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# **GENDER AND ELECTIONS: TEMPORARY SPECIAL MEASURES BEYOND QUOTAS**

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# GENDER AND ELECTIONS: TEMPORARY SPECIAL MEASURES BEYOND QUOTAS

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Gender parity in elected office has become a central goal of national governments and international organizations around the globe. The roots of this demand extend back to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in 1948, which enshrined “the equal rights of men and women,” including the right to participate in government.<sup>1</sup> Delegates to the United Nations World Conference on Women, held in Mexico City in 1975, called on governments to “establish goals, strategies, and timetables” to increase “the number of women in elective and appointive public offices and public functions at all levels.”<sup>2</sup> The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly and ratified by nearly every member state, reiterated that women must be ensured the right “to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government.”<sup>3</sup>

At the end of the UN Decade for Women in 1985, the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women encouraged states to take more active steps to achieve these goals. It recommended that governments consider “legislative and administrative measures,” and that parties “institute measures to activate women’s constitutional and legal guarantees of the right to be elected and appointed by selecting candidates.”<sup>4</sup> Build-

ing on these advances, general recommendation no. 5 of the UN's CEDAW Committee specified in 1988 that the term "temporary special measures" from article 4 of CEDAW referred to "positive action, preferential treatment, or quota systems to advance women's integration into education, the economy, politics, and employment."<sup>5</sup>

These commitments were strengthened in the Beijing Platform for Action, signed by all member states at the UN's Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. This document set a specific target of 30 percent women in decision-making positions that, it argued, might only be achieved through use of positive action in candidate selection.<sup>6</sup> Following the conference, debates over quotas for women in politics were initiated worldwide, leading to the passage in the ensuing years of electoral gender quota policies in more than one hundred countries, nearly all specifying 30 percent as a minimum proportion of women candidates and/or elected officials (Krook 2009).<sup>7</sup>

Yet the Beijing Platform for Action did not focus solely on quotas as a solution to women's underrepresentation. It also highlighted a range of other measures to support the goal of gender-balanced decision making, such as "career planning, tracking, mentoring, coaching, training, and retraining" for women and "public debate on the new roles of men and women in society and in the family,"<sup>8</sup> indicating that quotas alone might not suffice to achieve gender equality in elected office. On the one hand, the outcomes of quota policies may be enhanced by programs expanding the pool of potential female candidates and promoting a broader transformation in public views toward women in politics. On the other hand, formal quotas may not be an option in all states, for a variety of reasons. In contrast to electoral quotas, however, "non-quota measures" to increase women's political representation have not been subject to systematic documentation or analysis.

Recognizing the utility of quota and non-quota approaches, I draw on examples from around the globe to outline a wide range of temporary special measures that might be used to promote gender parity in elections. I begin by presenting the current international thinking on these questions, which supports deliberate strategies of intervention to facilitate women's access to elected office, and then address temporary special measures in five parts. The first provides an overview of electoral gender quotas, focusing on policy design, adoption processes, and numerical impact. The remaining four catalogue non-quota strategies, organizing them according to the location of intervention: law, parliament, political parties, and civil society.

The diversity of non-quota measures employed around the world indicates a broad array of creative solutions, engaging a variety of actors, that might be pursued to enhance women's political representation. Together with quotas, these tactics highlight the need for a multifaceted approach to tackle the multidimensional and diverse obstacles to women's political inclusion.

## VALUE OF GENDER PARITY

Today women occupy 21.7 percent of all parliamentary seats worldwide.<sup>9</sup> While this is nearly double the 11.3 percent held in 1995 (Inter-parliamentary Union 1995), countries have varied significantly in terms of the change they have achieved. More than thirty states have met the 30 percent target for women in decision-making positions set by the Beijing Platform for Action. Of these, nine have surpassed the 40 percent mark, and two have achieved 50 percent or more. At the other end of the spectrum, however, several parliaments have only a handful or no women at all.<sup>10</sup>

What is notable about the group of countries at the top of the list is that they do not follow any clear patterns in terms of social, economic, political, or cultural characteristics. This is in sharp contrast to the late 1980s, when the nine states in the world with the highest levels of female representation fell into two groups: four were located in the Nordic region, and five were Communist countries (United Nations Office in Vienna 1992, 12). The diverse countries now at the top of the world rankings cast doubt on two common objections raised when concrete strategies are proposed to increase the numbers of women in politics.

The first is that long-term structural shifts in the roles of men and women in the home, family, work force, and public sphere will eventually facilitate a transformation in access to political positions. In fact, increased opportunities for women in higher education, labor force participation, and professional employment have not translated into greater access to decision-making positions. The second claim is that processes of democratization will gradually produce an even playing field so that, eventually, equal numbers of women and men will be elected. Evidence from democratizing as well as highly democratic states indicates this is also not the case, as many of these countries fall below the world average in women's representation (Norris and Krook 2011).

An alternative perspective, gaining ground today across the globe, suggests causality may in fact move in the opposite direction than is embodied in these two sets of claims: that is, equal representation will empower women and facilitate democracy. This view is reflected in a growing number of international declarations in favor of gender-balanced decision making as a means for promoting development, democracy, and security for all citizens.<sup>11</sup> A host of academic studies endorse this view, demonstrating that the increased presence of women in political office can help parties compete more effectively, encourage the political participation of both women and men, and draw attention to important issues previously overlooked (Norris and Krook 2011). Indeed, voters do not appear to be biased against female candidates—in some instances, in fact, they prefer to vote for women (Murray et al. 2012). Women, moreover, have proved to be diligent legislators (Anzia and Berry 2011), and, according to a global survey, both men and women believe government is more democratic when more women are present (Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005).

## ELECTORAL QUOTAS

Early comparative research identified differences in electoral systems, development, women's social and economic status, and political culture as reasons that some countries had elected more women than others (for a review, see Krook 2010). These patterns have unraveled in recent years, however, with the widespread introduction of electoral gender quotas, which have altered traditional candidate selection processes in ways that have enabled the election of more women, irrespective of previously assumed "prerequisites" for change. The main barriers to women's increased election thus appear to be political, rather than social, economic, or cultural. Nonetheless, quotas have not been similarly effective across contexts: some have produced dramatic jumps, while others have led to more modest changes and even setbacks in women's representation (Krook 2009). These variations stem from policy design, differing paths to policy adoption, and distinct contexts shaping the effectiveness of quotas in electing more women.

### *Quota Types*

Quotas take three main forms—reserved seats, party quotas, and legislative quotas—which intervene in the candidate selection process in distinct ways. *Reserved seats* involve reforms to constitutions, and occasionally electoral

laws, to set aside for women seats that men are not eligible to contest. They are found in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. Although they first emerged in the 1930s and were the main type of quota adopted until the 1970s, since 2000 they have been instituted in various countries with very few women in politics.

In most instances, reserved seats provide for low levels of female representation, usually between 1 and 10 percent of all representatives, although since 2000, several countries have instituted much larger provisions of 30 percent. In some cases, like local elections in India, reserved seats apply to single-member districts, where only women may run for election. In others, such as Afghanistan, they are allocated in multimember districts to the designated number of women who win the most votes. In yet others, like Uganda prior to 2006, women are selected for these seats several weeks after the general elections by members of the national parliament.

*Party quotas*, in contrast, entail changes to individual party statutes that commit the party to strive for a specific proportion of women among its candidates to political office. These policies were first adopted in the early 1970s by a limited number of socialist and social democratic parties in Western Europe. Over the course of the 1980s and 1990s, however, they began to appear in a diverse array of parties in all regions of the world, making them the most common type of gender quota today.

Party quotas typically set a goal of women comprising between 25 and 50 percent of candidates for office. All the same, the phrasing of this requirement varies; some policies—for example, in Argentina, South Africa, and Spain—identify women as the group to be promoted by the quota, while others—such as in Italy and several Nordic countries—set out a more gender-neutral formulation. Party quotas govern the composition of party lists in countries with proportional representation electoral systems, which are prevalent in much of the world, and are directed at collections of single-member districts in countries with majoritarian arrangements, such as the United Kingdom.

*Legislative quotas*, finally, are measures enacted through reforms to electoral laws, and sometimes constitutions, requiring that all parties nominate a certain percentage of female candidates. They tend to be found in developing countries, especially in Latin America, and post-conflict societies, primarily in Africa, the Middle East, and Southeastern Europe. They are the newest

kind of gender quota, first appearing only in the 1990s, at a time when the issue of women's underrepresentation in electoral politics had reached the agendas of many international and nongovernmental organizations.

Legislative quotas generally call for women to constitute between 25 and 50 percent of all candidates. In most instances, the language of these measures is gender neutral, speaking of women and men together or making reference to the "underrepresented sex." Yet legislative quotas vary in terms of how strictly their goals are articulated; some speak vaguely about "facilitating access," as is the case in France, while others offer concrete guidelines regarding the selection and placement of female candidates, as in Argentina, Belgium, and Costa Rica. Similar to party quotas, these policies are implemented in different ways depending on the electoral system, applying to party lists, as is the case in much of the world, or to a broader group of single-member districts, as in France. Given their status as laws, however, a distinctive feature of these quotas is that they may contain sanctions for noncompliance and be subject to oversight from external bodies, as in Mexico and Portugal.

### *Quota Adoption*

Quotas are not only a widespread but also a relatively recent political phenomenon. Between 1930 and 1980, only ten countries established quota provisions, followed by twelve in the 1980s. Over the course of the 1990s, however, quotas appeared in more than fifty countries, and they have been implemented by over fifty more since the year 2000—most recently, in some of the new regimes emerging in the wake of the Arab Spring, such as Tunisia and Libya. Case studies suggest quotas reach the political agenda in four ways, due to women's mobilization, elite strategies, international pressure, and transnational influences (Krook 2009).

Women's groups tend to mobilize for quotas when they come to view them as an effective, and perhaps the only, means for increasing women's political representation. In these instances, women pursue quotas for both principled and pragmatic reasons. They believe more women should be in politics to achieve justice, promote women's interests, and make use of women's resources for the good of society. In the absence of any "natural" trend toward change, however, they recognize greater participation is likely to be achieved only through specific, targeted actions to promote female candidates.



Political elites are more likely to adopt quotas for strategic reasons, generally related to competition with other parties. Various case studies suggest, for example, that party elites often adopt quotas when a rival adopts them. This effect may be heightened if the party is seeking to overcome a long period in the opposition or a dramatic decrease in popularity. In other contexts, elites view quotas as a way to demonstrate a degree of commitment to women without actually intending to alter existing patterns of inequality. Alternatively, they treat quotas as a convenient means to promote other ends, such as maintaining control over rivals within or outside the party.

International pressures often work together with transnational influences. Over the last two decades, many international organizations—including the UN, the Socialist International, the Council of Europe, the European Union, the Commonwealth, the African Union, the Southern African Development Community, and the Organization of American States—have issued declarations recommending that all member states aim for women to comprise 30 percent of officeholders in all political bodies. In some cases, international actors are directly involved in quota adoption, introducing quotas or compelling national leaders to do so themselves. In others, international events provide new sources of leverage in national debates, shifting the balance in favor of local and transnational actors pressing for adoption. In still others, women's movements and transnational nongovernmental organizations share information on quota strategies across borders, bolstered by international declarations (Krook 2006).

### *Quota Effectiveness*

As quota measures and the reasons for their adoption are diverse, differences in their impact might be expected. Pinpointing why some are more effective than others is a complicated task, however; in addition to variations in features of specific policies, which affect their likelihood of being implemented, quotas are introduced when variations already exist in the percentages of women in national parliaments. Cross-national variations are thus the combined result of quotas, where these are present, and other factors that were at work before the quotas were established.

Three broad reasons have been offered to untangle these effects. The first focuses on *details of these measures*, namely differences in their wording, requirements, sanctions, and perceived legitimacy, all of which may have

intended and unintended effects. In France, for example, financial penalties associated with the 50 percent quota law have been found to create distinct incentives for parties of different sizes: larger parties tend to ignore the requirements, while smaller ones are more likely to comply, for the simple reason that the latter are under greater pressure to maximize the amount of state funding they receive (Murray et al. 2012).

A second explanation relates to *the “fit” between quotas and other political institutions*. Quotas often have the greatest impact in countries with proportional representation electoral systems with closed party lists and high district magnitudes. In Sweden, for example, multiple seats are available in each constituency, and candidates are elected from lists put forward by political parties, facilitating the use of quotas. In contrast, applying a quota is more difficult where only one seat is available per district unless it entails reserved seats, as in Tanzania.

Quotas also tend to improve women’s representation in countries where several parties coexist and larger parties respond to policy innovations initiated by smaller ones, as well as in parties with left-wing ideologies whose leadership is better able to enforce party or national regulations. Party fragmentation, however, can undercut the impact of quotas if each party wins only one seat per district, as occurred with the parity law implemented in Tunisia in 2011. Quotas can also be more successful where political cultures emphasize sexual difference and group representation, and less so where they stress sexual equality and individual representation. Indeed, quotas have been challenged in some states as a violation of constitutional principles of equality, as was the case in Italy and the United Kingdom in the 1990s and Mexico and Spain in the 2000s.

A third set of reasons points to *the role of political will*. Party elites are most directly responsible for variations in quota impact, since effective application of quotas largely hinges on their willingness to recruit female candidates. In many cases, elites take steps to mitigate quota impact, ranging from passive refusal to enforce quotas to more active measures—including large-scale electoral fraud—to subvert their intended effects. Elites in Bolivia, for example, went so far as to change male names to female ones as a means of circumventing the 30 percent quota law. Other actors may play a direct or indirect role in enforcing quota provisions, however, including women’s organizations, national and international courts, and ordinary citizens, all of whom may monitor party compliance in ways that lead elites to

honor, and possibly even exceed, quota requirements (Krook 2009).

## BEYOND QUOTAS: LEGAL MEASURES

Both scholars and international organizations have spent more than a decade intensely analyzing gender quotas, generating a wide body of knowledge on the topic. Much less is known about other tactics to promote gender equality in elected office. A systematic search, however, uncovers substantial variety in such initiatives, thus presenting many options beyond quotas for encouraging the greater inclusion of women in politics. Law-based measures could be the most effective non-quota strategies in steering party and public behavior, given that they are—in theory—enforced centrally by the state. They include party funding regulations, publicly provided campaign support, and laws seeking to combat violence against female politicians. As a group, these strategies seek to influence how parties approach the nomination and capacity building of female candidates, as well as provide resources and security that may increase women’s willingness to participate.

### *Party Funding Regulations*

In countries where political parties are publicly funded, regulating how funds are used can be an effective way of promoting women’s political participation. A relatively recent innovation, these policies take several different forms. While all establish a set of guidelines and conditions for the use of direct public funds, they may be directed at candidate nomination or capacity building (or both) of women inside the party (for a full list, see appendix). Unless specified in the text, all data cited in this section are from the International IDEA Political Finance Database.<sup>12</sup>

*Candidate-centered regulations* present incentives for political parties to nominate or elect more female candidates, with the amount of public funding conditioned on how many are put forward by a given party. Parties may lose a share of funding if they do not nominate a certain percentage of female candidates, as in France, where if the difference between the proportions of women and men exceed two percentage points then state subsidies are reduced by twice that difference, and in Ireland, where party funding will be reduced by 50 percent if women do not comprise at least 30 percent of party nominees (rising to 40 percent in subsequent elections).<sup>13</sup> An even stronger formulation exists in Serbia, where parties whose candidates do not include at least one-third candidates of each sex are prohibited from

participating in elections, rendering them ineligible for any state subsidy.

A slightly different approach, which is becoming increasingly more common, frames the issue in a more positive way. In these countries, parties are rewarded for nominating women, rather than punished for falling short of legal mandates. In Ethiopia, a required percentage is not specified, but rather, financial support is determined according to how many women are nominated by each party in the context of all parties. In the Republic of Korea, the subsidy also depends on how parties compare with one another, with the overall scheme depending on how many parties exceed 30 percent female candidates. In Georgia and Italy, rewards are more explicitly enumerated. In Georgia, a party will receive an addition 10 percent of the funds it is entitled to if there are at least 20 candidates of a different sex per group of 10 candidates. In Italy, the proportion of state funding lost by parties that do not respect the legislative quota for European Parliament elections is distributed as a bonus to parties that do comply.

As is well known from the literature on gender quotas, however, simply nominating more female candidates does not always translate into electing more women. A growing number of countries therefore allocate party funding according to the share of women who are actually elected. Apart from Kenya, where a party loses eligibility for state funding if more than two-thirds of its elected officials are of one gender, these provisions generally take the form of positive rather than negative incentives. In states as diverse as Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colombia, Mali, and Niger, between 5 and 10 percent of state funding is allocated to parties based on their shares of women elected, thereby encouraging them to elect as many women as possible.

In other countries, the regulation is more explicitly formulated as a bonus to parties that elect women. In Romania, a specific figure is not mentioned; the policy simply states that state funding will increase in proportion to the number of women elected. In Cape Verde, public funds are awarded to parties that elect at least 25 percent women, while in Papua New Guinea, parties receive a particular amount for each female candidate who wins at least 10 percent of the vote. Interestingly, the PNG law states that a party must not simply endorse a female candidate; it must also have spent a specified amount for expenses on her campaign. Premiums for electing women are most clear in a handful of other cases. In ascending order, political parties are entitled to a bonus of 10 percent of the amount allocated for each elect-

ed member of the underrepresented sex in Croatia; a 50 percent increase in public funding if 30 percent of elected officials are women in Burkina Faso (UNDP-NDI 2011, 29); and a doubling of funding if a party nominates at least 30 percent women and succeeds in electing at least 20 percent women in Haiti. In Togo, a unique case, the nomination fee a party must pay to contest elections is reduced by 25 percent if the party list contains female candidates.

*Capacity-building regulations* provide a less direct route toward greater gender equality in elected office. Rather than seeking to influence party calculations in candidate nomination processes, these laws require political parties to earmark a certain percentage of their public funding for activities that contribute to the political development of women (and in some instances, youth and ethnic minorities as well). In some cases, the activities themselves are not specified, thus permitting parties to elaborate their own programs. In Colombia and Ireland, requirements are especially vague; parties must simply spend some amount of their public funding on promoting the inclusion and participation of women. In Brazil, Italy, and Korea, amounts are identified—between 5 and 10 percent of state subsidies—but activities are not, referring only to those promoting the participation or development of women.

Other laws, however, do stipulate what funds must be used for, although the activities in question vary. A support fund in Morocco must be directed toward enhancing women's political representation. Along similar lines, each party in Mexico must devote 2 percent of its annual public funding to the training, promotion, and development of women's leadership skills. In Panama, at least 10 percent of the 25 percent of party funding dedicated to civic and political education activities must be channeled solely toward the training of women. A specific percentage is not stated in Costa Rica, but parties there must certify that they spent equal amounts of resources on the training of women and men; if they do not, the money for such activities will not be reinstated. Slightly different requirements exist in Finland, where all parliamentary parties must use 12 percent of their annual party subsidies to fund women's wings, and Honduras, where parties are assessed a fine of 5 percent of their public funding if they do not develop and provide proof of nondiscrimination policies.

### *Campaign Support Opportunities*

In addition to direct funding of political parties, the law may also be used to provide indirect funding of political campaigns. One way to do this is through the provision of free air time on television and radio stations, whether on state- or privately owned media. In Timor Leste, more broadcast media time is given to parties that place women in high positions on their party lists, which in past elections has had the effect of encouraging the nomination of women and increasing their visibility during the campaign (Sidhu and Meena 2007, 31; UNDP-NDI 2011, 30).

In Afghanistan, where elections are candidate-centered rather than party-centered, the state-run media are required to provide equal facilities to all candidates, including free broadcasting and advertising messages.<sup>14</sup> Although the opportunity was gender neutral in its formulation, it is notable that a higher proportion of female candidates (76 percent) than male candidates (55 percent) took advantage of this opportunity in 2005. This may stem from the fact that, according to a survey of three hundred parliamentarians worldwide conducted by the Inter-parliamentary Union, one of the most significant factors deterring women from entering politics is the lack of finances to contest electoral campaigns (Ballington 2008, 18).

Increased awareness of campaign finance issues as potential obstacles to women's candidacies—as also detailed among the party and civil society initiatives enumerated later in the paper—has led to two further law-based policies to reduce such barriers for women. In many developing countries, for example, even relatively modest fees required to register a candidacy can exclude women from the election process (Sidhu and Meena 2007). In Nigeria, where money plays a key role in election campaigns, the federal government—acting through the Ministry of Women Affairs and Development—launched the Nigerian Women's Trust Fund in 2011, with the aim of providing aspiring female politicians with financial and other types of resources toward their campaigns, regardless of political affiliation. This initiative was followed by a second trust, set up by the wife of the president under the auspices of the Women for Change Initiative,<sup>15</sup> to distribute various sums to each of 809 female candidates. The trusts complement the steps taken by several political parties to exempt women from paying some of the fees associated with participating in elections.<sup>16</sup>

### *Laws on Violence against Women in Politics*

A third set of legal measures has very recently reached the political agenda,

namely laws seeking to ensure women's safety while running for and holding elected positions. "Electoral violence" refers to the use of force by political parties or their supporters to intimidate opponents. It can include a wide range of actions—undertaken before, during, or after elections—including character assassination, discouragement and harassment, abuse and rape, threatening of lives and physical attacks, and even murder and attempted murder (SAP International 2010, 15–16).

Electoral violence perpetrated against female politicians can be treated as a broader category of violence against women. South Asian Partnership (SAP) International defines violence against women in politics as any act seeking to inflict physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering on female politicians with the intent of deterring their political participation. Importantly, the definition put forward by SAP International recognizes that such violence can occur in public or private life, within political parties, across political parties, or at the level of the state, as well as within a woman's own family (2010, 27).

Acknowledging this problem, legislators in several Latin American countries, including Bolivia, Ecuador, Guatemala, and Mexico, have sought laws to prevent and punish all forms of persecution, harassment, and violence against women in politics. In 2012, Bolivian legislators approved the groundbreaking Law against Harassment and Political Violence against Women. It was passed in response to demands from women's organizations that pointed out that over the previous eight years, police had received more than four thousand complaints of harassment from women participating in politics—a figure that most likely did not reflect the full extent of the problem, given that many incidents are not reported.

The increase in violence against female politicians in Bolivia appears to stem in part from the adoption of a legislative quota in 1997, which increased the number of women elected but also led to pressures on women to renounce their positions in favor of male substitutes. Recognizing the many forms such violence may take, the law stipulates a two- to five-year prison sentence for anyone who pressures, persecutes, harasses, or threatens an elected woman. The penalty for physical, psychological, or sexual aggression is three to eight years in prison.<sup>17</sup> To prevent elected women from making decisions against their will, moreover, resignations tendered by them are valid only if the woman in question appears in person before the National Electoral Court; the presence of this provision acknowledges that some



women have been forced to sign their resignations under duress (Salguero Carrillo 2009).

## BEYOND QUOTAS: PARLIAMENTARY REFORMS

A second group of non-quota initiatives focus on parliaments as an institution, seeking both to signal that political institutions are open to women and to make politics a more attractive career for them. These initiatives recognize that particular aspects of parliamentary routines and infrastructure affect men and women in different ways, so that women often feel like outsiders within what they perceive as overwhelmingly “masculine” institutions (Palmieri 2011, 83–84; cf. Duerst-Lahti and Kelly 1995; Krook and Mackay 2011). These include a sense of parliament as a “gentlemen’s club,” with a plethora of unwritten rules and codes of conduct at one end of the spectrum and disparaging or condescending sexist remarks at the other (Palmieri 2011, 84). For women and other underrepresented minorities, surviving in such an environment often entails adapting to, rather than changing, existing institutions (Celis and Wauters 2010), perpetuating biases that reinforce their exclusion and isolation.

Parliament-based strategies to promote gender equality fall into two broad categories. The first seeks to tackle infrastructural issues that may—in symbolic or actual terms—deter women’s participation by suggesting politics is not open to them. The second aims to support women in parliament once they are elected by providing resources to help them be more effective legislators. As with other non-quota strategies, these innovations are relatively new but also quite diverse, pointing to numerous solutions for rethinking political institutions in ways that may make them more inclusive.

### *Infrastructural Issues*

Infrastructural issues can be divided into those pertaining to language and symbols and those connected with operating procedures. Parliaments around the world are saturated with practices and images that can reinforce as well as challenge social hierarchies.<sup>18</sup> For actors inside institutions—as well as visitors to them—these can implicitly suggest which actors are valued and can participate.

*Language issues* can be especially acute in countries where masculine and feminine forms are used, with the masculine plural form referring to a



mixed group. In Spain, the term “*señores diputados*,” or “male deputies,” had long been used when addressing male and female deputies together, following Spanish-language rules. Legislators came to recognize, however, that such linguistic conventions, in effect, rendered women invisible within the institution. During the 2008–12 session, the Standing Orders of Congress were therefore revised to be more inclusive and nonsexist by using both masculine and feminine forms in plenary and committee debates.<sup>19</sup> A decision was also made at that time to issue any future constitutional amendments in the name of “Congress,” a more gender-neutral term than “Congress of Deputies,” which employs the masculine plural form (Palmieri 2011, 86; see also Waring et al. 2000).

Other steps taken on a *symbolic plane* to signal openness to women’s participation include the revision of parliamentary websites. Certain legislatures, for instance, provide a separate list of female members, drawing attention to the presence of women in parliament.<sup>20</sup> Some websites also showcase events related to gender equality, such as anniversary celebrations of women’s right to vote and the passage of women-friendly legislation (Palmieri 2011). In France, a special section was added to the parliamentary website to draw attention to the history of women in politics,<sup>21</sup> including an extensive set of videos and other links on women’s role in French politics.<sup>22</sup>

In other countries, such as Brazil, special exhibitions have been organized to showcase the role of women in politics. In Sweden, a five-party motion in 1989 observed that nearly all portraits in the parliament building were of men. The aim of the motion was to take steps to render visible women who had, over the years, made meaningful contributions to Swedish politics. Pieces of artwork by female artists depicting women’s lives were therefore installed in a hallway where members of parliament often passed in order to go from the chamber to committee rooms—a hallway that also formed part of the visits of both Swedish and foreign visitors. In 2005, a proposal was made to go further with a “women’s room” to inspire visitors with portrayals of “strong, brave, successful Swedish women.”<sup>23</sup> The current exhibition features women from different parties who have been political pioneers and role models, including the first female member of parliament, the first female party leader, and the first female speaker.

*Operating procedures* shape how parliament operates, both literally and figuratively, as an institution. These procedures have come into the spotlight as growing numbers of women have become members. They include basic

elements of the parliament building, as well as the daily and weekly routines of members, both of which appear to be based on assumptions that parliamentarians are men.

In numerous parliament buildings, for example, there are few female toilet facilities. In South Africa, there were only male restrooms when elections in 1994 brought an unprecedented share of women to parliament, 25 percent. The immediate solution was to hang a hand-lettered sign on the door of the bathroom farthest from the parliamentary floor—one that still hung there more than five years later (Ross 2002). Such problems can reinforce perceptions that women are not expected or welcome participants, but rather an “afterthought” within the institution.

In recent years, the greater presence of younger female members has also raised new issues related to child care and breastfeeding. The response has been uneven. In Germany, child care centers cater to parliamentary staff, but not to members themselves, while in Sweden, all members—both male and female—are entitled to use the child care center. In Scotland, child care facilities, which the governing body views as “an important part of creating an open and accessible Parliament,”<sup>24</sup> are available both to members and visitors. In a similar vein, new challenges to parliamentary rules prohibiting food and “visitors” on the chamber floor or in committee rooms surfaced in the late 1990s in Australia and the United Kingdom, when a string of new female members needed to breastfeed their babies.<sup>25</sup> In some countries, such as Peru, a solution has been to set up a room for this purpose within the parliament building itself (Palmieri 2011, 95).

In terms of the routines of parliament, both male and female members—but especially women—have highlighted “work-life balance” issues as the greatest challenge when serving (Palmieri 2011, 97). Several elements of parliamentary schedules make it difficult to combine work and family obligations. One is the timing of sittings. Many chambers work late into the night, precluding members from being home with their families in the evening.

Recognizing that this is a problem, especially for women, as societal expectations often place a greater burden on them for such tasks as preparing dinner and putting children to bed, several legislatures have established new rules concerning hours. In Denmark, no votes may take place after 7 PM, while in Sweden evening votes are avoided as much as possible. Votes

are also generally not taken on Mondays or Fridays, which has the further bonus of allowing members to spend more time in their districts. Another family-friendly provision aligns the parliamentary schedule with the school calendar, which has now been implemented in nearly 40 percent of parliaments (Palmeri 2011, 92).

Another broad swath of issues concerns parental leave. Debates surround the question of whether to bring policies in line with those applying to other government officials (such as civil servants) or citizens or simply negotiate leaves of absence on a case-by-case basis. This problem came to a head several years ago in Colombia, where a proposed bill stipulated that legislators would lose their seats if they did not attend a certain number of sessions—a law intended to curb absenteeism that also had particular implications for pregnant women (and was later defeated on these grounds). Voting can also be an issue in cases of parental leave. In parliaments with substitute members, this problem can be more easily resolved, with an alternate taking the place of the member. In some countries, however, such as Armenia, Australia, and France, members are not replaced when on leave, as their offices are not considered vacant, although a special provision was introduced in Australia in 2008 that permits a nursing mother to ask her party whip to vote on her behalf by proxy (Palmieri 2011, 95).

### *Institutional Support*

Beyond addressing infrastructural issues, legislatures around the world have devised various ways to support women in parliament once they are elected, with the goal of making them more effective legislators, both individually and as a group. Many legislatures offer orientation or induction sessions for all newly elected members. Yet, especially for those who may be outside “old boys’ networks,” the resources for translating this knowledge into practice may be incomplete—particularly for women, who must also navigate the various challenges of entering a male-dominated environment. Initiatives along these lines come in at least three forms: research and training centers, women’s caucuses, and gender equality committees.

*Gender-specific research and training* within parliaments is relatively new. The aim is to support female legislators, as well as women-friendly policy-making more broadly. The Research Center for Women’s Advancement and Gender Equality was established in Mexico in 2005, for example, to provide specialized technical support and analytical information services. While

the center's mission is to work with both male and female legislators to promote gender equality in the legislative process,<sup>26</sup> in practice it works in large part with female deputies to craft bills. The demand for such services is clear, as evidenced by the first two terms of the center's existence, during which it provided 428 informational services to parliamentarians, including assistance with sixty-five reports on legislation, thirty-five research papers, and forty-nine analyses (Palmieri 2011, 55). A similar center, the Technical Unit on Gender Equality and Equity, was created in Costa Rica in 2009 to provide gender training to staff, provide expert advice, and coordinate with civil society.<sup>27</sup>

*Women's caucuses* are not an entirely new idea, having been established in many state legislatures in the United States for many years (Thomas 1994). They can be especially important, however, when there are relatively few female parliamentarians and women can gain strength by working together (Archenti and Johnson 2006; Reingold 2000). Their main function is to bring women together across partisan lines, but they can also serve as a means to connect with actors in civil society and the private sector. Caucuses can range from formal organizations, with permanent offices and objectives, to less formal groups that convene meetings as necessary, to groups that hold informal gatherings, like monthly breakfast meetings. Their funding can derive from voluntary fees, as in Pakistan, or even international sources, as in Peru (Palmieri 2011, 48). The degree of formality and cooperation often depends on the strength of party politics, with women being less likely to come together formally where partisan divides are strong.

In addition to coordinating women's legislative activity, women's caucuses can play a role in leadership training, speechwriting, and gender budgeting. One particularly comprehensive model is the Forum of Rwandan Women Parliamentarians, established during the transitional assembly in 1996 with the goal of strengthening the role of female parliamentarians. All female members of both houses of parliament are included. Formally recognized by parliament, with its own office, the forum engages in advocacy on behalf of women, identifying legislative priorities and reviewing legislation to ensure it is gender sensitive. To this end, the caucus coordinates with the Gender and Family Promotion Committee inside parliament, as well as with women's groups in civil society (Palmieri 2011, 46). At the same time, it also seeks to build up the capacity of members through training workshops, administrative assistance, and expert technical advice.<sup>28</sup>

*Gender equality committees* more specifically focus on developing women-friendly legislation. They may take a variety of different forms, focusing on gender equality, women's status, and often family issues. Their varied tasks can include generating legislation, providing oversight for bills proposed in other committees, monitoring the implementation of laws, requesting briefings from ministers and government departments, and conducting study tours. According to the Inter-parliamentary Union, eighty-six countries worldwide have one or more parliamentary bodies (a total of 101) dedicated to the status of women and gender equality.<sup>29</sup>

## BEYOND QUOTAS: POLITICAL PARTY INITIATIVES

Political parties form the third locus of non-quota strategies to promote women in politics. Given their central role in candidate selection processes, as well as politics more generally around the world, parties have been the subject of closer scrutiny in recent years as a potential intervention point for the political empowerment of women (Norris and Krook 2011; UNDP-NDI 2011). In addition to party quotas, parties may employ a number of tactics to recruit women and enhance their chances of being elected. These include softer and more indirect quota provisions and the establishment of women's sections, as well as recruitment, training, and campaign funding support.

### *Soft Quotas*

For ideological reasons, many parties around the world reject or resist positive action as an option for bringing more women into political office. Their resistance may stem from party values or the broader context in which they operate. Some parties, however, are committed to increasing women's representation. In lieu of formal quotas, they introduce regulations that seek to encourage, but do not require, parties to promote the selection of more female candidates. In some cases, these "soft quotas" can influence candidate recruitment processes to an equal or greater degree than "hard quotas," in part because they are often functionally equivalent to formal quotas (Krook et al. 2009).

Soft quotas most often appear as informal targets and recommendations. While they are not intended to bind the hands of the political parties that adopt them, they can directly affect the nomination of female candidates, despite the care taken to distance these policies from quotas per se. In New Zealand, party quotas were proposed by the leader of the NZ Labour Party

following the adoption of a new electoral law in 1993. The idea was rejected in favor of changing the party constitution to include a principle of “gender balance” for all selection procedures (Drage, n.d.). Accordingly, at candidate selection conferences, the party is supposed to “pause for thought” after each bloc of five candidates to consider the balance of gender, ethnicity, age, and experience (Catt 2003).

Similarly, in Sweden, parties have viewed formal quotas as a last resort to be applied only when softer measures fail to produce change. In the 1960s and 1970s, several parties passed informal “resolutions” stating they would try to elect more women. In the 1980s and 1990s, these commitments slowly radicalized into more specific “recommendations” and “targets” to increase the proportion of female candidates to at least 40 percent. By the mid-1990s, a number of parties further pledged themselves to strict alternation between women and men on all party lists. While this last policy is technically a 50 percent party quota, party officials often insist it is not a “quota” at all, but rather is based on the principle of “every other one for the ladies” (Freidenvall 2006; Krook 2009). The soft measures applied by some parties, combined with the formal policies adopted by others, resulted in the election of 44.7 percent women in 2010.<sup>30</sup>

### *Internal Leadership Quotas*

Quotas for internal party bodies reflect a less direct type of soft quota. While typically pertaining to leadership positions within the party, these regulations can set targets to increase the proportion of female party members more generally as well. Typically, they provide for women to be included on party governing boards or national executive committees, but they may also be applied to party committees. At a glance, these policies are sorely needed: a joint report by the UN Development Programme and the National Democratic Institute estimated that women comprised between 40 and 50 percent of party members globally but occupied only 10 percent of party leadership positions (UNDP-NDI 2011, 15). This disparity can have implications for women’s representation in elected positions, as research has uncovered a correlation between the percentage of women in the party leadership and the proportion of women in the party’s parliamentary delegation (Kittilson 2006).

Examples of such rules can be found in Germany, India, and South Africa. In Germany, the Christian Democratic Union adopted a 33 percent quota for

party officials in 1996. If the quota is not met, the internal elections must be repeated (UNDP-NDI 2011, 16). In 2008, the Bhatariya Janata Party in India amended its constitution to reserve 33 percent of the party's leadership positions for women. The head of the women's branch was also made a member of the central election committee. In 2010, the African National Congress amended rule 6 of its party constitution to stipulate that women occupy no less than 50 percent of all elected positions within the party.<sup>31</sup>

### *Women's Sections*

Another way to incorporate women into the party with the hopes of stimulating their participation is through the creation of a women's section—also known as a women's association, women's wing, or women's committee. Around the world, women's sections have traditionally played a role in recruiting female party members and performing important tasks for the party, including electoral canvassing. Historically, the goal has thus been more for women to serve the interests of the parties, rather than for the parties to serve the interests of women. Yet over time women's sections in many countries have come to serve as important platforms for women inside political parties, both in mobilizing around women's issues and in gaining commitments from party leaders for the increased recruitment of female candidates (Lovenduski and Norris 1993).

Although these organizations theoretically can bring together all of the women who are members of a particular party, in practice they have traditionally involved a smaller proportion of women. One way to ensure that a separate women's section does not result in the sidelining of women's issues is to provide for the section chair to have a seat and vote on the party's governing board. Tasks that can be performed by these groups include contributing to policy development, coordinating the activities of female party members, and providing support and training to newly elected female officeholders, as well as supporting a more general transformation within the party by sensitizing members, male and female, to the importance of gender equality (UNDP-NDI 2011, 17).

Women's sections in Vietnam and Serbia, for instance, play a direct role in pressing for the nomination of women, including lobbying party leaders to ensure they are given high positions on electoral lists. In Cambodia, the women's wing of the Sam Rainsy Party has sought quotas for party leadership positions, provided training for female candidates, and engaged in



civic education and voter outreach on behalf of women. Along similar lines, most parties in Morocco have set up women's sections to address women's issues and the needs of female party members, including, in one party, an equality council to ensure women's participation in party decision-making processes (UNDP-NDI 2011).

### *Recruitment Initiatives*

Aside from these institutional approaches, political parties have also sought new ways of recruiting female candidates. Although this strategy is more common among civil society groups, it represents a crucial first step toward greater gender equality in elected office. An instructive party-based example comes from Sweden in the 1970s, prior to the adoption of formal quota policies. To combat the claim that no qualified women could be found to run for office, women's sections inside the major political parties assembled databases containing the names and curriculum vitae of potential female candidates, which could be presented to party officials as they sought to find women to put on their lists (Wistrand 1981). While women's sections may have more contacts with women inside and outside the party, other party members can engage in recruiting as well. A local party leader in Sweden, for example, used the list of female party members in his district to contact women personally, one by one, to ask them to consider putting themselves forward as candidates.<sup>32</sup>

### *Training Programs*

Parties can also develop training programs to enhance the capacities of female candidates. Such strategies are necessary not because women lack the skills and qualifications to hold political office, but rather because women have not yet had the same opportunities as men to access a political career (Lawless and Fox 2005). Training can be offered to women currently running for office, as well as to those who might consider doing so in the future. Topics can include fostering motivation, improving public speaking, and demystifying the campaign process.

Although, like recruiting, training is a strategy more often associated with civil society organizations, one example of a party-based initiative is the Women2Win campaign in the British Conservative Party. The group, supported by a broad cross section of men and women in the party, argues that supporting women is crucial "to win the trust and confidence of the British



people” through a “modern and rejuvenated Conservative Party.” Women2Win seeks to promote “the brightest and best women the party has to offer” by providing support, advice, and training in public speaking and media skills to conservative women who wish to get more politically involved. It also hosts networking events for women at all levels of politics to meet with one another. Recognizing that capacity building may also be required of party officials, Women2Win aims as well to convince grassroots party associations of “the benefits of putting their trust in female candidates.”<sup>33</sup>

In Mexico, the National Action Party (Partido Acción Nacional, or PAN) runs seminars, workshops, forums, and courses directed at female candidates in an effort to level the political playing field. Beyond what is done in the British Conservative Party, PAN officials offer courses for women who may be interested in getting involved in political campaigns, especially as campaign coordinators, viewing this as an additional opportunity to stimulate women’s interest in politics (Llanos and Sample 2009). Another example can be seen in El Salvador, where the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front sends money from the party budget to the National Ministry for Women, which uses it for national assemblies for party women, trainings, and consultations with women (Sidhu and Meena 2007, 20). Mentoring programs have also become more common as a way to enhance the confidence and skills of female candidates. In Australia, the Labor Party—through its EMILY’s List program—has established a mentoring program that pairs first-time candidates with more experienced politicians (UNDP-NDI 2011, 33).

### *Campaign Funding*

A third possibility is to provide financial support to female candidates, which can help overcome perceptions that women are not viable candidates (an assumption disproved in many studies), as well as compensate for the fact that women often lack access to the formal and informal networks that supply campaign funds—most of which tend to be dominated by men. Further, women may have additional expenses not often incurred by men; for example, to help with household tasks and child care or to cover extra costs of security (Sidhu and Meena 2007, 10-11). One approach is to create a special internal party fund for women’s campaigns, while another is to provide subsidies of one kind or another to female candidates.

An internal party fund has been established by the Liberal Party in Canada, for example, to assist women with their campaign costs. The money is

raised through fundraising events, direct mailings, and the Internet, and the party maintains centralized control in determining who is prioritized in receiving contributions. Female candidates can also be reimbursed up to Can\$500 for child care expenses incurred when seeking a nomination and Can\$500 for travel when campaigning in geographically large constituencies, and a further Can\$500 when pursuing nomination in a district where an incumbent is retiring (UNDP-NDI 2011, 28). These provisions recognize that women often assume primary parenting responsibilities, despite recent changes in gender roles, while also seeking to encourage them to contest “winnable” districts.

Party subsidies to female candidates are somewhat rare but typically seek to overcome one of the key financial barriers to women’s participation, especially in developing countries: the need to pay a deposit in order to register a candidacy. While Togo provides a financial incentive by law, it is more common elsewhere for this to occur at the party level. In Cambodia, the Sam Rainsy Party offers assistance with membership dues and candidate nomination fees, which can be prohibitively high for women. It also provides female candidates with basic items, such as clothes and bicycles to use while campaigning (UNDP-NDI 2011, 28). In Sierra Leone, several political parties—including the main opposition party—have reduced or waived nomination fees for women.<sup>34</sup> Similarly, the ruling People’s Democratic Party in Nigeria introduced a waiver of the mandatory registration fees for women aspiring to any elective post on the party label.<sup>35</sup> As this policy spread to other parties, however, some party executives began to use it as a reason to exclude women for being “insufficiently committed” to the party.<sup>36</sup>

## BEYOND QUOTAS: CIVIL SOCIETY INITIATIVES

A fourth node of intervention is at the civil society level, where non-quota strategies are perhaps the most developed and longstanding. A key reason is that electoral gender quotas are not available as an option for societal groups; while they can lobby legislators and political parties, they cannot themselves introduce quotas. This limitation has led civil society groups of various kinds to devote time to devising institutions and programs to help support female candidates, particularly in the area of capacity building. In addition to offering women the skills and resources to run effective campaigns, these efforts can raise broader awareness of the need for more women in politics.

### *Recruitment Initiatives*

A necessary first step toward greater gender equality in elected office is to identify and encourage women to run for office, whether in the immediate or distant future. The common thread in these projects is convincing women to consider political careers—and, more broadly, to promote a shift in women’s mentalities in the long term. Recruitment initiatives organized by civil society organizations are particularly well developed in the United States, where the combination of a majoritarian electoral system and hostility to gender quotas makes it difficult to achieve dramatic increases in women’s political representation, at least overnight.

A recent campaign along these lines was the 2012 Project, a nonpartisan initiative by the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University.<sup>37</sup> The project focused on the year 2012 because following the 2010 census, every congressional and state legislative district was redrawn, creating a number of new and open seats. The campaign, which included a video entitled, “Consider This Your Invitation,”<sup>38</sup> was directed at women forty-five years of age and older, especially those in professions generally underrepresented in politics, such as finance, environment, science, health, technology, and small business. The 2012 Project targeted older women on the grounds that they were more likely to be at the top of their professions, hold fewer family responsibilities (because children may be older), and be financially independent. Women interested in being candidates were connected to leadership institutes, think tanks, campaign training programs, and fundraising networks designed to help them succeed in their own states.

In contrast, another US group named Running Start has centered its work on a younger demographic, arguing that the key to increasing women’s representation is getting more of them engaged in politics and elected to office at a younger age. Running Start’s Young Women’s Political Leadership Program introduces secondary (high) school girls to the importance of women in political leadership and trains them in public speaking, networking, on-camera media performance, and platform development. The Running Start/Wal-Mart Star Fellowship provides seven university-aged women with semester-long internships in the offices of female representatives or senators, with each Friday spent in a seminar learning the “nuts and bolts” of holding political office.<sup>39</sup> In 2012, the national Girl Scouts organization launched To Get Her There, a long-term campaign to create “balanced leadership” and “equitable representation of women in leadership positions in

all sectors and levels of society in the course of a generation.”<sup>40</sup>

Finally, two additional US-based recruitment initiatives are She Should Run and Appoint Her. The former is an online nomination tool and resource inspired by statistics indicating that women are much less likely than men to think about becoming candidates—but when they do run, they tend to win at equal rates to men. An individual can submit a form with information about a woman whom he or she believes should run for office someday, and the program will guarantee the woman receives the encouragement, connections, and resources necessary to take the next step.<sup>41</sup> The related Appoint Her campaign is organized by the Women’s Campaign Forum Foundation. It provides a national resource for women seeking appointed office by informing them of available positions, sharing information on skills and traits of women currently in office, and discussing how current officeholders launched their own careers.<sup>42</sup>

### *Training Programs*

Candidate training initiatives have increased exponentially since the 1980s, when only a few programs existed worldwide. Such programs are now run by nonpartisan networks, university centers, and even international organizations. Networks like the 300 Group in the United Kingdom were founded from the realization that women often did not know where to start when pursuing a nomination for office.<sup>43</sup> In the United States, many such programs are based at universities.<sup>44</sup> The NEW Leadership Program, for example, is dedicated to expanding political knowledge and participation among female university students through programs serving educational institutions in twenty-five states.<sup>45</sup>

University-based training programs, however, may serve others besides university students. The Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University, for example, runs a number of programs for women interested in running for office. The Ready to Run program is divided into two parts, one tailored to women who plan to run in the near future and one for those who are thinking about running sometime in the future. Additional sessions targeted toward African American, Hispanic, and Asian American women address potential group-specific challenges in the campaign process.<sup>46</sup>

Trainings organized by nonuniversity groups take a variety of forms. Emerge provides a seven-month program for Democratic women who want to run

for elected office, working in nine states.<sup>47</sup> The White House Project offers interactive leadership development through three-hour online and in-person trainings, full-day conferences, and three-day summits.<sup>48</sup> More internationally grounded, the newly established Women in Public Service Project (WPSP) seeks to build a new generation of global female leaders. Founded through a partnership between the US Department of State and five leading women's colleges, WPSP aims to train women to enter the public sector by cultivating the "strategic leadership skills, energy, and commitment required to tackle today's global challenges."<sup>49</sup>

Another internationally oriented initiative is the Women Can Do It program, designed by women inside the Norwegian Labour Party, which arranges candidate training opportunities in more than twenty-five countries. Funded by Norwegian People's Aid, the program covers topics ranging from democracy and women's participation to communication, argumentation, speeches and debate, handling the media, negotiations, networking, advocacy training, and violence against women. While offering training in particular skills to facilitate women's participation in public affairs, the program also serves as an opportunity for women to meet and form networks.<sup>50</sup>

### *Fundraising Networks*

In addition to convincing women to run for office, civil society organizations have developed a variety of fundraising initiatives to ensure that female candidates have the financial resources they need to wage successful campaigns. A focus on removing the financial obstacles to elected office takes on special importance in countries where public funding is not available for candidates' campaigns.

Perhaps the best known of these initiatives is the US-based EMILY's List, a group founded in 1985 that recruits and trains women but, unusually for such groups, publicizes their names to solicit campaign contributions from supporters across the country.<sup>51</sup> EMILY stands for "Early Money Is Like Yeast"—an acknowledgment that early funding is crucial for establishing the viability of a political campaign (and thus inspiring other people to donate funds) the way yeast is crucial for making dough (a slang term for money) rise. The aim is to bring selected female candidates together with potential supporters across the country. The group claims to have helped elect eighty-seven pro-choice Democratic women members of Congress, sixteen senators, nine governors, and over five hundred women holders of

state and local offices.<sup>52</sup>

Similar fundraising groups have been established in other countries on the model of EMILY's List, including Australia, Italy, and the United Kingdom. Because EMILY's List focuses on electing more women from leftist parties, its success in the United States has spurred the establishment of political fundraising groups for women on the political right. A group known as WISH List (WISH = Women in the Senate and House) was founded in 1992 with the mission of providing strategic advice, training, and financial support to pro-choice Republican women running for local, state, and national offices all across the country.<sup>53</sup> The Susan B. Anthony List, created in 1993 as another counterpart to EMILY's List, is dedicated to electing candidates and pursuing policies to end abortion, with an emphasis on the election, education, promotion, and mobilization of pro-life women; it is also willing, however, to support the election of pro-life men over pro-choice women.<sup>54</sup>

Outside the United States, the Fiji Women's Rights Movement undertook a Women in Politics Appeal in the run-up to national elections in 2006. Highlighting the major obstacle of access to electoral funding faced by women in politics, the group raised \$11,000 and divided the money among the thirty women standing for office, regardless of their party affiliations (Clark 2009, 21).

### *Raising Awareness*

One of the most powerful ways that civil society actors can influence gender equality in elected office is by reshaping public attitudes toward women in politics. Beliefs that women should not run for political office are informed and reinforced by gender stereotypes that associate men with the public sphere of politics and women with the private sphere of the home. Changing these stereotypes can increase the number of women considering a political career, as well as alter how voters—and political parties—view female candidates. Strategies for combating such stereotypes include media-based campaigns aimed at changing how citizens think about gender and politics, as well as the generation and publication of data and strategies for overcoming women's exclusion.

*Media campaigns* are quite varied, but they share the basic goal of highlighting the current lack of gender balance in the political sphere and the need to elect more women for the sake of democracy. In the Czech Republic, for

instance, a poster campaign was sponsored by the group Forum 50% in the run-up to the 2006 elections.<sup>55</sup> The group placed posters in the Prague subway and street network featuring a long row of trousers and neckties captioned with the question, “Do you really have a choice?” The message implied that while men in politics differed somewhat, little true “choice” was offered among candidates, who were still almost exclusively men. Excluding women therefore undermined democracy by restricting the options available to voters.

In Turkey, the Association to Support Women Candidates, Ka-Der, has also waged a series of innovative public awareness campaigns.<sup>56</sup> In preparation for general elections in 2007, for example, the group created posters of well-known businesswomen and female artists wearing neckties or mustaches, asking “Is it necessary to be a man to enter parliament?” In the run-up to local elections in 2009, it used billboards depicting the three male leaders of the main political parties shoulder to shoulder, with text implying that the three parties were united in preferring male candidates over female ones.

A similar initiative was launched in France in early 2012 by the Laboratory for Equality, a group set up in 2010 to promote equal treatment at all levels of decision making. Its more than seven hundred members include men and women of different political orientations and professional backgrounds. In addition to pressuring all presidential candidates to commit to a “Pact for Equality,” the group has created posters showing men sitting on women, with the caption: “What place are we ready to give women?” The Laboratory also produced a video<sup>57</sup> showing men ignoring women’s contributions and stepping in front of them in a variety of situations, suggesting women are essentially invisible in society. The film, along with additional images,<sup>58</sup> has appeared in news outlets, public spaces, and on the Internet,<sup>59</sup> with the ultimate goal of raising awareness and contributing to true equality in all aspects of French life, including politics.

*Data generation* can also be a powerful tool. The data produced by university research centers on women and politics,<sup>60</sup> as well as international organizations like the Inter-parliamentary Union,<sup>61</sup> have been instrumental in raising awareness about the extent of women’s exclusion, as well as indicating where and when major gains have been made. Websites like the Global Database of Quotas for Women,<sup>62</sup> a joint project of Stockholm University and International IDEA, have been a vital resource in assembling data on the existence and design of electoral quotas in countries around the



world. The ability to compare countries to one another can be a useful tool in spurring governments to take action in this area (Towns 2010).

A related tactic is the “naming and shaming” of political parties. Publicizing a list of the political parties that perform the worst in terms of women’s participation can damage a party’s reputation and ultimately its electoral success. In the run-up to the 2010 parliamentary elections in the United Kingdom, for example, the significantly lower percentage of female members of parliament elected from the Liberal Democrat party, compared with the Labour and Conservative parties, was extensively discussed in the media and the subject of much negative attention. This brought the issue of women’s representation further up the popular agenda and forced the parties to discuss and justify their own records.

In terms of *knowledge sharing*, the Internet has also proved a useful tool for raising public awareness, as well as for building connections among women in politics. At the global level, a group of transnational nongovernmental organizations has come together as the International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics, or iKNOWPolitics, to facilitate the exchange of information on how to empower women in politics.<sup>63</sup> The website is jointly funded by the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, the Inter-parliamentary Union, and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance. The project is described as an “online workspace,” designed to serve the needs of elected officials, candidates, political party leaders and members, researchers, students, and other practitioners interested in the advancement of women in politics.

Another organization, the European Women’s Lobby (EWL), founded in 1990 and based in Brussels, has been actively campaigning for the increased representation of women in the European Parliament (EP). The EWL has organized a campaign before each EP election since the early 1990s with the goal of getting parties to nominate more women by mobilizing a network of two thousand five hundred women’s groups across Europe. It has also provided a number of lobbying tools on its website, available in a range of languages, to help ordinary citizens pressure elites in their own countries to take gender balance seriously in their nominations, particularly through its 50/50 campaign.<sup>64</sup>

## CONCLUSION



Gender equality in elected office has grown into a major commitment on the part of international organizations, national governments, political parties, and civil society groups around the world. To date, much of the discussion has revolved around “temporary special measures,” largely defined with reference to electoral gender quotas. This report presents an overview of quota measures globally but also seeks to widen the discussion to a range of non-quota strategies that might be employed at a variety of different levels to empower women in politics. The diversity of measures catalogued in this report—present in laws, parliaments, political parties, and civil society groups—reveals a broad array of creative solutions that might be pursued to enhance women’s political representation.

Exploring options beyond quotas is vital for all countries. In states with quotas, additional strategies may serve as an important complement to these measures, expanding the pool of potential female candidates and promoting a wider transformation in public views regarding women in politics (cf. Franceschet et al. 2012). In countries where quotas are unlikely to reach the agenda, or where they have been rejected or overturned, non-quota strategies present a crucial alternative path to women’s political integration. As noted above, evidence from around the world suggests that the main barriers to women’s increased election are political rather than social, economic, or cultural. Dramatic changes are thus unlikely to occur without deliberate interventions to increase the number of viable female candidates, whether through quotas or non-quota initiatives to empower women in politics.

## APPENDIX: GENDER EQUALITY PROVISIONS IN POLITICAL PARTY FINANCE LAWS

### *Provision of Direct Public Funding to Political Parties Related to Gender Equality among Candidates*

Country	Funding Provision
Bolivia	5 percent of public funds are distributed in accordance with the share of elected women candidates.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	10 percent of public funds are distributed to parties in proportion to the number of seats held by the “less represented gender.”
Cape Verde	Public funds are awarded to parties if at least 25 percent of their elected candidates are women.
Colombia	5 percent of public funds are distributed in accordance with the share of elected women candidates.
Croatia	For each elected member representing the underrepresented sex, political parties are entitled to a bonus of 10 percent of the amount allocated for each member.
Ethiopia	Financial support from the government is apportioned according to the number of female candidates nominated by the party.
France	If the gender difference among nominated candidates is greater than 2 percent, public funding is reduced by twice of this difference.
Georgia	A party receives an additional 10 percent of funds if its party list contains at least 20 percent candidates of each sex in every ten candidates.
Haiti	Any political party that has at least 30 percent female candidates and succeeds in electing 20 percent women overall will receive double the party funding.
Ireland	State funding to a political party will be reduced by 50 percent if less than 30 percent of its nominees are female (rising in subsequent elections to 40 percent).
Italy	For elections to the European Parliament, neither sex should comprise more than two-thirds of candidates on party lists. If this quota is not implemented, public subsidies to the party are reduced in proportion to the number of candidates exceeding the maximum allowed (up to 50 percent). The withheld amount is disbursed as a “premium” to parties adhering to the law.
Kenya	A party is not eligible for funding if more than two-thirds of its elected officials are of one gender.

Republic of Korea	Female candidate nomination subsidies are distributed to political parties based on the ratio of National Assembly seats held and the votes polled. Distribution and disbursement vary depending on the number of parties with ratios of female candidate nomination of at least 30 percent.
Mali	10 percent of state funding is proportionately shared among political parties that have women elected as deputies or municipal councilors.
Niger	10 percent of public funding is allocated proportionately to political parties that have women elected at all levels.
Papua New Guinea	Parties receive a specified amount for each female candidate who wins at least 10 percent of the vote. A woman must not only be endorsed by the party as a candidate; the party must also have spent an amount as campaign expenses on her behalf.
Portugal	A party that does not present at least one-third women and/or violates placement requirements in its candidate nominations can lose between 25 and 80 percent of its public funding.
Romania	State funding will increase in proportion to the number of seats to which female candidates have been elected.
Serbia	Parties must have at least one-third candidates of each sex. Parties not complying cannot contest elections and therefore are ineligible for state funding.

Source: International IDEA Political Finance Database, <http://www.idea.int/political-finance/>. As of this writing, the source has data on 174 countries; 98 of them do not offer public funds to political parties related to gender equality among candidates, 18 do, and 58 countries are listed as "not applicable."

### *Provisions for Other Financial Advantages to Encourage Gender Equality in Political Parties*

Country	Funding Provision
Brazil	A minimum of 5 percent of direct public funding must be used to promote the political participation of women. Parties that do not comply must increase this proportion by 2.5 percent the following year.
Colombia	Some of the public funds provided should be used for activities aimed at the political inclusion of women, youth, and ethnic minorities.
Costa Rica	Each party determines how to distribute its public funding but must certify that it has spent equal amounts of resources on the training of men and women. If a certificate is not provided, the money spent in that area will not be reinstated.
Finland	Each parliamentary party must use 12 percent of its annual subsidy to fund a women's wing.
Honduras	Political parties are obliged to develop a no gender discrimination policy and submit it to the Supreme Electoral Tribunal prior to any election. A fine of 5 percent of its public funding is imposed on any party that fails to comply.
Ireland	Public funding must be spent on promoting the participation of women and young persons in politics, but a percentage is not specified.
Italy	At least 5 percent of provided funds must be used for activities to promote the participation of women in politics.
Republic of Korea	10 percent of public funding to political parties must be used for the political development of women.
Mexico	Each party must devote 2 percent of its yearly public funding to the training, promotion, and development of women's leadership.
Morocco	A support fund was established to promote women's representation.
Panama	At least 10 percent of the public funding devoted to civic and political education activities is channeled solely to supporting the training of women.
Togo	The nomination fee is 25 percent less if a party list contains female candidates.

Source: International IDEA Political Finance Database, <http://www.idea.int/political-finance/>. As of this writing, the source has data on 171 countries, 157 of which do not have provisions for other financial advantages to encourage gender equality in political parties, and 14 of which do. For 11 additional countries, the source has no data.

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## NOTES

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