

*United Nations Women*

*Strengthening  
Women's Political  
Participation in  
Developing Countries*

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## *INTRODUCTION*

The United Nations gather together each year in order to discuss, argue and take decisions regarding international affairs that need a short, medium or long-term solution. For each international danger, there is a United Nations branch dedicated to reaching viable solutions in benefit of humanity. UN Women is the UN organization in charge of handling affairs related to gender equality and the empowerment of women. This committee aims to accelerate progress by meeting their needs, and to support UN Member States as they set global standards for the achievement of gender equality, in addition to working with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes, and services needed to ensure that such standards are effectively implemented and truly benefit women and girls worldwide. ("About UN Women", 2018) The existence of this committee is of the utmost importance, even more so in this specific époque, where inequality and men-dominated societies prevail and continue making women feel like a less important or powered sex.

Our age, in truth, has presented its contradictions. Another is the stark contrast between the increased awareness of the importance of the country of women in national economies and of society in general and the deterioration in the economic position of millions of women in developing countries.

The 1980s violently affected economic and social problems in most developing countries, which stopped and sometimes reversed the progress of previous decades. As we have seen, the economic recession precipitated serious problems of balance of payments and external debt, and the developing countries endured the worst of the process of international adjustment. The "stabilization" and "structural adjustment" programs, which were forced to continue as the price of IMF aid, were designed to restore current account balances within recovery times. Little attention was paid to the social impact of economic adjustment.

There were many hardships, of which women faced a disproportionate share when families became fewer and faced higher costs and reduced public services, but yet women do not get any recognition for this.

From the local to the global level, women's leadership and political participation are restricted. Women are underrepresented as voters, as well as in leading positions, whether in elected office, the civil service, the private sector or academia. This occurs despite their proven abilities as leaders and agents of

change, and their right to participate equally in democratic governance.” (“Women’s Leadership and Political Participation”, 2018). This happens mainly due to a male culture popular around the world. Giving political strength and enabling political speech will lead to different approaches for conflict resolution.

The main objective of this committee would be for State Parties to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country and, in particular, ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the rights to vote in all elections and public matters, to participate in the formulation of government policy, to participate in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country.

Women face several obstacles to participating in political life. Structural barriers through discriminatory laws and institutions still limit women’s options to run for office. Capacity gaps mean women are less likely than men to have the education, contacts, and resources needed to become effective leaders.” (“Women’s Leadership and Political Participation”, 2018)

#### *HISTORY OF THE PROBLEM*

Oppression is the unfair use of authority, law, or physical power to keep others from being free or equal. Oppression is a kind of injustice. It can likewise mean to irrationally load somebody, for example, with the mental burden of an oppressive thought.

Women's activists battle against the persecution of females. Ladies have been unfairly kept away from accomplishing full potential for a big part of mankind's history in numerous occasions. Women's activist scholars of the 1970s searched for better approaches to end this oppression. These women's activists additionally drew facts and arguments from past authors who had broken down the abuse of ladies, incorporating Simone de Beauvoir in "The Second Sex" and Mary Wollstonecraft in "A Vindication of the Privileges of Women".

Various types of oppression are depicted as "isms, for example, sexism, racism, et cetera. In a great part of writings of the medieval world, we have confirmation of ladies' mistreatment by men in European, Center Eastern and African societies. Women did not have an indistinguishable lawful and political rights like men and were under the control of fathers and husbands in all social orders. In a few social orders in which women had few choices for supporting their life if not upheld

by a husband, there was even a routine with regards to suicide or murder. (Asia proceeded with this tradition into the twentieth century with a few cases happening in the present also.)

In Greece, regularly held up as a model of popular government, females did not have fundamental rights, and could claim no property nor would they be able to take part specifically in the political framework. In both Rome and Greece, women's development out in the open was restricted. There are societies today where ladies can only once in a while leave their own homes.

### *CURRENT SITUATION*

Women occupy more than half the world population. The contribution they make in distinct aspects, such as social and economic development, is also more than half as compared to that of men.

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It is the women who have added the extra work to supplement the family income and reorder the family's budgets by changing to economic foods, saving fuel and selling treasured possessions. It is women who were affected most immediately by the cuts in health and education resulting from reductions in government spending and by increasing rates of illness and death for children. Women have been on the front lines of the crisis in the developing world, bearing the greater responsibility of adjusting their lives to ensure survival.

Yet their participation in formal political structures and processes, where decisions regarding the use of societal resources generated by both men and women are made, remains insignificant. Presently, women's representation in legislatures around the world is 15 percent. Despite the pronounced commitment of the international community to gender equality and to the bridging the gender gap in the formal political arena, reinforced by the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Platform of Action, there are only twelve countries where women hold 33% or more seats in the parliaments"

(UNDP Report, 2005).

In today's well-developed countries we can clearly see associations like Women's Empowerment International, that believe in the power of women to change their own lives – and the world around them – for the better. When women work together, there's nothing they can't do. But while talent is ubiquitous, opportunity is not. That's where they make a difference.

Partnering with high-impact grassroots organizations serving some of the world's neediest women in remote parts of the world. They provide business loans and services that enable hard-working women to create sustainable livelihoods, care for their families, improve their lives and change our world.

According to the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) statistics, from 1945 to 1995, the percentage of women MPs worldwide has increased four-fold. Their latest statistics indicate that, in 1998, the world average of women in parliaments (both houses combined) is 12.7%, with the highest percentage existing in the Nordic context at 37.6%, followed by the Americas at 15.5%, Asia at 13.4%, Europe OSCE member countries (excluding the Nordic countries) at 12.5%, Sub-Saharan Africa at 11.6%, the Pacific at 8.3%, and the lowest in the Arab states 3.3%. Also according to the same statistics, since 1995, 6 countries acquired a woman speaker of parliament for the first time: Ethiopia (1995), Latvia (1995), Peru (1995), Jamaica (1996), Malta (1996) and Poland (1997). According to the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women (UNDAW) Fact Sheet on Women in Government of 1996, the percentage of women in both ministerial and sub-ministerial levels ranges from 0% (in about 15 countries [9]), to 30% in 2 countries [10]. It is interesting to note that out of the 15 countries with 0% of women in government positions in 1996, 8 were Arab countries.

With women population that was almost as big as that of men, women's needs and interests must be represented in the policy-making process

### *UN ACTIONS*

The UN Women's programmes on leadership and participation have been working in distinct aspects in order to promote the political participation of women. First of all, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women upholds women's right to participate in public life, while the Beijing Platform

for Action calls for removing barriers to equal participation.” (“Women’s Leadership and Political Participation”, 2018) This promotes the public participation in an equal way for women, as well as the respect for their rights. Also, the Millennium Development Goals reports progress towards gender equality in part by the proportion of women in parliamentary seats.” (“Women’s Leadership and Political Participation”, 2018) The women’s role in the parliament is becoming important because of their proportional participation and occupation of seats.

The UNW has been working for the civic and voter education. UN Women provides training for women political candidates to help build their capacities, and offer sensitization campaigns on gender equality. (“Women’s Leadership and Political Participation”, 2018) UNW has been “calling on political parties, governments, and others to do their part in empowering women. Other initiatives encourage young men and women to engage in advocacy around making gender equality measures central to public policymaking.” (“Women’s Leadership and Political Participation”, 2018) By doing this, UNW hopes a better political participation of women because of the encouragement of their importance.

To continue this, “UN Women advocates for legislative and constitutional reforms to ensure women’s fair access to political spheres.” (“Women’s Leadership and Political Participation”, 2018) These efforts will seem accomplished because “UNW collaborate with UN country teams and work with civil society on programmes so that elections uphold women’s rights, including to vote and campaign free from electoral violence.” (“Women’s Leadership and Political Participation”, 2018)

#### *POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS*

- 1.- Provide financial support to congresses in which women provide solutions to problems in their local communities’ problems.
- 2.- Fund the inauguration of ladies colleges in countries non-supportive of their academic development in which they will learn about topics such as politics and laws, as well as international relations and entrepreneurship.

3.- Create and give economical support to organizations that provide equitable education and support to women in developing countries.

4.- Assure with help of the Security Council, protection to the women's right to freedom of speech and self expression

5.- Instill in children of the next generation inclusive culture to the female sex in schools and community centers

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