succeed.

**Chile Country Office:** The most important lesson we have learnt is that we must keep in touch with the political debate. By doing this, we have been able to prepare data and information that is considered neutral and reliable by both CSOs and MPs.

**Kosovo<sup>1</sup>:** One of the Committee's main challenges is the a scarcity of resources to complement the Executive's proposed draft laws with more policy models and data derived from parliamentary monitoring in the field, provided by independent sources that enable MPs to have a total picture of every issue before passing laws and making policy choices based on local real needs.

**Ethiopia Country Office:** There is a need for a comprehensive resource mobilization strategy, given the resources gap to effectively promote gender equality at various levels. It is worth harmonising and scaling up the programmatic approach of promoting gender equality and women empowerment in this country, as it requires a multidimensional and well-integrated approach.

**Panama Country Office:** Political will of management to invest the organization's own resources in this issue..

In some cases, UNDP's positive achievements have also created a need to manage the divergent expectations of women parliamentarians in terms of what can, and cannot, be achieved through parliamentary assistance.

**Myanmar Country Office:** There has been an enormous interest in supporting the Myanmar Parliament from the international community. Much of this support has been targeted to the very few women MPs. These women have become overwhelmed by the support, which in all cases has been provided through ad-hoc and disparate interventions, and as a result their interest in continued support has decreased rapidly.

**Pakistan Country Office:** Though the support to women's caucus has contributed in more active participation of women lawmakers in the legislative processes but it somehow has also raised many expectations from UNDP to continuously support its secretariat as well as the members. Hence, rather than specialised technical support, the expectations somehow have shifted to provision of logistic support to the caucus in its routine functions.

**Dominican Republic Country Office:** The Gender Regional Hub provided important assistance with direct advising, or providing the expert roster, establishing contacts, knowledge products and promoting exchange activities. The local Office has considered this a top priority topic and allocated financial resources, there is much that can be done with small amounts of resources but the demands from parliamentarians cannot all be met.

## 2) Identifying appropriate activities and implementation modalities

This Guidance Note has identified a consistent trend in the implementation of training as a primary form of parliamentary development assistance. UNDP Offices offered three pertinent lessons in terms of appropriate activities and implementation modalities: first, that there is a need to balance activities aimed at gender mainstreaming, and those which are gender targeted; national experts are in high demand, but scarce; and that "train-the-trainer" type activities have successfully leveraged the capacity of a wider range of stakeholders to support parliamentary assistance projects.

**Sierra Leone Country Office:** During the height of Ebola crisis in the country, UNDP supported the Women Caucus to develop a jingle on Ebola related awareness in seven local languages which was aired for a period of four weeks in several community radio stations on behalf of all Members of Parliament. This was appreciated by parliament as a whole. An activity while led by the women caucus, can promote the image of the whole Parliament. It does not necessarily have to be gender specific.

**Madagascar Country Office:** We need to find the appropriate balance between mainstreaming gender in activities targeting all parliamentarians and holding gender-specific (or women-specific) activities

**Pacific Centre:** Gender mainstreaming parliamentary assistance means there is a “need to make the rules ensure that gender considerations are mandatory.”

**Lao PDR Country Office:** In Lao PDR, there is a need to build the capacity of national experts on gender mainstreaming and women’s empowerment in parliamentary processes. More dialogue and interaction with the Women Parliamentarians’ Caucus and national gender experts should be ensured to allow exchanges to better understand and create more gender responsive parliamentary processes.

**Nigeria Country Office:** The fact that the project utilized local experts, who appreciate the context and have a good grasp of the issues, extremely facilitated the process of the gender audit.

**Kosovo<sup>1</sup>:** Technical assistance is most efficient when delivered on-the-job. The administrative staff of the AoK do not need general trainings anymore. They need tailor made solutions for problems that arise in their every day work.

### 3) Involving a wider range of stakeholders

More responsive parliamentary assistance requires the involvement of a wider range of stakeholders – the first among whom are men. If men are not involved in the activities implemented to promote gender equality outcomes, they simply will not be achieved. The Moldovan Country Office specifically learned that:

- Identifying gender champions within partner institutions, capacitating and empowering them to lead gender equality changes are an effective mechanism for increased ownership over gender results and a powerful signal to motivate others to follow; and
- Engaging men in advocacy for gender equality in politics sends a positive message to other men to join efforts and support gender equality agenda in the country.

More concerted efforts to coordinate more effectively with partners and donors in order to avoid duplication of activities and results, is also required.

A third set of partners with which to establish stronger relationships are those in the private sector. Parliaments have a natural ability to engage with representatives of the private sector, particularly through committee work and community engagement. Hearing from the private sector can be an area of stronger focus for gender equality bodies.



**Madagascar Country Office:** We need to coordinate with other development partners (e.g. in Madagascar EISA has a full gender and parliamentarians programme which support the women parliamentarians caucus so UNDP should not duplicate but rather complement it – we need to involve men parliamentarians and not just women parliamentarians.

**Chile Country Office:** Lesson learned: implementing quotas takes constant communication and consultation with a wide range of groups: We have been an active part in the discussion of the gender quotas law project. We have participated in the political debate, we have been in constant conversations with CSO regarding this subject, and also with the Ministry of Women.

**Moldova Country Office :** In Moldova, to intensify the advocacy efforts for gender equality, 9 prominent gender male champions were engaged in a nation-wide awareness campaign in support of increased women’s participation in politics and public life. A set of ‘call-to-action’ videos have been produced and broadcasted nation-wide and promoted internationally. With these, UNDP Moldova also joined the *HeforShe* global solidarity movement for gender equality alongside with UN Women.

**Togo Country Office:** UNDP’s support has been very beneficial. Parliamentarians have expressed interest in organizing more of these initiatives and engaging male parliamentarians in the trainings and gender sensitization workshops given that they are the ones who currently hold decision-making positions.



Female politicians at a meeting of women lawmakers from Arab States and members of the European Parliament. Photo: UN Women/Emad Karim.



## Recommendations

This mapping suggests that a range of recommendations could be considered to improve the quality and effectiveness of gender equality focused parliamentary assistance provided by the UNDP. These recommendations are made on three levels: policy, regional and country office.

### Policy level

- **A theory of change should be developed for gender equality focused parliamentary assistance.** The analysis of reported parliamentary programming suggests that activities are currently being implemented in an ad-hoc, discrete fashion, without a comprehensive understanding of their capacity for change (impact). A macro-level theory of change developed by policy specialists would allow the UNDP to consider, more holistically, what can be expected from parliamentary assistance on gender equality; innovative interventions that are best suited to specific outcomes and outputs; more effective strategies to engage men on the achievement of gender equality; and the partners required to implement such activities. An integral aspect of this theory of change would focus on women's empowerment and leadership in positions across the parliament, including in committees on security, defence and foreign affairs, and finance and budget. Annex 2 provides a list of activities that could be considered. Programmes emanating from this theory of change would need to be tailored to country level dynamics, but would be based on sound, evidence-based, policy guidance.
- **The theory of change should be accompanied with a comprehensive resource mobilisation strategy and tool kit.** While resource mobilisation is often done at the country and regional levels, a mobilisation strategy should be prepared at the global level to provide evidence-based reasoning for expenditures in this area of programming. A first step here would be to assess existing capacity and partnerships that have been successful in mobilising resources. This is essential in convincing donors that parliamentary assistance can promote sustainable gender equality outcomes. A mobilisation strategy could provide options in terms of sharing responsibility for fundraising between headquarters and regional/country offices, and the modality of disbursement. These arrangements can be negotiated, but need to be clarified at the outset.
- A performance audit should be undertaken of all UNDP parliamentary projects that have not achieved a Gender Marker Rating of at least 2. The UNDP, like all UN agencies and programmes, is required to mainstream gender equality through all of its programming. Parliamentary assistance is no exception. That projects continue to be implemented without significant contribution to gender equality outcomes is concerning and warrants policy level monitoring, or at the very least, justification. Stronger guidance should be provided to UNDP offices on the distinction between gender mainstreaming and gender-targeted interventions, and the applicability of both to parliamentary assistance projects.
- While knowledge sharing platforms such as iKNOW Politics and AGORA must continue to be supported, there is scope to attract a wider audience of development practitioners and parliamentarians alike. UNDP offices noted that these platforms were useful in sharing lessons learned and experiences. These platforms, however, have been less successful as a dialogue mechanism between members of parliament or parliamentary staff. UNDP (and its partners) may wish to consider how a wider audience can be generated and sustained.
- **The pool of experts who can be deployed on gender equality parliamentary assistance projects should be expanded.** Country offices frequently noted the need to deploy experts who not only understood parliament, but who understood national and regional political dynamics. While a global roster of parliamentary experts is maintained by the UNDP at headquarters, there is a need to add more gender experts with localised knowledge and experience, and in particular, national consultants. "Train-the-trainer" workshops could be run with regionally-based parliamentary experts, covering common parliamentary systems in the region, cultural commonalities in terms of gender power relations, and effective strategies of working with parliaments in the region.

- Political economy analyses should be facilitated in HQ and regional hubs by creating knowledge banks of relevant information and providing staff training. Political economies have become more widely accepted among donors and development agencies as a key tool in understanding what will work in a given country, and what will not, by considering “the interaction of political and economic processes in a society: the distribution of power and wealth between different groups and individuals, and the processes that create, sustain and transform these relationships over time” (OECD).xxiv Regional hubs could maintain a repository of relevant information that can be shared across offices in the region, and that could be used to ‘up skill’ UNDP staff.
- It is not clear from the results of this survey whether sufficient support exists at the regional level for monitoring and evaluation of gender focused parliamentary assistance. While governance is notoriously difficult to capture change in, regional offices may wish to consider working with country offices to develop nuanced, qualitative monitoring and evaluation systems – in addition to the usual quantitative baselines such as the number of women participating in a given activity.

## Country office level

- Country offices should consider undertaking gender assessments and mappings of the parliament with key stakeholders to encourage them to identify areas requiring strategic intervention. Various toolkits by which to undertake gender assessments have been developed by different organisations. A positive model exists for the gender assessment of electoral management bodies (UNDP and UN Women), and can be tailored to the more specific nature of parliaments. The IPU has also developed a valuable toolkit to facilitate gender sensitive parliamentary self-assessments. Gender audits and assessments are essential not only to identify relevant, context-appropriate areas of intervention, but to secure the buy-in of the parliamentary leadership. At the very least, these toolkits should be shared with parliamentary secretariats.
- [Country offices should convene and facilitate regular dialogues between women parliamentarians and women’s CSOs.](#) This could ‘regularised’ through the gender focused parliamentary bodies, for example, by establishing regular hearings between the committee or the caucus and women’s organisations, or it can be a less formal invitation to a shared meal. The important aspect, however, is that these interactions should occur on a frequent basis.
- Country Offices should undertake a mapping of the quality and effectiveness of partnerships established, to identify gaps and synergies in the national context. The potential to work more effectively with regional partners, such as regional parliamentary assemblies, should be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

## Annex 1: UN mandates on gender equality and parliamentary assistance

Over the past three decades, much attention has focused on working to improve the participation of women in public life. The normative framework in relation to women's political participation is established in human and political rights declarations, covenants and conventions, United Nations reports, resolutions and action plans and existing United Nations policy on gender equality. These include the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) adopted in 1948, the Convention on the Political Rights of Women (CPRW, 1952) and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), adopted in 1979, which reiterates the right of women "to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government," and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995).

In 2000, the Security Council adopted Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. A key pillar of this and its successor resolutions is participation in post-conflict governance. More recently, the Member States of the United Nations adopted a comprehensive framework to guide their work towards sustainable development. Seventeen Sustainable Development Goals, include goals on gender equality and women's empowerment (Goal 5) and promoting peaceful and inclusive societies and effective, accountable and inclusive institutions (Goal 16).

Supporting Member States' national efforts to ensure inclusive political processes and promoting women's political participation is high on the agenda of the United Nations system. UN entities and personnel are obliged to respect, and aim to further, the rights and standards enshrined in the UN's normative framework on gender equality.

In 1997, the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) adopted the strategy of "mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system." A UN System-Wide Policy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women was endorsed by the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) in April 2012 as a means of furthering the goal of gender equality and women's empowerment within the policies and programmes of the UN system and implementing the ECOSOC agreed conclusions 1997/2.

UNDP's Strategic Plan and Gender Equality Strategy 2014-17 clearly mandate the organisation to ensure that gender equality and the empowerment of women are integrated in every aspect of the organisation's work, including parliamentary assistance.

UNDP supports advocacy, policy and legal reforms to accelerate the equal participation of women, including young women and marginalized groups, in decision-making. This includes supporting women's representation in governance institutions, including parliaments, public administrations, constitutional committees, electoral management bodies, and the judiciary.

UNDP provides technical assistance to establish or strengthen mechanisms to advance gender equality and women's empowerment in electoral and governance processes. This includes providing direct support for gender mainstreaming in gender units, committees and commissions, and women's caucuses and networks.

## Annex 2: Entry points for gender equality focused parliamentary assistance

<b>POST-ELECTION</b> (following the announcement of electoral results)	<b>PARLIAMENTARY TERM</b>	<b>PRE-ELECTION</b> (18 months out from the election)
<p><b>Support newly elected MPs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Gender targeted and gender sensitive induction training (i.e. some sessions for women only; some for men and women)</li> <li>▪ Establish mentoring programmes for new women MPs with more senior MPs (men or women)</li> <li>▪ Capacity building in the use of parliamentary procedures (incl. legislative drafting skills, debating procedures etc.)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Support CEDAW and SCR1325 compliance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide training on CEDAW using the UN-IPU Handbook for Parliamentarians</li> <li>▪ Support MPs in oversight measures (status of the State party's report, monitoring government responses to CEDAW recommendations, etc.)</li> <li>▪ Use the CEDAW Committee's checklist to ensure compliance with the women, peace and security agenda outlined in SCR 1325 and related resolutions</li> </ul>	<p><b>Improve women's access to Parliament</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review existing legal and electoral frameworks to ensure non-discrimination (e.g. legal gender quotas, party selection rules and procedures)</li> <li>▪ Where appropriate, support the adoption of TSMs to ensure higher numbers of women are elected</li> <li>▪ Organise community outreach activities with women MPs to role model women's positive contribution to leadership and decision-making</li> <li>▪ Promote advocacy initiatives to combat stereotypes and raise awareness (citizen engagement, media campaigns)</li> <li>▪ Organize outreach activities targeting political parties (women's sections, GE sections etc)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Promote women's parliamentary leadership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review internal procedures to support the adoption of affirmative action measures which give preference to women in leadership positions (e.g. rotate positions between men and women; establish two posts for each position – one for a man and one for a woman, ensure gender-sensitive working environment with a provision of child-care facilities)</li> <li>▪ Support political parties to identify potential women leaders and encourage the development of a broader range of criteria for promotion</li> <li>▪ Support women's leadership in non-traditional areas, including finance, security, defence and foreign affairs</li> </ul>	<p><b>Support parliamentary mechanisms in reviewing discriminatory legislation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Direct technical support to a parliamentary committee or parliamentary groups for a specific draft law</li> <li>▪ Provide direct or support indirect research in support of the parliament, including by fostering links between committees and CSOs and gender advocates</li> <li>▪ Facilitate interactions, both formal and informal, between parliamentary committees and the executive</li> <li>▪ Support for specific thematic areas, including TSMs, EVAW, labour laws, etc.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Review discriminatory legislation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assist the parliament in undertaking analyses of existing legislation (e.g. constitutions, electoral laws, gender equality laws, budget making laws, etc) by deploying experts, developing gender checklists and sourcing relevant sex disaggregated data</li> <li>▪ Facilitate capacity development for parliamentary staff to enhance sustainability of gender-sensitive legislative review support</li> </ul>
<p><b>Conduct gender sensitive self-assessments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support the self-assessment of existing processes, mechanisms and rules from a gender perspective</li> <li>▪ Support implementation of recommendations from the assessment/mapping exercise, through</li> </ul>	<p><b>Commit to gender mainstreaming in legislation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support the dedication of time, each sitting, for debates on legislation and budgets from a gender perspective</li> <li>▪ Develop legislative assessment guidelines or toolkits that will strengthen parliamentary capacity to</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strengthen gender sensitivity of media organizations and journalists</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide gender sensitive training to political media and journalists, with women MPs (and where relevant, their staff) present</li> </ul>

<p>technical assistance, advocacy and education</p>	<p>analyse the implications of draft legislation/Bills for men and women, boys and girls, gender budgeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support development or amendment of law making legislation/procedure providing for all Bills/draft legislation be presented with a gender analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Training for women MPs on media messaging and management (e.g. social media)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Promote establishment of gender equality parliamentary bodies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Where appropriate, support the establishment of dedicated GE infrastructure in the parliament such as a GE Committee or a women’s parliamentary caucus (or both)</li> <li>▪ Promote gender mainstreaming through the existing parliamentary committees structures</li> <li>▪ Technical assistance for members of the mechanism on its operation, activities, and internal and external relationship</li> <li>▪ Exchanges of experience with women (and men) MPs from other countries</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ensure gender equality is a shared responsibility between men and women</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Encourage men to co-sponsor legislation on gender equality issues and engage in gender analysis of draft legislation</li> <li>▪ Support committees to inquire into gender equality issues raised, and of concern to, men parliamentarians</li> <li>▪ Include men in celebratory events such as International Women’s Day or the 16 Days campaign</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Gender sensitise parliamentary strategic plans and policies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support the development (or amendment) of parliamentary strategic plans to include gender equality objectives with concrete actions, timelines, and indicators to monitor progress</li> <li>▪ Ensure media and communications policies are gender sensitive</li> <li>▪ Develop anti-harassment and anti-discrimination policies for Members of Parliament and staff</li> <li>▪ Provide technical assistance on gender sensitive plans of action, consultations with leadership</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strengthening MPs’ collaboration with gender advocates</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Build capacity of CSOs to advocate and provide knowledge to parliament, including through trainings on writing submissions to parliamentary committee inquiries and presenting information to a committee hearing</li> <li>▪ Create opportunities and spaces for dialogue and information exchange (e.g. public consultations for committees) on specific policy issues</li> <li>▪ Provide knowledge to parliament on the benefits of engaging CSOs</li> </ul> <p>Develop knowledge products that outline international and regional good practices</p>	
<p><b>Establish gender sensitive parliamentary cultures</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Conduct a gender analysis of parliamentary norms and practices – written and unwritten rules; codes of conduct; sitting hours and meeting times; parental leave and child care options</li> <li>▪ Support the implementation of recommendations approved following the analysis</li> </ul>	<p><b>Building sustainability through staff development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Knowledge products and training for staff on key functions, most particularly on gender research and analysis and gender mainstreaming</li> <li>▪ Support the collection and disaggregation of data as it relates to women MPs</li> <li>▪ Capacity building for staff on gender research and analysis, using sex disaggregated data and developing gender equality-focused recommendations</li> <li>▪ Fellowships for exchanges between staff with counterparts in other parliaments</li> </ul>	

## Annex 3: Assessment checklist on gender and parliamentary assistance

The following, non-exhaustive list of questions is intended to help a needs assessment team to address issues related to gender and parliamentary assistance, in meetings with interlocutors. Any assessment mission should analyse the information obtained and make recommendations to ensure gender mainstreaming in all parliamentary assistance activities, and that priority is given to the participation and empowerment of women.

### A) Questions

- 1) Is responsibility for achieving gender equality outcomes shared across the parliament? Are women members and leaders of committees across all policy portfolios? What hinders the participation of women across all areas of the parliament's work? What activities do men undertake in support of gender equality in parliament? What have been positive strategies to encourage men's participation in gender equality activities?
- 2) Does the parliament have policy and legal frameworks that support the promotion of gender equality (e.g. a gender equality policy; or policies to ensure that the workplace is free from discrimination, sexism and harassment)? If so, how are these applied, monitored and evaluated?
- 3) What procedural changes has the parliament made to promote gender mainstreaming (e.g. time dedicated to debates in plenary; oral and written questions used; budget process is gender responsive; mechanisms or structures are used to mainstream gender equality; tools such as checklists have been created; regular consultations with gender advocates)?
- 4) What capacity exists among men and women parliamentarians for gender analysis? What sources of gender analysis do MPs access (e.g. national statistics offices, ministry for gender equality/women's affairs, CSOs, other parliaments, etc.)?
- 5) How conducive is the parliamentary environment to women's participation and leadership (e.g. free from gender-based stereotypes and harassment of/violence towards women; language is gender-neutral; sitting hours are family-friendly; adequate parental leave is provided to men and women and facilities available for child care)? What are the key barriers to a more empowering parliamentary environment for women?
- 6) How gender sensitive is the parliamentary administration? Are women in positions of seniority? What recruitment practices encourage or hinder women's promotion? Are there family-friendly work practices and facilities for staff? What capacity exists among staff for gender analysis? Is professional development available to develop (and maintain) gender expertise?
- 7) Have there previously been and are there currently any UN gender and parliamentary assistance activities in the country? What has been their focus, and has an assessment been made of their impact? If yes, what was it?
- 8) What are previous, current and future activities by non-UN actors promoting gender equality in the parliament? What are the strengths and weaknesses of those activities? Where do other actors have a comparative advantage or shortcoming compared with the UN?

### B) Recommendations

- 9) What should be the focus of UN parliamentary assistance in relation to gender and parliaments in order to ensure gender mainstreaming across the parliamentary cycle?



10) What risks and benefits would different measures have?

11) Based on this analysis, what measures should be recommended, and why?

## C) Data

A main source of information for analysing women's political participation and empowerment, and with which to make evidence-based recommendations, is sex-disaggregated data. Assessments should aim to collect the following types of information:

- number of men and women Members of Parliament (currently and in the recent past);
- number of men and women in positions of parliamentary leadership in the Bureau or Board (currently and in the recent past)
- number of committee membership, by sex, including positions of leadership (Chairperson, Deputy, other office bearers);
- number of parliamentary staff, by sex, including in positions of leadership;
- standing orders/internal rules of the Parliament;
- any laws relating to gender equality passed by the Parliament in at least the last five years;
- the Constitution or the national electoral law;
- number of men and women in leadership positions in the major political parties;
- any Government and Opposition parties' policies or programmes concerning gender equality;
- any policies of the Parliament that have an impact on gender equality (e.g. code of conduct, anti-discrimination policies, communications strategy);
- the Parliament's Strategic Plan, or other plans of action; and
- national CEDAW reports tabled in parliament, and copies of parliamentary debates held on those CEDAW reports or of any parliamentary delegation to the annual Commission on the Status of Women.

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- i UNDP, Más allá de los números: las mujeres transforman el poder legislativo en América Latina y el Caribe; Julie Ballington and Azza Karam (eds), 2005, *Women in Parliament: Beyond Numbers*, Revised Edition, International IDEA: Stockholm; Julie Ballington, 2008, *Equality in Politics: A Survey of Men and Women in Parliaments*, IPU: Geneva; Sonia Palmieri, 2012, *Gender-Sensitive Parliaments: A Global Survey of Good Practice*, IPU: Geneva
- ii Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Chile, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, Honduras, Indonesia, Kosovo, Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR), Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritania, Moldova, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Pacific Centre, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Suriname, Tanzania and Togo.
- iii In 2009, UNDP launched the gender marker, which requires managers to rate projects against a four-point scale indicating its contribution toward the achievement of gender equality. The gender marker enables UNDP to track and monitor how gender-responsive each financial allocation and expenditure is. It also enables managers to analyse trends by region, outcome and focus area. UNDP Gender Equality Strategy, p. 17.
- iv OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). 2013. *A comparative study of structures for women MPs in OSCE region*. OSCE ODIHR: Warsaw.
- v OSCE ODIHR, 2013, op cit.
- vi IPU. Parline Database of Specialised Bodies. <http://www.ipu.org/parline-e/Instancelist.asp?newquery=yes&typeforminstance=Advanced> Accessed November 2015.
- vii On opportunities to improve men's participation, see Sonia Palmieri, 2013. 'Sympathetic advocates: male parliamentarians sharing responsibility for gender equality', *Gender and Development*, 21(1).
- viii A 2012 study of women's leadership of parliamentary committees found that while women were most commonly chairs of committees on women's/gender issues or social policy (education, health and the environment), women had not been completely absent as chairs of foreign affairs committees. At that time, 18 parliaments reported having a woman chair of the foreign affairs or defence committee, including Argentina, Mexico, Pakistan, Peru, Singapore and Rwanda. Sonia Palmieri, 2012, *Gender-Sensitive Parliaments: A Global Survey of Good Practice*, IPU: Geneva, pp. 20-1.
- ix IPU, 2013, Guidelines for Women's Caucuses, available at: <http://www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/caucus-e.pdf>
- x For example, Susan Webb Hammond and Daniel P Mulholland and Arthur G Stevens, Jr., 1985. 'Informal Congressional Caucuses and Agenda Setting'. *Western Political Science Quarterly* 38(4): 583-605; Leah Olivier, 2005. 'Women's Legislative Caucuses', National Conference of State Legislatures, Briefing Paper on the Important Issues of the Day 13(29); Anna M Mahoney, 2011. 'Politics of presence: A Study of Women's Legislative Caucuses in the 50 States', State Politics and Policy Conference Dartmouth, Hanover, New Hampshire.
- xi National Democratic Institute, 2008, 'Women's Caucuses Fact Sheet', Washington: NDI.
- xii Mahoney, 'Politics of presence'.
- xiii Reference to Kosovo is made pursuant to UN Security Council Resolution 1244.
- xiv OSCE ODIHR, p. 20.
- xv Keila Gonzalez and Kristen Sample, 2010, One Size Does Not Fit All: Lessons Learned from Legislative Gender Commissions and Caucuses, NDI and International IDEA, pp. 18–19.
- xvi Julie Ballington, 2008. *Equality in Politics: A Survey of Men and Women in Parliaments*, IPU: Geneva, p. 68.
- xvii Sonia Palmieri, *Gender-Sensitive Parliaments: A Global Survey of Good Practice*, IPU: Geneva, pp. 49-50.
- xviii OSCE ODIHR.
- xix Reference to Kosovo is made pursuant to UN Security Council Resolution 1244.
- xx Marian Sawyer, Sonia Palmieri and Lenita Friedenvall. 2013. "Playing their part? Parliamentary Institutions and Gender Mainstreaming", Available on the Social Science Research Network.
- xxi OSCE ODIHR.
- xxii Sonia Palmieri, *Gender-Sensitive Parliaments*, pp. 55.
- xxiii Reference to Kosovo is made pursuant to UN Security Council Resolution 1244.
- xxiv Wil Hout, 2015, "Putting political economy to use in aid policies" in OECD, *A Governance Practitioner's Notebook: Alternative Ideas and Approaches*, available at: <http://www.oecd.org/dac/governance-peace/governance/docs/Governance%20Notebook%201.4%20Hout.pdf>; The Asia Foundation, 2012, *Political Economy Analysis of Local Governance in Nepal*, prepared for AusAID, available at: <http://asiafoundation.org/resources/pdfs/analysislocalgovernancenepal.pdf>