



# AFRICAN WOMEN'S DECADE 2010-2020

WOMEN'S  
PARTICIPATION IN  
DECISION-MAKING &  
LEADERSHIP



**Make Every Woman Count**  
*Promoting the Empowerment of African Women & Girls*



**African Women's Decade 2010-2020: Women's Participation in Decision-Making & Leadership**

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[www.MakeEveryWomanCount.org](http://www.MakeEveryWomanCount.org)

**Email:** [info@makeeverywomancount.org](mailto:info@makeeverywomancount.org)

**Website:** [www.MakeEveryWomanCount.org](http://www.MakeEveryWomanCount.org)

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# CONTENT

<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>FINANCIAL SUPPORT</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>6</b>
Objectives of the Report	6
Challenges	7
Methodology and Overview	7
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>MAPUTO PROTOCOL MAP</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>CENTRAL AFRICA REGION</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>OVERVIEW</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS</b>	<b>12</b>
Gender Parity Law	13
<b>STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION &amp; LEADERSHIP ROLES</b>	<b>13</b>
Beyond numbers	13
<b>CHALLENGES</b>	<b>14</b>
Institutional Barriers	14
Social/Cultural Barriers	14
Economic Barriers	14
Media	14
<b>EAST AFRICAN REGION</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>OVERVIEW</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS</b>	<b>39</b>
Gender Parity Law	39
<b>STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION &amp; LEADERSHIP ROLES</b>	<b>40</b>
Beyond numbers	41
<b>CHALLENGES</b>	<b>42</b>
Institutional Barriers	42
Social/Cultural Barriers	42
Economic Barriers	43
Media	43

<b>NORTH AFRICAN REGION</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>OVERVIEW</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS</b>	<b>82</b>
Gender Parity Law	82
<b>STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION &amp; LEADERSHIP ROLES</b>	<b>82</b>
Beyond numbers	83
<b>CHALLENGES</b>	<b>84</b>
Institutional Barriers	84
Social/Cultural Barriers	84
Economic Barriers	84
Media	84
<b>SOUTH AFRICAN REGION</b>	<b>106</b>
<b>OVERVIEW</b>	<b>106</b>
<b>ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS</b>	<b>106</b>
Gender Parity Law	107
<b>STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION &amp; LEADERSHIP ROLES</b>	<b>107</b>
Beyond numbers	108
<b>CHALLENGES</b>	<b>110</b>
Institutional Barriers	110
Social/Cultural Barriers	110
Economic Barriers	111
Media	111
<b>WEST AFRICAN REGION</b>	<b>144</b>
<b>OVERVIEW</b>	<b>144</b>
<b>ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS</b>	<b>144</b>
Gender Parity Law	145
<b>STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION &amp; LEADERSHIP ROLES</b>	<b>145</b>
Beyond numbers	146
<b>CHALLENGES</b>	<b>147</b>
Institutional Barriers	147
Social/Cultural Barriers	147
Economic Barriers	147
Media	147
<b>GENDER PARITY (QUOTAS)</b>	<b>192</b>
<b>REFERENCE</b>	<b>197</b>



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Ariel Ramdewar, Beccy Crosby Idaishe Zhou, Matilde Aghdasi, Sanchia Zucker-Rodriguez, Emilie Linder, Surbhi Mahajan, Nina Jerak, Tandi Pilani, Jessica Barrett

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## FINANCIAL SUPPORT

We wish to thank Oxfam and FEMNET for the financial support received for the publication of the 2017-2018 report of the African Women's Decade. Many thanks to Oxfam Pan-African team for their great support and help during the last few years for the publication of this yearly report.

## PARTNERS

We would like to thank our partners: Oxfam, Solidarity for African Women's Rights (SOAWR), FEMNET



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On the International Day for Rural Women, the African Union (AU) officially launched the African Women's Decade (AWD) 2010–2020 with the purpose of advancing gender equality by accelerating the implementation of Dakar, Beijing and the African Union Assembly Decisions on gender equality and women's empowerment.

Inspired by the launch of the African Women's Decade (AWD) in 2010 and by the Beijing Platform for Action, an outcome of the 1995 Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women, which recommended the creation of mechanisms to monitor gender equality and the advancement of women, MEWC's Annual Review of the African Women's Decade evaluates the progress, or lack thereof, being made to include and promote the rights of women at country, regional and continental levels.

The decade emphasizes a grassroots approach to development and leaders have encouraged women and those that advocate for them to take ownership of the decade and seize it as an opportunity for sharing effective strategies. In spite of these laudable goals, MEWC identified an information vacuum following the initial launch of the AWD and could not find any evidence that progress, or lack thereof, towards the decade's goals was going to be assessed systematically.

Concerned that the critical issues confronting African women were quickly returning to the shadows, MEWC embraced the principles of the AWD and stepped up to the challenge of tracking results and demanding that long overdue attention to gender parity in Africa not become derailed.

Make Every Woman Count (MEWC) has been compiling a yearly report, tracking the progress of the African Women's Decade (AWD) since 2011. This is achieved by presenting each country on the continent with a background and a presentation of progress and developments made within different areas during each year of the African Women's Decade 2010–2020.

MEWC perceives the collection of data as an important tool that can be used by human rights advocates, academics, national and international organisations, governments, activists to improve gender equality. This report is not just relevant for monitoring women participation in decision-making, it should be seen as a means to inform all policies and programmes, so that gender issues are mainstreamed and policies are designed to enable the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights. The inclusion of a stand-alone goal on "achieving gender equality and empower all women and girls" in the Outcome document of the Open Working Group (OWG) for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted in New York in July 2014, reinforces the importance of data collection and increases the demand for better data that reflect the differences between men and women in society. Accordingly, based on Sustainable Development Goal 5, MEWC uses information and communications technology in order to promote the empowerment of women in the public sphere.

## I. OBJECTIVES OF THE REPORT

As an African woman-led organisation, which serves as an information, research, advocacy and training platform, MEWC uses the power of research, to analyse the women's rights situation in the African continent within the African Women's Decade and identify best practices, as well as gaps and challenges that need to be addressed. In addition, committed to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its core principle to "leave no one behind", MEWC has collected disaggregated data that offer an in-depth look at women's participation in African politics and decision-making.

Considering that equal access of men and women to power is a necessary precondition for democracies to flourish, our 2017–2018 report focuses on women's role in decision-making and leadership in key positions and at all levels. Nowadays, women leaders have an enormous potential to influence decision-making, by promoting fairer policies and practices in governments, parliaments, the judiciary and the private sector. Even though women play a crucial role in all the above fields, previous reports have mainly focused on women in governments and parliaments. In other words, this report goes beyond limitations and seeks a holistic approach with regard to women's participation in all spheres of decision-making such as women MPs, women ministers, women in the judiciary, women in the private sector.

One of the main objectives of disaggregating data, in relation with women in multiple leadership roles, is to highlight the importance of engaging more women in decision-making since including more women at negotiating tables can have a positive impact on gender equality, peace-building and socio-economic development. Furthermore, the collection of disaggregated data allows for the monitoring of progress to be made in each decision-making domain in African countries and offers evidence of best practice of enhancing gender parity and promoting women's rights. At the same time, the report highlights countries with low participation and representation of women in order to contribute to the identification of existing gaps and open new discussions on how to combat them. Lastly, by concentrating on more specific themes, MEWC's goal is to transform this report into a valuable tool that can be used by States, human rights practitioners and organisations to advocate for the advancement of gender equality in Africa.

This report offers an interim evaluation of progress made so far in meeting the requirements stipulated in the Maputo Protocol and the other international agreements with just 2 years to go before the end of the Women's Decade, acknowledging the successes and achievements and areas of progress still needing to be made.

## II. CHALLENGES

Collecting disaggregated data on all the countries of the African continent can be extremely challenging especially for an organisation with limited access to financial resources and field representatives. During the research process, it was extremely hard to locate data on women in the judiciary and the private sector. Sometimes, it was difficult to find information on the number and proportion of women voters. In some countries, it was hard to identify obstacles that are imposed on women in and by the media. This absence of data can be explained: first and foremost, most of the research that has been undertaken during the past years has not been gender-disaggregated. Secondly, many countries will not publish statistics, even after a year, from the date that the elections were held.

## III. METHODOLOGY AND OVERVIEW

This study is not comparative, but aims to present the situation of women's rights in all the 55 African countries during the decade. It is based on statistics and on data collected from different online sources such as the United Nations, Inter-Parliamentary Union, World Bank, NGOs, local news and reports, international institutions, online journals and individual country information provided by national ministries and institutions. The majority of translations from French to English are made by the authors.

The report is divided into five main regions: Central, East, North, Southern and West Africa. Then the countries of each region are analysed in individual reports that are separated in different sections and subsections:

1. The first section titled "Overview" provides the reader with general information on the country's historical, political and legal developments.
2. The second section "Country Assessment of Progress" presents the women's rights situation within the country, including a subsection on "Gender Parity Law/Quota".
3. The third section on "Statistics on Women's Political Participation and Leadership Roles" is comprised of statistics on women MPs, ministers, judges and in the private sector.
4. The fourth and last section presents the barriers and challenges imposed on women at four levels: institutional, social/cultural, economic and media

A report with such a wide ranging brief will have limitations and shortfalls. There is both an absence of data and, at times, a lack of transparency in published statistics. However, before the end of the African Women's Decade it must be hoped that all countries will wish to audit the significant progress that is being made to improve the inclusion and influence of women to the governance, economy and wellbeing of each nation.

# INTRODUCTION



Fifteen years ago, in July 2003, the fight for women's rights entered a new era when, at the 2nd Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union in Maputo, Mozambique, African Heads of State adopted the continental instrument on women's rights 'The Protocol to The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa known as the "Maputo Protocol".

Article 2(1) of the Maputo Protocol calls on States Parties to take affirmatives actions through the adoption of laws and policies to combat all forms of discrimination against women and girls. The uniqueness of the Maputo Protocol is that it reflects the lived realities of African women and girls and goes beyond the precedents human rights instruments. It covers issues such as harmful practices, marriage, women's rights to property and inheritance in case of divorce. The Maputo Protocol was the first human rights treaty to address the right to abortion under certain conditions.<sup>2</sup>

Since its adoption in 2003, up to 39 countries have so far ratified the Maputo Protocol, while 16 have only signed but not yet ratified. South Sudan ratified the Protocol in October 2017 and Ethiopia in May 2018; however, both countries have not yet deposited the ratification at the AU Commission, which is required for the validation.

While most countries have ratified the Protocol without reservations, a few, such as Cameroon, Kenya, Namibia, Rwanda, South Africa, Uganda, Mauritius, Rwanda (lifted its reservation in 2012) have only done so with reservations regarding some of the articles of the Protocol.

Members States are required under Article 26 of the Maputo Protocol to submit periodic reports to the AU Commission. However, since the adoption of the Protocol in 2003, only 6 countries have so far reported on the implementation of the Maputo Protocol: Senegal, Malawi Burkina Faso, South Africa, Rwanda and DRC.

Over the last decade, the African Union has taken some laudable actions to demonstrate its commitment to securing women's rights in Africa. Evidence of this commitment is found in the adoption of legal instruments such as the Maputo Protocol; the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa; the introduction of the Fund for African Women and the launch of the African Women's Decade 2010-2020. The AU also declared its 24th Summit in 2015 as the "Year of Women's Empowerment and Africa's Development for the Concretization of Agenda 2063", and the following year as the "Year of Human Rights with Particular Focus on the Rights of Women for its 26th AU Summit.

In 2010, the AU launched the African Women's Decade 2010-2020 with the theme "grassroots approach to gender equality and women's empowerment." The aim of the African Women's Decade is to 'advance gender equality by accelerating implementation of Dakar, Beijing and AU Assembly Decisions on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE), through dual top-down and bottom-up approaches inclusive of grassroots participation.<sup>3</sup>

Since the launch of the Decade, most countries have adopted various legal frameworks, policies/strategies and national actions plans to put an end to the discrimination and exclusion of women in the social, political and economic sphere. Almost all African countries have the principle of equality for men and women enshrined in their Constitutions, through the prohibition of discrimination on the basis of sex and the protection of the fundamental rights of all.

***Article 9 of the Maputo Protocol stipulates that: "States Parties shall take specific positive action to promote participative governance and the equal participation of women in the political life of their countries through affirmative action, enabling national legislation and other measures..."***

Participation of women in the political life of the country is an important element for achieving gender equality. Women constitute more than half of the population in African states and their level of political activity and political representation vary across the continent. Women are more likely to make a lasting difference when given the opportunity to participate in decision-making positions<sup>4</sup> and therefore, equal access of men and women in political participation and decision-making is the key for inclusive and functioning democracies. Despite all the efforts made by the AU towards gender equality, women in Africa often have to overcome multiple obstacles, such as lack of education, resources and prohibitive social, cultural and traditional attitudes to access equal representation in politics and make their voices heard.

It is becoming abundantly clear, in the political climate sweeping the world, that the role of women in top leadership needs to be addressed and promoted. Now, more than ever, we need women to occupy leadership positions around the globe. Despite the many achievements in terms of legislation and policies aimed at equity and gender equality, implementation remains a significant challenge. Gender-based violence and sexual harassment remain problems throughout the continent. In a number of countries competing legal systems result in antagonistic interpretations which allow discrimination and harmful practices against women to continue. A number of countries have adopted legislation to improve women's access to and ownership of land. However, inequalities persist, partly because women are unaware of their rights and thus are unable to exercise their rights and because traditional, cultural and religious norms prevail.

However, across the continent there have been some positive developments in terms of women's representation in national parliaments. As of June 2018, women hold more than 40% of the seats in parliament in four countries in Africa. Rwanda stands out, not only in terms of parliaments in Africa, but also globally, with women holding 61.3% of the seats in parliament. It is followed by Namibia with 46.2%, 42.4% in South Africa, and 41.8% in Senegal. While in other African countries, women's representation is well above the 30% mark.

A number of states have taken significant measures to ensure the equal representation and participation of women and, as a result of these actions, has seen the number of female representatives increase. Most countries have adopted legislated quotas to promote female representation in parliament, while others use voluntary party quotas. Although there have been positive developments, in other countries the use of a gender parity provision has been removed, or conditioned to only apply for a specific period, thus putting gender parity in decision-making bodies into question.

When it comes to women in the judiciary, across Africa there is little data available. While the data is limited, there are appear to be positive developments. In Morocco and Egypt, the number of women in the judiciary has increased. Even in countries where there are few women in the judiciary, women hold significant positions. In Niger, the President of the Constitutional Court is a woman. In Sierra Leone, Dr. Priscilla Schwartz made history as the first woman to be appointed Attorney General and Minister of Justice.

Elected officials and members of civil society organisations and grassroots activists all play important roles in promoting women's rights and ensuring their full implementation. Women's groups and civil society organisations (CSOs) continue to play an important role and their advocacy work has resulted in significant changes. They also play a crucial role in holding governments accountable. In recent years, women activists have participated in protests, such as those during the Arab Spring, advocated for legislative and policy changes and demanded an increase in participation and representation in decision-making. Although data about their activities is not always well documented.

This report offers some evidence of best practice as well as limited commitment to the ideals enshrined in the various Protocols and Accords. That without transparent published evidence and statistics, a full audit of the success of the Decade is difficult to evaluate and may reflect too favourably or unfavourably in the various countries' reports. With 2 years until it ends, it is to be hoped that more concrete evidence and substantiated statistics will become easily available to offer a full appraisal of outcomes, which will lead to positive indicators of how women's development and full involvement can be assured. It is therefore vital that there be a robust system of monitoring and reporting where Governments are held accountable to ensure that promises, national, regional and international agreements on women's rights are respected, but most importantly, turned into action.

Moving forward, it is paramount that women are given an equal role in decision-making, that their voices are heard, and their contributions recognised. Such fundamental change will benefit not only the individual country, but also the entire African continent and will surely inspire other countries to follow Africa's lead. It is my hope that this report will be used as an advocacy tool to inform all policies and programmes, so that gender issues are mainstreamed and policies are designed to enable the full and equal enjoyment of women's rights

I would like to extend my deepest appreciation and gratitude to all those who have put great effort to make this report possible.

**RAINATOU SOW**  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,**  
**MAKE EVERY WOMAN COUNT**



**61.3%**

women holding  
parliament seats  
in **Rwanda**



**46.2%**

women holding  
parliament seats  
in **Namibia**



**42.4%**

women holding  
parliament seats  
in **South Africa**



**41.8%**

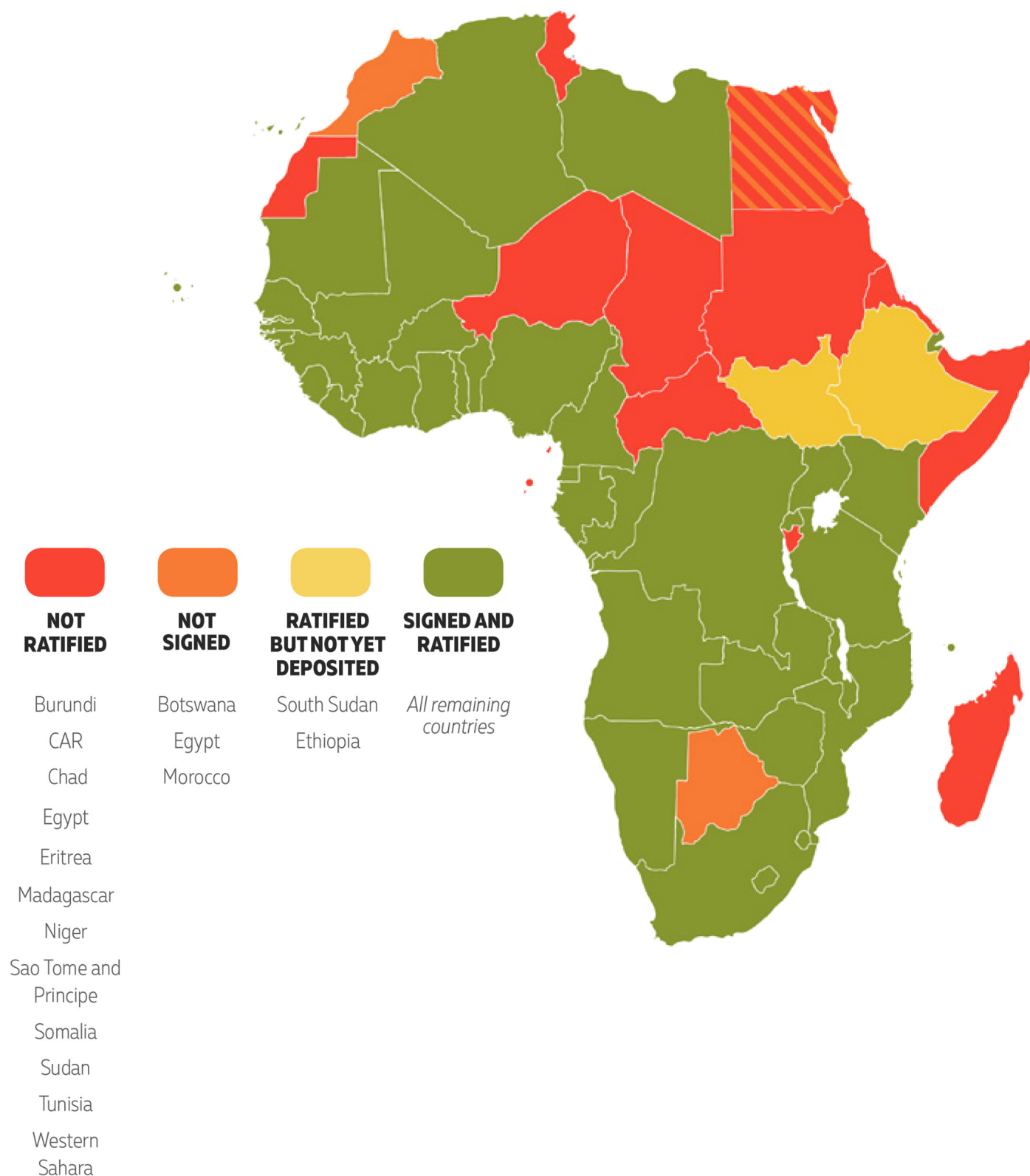
women holding  
parliament seats  
in **Senegal**



*Under representation of women in African leadership*



# STATUS OF RATIFICATION OF THE MAPUTO PROTOCOL AS OF JUNE 2018



# CENTRAL AFRICAN REGION

## OVERVIEW:

All countries within the Central Africa region have either acceded or ratified CEDAW, but the majority of them have not adopted a National Action Plan for UNSCR1325, with only the Central African Republic (CAR), Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) doing so. All countries have either ratified or signed the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (The Maputo Protocol).

There have been efforts in the region to boost women's participation in the public sphere and achieve gender equality, mainly through the adoption of National Gender Policies and Strategies. Although women have the right to vote in all countries, there is no significant data on numbers of female voters. Women's political participation is often limited due to institutional, cultural and financial constraints. In addition, some of the countries such as CAR and DRC experience political and economic instability, which constitutes extra barriers to women's access in the public sphere. Most governments are male-dominated and there has never been a female Head of Government.

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS:

Most countries have introduced National Gender Policies to create favourable conditions for equal participation of women and men in politics and ensure effective adoption of gender policies at all levels. The above policies have been fully implemented in most of countries.

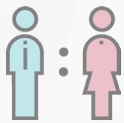
Gender-based violence (GBV) remains an issue in all countries and the most affected are the unstable regions. Several measures have been taken to tackle violence against women, such as the introduction of legal frameworks. However, the implementation is weak mainly due to customary law, social, cultural and institutional attitudes. For instance, in Burundi, even though a new law was introduced against GBV, women are constantly at risk of rape, trafficking and forced prostitution<sup>5</sup>.

In relation to sexual and reproductive rights there are certain limitations which are legal or/and institutional. CAR offers a typical example of legal limitation, where abortion is prohibited except for saving a woman's life. However, at an institutional level, there is a lack of information regarding the correct implementation of the law. In Congo, couples lack information on their reproductive rights and in DRC, even though the law does not require a husband's permission before providing family planning services to a married woman, providers generally require it.

Literacy rates remain a major challenge in most Central African countries. Considerable disparities between women and men exist in countries such as Burundi, Cameroon, CAR and Chad. Equatorial Guinea has heavily invested in education and training for its citizens, for both men and women, so that in 2012, the ratio of female to male primary school enrolment was 99%.

In the vast majority of Central African countries, women are discriminated against regarding inheritance and ownership due to customary laws, societal attitudes and/or the absence of explicit legal frameworks that safeguard women's rights. In Burundi, there is no formal law that provides women with the right to inheritance and property. On the other hand, in Cameroon, the Civil Code grants equal rights to men and women regarding land ownership, but customs and traditions constitute a significant barrier to legal implementation.





## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

Burundi, CAR and Congo have all introduced gender quotas. In Burundi, a gender quota of 30% applies to the National Assembly, Senate, ministerial positions and governmental institutions; in CAR, a gender quota of 35% applies to both public and private spheres and in the Republic of Congo a gender quota of 30% applies to the Lower House. Usually, when gender parity legal frameworks are fully implemented, women's political participation is impacted positively, although other factors may be important. However, there are countries such as Gabon and Sao Tomé, where even though there is no gender parity legislation, women's political participation has increased significantly within the last years. In both countries there has been a 400% increase in women's representation in Parliament.



## BEYOND NUMBERS:

### THE IMPACT OF WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS AND DECISION-MAKING

In the Republic of Congo, since electing females into office, two laws have been passed on Violence Against Women/ Gender-Based Violence; the Law of 25th February 2011 prohibiting traffic and sexual exploitation of indigenous children and women;<sup>9</sup> and the Law No. 4-2010 of 14th June 2010 for the Protection of the Child in the Republic of the Congo<sup>10</sup>.

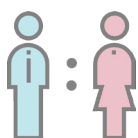
In Gabon, the National Support Centre for Women's Organisations brings together women's associations, politicians and NGOs to train lawyers and paralegals on the principles of legal defence that women must know about and use when they are victims of any violation of their rights.<sup>11</sup>

In São Tomé and Príncipe, an initiative was introduced by Madame Helena Bonfim, Program Coordinator at the Ministry of Education to promote women's empowerment through the preservation of biodiversity. As many women are living in poverty on the island, the project helps women process agricultural products, sell seafood, create fashion items and participate in other income-generating activities. It also aims to further improve literacy and teach women about protecting the environment and biodiversity of the island. The Ministry of Education has further introduced school meals and uniforms to promote self-confidence among young girls.<sup>12</sup>

In Burundi, women have continued to play vital roles in peace building in Burundi. The "Women's Network for Peace and Dialogue" consists of 534 women mediators working across all municipalities in Burundi (129 in total).<sup>13</sup> By their own estimate, women mediators have addressed over 5,000 conflicts at the local level. They also initiated dialogues in 17 provinces with politicians, security forces and civil society. The mediators promote non-violence and dialogue, and counter rumours and exaggerated fears with verifiable information<sup>14</sup>.

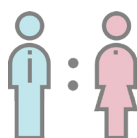
## STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:

There is a lack of disaggregated data with regards to female voters and women in the judiciary. Most of the time, the introduction of gender quota policies directly impacts women's participation. For instance, the gender quota policy in Burundi has been a success and this is reflected in the high rate of women's representation in the legislature<sup>67</sup>. Before the introduction of gender quotas, less than 20% of seats in both the National Assembly and the Senate were filled by women but currently, women's participation is 36.4% for the Lower House and 41.9% for the Upper House. In contrast, where there are no quotas, usually the representation is low, especially if there are also instabilities in the country, for example currently in CAR, women represent only 8.6% of the Parliament.<sup>8</sup>



# 30%

Gender quota  
in **Burundi**



# 35%

Gender quota  
in **CAR**

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Women who enter politics often face discrimination within their political parties. In São Tomé and Príncipe, political parties rarely promote or appoint women to elected positions. While in Gabon, the ruling party controls the roles given to women. In other countries, women are at a disadvantage because parity laws are not implemented, such as in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

Women also face a number of economic barriers such as high rates of poverty, being financially dependent upon their husbands and discriminated against when it comes to land ownership. In Cameroon, a husband put an end to his wife's economic activity simply by notifying the Registrar of the Commercial Court of his objection<sup>15</sup>. In many countries women have unequal access to and ownership of land. As a result, women struggle to obtain credit. This negatively impacts women's ability to cover the cost of campaigning.



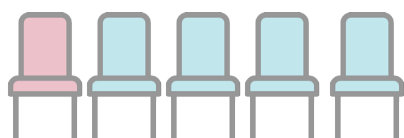
## SOCIAL|CULTURAL BARRIERS

Strongly held and persistent cultural norms, practices and patriarchal views also pose significant barriers for women in Central Africa. In many societies there are deep-rooted stereotypes of the roles women and men should hold with respect to their families, societies and in decision-making. Women are often discouraged from pursuing a political career citing the expectations of women's role in the family and the perception that women are not naturally predisposed to engage in politics or seen as being capable of holding leadership positions.



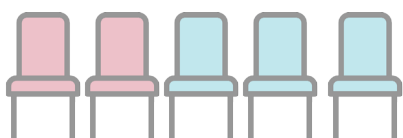
## MEDIA

The media in Central Africa is dominated by men, who also determine the issues covered, and female journalists often face threats and harassment. In the Republic of Congo, a female journalist was threatened after publishing a series of stories and was later expelled from the country. Moreover, there is often no policy promoting equal opportunities. In Burundi, women make up only 17.9% of the journalists. Female journalists are often seen as fragile and unable to do the same job as their male colleagues and are often overlooked in the hiring process or delegated to covering less important issues. However, in Gabon, efforts are being made to promote women and gender issues by creating spaces and programmes specifically dedicated to increasing women's voices.



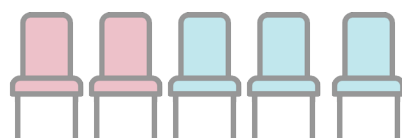
**20%**

Seats filled by women before Gender quota in **Burundi**



**36.4%**

Seats filled by women in Lower House after gender quota in **Burundi**



**41.9%**

Seats filled by women in Upper House after gender quota in **Burundi**

# BURUNDI

## OVERVIEW

Burundi gained independence in 1962, and since then, the country has been through various ethnic tensions, which have led to a 12 years conflict from 1995 to 2005.<sup>16</sup> While the country was still recovering from the decade long conflict, in 2015, it was once again faced with another crisis, when the current President, Pierre Nkurunziza, decided to run for a third term. This move was followed by protests throughout the country organised by the opposition who argued that a third term was unconstitutional.<sup>17</sup>

Burundi ratified the Convention of Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) on 8th January 1992 without reservations<sup>18</sup>. The country signed the Maputo Protocol on 13th November 2001<sup>19</sup>. The 2012-2016 National Action Plan for the implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSC) was launched in 2011<sup>20</sup>. Burundi ranks 108th out of 159 countries in the 2015 UNDP Gender Inequality Index<sup>21</sup>.

Burundi has a bicameral parliament, consisting of the National Assembly and the Senate. Of the 121 members in the National Assembly, 100 are directly elected through proportional representation for a 5-year term. The seats are distributed in proportion to the number of votes obtained by each list, after removing the lists that received less than 2% of the votes nationwide.<sup>22</sup> The remaining 21 members are selected based on the principle to respect 60/40 Hutu-Tutsi split and 30 percent quota for women.<sup>23</sup> Women hold 44 (36.4%) of the 121 seats.<sup>24</sup> The Senate consists of 34 members who are indirectly elected by an electoral college composed of members of the communal councils in the province concerned for a 5-year term.<sup>25</sup> The total number of senators varies as additional seats may be added to meet required ethnic and gender quotas.<sup>26</sup> In the Senate, women hold 18 (41.9%) of the 43 seats.<sup>27</sup> The President in Burundi is directly elected by universal suffrage, with an absolute majority, for a five-year term which is once renewable.

Women received the right to vote and to stand for election in 1961. Burundi has not had a female head of government so far<sup>28</sup>. Even though voter registration is not affected by Constitutional quotas for the participation of women, currently 52% of registered voters are women<sup>29</sup>.

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

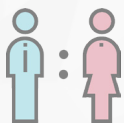
The principle of gender equality and non-discrimination on the grounds of sex is enshrined in the 2005 Constitution<sup>30</sup>. The 2003 National Gender Policy was adopted with a view to improving the living conditions of the population in general, and women's participation in decision-making is one of the areas addressed<sup>31</sup>. In 2010, the Government of Burundi prepared a revised 2012-2025 National Gender Policy. The new 2011-2025 National Gender Policy is a step forward and aims to correct the historical disadvantages faced by women by providing substantial gender-sensitive budgetary support<sup>32</sup>. In addition, Burundi's Second Generation Strategic Framework for Growth and Poverty Reduction (2010-2025) integrates gender more than its predecessor and includes a major focus on strengthening the rule of law and good governance, as well as promoting gender equality. Several performance indicators in the plan have also been incorporated into the education and health sectors<sup>33</sup>.

In 2013, the Government of Burundi revised the Penal Procedural Code. The law prohibits rape, including spousal rape, with penalties of up to 30 years' imprisonment. The law prohibits domestic abuse of a spouse, with punishment ranging from fines to three to five years' imprisonment. However, the government has not enforced the law uniformly, and rape and other domestic and sexual violence continue to be serious problems<sup>34</sup>.

The Government also introduced a Law on the Prevention, Protection of Victims and Deterrence of Gender-Based Violence in 2016<sup>35</sup>. This revision allowed witnesses and victims to benefit from protection during judicial proceedings<sup>36</sup>. Even though the law prohibits sexual harassment in the public sphere, women remain at risk of rape, trafficking and forced prostitution<sup>37</sup>.

Women's physical integrity in Burundi is also compromised by limited reproductive choices. In response, the Government's priorities for sexual and reproductive health in the next 5-10 years are spelt out in the National Demographic Policy Statement to include: strengthening family planning intervention by improving accessibility to modern contraception and strengthening the capacities of health care centres and hospitals<sup>38</sup>.

A draft inheritance law, under development since 2008, has been stalled since 2013<sup>39</sup>. As a result, no formal law currently provides women with the right to inheritance and property. This worsens and reinforces the vulnerability of households headed by women and as a result has a drastic limitation on their economic independence<sup>40</sup>. Social perception of rural land ownership is based on the existence of common agricultural customs, passed down through a patrilineal system<sup>41</sup>.

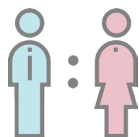


## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

Article 164 of the Constitution reserves 30% of National Assembly, Senate and ministerial positions for women. Under Article 38.3 of the Electoral Code, electoral candidate lists must consider gender balance, requiring one in four candidates to be a woman<sup>43</sup>.

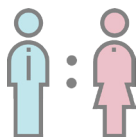
It must be noted that the 30% quota for women's participation has also been attained in other governmental institutions<sup>44</sup>. For instance, the National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI) leadership includes two women out of five total members, exceeding the 30% mark established in the Constitution<sup>45</sup>. The 30% quota is also respected when composing provincial and communal election commissions, as well as during the recruitment process for polling station workers<sup>46</sup>. However, there is no such quota for the presidential institution (and vice-presidency), the appointment of governors and ambassadors, the colline (village) level posts, or in the civil service or quasi-public and private sectors<sup>47</sup>.

In 2012, a National Action Plan (NAP) for the Implementation of Resolution 1325 was introduced to promote women's participation in reconstruction, rehabilitation and recovery programmes, to improve justice mechanisms and increase their participation in peace-building processes<sup>48</sup>. The NAP called for an expansion of the 30% female-participation quota to councils and non-elected positions, the civil service and territorial administrations and to the justice, defense, and security sectors<sup>49</sup>.



# 46%

Women **Senators**  
in **Burundi** in 2010



# 22.7%

Women **Ministers**  
in **Burundi** in 2010

## STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



### WOMEN MPS

The gender quota policy in Burundi has been a success, reflected in the high rate of women's representation in the legislature. In the 2010 elections, 31% of National Assembly members and 46% of senators were women<sup>50</sup>. Four years prior to that, before provisions ensuring a minimum of 30% of women's representation in the legislature had been adopted, less than 20% of seats in both the National Assembly and the Senate were filled by women<sup>51</sup>. Currently, women's participation is 36.4% for the Lower House and 41.9% for the Upper House<sup>52</sup>.



### WOMEN MINISTERS

The proportion of women in ministerial level positions grew steadily, but in recent years has showed signs of declining. In 2012, 34.8% of the ministers were female, up from 28.6% in 2010.<sup>53</sup> The proportion grew to 36.4% in 2014, however since then it has declined to 34.8% in 2015 and 22.7% in 2016.<sup>54</sup>



### WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

Women played strong roles in women's movements during the war and in subsequent peace processes, consolidating their experience in the judiciary. Two women have been Presidents of the Constitutional Court, holding office from 1998-2006 and then from 2007-2013<sup>55</sup>. In Burundi's case, a strong women's movement, combined with the end of armed conflict, may help explain the rise of women to the highest judicial position<sup>56</sup>.



### WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

In 2014, 44% of firms had female participation in ownership and 16.3% of firms had a female top manager<sup>57</sup>.

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Illiteracy and low levels of education are frequently cited by women as a key obstacle to their political participation. Some women attest that ignorance leads to loss of confidence, which gives rise to a pattern of self-censorship leading to a de facto exclusion from political life. In fact, women often report that they are afraid to contest certain positions. Furthermore, the low level of education among women often leads to a general perception that they should not hold positions of high institutional responsibility<sup>58</sup>.



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

The lack of time women have to devote to political participation is strongly linked to the division of roles between men and women in family and community. Women bear the largest part of the housework and family responsibilities, so they have little time to engage in activities outside the domestic sphere<sup>59</sup>. Cultural practices pressure both men and women to accept this division of roles. In some cases, even if there is interest in political activities, women are still forced by their husbands and families to stay at home. These hurdles often lead women to abandon the opportunity to get involved and act in the public sphere.<sup>60</sup>



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

Women face barriers to effective participation, including financial constraints.<sup>61</sup> Inequality in property ownership, unemployment, inheritance, lack of access to financial services and capital are some of the key challenges women face to effectively participate in politics and decision-making. Constraints on the financial autonomy of women prevent them from contributing financially to the parties<sup>62</sup>. A deposit of 500,000 Burundian Francs (\$280) is needed for political parties and independent candidates standing for the National Assembly, this amount is fully reimbursed if the gets at least 2% of vote.<sup>63</sup>



## MEDIA

The media in Burundi is a male-dominated environment. According to a study by the National Communication Council, over 82 % of journalists are male, while 18% are female.<sup>64</sup> According to the Association of Burundian Women Journalists, women are underrepresented in part due to strongly held views about women's capabilities.<sup>65</sup> Female journalists are viewed as fragile and unable to do the same work, such as fieldwork, as their male counterparts, and so male journalists are favoured in the hiring process.<sup>66</sup> There is also a lack of gender parity in reporting, and so women's voices are rarely heard.



*Under representation of women by the media*



# CAMEROON

## OVERVIEW

Cameroon is in Central Africa, bordering the Bight of Biafra, between Equatorial Guinea and Nigeria. Previously a French colony, the country became independent in 1960 as the Republic of Cameroon. Today Cameroon is the sixth largest economy in Africa having abundant natural resources. The Republic of Cameroon is a decentralised unitary State. Cameroon has been officially at war with Boko Haram since May 2014. The continuing violence, combined with the sharp rise in the number of suicide attacks between May and August 2017, are reminders that the jihadist movement is by no means a spent force. Since May 2014, 2,000 civilians and soldiers have been killed, in addition to the more than 1,000 people kidnapped in the Far North (or Extreme North) region<sup>68</sup>.

Cameroon ratified CEDAW on 23rd August 1994<sup>69</sup> and ratified the Maputo Protocol on 13th September 2012<sup>70</sup>. The country has not yet adopted a National Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325. However, the government is currently working on its elaboration.<sup>71</sup> Cameroon ranks 138th out of 159 countries in the 2015 UNDP Gender Inequality Index<sup>72</sup>.

Cameroon has a bicameral parliament consisting of the Senate and the National Assembly. The National Assembly has 180 members who are directly elected for a 5-year term.<sup>73</sup> Women hold 56 (31.1%) of the 180 seats.<sup>74</sup> The Senate has 100 members of which 70 are indirectly elected by an electoral college composed of regional and municipal councillors using a mixed voting system.<sup>75</sup> The remaining 30 members are appointed by the President.<sup>76</sup> The members of Senate serve 5-year terms. Women hold 20 (20%) of the 100 seats in the Senate.<sup>77</sup> The President of Cameroon is elected by plurality vote to serve a 7-year term.<sup>78</sup> The Prime Minister is appointed by the President.

In Cameroon, women gained the right to vote and to stand for election in 1946.<sup>79</sup> Although the first woman was elected to Parliament in 1960, up until now, the country has not had a female President or a female Prime Minister.<sup>80</sup>

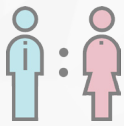
## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

In relation to political participation, in 2011, the government published its National Gender Policy (2011-2020)<sup>81</sup> with one of the main objectives being to create favourable conditions for equal participation of women and men in development activities and ensure effective incorporation of gender policies in all institutions. The fifth strategic area of the policy focuses on the enhancement of women's participation and representation in public life and decision making.<sup>82</sup>

The new Penal Code of 2016<sup>83</sup> constitutes a real advancement regarding women's rights. Cameroon now criminalises FGM/C, breast ironing, child abuse, forced marriage and delay or refusal to enrol a child in school. It also amended Article 361 on adultery, which now grants equal rights to men and women to sue for divorce.

The law does not specifically prohibit domestic violence, although assault is prohibited and punishable by imprisonment and fines<sup>84</sup>. Rape is criminalised under Article 296 of the Penal Code and punishable by a term of five to ten years imprisonment. Nonetheless, there is a lack of clarity as to whether marital or spousal rape is a criminal act. The government stated, in its 2012 report to CEDAW, that spousal rape could technically be included under Article 296 of the Penal Code though the government admits that punishment would be left to the discretion of the judge<sup>85</sup>.

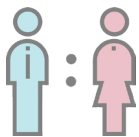
Although land law does not address women's land rights specifically, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Civil Code grants all Cameroonians access to land regardless of gender<sup>86</sup>. However, because of custom and tradition, civil laws protecting women often were not respected. For example, in some ethnic groups women are precluded from inheriting from their husbands<sup>87</sup>.



## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

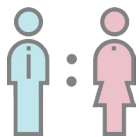
Cameroon's Electoral Code<sup>88</sup> of April 19th, 2012 provides a way to reduce the existing gender gap in electoral contests. Several Articles within the Electoral Code also aim to increase women's participation in politics.<sup>89</sup> The law provides that lists of candidates for legislative and municipal elections should consider the sociological components of the constituency, including gender<sup>90</sup>. However, there are no legislated quotas at the national or sub-national level, although some political parties do include voluntary quotas to encourage women's participation<sup>91</sup>.

History has recorded that the 9th legislature of Cameroon (2013 – 2018) has witnessed a significant increase in women's representation. For so long, women had denounced the male dominated parliament for not taking women's issues and concerns seriously and for violating women's right to participation by not giving them a chance to be part of governance. The concerted efforts of the civil society, national and international organisations have made the big dream of women reaching the 30% quota<sup>92</sup> nearer to a reality.



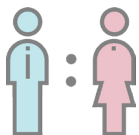
**31.1%**

Women in the **Lower House**  
in **Cameroon** in 2010



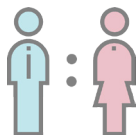
**14%**

Women **Ministers**  
in **Cameroon** nowadays



**39.7%**

Women **Firm owners**  
in **Cameroon** in 2016



**22.9%**

Women **Top managers**  
in **Cameroon** in 2016

## STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



### WOMEN MPS

In 2010, women represented only 13.9% of the Lower House. Currently, they represent 31.1% of the lower house and 20% in the upper house.<sup>93</sup> Women occupy 10 cabinet positions, 76(27.1%) of 280 parliamentary seats, and other senior level offices, including territorial command and security/defence positions<sup>94</sup>.



### WOMEN MINISTERS

In 2010, only 11.8% of ministers were women. Nowadays, this number has slightly increased to 14%.<sup>95</sup> In the current government, women hold diverse positions such as Minister of Lands, Survey and State Property, Minister of Post and Telecommunications, Minister of Social Affairs and Minister of Basic Education.<sup>96</sup> It must be highlighted that, for the 2013-18 electoral period, women occupied 26 council mayor positions, in comparison with 23 in 2007-13, 10 in 2002-07, two in 1992-97, and one in 1987-92<sup>97</sup>.



### WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

In the judiciary, the level of gender inequality is high. In 2010, out of 994 magistrates, 24.3% were women. Out of the 75 High and First Instance Courts, 14.7% were women. Moreover, there has been only one female Attorney General out of 10 and only 2 females Prosecutors out of 70 since the independence of the country. There is currently only 1 female President of Court of Appeal, no female Attorney General at the Supreme Court and only 6 female Advisers at the Supreme Court out of 51 positions.<sup>98</sup>



### WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

In 2009, 10% of firms had a female top manager but by 2016, the number had increased to 22.9%.<sup>99</sup> In addition, in 2009, 15.7% of firms had female participation in ownership with the number increasing to 39.7% by 2016<sup>100</sup>.

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Illiteracy and low levels of education are frequently cited by women as a key obstacle to their political participation. Some women attest that ignorance leads to loss of confidence, which gives rise to a pattern of self-censorship leading to a de facto exclusion from political life. In fact, women often report that they are afraid to contest certain positions. Furthermore, the low level of education among women often leads to a general perception that they should not hold positions of high institutional responsibility<sup>58</sup>.



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## MEDIA

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# CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

## OVERVIEW

The history of the CAR is complex and, since its independence in 1960, the country has been the scene of cyclical internal wars, characterised by massacres and countless internally displaced persons. Its humanitarian crisis has worsened since a coup in March 2013, which resulted in widespread insecurity, grave and systematic violations of human rights and the quasi-collapse of the State. Today, 600,000 people are internally displaced with 513,666 refugees in neighbouring countries<sup>108</sup>. For the first time in its history, the CAR democratically elected a president and parliament in March 2016. Nevertheless, clashes are still erupting, and the civilian population continues to be the target of attacks. Tens of thousands of people have been forced from their homes because of the escalating violence between the numerous armed groups<sup>109</sup>.

The CAR ratified CEDAW on 21st June 1991.<sup>110</sup> The Maputo Protocol was signed on 17th June 2008, but the country has not yet ratified the Protocol.<sup>111</sup> The Government of the Central African Republic launched its National Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 in 2014.<sup>112</sup> Central African Republic ranks 149th out of 159 countries in the 2015 UNDP Gender Inequality Index<sup>113</sup>.

The country has a unicameral parliament. The 140 representatives of the National Assembly are directly elected in two rounds by universal adult franchise from single member constituencies.<sup>114</sup> The President of the country is directly elected through universal adult franchise, when he must obtain an absolute majority, or a runoff is held with the top two candidates.<sup>115</sup> The President serves a 5-year term and also appoints the Prime Minister.

Women gained the right to vote and to stand for elections in 1986.<sup>116</sup> Catherine Samba-Panza became the first female President in January 2014.<sup>117</sup> She was elected as an interim President with the difficult task of halting sectarian killings, stabilising the country and conducting fair elections<sup>118</sup>.

In the last election of December 2015, there were a total of 1,954,433 people registered to vote. Out of this number, 945,128 were women compared to 1,009,305 men, so women potentially formed 48.3% of all registered voters.<sup>119</sup>

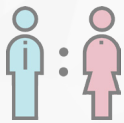
## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

Gender-based violence in CAR must be considered in the context of the relatively recent armed conflict and its aftermath. There is no specific law criminalising domestic violence; but there was a plan of action (2007-2011) prohibiting violence against any person with penalties of up to 10 years in prison<sup>120</sup>. In 2006, the government introduced a law on the protection of women against violence, which covered rape. Marital rape or spousal rape is not specifically prohibited and Article 46 of the Penal Code<sup>121</sup> provides that spousal murder, under circumstances of adultery, is considered a "forgivable murder"<sup>122</sup>. The 2006 law on the protection of women against violence also covers sexual harassment in the workplace<sup>123</sup>. In 2014 the International Rescue Committee reported more than two-thirds of 125 women surveyed in the region of Bangui had been gang raped, primarily by members of armed groups<sup>124</sup>.

Limitations on women's reproductive rights also infringe the physical integrity of women in CAR. Abortion is not permitted, except for saving a woman's life<sup>125</sup>. There are health issues here too regarding breast ironing and FGM. The law prohibits FGM/C for women and girls, but approximately 24% of girls and women between ages 15 and 49 have been cut, according to multiple indicator cluster surveys reported by UNICEF in 2010 and of that number, 52% had undergone the procedure between the ages of 10 and 14<sup>126</sup>.

Education is free in government-financed schools and compulsory from the ages of 6-14, but the number of teachers was seriously affected by the AIDs epidemic in the late 1990s. Since then, many staff have sought refuge in neighbouring countries from Séléka rebel attacks. In 2007, 65% girls enrolled in primary education, but only 23% were still at school after 6 years according to the CAR 2013 Human Rights Report- US Dept of State. In 2012, there were 65,962 male children out of school, compared to 127,690 female children<sup>127</sup>. Data from 2008-2012, provided by UNICEF, also indicates a significant gender gap in both primary and secondary education.

There is limited information available on the women's legal position in relation to women's right to own and inherit property, land ownership, non-land assets and financial services. In 2010, the US Agency for International Development reported that, although the law did not discriminate against women in property rights, discriminatory customary laws often infringed women's rights<sup>128</sup>.



## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

In 2016, the CAR National Assembly adopted a law establishing parity between men and women. According to this law, parity is defined as "the numerical equality of men and women in electoral mandates, elective and nominative positions in the public and private sectors"<sup>129</sup>. The law requires 35% of women to be represented in the spheres of decision-making and this quota is imposed both in the public and private sectors. Although this law represents a real advancement for women's rights, the decree of application to make this law operational has yet to be published<sup>130</sup>.



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

In the judiciary, of the 182 magistrates in the country, only ten are women today.<sup>137</sup> Moreover, the Court of Appeal in the Bangui region has fifteen magistrates, none of whom are women.<sup>138</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

In 2011, 53.3% of firms had female participation in ownership and 12.1% of firms had a female top manager<sup>139</sup>.

## STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:

The instability of the country is a highly significant challenge to the advancement of women's rights in general and reduces drastically the possibility of increasing women's political participation in the country. Overall, the representation of women in CAR in the political, economic, social and cultural decision-making bodies is very weak<sup>131</sup>.



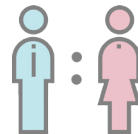
## WOMEN MPS

In 2010, women represented 9.6% of the Parliament.<sup>132</sup> They slightly increased their participation in 2012 when they reached 12.5%.<sup>133</sup> Unfortunately, due to the instability of the country, data are missing for the period 2013- 2015. Today, women represent only 8.6% of the Parliament.<sup>134</sup>



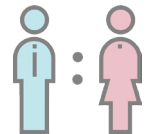
## WOMEN MINISTERS

The transitional government of 2014 counted 20 ministers, of which seven were women (35%).<sup>135</sup> Today women represent only 14.7% of the Ministers.<sup>136</sup>



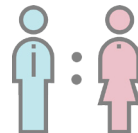
8.6%

Women in the  
**Parliament** in **CAR** in  
2018



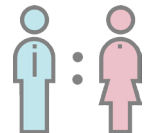
14.7%

Women **Ministers**  
in **CAR** in 2018



53.3%

Women **Firm owners**  
in **CAR** in 2011



12.1%

Women **Top managers**  
in **CAR** in 2011

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

As a result of the country's ongoing conflict, the CAR's educational system is weak, and the literacy rate is low<sup>140</sup>. For instance, in 2010, 24% of women aged 15+ were literate compared to 51% of men<sup>141</sup>. In some parts of the country schools are closed and qualified teachers are rare<sup>142</sup>. Moreover, infrastructure, funding, and supplies are lacking<sup>143</sup>. In these conditions, women are disadvantaged in developing the necessary skills and knowledge to get involved in the decision-making institution of the country.



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

The country's social organisation is based on a patriarchal system in which the ranking and distribution of roles between the sexes perpetuate inequalities and discrimination towards women<sup>144</sup>. Many men, and women, believe that a woman should not pursue a political career<sup>145</sup>. In addition, women and girls are regularly targeted and are experiencing physical and sexual violence in their homes and communities from internal and external agencies. It's important to understand that pre-existing gender inequalities in CAR are being aggravated and deepened by the continuing conflict.<sup>146</sup>



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

Despite having rich mineral resources, CAR is the 10th poorest country in the world and was ranked bottom of 188 countries for health in 2015. In such contexts, women's opportunities to develop are limited.

Seventy percent of the population live in remote outlying areas and have a per capita income of about \$400 pa, which is one of the lowest in the world. Although this estimate ignores unregistered economies based on diamonds, ivory and bushmeat, most people live at a subsistence level. Only 1% of the population have a bank account and access to credit is very limited. This has implications for all, but especially for women.



## MEDIA

Radio remains the most important and used media channel. Only 1% of author-identified printed articles are published in the press, whereas 38.4% of news and information on radio is known to be produced by women. Two thirds of information source material comes from women<sup>147</sup>. Women most often report on discrimination in education and business enterprises, but have yet to have a significant impact on promoting greater female participation in decision-making positions.<sup>148</sup>

# CHAD

## OVERVIEW

The Republic of Chad gained independence from France in 1960. Chad has a long history of chronic instability. Owing to the diversity of the population, tensions have erupted on many occasions between religious and ethnic groups since the independence of the country. In addition to internal conflict, the presence of the group Boko Haram has increased the instability and insecurity.<sup>149</sup>

Chad ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1995.<sup>150</sup> The government also signed the Maputo Protocol in 2004.<sup>151</sup> By accepting these international treaties, the government has agreed to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women. Chad does not have a National Plan for the Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325).<sup>152</sup> Chad ranks 186 out of 188 countries in the list of Gender Inequality Index.<sup>153</sup>

Chad has a unicameral National Assembly comprising 188 seats, with members elected through a mixed system and serving 4-year terms.<sup>154</sup> Women hold 24 (12.8%) of the 188 seats in parliament.<sup>155</sup> The President of Chad is directly elected with absolute majority popular vote, using a two-round system, for a 5-year term.<sup>156</sup> In 1995, the President Idriss Déby unilaterally modified the Constitution to remove the two-term limit on the presidency. Idriss Déby was re-elected to his fifth term in 2016. The election was peaceful, but opposition politicians alleged that hundreds of ballot boxes disappeared during the counting process.<sup>157</sup>

Women's civil and political rights are guaranteed under Article 12 of the Chadian Constitution.<sup>158</sup> Even though women have the right to vote and to stand for elections in Chad since 1958<sup>159</sup>, they are still extremely under-represented in government and decision-making positions. Chad has never had a female head of government.

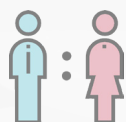
## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

In 2014, the Government developed and validated a National Strategy to fight gender-based violence.<sup>160</sup> Although the law prohibits violence against women, domestic violence is widespread. According to the 2014-15 Demographic and Health Survey conducted by the Chadian National Statistical Institute, 15% of women suffered physical violence in the previous 12 months.<sup>161</sup> In addition, the law does not prohibit sexual harassment.<sup>162</sup>

The law provides for the right of couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing and timing of their children; to manage their reproductive health and have access to the information and means to do so, free from discrimination, coercion, or violence.<sup>163</sup> However, the UNFPA estimated that only 3% women used any form of contraception and according to 2014 statistics from the National Institute of Statistics in Chad, only 5% married women used modern contraceptive methods.<sup>164</sup>

Women in Chad are subjected to discrimination in access to employment, housing and credit. There is also an important gender gap in salary and in owning or managing businesses, in part because of unequal opportunities to men in relation to access to education and training.<sup>165</sup> Data from 2008-2012, provided by UNICEF, indicated a significant and detrimental gender gap of girls in primary school enrolment.<sup>166</sup>

Women's rights to land ownership are guaranteed under the Civil Code and the Chadian Constitution. However, discriminatory practices in relation to inheritance pose significant barriers to women's land ownership.<sup>167</sup> In 2010, the government reported that social and cultural norms prevent women from accessing land and women are further disadvantaged by their poor economic status.<sup>168</sup>



### GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

In Chad, women remain under-represented among voters, party members, and candidates for office.<sup>169</sup> A National Gender Policy (NGP) was put in place in 2011. One of the major challenges of the NGP was to ensure a greater representation of women at all levels in decision-making. The Strategic Direction Number 4 focuses on increasing equal participation and equal access for men and women in decision making at all levels.<sup>170</sup> The policy also highlights that women's skills and resources need to be valued at all levels, through specific policies or innovative strategies.<sup>171</sup>

There is no gender quota in relation to female political participation in Chad.<sup>172</sup> The political Parties Charter of December 1994 was introduced to promote women representation in politics. Article 54 of the Charter states that 10% of the subsidies to political parties shall not be paid, if they don't elect women representatives.<sup>173</sup>

# STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



## WOMEN MPS

In 1962, the first woman was elected in Parliament. In 2011, women were holding the 12.8% of the seats in parliament, in 2012, 14.9% but in 2017 the number returned to the level of 12.8%<sup>174</sup>.



## WOMEN MINISTERS

In 2010 women represented 6.9%<sup>175</sup> of the ministers, in 2014, 15.2%<sup>176</sup> and in 2017, 14.3%<sup>177</sup>.



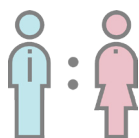
## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

There is a lack of published statistics in relation to women's current representation in the judiciary. However, in 2011, they represented only 7% of the 290 judges<sup>178</sup>. In addition, in 2015 only 1 out of 6 judges at Chad Constitutional Court was a woman.<sup>179</sup>



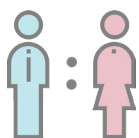
## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

In 2009, 40.1% of firms had female participation in ownership and 6.8% of firms had a female top manager.<sup>180</sup> However, women have been especially targeted for micro-investment and education projects and in entrepreneur initiatives.



**12.8%**

Women in the  
**Parliament in Chad** in  
2017



**14.3%**

Women **Ministers**  
in **Chad** in 2017

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

The Gender National Policy states that the coexistence of modern law with prevailing customary laws and Muslim laws creates an unfavourable environment for the implementation of laws and policies for gender equality<sup>181</sup>. The accumulation of laws, and the contradictions between them, limits the effectiveness of the principle of equality, even though it is protected in the Constitution and the international conventions and treaties.<sup>182</sup>



## SOCIAL|CULTURAL BARRIERS

Chad has a highly traditional society and the status of women is still characterised by gender-based discrimination. Patriarchal structures assign different roles to girls and boys from an early age, which reduces the opportunity of women to access knowledge and take up economic and political opportunities.<sup>183</sup> In addition, the proportion of illiterate women remains high. According to UNSECO data from 2015, only 50.7% of women are literate and only 5.27% of girls are enrolled in secondary school.<sup>184</sup> Therefore, it's extremely difficult for women to develop the necessary skills and knowledge to get involved in the decision-making institution of the country.



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

While the law does not place formal obstacles based on gender, the UN Human Rights Council Working Group on the Issue of Discrimination Against Women in Law and in Practice, found several factors impeding women's participation and economic empowerment in Chad.<sup>185</sup> For example, women are primarily responsible for taking care of household chores, and in some cases are forbidden to work by their husbands.<sup>186</sup> Of the women who do work, the majority are found in the informal and agricultural sectors, where they earn little money. Moreover, women have limited and unequal access to, use of and control over land.<sup>187</sup> According to the Working Group, although statutory law does not deny women the right to own land, customary law prevents women from both owning or inheriting land.<sup>188</sup>



## MEDIA

Freedom of the press and freedom of expression are guaranteed by the Constitution, however, reporters are often threatened and arrested due to their reporting.<sup>189</sup> Criticism of the President is not tolerated.<sup>190</sup> There are few women journalists in Chad. This is partially due to early marriage, low levels of education and responsibilities of caring for the home and family.<sup>191</sup> When women access the newsrooms, they are responsible only for covering issues such as health and education.<sup>192</sup>



# REPUBLIC OF CONGO

## OVERVIEW

The Republic of Congo is located across the Equator in West-Central Africa.<sup>193</sup> Despite the fact that the country is one of sub-Saharan Africa's main oil producers, nearly half the population lives in poverty.<sup>194</sup>

The country ratified CEDAW on 26th July 1982.<sup>195</sup> The Maputo Protocol was ratified on 14th December 2011.<sup>196</sup> The Republic of the Congo does not have a National Action Plan for the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325.<sup>197</sup> Congo ranks 135 out of 188 countries on the UNDP Gender Inequality Index.<sup>198</sup>

Congo has a bicameral Parliament consisting of the Senate and the National Assembly. The 72 members of the Senate are indirectly elected by departmental and communal councils using a single-member plurality system (one round) for a 6-year term.<sup>199</sup> Of 71 seats currently filled, women hold 14 (19.7%).<sup>200</sup> The 151 members of the National Assembly are directly elected through a majority voting system for a 5-year term.<sup>201</sup> Women hold only 17 (11.3%) of the 151 seats.<sup>202</sup> The President is elected by absolute majority vote through a two-round system to serve a 7-year term.<sup>203</sup> The President appoints the Prime Minister.

Although, women received the right to vote and to stand for election in Congo in 1963<sup>204</sup>, only two women have run so far for the supreme office; Angèle Bandou in 1992 and 2002 and Moutsara Gambou in 2016.<sup>205</sup> The current President, Denis Sassou-Nguesso, has been in power since 25th October 1997. The last elections, held in 2016, were marked by intimidation, violence and an opposition boycott.<sup>206</sup> There is no sex-disaggregated data for registered voters at the national or regional level, which hampers any strategy to encourage women to participate in elections as voters. However, according to the National Gender Policy, the participation of women as voters is considered to be important.<sup>207</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

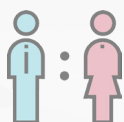
Article 17 of the 2015 Congolese Constitution grants women the same rights as men and ensures women's promotion and representation in political, elective and administrative functions<sup>208</sup>. In 2016, a National Gender Policy was launched for the period of 2017-2021 and its first objective was to amend the legal framework and improve institutional mechanisms for the promotion of women in political, elective and administrative positions.<sup>209</sup>

Rape is illegal, but according to a local women's group, penalties imposed for rape ranged from only a few months' imprisonment to rarely more than three years<sup>210</sup>. Domestic violence against women, including rape and beatings, is widespread but rarely reported. There are no specific provisions in the law outlawing spousal violence other than general statutes prohibiting assault<sup>211</sup>.

Couples and individuals have the right to decide the number, spacing, and timing of their children, free from discrimination, coercion, or violence, but often lacked the information and means to do so. There are no restrictions on the right to access contraceptives<sup>212</sup>.

In 2012, the ratio of female to male primary school enrolment was 109%, 94% of girls were enrolled in primary school compared to 86% of boys. In 2011, 73% of women aged 15+ were literate compared to 86% of men<sup>213</sup>.

Women experienced discrimination in divorce settlements, especially in regard to retaining property and financial assets. According to a local NGO, widows often were not accorded their legal rights of land and property inheritance<sup>214</sup>.



### GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

There is a quota concerning women representation in the Lower House. According to Article 61 of the Electoral Code as amended in 2014, candidate lists must consider the representation of women in a proportion of at least 30%. It specifically states that "the submission of candidatures for local elections must take into account the representativeness of women at the rate of 30% at least for each list of candidates, on the one hand, and the positioning of women, while respecting rigorous alternation with the upper third, in the communes on the other hand"<sup>215</sup>. However, due to the lack of enforcement mechanisms, parties continue to ignore the quotas.<sup>216</sup> It must be noted that a previous quota of 15% was put in place in 2007.<sup>217</sup> Due to the low success in the election of women in the Parliament, the government decided to raise this number.

# STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



## WOMEN MPS

Women's representation in the Congolese Parliament has seen a positive trend in the last 10 years. In 2010, women represented only 7.3% of the lower house and 12.9% of the upper house. In 2017, they increased their representation to 11.3% in the lower house and 19.7% in the upper house.<sup>218</sup>



## WOMEN MINISTERS

There is the same positive trend in women's representation in ministerial positions. In 2010, women represented only 13.5 %<sup>219</sup> of members of the ministers. Today, they represent 22.9%.<sup>220</sup>



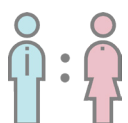
## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

There is a lack of published statistics in relation to women's representation in the judiciary. The only information available is from 2015, when women represented 19% of the judiciary.<sup>221</sup> Moreover, in 2016, women represented 22%<sup>222</sup> of the members of the Constitutional Court.



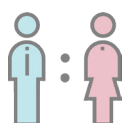
## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

In 2013, only 7% of firms used banks to finance investments. Women were unable to access finance, as under the old Family Code, women could not sign contracts, negotiate with companies, open a bank account or obtain loans without their husbands' permission. In 2016, a new Code was adopted, but still only 3.6% of women-led firms have a bank loan.<sup>223</sup>



**19.7%**

Women **MPS** in the **Upper House** in **Republic of Congo** in 2015



**22.9%**

Women **Ministers** in **Republic of Congo** today

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Discriminatory practices, as well as violence, exist as obstacles to women in accessing political positions and participating in the labour market and still pose significant threats to women's representation.<sup>224</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

Women in Congo are subjected to multiple discriminations; traditionally from living within a patriarchal society. Women are confined to their role of wife or mother and subjected to domestic and sexual violence. Sexual harassment is common and discourages women's participation in political activities.<sup>225</sup>



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

Congolese women face a number of economic barriers that prevent them from equal and full participation in decision-making. Poverty in the Congo is experienced mostly by females, as the poverty rate is higher among households headed by women.<sup>226</sup> Women are also more likely to work in the informal sector and encounter significant difficulties in accessing credit.<sup>227</sup> Congolese women in rural areas face discrimination with respect to ownership, sharing and inheritance of land.<sup>228</sup> Moreover, the prevalence of customs and traditional practices in rural areas prevent widows from inheriting property.<sup>229</sup>



## MEDIA

While freedom of the press is recognised under the Constitution, it is highly restricted in practice.<sup>230</sup> According to Reporters Without Borders, since 2014, many journalists have been threatened, forced to flee the country or expelled for criticizing the Government or inviting the opposition to express their views.<sup>231</sup> In 2014, Sadio Kante, a Congolese citizen, was expelled to Mali after the police accused her of disturbing the peace, drug consumption, and illegal residence.<sup>232</sup> Prior to her expulsion, Kante reported that she had received threats following a series of stories she published on the attack of another journalist.

# DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

## OVERVIEW

Since its independence from Belgium in 1960, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has been caught up in a complex series of wars, characterised by the large-scale displacement of men, women and children<sup>233</sup>. Today, although the country has been stabilised, some regions are still subjected to waves of recurring conflicts, humanitarian crises and serious human rights violations. The cycle of instability and political uncertainty has the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) on high alert and agreements between prominent political actors have done little to stem the tide of violence<sup>234</sup>. Until the end of 2016, the insecurity was limited to the country's eastern Ituri region, but violence is now being reported in Kasai in the central region of the country. As a result, levels of violence and death rates remain high and there have been reports of increasing human rights abuses<sup>235</sup>.

The DRC ratified CEDAW on 17th October 1986.<sup>236</sup> The Maputo Protocol was ratified on 9th June 2008<sup>237</sup>. In 2010, the government put in place the National Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325.<sup>238</sup> The country ranks 153rd out of 159 countries in the 2015 UNDP Gender Inequality Index<sup>239</sup>.

The country has a bicameral parliament consisting of the National Assembly and the Senate. The 108 members of the Senate are indirectly elected by the Provincial Assemblies, using a proportional voting system, for 5-year terms<sup>240</sup>. In the Senate, women only hold 5 (4.6%) seats.<sup>241</sup> The 500 members of the National Assembly are directly elected through a mixed voting system for 5-year terms<sup>242</sup>. Of the current 492 seats filled, 44 (8.9%) are held by women.<sup>243</sup> The President is elected by plurality vote to serve a 5-year term.<sup>244</sup> The Prime Minister, a member of the majority party or coalition in the National Assembly, is appointed by the President.<sup>245</sup>

In terms of representation, although women received the right to vote in DRC in 1967<sup>246</sup>, but there has never been a female head of government.

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

Article 14 of the 2005 Congolese Constitution, amended in 2011, states that women are entitled to equitable representation in national, provincial and local institutions. It also declares that the State guarantees the achievement of parity between men and women in institutions<sup>247</sup>. Moreover, according to Article 13 (3) of the 2006 Electoral Law, as amended in 2011, each party list is established to reflect the equal representation of men and women.

In 2015, a National Forum gathered Ministers and Provincial Heads of Divisions in charge of gender to establish a coordinated, results-oriented, national and provincial system for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

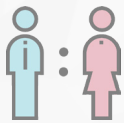
<sup>248</sup> The same year, the Government created a Plan Against Early Marriage<sup>249</sup> and in 2016, amended the Family Code to better protect children.<sup>250</sup>

The Law on Parity (Loi n° 15/013 du 1er août 2015 portant modalités d'application des droits de la femme et de la parité) of August 2015 was established to protect women's rights in general. It allows women to participate in economic domains without the approval of male relatives, provides for maternity care, disallows inequities linked to dowries, and specifies fines and other sanctions for those who discriminate or engage in gender-based abuse.<sup>251</sup> Another important objective of the Law on Parity is to operationalise the Articles of the Constitution that provide for equal representation and participation of women at decision-making levels and processes.<sup>252</sup>

In the DRC, women are subjected to extreme gender-based violence, mainly in the unstable regions of the country. According to the United Nations, rape has been used as a weapon of war in DRC for many years now<sup>253</sup>. The law criminalises rape and also addresses sexual slavery, sexual harassment and forced pregnancy<sup>254</sup>. Even though the law on sexual violence criminalises rape, it is underreported by victims and thus not always enforced<sup>255</sup>.

Insufficient education for Congolese girls and women contributes to ignorance and absence in the decision-making processes. Although many non-governmental organisations have set up centres for the elimination of illiteracy of Congolese women, without State support, female illiteracy rates remains very high<sup>256</sup>. In 2012, the female adult literacy rate was 62.92% and female youth literacy rate was 76.66%.<sup>257</sup>





## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

There is a quota concerning women representation in the Lower House. According to Article 61 of the Electoral Code as amended in 2014, candidate lists must consider the representation of women in a proportion of at least 30%. It specifically states that "the submission of candidatures for local elections must take into account the representativeness of women at the rate of 30% at least for each list of candidates, on the one hand, and the positioning of women, while respecting rigorous alternation with the upper third, in the communes on the other hand"<sup>215</sup>. However, due to the lack of enforcement mechanisms, parties continue to ignore the quotas.<sup>216</sup> It must be noted that a previous quota of 15% was put in place in 2007.<sup>217</sup> Due to the low success in the election of women in the Parliament, the government decided to raise this number.



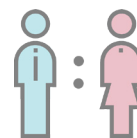
## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

According to data from the World Bank, out of the 9 members on the Constitutional Court, no member is a woman.<sup>265</sup>



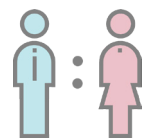
## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

According to the International Labour Organization, women rarely occupy positions of authority or high responsibility.<sup>266</sup> In 2010, 13.7% of firms had a top female manager, but in 2013, the numbers decreased to 10.8%<sup>267</sup>. In 2010, 38.9% of firms had female participation in ownership but by 2013, female participation dropped to 15.1%<sup>268</sup>.



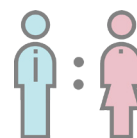
**4.6%**

Women in the **Senate**  
Congo in 2017



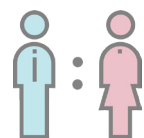
**11.6%**

Women **Ministers**  
in Congo in 2017



**0%**

Women in the  
**Constitutional Court** in  
Congo



**10.8%**

Women **Top managers**  
in Congo in 2013



## WOMEN MPS

In 2010, women represented 8.3% of the National Assembly and 4.6% of the Senate. In 2014, 10.6% of MPs of the lower house were women. However, numbers decreased the following year to 8.9%. In 2017, women still represent only 8.9% of the lower house. Concerning the upper house, in 2013, women represented 5.6% of the MPs. This number went down in following years. In 2017, women represent only 4.6% of the Senate.<sup>260</sup>



## WOMEN MINISTERS

There is also a negative trend in women's representation in ministerial positions. In 2010, women represented only 12.5 % of ministers<sup>261</sup>. In 2014, this number went down to 10.3%<sup>262</sup> and 8.1%<sup>263</sup> in 2015. In 2017, it went back up slightly as women hold now 11.6%<sup>264</sup> of ministerial positions.

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Women face several barriers, such as the lack of enforcement of the law for the implementation of parity. The high illiteracy rate among girls and women, the lack of political will of leaders and political parties and the insufficient resources allocated to women's management structures compound their problems.<sup>269</sup>



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

Women in the DRC, on average, are making less than \$1 per day and more women live in poverty than men, and thus have limited economic resources to run for office.<sup>271</sup> Moreover, in 2017, a law was passed that requires a candidate to make a deposit of \$1,000 in order to run, and this, according to many civil society organisations, discriminates against women by setting up financial barriers.<sup>272</sup> Candidates must have significant financial means not just to cover the deposit, but also to cover the high cost of campaigning in a country with a vast territory.<sup>273</sup> A report by International Alert, noted that this contributes to reducing the mobilisation power of women and disconnects women from potential electoral support bases.<sup>274</sup>



## SOCIAL|CULTURAL BARRIERS

The absence of a tradition of civic duty, practical obstacles such as family responsibilities, a fear of competing with men, physical security-related fears and economic obstacles that make access to infrastructures difficult, as well as a high level of political ignorance are the main obstacles to women's participation.<sup>270</sup>



## MEDIA

Media in the DRC is not always equally accessible to men and women and often perpetuates sexist and negative stereotypes.<sup>275</sup> An article published by the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) noted that people were using media, such as radio, to promote messages against women's rights and encouraging men not to accept that their wives become politically active.<sup>276</sup>

There are few women in the media. In a 2013 report by UCOFEM (L'Union Congolaise des femmes de medias), only 28% of media employees, all services combined, were female.<sup>277</sup> In the print media, 19% of the journalists are women.<sup>278</sup> Furthermore, female journalists are often threatened and face sexual harassment in the workplace.<sup>279</sup>



*Challenge women face in having their political opinions heard*

# EQUATORIAL GUINEA

## OVERVIEW

The Equatorial Guinea is one of the smallest countries in Africa. After 190 years of Spanish rule, the country gained independence in 1968.<sup>280</sup> The Equatorial Guinea Constitution of 1991<sup>281</sup> states that women have equal rights and opportunities with men in all spheres of public life, private and family, in civil, political, economic, social and cultural contexts.

Equatorial Guinea ratified CEDAW on 23rd October 1984<sup>282</sup>. The Maputo Protocol was ratified on 27th October 2009.<sup>283</sup> The country does not have a National Action Plan for the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325.<sup>284</sup> Due to a lack of relevant data, the Gender Inequality Index (GII) has not been calculated for this country<sup>285</sup>.

Equatorial Guinea has a bicameral parliament, which was unicameral until 2013. It now consists of the Chamber of Deputies, with 100 members elected for 5-years terms<sup>286</sup>, and the Senate with 73 members elected for 5-years terms.<sup>287</sup> Both the members of the Chamber of Deputies and Senate are directly elected using a proportional voting system<sup>288</sup>. Women hold 20 (20%) of the 100 seats in the National Assembly, and 11 (15.3%) out of the 72 seats currently occupied in the Senate.<sup>289</sup> The President is elected by plurality vote to serve a 7-year term and may serve a second term.<sup>290</sup> The President appoints the Prime Minister.

Although women received the right to vote and to stand for election in Equatorial Guinea in 1963<sup>291</sup>, no female head of government has been elected<sup>292</sup>. Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo has been the President of Equatorial Guinea since 1979. He is the longest-serving president in the world<sup>293</sup> and his party, The Democratic Party (PDGE) maintains a monopoly over political life<sup>294</sup>. According to Freedom House, although the country holds elections, they are neither free nor fair<sup>295</sup>. During the last election of 2016, President Mbasogo declared victory with 93.7% of the vote<sup>296</sup>.

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

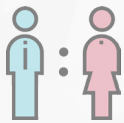
In 2002, the Government adopted the National Policy on the Promotion of Women and implemented the National Multi-sectoral Action Plan to Promote Women and Gender Equity.<sup>297</sup> In 2013, the Counsellor of the Presidency of Government on the Advancement of Women in Equatorial Guinea, told UN representatives that the government had established a Family Court with the objective to prosecute gender violence and juvenile offenses. Moreover, the Government supervised the construction of shelters for victims of violence and the development of education and awareness programmes on gender violence and equality<sup>298</sup>.

There is no specific law punishing violence against women, although a draft act to prevent, punish and eradicate violence against women is under consideration<sup>299</sup>. Rape is illegal, but the law is poorly enforced, and the reporting of rape is considered shameful to the families involved<sup>300</sup>. No law prohibits sexual harassment, and NGOs have reported it is a problem, although the extent is unknown<sup>301</sup>.

In 2016, with UNICEF's support, the country managed to develop a Bill on Sexual and Reproductive Health, which will ensure the access of women to specialised services<sup>302</sup>.

Equatorial Guinea has invested heavily in education and training for its citizens, for both men and women. In 2012, the ratio of female to male primary school enrolment was 99% of girls in primary school compared to 61% of boys. The same year, 92% of women aged 15+ were literate compared to 97% of men<sup>303</sup>.

While the Constitution provides for equality between men and women, the country applies the Spanish Civil Code as it was adopted when Equatorial Guinea gained independence in 1968. The Code discriminates against women in matters of nationality, real and personal property and inheritance<sup>304</sup>.



## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

The Constitutional Reform of 2011 called the authorities to take legal initiatives and develop mechanisms to promote adequate representation and participation of women in the performance of duties and other charges in all state institutions.<sup>305</sup> Article 13 declares: ***“On the basis of the principle of equality of the women before the law, the public powers will adopt legal initiatives and mechanisms to favour the adequate representation and participation of the Woman in the performance of offices (cargos) and other functions in all institutions of the State.”***<sup>306</sup>

Despite this constitutional reform, there is no legislated gender quota in Equatorial Guinea at the national or sub-national level to promote women's political participation. However, the Social Democratic Convergence, the major opposition party, has adopted a voluntary gender quota.<sup>307</sup>



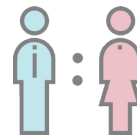
## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

There is limited data available on women in the judiciary. According to data from the World Bank, only 1 out of 5 members on the Constitutional Court is a woman. In May 2015, the President dissolved the entire judicial branch with the new Supreme Court continuing to be an all-male institution.<sup>315</sup>



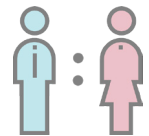
## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

No data was found on women in the private sector was found in the sources consulted for this report.



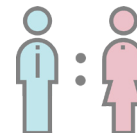
7.9%

Women in the **Senate**  
in **Equatorial Guinea** in  
2013



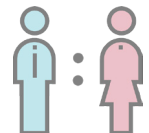
15.3%

Women in the **Senate**  
in **Equatorial Guinea** in  
2018



9.7%

Women **Ministers**  
in **Equatorial Guinea** in  
2017



0%

Women in the **Supreme Court** in **Equatorial Guinea**



## WOMEN MPS

In 2010, women represented 10%<sup>308</sup> of the members of the lower house. After the elections of 2017, this number increased to 20%<sup>309</sup>. Regarding the Senate, women represented 7.9%<sup>310</sup> in 2013. However, after the last elections they represent 15.3%<sup>311</sup> of the members.



## WOMEN MINISTERS

In 2010, only 3.7%<sup>312</sup> of ministers were women. In 2014, this number grew to 8.7%<sup>313</sup> and currently women represent 9.7%<sup>314</sup>. Although women are now three times more represented in ministerial positions than 7 years ago, the proportion remains low.

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

While the Constitution provides for equality between men and women, women face multiple forms of discrimination in Equatorial Guinea, which prevent them gaining political power. Overall corruption and political repression make it even harder for women to gain any political power.<sup>316</sup> Women will not enter politics just because the law allows them to, as they also need to feel secure that the State is behind their efforts to reach equality. It is a cause of concern that there is little evidence of wholesale mobilisation of forces in Equatorial Guinea to eradicate discrimination against women<sup>317</sup>.



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

Women encounter the weight of tradition and culture in Equatorial Guinea. Predominantly patriarchal cultural and traditional practices prevent women from achieving equality in politics. In Equatorial Guinea, many men, and women, still believe that a woman's place is in the home, not pursuing a political career.<sup>318</sup>



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

Despite a high national income, the poverty rate is high, especially in rural areas and among women.<sup>319</sup> Women also face discrimination in terms of access to and ownership of land. According to a report by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, traditional practices and customs common in rural areas prevent women from inheriting or acquiring ownership of land and other property and from accessing financial credit and capital<sup>320</sup> The lack of ability to acquire financial resources negatively impacts on women's ability to participate in decision-making and run a campaign.



## MEDIA

The media in Equatorial Guinea and the issues it covers, are controlled and orchestrated by the Government.<sup>321</sup> It is not possible for the media to criticise the President or the security forces.<sup>322</sup> According to Reporters Without Borders, self-censorship often replaces reporting, as journalists risk getting fired or detained, and their programmes can be suspended.<sup>323</sup>

# GABON

## OVERVIEW

Gabon is located on the west coast of Africa in line with the Equator. It became independent from France on 15 July 1960 but retains a strong relationship with the French language and culture using a system known as "Françafrique". The country is known to receive political and military support from France, in return for favourable business concessions.<sup>324</sup>

The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women was signed on 17th July 1980, and ratified on 21st January 1983<sup>325</sup>. The Maputo Protocol was signed on 21st January 2005, and ratified on 10th January 2011<sup>326</sup>. The country has not adopted a National Action Plan for the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325)<sup>327</sup>. Gabon ranks 127 out of 159 in the table of the UNDP Gender Inequality Index<sup>328</sup>.

Gabon has a bicameral parliament consisting of the National Assembly and the Senate. The National Assembly is made up of 120 members who are directly elected for 5-years.<sup>329</sup> Of the 117 seats currently occupied in the National Assembly, women hold only 20 (17.1%).<sup>330</sup> The 102 members of the Senate are indirectly elected by municipal councils and departmental assembly for 6- year terms.<sup>331</sup> Women hold 18 (17.6%) of the 102 seats.<sup>332</sup> The President of Gabon is elected by plurality vote to serve a 7-year term.<sup>333</sup> There are no term limits for the presidency. The President appoints the Prime Minister.

The 2016 presidential election was highly contested, leading to violence and riots.<sup>334</sup> Ali Bongo, son of former President Omar Bongo, won by 49.8%, while Jean Ping had 48.23% of votes.<sup>335</sup> Ping claimed the votes were manipulated, calling it a "miscarriage of justice", among other claims of fraudulent electoral practices.<sup>336</sup> Many countries in Central Africa, including Gabon, do not release their results progressively, which increases the likelihood of electoral fraud.<sup>337</sup>

Women were granted the right to vote and stand for election in 1956<sup>338</sup>, but there have been no female candidates for president. However, Rose Francine Rogombé was Acting President from June 2009 to October 2009, as she was the rightful successor of President of the Senate<sup>339</sup>. Gabon has only had three presidents since its independence from 1960, because Africa's then longest serving president, Omar Bongo, served from 1967 until his death in 2009.<sup>340</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

Gabon initiated a National Gender Equality and Equity Policy in 2010.<sup>341</sup> The Penal Code of Gabon prohibits domestic violence, but CEDAW has criticized the lack of comprehensiveness in this law. There are many cases of domestic violence, but seldom are these reported by women. The government has responded to this issue by providing counselling services to victims and providing support to non-governmental organisations with domestic violence centres. Through these services, police can become involved and help victims file complaints.<sup>342</sup> However, incidents of rape are underreported and often go unprosecuted. There is no law against spousal rape and there are scarce resources for rape victims.<sup>343</sup>

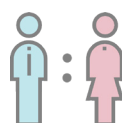
Laws in Gabon are also discriminatory towards women with respect to land and work life. Married women cannot own their own land and are obligated to live in a residence chosen by their husband.<sup>344</sup> There are no laws against sexual harassment and many domestic workers, many of whom are trafficked, are often harassed and abused with no legal recourse.<sup>345</sup> In 2012, 80% of women aged 15+ were literate compared to 85% of men.

In 2010, women had on average 9 years of schooling compared to 8 years of schooling on average for men<sup>346</sup>.



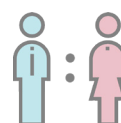
### GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

There are currently no legislated quotas to enforce or support women's political participation. However, according to the government's latest report to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Act No. 24/96, enacted in June 1996, calls for no distinction between men and women regarding participation in public life, and Act No. 7/96 calls for no distinction between men and women regarding participation in political elections.<sup>347</sup>



**18.2%**

Women **MPS**  
in **Gabon** in 2015



**17.9%**

Women **Ministers**  
in **Gabon** in 2016



# STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



## WOMEN MPS

Women's representation in the Lower or Single House increased from 14.7% in 2009 to 17.1% in 2011 but remained at 17.6% in the Upper House.<sup>348</sup> There was a 400% increase from 3% in 1994 to 12% in 2000 under former President Bongo and he additionally appointed a woman as President of the Upper Chamber.<sup>349</sup> In September 2015, women held 17 (14.2%) out of the 120 seats in the Lower House which is a slight drop compared to 2014 when women were 15% of the Lower House. Women were 20% in the Upper House in 2014, however, this number decreased to 18.2% in 2015 (18 seats out of 99 were occupied by women.)<sup>350</sup>



## WOMEN MINISTERS

The number of women holding ministerial level positions in Gabon has fluctuated in recent years. In 2010, women held 20.7% of the positions, however the number dropped to 14.3% in 2012.<sup>351</sup> The number of female ministers increased to 18.8% in 2014, only to decrease to 12.5% in 2015.<sup>352</sup> Since 2016, the proportion of women in ministerial level positions is 17.9%.<sup>353</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

According to data from the World Bank, of the 9 justices on the Constitutional Court, 4 are women.<sup>354</sup> Moreover, the President of the Constitutional Court of Gabon is a woman, Marie Madeleine Mborantsuo, and she has held the position since 1991.<sup>355</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Based on data from 2004, 10% of women in Gabon manage companies, less than 5% of women are chief executive officers and less than 1% of women sit on the boards of directors. This is due to the many obstacles and unfair treatment that women face in the workplace.<sup>356</sup>

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

The ruling government controls the amount of attention given to women in political parties. There was a drop in representation after 1990, when the country ended mono-partism. The following era of *bonne gouvernance* did not respect women's selection established by the previous government.<sup>357</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

Persistent adverse cultural norms, practices and traditions and patriarchal attitudes pose significant barriers for women in Gabon and their ability to fully and equally participate in decision-making.<sup>358</sup> There are also deep-rooted stereotypes regarding the roles, responsibilities and identities of women and men in the family and society.<sup>359</sup> In a report, the Committee on the Elimination on Discrimination Against Women noted that stereotypes contribute to the persistence of violence against women and to harmful practices, including child marriage and widowhood practices.<sup>360</sup>



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

The unemployment rate among women is high in Gabon and there is a persistent gender pay gap. Of the women who are employed, the majority work in the informal sector without legal and social protection and benefits.<sup>361</sup> Furthermore, for women in rural areas, there are limited income-generating opportunities.<sup>362</sup> While the government of Gabon has taken steps to facilitate access by women to microcredit, challenges remain. For example, women in rural areas face barriers in the acquisition of land owing to discriminatory customary laws.<sup>363</sup> As a result of these economic barriers, women, especially in rural areas, are disproportionately affected by the lack of participation in decision-making processes, economic opportunities and social benefits.<sup>364</sup>



## MEDIA

There is no policy that promotes equal opportunities in the media.<sup>365</sup> A study by the Friedrich Elbert Stiftung found that female journalists often have to work harder to have the same chances as men.<sup>366</sup> However, efforts are being made to increase women's voices and gender issues in the media. According to the same study, several radio stations and newspapers have created spaces dedicated to women and gender issues.<sup>367</sup>

# SÃO TOMÉ & PRÍNCIPE

## OVERVIEW

São Tomé and Príncipe is located on the equator on the West African coast and consists of two main islands and several rocky islets. A former Portuguese plantation colony, the country gained independence in 1975. São Tomé and Príncipe was under a one-party system until 1990, when a new constitution was adopted with a multiparty system of government.<sup>368</sup>

The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) was signed on 31st October 1995 and ratified on 3rd June 2003.<sup>369</sup> The Maputo Protocol was signed on 1st February 2010<sup>370</sup> but has not yet been ratified. São Tomé and Príncipe has not yet adopted a National Action Plan on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325<sup>371</sup>. The country ranks 122 out of 159 countries in the 2015 UNDP Gender Inequality Index<sup>372</sup>.

São Tomé and Príncipe has a unicameral parliament, the National Assembly. The National Assembly consists of 55 members who are elected for a four-year term by proportional representation with closed party lists.<sup>373</sup> Women hold 10 (18.2%) of the 55 seats.<sup>374</sup> The President is elected by an absolute majority popular vote for a 5-year term, and the Prime Minister, who is head of the cabinet, is chosen by the National Assembly and approved by the President.<sup>375</sup> The Prime Minister holds the dominant position, as the President has no executive powers, with only an arbitrating role in government.<sup>377</sup> The Constitution was changed to reduce the President's executive powers and make it more difficult to dismiss a prime minister, which lead to more political stability.<sup>378</sup> São Tomé and Príncipe is known for vote-buying, known as *banho* ('bath') where poorer citizens are paid for their vote.<sup>379</sup>

Women were granted the right to vote and to stand for election in 1975, and the first woman in Parliament was elected the same year. There has not been a female president in the country, but from 2002-2004 Maria das Neves served as Prime Minister.<sup>380</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

Article 15 of the Constitution of São Tomé and Príncipe guarantees equal political, economic and social rights for women and men and condemns all forms of discrimination.<sup>381</sup> Several initiatives were taken to develop a National Gender and Development Policy, but it was never formulated. Even though the Constitution stipulates, and law provides for the same legal status and rights for women as for men, they do not specifically recognise these rights as they pertain to the family, child custody, labour, employment, owning or managing businesses or property, nationality, or inheritance<sup>382</sup>.

The Penal Code protects against offenses affecting personal freedom or safety, however it is not specific to cases in which the victim is a woman.<sup>383</sup> The most common forms of violence in São Tomé and Príncipe are against women within the family. In practice, police do little to protect victims in these cases and the offences are often underreported.<sup>384</sup> The Penal Code prohibits sexual harassment and the government enforces its provisions<sup>385</sup>.

In relation to education, in 2014, 92% of girls were enrolled in primary school compared to 93% of boys. In 2011, 53% of girls were enrolled in secondary school compared to 46% of boys<sup>386</sup>. However, while many women had access to opportunities in education, traditional views leave them with most child-rearing responsibilities<sup>387</sup>.

The Government recognises the right of couples and individuals to decide freely the number, spacing, and timing of their children, manage their reproductive health, and have access to the information and means to do so, free from discrimination, coercion, or violence. There are no restrictions on access to contraceptives<sup>388</sup>.

The Law of the Family is more favourable to women in terms of inheritance and gives equal parental authority to both parents.<sup>389</sup> Women are granted the right to work, with maternity leave and their retirement age is lower than it is for men. The Social Security Law grants equal rights between men and women regarding opportunities available and treatment in access to employment, sex-based discrimination and grants women access to any position that does not pose a risk to their reproductive function. Additionally, during pregnancy and post-pregnancy there are clauses protecting women's time off for medical appointments and prohibits night work.<sup>390</sup>



### GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

There is currently no quota in São Tomé and Príncipe, but women's representation has still managed to increase from 7.3% in 2006 to 18.2% in 2010 without any specific measures taken.<sup>391</sup> The Network of Women at the Parliamentary Assembly, Community of Countries of Portuguese Language (Rede de Mulheres da Assembleia Parlamentar, Comunidade de Países de Língua Portuguesa) assigned a 30% quota, but this goal has not been reached.<sup>392</sup>



# STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



## WOMEN MPS

Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments in São Tomé and Príncipe was 18.2% as of 2017, its highest value over the past 27 years, while its lowest value was 1.8% in 2007<sup>393</sup>.



## WOMEN MINISTERS

The proportion of women in ministerial level positions has fluctuated in recent years. In 2010, 38.5% of the ministers were women, however following the 2011 election the number of female ministers dropped significantly to 9.1% in 2012.<sup>394</sup> By 2014 the proportion of women ministers increased to 15.4% but in 2015, the number declined again to 7.7%.<sup>395</sup> However, in 2016 the proportion of ministerial positions held by women more than doubled to 18.2%.<sup>396</sup>



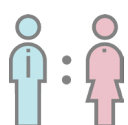
## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

A woman currently holds one seat on the three-member Supreme Court as President of the Supreme Court, and two of the 12 judgeships in the circuit courts.<sup>397</sup>



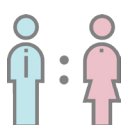
## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

No specific data could be found regarding the proportion of women in ownership or top managerial posts. However, women from São Tomé and Príncipe hold the positions of Governor of Central Bank and Secretary of State for Trade and Commerce.<sup>398</sup>



**18.2%**

Women **MPS**  
in **São Tomé & Príncipe** in  
2017



**18.2%**

Women **Ministers**  
in **São Tomé & Príncipe** in  
2016

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Political parties rarely appoint women to elected positions and there is no system to ensure gender equality. Gender equality is poorly understood. In 2002, research conducted with a sample group of the population found that 7% of the group had never heard of 'gender' and 16% had never heard of 'gender relations'.<sup>399</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

While many women have access to opportunities in government, women, particularly older women, generally encounter significant societal discrimination due to traditional beliefs, which limit women to take only child-rearing responsibilities. Younger women have increasing access to educational and professional opportunities compared to the older generation, although a high teenage pregnancy rate reduces economic opportunities for some.<sup>400</sup>



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

The economy in São Tomé and Príncipe is small and there is no major driving force. Agriculture, fisheries and tourism are the main sectors where women work. There are a number of economic barriers that pose challenges vis-à-vis women's equal participation in decision-making, such as poverty and unemployment. According to a report by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 71.3% of women live in poverty, compared to 63.4% of men.<sup>401</sup> The main reason for poverty among women is unemployment. An estimated 19.7% women are unemployed, compared to 9.3% men.<sup>402</sup>



## MEDIA

São Tomé and Príncipe has been praised for its relative free media with a mix of state and private media outlets. Freedom of the press is not only guaranteed by the Constitution, it is also respected in practice.<sup>403</sup> Information criticising the Government is circulated and opposition parties receive free airtime.<sup>404</sup> However, in the sources consulted there was no data on the number of female reporters and the challenges they may face, or coverage of female candidates and gender issues.

# EAST AFRICAN REGION

## OVERVIEW:

All countries in the East African region, except Sudan, have signed CEDAW, and most have ratified, with the exception of Somalia. Most countries have also signed and ratified the Maputo Protocol, with the exception of Eritrea and Somalia who have not signed. Four of the 14 countries have adopted a National Plan of Action for UNSCR 1325: Kenya (launched on International Women's Day in 2016),<sup>405</sup> South Sudan (for the period of 2015 – 2020),<sup>406</sup> Rwanda (2010),<sup>407</sup> and Uganda (2008).<sup>408</sup>

Most countries across the region granted women the right to vote in the 1950's and 1960's, with Djibouti and Seychelles marking that milestone a decade earlier in 1946<sup>409</sup> and 1948<sup>410</sup> respectively. However, women in Eritrea were not allowed to vote until 1995,<sup>411</sup> and as South Sudan is only newly formed, women there gained voting rights at independence in 2011. Some countries in the region allowed 'partial' voting. In the case of Kenya, while all women could vote in 1963, white women had been voting since 1919, followed by African women who owned property (and attained a certain level of education) in 1956.<sup>412</sup> Although not divided by race or education, Rwandan women could vote in 1961<sup>413</sup>, but could only vote for the office of President in 1978.

As is true for most of the world, women's roles in top governmental leadership lag behind men, and East Africa is no exception. However, there have been some monumental victories for women in the region. Surpassing even more 'developed' nations, Mauritius elected their first female President, Ameenah Gurib-Fakim, a celebrated scientist and biologist, in 2015. The year 2015 also marked a historic moment for Mauritius when the three highest public posts were all held by women; President, Vice-President and the Speaker of the National Assembly.<sup>414</sup> Ethiopia had a female Deputy Prime Minister, Aster Mamo, from 2014 to 2016.<sup>415</sup> Specioza Naigaga Wandira Kazibwe became the first female Vice-President of Uganda in 2011.<sup>416</sup> Perhaps most notably, in a country not well known for the empowerment of women, Fowsiyo Yusuf Hajji Aden was the first woman to be appointed as Deputy Prime Minister of Somalia and Minister of Foreign Affairs in 2012.<sup>417</sup>

While there are only four cases of women in top leadership, there is a growing presence of women running for elected high office. This drive shows significant progress within the region, even though most of these female contenders have not yet attained parity with men within political and decision-making spheres. For instance, in 2016, Alexia Amesbury became the first woman to run for President in Seychelles, although she received a very low percentage of the vote and did not compete in the second round. Similarly, in Comoros, 2010 also saw the presence of the first female presidential candidate, who likewise, did not make it beyond the first round of voting.<sup>418</sup> In 2015, another female candidate ran for President, but again was not one of the top candidates to compete in the run-off election.<sup>419</sup>

In the 2013 Presidential election in Madagascar, out of 33 candidates, two were women, neither of whom received enough votes to reach the second round.<sup>420</sup> In Uganda, Beti Olive Kanya Namisango Turwomwe in 2011<sup>421</sup> and Maureen Kyalya Waluube in 2016,<sup>422</sup> ran for office, defeated by male competitors. In both the 2015 Tanzanian elections,<sup>423</sup> and the 2013 Kenyan elections,<sup>424</sup> there were eight candidates for President, including one woman, in each country. In Sudan in 2010, Fatima Abd-al-Mahmud made history when she became the first female candidate to contest a presidential election.<sup>425</sup>

In the newly independent South Sudan, while there are no women in top leadership, five women were appointed ministers in the new government,<sup>426</sup> and though Rwanda still has no women in top political roles, women hold 61.3% of the seats in the Lower Parliament, a percentage not matched by more 'industrialised' nations.<sup>427</sup>

The vast majority of the countries in this region did not have available voter data (or disaggregated voter data). However, for the countries that did have data, it showed women make up approximately half of registered voters in those countries: Ethiopia at 48% in 2015,<sup>428</sup> Kenya at 47% in 2017,<sup>429</sup> Tanzania at 53% in 2015,<sup>430</sup> Madagascar at 46% in 2013; and, Seychelles at 50% in 2007 (no information on 2011, 2015 or 2016 was available).<sup>431</sup> It is yet to be determined if women make up similar percentages in the countries unaccounted for.

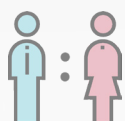
# ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS:

The Governments in the East African region have introduced policies and legislation to reduce gender inequality, strengthen women's rights and increase women's political participation. In South Sudan, Africa's youngest country, the 2015 Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict includes several specific provisions for women's rights and gender equality, such as ensuring women's participation in the Transitional Government, and it requires women's organisations to be consulted on certain policy areas.

With respect to equal access to land and property on land, a number of countries have introduced legislation, remove gender-based discrimination and provide women with equal ownership. In Kenya, the Land Act of 2012 and the Land Registration Act provide for equitable access to land,<sup>432</sup> and state that women have equal land ownership rights and cannot be discriminated against because of their gender.<sup>433</sup> However, many women remain unaware of these provisions. In Uganda, the 2013 National Land Policy directs the Government to pass legislation that ensures equal land rights for men and women in marriage as well as protects the right to inheritance and ownership of land for women and children.<sup>434</sup> On the other hand, while the law in Madagascar does not discriminate between women and men in terms of ownership, custom does not grant women the right to inherit land from their parents.<sup>435</sup>

Gender-based violence (GBV) remains an issue for the countries in the region. Many Governments have adopted legislation and implemented national policies and strategies to combat GBV, while in others no new policies have been introduced. In 2011, following the launch of the National Action Plan for Domestic Violence (2010 – 2011), the Government of the Seychelles established a Family Squad Unit to offer special services in domestic violence and child abuse cases, as well as to implement the Capacity Building Project of the Justice System on Women's Issues to train police, prosecutors and judges on gender-related human rights treaties.<sup>436</sup> In Djibouti, the Government launched the Triennial Action Plan, a national action plan specific to violence against women.<sup>437</sup> In Tanzania, no new plan has been introduced since the National Plan of Action to Prevent and Eradicate Violence of Women and Children (2001 – 2015) ended.

Although several measures have been taken with regards to sexual and reproductive rights, access to health services is particularly challenging for women in regions with continued conflict and political instability. For example, despite the implementation of Health Sector Strategic Plan (HSSP) 2013-2016 to improve access to health services for the people of Somalia, continued conflict is hindering women's access to health services.<sup>438</sup>



## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

Of the countries in this region, eight (Eritrea, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda) have quotas at a National or Sub-National level that require between 25% - 33% female participation or opposite gender participation. Djibouti does not have a 'quota' per se, but a 2002 electoral law states that at least 10% of candidates in each political party's list must be of the opposite gender.<sup>439</sup>

Comoros, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mauritius and Seychelles do not have a gender quota. In the case of Seychelles, the country noted in their CEDAW submission that quotas are unnecessary since there are 'no legal barriers' to participation in political, social and economic activities.<sup>440</sup> Mauritius does not have any national quotas, but the Local Government Act passed in 2011 requires that at least one-third of candidates for local government positions be women, but does not guarantee one-third of those elected will be female.<sup>441</sup> Ethiopia does not have any national or local quotas but one political party, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) did establish a 30% party quota in 2004.<sup>442</sup>

# STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



## WOMEN MPS

Women's presence in Parliament (in both houses) is generally improving across the region. In Ethiopia, in the 2010 election, 27.8% of women served in the House of Peoples' Representative, and 16.3% in the House of the Federation,<sup>443</sup> and these numbers stayed constant until the 2015 election, when the level of representation rose to 38.8% and 32%, respectively.<sup>444</sup> In the Upper House in Sudan, numbers of women have increased significantly during the period of 2010 to 2017, from 10.9%<sup>445</sup> to 35.2%.<sup>446</sup> Kenya has seen a growth of women Parliamentarians during the African Women's Decade, and in the 2017 election once again they increased their presence to 21.8%.<sup>447</sup> Likewise, Tanzania saw a slight increase after the 2015 election to 36.6%.<sup>448</sup> Somalia has gradually increased from 6.78% in 2004,<sup>449</sup> to 13.8% in 2015 and currently stands at 24.4% in 2017.<sup>450</sup>

Women's representation in both houses in parliament in South Sudan has remained steady, only slightly increasing in recent years. With respect to the Lower House, South Sudan has exceeded its 25% quota. In 2016, women's representation increased to 28.5% where it remains.<sup>451</sup>

However, Seychelles has seen a significant decline in female MPs in recent years: from 43.8% in 2011<sup>452</sup> to 21.2% in 2016,<sup>453</sup> the lowest in over 20 years.<sup>454</sup> While not as extreme, Mauritius also saw a decrease, from 18.8% in 2010,<sup>455</sup> to 11.6% in 2015 of their National Assembly.<sup>456</sup>

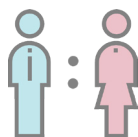


## WOMEN MINISTERS

Levels of women's participation at Cabinet level are in a constant case of flux. Some countries have improved, while others have declined, so each country should be assessed on a case-by-case basis. For example, in Tanzania the election of a new President saw a rise in the proportion of women in ministerial positions from 16% in 2015,<sup>457</sup> to 32.3% in 2016 (after elections),<sup>458</sup> but had again reduced to 22.7% in 2017.<sup>459</sup> Similarly in Madagascar over the last two years, women made up 25.7% of the transitional government<sup>460</sup> but with a newly elected government, this was lowered to 18% in 2017.<sup>461</sup>

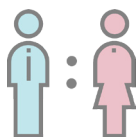
Looking solely at the most recent data, the country at the forefront of gender parity is Rwanda, where women make up more than half of President Kagame's Cabinet.<sup>462</sup> Uganda has 36.7% women in ministerial positions as of 2017.<sup>463</sup> The Executive Branch in Kenya is 27.8% female.<sup>464</sup> In Seychelles, the first female minister was selected in 1986, the percentage of women in Cabinet has been 25%.<sup>465</sup> In South Sudan, while women's participation in the Lower House is above the 25% quota, women's representation in ministerial positions remains below, with only 20% of ministerial seats held by women.<sup>466</sup> Eritrea has 18.8% female representation.<sup>467</sup>

In Sudan, although the percentage of women in ministerial positions initially increased, recent developments have seen a decline. In 2017, female representation among ministers dropped to 11.4%.<sup>468</sup> There is also a very low representation of women in Mauritius at 12.5%,<sup>469</sup> Djibouti at 13.6%,<sup>470</sup> Ethiopia at 15%,<sup>471</sup> and the lowest in the region, Somalia, at 6.7% (in 2016).<sup>472</sup> Comoros has no female ministers<sup>473</sup>, even though in the past few years women served in the President's Cabinet as Ministers of Employment, Labour, Vocation Training and Women's Entrepreneurship and Telecommunications.<sup>474</sup>



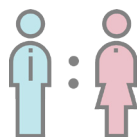
**27.8%**

Women in the  
House of Peoples'  
Representative in  
Ethiopia in 2010



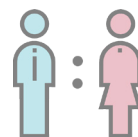
**32.3%**

Women Ministers  
in Tanzania in 2016



**57%**

Women in the  
Supreme Court in  
Madagascar in 2017



**42%**

Women-led enterprises  
in Rwanda in 2012



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

The available data<sup>475</sup> shows that all of the countries in this region have some representation of women in their high courts with the exception of Comoros and Somalia. In Comoros, no woman has ever been appointed to either of the country's two top courts; the Supreme Court or the Constitutional Court.<sup>476</sup> While there was once a female judge in South-Central Somalia, no women currently serve in this branch (although there is a female deputy Prosecutor in Somaliland, Simone Boneschi.)<sup>477</sup>

A particularly high level of representation exists in Madagascar where 57% women sit in the Supreme Court as of 2017.<sup>478</sup> Following that is Mauritius, where women comprise 45% of the Supreme Court.<sup>479</sup> In Rwanda, there were 37% women in the judiciary in 2016. In 2017, Ethiopia had 35.3% female representation on their Supreme Court.<sup>480</sup> Seychelles had 33% women (a huge improvement from 12.5% in 2014)<sup>481</sup>; and Uganda boasted 37.5% female Supreme Court justices and 43.4% High Court judges (as of 2015).<sup>482</sup> Additionally, Julia Sebutinde, a Ugandan judge, sits on the International Court of Justice, the judicial branch for the United Nations.

In Djibouti, while women are generally not well represented in a leadership capacity, they are fairly well represented in the Judicial Branch. For the past 20 years, the President of the Supreme Court has been a woman, a role that would rule the country in an interim capacity, should the president become incapacitated.<sup>483</sup> The Court of First Instance and the Court of Appeal are headed by women and of the total number of magistrates recruited in 2012, half were women<sup>484</sup>; although this number dropped to 35% in 2014.<sup>485</sup>

The remaining countries not attaining the 30% leadership mark are Eritrea with 20%<sup>486</sup>; Kenya with 28.6%<sup>487</sup>; and Tanzania with 23.5%<sup>488</sup>.



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

There were limited data available on women in the private sector in the sources consulted for this report. It suggests, however, low levels of female leadership in the private sector. Eritrea has one of the lowest percentages of firms with a woman among the principals, at 4.2%.<sup>489</sup> In Comoros, there is a large disparity between women and men in the workforce at 36% and 81%,<sup>490</sup> and this translates to even lower levels of women in top management. For example, in the telecommunications industry, only 6.25% of senior leaders were women.<sup>491</sup> However, elsewhere in the Region, levels of female participation were higher. In 2012, 23.4% of managers in Mauritius were women<sup>492</sup> and Rwanda had 42% of women-led enterprises,<sup>493</sup> attributed to the support of the Rwandan Government. Their guarantor programme enabled women to access loans through private financial institutions even when they did not have collateral.<sup>494</sup> Madagascar has shown some progress, from 20% female management in 2000,<sup>495</sup> to 36.6% in 2010.<sup>496</sup>



## BEYOND NUMBERS:

### THE IMPACT OF WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS AND DECISION-MAKING

In Kenya, The Hon. Njoki Ndung'u advocated for several bills in her time in Parliament from 2003 to 2007. Among the bills she worked on that were passed were the Sexual Offences Bill, which is referred to as the Njoki Law. In lobbying for the law, she built partnerships with organizations like the Kenya Women Parliamentary Association and with the Attorney General, raised awareness through print and electronic media, held workshops for groups from religious sectors and doctors. She even reached out to MPs wives, families, and constituents.<sup>497</sup> She also worked on Amendments on Maternity and Paternity Rights in Employment Act 2007. These amendments provided for paid maternity and paternity leave.<sup>498</sup>

In South Sudan, Although the development of the small number of women's organisations and movements are still in their initial stages, South Sudanese women are participating and seeking to influence decisions.<sup>499</sup> For example, since the signing of the Agreement for the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan, and the subsequent discussions on its implementation, more than 500 women from all States of South Sudan have adopted a seven-point agenda on how to implement a gender-responsive peace agreement.<sup>500</sup> The focus is on integrating women's voices in the implementation of the peace agreement and in the formation of the Transitional Government of National Unity (TGoNU).<sup>501</sup> They also resolved to fill the 14 institutions and bodies of government that still have no women representatives, and establish a Women's Peace Think Tank to monitor gender-responsiveness in its enforcement.<sup>502</sup>

In Uganda, female legislators have taken a lead in the enactment of critical laws like the Domestic Violence Act (2010) and the Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation (2010). During the process of legislation, women leaders were key, moving motions and doing research to support legislation.<sup>503</sup> Women councillors at the local levels have promoted legislation on Gender Based Violence and the delivery of services for livelihood enhancement.<sup>504</sup>

The Uganda Women's Parliamentary Association (UWOPA) has been a critical voice in engendering the legislative process.<sup>505</sup> UWOPA joined forces with Domestic Violence Act Coalition and gained the support of some male members of parliament in order to pass the Domestic Violence Act.<sup>506</sup>



# CHALLENGES

Across the Region, despite the current presence of women in leadership or beneficial laws, quotas or action plans that promote or protect women, the challenges remain relatively the same.



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

While many countries in this region have some kind of quota for women's political participation, this in and of itself does not result in equal access for women. Women are often relegated to operational tasks and are not given leadership or decision-making roles. When they are in such roles, they are usually for 'soft ministries' such as the Ministry of Gender or the Ministry of Housing.<sup>507</sup> Furthermore, in most countries, there is little to no training for women to prepare for senior government posts. Women who are politically active are not able to fully participate in the process since decisions are often made under the table and at night, outside of working hours.<sup>508</sup>

Another unintended outcome of the quota system is that women are considered 'second class', and not seen as equal to men, since they are often nominated and not elected. Issues of 'party loyalty' therefore come into play, (since the quota system is usually controlled by political parties), where women feel they must be loyal to the party line, even at the expense of promoting gender-sensitive legislation.<sup>509</sup> Also, the nominating process is not always transparent, which opens it up to corruption and manipulation.



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

There are a multitude of sociocultural barriers to women's participation in public life, and specifically leadership roles. Traditional beliefs, rooted in patriarchy, perpetuate gender inequality and these potentially harmful conceptions of masculinities and femininities are difficult to dispel, as they are so often unconscious. Even when targeted advocacy is aimed at ousting such beliefs, children nonetheless absorb the idea that girls are the subordinate sex. In some cases, religion can play a role in reinforcing many detrimental gender stereotypes.

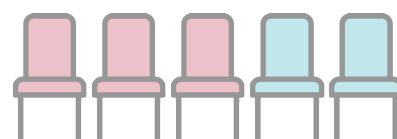
It is often expected that women should take care of the home and children, and men are the decision-makers and representatives of the family. In their communities, men also make decisions based on customary beliefs. Many people believe that men are natural born leaders and women should not aspire to such roles. Women who transgress social norms put themselves at great physical, emotional or economic risk. In some areas of Madagascar, wavering from traditional custom is forbidden and if women refuse to participate, they risk being expelled from their communities.<sup>510</sup> In Uganda, although not isolated to this country, it has been reported that female voters are intimidated by their spouses and prevented from

listening to campaigns or voting for candidates of their choice.<sup>511</sup> Women are branded 'disloyal' if they do not vote for their husband's choice, and there is anecdotal evidence that suggests an increase in domestic violence.<sup>512</sup>

Women who are politically active, are sometimes labeled as 'unfeminine,' 'irresponsible wives and/or mothers,' or 'loose women'.<sup>513</sup> Women who choose to run for office face threats of rape and beatings, sexual slurs or curses from elders for violating tradition. For example, in Kenya, Senatorial candidate Shiela Githaiga was attacked by more than thirty men with batons and machetes.<sup>514</sup>

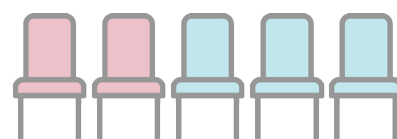
Access to education and associated literacy rates also have an impact on women's political participation. Literacy is required to compete for any seat in government, therefore illiteracy is a serious obstacle for potential female candidates.<sup>515</sup> For example, the literacy rate for women in Djibouti between the ages of 15 and 49 is 47%, automatically limiting more than half the female population from qualifying as candidates.<sup>516</sup>

In some countries, the structure of traditional societies limits women's political participation. For example, Somali culture is organised according to a clan system with membership in groups based on kinship and group members linked together in alliances. Women who become members are not considered members in the same way as men. Groups of elders responsible for making decisions are called 'Male Traditional Elders', from which women are obviously excluded.<sup>517</sup>



**57%**

women in the **Supreme Court** in  
**Madagascar** in 2017



**37%**

women in the **Supreme Court** in  
**Rwanda** in 2017



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

In East Africa there is a general economic disparity between women and men that has been well documented. This is partially due to unequal access to education, with boys being favoured to go to school or follow more "serious" academic pursuits. This translates into access to employment, without which women cannot gain material independence, professional skills or self-confidence.<sup>518</sup>

In politics, a deposit is often required to run for office, varying by country. In Comoros, a deposit of \$1,200 is needed and only reimbursed to candidates who win at least 10% of the votes.<sup>519</sup> In Djibouti, the price is even higher, at \$2,793 and only refundable if the candidate wins at least 5% of the vote.<sup>520</sup> In Kenya, women need to pay a non-refundable fee \$241 to run for Senate, and \$96 for the National Assembly,<sup>521</sup> as well as carrying their own costs during the campaigning season. For those who manage to cover these costs, some have reported threats of violence and involve additional hiring of bodyguards.<sup>522</sup>

Without the support and allocation of funds for women's campaigns it becomes challenging for women to compete or participate in leadership.



## MEDIA

Generally speaking, women are either misrepresented or underrepresented in the media across East Africa. They are often portrayed in stereotypical roles where they are trivialised, condemned or objectified.

During the 2010 elections in Tanzania, the Commonwealth Secretariat stated that the media did not adequately cover female candidates' campaigns, with only 12% of election related coverage given to gender issues.<sup>523</sup> Women were only invited to talk about 'women's issues' and GBV.<sup>524</sup> Similarly in Uganda, a 2016 report by Uganda Media Women's Association, showed that local newspapers offered more space to male politicians,<sup>525</sup> and out of the 2,624 election related stories, women featured as news subjects only 20% of the time.<sup>526</sup> In Kenya, only 6% of total television coverage was dedicated to women in the 2007 election.<sup>527</sup>

There are also issues of threats and harassment related to the media. In countries like Sudan where the media is restricted, journalists are often harassed and detained for publishing content deemed too 'sensitive'—critiquing the government or dominant religion.<sup>528</sup> This creates a hostile environment for coverage of women's related issues or women's empowerment. Female reporters and editors who write about the abuse of women activists are themselves threatened and often banned from writing.<sup>529</sup> In the 2013 Kenya elections, 'hate speech' and threats to female candidates were posted on social media platforms.<sup>530</sup>



*Under representation of women in the supreme court*

# COMOROS

## OVERVIEW

The Union of the Comoros is an island nation located between Madagascar and mainland Africa. The country consists of a group of three islands which autonomously declared their independence from France in 1975.<sup>531</sup> Since independence, the Comoros has had a strained political history with over 20 coup attempts, but the political system has been relatively stable since 2006.<sup>532</sup> While laws in the country prevent discrimination based on gender, women are still underrepresented in politics. Economic inequality is also a challenge with fewer opportunities for the education and employment for women.<sup>533</sup>

Comoros ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1994,<sup>534</sup> and is one of three majority Islamic States to sign the agreement with no reservations. For this, and other reasons discussed later, Comoros was found to be the best Arab country for women by Reuters in 2013.<sup>535</sup> The country ratified the Maputo Protocol in 2004.<sup>536</sup> Comoros does not have a National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325.<sup>537</sup>

Under the Constitution, which was last modified in 2009, Comoros has a rotating presidency and the President is elected for a single five-year term. The election for the President has two phases: in the first round of voting, the citizens on each island vote independently; in the runoff/second round, voters from all three islands vote from a choice of the top three candidates. For the legislature, Comoros has a unicameral legislature with 33 seats. Of those seats, 24 are directly elected and the remaining nine seats are nominated by the three island parliaments.<sup>538</sup>

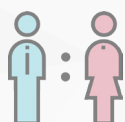
Although women gained the right to vote and the right to stand for elections in 1956,<sup>539</sup> none of the leaders of the country have been women.<sup>540</sup> In 2010, Comoros had its first female presidential candidate, but she did not make it past the first round of voting.<sup>541</sup> In 2015, another woman also ran for President, but again was not one of top candidates to compete in the runoff election.<sup>542</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

The Government works with UNFPA on programmes to improve healthcare service, decrease maternal mortality, provide emergency obstetric care and family planning, maintain the low prevalence of HIV/AIDS and manage sexually transmitted diseases.<sup>543</sup> Between 2010 and 2015, the maternal mortality rate fell from 388 to 335 per 100,000 live births.<sup>544</sup> In 2016, the Comoros Government provided \$167,554 in programme expenses to finance three key targets. The first is to increase access to high-quality emergency obstetric and new-born care services in 12 districts out of a total of 17 and in family planning services at the national level. The second aims is to promote gender equality and combat gender-based violence, including early marriage and promote sexual and reproductive health services for adolescents and youth. Lastly it seeks to increase the availability and use of high quality data disaggregated by sex and age.<sup>545</sup> The programme is set to run from 2015 to 2019.<sup>546</sup> On May 25, 2017, the President presided over the opening of a new hospital, Bambao-Mtsanga Hospital, on Anjouan Island. This 100-bed hospital will eventually include services in gynaecology and obstetrics.<sup>547</sup>

Rape is punishable by law with a maximum sentence of fifteen years if the victim is under the age of fifteen. A law was passed in 2014 to increase the punishment for rape as well as to criminalise spousal rape. While some have criticized officials for not taking gender-based violence seriously, a report from the State Department found that the government prosecutes when the victim presses charges.<sup>548</sup> Interestingly, in the capital of Moroni, half of the men in prison are incarcerated for sex crimes.<sup>549</sup>

Education is compulsory until age 12, but a child cannot be prevented from attending school until age 14. In primary school, the ratio of female to male students is roughly the same, but the number of female students in secondary school dwindles and fewer girls complete their schooling.<sup>550</sup>



### GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

No legislation has been passed to boost the number of women entering political office or other leadership positions, and no quotas exist to encourage the participation of women in public life.<sup>551</sup> Few women participate in elections as voters or candidates. In the most recent national and local elections in 2015 and 2016, around 3.76% of candidates for the National Assembly were women; 5.4% of Counsel; 4.5% for Governors; and 3.7% for President.<sup>552</sup>

# STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



## WOMEN MPS

Although women gained the right to stand for elections in 1956, it was not until 1992 that the first women ran for public office at the national level. In the legislative election of 1992, twelve women ran for office but none was elected. When the Assembly was dissolved the following year, nine women were candidates and one woman was elected. During the 2009 elections, 50 women were candidates for legislative office, most of them with the support of political parties.<sup>553</sup> Between 2010 and 2016, one woman was serving in the 33-member parliament, making up 3% of the total.<sup>554</sup> In 2017, a second woman joined parliament, doubling representation to 6.1%.<sup>555</sup>



## WOMEN MINISTERS

In the past few years, several women have served in the President's Cabinet as Ministers of Employment, Labour, Vocation Training and Women's Entrepreneurship, and of Telecommunications.<sup>556</sup> In 2017, there were no female ministers but one woman, Mme Sitti Attoumae, does serve as Secretary of State in charge of Tourism and Handicrafts to the Vice-President, responsible for the Ministry of Economy, Planning, Energy, and Industry. She is one of four Secretaries of State. Although it is not currently headed by a woman, the Ministry of Health, Solidarity, Social Protection and Gender Promotion is one sector of the Executive Branch.<sup>557</sup> For the years that data were available, women comprised 30% of the Cabinet in 2010, and 20% in 2012, 2015, and 2016.<sup>558</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

In the judiciary, no woman currently serves on or has previously been appointed to either of the country's two high courts, the Supreme Court and the Constitutional Court.<sup>559</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

In private industries, women's participation is growing but women are underrepresented. Thirty-six percent of women participate in the workforce, a number significantly lower than that of men, which stands at 81%.<sup>560</sup> In positions of leadership, the statistics for women in those roles are even lower. In the telecommunications industry in 2011, 6.25% of senior leaders were women.<sup>561</sup> Of managers, women comprised 50.17%. Two thirds of agricultural jobs were held by women, and women work 70% of those jobs without legal protection.<sup>562</sup>

## CHALLENGES



### INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

There are no gender quotas for corporate boards, Parliament or local and national government at present.<sup>563</sup> There is little or no training for women to prepare for senior government posts.<sup>564</sup> In political parties, where women's participation is already significantly lower than men's, women are often relegated to operational tasks and the mobilization of women voters and are not given leadership or decision-making roles.<sup>565</sup>



### SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

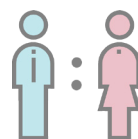
The socio-cultural barriers to women's participation in public office and decision-making include the gender stereotyping of women's roles and responsibilities. These stereotypes lead to discrimination against women as they are often seen as inferior or subordinate to men. Even in family life, men are often the decision-makers and representatives of the family. In their communities, men also make decisions based on custom. When coupled with chauvinism, this makes participation in politics difficult for women.<sup>566</sup> Madame Sittou Ragadha, the first female minister and first female deputy in Comoros addressed the challenge of women in politics as due to the internalised idea that women cannot be elected. She also said that women must believe that they are as capable as men, and must assert the right for positions in politics.<sup>567</sup>





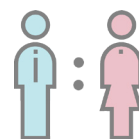
## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

One of the challenges women face in participating in public life is the deposit required to be a candidate for public office. A deposit of 500,000 Comorian francs (about \$1,200) is needed and that is only reimbursable to candidates who win at least 10% of the votes.<sup>568</sup>



**6.1%**

Women in the **Parliament**  
in Comoros in 2017



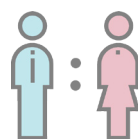
**20%**

Women **Ministers**  
in Comoros in 2016



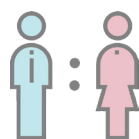
## MEDIA

The Constitution guarantees freedom of the Press, but according to Reporters Without Borders, journalists impose a high degree of self-censorship<sup>569</sup>. While new media outlets have started in recent years, a lack of formal training constitutes a significant barrier for Comorian women in media<sup>570</sup>. As a result, female journalists are often absent in fields such as politics and economics.<sup>571</sup> For women who do work in the media, there are few opportunities for developments such as through ongoing training.<sup>572</sup>



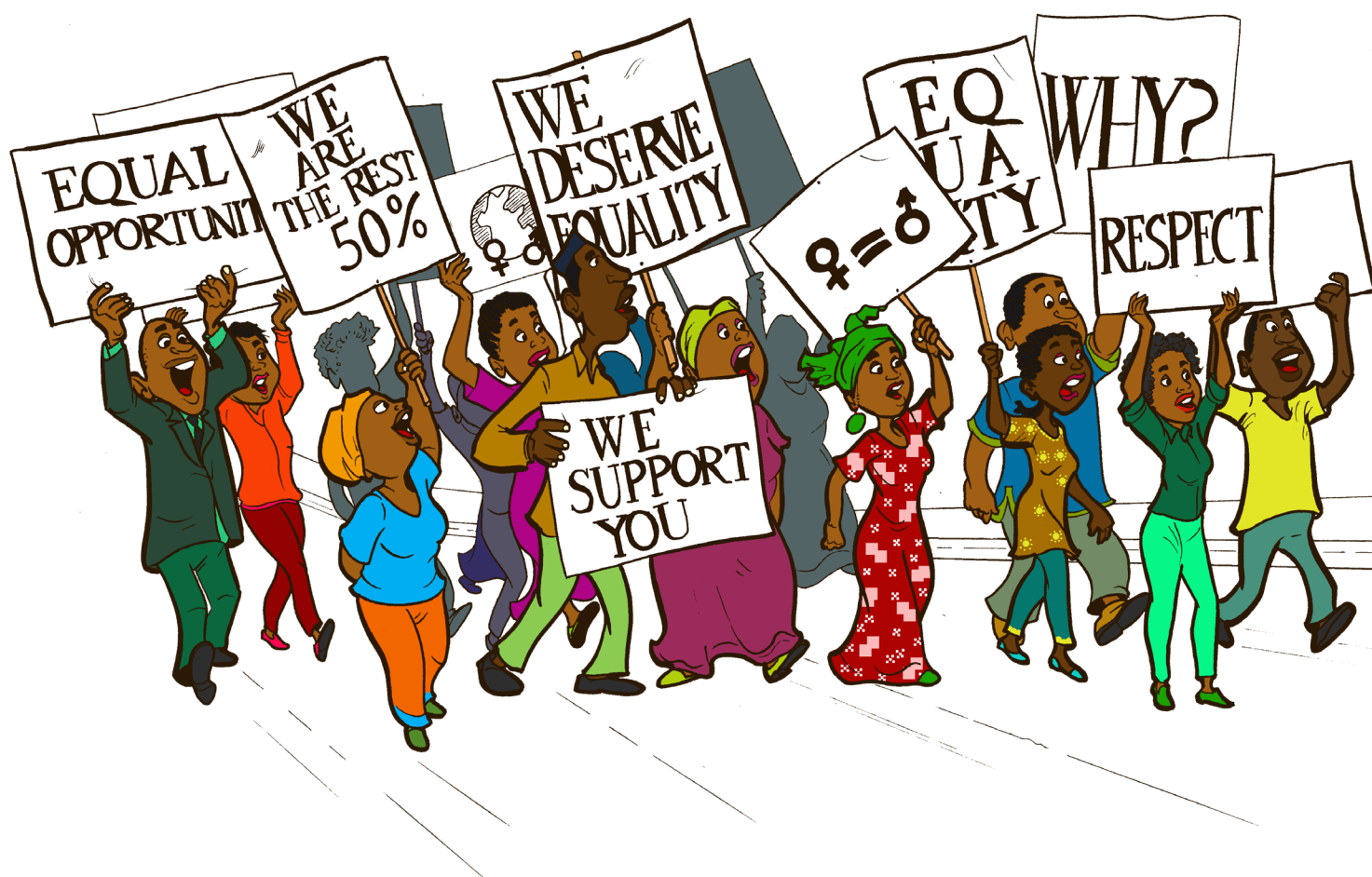
**0%**

Women in the  
**Judiciary** in Comoros



**36%**

Women in the **Private**  
**Sector** in Comoros



*Protesting inequality*



# DJIBOUTI

## OVERVIEW

Djibouti is a small nation that gained independence from France in 1977. Bordering Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia, it is a relatively stable country in the Horn of Africa.<sup>573</sup> Its location near the Suez Canal, one of the world's busiest shipping routes, provides the country with income and employment. Djibouti also hosts military bases for foreign countries, including France and the United States.<sup>574</sup> A civil war raged in the country in the 1990s between the Afar minority and the Issa-dominated government, ending in the 2001 peace agreement. Although the Constitution expresses equality of the sexes, there are barriers to women's full equality that limits women's participation in public life, business and politics.<sup>575</sup>

Djibouti ratified CEDAW without reservations in December 1998.<sup>576</sup> In February 2005, Djibouti ratified the Maputo Protocol.<sup>577</sup> So far, no National Action Plan has been adopted to incorporate UNSCR 1325.<sup>578</sup>

Djibouti has a presidential system with a unicameral legislature. In 2010, the Constitution was amended to remove term limits and allow the president to run for a third term. The presidential terms were also reduced from six years to five years. Djibouti's legislature has 65 members who are directly elected. Since November 2012, 52 members of the assembly are elected by plurality vote and the remaining seats are awarded proportionally.<sup>579</sup> The Constitutional amendments in 2010 allow for a bicameral parliament, but the new Senate has not yet been established.<sup>580</sup>

Djiboutian women gained the right to vote in 1946 but it was not until 1986 that they gained the right to stand for election.<sup>581</sup> The country has not had a female leader, but the first woman was elected to the legislature in 2003.<sup>582</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

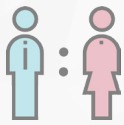
There has been considerable progress in Djibouti's efforts to combat gender-based violence, spearheaded by the Ministry for the Advancement of Women, Family Welfare and Social Affairs. Several policies have been targeted towards reducing GBV. One is the National Initiative for Social Development (2008-2012), this policy refers to international conventions, awareness raising campaigns against Violence Against Women (VAW) and FGM/C, and makes the existing laws stronger.<sup>583</sup> Another policy is the Triennial Action Plan, a national action plan specific to violence against women.<sup>584</sup> One of the challenges Djibouti faces is Female Genital Mutilation / Cutting. At the start of the century, Djibouti had one of the highest rates of FGM/C (93%) but that has been gradually lessening due to the efforts of the government and activists.<sup>585</sup>

In 2010, an Institutional Advocacy Workshop on the Engagement of Police, Gendarmerie and Army Staff on Gender Issues (FGM/VAW/HIV) was organised by the government in collaboration with UNFPA. The aim of this workshop was to present the Guide on Gender-based Violence as a working tool to enable the police, gendarmerie and armed forces to help women who are victims of violence.<sup>586</sup>

The Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Family Planning worked with women's groups to promote the rights of girls, including the right to decide and when and whom to marry.<sup>587</sup> An anti-trafficking of persons law passed in March 2016, which prohibits tracking and outlines definitions distinguishing trafficking and smuggling.<sup>588</sup>

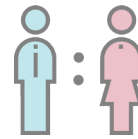
There has been progress made in lowering maternal mortality and increasing access to prenatal and postpartum care for women. In 2015, the maternal mortality rate had lowered to 229 per 100,000 live births, a significant drop from 517 in 1990.<sup>589</sup> In urban areas, 98% of births took place in a health centre, with 88% of women receiving prenatal care. The rate was lower in rural areas where only 53% of rural births took place in a health centre and the same percentage received postpartum care.<sup>590</sup>

Article 3 of the 2006 Labour Code prohibits discrimination based on sex in the workplace, so that opportunities are equal for men and women with no preference for men or other benefits.<sup>591</sup> Women benefit from Article 114 of the Labour Code which protects them from being fired while pregnant and guarantees them 14 weeks of maternity leave.<sup>592</sup>



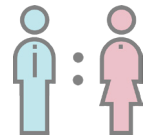
## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

The 2002 Electoral Law<sup>593</sup> requires at least 10% for women in elected offices and administrative positions. There are no quotas at the sub-national level and no political parties have adopted voluntary quotas.<sup>594</sup> A quota law was first implemented in the January 2013 legislative elections. For the first time in Djiboutian politics, seven women were elected to Parliament, representing 10.8% of the total number of seats.<sup>595</sup>



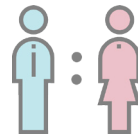
**10.8%**

Women in the **Parliament**  
in **Djibouti** in 2013



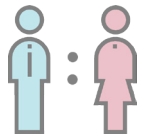
**13.6%**

Women **Ministers**  
in **Djibouti** in 2014



**42.8%**

Women **prosecutors** in  
**Djibouti** in 2016



**22.3%**

Women **Firm Owners** in  
**Djibouti** in 2013

## STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



### WOMEN MPS

In the Legislature, the first woman taking office was elected in 2003, nearly two decades since women were first given the right to stand for election. Between 2010 and 2012, there were nine women in the Legislature, making up 13.8 % of the body.<sup>596</sup> After the February 2013 legislative elections, the number of women in the Assembly was down to seven members. In a full Congress, this would be 10.8 % of the body, however, the opposition coalition, won 10 seats and because they contested the results of the election, their members refused to join the legislature until they reached an agreement with the ruling party. That agreement was reached in December 2014.<sup>597</sup>



### WOMEN MINISTERS

Within the executive branch, women have been represented since 1999 when the first woman, Hama Ahmed Yousseuf, was appointed Minister of Women's Affairs.<sup>598</sup> Since 2014, out of a Cabinet of 22 members, which is composed of 19 ministers and three Secretaries of State, three women are present.<sup>599</sup> That is a slight increase from the 2010 representation figure of 10%.<sup>600</sup> There is also one woman serving as an ambassador, out of approximately 30 embassies around the world.<sup>601</sup>



### WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

The judicial branch is the area of government where women are most represented in Djibouti. For the past 20 years, the President of the Supreme Court has been a woman. The holder of this post would rule the country in an interim capacity, should the president be incapacitated.<sup>602</sup> The Court of First Instance and the Court of Appeal are headed by women and of the total number of magistrates recruited in 2012, half were women.<sup>603</sup> In 2014, 40 out of 115 or 35% of magistrates were women.<sup>604</sup> On the prosecutorial side, in 2015, the Deputy Attorney General was a woman<sup>605</sup> and in 2016 six out of fifteen prosecutors were women.<sup>606</sup> On the Constitutional Council, the body that ensures compliance with constitutional principles, there was one woman in this group of six appointees.<sup>607</sup>



### WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

There is limited data available with respect to women's representation in the private sector. Of the data available, in 2013, 14.2% of the firms have females as top managers and 22.3% of firms have female participation in ownership.<sup>608</sup>

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Despite some signs of improvement over the years, data (or lack thereof) suggest significant under-representation of Djibouti women in political life. Quota systems (introduced in 2002) may have enabled some semblance of representation, but fixed at a minimal 10% means women remain generally excluded from decision-making posts. The existing quota system needs to be improved at all levels of participation. Social and cultural barriers continue to position women's roles as essentially inside the domestic domain. Poor access to education, economic opportunities adversely affects any active political organising, which in turn affects the low number of female political representatives.



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

A challenge women face is literacy. A requirement to stand for Parliament is the ability to read, write, and speak French and Arabic fluently.<sup>609</sup> This requirement is difficult to meet if one has not received formal education. The literacy rate for women in Djibouti between the ages of 15 and 49 is 47 %, automatically limiting the majority of women from qualifying as candidates.<sup>610</sup> Further challenges are the traditions and stereotypes about the roles of women in society.<sup>611</sup> These stereotypes combined with patriarchy limit women's participation in public life and leadership.



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

For someone to be declared a candidate for the legislature, they must pay a deposit of 500,000 DJF (\$2,793). This deposit is only refundable if the candidate wins at least 5% of the vote.<sup>612</sup> This remains a challenge for women, without the support and allocation of funds for their campaigning.



## MEDIA

With no private TV or radio stations, the media is dominated by the State, which also owns the main newspaper. In 2016, the flow of information intensified as the presidential election neared.<sup>613</sup> In 2015, UNESCO led a workshop with the Djibouti Journalists' Association to discuss the portrayal of women and gender equality in the media. UNESCO noted that while legislation had been passed to promote gender equality, gender-sensitive policies need to be drafted and implemented for press and broadcast media.<sup>614</sup>

# ERITREA

## OVERVIEW

Eritrea is one of the world's youngest countries, having gained independence in 1993 from Ethiopia. After independence, a Transitional Government was put into place with a four-year deadline for an election, which was postponed in 1997 and then again in 2001, indefinitely.<sup>615</sup> Human rights abuses are many. Opponents of the Government have been silenced, hundreds of people have 'disappeared', and Eritrea is one of the world's most censured countries.<sup>616</sup> The country has no functioning legislature, independent judiciary, elections, independent press or non-governmental organizations.<sup>617</sup>

Eritrea ratified CEDAW in 1995.<sup>618</sup> The country has not yet signed or ratified the Maputo Protocol.<sup>619</sup> Eritrea does not have a National Action Plan based on UNSCR 1325<sup>620</sup> but the Government did have a National Gender and Action Plan between 2003 and 2008 to integrate gender into the national development process and provide for effective implementation of gender-related commitments made by the Government in several international conventions and documents including CEDAW and the Millennium Development Goals.<sup>621</sup>

The Constitutional Government meant to replace the Transitional Government has not yet been established because the Constitution, while ratified, is not enforced. The Eritrean Constitution includes a unicameral National Assembly with 150 members with half the seats reserved for the ruling party, People's Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ), and the other half directly elected by the citizens.<sup>622</sup> The National Assembly is given authority to elect the President, who is the Chairperson of the National Assembly and the Cabinet of Ministers.<sup>623</sup> The National Assembly has not met since 2002.<sup>624</sup> The President and Council of Ministers head the Executive Branch of the Transitional Government.<sup>625</sup>

Women gained the right to vote and stand for election in 1995.<sup>626</sup> As there have not been elections since independence, women have not had the opportunity to present themselves as candidates.



### GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

Eritrea's National Assembly has a quota which reserves 30% of the seats for women. At the subnational levels, 30% of seats in provincial and district councils are also reserved for women.<sup>629</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

Between 2003 and 2008, the Government had a National Gender and Action Plan. Regarding violence against women, the Plan aims to eradicate rape, domestic violence, and FGM/C; strengthen the implementation and monitoring of international and regional human rights instruments; and enable men and women to know how to use them.<sup>627</sup> In 2007, the Government passed Proclamation 158/2007, the Female Circumcision Abolition Proclamation.<sup>628</sup> In 2009, an anti-FGM/C committee comprised of members from the Ministry of Health, National Union of Eritrean Women, Ministry of Information, and National Union of Youth and Students was formed,<sup>629</sup> and between 2009 and 2012, 155 perpetrators of FGM/C were penalised.<sup>630</sup>

In 2009, the Civil and Penal Code was revised. Article 46 states that marriage is based on free consent of both parties and parental consent is not needed. Article 48 states that women can enter marriages freely and that they have the same rights as men within those marriages. Article 49 prohibits bride price and dowry and Article 50 makes kidnapping for marriage illegal. Additionally, the legal age of marriage was raised to 18.<sup>631</sup>

Eritrea has made progress on maternal health, with maternal mortality rates decreasing from 998 per 100,000 in 1995 to 486 per 100,000 in 2010.<sup>632</sup> Linked to the lower maternal mortality rate has been an increase in access to services. The percentage of health facilities providing at least three modern contraceptive methods was 100% in 2010, a dramatic increase from 51.3% in 2007.<sup>633</sup>

In Eritrea, only the State can own land under the Proclamation 58/1994. Citizens cannot transfer, sell or buy land, but every citizen has the right to use land irrespective of their sex, faith, and race and clan.<sup>634</sup> Every citizen who has completed national service (women over 25 and men over 30) is entitled to a residential plot in their ancestral village and if they live there, a farming plot.<sup>635</sup>

Women are entitled to 60 days of maternity leave.<sup>636</sup> In Article 23 of the Labour Law, gender cannot be a reason for terminating a person's employment. Additionally, Article 65 states that 'women may not be discriminated against as regards opportunity or treatment in employment and remuneration, on the basis of their sex.'<sup>637</sup> This article also provides information on how women may report discrimination in the workplace.<sup>638</sup>

# STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



## WOMEN MPS

Over the past decade, 33 women have been members of the 150-member National Assembly. However, the National Assembly has not met since 2002 and the President and Executive Branch rule the nation.<sup>640</sup>



## WOMEN MINISTERS

Women have some representation in the Executive Cabinet. In 2013, of the 18 Ministries, four were headed by women –Tourism, Justice, Health, and Labour.<sup>641</sup> The same number of women was present in the Cabinet the following year, but the percentage increased to 24% as there was one less male minister in the Cabinet.<sup>642</sup> Since 2015, there have been three women in the Cabinet. In 2015 and 2016, women represented 17.6% of the Cabinet of seventeen members<sup>643</sup> and from 2017, they are 18.8% of the sixteen-member Cabinet.<sup>644</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

In 2013, of nine judges, only one was a woman.<sup>645</sup> In 2014, one of five judges (20%) on the court was a woman and two of nine High Court judges were women (21%).<sup>646</sup> In the period of 2015–2017, one of five members of the Appellate Court has been a woman.<sup>647</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Eritrea has one of the lowest percentages of firms with a woman among the principals, at 4.2%.<sup>648</sup> Statistics on women in the private sector are difficult to find. The law does provide for equality in the workplace or equal pay for equal work. However, due to lack of cultural sensitivity, based on long held beliefs and traditions and lack of educational opportunities for women, most women cannot use the opportunities stated by the law.<sup>649</sup> Women still do not receive equal payment and benefits, nor do they have equal opportunities to be hired and promoted.<sup>650</sup>

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

The lack of elections is one institutional barrier to women's participation in politics and public life. No elections have been held in Eritrea since 1993 so women have not had the opportunity to present themselves as candidates for public office.



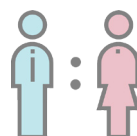
## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

Early socialization in the country equates femininity with weakness.<sup>651</sup> Traditions rooted in the patriarchal structure of society mean that women are largely responsible for family affairs, like raising children, which can lower their opportunities for participation in public life.<sup>652</sup>



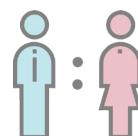
## MEDIA

The media is highly controlled by the Government. According to Reporters Without Borders, there is no room for freely reported news and the media are subject to the whim of the President.<sup>653</sup> Moreover, the journalists are frequently threatened and imprisoned, while others leave the country.<sup>654</sup> Journalist Yirgalem Fisseha Mebrahtu has been imprisoned since 2009, when the authorities raided the radio station where she worked.<sup>655</sup> She was one of the few female journalists working in the country.



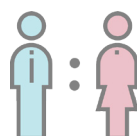
**18.8%**

Women in the **Cabinet** in **Eritrea** in 2017



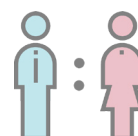
**20%**

Women **Judges** in **Eritrea** in 2014



**20%**

Women in the **Appellate Court** in **Eritrea** in 2017



**4.2%**

Women-led firms in **Eritrea**



# ETHIOPIA

## OVERVIEW

Considered to be the Africa's oldest country, during the 1970s and 1980s, the country was plagued with draught, famine, war and a refugee crisis. After Eritrea gained independence from Ethiopia in 1993, a war broke out over demarcation issues, lasting until a 2000 peace treaty.<sup>656</sup> Ethiopia has also been involved in counter-insurgency operations in Ethiopia's Somali region against the Ogaden National Liberation Front.<sup>657</sup>

Ethiopia signed CEDAW in 1980 and ratified the agreement in 1981.<sup>658</sup> The country signed the Maputo Protocol in 2004,<sup>659</sup> but has not yet adopted a National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325.<sup>660</sup> In 2015, Ethiopia ranked 116th out of 159 on the UNDP Gender Inequality Index.<sup>661</sup>

Ethiopia has a bicameral legislature. The two houses are the Yehiizb Tewokayoch Mekir Bete (House of Peoples' Representatives and Yefedereshein Mekir Bete (House of the Federation). Ethiopia's Electoral Law was established in 1993 and 547 members are directly elected to the House of Peoples' Representatives,<sup>662</sup> 153 members to the House of the Federation, with members of both chambers serving five year terms. For the House of the Federation, State Councils may indirectly elect members or organise direct elections.<sup>663</sup> Each nation, nationality and people are represented by at least one member and by an additional member for every one million of its population.<sup>664</sup> The executive branch is headed by the President who is the Chief of State, and the Prime Minister, who is the Head of Government. Both roles are indirectly elected by Parliament, with the President elected for a six-year term, with a maximum of two terms.<sup>665</sup>

Women in Ethiopia gained the right to vote in 1955, the same date that they also gained the right to stand for election.<sup>666</sup> One woman, Aster Mamo, was Deputy Prime Minister from 2014 to 2016, having previously served in the position of Chief Government Whip in the House of Peoples' Representatives.<sup>667</sup> In the 2013 Presidential elections, no women were candidates.<sup>668</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

Ethiopia has a National Action Plan for Gender Equality 2006–2010, which sets several priorities, including eliminating traditional practices harmful to women's health, including FGM/C.<sup>669</sup>

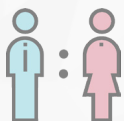
In 2004, legislation was passed (through Articles 565 – 570 of the Criminal Code) to provide punitive actions for those who commit FGM/C and to prohibit harmful practices such as domestic violence, trafficking and early marriage.<sup>670</sup> The same year, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs established a Women and Children's Trafficking Monitoring Directorate, designating 'Labour Attachés' within Ethiopian Embassies to deal with the issues of trafficking.<sup>671</sup> Rape is prohibited and is punishable, but the law does not include spousal rape.<sup>672</sup> In 2009, the Ministry of Justice established a special unit for the investigation and prosecution of violence, especially sexual violence. A flagship programme on gender equality and women's empowerment funded four safe houses and two one-stop GBV centres which provide coordinated and comprehensive services for survivors of violence.<sup>673</sup> In 2010, the Government expanded efforts to combat GBV by setting up a hotline run by the Federal Police. Police officers were also required to receive domestic violence training.<sup>674</sup> In 2011, the Ministry of Health began to expand the rape crisis centre at Gandhi Hospital into a training centre for health workers, law enforcement personnel and others.<sup>675</sup>

All maternal and child health services are provided free of charge in the public sector, but challenges persist in accessing quality services in remote areas due to issues with transportation.<sup>676</sup>

Ethiopia developed the Education Sector Development Program V (ESDP V) sector plan for 2015/2016 to 2019 that focuses on cross-cutting issues that affect education, including gender and HIV/AIDS.<sup>677</sup> Strides are being made to reach gender parity in education.

Article 35, Section 7, of the Constitution states that women have equal rights with men regarding the use, transfer, administration and control of land.<sup>678</sup> Article 5(c) of the 2005 Federal Rural Land Administration and Use Proclamation states that for land jointly held by a married couple, the certificate shall be in the name of both partners.<sup>679</sup> Also, the revised family codes and constitution recognise the equality of women in all aspects of land ownership and administration of personal and common property.<sup>680</sup>

The Labour Proclamation of 2003 states that women shall not be discriminated against regarding employment and payment due to their sex. It also provides protection for pregnant women and prevents employers from dismissing them while pregnant or in the months after the birth.<sup>681</sup> Article 35 of the Constitution states that women are entitled to affirmative action to enable them to compete and participate on the basis of equality with men in political, social and economic life, as well as in the public and private institutions.<sup>682</sup> In the 2010 and 2015 elections, women were nearly half of registered voters, making up 47.8% of the electorate in 2010<sup>683</sup> and 48% in 2015.<sup>684</sup>



## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

According to the Quota Project, Ethiopia has no quotas regarding the percentage of women who should be represented in either of the Houses of Parliament. One political party, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) did establish a 30% party quota in 2004.<sup>685</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

Following the 2010 elections, two women were part of the 11 member Supreme Court, making up 18%.<sup>693</sup> However, that dropped to 9%, when in 2014, only one female judge remained.<sup>694</sup> In 2015, of a total of 21 judges only one woman remained representing 4.8%.<sup>695</sup> In 2016, two women were on the Federal Supreme Court out of a total of 30 (6.7%).<sup>696</sup> In 2017, 12 of the 34 judges nominated to the Supreme Court were women, making up 35.3%, the highest percentage in the period of study.<sup>697</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

According to the International Labour Organization, there is a lack of statistics on women CEOs in most African countries. However, they do note that the proportion of women who are employers in Ethiopia is 14%.<sup>698</sup>



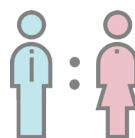
## WOMEN MPS

The percentage of women present in Ethiopia's legislature has been increasing over time. After the 2010 election, 152 (27.8%) women were elected to the House of Peoples' Representative and 22 (16.3%) were elected to the House of the Federation.<sup>686</sup> Those numbers stayed constant until the 2015 election, which resulted in more women being elected to both houses. In the Lower House, women were elected to 212 of 547 seats (38.8%) and 49 of 153 (32%) of the upper legislative body.<sup>687</sup>



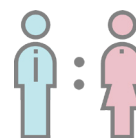
## WOMEN MINISTERS

Numbers of women in cabinet posts has fluctuated over the past few years. Between 2010 and 2013, women comprised 14.3% of Cabinet Ministers, holding three seats out of a total of 21.<sup>688</sup> In 2014, the Cabinet size increased to 25, but the number of women decreased by one, so women constituted only 8% of the Cabinet.<sup>689</sup> After a Cabinet reshuffle in 2015, four women were now in the Cabinet making up 16%.<sup>690</sup> In 2016, two of 26 members of the Cabinet were women, lowering the percentage to 7.7%.<sup>691</sup> Finally, in 2017, two more women became ministers, raising the total to four, a percentage increase to 15%.<sup>692</sup>



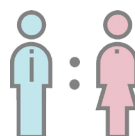
# 38.8%

Women in the **Lower House in Ethiopia** in 2015



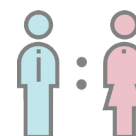
# 15%

Women **Ministers** in **Ethiopia** in 2017



# 35.3%

Women in the **Supreme Court in Ethiopia** in 2017



# 14%

Women **Employers** in **Ethiopia**

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Firstly, quotas are not systemically in place to assure women's equal participation in governance. Even though the EDRPF has a 30% quota at party level,<sup>699</sup> some women who choose to run, fail to gain party and electoral support.<sup>700</sup> This lack of support at the party level (where the only quotas exist) in many ways nullifies the value of the quota to begin with.



## SOCIAL|CULTURAL BARRIERS

There exist a number of traditional beliefs that make participation in political life difficult for women. Firstly, it is often expected that women take care of the home and children, and leave men to participate in activities outside the home.<sup>701</sup> Another barrier is the idea that women are supposed to be led and are considered subordinate to men.<sup>702</sup> The leadership abilities of women are often questioned.<sup>703</sup> Religion reinforces these beliefs as many religions encourage women to be subservient to men. In some religions, 'power and authority [is] believed to divinely belong to men hence subjugating women.'<sup>704</sup> Women internalise these beliefs and that limits their political advancement and empowerment.<sup>705</sup>



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

Women's economic condition greatly impacts the opportunities they have in life, for instance in decision-making positions. Illiteracy, lack of employment, heavy household chores, are some of the barriers women face in participating in public life. Without access to employment, which would give them material independence as well as professional skills and greater self-confidence, women are not able to participate in decision-making.<sup>706</sup> This causes a greater dependency of women on men, which makes for their low participation in politics in the country.



## MEDIA

With no private TV or radio stations, the media is dominated by the State, which also owns the main newspaper. In 2016, the flow of information intensified as the presidential election neared.<sup>613</sup> In 2015, UNESCO led a workshop with the Djibouti Journalists' Association to discuss the portrayal of women and gender equality in the media. UNESCO noted that while legislation had been passed to promote gender equality, gender-sensitive policies need to be drafted and implemented for press and broadcast media.<sup>614</sup>



*Inequality between men and women in the judiciary*

# KENYA

## OVERVIEW

Kenya gained its independence from The United Kingdom in 1963. For 39 years, the country was ruled by the Kenyan African National Union.<sup>708</sup> Kenya is often viewed as one of the most stable countries on the continent, but that reputation was challenged after violence swept the country following the 2007 elections. At least 1,500 people died and there were many instances of sexual violence, including about 3,000 rapes.<sup>709</sup> In 2010, a new constitution was introduced with changes meant to decentralise power and better facilitate people's representation, which were seen as contributing factors to the 2007 violence.<sup>710</sup> The 2013 elections were relatively peaceful, but violence erupted once again during the 2017 elections.<sup>711</sup>

Kenya ratified CEDAW in 1984 and the Maputo Protocol on in 2010.<sup>712</sup> Kenya launched a National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325 in 2016.<sup>713</sup> Kenya ranks 135th out of 159 on the 2015 UNDP Gender Inequality Index.<sup>714</sup>

Until the 2010 Constitution, Kenya's executive branch had a President and Prime Minister, but since then, the Prime Minister position was abolished. The President is elected by a majority vote. For a candidate to win in the first round, they must win the majority of the national vote plus at least 25% of the vote in at least 50% of the counties.<sup>715</sup> The legislative branch has two houses, a 350-member National Assembly and a 68 member Senate, created in 2010.<sup>716</sup> Members of the Senate are elected by 47 single member counties. In addition to the 47 members, 16 women are nominated by political parties according to their proportion of members in the Senates. In addition, 2 members, one man and one woman, are elected proportionally through party lists to represent the youth and another two, one man and one woman, to represent people with disabilities.<sup>717</sup>

Women in Kenya gained the right to vote in different years, with European women obtaining the right to vote in 1919 and African women who owned property and had attained a certain educational level in 1956, with all women receiving the right to vote in 1963.<sup>718</sup>

Kenya has yet to have a female head of state.<sup>719</sup> In 2013, one of eight presidential candidates was a woman.<sup>720</sup> In the 2017 election, none of the candidates were women.<sup>721</sup> In the 2010 referendum, women were 49% of registered voters.<sup>722</sup> In the 2013 and 2017 elections, women were 47% of registered voters.<sup>723</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

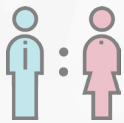
Regarding violence against women, Kenya has passed several provisions. The Constitution guarantees everyone the right to freedom and security of the person, including the right not to be subjected to any form of violence, physical or psychological torture, corporal punishment, or cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment.<sup>724</sup> It also protects from being held in slavery or servitude or any kind of forced labour.<sup>725</sup> Prior to the Constitution, there had been several laws passed. One was the Sexual Offences Act of 2006, which prohibited all form of sexual violence and abuse.<sup>726</sup> The same year, the Witness Protection Act was also passed, with the goal of providing protection for witnesses in criminal and other proceedings with an accompanying Witness Protection Programme. Two years later, this Act was amended to include a section on gender-sensitive measures to facilitate the testimony of sexual violence victims.<sup>727</sup> In 2014, A National Policy and Response to Gender-Based Violence was launched by the President.<sup>728</sup>

In sexual reproductive health rights, men and women have the right to decide if, when and how many children to have and receive information without fear of discrimination, coercion, and violence.<sup>729</sup> The Government provides subsidised contraceptive options, but access to modern contraception is more difficult in rural areas. In 2014, an estimated 46% of girls and women between 15 and 49 were using modern contraception.<sup>730</sup>

In 2010, the maternal mortality rate was 360 per 100,000, a decline from 450 in 2005, and a woman's lifetime risk of dying due to pregnancy was 1 in 55.<sup>731</sup> Skilled personnel attended the births of 44% of the population in 2014.<sup>732</sup> In education policy, education is free and compulsory until age 13 but authorities do not enforce the mandatory attendance laws uniformly. Around 47.6% of girls and 52.4% of boys are enrolled in secondary school<sup>733</sup> and women make up 40% of university students.<sup>734</sup> The law also protects pregnant girls' rights to attend school, but some girls are expelled or transferred to other schools by their headmasters despite this provision.<sup>735</sup>

In terms of land reform, the Constitution eliminates gender discrimination in customs, law and practices related to land and property on land. Further, the Land Act of 2012 and the Land Registration Act provide for equitable access to land,<sup>736</sup> and state that women have equal land ownership rights and cannot be discriminated against because of their gender.<sup>737</sup> One challenge is that despite these provisions, many women are unaware they exist and therefore do not activate these rights, and so remain disadvantaged.<sup>738</sup>





## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

Kenya has adopted several quotas to increase women's participation. According to the Article 27 Section 8 of the Constitution, 'not more than two thirds of the members of the elective or appointive bodies shall be of the same gender.'<sup>739</sup> A total of 47 National Assembly seats are reserved for women, one each from every county.<sup>740</sup> The country also passed a Political Parties Act in 2011 which provides legal sanctions for noncompliance with the quota.<sup>741</sup> Parties failing to meet the quota are not eligible for public funding.<sup>742</sup> In the Senate, 16 seats are reserved for women, along with one woman who represents youth and another representing people living with disabilities.<sup>743</sup> The Constitution also allows for a quota at subnational levels but there are no legal sanctions for non-compliance.<sup>744</sup> To date, three political parties have voluntary quotas. The Democratic Party, SAFINA Party and the National Rainbow Coalition each have policies that reserve one third of seats or nominations for each gender.<sup>745</sup>



## WOMEN MPS

The first woman elected to Kenya's legislature was elected in 1969, Kenya's second election after independence.<sup>746</sup> During the African Women's Decade, the number of women in Parliament has grown. Following the 2007 elections, 22 women were elected to the National Assembly, making up 9.8%.<sup>747</sup> This is the session of the Assembly that was in place until the 2013 election when the number of women increased to 19.7%.<sup>748</sup> Of 27 committees in the National Assembly, women were chairperson of seven and vice-chairperson of eight committees.<sup>749</sup> In positions of leadership, the Deputy Speaker and the Deputy Majority Leader were women.<sup>750</sup> The 2013 election was the first after the 2010 referendum to adopt a new constitution, which created a new house of the legislature, the Senate. Of the 17 female candidates, none were elected.<sup>751</sup> The women who made up the 26.5% of legislators were appointed to seats reserved for women.<sup>752</sup> In leadership positions, women held two of 10 key posts, the Majority Deputy Chief Whip and the Minority Deputy Chief Whip. One of 11 committees was headed by a woman and 6 women were Vice-Chairpersons.<sup>753</sup> In the 2017 election, women once again increased their presence in the National Assembly, reaching 21.8% and three women were elected for the first time to the Senate.<sup>754</sup> Adding these women to those selected for reserved seats for women in the Senate increased the percentage of women in that house to 30.9%.<sup>755</sup>

## STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



## WOMEN MINISTERS

In the Executive Branch, women are present as ministers of several departments. In 2010, seven of 40 ministers were women.<sup>756</sup> By 2013, there was one less minister and six women serving, making up 15.5% of the total.<sup>757</sup> In 2014, the Cabinet was smaller with 16 members. Of those members, five women were present as ministers, increasing their presence to 31%.<sup>758</sup> The following year had six women serving in an 18 member Cabinet, which represented 33%.<sup>759</sup> With a Cabinet reshuffle in 2016, the year ended with 5 women in a 16-member Cabinet (with one open seat) or 31.25%.<sup>760</sup> and in 2017, five women were serving in an 18-member Cabinet, for a representation percentage of 27.8%.<sup>761</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

The highest court in Kenya is the Supreme Court. Currently, seven justices are on the court. Since 2014, there have been two women on the court, or 28.6%.<sup>762</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

In 2014, 44 of 462 (9.5%) board members on the 55 companies listed on the Nairobi Securities Exchange were women.<sup>763</sup> Twenty-three of those companies had women directors and those with female board members were majority-owned by multinationals.<sup>764</sup>



# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Women have reported that their male colleagues use the existence of reserved seats for women to discourage women from contesting other positions.<sup>765</sup> Political parties have also been criticised for holding party primaries that lock women out of elections and not supporting female candidates. They have also failed to adhere to their own stated procedures for choosing candidates.<sup>766</sup> Institutions, such as the police, also ineffectively responded to complaints or did not take them seriously and follow them up.<sup>767</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

As is common elsewhere in the Region, patriarchal beliefs are another challenge women face in all spheres of life, but particularly regarding leadership roles. Many people believe that men are natural born leaders while women should raise children and keep house. Girls are taught at a young age to aspire to be home makers, unlike boys who are taught to be good leaders.<sup>768</sup> As a result of challenging such gender stereotypes, women who choose to run for office face threats of rape and beatings, sexual slurs, or curses for violating tradition. Senatorial candidate Shiela Githaiga was attacked by more than thirty men with batons and machetes and Caroline Wangai said male rivals were spreading the idea that women should not be allowed leadership.<sup>769</sup> The main forms of violence included intimidation, propaganda, physical assault, threat, destruction of property, abductions, verbal abuse, and the use of derogatory language to demean women.<sup>770</sup> For example, female candidates' names were printed on the side of condoms which were distributed on election day.<sup>771</sup>



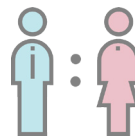
## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

To run for the Senate, women need to pay a non-refundable fee of 25,000 shillings (\$241) and if running for the National Assembly, the fee is 10,000 shillings (\$96).<sup>772</sup> In addition to these nomination fees, candidates are responsible for contributing to financial costs during the campaigning season. Those fees include items such as fliers and handbills, hiring public address systems, mobile phones, hospitality, transportation and subsistence for their team. For those who manage to cover these costs, some women have reported threats of violence and have had to finance the cost of bodyguards.<sup>773</sup>



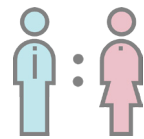
## MEDIA

Insufficient mobilization of media support and/or poor media coverage is listed as one of the barriers to participation in leadership. In the 2007 elections, only 6% of total coverage on television was dedicated to women candidates.<sup>774</sup> In the 2013 election, social media posed a new challenge with 'hate speech' and threats being posted across various platforms.<sup>775</sup>



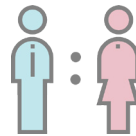
**30.9%**

Women in the **Senate** in **Kenya** in 2017



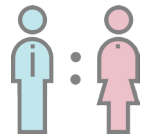
**27.8%**

Women in the **Cabinet** in **Kenya** in 2017



**28.6%**

Women in the **Supreme Court** in **Kenya** in 2014



**9.5%**

Women in **Board Members** in **Kenya** in 2014

# MADAGASCAR

## OVERVIEW

Madagascar is a large island nation off the coast of South East Africa, with a tumultuous political history. Most recently, political unrest eventually led to a coup d'état in 2009 led by the mayor of Antananarivo backed by the military. Following the coup, the Government was suspended and replaced with a transitional government,<sup>776</sup> ending only in 2013 when the country held national elections.

Madagascar ratified CEDAW in 1998 and signed the Maputo Protocol in 2004.<sup>777</sup> Madagascar has not yet adopted a National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325.<sup>778</sup>

Madagascar has a bicameral parliament. The National Assembly has 87 members who are directly elected by a plurality vote in single member constituencies and 64 members who are elected in two-member constituencies.<sup>779</sup> The other chamber of the legislature, the Senate, has 42 members who are appointed by regional legislatures and 21 who are appointed by the President.<sup>780</sup> Members of both houses are elected for five year terms.<sup>781</sup> The President of Madagascar is elected by a majority vote in two rounds for a five year term.<sup>782</sup>

In its postcolonial history, the country has not yet had a female head of state.<sup>783</sup> Women in Madagascar received the right to vote in 1959.<sup>784</sup> In the Presidential election of 2013, out of 33 candidates, only two (6%) were women, neither of whom received enough votes to reach the second round.<sup>785</sup> In the 2013 national elections, women were 46% of registered voters, although it is unreported how many women voted.<sup>786</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

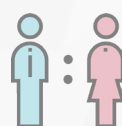
The Government has taken several steps to addressing women's rights issues in the country. One step has been the establishment of gender focal points at every level in every ministry. These focal points have the mission of integrating a gender dimension and development programmes at the all levels in their respective ministries.<sup>787</sup> The Gender Promotion Directorate provides training on gender and development, women's rights, anti-violence, leadership and advocacy, gender mainstreaming in a development project and gender sensitive budgets.<sup>788</sup> The Gender Promotion Directorate, together with traditional leaders, identified discriminatory practices against women and girls, including early marriage, non-inheritance of land, women's labour and gender-based violence. These leaders are committed to sensitising people in their communities on these issues.<sup>789</sup>

Regarding sexual and reproductive rights, the Government provides free access to contraceptives and family planning information at public clinics, but the services are not always available because of a lack of resources.<sup>790</sup> Around 36.4% of women use modern contraceptives. Maternal mortality has decreased to 353 per 100,000 live births in 2016,<sup>791</sup> lower than rate of 478 found in the 2012-2013 Madagascar Millennium Development Goal Monitoring Survey<sup>792</sup>, while 44% of births were attended by skilled personnel.<sup>793</sup>

The Constitution provides tuition-free public education until age 16.<sup>794</sup> Although education is free, parents are still required to pay for registration and other fees to subsidise teacher salaries and to cover the cost of supplies and furnishings.<sup>795</sup> UNICEF reported that boys and girls generally have equal access to education, although girls were more likely to drop out in adolescence.<sup>796</sup> According to a UNICEF study, only 73.4% of children between six and ten were enrolled in school and fewer than half of those graduated.<sup>797</sup>

In land rights, the law does not discriminate between men and women regarding ownership, but custom does not grant women the right to inherit land from their parents.<sup>798</sup> Article 34 of the Constitution states that 'the State guarantees the right of individual property'.<sup>799</sup> This principle does not specifically deal with gender, but Law 68-012 passed in 1968 on inheritance, wills, and donations does.<sup>800</sup> Law 2005-019 allows joint registration of properties.<sup>801</sup>

In law, women have equal access to employment opportunities and benefits in the workplace.<sup>802</sup> Among the factors that cannot be used to discriminate against an employee is gender. The Labour Code protects pregnant women's employment. Article 5 states that 'the contract is suspended during the rest periods of women' and Article 25, that 'no employer may terminate the employment contract when it is suspended'.<sup>803</sup>



### GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

Madagascar does not have any legislated quotas for either of the Houses of Parliament, nor are there any quotas at subnational levels.<sup>804</sup> There is no indication that any of the political parties have adopted voluntary quotas.<sup>805</sup>

# STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



## WOMEN MPS

After a coup d'état in 2009, a new President came to power and suspended the National Assembly. In the time the country prepared for new elections, a transitional government was appointed. In the Transitional Congress of 256 members, 32 were women for a proportion of 12.5%.<sup>806</sup> In the house of the Higher Transitional Council, 10 of 90 members were women (11.11%).<sup>807</sup> When the Councils increased in size, the Higher Council grew from 90 to 189 and the Transitional Council from 256 to 417. With many seats in the larger Transitional Council vacant in 2012, the rates of female participation increased to 64 (17.5%) women out of 365 members.<sup>808</sup> When one party had not nominated members to the larger Council, there were 20 women out of 164, or 12%.<sup>809</sup> Following the national elections at the end of 2013, a new National Assembly took its seats in 2014 with women making up 20.5% of the total.<sup>810</sup>



## WOMEN MINISTERS

The last two years of the Transitional Government had women making up 25.7%.<sup>811</sup> With a new elected government, the new President appointed 6 women to a 31 member Cabinet for a percentage of 19.35%.<sup>812</sup> In 2016, a reshuffle took place increasing the proportion to 20%, but then decreased once more to 18% in 2017.<sup>813</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

Women comprise more than half of the members of the Supreme Court. In 2013, women were 52.8 %<sup>814</sup> and in 2014, they were 53.06 %.<sup>815</sup> In 2016 and 2017, women were 57 % of the Supreme Court judiciary.<sup>816</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Women comprise more than half of the members of the Supreme Court. In 2013, women were 52.8 %<sup>814</sup> and in 2014, they were 53.06 %.<sup>815</sup> In 2016 and 2017, women were 57 % of the Supreme Court judiciary.<sup>816</sup>

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

One barrier women face in entering into politics is the lack of special measures, such as quotas, to encourage women's participation. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination recommended special measures at subnational levels of government, in Parliament and for political parties in 2008, but Madagascar has not acted on these recommendations.<sup>819</sup> In a shadow report to CEDAW, Malagasy CSOs noted that the Lower House of Parliament refused to review a proposed law to initiate a list of alternating male/female candidates for subnational authorities and the Upper House did not adopt law No03-212/PL to have a 30% quota of women in elected and nominated positions.<sup>820</sup>



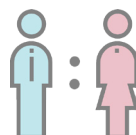
## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

Like many countries, inequality between the sexes exists. Stereotypes regarding traditional roles in the family and in society were noted as an issue by CEDAW and recommendations for campaigns to enhance the political empowerment of women were made.<sup>821</sup> In some areas, transgression from traditional custom is forbidden and if women refuse to conform, they risk being expelled from their communities.<sup>822</sup>



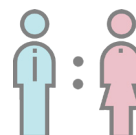
## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

One challenge is the political crisis in Madagascar after the coup d'état. This crisis stalled the economy, lowered incomes and increased poverty,<sup>823</sup> with women especially affected.



**20.5%**

Women in the **National Assembly** in **Madagascar** in 2014



**18%**

Women in the **Cabinet** in **Madagascar** in 2017

# MAURITIUS

## OVERVIEW

An island in the Indian Ocean, Mauritius was 'discovered' by the Portuguese, and colonised by the Dutch, French and finally by the British, from whom they gained their independence in 1968. Such a varied history has led to a diverse population of Europeans, Asians and Africans.<sup>824</sup> The island, considered a 'success story' for post-colonial developing countries, quickly improved standards of living and has grown economically since independence. Likewise, for over 30 years, the various ethnicities have lived in relative peace.<sup>825</sup>

Mauritius ratified CEDAW in 1984 and ratified the Maputo Protocol in June 2017. To date, Mauritius does not have a National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325.<sup>826</sup> Mauritius ranks 82nd out of 159 on the 2015 UNDP Gender Inequality Index.<sup>827</sup>

Mauritius has a unicameral legislature (National Assembly) with 70 seats. Sixty-two members are elected by a plurality vote in multi-member constituencies, and eight are appointed by the Election Commission.<sup>828</sup> The members are appointed to balance the representation of ethnic communities.<sup>829</sup> Members of the National Assembly are elected for five-year terms. The President of Mauritius is elected by the National Assembly for a five-year term and the President selects the Prime Minister.<sup>830</sup>

Women in Mauritius gained the rights to vote and stand for election in 1956.<sup>831</sup> In June 2015, Mauritius elected its first female President, Ameenah Gurib-Fakim, a celebrated scientist and biologist. Since June 2015, the three highest public posts are held by women; President, Vice President and the Speaker of the National Assembly.<sup>832</sup>

Men and women in Mauritius have the same rights under the law but cultural and societal barriers prevent women from participating in higher numbers.<sup>833</sup> Women's participation in politics is low in government, with the exception of the Judicial Branch, where women hold over one third of the posts.

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

Regarding violence against women, several laws have been passed to criminalise rape and domestic violence, including the Protection from Domestic Violence Act. First written in 1997, this Act aimed to protect spouses from domestic violence by applying for protection orders, occupation orders, and tenancy orders.<sup>834</sup> The Act has been amended several times to be more inclusive. In 2004, the Act was amended to include cases of unmarried, cohabitating partners.<sup>835</sup> In addition to these laws, the National Children's Council runs one shelter for victims and their children,<sup>836</sup> with another two shelters

run by NGOs. The Ministry of Gender also maintains an abuse hotline and a website on legal protections for victims.<sup>837</sup>

Access to contraceptives is available free of discrimination, coercion, and violence.<sup>838</sup> Thirty-nine percent of girls and women ages 15 to 49 used a modern form of contraception.<sup>839</sup> According to a UNICEF study, the maternal mortality rate was 22 per 100,000 in 2010, one of the lowest rates in the region,<sup>840</sup> although this had risen to 53 per 100,000 by 2015.<sup>841</sup> In education policy, children are required to attend school until the age of 16, and public education is available tuition-free until secondary school, including the provision of books and uniforms.<sup>842</sup> The rates of girls' in primary school is 49% of girls in Primary School, 52% in secondary school, and 62% in higher education.<sup>843</sup>

In land rights, men and women are entitled to equal rights and can conclude contracts and administer property in their own name, without interference or the consent of a partner. Women may also inherit land from their parents or other relatives.<sup>844</sup> Legislation exists concerning access to employment. The Employment Relations Act, Occupational, Health and Safety Act, and other employment acts apply to men and women equally.<sup>845</sup> In 2008, the Equal Opportunities Act was passed, and sex is included as one of the forms of discrimination that is illegal.<sup>846</sup> Men and women are entitled to equal opportunity in employment and women are protected in pregnancy and childbirth.<sup>847</sup> In the Employment Rights Act, women are entitled to maternity leave for 12 months. Women are also entitled to two half hour breaks per working day to nurse for six months or longer if recommended by a doctor.<sup>848</sup>



### GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

At the national level, Mauritius has not adopted any quotas for its legislature.<sup>849</sup> The political parties also do not have any voluntary quotas.<sup>850</sup> At the local level, there is a quota. Passed in 2011, the Local Government Act requires that at least one-third of candidates for local government positions be women.<sup>851</sup> As this only pertains to candidates, the percentage of women who are elected may be higher or lower than the 33% who are on the candidate list.

The December 2012 local elections were held, the first election since the Local Government Act was passed, with the goal of increasing the number of women running for office in local elections.<sup>852</sup> Of the 1260 seats in municipal and village elections, 330 seats (26.2%) were won by women. That was a four-fold increase from the previous elections where women had occupied only 6.4% of local seats.<sup>853</sup>

# STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



## WOMEN MPS

Following the 2010 elections, women comprised 18.8% of the National Assembly.<sup>854</sup> Ten women were elected and three of the seven members appointed by the Electoral Commission were women.<sup>855</sup> The next legislative elections in 2014 saw the number of women in Parliament decrease. Eight women were elected and none were appointed by the Commission so since 2014, women have constituted 11.6% of the National Assembly.<sup>856</sup> Around 10.9% of candidates for national office in 2010 were women,<sup>857</sup> that increased in 2014 to 17.3%.<sup>858</sup>



## WOMEN MINISTERS

In 2010, three women (12%) were members of the 25 member Cabinet.<sup>859</sup> Between 2011 and 2013, two women were ministers in a 25-member Cabinet, or 8%.<sup>860</sup> In 2014, the Cabinet decreased in size by one ministry to 24 members with 2 women as ministers, or 8.3%.<sup>861</sup> The next year, 2 women were members of a 22-member Cabinet, making up 9%.<sup>862</sup> In 2016 and 2017, 3 women were members of a 24-member Cabinet, 12.5% of the total.<sup>863</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

With the exception of 2013 when women were 31.5% of the Supreme Court, women have made up about 40% of the highest court. In 2010, seven of 17 judges on the Supreme Court were women (41.18%).<sup>864</sup> In 2011 and 2012, the Court had 20 members, 8 of whom were women, or 40%.<sup>865</sup> In 2013, the size of the court decreased to 19 members and 6 women were judges that year.<sup>866</sup> In 2014, the size increased once more to 20 and 8 women served on the court that year (40%).<sup>867</sup> In 2015, the size of the court increased to 23 and nine women were named to the court, making up 39%.<sup>868</sup> In 2016, 45.5% of the court was female with 10 women serving in a court of 22 members.<sup>869</sup> In 2017, 9 women served in a court of 20, making up 45% of the court.<sup>870</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

In 2012, 23.4% of managers in Mauritius were women.<sup>871</sup> A 2004 study found that 19% of board members in private sector companies were women. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), 12% of employers are women and the percentage of firms with women as owners is between 15 and 20% for Mauritius. The data is from the most recent year ILO studied the country, but the exact date was not specified.<sup>872</sup>

## CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

The report from the CEDAW committee stated that systematic barriers impede women's participation in public life. Among the barriers they included were lack of temporary special measures such as quotas for women and lack of capacity-building of potential candidates, limited financial resources and lack of logistical support for women candidates.<sup>873</sup>



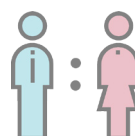
## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

Among the barriers CEDAW included were negative cultural attitudes and doubts about women's leadership capabilities.<sup>874</sup> These negative cultural attitudes are due to conservative attitudes against gender egalitarianism.<sup>875</sup>



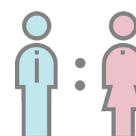
## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

One economic barrier is the \$25 deposit needed for a woman to declare candidacy for parliament. This fee is only reimbursed if the candidate wins at least 10% of the votes.<sup>876</sup> Combined with the limited financial resources provided to women, this makes funding a campaign for female candidates difficult.



**11.6%**

Women in the **National Assembly** in **Mauritius** in 2014



**12.5%**

Women in the **Cabinet** in **Mauritius** in 2016-2017



# RWANDA

## OVERVIEW

Rwanda occupies a special place in the annals of international development. The 1994 genocide, involving the mass slaughter of Tutsis and moderate Hutus, threw this small African nation into a state of destructive violence that only ended when the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) taking over from the ruling party, halted the bloodshed. However, the deaths of half a million Rwandans and the long-lasting consequences of civil war meant Rwanda's social, economic and political institutions stood in dire need of restoration. Paul Kagame, the leader of the RPF (and current President), has expressed a strong commitment to women's rights, a commitment that can be seen in quotas for women in Parliament and the fact that, as of 2017, women hold 61.3% of the seats in the Lower Parliament, the highest ranked country in the world.<sup>877</sup>

Rwanda ratified CEDAW in March 1981 and the Maputo Protocol in June 2004. In May 2010, Rwanda launched its Plan of Action for UNSCR 1325.<sup>878</sup> In 2015, Rwanda ranked 84th out of 159 on the UNDP Gender Inequality Index.<sup>879</sup>

Rwanda has a bicameral parliament with legislated quotas for the Single/Lower House and Upper House and at the sub-national level. Women earned the right to vote in 1961,<sup>880</sup> with the right to vote for the President much later in 1978. Historically, women were afforded little power in colonial times with men dominating social, economic, and political spheres. However, the genocide changed the face of gender relations, with excessive slaughter, rape and the rupturing of families resulting in many female-led households, as women comprised 70% of the population in the immediate aftermath.<sup>881</sup> While this figure gradually equalised as Rwandan refugees returned to their homeland, women's rights could no longer be ignored. In the 2016 elections, there was a reported 99% turnout of voters.

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

According to the World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Report of 2017, Rwanda has closed 82% of its gender gap and now ranks 4th in the world,<sup>882</sup> which is a step up from 5th in 2016.<sup>883</sup> It has also advanced five spots on the political empowerment front and ranks 3rd globally. Rwanda has closed its Health and Survival gender gap for the first time, although its Educational Attainment gender gap remains open.<sup>884</sup>

Rwanda is one of the leading examples in Africa for gender-inclusive politics and policies. The Constitution lays a strong foundation, prohibiting any form of discrimination based on gender, disability, language or social status. The National Human Rights Commission set up under Law No. 04/99 of March 1999 guarantees women's rights and their equal access to justice. The legal reforms further articulate the State's commitment to enhancing the status of women in other areas of society. These include inheritance law, which provides for women to inherit property from their fathers and husbands and to choose the legal property regimes they wish to adopt; land law; labour code<sup>885</sup> and family law. The Family Code has improved the legal position of women in matters relating to marriage, divorce and child custody. All of these laws are designed to address the stark discrimination against women in economic and social relations. Subsequent policy actions continue to focus on creating a level playing field in areas such as education and employment in the formal sector of the economy.

In terms of institutional frameworks and mechanisms, the Ministry of Gender and Women in Development is responsible for implementing the Beijing Platform for Action and coordinating policy implementation in the promotion of gender issues. The Gender Monitoring Office (GMO), established by the Constitution, is a governmental body that monitors, advises and advocates gender equality in all institutions in the country. Similarly, initiatives like one-stop centres are being rolled out as part of the larger drive to tackle the issue of gender-based violence.<sup>886</sup>

Politically, Rwanda is one of the leading examples in Africa for gender-inclusive politics, with the highest number of female Parliamentarians in the world. The numbers of women exceeded men in the Chamber of Deputies, with women occupying 51 seats in relation to 29 occupied by men<sup>887</sup> and offering greater opportunities to influence decision-making.

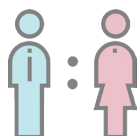
The redefinition of rape and sexual torture as a 'Category One' crime in 1996,<sup>888</sup> the 2001 laws which protected children from violence<sup>889</sup> and laws permitting women to inherit land<sup>890</sup> from 2003 have been crucial advances in women's liberation in Rwanda. Yet in many parts, especially the rural districts, women still experience a 'gender dilemma',<sup>891</sup> of whether to exercise rights enshrined in the Constitution or avoid disruption of family life.



## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

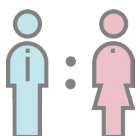
Rwanda's quota system for women aims to ensure that women constitute a certain number or percentage of the members of a body, committee or government. As a form of affirmative action, it is designed to help women overcome the obstacles that prevent them from entering politics. Quotas exist at both the upper and lower levels of Rwanda's bicameral government. The year 2003 saw the publication of a new Constitution which guarantees that women should occupy 30% of all governmental 'decision-making bodies', although mechanisms for securing these figures outside the Lower Chamber of Parliament are not spelled out in the text. The increasing number of seats held by women in Parliament displays the efficacy of this quota system. However, to what extent women occupying seats has genuinely amplified women's voices in influencing policy making, remains a question.

Despite the quota system, women's capacity to control resources and surplus in Rwanda is limited, both socially and legally.<sup>892</sup>



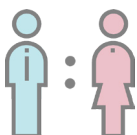
# 61%

Women **MPs in the Lower House in Rwanda** in 2017



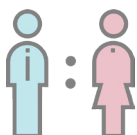
# 50%

Women in the **Cabinet in Rwanda** in 2018



# 50%

Women in the **Supreme Court in Rwanda**



# 42%

Women-led enterprises in **Rwanda**

## STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



### WOMEN MPS

Rwanda leads the global field with 64%<sup>893</sup> (in terms of female political representatives post-2013 Parliamentary elections), compared with 56.3% of women MPs in 2010 elections, as well as a global average of 23%. Its Chamber of Deputies is one of only two chambers worldwide in which women outnumber men (for instance, it has 24 reserved seats for women); women's councils exist at the cell, sector, district and provincial level.<sup>894</sup> As of 2017, 61% female MPs sit in Single/Lower House and 38.5% in Upper House.



### WOMEN MINISTERS

In 2016, 40% of women occupied ministerial positions, which is a marginal increase from 36.8% in 2013.<sup>895</sup> Currently, women make up more than half of Kagame's Cabinet.<sup>896</sup>



### WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

There were 37% women in the Judiciary in 2016, which is a drop from 43% in 2013.<sup>897</sup> Seven out of 14 judges in the Supreme Court are women.



### WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

The Rwandan Government has taken a particular interest in promoting women entrepreneurs. In 2000, it set up a guarantor programme that enabled women to access loans through private financial institutions, even when they did not have collateral.<sup>898</sup> Women head 42% of enterprises; and many are increasingly branching out into non-traditional sectors, such as Information and Communication Technologies.<sup>899</sup>

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Despite women's consistent visibility in Rwanda's political corridors, gender inequality persists. An example is the recent disqualification of the only female presidential candidate, Diane Rwigara, in the 2017 election. News reports published her counter claims that she was targeted and falsely accused of obtaining fraudulent signatures in order to run for office.<sup>900</sup>

In the larger context of the existing political environment, there has been mounting criticism by rights groups like Amnesty International, alleging that elections might have been held under widespread human rights abuses, a muzzling of independent media and suppression of political opposition.<sup>901</sup>

The Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF) was placed within the Prime Minister's office, signifying commitment to the cause of gender equality. In the past, the Parliament has aggressively questioned national policy with regard to women and children, and women parliamentarians have led the questioning of government officials in both instances.<sup>902</sup> In other cases, and perhaps out of fear of opposition, some civil rights organisations have tended to focus on gender-based violence and women's rights, which are part of the Constitution, rather than address more politically-sensitive topics. This may curtail total political freedom.<sup>903</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

Reports reveal a rupture between public policy and social custom. This was reflected on many levels from education (where girls are traditionally discouraged to pursue jobs in the more remunerative STEM fields) to workplaces, where, in a survey of 15 randomly selected districts, 39% of health workers had experienced some form of workplace violence.<sup>904</sup> Negative stereotypes of women, uneven sharing of family and home responsibilities and continued incidences of gender-based violence, disrupt Rwanda's gender equality visions.



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

Findings suggest that there is a divide between urban and rural women in power. While urban women have access to generous government benefits and the acquired social capital that comes with their positions, women in rural areas have to shoulder the burden of being community representatives, often without remuneration. They have to balance work and family responsibility with political activities, without necessarily gaining the social and economic benefits of their urban counterparts. With this in mind, it makes it all the more difficult for women from economically disadvantaged areas to succeed in political life.

# SEYCHELLES

## OVERVIEW

A coup soon after independence in 1976, and an invasion by mercenaries left 10,000 people internally displaced, Seychelles was stabilised and has developed into a popular tourist destination. The country has the highest standard of living in Africa.<sup>905</sup> Seychelles is a leading country in promoting gender equality as there is equal access employment, equal pay for equal work, and access to credit, among other rights.<sup>906</sup>

Seychelles ratified CEDAW in 1992.<sup>907</sup> The Maputo Protocol was ratified in 2006.<sup>908</sup> Seychelles does not yet have a National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325.<sup>909</sup>

Seychelles has a unicameral legislature with up to 35 members who are directly elected. Twenty-five members are elected by a majority vote, with the remaining members nominated by political parties to obtain at least 10% of the total votes. The parties are allowed to nominate one member for every 10% of votes polled.<sup>910</sup> The President is elected by a majority vote in two rounds for a renewable five year term.<sup>911</sup>

Women in Seychelles gained the right to vote and stand for election on August 6, 1948.<sup>912</sup> Universal adult suffrage was gained in 1967, removing barriers of taxpayer status or land ownership.<sup>913</sup> In 2016, Alexia Amesbury became the first woman to run for President. She received 1.3% of the vote and did not compete in the second round of the election.<sup>914</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

The Seychellois Government has made various efforts to reduce violence against women. One of the earliest was passing the Family Violence (Protection of Victims) Act. This act allows for protection orders for victims of family violence.<sup>915</sup> Since 2001, government schools have been teaching about family violence, covering topics such as meaningful relationships, children's rights, and tolerance.<sup>916</sup> In 2008, a National Strategy on Domestic Violence was launched with the goals of reducing the impact of violence on children, reducing vulnerability to domestic violence, strengthening the response to domestic violence and nurturing an environment to improve gender equality.<sup>917</sup> The National Strategy includes the National Action Plan for Domestic Violence (2010-2011), which encompassed awareness raising and prevention, capacity strengthening of service providers and legislation, advocacy and lobbying.<sup>918</sup> In 2011, a Family Squad Unit was started in the justice system to offer special services in domestic violence and child abuse cases.<sup>919</sup>

In sexual and reproductive rights, there are no legal, social, or cultural barriers to accessing modern methods of contraception or to treatment for sexually transmitted infections. The Government also provides free childbirth services, including prenatal and postnatal care.<sup>920</sup> In education policy, universal access to education is a right. For years, more women than men have been completing tertiary education. In 2010, around 60% of graduates were women. In 2011, it was 52% and again in 2012, 60%.<sup>921</sup>

In land ownership rights, the Seychelles' Constitution allows for the right to property without gender-based discrimination. The law applies equally to all women, regardless of their marital status.<sup>922</sup> The law also recognises the right to equal access to employment. The Constitution states that 'the State recognises the right of every citizen to work and to just and favourable conditions of work.'<sup>923</sup> The Public Services/Parastatals Order 32 states that there will be no difference between the salary of men and women with equivalent qualifications and experience.<sup>924</sup> The 1995 Employment Act provides protections for pregnant women, including 14 weeks paid maternity leave.<sup>925</sup> An amendment to the Public Service Order in December 2003 guarantees paid maternity leave for all women regardless of their marital status.<sup>926</sup>

According to the Government's CEDAW submission, for the 2001/2002 and 2006/2007 elections, more than 50% of voters were women. The Government credits this to high level of political consciousness and civic responsibility among women.<sup>927</sup> No information was found on the percentage of women who voted in the national elections in 2011, 2015, and 2016.



### GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

Seychelles has no quotas at national or subnational levels and no political parties have adopted voluntary quotas.<sup>928</sup> In the country's CEDAW submission, the country notes that the Government and political parties consider it unnecessary to have quotas for positions since there are no legal barriers to participation in political, social and economic activities. As there are continuing gaps in some areas, such as political participation and job stereotyping, the Government says it would consider temporary measures, but prefers to focus on advocacy, support and training interventions.<sup>929</sup> Also, the Constitution of Seychelles makes no provision for quotas or reserved seats for women.

Political parties have not spoken in favour of quotas with one representative being quoted as saying that 'a political party's goal is to win election and it will field its best candidates, be they men or women', therefore, fielding male candidates implies they make the best candidates.<sup>930</sup>

# STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



## WOMEN MPS

In 2010, there were eight (23.5%) women in the National Assembly.<sup>931</sup> These Parliamentarians had been elected in 2007. At the next election held early in 2011, after parliament had dissolved itself, the percentage of women nearly doubled to 43.8% with 14 women elected to a parliament of 32.<sup>932</sup> In the 2016 elections, the number of women decreased by half, with 7 women serving in a parliament of 33 or 21.2%.<sup>933</sup> That is the lowest percentage of MPs in over 20 years.<sup>934</sup>



## WOMEN MINISTERS

The first female minister was selected in 1986.<sup>935</sup> In 2010, two women were members of the Cabinet.<sup>936</sup> In 2011, 20% of ministers were women, or two women out of a Cabinet of 10.<sup>937</sup> For the next three years, three (23%) women were ministers in a 13 member Cabinet.<sup>938</sup> Since 2015, the percentage of women in Cabinet has been 25% as three women are serving in a 12 person Cabinet.<sup>939</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

In 2013 and 2014, one woman was a member of an eight (12.5%) person court.<sup>940</sup> In 2015, the percentage decreased to 11% as a male member was added to the court.<sup>941</sup> In 2016, women comprised 22%, with two female justices on a court of nine.<sup>942</sup> In 2017, there were four women on a 12 person court, giving a representation of 33%.<sup>943</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Data on women in the private sector is limited. In 2011, 40.8% of managers in Seychelles were women.<sup>944</sup>

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

The Government states that no research has been conducted by government, political parties or NGOs to determine structural barriers,<sup>945</sup> making it difficult to know the extent of the problem of discrimination. The Committee on CEDAW noted that available data is not disaggregated for sex, race, region and other factors making it difficult to assess the situation of women and determine whether they suffer from discrimination. It is also difficult to make informed and targeted policy and evaluate progress made toward women's equality.<sup>946</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

As in many countries, traditional beliefs rooted in patriarchy limit women's participation in public and political life. Traditional stereotypes regarding the roles of women and men perpetuate gender inequality.<sup>947</sup> There are harmful conceptions of masculinities and femininities and these are difficult to dispel, as they are unconscious and often unintentional.<sup>948</sup> Even as schools try to change these ideas with positive images projected in classrooms, children absorb these ideas where girls are perceived as weak.<sup>949</sup>

Further anecdotal reasons suggested for women's non-participation are family commitments, heavy demands on time, personal sacrifices and lack of confidence to engage in competitive elections. Women from the opposition parties also add fear of victimisation as a concern.<sup>950</sup>



## MEDIA

No information on media and gender in electoral politics was found. However, in the report to the Government of Seychelles on CEDAW, the Committee noted that discriminatory media advertisement and vacancy announcements limited the participation of men in domestic duties.<sup>951</sup> These images perpetuate the belief that there are designated spheres for women and men, with women at home and men in public life.



# SOMALIA

## OVERVIEW

Situated in the Horn of Africa, Somalia continues to experience widespread civil unrest alongside political and economic instability coupled with natural disasters such as famine and drought. Since the collapse of the central government in 1991, Somalia has suffered extensively from a prolonged civil war where continued conflict and a dominant customary law override State judiciary, directly affecting the security and status of women. The average life expectancy is rated at 55.4 years.<sup>952</sup> Somalia is the only country in the East of Africa not to have ratified CEDAW, despite becoming a signatory in 2006,<sup>953</sup> and the country has still not ratified the Maputo Protocol.<sup>954</sup> Somalia has no Action Plan for the UNSCR 1325.

Somalia's political landscape is slowly transforming. The year 2012 saw Somalia's first formal government in over 20 years, ending the mandate of the Transitional Federal Government. Somalia has a bicameral parliament, the Lower House, known as the House of the People, has 275 members indirectly elected by 135 traditional elders. The Upper House of Parliament does not yet exist, however members will be elected from the 18 regions of Somalia and from the Federal Member states.<sup>955</sup> Mohammed Sheikh Osman was elected President in August 2012, and re-elected in January 2017.<sup>956</sup>

While women received the right to vote and stand for election in 1956,<sup>957</sup> there has never been a female head of government,<sup>958</sup> though Fowsiyo Yusuf Hajji Aden was the first woman to be appointed as Deputy Prime Minister.<sup>959</sup> The re-emergence of customary law and clan-based forms of political representations means that women are often excluded from political participation due to feudal and patriarchal attitudes.

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

Progressive reforms were made to the Family Law in 1975 under Siad Barre, assuring that women had equal rights, and made discrimination against women illegal. However, at the time, little was done to enforce the law, and to date, the law is often seen as surplus from the Barre regime and is not applied in legal practice.<sup>960</sup>

Considering the decentralised nature of Somalia's federal governmental structure, the different states across the country have tried to implement policies that do not apply to other states. For example, a Gender Policy was drafted in 2008 in Puntland but has not been passed. This policy is complicated by the fact that it has been developed based on Sharia law.<sup>961</sup> In Somaliland, the

Ministry of National Planning and Development developed a five year National Development Plan (2012-2016), which includes section 5.4.6 that states a requirement to 'eliminate gender inequalities/disparities in employment and gender-based violence (GBV), and mainstream women's empowerment in all sectors of development'.<sup>962</sup> The National Gender Policy has been approved, though implementation is a challenge as coordination is lacking, and there is no action plan for its implementation.

Customary approaches to issues surrounding GBV involve making 'arrangements' between the clans of the victim and the perpetrator(s) through unlawful and unofficial methods. Moreover, harmful practices such as FGM/C are well-known and practiced across the country. UN Women estimates that 98% of women and girls aged 15-49 have undergone FGM/C.<sup>963</sup> In 2011, a FGM/C law was passed for the first time in Puntland which bans pharaonic circumcision or infibulation (the complete removal of the external genitalia and suturing of vulva), however it still allows for some form/type of circumcision, and does not follow international human rights standards.<sup>964</sup> Furthermore, according to the 1975 Family Code, the legal minimum age for marriage is 18 years for both men and women; however in 2017 it was recorded 45% of girls aged between 20-24 had married before the age of 18.<sup>965</sup>

With reference to sexual reproductive and health rights, women's access to health services are limited, and Somalia's maternal mortality rate is amongst the highest in the world, at 1,600 per 100,000 live births.<sup>966</sup> A Health Sector Strategic Plan (HSSP) 2013-2016 worked to help the Somali Government's capacity to improve access to health services for the people of Somalia, however, issues relating to public security and continued conflict are making women's access to health services very difficult.<sup>967</sup>

The collapse of the central government, decades of war, civil conflict and continued civil unrest has left Somali schools in ruins. Severe shortage of facilities, resources and qualified teachers, combined with the absence of a structured curriculum has resulted in one of the world's lowest enrolment rates for primary school children. Around 42% of children are in school and of that, only 36% are girls.<sup>968</sup>

Even though women are entitled to inherit and acquire land, as stipulated by the Agricultural Land Ownership Law of 1999,<sup>969</sup> the position of women with regards to land property ownership has been weakened and compromised by traditional and customary laws, where ownership privileges male family members.<sup>970</sup>



## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

Article 3 of the Provisional Constitution stipulates that: 'Women must be included, in an effective way, in all national institutions, in particular in all elected and appointed positions across the three branches of government and in national independent commissions.'<sup>971</sup>

There is a quota of 30% of the elected members of the House of the People to be women. Each of the four main clans should have 18 elected women members, while other clans should have 9 women members.<sup>972</sup> Despite advocacy for a quota of 30% of female representation in all political institutions, the quota was not included in the Provisional Federal Constitution adopted on the 1st August 2012.<sup>973</sup> The failure of the Federal Parliament to meet the 30% quota of reserved seats for women in the 2012 Federal Parliament election has been largely attributed to the lack of agreement among the clans that govern the country.<sup>974</sup>



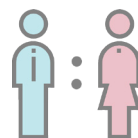
## WOMEN MINISTERS

In 2012, 5.6% of ministers were female, which increased to 8% but then declined to 6.7% in 2016.<sup>979</sup> The reshuffling of the Government in January of 2014 produced 25 ministries with only two female ministers, one as Minister of Construction and the second as the Minister of Women and Human Rights Development.<sup>980</sup> Fowsiyo Yusuf Hajji Aden was appointed as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, which marks the first time in Somali history that a woman has become head of the foreign ministry.<sup>981</sup>



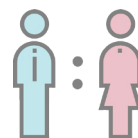
## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

There are currently no female judges in Somalia. There was previously one female judge in South-Central Somalia. However, there is a female Deputy Prosecutor in Somaliland, Simone Boneschi.<sup>982</sup>



**24.4%**

Women in the **Transitional  
Federal Parliament** in  
**Somalia** in 2017



**6.7%**

Women **Ministers** in  
**Somalia** in 2016



## WOMEN MPS

The number of women in Parliament has gradually increased; in 2004, 6.78% of women sat in the Transitional Federal Parliament,<sup>975</sup> which rose to 6.8% in 2011, 13.8% in 2015 and currently stands at 24.4% in 2017.<sup>976</sup> Despite this increase, Somalia has failed to reach the 30% quota for women candidates in the 2017 election. However, it is worth noting that female representation in the previous election is still 10% higher than the 2012 election which was around 14%.<sup>977</sup>

Statistics on the representation of females at a local level are sparse and relies on data collection by the country's individual states and at local elections which have been sporadic and inconsistent. For example, in Somaliland, 2012 saw the first poll for local councils to take place since 2002. The election panel listed nearly 2400 candidates for 350 council seats. The preliminary results showed that out of 134 women candidates, only 10 were elected as local councillors.<sup>978</sup>

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Female political engagement in Parliament and as representatives of their clans are strongly opposed by clan leaders. In 2012, for the new Federal Parliament, the clan elders selected 238 men and 37 women members.<sup>989</sup> The result of the situational system whereby elders elect future parliamentarians means that achieving the 30% target quota for women is extremely difficult due to such resistance. To mobilise female candidates, electoral committees need to work with clans and negotiate the number of seats reserved for women.<sup>990</sup> The electoral committees themselves must include women to enhance a gender responsive agenda to electoral reform.



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

There is a candidacy fee of \$5,000 USD for a seat in the House of the People and \$10,000 for the Upper House, however the fee for women candidates is reduced by 50%<sup>987</sup> - \$25,000 for women in the House of the People and \$5,000 in the Upper House<sup>988</sup>. Despite this reduction, the cost of running a campaign, producing materials and organising events, hinders the number of women vying for candidacy.

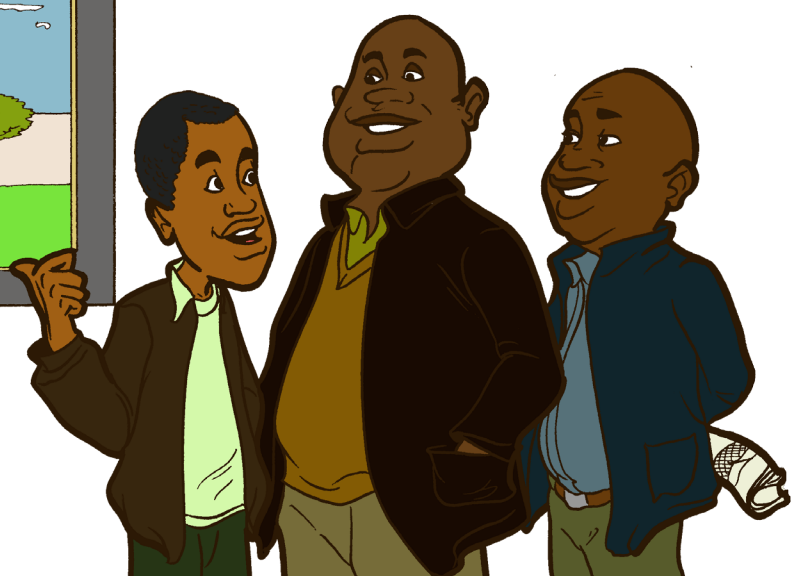


## SOCIAL|CULTURAL BARRIERS

The dominant feudal society and traditional attitudes often prohibit female political participation in Somalia. Somali culture is organised according to a clan system with group membership based on kinship and linked together in alliances. Kinswomen are not considered members in the same way as men. The elders responsible for making decisions are called Male Traditional Elders, a group from which women are excluded and are represented by male relatives if a grievance concerns them.<sup>985</sup> Furthermore, there are no laws prohibiting domestic violence, spousal rape or sexual harassment,<sup>986</sup> which could affect women's access to the public sphere.



**SHE IS TOO  
PRETTY FOR POLITICS.**



*Objectification of women in politics*

# SOUTH SUDAN

## OVERVIEW

On July 9th 2011, South Sudan gained independence from Sudan.<sup>991</sup> This historic day was the culmination of a six-year peace process, beginning with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in January 2005 between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), which thereby ended more than 20 years of war.<sup>992</sup> Since its independence, South Sudan has seen a number of conflicts, and in 2013 civil war broke out after the President accused the Vice-President of planning a failed coup.<sup>993</sup>

To help consolidate peace and security, strengthen the capacity of the government of South Sudan to govern effectively and democratically and assist in establishing conditions for development, the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) established a presence in the country.<sup>994</sup> Although a peace agreement was signed between the warring parties to end the civil war in 2015, the country struggles to implement it.<sup>995</sup> Continued violence creates a particularly dangerous environment for women, who are often targeted in revenge attacks. Moreover, the judicial system lacks the capacity, and the government the political will, to address crimes and violence against women.<sup>996</sup>

South Sudan ratified the Maputo Protocol in October 2017, however, as of June 2018, it has not been deposited at the AU Commission which is required for the validation of the ratification.<sup>997</sup> The country ratified CEDAW in 2015.<sup>998</sup> Also in 2015, it adopted a National Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 for the period 2015 – 2020.<sup>999</sup>

South Sudan is governed by a Transnational Government of Unity, headed by President Salva Kiir, who was elected in 2010 and currently serves as the country's first President.<sup>1000</sup> A permanent constitution laying out the country's political system and electoral law was to have been adopted in 2015, but due to administrative delays and civil war, South Sudan still follows the 2011 Interim Constitution.<sup>1001</sup> The 2015 election was postponed due to the ongoing conflict, and is now scheduled for July 2018.<sup>1002</sup>

South Sudan has a bicameral parliament with legislated quotas for both houses of parliament.<sup>1003</sup> As of 2017, women hold 109 out of 383 seats in the National Legislative Assembly or Lower House, and six out of 50 seats in the Council of States, or Upper House.<sup>1004</sup>

Women have had the right to vote since the independence of South Sudan. Thus far, no woman has been elected President in South Sudan. In the first Government of South Sudan, five women were appointed ministers.<sup>1005</sup> At the local level, in South Sudan's Warrap State, Nyandeng Malek Deliech serves as South Sudan's only female governor.<sup>1006</sup> Moreover, the Parliament of Warrap established a women's parliamentary caucus, making it the first state in the history of the world's youngest country to create a body dedicated to women's affairs.<sup>1007</sup>

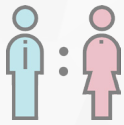
In the upcoming presidential election of July 2018, Suzanne Jambo, a former official of the ruling party (The Sudan People's Liberation Movement – SPLM), intends to run for office, making her the first woman to stand for election in the country.<sup>1008</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

South Sudan is a country in transition, and continued political instability and lack of strong public institutions have affected the country's progress.<sup>1009</sup> Despite these challenges, the Government has adopted laws with respect to gender equality and the empowerment of women. The goal of achieving gender equality in South Sudan is anchored by the country's Interim Constitution.<sup>1010</sup> Article 16 states that women should receive equal pay for equal work, enjoy equal participation in the public sphere and 'be accorded full and equal dignity of the person with men.'<sup>1011</sup>

The Government has also taken steps to include a gender perspective in its policies. In the South Sudan Development Plan (SSDP 2011–2013) gender equality and the empowerment of women are recognised as prerequisites for sustainable peace and development and an integral part of the national goal of building a peaceful, inclusive and prosperous nation.<sup>1012</sup>

In 2015, the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan was signed. The Agreement includes several specific provisions for women's rights, gender equality and inclusion and specifically creates positions for women.<sup>1013</sup> Parliamentary seats are allocated to ensure women's participation in the Transitional Government, and the chapter dealing with the parameters of the Permanent Constitution contains provisions guaranteeing gender equity and affirmative action.<sup>1014</sup> The Agreement requires women's organizations to be consulted on certain policy areas and the inclusion of women in a ceasefire implementation reporting mechanism.<sup>1015</sup> Despite these positive steps, a report by Women's Monthly Forum (WMF) found that many areas remain unaddressed, and identifies various ministries and processes, such as justice bodies and peace negotiations, that would be improved with subcommittees to address gender issues.<sup>1016</sup>



## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

Seychelles has no quotas at national or subnational levels and no political parties have adopted voluntary quotas.<sup>928</sup> In the country's CEDAW submission, the country notes that the Government and political parties consider it unnecessary to have quotas for positions since there are no legal barriers to participation in political, social and economic activities. As there are continuing gaps in some areas, such as political participation and job stereotyping, the Government says it would consider temporary measures, but prefers to focus on advocacy, support and training interventions.<sup>929</sup> Also, the Constitution of Seychelles makes no provision for quotas or reserved seats for women.

Political parties have not spoken in favour of quotas with one representative being quoted as saying that 'a political party's goal is to win election and it will field its best candidates, be they men or women', therefore, fielding male candidates implies they make the best candidates.<sup>930</sup>



## WOMEN MINISTERS

While women's participation in the Lower House is above the 25% quota, women's representation in ministerial positions remains below. In 2014, 22.7%<sup>1024</sup> of the ministerial positions were held by women, an increase from 16.7% in 2012<sup>1025</sup>. In 2017, 20% of the ministerial seats were held by women.<sup>1026</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

There is limited information available on women in the judiciary in South Sudan. However, it has been found that the judiciary in South Sudan is very much dominated by men and this is a result of the way public attorneys, legal counsels and advisors are nominated and dismissed, "which does not provide for affirmative action in favour of women".<sup>1027</sup> According to UNDP, there is a big increase of traditional women leaders in traditional courts which has 'quadrupled' in some parts of the country.<sup>1028</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

There is little data available on women in the private sector in South Sudan in the sources consulted for this report. However, according to the World Bank in 2014, 9.5% of firms in South Sudan had female top managers and 21.9% of firms in South Sudan had female participation in ownership.<sup>1029</sup>

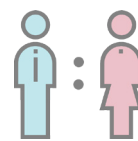
## STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



### WOMEN MPS

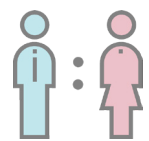
Women's representation in both houses in parliament has remained steady, only slightly increasing in recent years. With respect to the Lower House, South Sudan has exceeded its 25% quota. From 2011 to 2015, women held 26.5% of the seats in the Lower House.<sup>1020</sup> In 2016, women's representation increased to 28.5% where it remains.<sup>1021</sup>

The representation of female members in the Upper House remains low. From 2011 to 2015 women held 10% of the seats in the Upper House.<sup>1022</sup> Women's representation in the Upper House increased by 2% in 2016 to 12%.<sup>1023</sup>



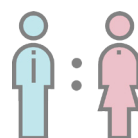
12%

Women **MPs in the Upper House in South Sudan** in 2016



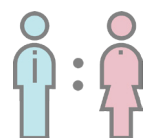
20%

Women **Ministers in South Sudan** in 2017



9.5%

Women **Top Managers in South Sudan** in 2014



21.9%

Women **Firm Owners in South Sudan** in 2014



# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Women who are politically active are often not able to fully participate in the decision-making process. According to former Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, Dr. Betty Achan Ogwaro, decisions are often not made at the table, but occur under the table and at night.<sup>1030</sup> The fact that decisions are made after working hours makes it difficult for women to participate and influence decisions.<sup>1031</sup>

Additionally, UN Women found that among the challenges that hinder women's political participation, are general political and public attitudes and indifference to gender concerns, the low prioritization of gender issues, as well as the institutional and organizational weakness of the governance institutions.<sup>1032</sup> The low prioritisation of gender equality and the role of women are also reflected in the positions women are given within the government itself. Women are more likely to head so called 'soft ministries' such as the Ministry of Gender, the Ministry of Telecommunication or the Ministry of Housing.<sup>1033</sup> However, in 2009, Suzanne Jambo, an official of the ruling party, became South Sudan's Foreign Relations Secretary.<sup>1034</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

Persistent cultural perceptions and practices such as early and forced marriages present significant challenges to women's political participation. Additionally, involvement in politics is not seen as a woman's prerogative.<sup>1035</sup> Women are often excluded from the Akiriket, the traditional (social, political and religious) assembly of initiated men where important issues are discussed.<sup>1036</sup> The women who are politically active, are sometimes labeled as 'unfeminine,' 'irresponsible wives and/or mothers,' or 'loose women'<sup>1037</sup>

Because of the patriarchal nature of society in South Sudan, women exercise only limited decision-making power at the household and community levels.<sup>1038</sup> A study published by Oxfam found that women are culturally subordinate to men and have little control over decisions, which they surrender to their spouses or other male household members.<sup>1039</sup> Moreover, the study found that the situation is further exacerbated by women and girls limited access to education, information, training and employment opportunities.<sup>1040</sup>



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

The gendered division of labour further contributes to the marginalisation of women in political and public life.<sup>1041</sup> Women's access to resources plays an important role in their ability to participate in politics.<sup>1042</sup> While it is more common for women in urban areas to participate, as they are more likely to have the monetary means, it also creates class differences and widens the gap between women.<sup>1043</sup>



## MEDIA

Following years of conflict, women are underrepresented in media and their voices are rarely heard. Organisations such as the Association of Media Development in South Sudan (AMDISS) and the Association of Women in Media in South Sudan (AMWISS), struggle to get more women to use media to get their voices heard.<sup>1044</sup> High illiteracy among women is one of the main reason preventing women from taking an active part and to talk about issues important to them.<sup>1045</sup> A lack of education and an unsafe environment are some of the reasons why there are few female journalists. Many women journalists report that they have received threats, even death threats, and are often harassed.

# SUDAN

## OVERVIEW

Since the secession of South Sudan, the Sudan has been in a period of transition. Armed conflicts between the government in the Sudan and armed opposition in Southern Kordofan's Nuba Mountains, the Blue Nile state and Darfur continue to make the country a dangerous environment for civil society organisations and activists, in particular for female activists and women's organisations.<sup>1046</sup>

With respect to women's rights, Sudan signed the Maputo Protocol in 2008 but has not ratified it.<sup>1047</sup> Likewise, Sudan has not ratified or acceded to CEDAW. Sudan has not yet adopted a National Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325. In 2015, Sudan ranked 140<sup>th</sup> out of 159 on the UNDP Gender Inequality Index.<sup>1048</sup>

Sudan is governed according to its 2005 Interim Constitution.<sup>1049</sup> The country has a bicameral parliament with legislated quotas for the Lower House.<sup>1050</sup> As of 2017, women held 130 (35.5%) out of 462 seats in the Lower House, and 19(%) out of 54 seats in the Upper House.<sup>1051</sup> Members of the Lower House, the National Assembly, are elected using a mixed majoritarian and party-list system, while the members of the Upper House, the Council of States, are chosen by state legislatures.<sup>1052</sup> The members of both houses serve five-year terms. Under the 2005 Interim Constitution, the president may serve a maximum of two five-year terms.<sup>1053</sup> President Omar al-Bashir came to power in 1989 following a coup, and he won re-election in the 2010 and 2015 elections marred by opposition boycotts and claims that the voting did not meet international standards.<sup>1054</sup> President Al-Bashir claimed that the term limits of the 2005 Interim Constitution do not apply retrospectively.<sup>1055</sup>

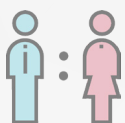
Sudanese women received the right to vote and the right to stand for elections in 1964.<sup>1056</sup> While the Republic of Sudan has not elected a female President, Fatima Abd-al-Mahmud made history in 2010 when she became the first female candidate to contest a presidential election.<sup>1057</sup> Ms. Abd-al-Mahmud has also held several ministerial positions.<sup>1058</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

Following the independence of South Sudan, a final comprehensive constitution was to have been adopted to replace the 2005 Interim Constitution.<sup>1059</sup> The Sudanese President announced that the new constitution would be introduced based on Sharia law.<sup>1060</sup> The 2016 report by the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, within its section on causes and consequences, noted that it is unclear when a new constitution will be adopted, or if substantive human rights protection, in particular for women and girls, will be included.<sup>1061</sup> The Interim National Constitution of 2005 contains provisions relevant to women's human rights, particularly Articles 31 and 32, to ensure non-discrimination and equal treatment of women in all spheres, through the adoption of affirmative action policies for women.<sup>1062</sup>

The Government of the Sudan has conducted an ongoing review of all laws and has identified over 26 laws that contain provisions discriminatory to women.<sup>1063</sup> As a result of this review, in February 2015, the Criminal Act of 1991 was amended, in particular Article 149 on crimes of rape and adultery, with new provisions that now distinguish rape from adultery.<sup>1064</sup> This change is significant in that previously, victims of rape were charged with adultery, and as consequence the law served as a barrier to reporting incidents of rape.<sup>1065</sup> Additionally, the review also led to the inclusion of a new provision on sexual harassment.<sup>1066</sup>

The Sudanese Government has adopted number of policies and strategies on violence against women. These include the 2011-2016 National Plan for Eradicating Violence Against Women, along with its successor for 2015 to 2031, and a National Plan of Action to End Female Genital Mutilation (2007-2018).<sup>1067</sup> Sudan has an exceptionally high rate of Female Genital Mutilation /Cutting, with 9 out of 10 women having been subjected to the practice.<sup>1068</sup> Additionally, the Government has established the Unit for Combating Violence against Women as a nationwide institutional mechanism to respond to violence against women.<sup>1069</sup>



### GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

The Sudan has legislated quotas for the Lower House of Parliament, but not the Upper House. Recently, the country increased the number of reserved seats for women. The 2008 National Election Act; Article 29, stated that 25% of the female members shall be elected on the basis of proportional representation at the state level from separate and closed party lists.<sup>1070</sup> In 2014, the National Assembly amended this election law and the number of seats reserved for women was increased to 30%.<sup>1071</sup>

# STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



## WOMEN MPS

Women's political participation in the Lower House has increased and meets the quota set in the revised law. From 2010 to 2013 women represented 24.6% of the seats in the Lower House.<sup>1072</sup> In 2014 there was a slight drop to 24.3%.<sup>1073</sup> Since 2015, women hold 30.5% of the seats in the Lower House.<sup>1074</sup>

In the Upper House, the number of women has increased significantly during the period 2010 to 2017. In 2010, women only held 10.9% of the seats in the Upper House,<sup>1075</sup> whereas from 2011 to 2013, women held 17.9% of these seats.<sup>1076</sup> In 2014 there was a drop to 17.2%<sup>1077</sup> but in 2015 women's representation more than doubled to 35.2%, and it has remained there.<sup>1078</sup>



## WOMEN MINISTERS

Although the percentage of women in ministerial positions initially increased, recent development has seen a decline. In 2010, only 6.3% of the ministers were female.<sup>1079</sup> By 2012 women represented 9.1% of the ministerial positions.<sup>1080</sup> In 2014 female representation among ministers increased significantly to 16.1%.<sup>1081</sup> Since then however, there has been a decline in female representation among ministers. In 2015, women held 15.2%<sup>1082</sup> of the ministerial positions and by 2017, female representation among ministers dropped to 11.4%.<sup>1083</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

No data was available in the sources consulted for this report.



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

With respect to women in the private sector in the Republic of Sudan, only limited data was found in the sources consulted. According to the World Bank in 2014, 3.4% of firms have females as top managers and 8.2% of the firms have a woman among its principal owners.

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Authorities continue to apply Sharia (Islamic law) sanctions.<sup>1084</sup> The vaguely defined public morality crimes discriminate against women in Sudan and limits their movement and role in public life. They impose corporal punishments of lashing and stoning, in violation of international norms.<sup>1085</sup> A report by Human Rights Watch indicated that female activists who are victims of sexual violence did not receive legal redress and many fled the country frightened of future abuse.<sup>1086</sup> The report revealed that Sudanese women who stayed, were often pressured by family members and friends or government officials to stop or limit their activism.<sup>1087</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

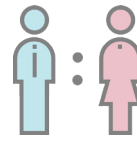
Religion, tradition and culture play a significant part in Sudanese society, and the roles assigned to women and girls within the family and community often have a negative impact on women's rights and participation.<sup>1088</sup> The belief that men are holders of authority persists and contributes to a violent and unsafe environment for women.<sup>1089</sup> Especially vulnerable are single women, divorced women, women in polygamous marriages and displaced women who live on their own, due to the perception that they are violating traditional and religious norms.<sup>1090</sup>

Access to education and literacy also impact women's political participation. 39% of women are illiterate. In some provinces enrollment at school was as low as 20% for girls. In order to compete for any seat in government, literacy is required, making access to education a serious obstacle for potential female candidates.<sup>1091</sup> Thus female political candidates and the women's movement tend to be dominated by well educated women from Khartoum, with little participation from rural women.<sup>1092</sup>



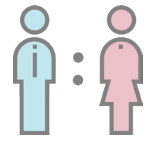
## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

The gendered division of labour further contributes to the marginalisation of women in political and public life.<sup>1041</sup> Women's access to resources plays an important role in their ability to participate in politics.<sup>1042</sup> While it is more common for women in urban areas to participate, as they are more likely to have the monetary means, it also creates class differences and widens the gap between women.<sup>1043</sup>



**30.5%**

Women **MPs in the Lower House in Sudan** since 2015



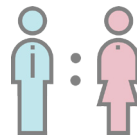
**11.4%**

Women **Ministers in Sudan** in 2017



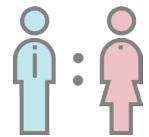
## MEDIA

The media in the Sudan is restricted, and journalists are often harassed and detained for publishing content deemed too critical (such as allegations of abuse by security forces).<sup>1095</sup> Additionally, it is not uncommon that security forces confiscate newspapers that have published articles deemed too politically sensitive.<sup>1096</sup> Female reporters and editors who write about the abuse of women activists are themselves threatened and often banned from writing.<sup>1097</sup> For example, in 2017, Ms. Hanadi El Siddig, Editor-in-chief of the newspaper Akhbar El Watan, was beaten and verbally abused during her arrest, in an attempt to intimidate her.<sup>1098</sup>



**3.4%**

Women **Top Managers in Sudan** in 2014



**8.2%**

Women **Firm Owners in Sudan** in 2014

## POLITICAL ARENA



*Barriers preventing women from participating fully in politics*

# TANZANIA

## OVERVIEW

In 1964, Tanganyika merged with the independent island of Zanzibar to form Tanzania, with Zanzibar becoming a semi-autonomous region with its own parliament and president.<sup>1099</sup> In 1977, Tanzania became a one party State when the Tanganyika African National Union and Zanzibar's Afro-Shirazi party merged to become the Party of the Revolution, which was made the only legal party. It remained a one-party state until 1992 when the Constitution was amended to allow multiple parties, and in 1995, the country held its first multi-party election.<sup>1100</sup> Since independence, Tanzania has been a peaceful and stable nation.<sup>1101</sup> Although conflict has not taken place in the country, instability in the wider region has brought thousands of refugees into the country.<sup>1102</sup>

Tanzania ratified CEDAW in 1985 and the Optional Protocol in 2004.<sup>1103</sup> The Maputo Protocol was ratified in 2007.<sup>1104</sup> Tanzania does not have a National Action Plan for UNSCR 1325.<sup>1105</sup> Tanzania ranks 125<sup>th</sup> out of 159 on the 2015 UNDP Gender Inequality Index.<sup>1106</sup>

Tanzania has a unicameral legislature composed of 393 members. Around 264 of those members are directly elected in single member constituencies; 118 are indirectly elected and out of that number, 113 are women selected by the political parties in proportion to their seats and five (two of whom must be women) are members from Zanzibar. Ten members are appointed by the President with at least five being women. The Attorney General is the final member of the National Assembly. Members of this house are elected for five-year renewable terms.<sup>1107</sup> The Executive Branch is headed by the President, who serves as the Head of Government. The president is elected for a five-year term that is renewable once.<sup>1108</sup>

Women in Tanzania gained the rights to vote and stand for election in 1959.<sup>1109</sup> In the 2015 election, there were eight candidates for president and one was a woman, representing 12.5%.<sup>1110</sup> Women's rights are guaranteed by the Constitution, but not uniformly protected as traditional and Islamic customs sometimes discriminate against women in family law.<sup>1111</sup> Many types of violence against women occur, including domestic violence, early marriage and female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C).<sup>1112</sup> In the 2010 elections, 50.03% of registered voters were women.<sup>1113</sup> In the 2015 elections, even more women registered, making up 53% of voters. According to the 2012 census, women are 51% of Tanzania's population,<sup>1114</sup> yet they make up a slight majority of the voting body. Ms. Abd-al-Mahmud has also held several ministerial positions.<sup>1058</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

Tanzania's government has made progress in addressing gaps to women's equality. In 1998, Tanzania's government passed the Sexual Offences Special Provisions Act, criminalising FGM for girls under 18. The Act also addresses other issues, including trafficking, sexual exploitation of women and children and incest. This Act amended several laws to safeguard the integrity, dignity, liberty and security of women and children when sexual offences are involved.<sup>1115</sup> One of the amended laws was Section 130 of the Penal Code, which was changed to state that rape occurs when a man has sexual intercourse with a girl or woman without her consent, but made marital rape an exception.<sup>1116</sup>

From 2001 to 2015, the Government had a National Plan of Action to Prevent and Eradicate Violence of Women and Children. The vision of the plan was a society free of physical, psychological, emotional and sexual violence against women and children by 2015.<sup>1117</sup> No new plan has been introduced to replace this.<sup>1118</sup> In 2016, the Government amended the Education Act to prohibit child marriage.<sup>1119</sup>

In sexual and reproductive rights, people are free to receive information and access to contraceptives with no restrictions. Around 32% of women aged 15–49 used a modern form of contraceptives in 2016.<sup>1120</sup> The Government provides free care for childbirth, including prenatal and postpartum services. Maternal mortality has decreased from 790 per 100,000 in 2008<sup>1121</sup> to 398 in 2015.<sup>1122</sup>

In education policy, primary school is compulsory until age 15. In December 2015, secondary school tuition was made free, but not mandatory. In primary school, half of the pupils are girls but they miss school more often because of household chores.<sup>1123</sup>

In land ownership, the 1977 Constitution guarantees gender equality regarding ownership occupation and use of land.<sup>1124</sup> The Village Law Act (1999) also protects women against customs and traditions that discriminate against their lawful access to land. The Law also grants women the right to buy or acquire land after divorce. Although this law prevents discrimination, customary law and Islamic law are used to regulate access to land and are not always fair to women.<sup>1125</sup>

In access to employment, the Employment and Labour Relations Act (2004) forbids discrimination on many grounds including sex, gender, marital status and pregnancy.<sup>1126</sup> It also guarantees equal pay for equal work and grants employees maternity leave.<sup>1127</sup>





## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

Tanzania has several quotas to guarantee the participation of women in political life. For the National Assembly, the Constitution states that women must be at least 30% of the legislature. All political parties that contest parliamentary elections must submit the names of eligible female candidates for the reserved seats to the Commission with the names in order of preference. At the subnational level, electoral law states that women must have at least one third of seats.<sup>1128</sup>

Several political parties have adopted voluntary quotas to include at least one woman to stand for election in each constituency. Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM/Party of the Revolution) in its 2010 manifesto set out to attain 50% women representation by 2015.<sup>1129</sup> In the 2015 election, John Magufuli was the candidate for president and Samia Suluhu his running mate.<sup>1130</sup> They won the election and Samia Suluhu became the first female Vice-President of Tanzania.<sup>1131</sup>

Zanzibar's House of Representatives has a 30% quota for women. The reserved seats are allocated proportionally to parties that won more than 10% of the total seats in the House.<sup>1132</sup>



## WOMEN MINISTERS

Several women are leaders in the Cabinet. In 2010 and 2011, the Cabinet had eight female ministers and three deputies.<sup>1136</sup> The total number of ministers for those dates was not found. In 2012, women comprised 30% of the Cabinet with nine women out of 30 ministers and four deputy ministers.<sup>1137</sup> In 2013, the proportion was lower with 25.5% of ministers being women.<sup>1138</sup> In 2014, the proportion was lower still at 20%.<sup>1139</sup> In 2015, the proportion of women was at its lowest in the study period at 16%.<sup>1140</sup> With a new president, the proportion rose to 32.3% in 2016<sup>1141</sup> and then decreased to 22.7% in 2017.<sup>1142</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

The Court of Appeal is the highest court in Tanzania. In 2010 and 2011, women comprised 31% of the court with five women on a court of 15.<sup>1143</sup> Between 2012 and 2015, women were 26.6% of the court with four women judges on a court of 15.<sup>1144</sup> In 2015, the proportion decreased to 18.8% with three women out of 16 judges, and in 2017 went up to 23.5% with four women out of 17.<sup>1145</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

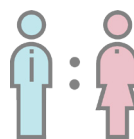
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## STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



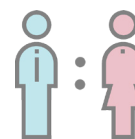
### WOMEN MPS

At the beginning of 2010, women held 30% of seats in the National Assembly.<sup>1133</sup> Following the election in October 2010, women increased their presence to 36%. In addition to their reserved seats, 21 women were elected from constituencies.<sup>1134</sup> After the 2015 elections, the proportion of women increased slightly to 36.6%. Women won 25 seats in addition to the reserved seats.<sup>1135</sup>



# 36.6%

Women in the **National Assembly House** in **Tanzania** after 2015



# 22.7%

Women **Ministers** in **Tanzania** in 2017

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

The quota system has had the positive effect of increasing the number of women in government. It has, however, created some obstacles. One is that party leaders often allow women to compete for only reserved seats, arguing that women should not take the seats from men.<sup>1147</sup> Another challenge is that women are not seen as equals by men, as most of them are nominated and not elected. Women reported that nominated MPs were seen as 'second class' and are passed up from leadership positions.<sup>1148</sup> These 'special seat MPs' have limited access to resources, like the Constituency Development Fund<sup>1149</sup> and the nominating process for these seats is not transparent. On the day before the 2015 election, several parties had not submitted their list of women nominated for special seats. The lack of rules guiding the process of nominating and lack of oversight means the process has the potential for corruption and manipulation.<sup>1150</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

One cultural barrier women face is the belief that women should not be involved in politics. In past elections, many Tanzanians have expressed the view that while women should be included in post-independence government, they should have a limited role.<sup>1151</sup>



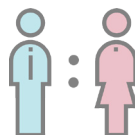
## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

One economic challenge faced by women is from political parties. As there are reserved seats for women, some party leaders are reluctant to invest money into campaigns for female candidates and prefer to invest in their male candidates.



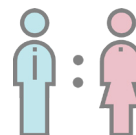
## MEDIA

Observers from the Commonwealth noted that during the 2010 elections, the media did not adequately cover women candidates nor did they devote attention to gender issues.<sup>1152</sup> Women's stories were only 12% of election related stories in 2010. Additionally, women were only invited to talk about issues related to gender equality and GBV.<sup>1153</sup> Another challenge is that lesser known candidates, particularly women candidates, were at a disadvantage as most journalists have limited resources and can only report on easily available information.<sup>1154</sup>



**23.5%**

Women **in the Court** in  
**Tanzania** in 2017



**16.5%**

Women **Managers** in  
**Tanzania** in 2006

# UGANDA

## OVERVIEW

Uganda has a long history of civil war and conflict, with elections that often become violent.<sup>1155</sup> Moreover, the country is exposed to complex intra-state conflicts with bordering countries and non-state armed groups in the Great Lakes region.<sup>1156</sup> However, the women's rights movement has made some significant headway and women are fairly well represented in leadership roles.

The Ugandan Constitution protects women's human rights and the country has ratified a number of international agreements.<sup>1157</sup> Uganda ratified CEDAW in 1985,<sup>1158</sup> and the Maputo Protocol in 2010.<sup>1159</sup> In 2008, Uganda launched a National Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325.<sup>1160</sup> Uganda ranks 121<sup>st</sup> on the 2015 UNDP Gender Inequality Index.<sup>1161</sup>

Uganda is a presidential republic where the President serves as both Head of State and Head of Government.<sup>1162</sup> The President is directly elected every five years by universal adult suffrage.<sup>1163</sup> Since 2005, there are no limits to the number of terms a President may serve.<sup>1164</sup> The Parliament is made up of 465 members of whom 422 are elected directly, 25 are indirectly elected and 18 members are appointed by the President.<sup>1165</sup> As of 2017, all members serve a 7-years term. In 2017, 154 out of 449 (34.3%) seats were occupied by women.<sup>1166</sup> There are currently 16 vacancies in parliament. Additionally, there are legislated quotas for parliament as well as for the sub-national levels.

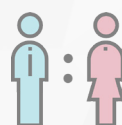
Ugandan women were granted the right to vote and stand for election in 1962.<sup>1167</sup> Though the country has not elected a female President, two women stood as presidential candidates in the two most recent elections; Beti Olive Kamywa Namisango Turwomwe in 2011<sup>1168</sup> and Maureen Kyalya Waluube in 2016.<sup>1169</sup> In 2011, Uganda had the first female Vice-President, Specioza Naigaga Wandira Kazibwe, and in 2011, Ms. Rebecca Kadaga became the first female Speaker of Parliament.<sup>1170</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

With respect to protecting women's rights and advancing gender equality, the Government of Uganda has made notable progress in developing legal frameworks, policies and programmes.<sup>1171</sup> The Constitution of Uganda prohibits laws, customs or traditions that are against the dignity, welfare and interest of women, and protects an affirmative action policy.<sup>1172</sup> For example, Article 21 of the Constitution provides for equality of men and women, and prohibits discrimination of a person on the grounds of sex.<sup>1173</sup>

In 2013, the National Land Policy was approved and it directs the government to pass legislation to 'protect the right to inheritance and ownership of land for women and children', and to ensure equal land rights for men and women in marriage.<sup>1174</sup>

The Government is also committed to achieving gender equality and empowerment as stated in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). To attain SDG 5, the Ugandan government commits, among other goals, to reduce discrimination and marginalisation rates by 4%, and to mainstream gender and rights in policies, plans, and programmes.<sup>1175</sup> Its promise to push for change is further manifested in the government's attempts to localise and promote national awareness of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development into its national planning frameworks.<sup>1176</sup>



### GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

Uganda has legislated quotas for the national parliament as well as at the sub-national level. According to Article 78(1) of the Constitution, 'Parliament shall consist of one woman representative for every district.'<sup>1177</sup> As the number of districts in Uganda grew so did the number of reserved seats for women.<sup>1178</sup> There are 112 districts in Uganda.<sup>1179</sup>

# STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



## WOMEN MPS

In 2010, women held 31.3% of the seats in parliament.<sup>1180</sup> From 2011 until 2015, women occupied 35% of the seats.<sup>1181</sup> In 2016, there was a decline in the number of seats held by women to 33.5%, however, by 2017 it increased to 34.3%.<sup>1182</sup>



## WOMEN MINISTERS

The percentage of women holding ministerial position has slowly increased. In 2010, 32% of the ministers in the Ugandan Government were women.<sup>1183</sup> By 2012, the percentage of women in ministerial positions only marginally increased to 32.1%.<sup>1184</sup> In 2015, women held only 29.6% of the ministerial positions,<sup>1185</sup> but in 2017, the percentage of women holding ministerial positions has increased to 36.7%.<sup>1186</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

There was limited data available in sources consulted on how many women serve in the judiciary. However, in 2015, of the eight Supreme Court justices, three were women, and of the 46 high court judges, 20 were women.<sup>1187</sup> At the international level, the United Nations General Assembly and the Security Council elected Julia Sebutinde, a Ugandan female judge, to the International Court of Justice bench in 2011.



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

In 2017, it was found (report) that women owned 34.8% of Ugandan businesses, making Uganda the highest ranked country in Africa for female entrepreneurship.<sup>1188</sup> The report also found that the average female entrepreneur has at least a secondary education, is between the ages 18-34 years old and works in the customer service sector.<sup>1189</sup> In 2016, a commitment was made by the Ugandan private sector to create more 'equitable conditions for women in the workplace,' and they pledged to adopt the UNDP led model, 'Gender Equality Seal Certification Programme for Public and Private Enterprises.'<sup>1190</sup>

While Uganda is a shining example of women-led business initiatives, the business sector is still dominated by men. This is partially attributed to women's domestic role and lower rates of access to credit.<sup>1191</sup> In 2013, 15.4% of firms in the private sector in Uganda had females as top managers, and 26.6% of firms have a woman among the principal owners.<sup>1192</sup> However, with current trends, it would appear that these statistics might shift in the coming years. As of 2016, around 90.5% of women were seeking to start businesses by borrowing and saving money, a figure much higher than the average of other low-to-lower-middle-income countries, which sits at 52.4%.<sup>1193</sup>

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Despite a rise in women's participation in national politics, women have reportedly been prevented from making greater contributions due to the patriarchal and militarised political system.<sup>1194</sup> Additionally, while the affirmative action policy was meant to enhance women's participation in elective politics, by ensuring that there is a woman representative for each district in the country, a report by Women's Democracy Group (WDG) notes that male contestants and their supporters have used it as tool for false propaganda.<sup>1195</sup> The message relayed to the electorate is that women have reserved seats and thus they should not contest for direct positions so as to reduce competition for male contestants.<sup>1196</sup> Moreover, 'the quota system is usually controlled by political parties, and this often means that women feel they must be loyal to the party line, even at the expense of promoting gender-centred legislative reforms.'<sup>1197</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

Ugandan women face discrimination and marginalisation as deep-rooted cultural and traditional practices that discriminate against women and girls and customary practices in many parts of Uganda continue.<sup>1198</sup> Traditional views of a women's role, coupled with lack of support from their spouses, discourages many qualified women from joining politics.<sup>1199</sup> Moreover, it has also been reported that female voters are intimidated by their spouses and prevented from listening to campaigns and voting for candidates of their choice.<sup>1200</sup> It is not uncommon that women who do not vote for their husbands' choice of candidates will be branded 'disloyal,' and there is anecdotal evidence that suggests an increase in domestic violence.<sup>1201</sup>



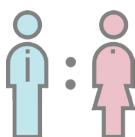
## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

According to a 2016 report by Women's Democracy Group (WDG), one of the reasons why women's political participation remains low is the fact that women have less access to resources than their male counterparts.<sup>1202</sup> The report also found that the amended Presidential and Parliamentary Elections Acts undermined women's political participation by raising the fees and thus limiting the number of female candidates at presidential and parliamentary levels.<sup>1203</sup> As of 2016, the fee for Presidential election was 20 million Uganda Shillings (5,200 US \$) and 3 million Uganda Shillings (780 US \$) for Parliamentary candidates.<sup>1204</sup>



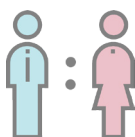
## MEDIA

A report by the Uganda Media Women's Association (UMWA) published in 2016 revealed that Ugandan newspapers offered more space to male politicians than female politicians.<sup>1205</sup> The report also found that, in their coverage of the recent general elections, the media often portrayed women negatively and reinforced stereotypes against women.<sup>1206</sup> Moreover, according to the findings, out of the 2,624 election related stories published between December 2015 and February 2016, women featured as news subjects in only 20% of the stories while men dominated the remaining 80%.<sup>1207</sup>



**34.3%**

Women **MPS** in **Uganda**  
after 2017



**36.7%**

Women **Ministers** in  
**Uganda** in 2017



*Women still being dragged by old practices in politics*



# NORTH AFRICAN REGION

## OVERVIEW

In 2011, protests and popular uprisings, known as the Arab Spring, took place in a number of the North African countries, resulting in changes in the political leadership in Egypt, Libya and Tunisia. Women played a large part in the protests and uprising, and demonstrated alongside the men. In the wake of the Arab Spring, there was much hope that the situation for women would greatly improve across the region. However, progress has been mixed. In some countries, the changes have resulted in an increase of women's representation in parliament and in decision-making capacities, as well as government action to improve women's rights. Notably, Tunisia and Libya have made progress in reducing gender inequality and their progress is reflected on the UNDP Gender Inequality Index (GII). While in other countries, the new political environment not only opened up space for women and women activists, it also gave room to more conservative forces seeking to limit the role of women. For example, in Egypt gender inequality remains high according to the GII. Despite their active role during the Arab Spring, Egyptian women's representation in parliament is the lowest in the region.

All countries, with the exception of Western Sahara, have ratified CEDAW. Western Sahara is not a member state of the United Nations and has therefore not signed and ratified CEDAW. Of the countries in the North African region, only two countries (Libya and Mauritania) have ratified the Maputo Protocol, while two countries (Algeria and Western Sahara) have signed but not ratified, and three countries (Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia) have not signed or ratified. None of the countries in the region has adopted a National Plan of Action for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325. Of note, Morocco was readmitted to the African Union (AU) in 2017 after a more than three decades long absence, having left when the AU's predecessor the 'Organisation of African Unity (OAU) recognised Western Sahara, a region previously annexed by Morocco.

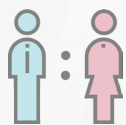
In all countries, with the exception of Morocco, women received the right to vote and stand for elections during the 1950s and 1960s, with Egypt leading the way in 1956. While Moroccan women received the right to vote in 1963, it was not until 30 years later that they gained the right to stand for elections. In none of the countries has a woman been elected president, however, in four countries female candidates have run for the presidency. All countries, except Tunisia, Egypt, and Western Sahara have adopted some form of quotas for women's representation in parliament.

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

The governments of North Africa have taken steps to improve women's political participation, gender equality and women's rights by adopting legislation and implementing policies and strategies. To promote women's political participation at local levels in Algeria, the Ministry of Interior partnered with UNDP to train women in local government and newly elected parliamentarians in participatory democracy. In Libya, on the other hand, discussions to adopt a new constitution to replace the current interim Constitutional Declaration have stalled, and women's participation in decision-making and public life has been reduced significantly.

A number of countries have adopted strategies to eliminate discrimination against women. While women in Mauritania have the right to own land under the law, they are often discriminated in access to land. To address the situation, the Government adopted a strategy with respect to women's land governance. Similarly, while women in Morocco have equal access to land, they did not receive equal shares of profits from communal land. A 2012 government order now gives men and women equal rights to benefits and income from their land.

With respect to sexual harassment and assault and violence against women, both Tunisia and Egypt adopted stronger legislation protecting women. Tunisia took important steps to provide protection to women who are victims of violence. In 2017, the country passed Draft Law 20/2016, significant as it provides a comprehensive definition of aggression against women, access to both psychological and legal support, and repeals provisions in the penal code that protected the rapists if they married the victims. In response to the increasing number of cases of sexual harassment and sexual assault, the Government of Egypt adopted Decree no. 50 in 2014, reforming the penal code and broadening the definition of harassment.

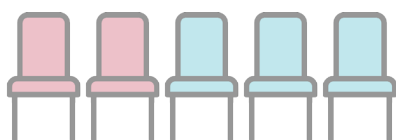


## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

Five of the countries in the North African region have constitutions that include gender parity provisions. Tunisia stands out and the country's law concerning gender parity is in many respects considered unique for the region. In 2014, Tunisia adopted a proportional representation list system, and each list submitted by a political party must follow the rules of parity and alternate between men and women. Furthermore, the constitution guarantees equality between men and women in elected offices. Since the adoption of the new constitution women's representation in parliament has increased.

Both Algeria and Morocco have adopted legislated quotas for the lower house as well as for the sub-national level. However, the upper houses in Algeria and Morocco do not have quotas. Nevertheless, Morocco stands out as the number of reserved seats for women in the lower house doubled from 30 seats to 60 in 2012.

Although Egyptian women were active participants during the Arab Spring protests, in the wake of the uprisings the country's gender parity provisions have weakened. With the adoption of the 2014 Constitution, the quota has been deleted in principle and the Egyptian government does not commit to the equal representation of women in parliament, but rather to ensure the appropriate representation of women in parliament. However, it is maintained for local councils. Western Sahara also does not have legislated quotas but the government in exile recognises the equality of men and women.



# 49.5%

Women **Firm Owners** in **Tunisia**  
in 2013

## STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



### WOMEN MPS

In general, women's participation in parliament has increased across North Africa. The standout countries in the region are Algeria, Mauritania and Tunisia where women's participation in parliament is above 25%. Particularly noteworthy is Tunisia, which has the highest representation of women in parliament (31.3%) in the region and among Arab states.<sup>1208</sup> However, not all countries saw an increase in women's representation. The lowest representation of women is found in Egypt, where following the most recent election in 2015 women hold 14.9% of the seats in parliament.<sup>1209</sup>



### WOMEN MINISTERS

With respect to women in ministerial positions, across North African women's representation remains significantly lower than in parliament. However, Mauritania is a notable exception with women holding 30.8% of the ministerial positions in 2017.<sup>1210</sup> Following the Arab Spring, a number of countries such as Libya saw the number of female ministers decline, while in Tunisia the number has increased.



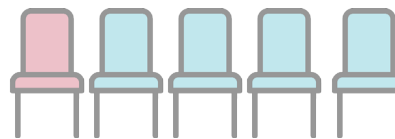
### WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

While the data available with respect to women in the judiciary in North Africa is limited, there are some positive developments. For example, in Morocco and Egypt, the number of women in Mauritania has increased. Between 2006 and 2015 there were less than 45 female judges across Egypt, but in June 2015, 28 additional women were appointed as judges.<sup>1211</sup> In Morocco, there were 940 (23.5%) female judges out of 4,001 sitting judges in 2014, and by 2015 that number of female judges had risen to 1,004 (25.1%).<sup>1212</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

There is limited data available with respect to women in the private sector in the region. The stand out countries are Morocco and Tunisia. In 2013, 31.3% of firms in Morocco had females as top managers, while the percentage of firms with a woman among the principal owners was highest in Tunisia with 49.5% in 2013.<sup>1213</sup>



25%

Seats filled by women in the  
**Parliament in Algeria, Mauritania  
and Tunisia**



## BEYOND NUMBERS:

### THE IMPACT OF WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS AND DECISION-MAKING

In all countries in the North African region, women play an important role in initiating policies and legislation vis-à-vis women's rights. The advocacy work by female members of parliament and women's rights organisations and activists has resulted in positive changes for women's participation in decision-making and women's human rights. This includes increasing numbers of women judges, preventing legislation that would negatively impact women's human rights and increasing access to education:

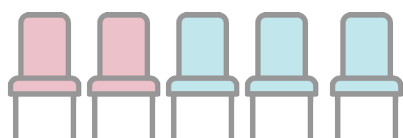
In Egypt, Suzy Nashed drafted legislation to stop discrimination against women holding judgeships in the State Council, the administrative court system. The proposal also received support from other members of parliament and the National Council of Women.

Moroccan women's groups and individual activists have lobbied for increased representation of women and equal opportunities to run for office. Their activism resulted in the increase of seats reserved for women in parliament, as well as funding for capacity building projects to support women running for office.

In Algeria, as a result of the active campaigning by the collective "Stop à la violence! Les droits aux femmes maintenant", the Government of Algeria not only tabled a bill to criminalise domestic violence, but when the Penal Code was amended and later adopted, it represented critical progress in protecting women. Women's groups in Tunisia also played an important role in the adoption of a law that strengthened the protection of women victims of violence and abolished retrograde provisions, such as the possibility for a rapist of a minor to marry his victim to avoid prosecution

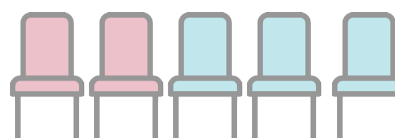
In Mauritania, the Women's Parliamentary Caucus has been the driving force behind a number of proposals vis-à-vis gender-based violence. In 2016, the Caucus established agreement on actions that would be taken to eradicate gender-based violence such as domestic violence and abuse, and included the proposal for new laws and legal frameworks. The development is significant as Mauritania does not have laws on domestic violence, rape and other forms of sexual violence.

In Western Sahara, women have been the driving force in providing Sahrawi girls and women with greater access to education. Due to their administration of the refugee camps, literacy rates soared and an increasing number of primary and secondary schools were built. In addition, women were also successful in obtaining agreements that resulted in more students going to universities in other countries.



30.8%

Seats filled by women in  
**Ministerial positions in  
Mauritania in 2017**



25.1%

Seats filled by women in the  
**Judiciary in Morocco in 2015**

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

In many countries in the North African region, politics is largely seen as male domain thus presenting a significant barrier to women's representation and participation. In Algeria, for example, political parties are doing little to invest in or promote female candidates during elections. In Mauritania, some politicians have taken steps to prevent women running for office and told women to run just for fun.<sup>1214</sup>

A common challenge for female politicians in North Africa is that women are often excluded from participating in various decision-making bodies. In Morocco, it was reported that political parties often assign women work considered more feminine and exclude women from assignments although the women may be more qualified than their male counterparts.

In a number of countries, the rise in harassment and assaults on women presents a significant barrier to women's participation in decision-making bodies and civil society organisations. There has been a significant increase in cases of sexual harassment and violence against women in Egypt and Libya. Similarly, Sahrawi women active in the Western Sahara independence movement face physical repression and human rights violations. As a consequence of the high level of insecurity and unsafe environments, women's ability to fully and equally participate is greatly reduced.



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

Conservative cultures and societies also present barriers to women's participation in the North African region. Persistent gendered division of labour at home, strongly held stereotypes and cultural and religious pressures limit women's participation. For example, in Morocco, women are expected to play traditional roles in the household. As decision-making bodies often meet in the evening and participating in such meetings is met with disapproval, women's involvement is greatly limited. While Tunisian women face similar challenges, a study by UNESCO revealed that women who are politically active are able to participate because they not only have the support of their husbands but also because their spouses share the responsibilities of the household. Women who challenge strongly held traditional and patriarchal views of their roles in society are often threatened and stigmatized. In Egypt, for example, strongly held religious views on gender roles not only prevent women from running for political office, but also from serving in the judiciary. Although some Libyans expressed support for women in public life and decision-making, there were differing views of what type of engagement was best-suited for women.



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

A common challenge for female candidates and women activists in North Africa is access to financial support. During the 2012 elections in Tunisia, a ban on private donations and limits put on funds received from public resources, forced parties use their own resources. As a result female candidates received less support within political parties and faced greater challenges in fundraising. In Egypt, many women's groups and activists had their assets frozen by the Egyptian court, which limited the work of women activists and their ability to influence decision-making.

Additionally, engaging in politics can have negative economic consequences for women in a region where many women live in poverty or work in the informal sector. In Mauritania, female politicians are paid less than their male colleagues due to discriminatory laws being in place. There are also differences between rural and urban women with respect to access to financial support. In Morocco, rural women lack access to resources to run successful campaigns and continue to be discriminated against. Additionally, economic participation among Algerian women is among the lowest in the world, and many Algerian women are engaged in unpaid work further limiting their opportunities to influence and participate.



## MEDIA

Media in the North Africa region provides less coverage on women's involvement in politics denying women an important tool in mobilising support. During the 2012 elections in Tunisia, only 2% of media coverage was dedicated to female candidates. The media also provides less coverage of violations against women politicians and activists. In contrast to international coverage, the Egyptian media has remained silent on reporting women's activities and experiences, such as cases of sexual assault and sexual harassment, avoiding negative perceptions of the country. Reporting on developments in Western Sahara is limited due to the tightly controlled media. When there is coverage, the focus tends to not focus on the prominent role women play in political resistance, but on the role of women in the refugee camps.

# ALGERIA

## OVERVIEW

While other countries in the region saw uprisings during the Arab Spring, and even though the country faced social, political and economic challenges, Algeria has maintained relatively stability. The Algerian Government has introduced reforms aimed at deepening the democratic process, amending the Constitution and revising laws governing elections, political parties and women's participation in public life.<sup>1215</sup> Since the country's independence movement, Algerian women have been politically active and although the country has made progress in terms of women's political participation and women's rights, challenges remain.

Algeria ratified CEDAW on 22 May 1996, but maintains reservations to Articles 2, 15 and 16 due to perceived conflicts in relation to Algeria's family laws and cultural practices, which prevents its full implementation.<sup>1216</sup> Although Algeria signed the Maputo Protocol on 29 December 2003, it has yet to be ratified.<sup>1217</sup> While Algeria has not adopted a National Action Plan for the implementation of UNSCR 1325, the National Algerian Parliamentary Caucus put UNSCR 1325 at the core of its operational by-laws and yearly action plans that fundamentally work towards achieving gender equality.<sup>1218</sup> Algeria ranks 94th out of 159 countries on the UNDP Gender Inequality Index.<sup>1219</sup>

The country has a bicameral parliament with legislated quotas for the lower house (National People's Assembly) and at the sub-national level, however, there is no legislated quota for the upper house (Council of the Nation).<sup>1220</sup> In 2017, 119 (25.8%) out of the 462 seats in the lower house were held by women, but only 10 (7%) out of 143 seats in the upper house.<sup>1221</sup> The President is elected for a five-year term. In 2016, the parliament passed revisions to the Constitution that reintroduced a two-term limit to the presidency and increased the power of the parliament and requires the President to consult the parliamentary majority on the appointment of a Prime Minister.<sup>1222</sup> The members of the National People's Assembly are directly elected in multi-seat constituencies to five-year terms, and the seats are awarded using proportional representation.<sup>1223</sup> All members of the Council of the Nation serve a 6-year term. Two-thirds of the members are elected by a majority vote by the Electoral College, and one-third of the members are appointed by the President.<sup>1224</sup> Half of the membership is renewed every three years.<sup>1225</sup>

Algerian women were granted the right to vote and run for office in 1962.<sup>1226</sup> While Algeria has not had a female President, in 2004 Louisa Hanoune became the first ever woman to bid for the presidency.<sup>1227</sup> Ms. Hanoune was also a candidate in the 2009 and 2014 presidential elections.<sup>1228</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

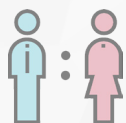
Algeria ranks among top countries that have successfully worked for the promotion of women's rights making significant progress in promoting these rights.<sup>1229</sup> Several governmental institutions and bodies have been established to promote women's rights and participation in various sectors.

With respect to women's political participation, the Algerian Government works with various agencies to provide sustainable resources and opportunities. The Ministry of Interior and UNDP together with local government launched a programme to train women in local government and newly elected parliamentarians in participatory democracy, civil society and public service management and included the launch of a forum for parliamentary women.<sup>1230</sup>

In 2015, the Government and UN Women signed an agreement to launch a programme to further gender equality and women's empowerment in Algeria.<sup>1231</sup> The programme addresses three areas. The first area seeks to provide capacity building and technical assistance to elected women at national and local levels to enhance their influence in the decision-making process.<sup>1232</sup> The second area focuses on the elimination of gender-based violence by improving the support system available for female survivors of violence in line with Algeria's national strategy to combat violence against women.<sup>1233</sup> The third area of the programme advocates and promotes gender equality values through media outreach to raise awareness among younger audiences and change negative gender stereotypes.<sup>1234</sup>

Additionally, in December 2015, Parliament amended the Penal Code to address gaps in the law concerning violence against women by criminalizing some forms of domestic violence.<sup>1235</sup> Under Law no. 15-19, assault against a spouse or ex-spouse is punishable by up to 20 years in prison, depending on the victim's injuries, and by a life sentence if the attack results in death.<sup>1236</sup> The Law also expands the definition of sexual harassment, strengthened penalties for it and criminalised harassment in public spaces.<sup>1237</sup>





## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

Algeria has made strides with respect to women's participation in elected assemblies at a national and local level.<sup>1238</sup> In 2012, the Law for the Representation of Women was adopted. Article 2 requires variable quotas of between 20% and 50% of candidates for parliament to be women, depending on the number of seats in each electoral district<sup>1239</sup>. In relation to the magnitude of the electoral constituencies, the law prescribes the following quota: 20% for constituencies with 4 seats; 30% for those with 5 or more seats; 35% for those with 14 or more seats; 40% for those with 32 or more seats; and 50% for the constituencies abroad.<sup>1240</sup> Moreover, according to Article 7, political parties can be awarded state funding according to the number of their female candidates elected at the national and sub-national levels.<sup>1241</sup> Legislative quotas for the upper house are still not implemented.<sup>1242</sup>



## WOMEN MINISTERS

The number of women who hold ministerial positions fluctuates. In 2010 women held 6% of the ministerial positions.<sup>1248</sup> However, by 2012 only 3.1% of the ministers were female.<sup>1249</sup> In 2014, women's representation increased to 12.1%<sup>1250</sup> and by 2015, women represented 20% of the ministers.<sup>1251</sup> By 2017, the number of female ministers had dropped to 13.3%.<sup>1252</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

Little data was found with respect to women in the judiciary in Algeria in the sources consulted for this report. However, in 2010, it was found that women had a good representation in the system judiciary in Algeria, comprising a third of the country prosecutors and 36% of judges.<sup>1253</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

There is limited data available on the proportion of Algerian women in the private sector. According to the 2016 Global Gender Gap Report, 15% of firms had female participation in ownership.<sup>1254</sup> This number has remained constant since 2011. No data was found with respect to the number of firms with female top managers.

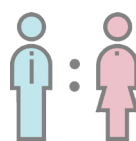
## STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



### WOMEN MPS

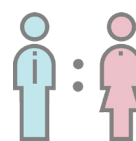
The 2012 Law for the Representation of Women is widely seen as a breakthrough that effectively ended the marginalisation and low representation of women in parliamentary politics.<sup>1243</sup> In 2010, women held only 8% of the seats in the lower house, which increased to 30% in 2012.<sup>1244</sup> Between 2013 and 2016 women's participation peaked at 31.6%, and then lowered to 25.8% in 2017.<sup>1245</sup>

While women's participation in the lower house increased, women's representation in the upper house remains low, only increasing by less than 2%. In 2010, women held 5.1% of the seats in the upper house.<sup>1246</sup> From 2012, 7% of the seats in the upper house are held by women.<sup>1247</sup>



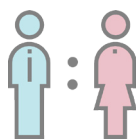
7%

Women in the **Upper House** in **Algeria** from 2015



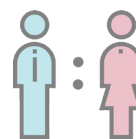
13.3%

Women **Ministers** in **Algeria** in 2017



36%

Women **Judges** in **Algeria** in 2010



15%

Women **Firm Owners** in **Algeria** in 2016

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Whilst Algeria has adopted legislated quotas, political parties struggle to find female candidates, as politics is largely seen as a male domain.<sup>1255</sup> The macho culture of politics is particularly pervasive in the desert and rural heartland of Algeria.<sup>1256</sup> Though girls make up the majority in universities and an increasing number of women enter the job market, political parties are reportedly doing little to invest in finding and promoting women in politics.<sup>1257</sup> However, one woman interviewed by VOANews said that though she had been approached by political parties, she was reticent to run for parliament as she did not wish to be seen as a token woman.<sup>1258</sup>

The women who do enter politics and become members of parliament have been described in the press as "decorative plants".<sup>1259</sup> They also have less influence in decision-making compared to their male counterparts. A study published in 2012, revealed that women made up only 22.6% and 21.9% of the power committees and the economic and foreign affairs committees of the National Assembly, and noted that women's participation was concentrated, at 60%, on social committees.<sup>1260</sup>

Furthermore, some political parties in Algeria were found to discriminate against female candidates by concealing the women's faces on election posters. During the 2017 election, it was reported that several political parties only showed hijabs surrounding blank spaces on posters for female candidates alongside photos of male candidates.<sup>1261</sup> The practice is illegal and the Algerian election authorities ordered the parties to display photos of all candidates or be removed from the vote.<sup>1262</sup> However, one female candidate noted that while no one in her family had a problem with her working as a politician, but because the family comes from a conservative region, they did not want her to display her face on a poster.<sup>1263</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

While women have had the right to run for office since 1962, women have been excluded from public life as traditional views have persisted in society, casting women mainly in the roles of wives and mothers.<sup>1264</sup> Where laws have changed in favour of women and women's rights, the changes are not always reflected in practice, in particular in rural areas where patriarchal customs and traditions remain strong.<sup>1265</sup> Thus so far, few Algerian women have held leadership positions that would allow them to influence policymaking.<sup>1266</sup>



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

Despite the advances in the political sphere, economic barriers remain that prevent Algerian women's participation in decision-making. A study by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) revealed Algerian women's economic participation is among the lowest in the world, but noted that in recent years more women in Algeria are entering the job market.<sup>1267</sup> Furthermore, the study found that many Algerian women are engaged in unpaid household activities, for example in the agricultural sector, and that family constraints limit women's opportunity to engage in paid work.<sup>1268</sup>



## MEDIA

Although women have made significant progress in terms of representation in the media and currently hold positions previously reserved for men, women continue to come up against a glass ceiling, a study

Commissioned by UN-Women and the Ministry of Communication revealed.<sup>1269</sup> In particular, women are struggling to obtain top decision-making positions. Moreover, the study revealed that the media show little interest in women. Only 22% of the topics covered address women.<sup>1270</sup> Furthermore, the media continues to perpetuate stereotypes of women mainly portraying them as good wives and mothers.

# EGYPT

## OVERVIEW

In 2011, following several days of protests, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak was removed from office.<sup>1271</sup> Since his removal, Egypt has experienced political instability and changes in political leadership. Although women actively participated in the protests alongside the men and hoped to benefit from the uprising, since the revolution women have been frequently overlooked in decision-making processes.<sup>1272</sup> Whilst women were appointed to the special committee responsible for drafting the new Constitution of 2014, they only represented 10% of the 50 members.<sup>1273</sup> Moreover, following elections and a military coup, women have faced gender-based violence and repression.<sup>1274</sup> In 2013, Egypt was found to be the worst country in the Arab world to be a woman.<sup>1275</sup>

With respect to women's rights, Egypt ratified CEDAW on 18 September 1981, but maintains reservations to articles 9, 16 and 21 preventing its full implementation.<sup>1276</sup> The country has not yet signed and ratified the Maputo Protocol.<sup>1277</sup> Though Egypt has expressed support, the country has not yet made specific commitments towards adopting a National Plan of Action for the implementation of UNSCR 1325.<sup>1278</sup> The country ranks 135th out of 159 countries on the UNDP Gender Inequality Index.<sup>1279</sup>

Egypt is a presidential republic where the Head of State is the President and the Head of Government is the Prime Minister.<sup>1280</sup> In 2014, Abdul Fattah al-Sisi was elected president. The President is elected by absolute majority in a two-round contest and serves a 4-year term, while the Prime Minister is appointed by the President with the approval of the parliament.<sup>1281</sup> Egypt has a unicameral parliament and, as of December 2017, women hold 89 (14.9%) out of 596 seats in parliament.<sup>1282</sup> Since the adoption of the 2014 Constitution, the quota is deleted in principle.<sup>1283</sup> Of the members in parliament 568 are directly elected, while 28 are appointed by the President.<sup>1284</sup> Of the members who are directly elected, 448 seats are filled by a majority system, and the remaining 120 seats through a party block vote.<sup>1285</sup> All members of parliament serve 5-year terms.

Egyptian women were granted the right to vote and run for office in 1956.<sup>1286</sup> Notwithstanding, women's participation in Egyptian politics has been low and no woman has been elected president. In 2012, Buthaina Kamel made history by becoming the first female presidential candidate in the country's modern history.<sup>1287</sup> With respect to Egyptian women in leadership roles, a positive step was taken 2017 when Nadia Ahmed Abdou became the first woman to be appointed governor.<sup>1288</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

In 2014, the new Constitution was approved in a referendum with 98% approval.<sup>1289</sup> While the 2012 constitution did not stipulate equality between men and women, the new Constitution declared that "the state guarantees the achievement of equality between men and women in all civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution".<sup>1290</sup> With respect to women's rights, the core is Article 11 which includes principles such as equality, political rights, and protection from all forms of discrimination.<sup>1291</sup> Furthermore, under the 2014 Constitution, the state also commits to protect women against all forms of violence.<sup>1292</sup> The 2014 Constitution has improved the position of women who had been marginalized under the previous constitution.<sup>1293</sup>

In response to the increasing number of cases of sexual harassment and sexual assault, the Government has taken a number of steps. In 2013, a Unit on Monitoring Crimes of Violence Against Women was set up in response to the rising number of attacks and sexual assaults.<sup>1294</sup> In 2014, Decree no. 50 came into effect reforming the penal code and broadening the definition of harassment and sexual harassment.<sup>1295</sup> This amendment included sentences of up to 6 months in prison or a fine for sexual harassment, and a longer sentence of 2 to 5 years and a fine if the offender is in a position of authority, or if the offender uses a weapon during the assault.<sup>1296</sup>

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is widely practiced in Egypt. In 2016, the Egyptian Government amended the law prohibiting FGM and introduced harsher penalties.<sup>1297</sup> Under the new law, those who carry out FGM may serve 5 to 7 years in prison and up to 15 years if the procedure results in permanent disability or death.<sup>1298</sup> Additionally, any person who escorts girls to undergo FGM will face 1 to 3 years in prison.<sup>1299</sup>

President Abdel Fatah El-Sisi declared 2017 as the Year of Egyptian Women in response to a proposal submitted by the National Council of Women (NCW).<sup>1300</sup> The NCW is the only governmental body dedicated solely to addressing the issues and concerns of Egyptian women.<sup>1301</sup> During the Year of the Egyptian Women, the NCW developed the National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030.<sup>1302</sup> The strategy is comprised of four pillars: women's political empowerment and leadership; women's economic empowerment; women's social empowerment; and women's protection.<sup>1303</sup> The Strategy also aims to change the social culture and norms that limit women's full participation, in addition to strengthening women's access to their legal rights.<sup>1304</sup> limit women's full participation, in addition to strengthening women's access to their legal rights.<sup>1304</sup>

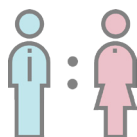
Additionally, in 2017, Parliament passed a new inheritance law giving women their legitimate right to inheritance, having previously been deprived of it.<sup>1305</sup> Under Article 49 of the new law, anyone who deliberately denies the heir, be it a man or a woman, their legal share of the inheritance or confiscates a document confirming this share, shall be jailed for six months at least and be subject to a fine.<sup>1306</sup>



## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

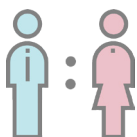
With respect to achieving gender parity in decision-making bodies, Egypt has moved away from a quota system that had a specific number of seats reserved for women in both national and local bodies, to one where the quota is only maintained at the local level. In 2009, Egypt established a quota system which reserved 64 seats for women in parliament.<sup>1307</sup> In the 2010 election the reserved seat system was abandoned, and under the new electoral system parties were obliged to nominate at least one woman as part of their district candidate lists.<sup>1308</sup>

In spite of demands by many women's organizations to assign a "quota" for women in parliament, the 50-Member Committee drafting the new Constitution refused to approve a quota for any societal group or religious sect in parliament.<sup>1309</sup> Thus Article 11 of the 2014 Constitution, reads "the State shall take the necessary measures to ensure the appropriate representation of women in the houses of representatives, as specified by Law."<sup>1310</sup> The State shall also guarantee women's rights of holding public and senior management offices in the State and their appointment in judicial bodies and authorities without discrimination.<sup>1311</sup> While there is no quota for women in parliament, Article 180 of the new Constitution assigns a quota of "one quarter of the seats" for women in the elected local councils.<sup>1312</sup>



**14.9%**

Women in the **Parliament** in **Egypt** in 2016



**11.8%**

Women **Ministers** in **Egypt** in 2015

## STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



### WOMEN MPS

After the quota system was removed, women's representation in parliament dropped significantly, but has recently showed signs of increasing. In 2010, women held 12.7% of the seats in the parliament of Egypt,<sup>1313</sup> but it dropped to 2% in 2011.<sup>1314</sup> No data was available from 2013 to 2015. From 2016 onwards, women have held 14.9% of the seats in parliament.<sup>1315</sup>



### WOMEN MINISTERS

Similar to women's representation in parliament following the revolution, the number of women who hold ministerial positions has declined, only increasing slightly in recent years. In 2010, women held 11.1% of ministerial positions.<sup>1316</sup> This number drastically decreased in 2011 to only one female minister in the 27-member cabinet.<sup>1317</sup> From 2012 to 2014, women held 10.3% of the ministerial positions.<sup>1318</sup> In 2015, women held 11.8% of ministerial positions.<sup>1319</sup> Egypt ranks 130<sup>th</sup> on the IPU ranking of women in Parliament, the lowest for countries in this region.



### WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

Even though the Egyptian legal framework does not prohibit women from appointment to the judiciary, the number of women judges is very low.<sup>1320</sup> In fact, it is far lower than many other jurisdictions in the Middle East and North Africa region.<sup>1321</sup> Between 2006 and 2015 there were less than 45 female judges across Egypt, although in June 2015, 28 additional women were appointed as judges.<sup>1322</sup>



### WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

In 2013, 16.1 % of Egyptian firms had female participation in ownership, and women held top manager positions in 7.1% of the firms.<sup>1323</sup> No additional data was found on female participation in ownership and firms with female top managers.

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Sexual harassment and assault are some of the greatest barriers to women's participation in public spheres as campaigners in influencing public policy and governance.<sup>1324</sup> A study published in 2013 by Amnesty International revealed that 99% of women and girls had been sexually harassed.<sup>1325</sup> In Egypt, crimes of sexual assault and harassment have typically been characterised by impunity for the offender and further victimisation of the women who have been assaulted. In 2012, following the investigation and trial of a military doctor, who sexually assaulted female protesters under the pretext of "virginity testing", was deemed immune to prosecution, despite senior military officials confirming that the assaults had taken place.<sup>1326</sup>

Civil society organizations, including those focused on women's issues, are fighting to continue their work amid increased government harassment and a crackdown on their activities.<sup>1327</sup> The Egyptian Government maintained its zero-tolerance policy towards dissent. It introduced repressive legislation, notably a non-governmental organization (NGO) law that may end independent associations according to Human Rights Watch (HRW).<sup>1328</sup> The limitations on civil society hinder the advocacy work of women's rights groups.<sup>1329</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

One of the obstacles is a culture that ignores women in decision-making processes at all levels of society.<sup>1330</sup> Moreover, underlying socio-cultural barriers and gender-based discrimination result in political parties not encouraging the participation of female candidates.<sup>1331</sup> Another challenge for these candidates is that a large portion of the population, both men and women, largely discount the idea of a female head of state and some Islamist parties and groups reject the notion on religious grounds.<sup>1332</sup>

Although women have attained law degrees, have practiced law and have also worked as law professors for decades in Egypt, very few women have been appointed as judges. The significant under-representation of women on the bench is a result of discrimination entrenched in attitudes of men, including some members of the judiciary.<sup>1333</sup> For example, one former State Council adviser noted that "while the law per se are not against women's appointments as judges, social norms and traditions prevents them from serving".<sup>1334</sup> Additionally, he also questioned how women, the foundation of their families, can both maintain their families and homes while working as a judge.<sup>1335</sup>



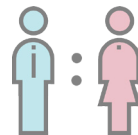
## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

Following the revolution, many women's rights activists and civil society groups had their assets frozen, a practice that started in 2011 and was revived in 2015.<sup>1336</sup> In 2017, the Egyptian court upheld this ruling, freezing the assets of among others Mozn Hassan and targeted her organisation, Nazra for Feminist Studies.<sup>1337</sup> In another case, Azza Soliman, a women's human rights defender and the founder of the Centre for Egyptian Women's Legal Assistance, received a travel ban and had her assets frozen.<sup>1338</sup> The freezing of assets limits the work of women activists and their ability to influence decision-making.



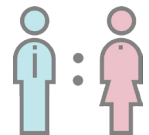
## MEDIA

The media in Egypt tends not to focus on women's activities and experiences. While international media reported on cases of sexual assault and sexual harassment, the local media remained largely silent.<sup>1339</sup> The silence points to one of the main concerns of women's rights activists, that the media does not report on the work of women, the violence women encounter and the stereotypes they battle.<sup>1340</sup>



**16.1%**

Women **Firm Owners** in  
Egypt in 2013



**7.1%**

Women **Top Managers** in  
Egypt in 2013



# LIBYA

## OVERVIEW

Following the uprising that led to the fall of the Gaddafi regime in 2011, Libya has struggled through transition to democracy.<sup>1341</sup> The continuous tensions between Nationalist and Islamic factions hinders the development of a stable and democratic government, and conflict has become a dominant factor in Libyan people's daily lives.<sup>1342</sup> Despite playing an active role in the uprising, Libyan women remain underrepresented in the official institutions of the state.<sup>1343</sup> Rather, the position of women in Libya continues to fluctuate in tandem with the political, economic and social reforms, leaving them struggling to have their voices heard.<sup>1344</sup>

At the request of the Libyan authorities to support the country's new transitional authorities in their post-conflict efforts, the United Nations Support Mission for Libya (UNSMIL) was established on 16 September 2011.<sup>1345</sup> In September 2017, UNSMIL proposed an action plan for Libya that includes the amendment of the current UN-sponsored political agreement, holding a UN-sponsored national conference for all of Libya's political factions, adopting a constitution, and holding an election of a president and a parliament before the end of 2018.<sup>1346</sup>

With respect to women's rights, Libya ratified CEDAW on 16 May 1989.<sup>1347</sup> The Maputo Protocol was ratified on 23 May 2004<sup>1348</sup>, making Libya one of the first countries to ratify it.<sup>1349</sup> Libya has not adopted a National Plan of Action for the implementation of UNSCR 1325.<sup>1350</sup> The country ranked 102 out of 188 countries on the UNDP 2015 Gender Inequality Index<sup>1351</sup>

The country is a parliamentary democracy with an interim Constitutional Declaration.<sup>1352</sup> In December 2015, the Libyan Political Agreement, which members of the UN-facilitated Libyan political dialogue signed and the House of Representatives approved, created the internationally recognized Government of National Accord (GNA) Presidency Council (PC), headed by Prime Minister Fayez Sarraj.<sup>1353</sup>

Libya has a unicameral parliament with legislated candidate quotas for the House of Representatives.<sup>1354</sup> In 2017, 30 (16%) out of the 188 seats in the House of Representatives are held by women.<sup>1355</sup> 120 are elected by majority, based on a first-past-the-post system for single-member districts, and for multi-member districts, a single non-transferable vote system is adopted.<sup>1356</sup> The remaining 80 members are elected by proportional representation from closed electoral lists, presented by political entities in multi-member constituencies.<sup>1357</sup>

Women in Libya received the right to vote, and stand for elections in 1964.<sup>1358</sup> Libya has not had a female Head of State or Head of Government. In the first national election following the uprising, out of 600 women running for positions in the National Transitional Council (NTC), only 2 women were elected, Salwa Fawzi El-Deghali

and Haniyeh al-Ghamati.<sup>1359</sup> The representation of women in governmental and other influential representative positions did not improve in the 2014 elections.<sup>1360</sup>

When violence erupted in polling stations for the 2012 elections, women's capacity to participate as voters was reduced.<sup>1361</sup> The number of registered female voters and women who actually vote has continued to decrease. In 2012 45% of registered voters were women, and 39% actually voted during elections; and in 2014, 41% were registered voters, and only 33.4% exercised their right to vote in the elections.<sup>1362</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

Following the revolution of 2011 the NTC has passed an interim Constitutional Declaration which stated that Libyans are equal before the law, however it does not specifically mention women's rights.<sup>1363</sup> The elected Constitutional Drafting Assembly's work has stalled due to infighting and boycotts by some members.<sup>1364</sup>

Although women actively participated in the uprising in the post-revolution setting, their participation in public life and decision-making has significantly reduced since then. For example, in 2013 the Supreme Court reviewed women's right to participate in the judiciary system but no change was made, a right women have held since 1981.<sup>1365</sup> Additionally, the Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court removed the legal requirement of men to obtain consent from their primary wife to marry a second wife.<sup>1366</sup>

Reflective of the low levels of representation, Libya has made some piecemeal progress in relation to violence against women. Libya does not have a specific women's office, only a unit within the Ministry of Social Affairs.<sup>1367</sup> During the conflict in Libya, many women and girls became victims of sexual violence and there were claims of mass rape in 2011.<sup>1368</sup> In 2012, the Council of Ministers established centres for the psychological assistance for victims of sexual violence and torture following decision no. 380 (201), an important development for victims of gender-based violence.<sup>1369</sup>

Moreover, Article 5 of the Constitutional Charter was amended in 2014 to include provisions in which the State must guarantee protections for women who are mothers, children, and the elderly.<sup>1370</sup> A fund for victims of sexual violence was set up, which is managed by the Ministry of Justice following the Council of Ministers' decisions no. 455 (2014) and no. 185 (2015).<sup>1371</sup> This followed a bill proposed by the Libyan Government in 2013, which recommends compensation for victims of sexual violence during the conflict and includes them as victims of war.<sup>1372</sup>



## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

In 2012, the NTC adopted a new election law allocating only 10% of the seats to women in the national elections, while leaving it to political parties to allocate seats at the local level.<sup>1373</sup> As a result of dropping the quota, large numbers of women were excluded from decision-making and the political process.<sup>1374</sup> According to Article 15 of the 2012 Law on the Election of the National General Congress, on the lists of candidates submitted by parties for the proportional representation contest, 'candidates shall be arranged on the basis of alternation among male and female candidates, vertically and horizontally.'<sup>1375</sup> Moreover, only lists that accept this principle will be accepted.<sup>1376</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

While Libyan law provides explicitly that women may be members of the judiciary, there are no provisions providing for additional measures to ensure or at least facilitate women's adequate representation either in the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) or in judicial offices.<sup>1382</sup> While there are no women sitting on the current, (outgoing), SJC, one woman has already been elected to represent the Benghazi Court of Appeal.<sup>1383</sup> Additionally 50% of candidates for certain other positions, including other Courts of Appeal, the Public Defence Department and the Litigation authority, are women.<sup>1384</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

No data was found with respect to with female participation in ownership (% of firms), or firms with female top manager (% of firms). However, the World Bank blog informally suggests that only 20% women are in paid work and 93% of these work in governmental posts. 52% of the population are aged 24 or less. Despite having the 10<sup>th</sup> largest oil reserves in the world, Libya has one of the highest unemployment rates in the world.<sup>1385</sup>

## STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



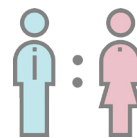
### WOMEN MPS

Representation of women in parliament in Libya is low, however following the uprising there has been an increase. In 2010, women held 7.7% of the seats in parliament.<sup>1377</sup> From 2012 to 2013, women held of 16.5% of the seats, and from 2014 to 2017 16% of the seats.<sup>1378</sup>



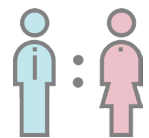
### WOMEN MINISTERS

In 2010, no woman held a ministerial position in Libya.<sup>1379</sup> In the post-revolutionary Libya, the number of women who held ministerial positions initially increased to 8.3% in 2012<sup>1380</sup>, but decreased to 3.6% in 2014.<sup>1381</sup>



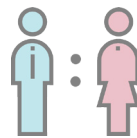
16%

Women in the **Parliament**  
in **Libya** in 2017



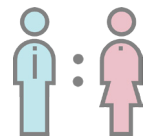
3.6%

Women **Ministers**  
in **Libya** in 2014



50%

Women **Candidates** in the  
**Judiciary** in **Libya**



20%

Women are in **Paid work**  
in **Libya**

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

High levels of insecurity continue to make the situation unsafe for women to run as candidates. The result is that the space for women to participate in decision-making is shrinking.<sup>1386</sup> Libyan women who are active in politics and peace-building face not only harassment but also threats to their lives and the lives of family members due to conflicts and rising radicalism.<sup>1387</sup> Female politicians and activists are justifiably fearful as in 2014 alone, politicians Salwa Bugaighis and Fariha al-Barkawy were shot dead.<sup>1388</sup> A few months later a civil society activist, Intisar al-Hassairy, was found murdered in the trunk of her car.<sup>1389</sup>

It is also harder for women to seek the protection of the police because of the precarious law and order conditions in Libya.<sup>1390</sup> Laws have been amended to legalise discrimination against women, and laws that do exist to protect women, are considered weak in their implementation potential.<sup>1391</sup> Claims of rape and violence against women remain under-investigated as well as underreported.<sup>1392</sup>

Another key barrier for women has been their lack of representation during elections in the electoral lists. Their exclusion in the compilation of electoral lists for the 2012 elections prevented women from being placed in favourable positions in the lists.<sup>1393</sup> Some parties placed women at the top of lists for specific constituencies where there were expectations that they would not succeed.<sup>1394</sup> Moreover, it has been recorded that women running for office often have not been provided key information about the elections and deadlines intentionally, to prevent them from being able to be elected.<sup>1395</sup> Women were also disadvantaged because their previous exclusion from participating in political life meant that in the 2012 elections, many women had a low level of knowledge of electoral campaigns, and had not had the opportunity to develop their political communication skills.<sup>1396</sup>



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

In post-revolution Libya, women are more severely affected by economic hardship.<sup>1407</sup> This is due to pre-existing inequalities and further reduces women to participate in decision-making.<sup>1408</sup> Labour Law no. 58/1970 continues to jeopardise women's right to employment as it limits women's access to different sectors, restricting them to certain stereotypical professions which have lower pay.<sup>1409</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

Following the revolution, it was thought the situation for women would improve. However, according to the Voice of Libyan Women, 'women are going back to their more culturally accepted roles.'<sup>1397</sup> Society in Libya tends to be tribal-based and male dominated, and women assuming leadership roles in society are viewed negatively.<sup>1398</sup> A study published by the National Democratic Institute (NDI) revealed that although in general many Libyans supported women playing roles in public life and decision-making, there was significant disagreement over what type of political engagement is best-suited to women.<sup>1399</sup> Moreover, the study revealed that both men and women were uncomfortable with women in leadership positions and thought that it would be culturally inappropriate or in conflict with women's responsibilities to their families.<sup>1400</sup>

Traditional views of women are still strong in rural areas, while in big cities it is slowly changing as women enter the workforce.<sup>1401</sup> In rural areas deeply rooted conservatism and discrimination of women have prevented women from running for political office as well as from voting.<sup>1402</sup> The UNDP found that in the 2012 elections, women were not given permission to vote differently from male family members, nor they did not have the means to travel to the polling stations on their own.<sup>1403</sup>

Moderates seem to concur that women should be "equal" in rights as long as this does not come into conflict with Islamic law.<sup>1404</sup> It has also been reported that female candidates who do not wear the hijab are harassed and this discourages many women from running preferring to return to private life.<sup>1405</sup> In fact, activism is declining and fewer women attend political meetings.<sup>1406</sup>



## MEDIA

Libya's media environment is highly polarised and virtually unregulated, reflecting the country's political instability.<sup>1410</sup> The rival political and militia factions have taken over key media assets in the areas under their control.<sup>1411</sup> Threats against journalists, as well as kidnapping of journalists, is common.<sup>1412</sup> There are also reports of assassinations of journalists. For example in 2014, Naseeb Kerfana, a female journalist, was murdered.<sup>1413</sup>

# MAURITANIA

## OVERVIEW

At the beginning of the decade, Mauritania faced political instability and postponed elections. The 2014 elections marked the transition from military rule to democratic rule and the establishment of the Forum for the Preservation of Democratic Process (MFPDP).<sup>1414</sup> The MFPDP assisted the government in promoting social harmony, encouraging women's participation in governance and promoting media freedom.<sup>1415</sup>

With respect to women's rights, on 10 May 2001, Mauritania ratified CEDAW.<sup>1416</sup> In 2014, the Government of Mauritania partially withdrew its general reservation made upon accession, which shall continue to apply in respect of articles 13 (a) and 16 of the Convention.<sup>1417</sup> On 21 September 2005, Mauritania ratified the Maputo Protocol.<sup>1418</sup> To date, Mauritania has not adopted a National Action Plan for the implementation of UNSCR 1325. The country ranks 147<sup>th</sup> out of 159 countries on the UNDP Gender Inequality Index.<sup>1419</sup>

Mauritania has a unicameral parliament with legislated quotas for the National Assembly, as well as at the sub-national level.<sup>1420</sup> The President is elected for five years with a limit of two terms.<sup>1421</sup> The members of the 147 seat National Assembly are elected by popular vote for five years.<sup>1422</sup> In 2017, women held 37 (25.2%) seats out of 147 in the National Assembly.<sup>1423 1424</sup>

Women in Mauritania received the right to vote and stand for elections in 1961.<sup>1425</sup> Mauritania has not had a female President. However, two women have run for the presidency, Aicha Bint Jeddane in 2003 and 2009, and Lalla Mariam Mint Moulaye Idriss in 2014.<sup>1426</sup> Another notable female politician is Naha Mint Hamdi Ould Mouknass, who served as Minister of Foreign Affairs in Mauritania, becoming the first female to hold the post in the Arab states.<sup>1427</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

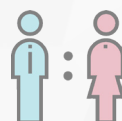
The Government has taken steps to improve the rights of women. For example, the 2006 Constitution guarantees women's participation in political life.<sup>1428</sup> The first institutional mechanism for gender equality was the National Strategy for the Promotion of Women (1995-2000), working with the Secretary of State for the Condition of Women.<sup>1429</sup>

The Government committed to fight female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C), which is embodied by the Mauritanian Public Health Schools that include in their curriculum a module on FGM, seeking to address religious and medical aspects of the issue

in 2012.<sup>1430</sup> This was followed by a workshop for leading health professionals to work on harmonizing and improving the teaching of the module.<sup>1431</sup>

Women face discrimination in access to land, and only represent 10% of Mauritians who hold occupying permits for land.<sup>1432</sup> As a result the Government established a national strategy and unified vision for women's land governance.<sup>1433</sup> Although the current land law recognises the right of women to own land, the lack of implementation at a local level is another key barrier for women.<sup>1434</sup> The Government's commitment is evident in its efforts to produce gender-disaggregated data about land and its registration system.<sup>1435</sup>

In 2015, the National Strategy for the Institutionalisation of Gender (La Stratégie Nationale d'Institutionnalisation du genre) was adopted to complement the National Strategy Women's Advancement Programme (SNPF, developed in 1994 and revised in 2008).<sup>1436</sup> The aim is to develop a coherent national approach and indicate the direction of the Government with respect to women's advancement.<sup>1437</sup> The implementation of the National Strategy will, in addition, focus on the institutionalisation of gender and violence against women and establish a series of programmes aiming to promote and encourage participation of women in political and economic life.<sup>1438</sup>



### GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

Mauritania has established quotas which have supported women's political participation. As of 2012, an electoral law was established. This reserves 20 seats for women running in the single nationwide list, in line with Article 3 of the Organic Law 29/2012.<sup>1439</sup> Political parties must submit lists with equal distribution between men and women. In instances where constituencies have between one to and three seats, women must be present in the candidate lists in the first or second position.<sup>1440</sup> Article 16 states that parties that do not comply may be rejected by the electoral administration.<sup>1441</sup>

In 2009, a quota of 20% of seats reserved for women in municipal councils was established and parties are obliged to submit lists which have at least 17.5%-20% depending on the number of members.<sup>1442</sup> Moreover, at least 2 women must be placed at the top of the list, in alternating positions.<sup>1443</sup> For example, lists with 9-11 councillors must place women either as no. 1 and or no. 2 and 4 on the list.<sup>1444</sup> In lists which have 15-17 councillors, women must occupy positions in number 1 or 2, and then number 5 and 7.<sup>1445</sup>

# STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



## WOMEN MPS

Women have maintained steady representation in parliament, only increasing slightly in 2014. Between 2010 and 2013 women held 22.1% of the seats in parliament.<sup>1446</sup> Following the election in 2013, women's representation saw a small increase. From 2014 onwards, women hold 25.2% of the seats in parliament.<sup>1447</sup> Mauritania was ranked by the Inter-Parliamentary Union 68<sup>th</sup> out of 193 countries worldwide for the proportion of women holding parliamentary seats.



## WOMEN MINISTERS

In 2010 women occupied 23.1% of ministerial positions, which is slightly higher than their percentage of members of parliament.<sup>1448</sup> However, their participation fell in 2012 to 11.5%.<sup>1449</sup> In 2014, women's representation had increased to 13% and by 2015, it had more than doubled to 26.9%.<sup>1450</sup> Their participation peaked in 2017, with 30.8% of ministerial positions being occupied by women.<sup>1451</sup>



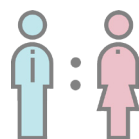
## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

No data on women in the judiciary was found in the sources consulted for this report.



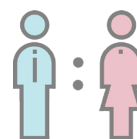
## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

In 2014, 15% of firms in Mauritania had female participation in ownership, and women held top manager positions in 4.5% of the firms.<sup>1452</sup> No other data was found to indicate whether female participation in ownership and the percentage of firms with female top managers have increased or decreased



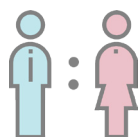
**25.2%**

Women in the **Parliament**  
**Mauritania** from 2014  
onwards



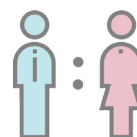
**30.8%**

Women **Ministers** in  
**Mauritania** in 2017



**15%**

Women **Firm Owners** in  
**Mauritania** in 2014



**4.5%**

Women **Top Managers** in  
**Mauritania** in 2014

## CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

In Mauritania, politics continue to be a male dominated sphere, where men occupy important positions of influence and women are excluded from holding certain office and positions. Though there has been notable progress in women's participation and representation in politics, some male politicians have taken steps to prevent women from running for political office. In 2012, Aslamou Ould Sidi al-Mustafa issued a fatwa banning women from running for presidential elections.<sup>1453</sup> According to Mr. al-Mustafa, women may enter the race but it must be "just for fun."<sup>1454</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

Society in Mauritania is conservative strongly influenced by customs and traditions, and the positions afforded to women are those which a society "marked by the patriarchy concedes to the women".<sup>1455</sup> Women, who challenge the patriarchal attitudes and religious and cultural norms that subordinate or restrict women, are scorned, stigmatized and threatened with death.<sup>1456</sup> Aminetou Mint El Moctar, founder and President of the Association of Women Heads of Household in Mauritania (Association des femmes chefs de famille en Mauritanie) and a women's rights activist has been arbitrarily arrested and detained on several occasions, and in 2014 was the object of a fatwa as a result of her work.<sup>1457</sup>





## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

Among women in Mauritania, levels of poverty are high and economic participation low. The lack of financial capacity is a significant barrier to women's political participation. Moreover, female politicians face discriminatory laws such as those that permit paying elected women less than men for the same posts.<sup>1461</sup> According to IRIN news, men do not give women a chance to fight against these discriminatory laws.<sup>1462</sup>



## MEDIA

Even though the Constitution prohibits discrimination, female journalists in Mauritania are underrepresented and underpaid. In recent years salaries for state employees have increased, but for public media workers, wages have stagnated.<sup>1463</sup> According to a report by Freedom House, female journalists in Mauritania are particularly disadvantaged, as they are not only underrepresented in the profession but are also underpaid compared with their male counterparts.<sup>1464</sup> Moreover, a study published by the International Federation of Journalists showed there are fewer women compared to men in senior positions in media.<sup>1465</sup>

...ONLY ONE OF YOU GENTLEMEN  
WILL GET THE PROMOTION...



*Male dominated world of private sector*

# MOROCCO

## OVERVIEW

Since the Arab Spring in 2011, the political system in Morocco has opened up to give a greater political voice and representation to women.<sup>1466</sup> However, the same opportunities have also been afforded to conservative Islamic groups, who strongly oppose women's participation in politics and decision-making and seek to limit it.<sup>1467</sup> Though women now have greater access and opportunities to run for political office, few women reach leadership positions.<sup>1468</sup>

In 2017, Morocco was readmitted into the African Union (AU).<sup>1469</sup> Morocco had left the Organization of African Unity (OAU), AU's predecessor, after the OAU recognised the independence of Western Sahara.<sup>1470</sup> To date, Morocco has not signed and ratified the Maputo Protocol.<sup>1471</sup> On 21 June 1993, Morocco ratified CEDAW with a reservation with regard to Article 29 and a declaration with regard to Article 2.<sup>1472</sup> Morocco has not yet adopted a National Action Plan for the implementation of UNSCR 1325.<sup>1473</sup> The country ranks 113th out of 159 countries on the UNDP Gender Inequality Index.<sup>1474</sup>

Morocco is a constitutional monarchy where the King is the hereditary Head of State.<sup>1475</sup> The head of government is the Prime Minister who is appointed by the King from the largest party in parliament.<sup>1476</sup> Morocco has a bicameral parliament with legislated quotas for the lower-house (Chamber of Representatives), however there are no legislated quotas for the upper house (The House of Councillors).<sup>1477</sup> The Chamber of Representatives has 395 members, of which 305 members are directly elected in multi-seat constituencies by proportional representation vote, and 90 members are directly elected in a single nationwide constituency by proportional representation vote.<sup>1478</sup> The members of the Chamber of Representatives serve 5-year terms. In 2017, 81 (20.50%) of the 395 seats are occupied by women.<sup>1479</sup>

According to Article 63 of the Constitution, the House of Councillors must have at least 90 members and a maximum of 120, elected by indirect universal suffrage for six years, depending on an equitable distribution of Article 63 of the Constitution.<sup>1480</sup> In 2017, 14 (11.7%) of the 120 seats are occupied by women.<sup>1481</sup>

While Moroccan women received the right to vote and stand for election in 1963, it was not until 1993 that a woman was elected to parliament for the first time.<sup>1482</sup> To date no woman has been appointed Prime Minister.

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

The Government of Morocco has taken some steps with respect to women's rights and political participation. In 2011, Morocco reformed Articles 6, 19, 22, 30, 115, and 146 of the Constitution.<sup>1483</sup> The changes on behalf of women included: the equal status of men and women as citizens; greater participation of women in the judiciary; promotion of equal access of men and women to elective offices, and recognition that men and women enjoy equal human rights and freedoms in civil, political, economic, social, cultural and environmental spheres.<sup>1484</sup>

The Government has stated its intention of working to achieve parity between men and women, and for that purpose created an Authority for Equality and the Fight Against all forms of Discrimination.<sup>1485</sup> To that end, it established a National Strategy for Gender Equality in 2011 (Agenda gouvernemental pour l'égalité 2011-15).<sup>1486</sup> Additionally, Morocco holds audits to monitor the implementation of gender-equality related legislation, policies and reforms.<sup>1487</sup>

There have been some positive improvements in women's access to employment. The National Strategy for Gender Equality focused on work-life balance, and Morocco now offers 14 weeks paid maternity leave and one year unpaid leave.<sup>1488</sup> The maternity leave, however, does not cover women who have informal employment, such as agricultural work.<sup>1489</sup> Pregnant women are also given a lighter work balance, and new mothers are allowed to breast feed in the workplace, with one hour breaks established.<sup>1490</sup>

In 2012, an order from the Ministry of the Interior granted men and women equal rights to benefit from the profits and income from their land.<sup>1491</sup> Traditionally, women did not receive their fair proportion of the money from selling communal lands. The Ministry of Interior supported the work through providing training and set up an online platform which explains women's rights to equal access to land.<sup>1492</sup> Whilst there is no official legislation which prevents women from owning land, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) estimates that only 4% of land in Morocco belongs to women.<sup>1493</sup>



## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

The first legislated quotas for women's political participation were introduced in Morocco in 2002<sup>1494</sup>. The political parties agreed to reserve 30 seats for women in the lower house, elected through a special nationwide list.<sup>1495</sup> In 2012, they built upon this base, and with a proportional representation system, 60 seats are reserved for women.<sup>1496</sup> Political parties which do not comply with the proportional representation will not be accepted.<sup>1497</sup>

In 2011, Law n° 59-11 concerning elections at the sub-national level was adopted, introducing quota provisions for women.<sup>1498</sup> Articles 76 and 77 of the new law stipulate that at least one-third of the seats in regional councils, which are directly elected, must be reserved for women.<sup>1499</sup> Furthermore, for elections to the lower district and communal councils, the law provides for additional electoral constituencies reserved for women, who should be elected through a proportional representation system.<sup>1500</sup>



## WOMEN MINISTERS

The percentage of women who hold ministerial positions remains low. In 2010, women held 11.1% of ministerial positions.<sup>1506</sup> However, by 2012, only 3.3% of ministerial positions were held by women.<sup>1507</sup> Since then, it has slowly grown, achieving 15.8% in 2014.<sup>1508</sup> In 2017, it dropped to 13%.<sup>1509</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

There was limited data on women in the judiciary in the sources consulted for this report. However, based on the limited data available, the number of women in the judiciary appears to be increasing. According to the Ministry of Justice and Freedoms, there were 940 women judges out of 4,001 sitting judges in 2014, and by 2015 that number of female judges had risen to 1,004.<sup>1510</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

In 2013, 31.3 % of Moroccan firms had female participation in ownership, and women held top manager positions in 4.3% of the firms.<sup>1511</sup> No other data on female participation in ownership and the percentage of firms with females in top manager positions have increased or decreased was found in the sources consulted for this report.

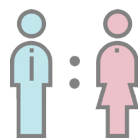
## STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



### WOMEN MPS

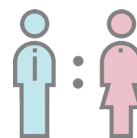
Since 2010, women's representation in the lower house of parliament has nearly doubled. It appears that the implementation of gender quotas has had a positive impact on women's representation in the lower house. In 2010, representation by women in the lower house of parliament was 10.5%.<sup>1501</sup> From 2011 to 2015 women held 17% of the seats in the lower house<sup>1502</sup>, and since 2016 women hold 20.5% of the seats.<sup>1503</sup>

While fewer women hold seats in the upper house compared to the lower house, women's representation in the upper house has grown. From 2010 to 2014, only 2.2% of the seats were held by women.<sup>1504</sup> From 2015 onwards, women hold 11.7% of the seats in the upper house.<sup>1505</sup>



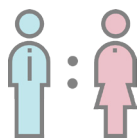
**11.7%**

Women in the **Upper House in Morocco** from 2015 onwards



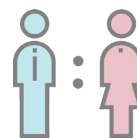
**13%**

Women **Ministers in Morocco** in 2014



**31.3%**

Women **Candidates in the Judiciary in Morocco**



**4.3%**

Women are in **Paid work in Morocco**

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Women remain excluded from committees of political parties, and the practice negatively impacts their ability to participate in decision-making.<sup>1512</sup> In fact, women who want to participate have largely been ignored.<sup>1513</sup> A survey held in 2010 to analyse support for women's involvement in politics revealed that men demonstrated very minimal support for the idea.<sup>1514</sup> Parties frequently hold important meetings at night, which excludes many women from being able to participate as they traditionally have responsibilities to care for their families.<sup>1515</sup>

The work within political parties tend to be highly gendered and women are frequently assigned work considered of less strategic and important, or that is related to topics perceived as feminine such as social and educational issues.<sup>1516</sup> Moreover, within political parties, women were reportedly excluded from work even though the women were more qualified (in years of education) than their male colleagues. In cases where the women did the work, they did not receive recognition for their contributions.<sup>1517</sup>

Moreover, women lack the same networks as men, due to having been historically excluded from public life.<sup>1518</sup> This has prevented women from being able to mobilise for general elections.<sup>1519</sup> The result is that women who want to participate in the public sphere have turned to working for NGOs to express their political opinions.<sup>1520</sup>



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

Rural women continue to face severe challenges in running for office.<sup>1527</sup> The women who have benefitted from the implementation of quotas have been women living in cities, while rural women continue to be discriminated against.<sup>1528</sup> Notably many rural women do not have access to the necessary resources to run successful political campaigns, including funding to travel, for communications, and making phone calls.<sup>1529</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

While the state has adopted legislated quotas, women still struggle against cultural pressures and persistent stereotypes that inhibit their opportunities to access and participate in the political sphere.<sup>1521</sup> To a large extent, women are still expected to play traditional roles within the household, serving as the main childcare provider and maintaining the household, and often face disapproval when they leave the house to participate in activities after nightfall.<sup>1522</sup>

A study published by UNESCO found that women are frequently perceived as lacking the 'natural' competence needed to succeed in politics, and that both men and women are reluctant to vote for female candidates.<sup>1523</sup> These stereotypes are often internalised by women, resulting in political parties, who wish to incorporate more women into their electoral lists, finding it difficult to mobilise female candidates.<sup>1524</sup>

The study also revealed that female politicians reported that they face multiple challenges such as the persistent gendered division of labour at home.<sup>1525</sup> Though their husbands supported their wives through their understanding, rather than practically helping with these duties themselves. All those surveyed relied on support from paid help or family members to help.<sup>1526</sup>



## MEDIA

Although women have made advances in other spheres, the media in Morocco continues to perpetuate female stereotypes and even though more women study journalism they remain underrepresented. In 2011, 60% of the journalism students were female; however, only 25% of journalists in Morocco are women.<sup>1530</sup> Within the media, there are gender inequalities. Female journalists receive less space in newspapers and magazines compared to their male counterparts and are often delegated to cover "soft" news such as fashion and cooking, while men cover "hard" news such as politics and economics.<sup>1531</sup>

# TUNISIA

## OVERVIEW

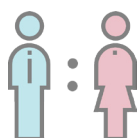
In 2011, as part of the 'Arab Spring' a civil resistance campaign paired with demonstrations took place, ousting the then president, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. Tunisian women played an active role during and following the revolution, advancing women's rights and participation in political life.

The Republic of Tunisia has been a strong advocate of women's rights nationally and regionally. Tunisia ratified CEDAW on 20 September 1985<sup>1532</sup>; and in 2014 all reservations of CEDAW were lifted.<sup>1533</sup> However, to date Tunisia has not signed and ratified the Maputo Protocol, and has still not adopted a National Action Plan for the implementation of UNSCR 1325. The country ranks 58<sup>th</sup> out of 159 countries on the UNDP Gender Inequality Index.<sup>1534</sup>

Tunisia has a unicameral parliament with legislated quotas for the Majlis Nawwab ash-Sha'ab (Assembly of People's Representatives). In 2017, 68 (31%) out of the 217 seats in the Assembly of People's Representative were occupied by women.<sup>1535</sup> The President of the Republic is elected by an absolute majority vote and a second round may take place if needed. There is a total of 217 members who have been elected in the Tunisian Constituent Assembly through a closed-list proportional representation system.<sup>1536</sup> Elections for both the parliament and the presidency are held every five years.

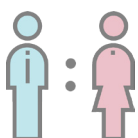
Women in Tunisia were granted the right to vote and stand for elections in 1957.<sup>1537</sup> In 2014, there were five candidates for the presidential election, and Kalthoum Kannou became the first female candidate for president.<sup>1538</sup> Kannou was not affiliated to any political party, as she wished to present herself as a new independent option to the 22 other presidential candidates.<sup>1539</sup> Kannou received 18,287 votes (out of 4 million), finishing eleventh out of a total of 27 candidates in the first round of voting.<sup>1540</sup>

The number of female voters in Tunisia has increased from 37.27% in 2012 to 50.5% in 2014, hence having a higher level of registration than male voters.<sup>1541</sup>



**31.3%**

Women in the **Parliament**  
in **Tunisia** in 2014



**23.1%**

Women **Ministers** in  
**Tunisia** in 2016

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

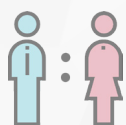
The Government of Morocco has taken some Tunisia has made some great strides in advancing women's right and is seen as a leader in the Arab world. In 2014, the Tunisian government removed its reservations of CEDAW which included issues such as women's access to inheritance and rights to property.<sup>1542</sup> Nevertheless, women continue to be heavily discriminated against in relation to inheritance, as they only receive half of their male siblings share.<sup>1543</sup>

A National Action Plan for the Elimination of Violence against Women (NAPEVW) was established in 2013.<sup>1544</sup> The NAPEVW objectives aim to disseminate information and improve the delivery of services to domestic violence survivors.<sup>1545</sup> The Ministry of Women and Family Affairs solicited a comprehensive study to be completed on sexual harassment, and its documentation centre provided key training to prevent gender-based violence in the public sphere.<sup>1546</sup> In 2014, the New Constitution established the basis for legal provisions to protect women from gender-based violence within Articles 23 and 46, establishing that the state must protect women and eradicate gender-based violence.<sup>1547</sup>

The National Social and Economic Development Plan (2012-16) included a section on gender-sensitive budgeting through a gender auditing programme, in collaboration with the Ministry of Economic Development, the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Interior, and the Ministry of Finance and in collaboration with the Women's National Committee<sup>1548</sup>

In 2017, the country passed The Draft Law 20/2016 to provide key protection for women who are victims of violence. The Law uses a comprehensive definition as "any physical, moral, sexual or economic aggression against women based on discrimination between the two sexes and resulting in any damage, physical, sexual, psychological or economic threats of such aggression, pressure or deprivation of rights and freedoms, both in public and private life".<sup>1549</sup> The Law also provides provisions for women to be able to access psychological and legal support.<sup>1550</sup> Moreover, through this Law, legislators repealed provisions in their penal code which would provide protection to rapists if they marry their victims.<sup>1551</sup>





## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

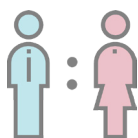
Tunisia has taken important legislative steps to support women's participation in public decision-making bodies.

Prior to the revolution, women in Tunisia had already benefitted from quotas of 23% established by the government in 2004.<sup>1552</sup> However, due to the autocratic nature of government, the percentage of representation did not reflect meaningful participation in decision-making.<sup>1553</sup>

Article 46 of the 2014 Constitution guarantees equality between women and men to have access to opportunities at all levels of responsibility and in all fields.<sup>1554</sup> Furthermore, the State aims to achieve equal representation for women and men in elected councils.<sup>1555</sup> Additionally, according to Article 16 of Decree 35: 'Candidates shall file their candidacy applications on the basis of parity between men and women.'<sup>1556</sup> All Party lists are requested to alternate between male and female candidates.<sup>1557</sup>

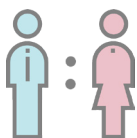
In the 2014 elections, the legislation did not include a provision for horizontal equality, which would have meant that half the lists presented by each party would have to be headed by a female candidate.<sup>1558</sup> Although parties complied with the law, only 12% of the party lists had a woman at the top, an increase from 7% in 2011.<sup>1559</sup> The Ennahda political party, whilst it does not have voluntary quotas, reached high levels of women's participation, with 46% of its lawmakers being women.<sup>1560</sup>

Furthermore, in 2016, a law was passed to implement quotas for local elections, where parties must submit lists with equal numbers of women and men.<sup>1561</sup> A positive step in increasing women's ability to participate in the public sphere was the Comprehensive Law, passed in 2017, criminalising all forms of gender-based violence, including harassment.<sup>1562</sup>



# 28%

Women in the **Judiciary** in  
**Tunisia** in 2016



# 8.5%

Women **Top Managers** in  
**Tunisia** in 2013

## STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



### WOMEN MPS

Women's participation in parliament has slightly increased in the wake of the revolution in 2011.<sup>1563</sup> In 2010, women held 27.6% of the seats in parliament.<sup>1564</sup> Between 2011 to 2013, women MPs held 26.7% of the seats.<sup>1565</sup> After the election in 2014, women's representation in parliament increased slightly to 31.3%.<sup>1566</sup> Notably, an impressive 4000 women ran for office in 2014.<sup>1567</sup>



### WOMEN MINISTERS

Before the revolution, women only represented 3.8% of all ministers, which slightly increased to 6.9% in 2012, before returning to 3.7% in 2014.<sup>1568</sup> Since 2015, however, there have been improvements, with women occupying 10.5% of ministerial positions, to 23.1% in 2016.<sup>1569</sup>



### WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

Limited recent data were found on women in the judiciary in the sources consulted. However, in the data available, women's representation in the judiciary declined in 2012. In 2010, 33% of judges were women, which slightly reduced to 28% in 2012.<sup>1570 1571</sup>



### WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

In the private sector, women's representation and participation appears to be mixed. In 2013 only 8.5% of the firms had females as top managers, while 49.5% of firms had a woman among the principal owners.<sup>1572</sup>

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Typically, Tunisian women in politics are highly educated, which continues to exclude women from lower socioeconomic backgrounds.<sup>1573</sup> In the 2014 election, 3000,000 women living in rural Tunisia were excluded from voting due to a lack of official documentation.<sup>1574</sup> In contrast, women in urban settings had higher voting patterns.<sup>1575</sup> In some instances, children were unwelcome in polling stations, and women who could not find childcare were deterred from participating.<sup>1576</sup> There were even cases of violent and aggressive behaviour towards elderly illiterate women, who were confused by the electoral process in the 2014 elections.<sup>1577</sup> At a regional level, women who wish to run as female candidates have been subjected to harassment and intimidation, which deters women from running for office.<sup>1578</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

A study carried out by UNESCO identified that some women in Tunisia limited their own political ambitions due to negative stereotypes within their communities and society.<sup>1579</sup> This is combined with the diminution of responsibilities for women in political parties, as they are often given the less important tasks, reducing their ability to participate in meaningful decision-making.<sup>1580</sup> The same study also found that the women who participated in politics had the support of their husbands, and that their husbands helped by looking after the children and the household.<sup>1581</sup>



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

A key challenge has been the financial support available to female candidates. In the 2012 elections, there was a ban on private donations and limits put on funds received from public resources, but parties were allowed to use their own resources.<sup>1582</sup> Women received less support within political parties and faced greater challenges in fundraising.<sup>1583</sup> Women also are not afforded equal opportunities as they cannot access the same level of resources and networks as their male counterparts.<sup>1584</sup>



## MEDIA

The media, whether traditional or modern, has a lot of influence on how we perceive and understand the world around us. The media plays a significant role in perpetuating stereotypes and challenging social norms that justify discrimination and it can be used to increase women's involvement in politics. In the 2012 elections in Tunisia, only 2% of media coverage publicised female candidates, denying women a critical resource to mobilise support during their campaigns.<sup>1585</sup>

# SAHRAWI ARAB DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

## OVERVIEW

For more than four decades, Western Sahara has been a disputed territory between Morocco and the Saharawi people, led by the Polisario Front.<sup>1586</sup> In 1976, the Polisario Front declared the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) a political entity with a government in exile in Algeria.<sup>1587</sup> Currently 82 states recognise SADR as a political entity.<sup>1588</sup> In 1991, Morocco and the Polisario Front signed a ceasefire.<sup>1589</sup> Since the deployment of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) in 1991, the ceasefire has generally held.<sup>1590</sup> Within the ceasefire arrangement, it was agreed that the United Nations would organize a referendum in which the people of Western Sahara would choose between independence and integration with Morocco. However, to date no referendum has been held.<sup>1591</sup>

The United Nations designated Western Sahara a non-self-governing territory in 1963.<sup>1592</sup> Therefore as Western Sahara is not a member state of the UN, the territory has not signed CEDAW. The Government of SADR has not adopted a National Plan of Action for the implementation of UNSCR 1325.<sup>1593</sup> As a full member of the AU, the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic signed the Maputo Protocol on 20 June 2006.<sup>1594</sup> The territory is not ranked on the UNDP Gender Inequality Index.

The Sahrawi National Council (SNC) or Sahrawi Parliament is a unicameral body with 53 seats.<sup>1595</sup> The members of the SNC are elected every two years at the General Popular Congresses by delegates from the Sahrawi refugee camps, supplemented by representatives of the Sahrawi People's Liberation Army and civil society organizations.<sup>1596</sup> According to Article 51 of the Sahrawi Constitution, the Polisario Front General Secretary assumes the Presidency.<sup>1597</sup> In 2016, Brahim Ghali was elected Secretary General of the Polisario Front and President of the SADR by a majority of participants in the Extraordinary Congress.<sup>1598</sup>

The SADR Constitution guarantees all citizens equality, and women hold the right to vote and run for elections.<sup>1599</sup> While SADR has not had a female president, women play an important role in many decision-making bodies. Ms Khadija Hamdi, an avid women's rights defender, is a member of the National Secretariat, and is Minister of Culture<sup>1600</sup>, and Ms. Mahfouda Mohamed Rahal is the Minister of Social Affairs and Promotion of Women.<sup>1601</sup> Fatma Mehdi was re-elected as Secretary General of the National Sahrawi Women Union (UNMS) in 2015 and in the same year, was also elected president of the Women's Committee and Equality in Economic, Social and African Council (ECOSOCC).<sup>1602</sup> Sahrawi women have played a prominent role in the independence movement and continue to do so.<sup>1603</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

Sahrawi women have historically played a key role in Sahrawi society, as they held positions in the highest political institutions within the nomadic and tribal matriarchal society.<sup>1604</sup> The liberal reading of the Qur'an is considered to be the foundation of Sahrawi women's empowerment in decision-making bodies.<sup>1605</sup> Sahrawi women play an important role in the conflict, and receive military and medical training in the camps.<sup>1606</sup> This set the foundation for their role in the administration and management of camps.<sup>1607</sup> Women continue to play a key role as activists promoting a peaceful resolution to the conflict and facilitating communication.<sup>1608</sup>

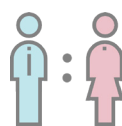
Women play important roles as representatives with international donors, and have been spokespersons at the European Coordinating Conference of Support to the Saharawi People (EUCOCO), and at the Ninth Congress of the Pan African Women's Organisation.<sup>1609</sup> This is a result of a gender mainstreaming movement for independence by the Polisario Front.<sup>1610</sup>

In 2013, a forum was held titled "Stop violence against women" which sought to raise awareness and discuss violations committed against Sahrawi women by Moroccan governmental officials.<sup>1611</sup> In relation to policies on gender-based violence, with the support of UNCHR, a women's centre was built to support victims of sexual violence.<sup>1612</sup>



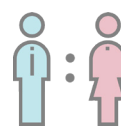
### GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

With respect to legislation to support women's participation in public decision-making bodies, there are no legislated quotas. However, Article 4 of the SADR constitution states that the in-exile government will "defend the political, economic, and social rights of Sahrawi women and will guarantee their participation in the improvement of society and the development of the country".<sup>1613</sup>



**40%**

Women **MPS**  
in **Sahrawi Arab** in 2012



**14.2%**

Women **Ministers**  
in **Sahrawi Arab** in 2014

# STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



## WOMEN MPS

There is little available current data with respect to women serving in the Sahrawi parliament in the sources consulted for this report. However, in 2012, women represented 35% of parliamentarians, meaning that the SADR surpassed the goals set by the Beijing agreement.<sup>1614</sup> At a local level, within the wilayas, women enjoyed an even higher level of participation with women representing 40% of the governors in 2012.<sup>1615</sup>



## WOMEN MINISTERS

Only limited data was found in the sources consulted on the percentage of women who hold ministerial positions in the SADR government. However, within ministerial positions, women have not reached the same levels of representation as in parliament. In 2012, women represented 7.1% of ministerial positions, which doubled in 2014 with 14.2%.<sup>1616 1617</sup> Women traditionally have occupied the Ministries of Education, of Culture, and Women's Machinery.



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

No reliable data was found with respect to women serving in the judiciary in the sources consulted for this report.



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Women have almost entirely been responsible for running refugee camps, when almost all men were recruited to the military. No data was found with respect to with female participation in ownership, or firms with female top manager in the sources consulted for this report.

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

While Sahrawi women activists are frequent participants in peaceful demonstrations and within the government in certain ministries, the National Union of Sahrawi Women has not been included in the peace processes.<sup>1618</sup> Moreover, they were not represented in the Manhasset negotiations, thus preventing an inclusive peace-building process.<sup>1619</sup>

Although Sahrawi women in many instances head the independence movement and activist movements, they are at threat of physical repression and human rights violations by the Moroccan Government.<sup>1620</sup> There have been reports of Moroccan officials physically harming female activists, and they experience high levels of abuse and discrimination.<sup>1621</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

Though Sahrawi female activists generally have freedom to express their political views and women can divorce without stigma, there have been reports of women being imprisoned for adultery and they remain excluded from the highest political posts in the Algerian camps.<sup>1622</sup> Moreover, while traditional gender roles have freed women to push for independence, those norms also often mean they have not pursued careers.<sup>1623</sup>



## MEDIA

While women organize peaceful protests in cities within the territories occupied by Morocco on a monthly basis, these activities receive little attention in the media, in particular in the international media.<sup>1624</sup> When there is coverage, the focus is on the leadership of Sahrawi women in the refugee camps located in Tindouf, Algeria, rather than on the prominent role of Sahrawi women in political resistance.<sup>1625</sup> As Western Sahara is tightly controlled by the Moroccan military, few reporters have entered the territory and reported from within.<sup>1626</sup>

# SOUTH AFRICAN REGION

## OVERVIEW

In recent years, many of the countries in the South African region have seen tremendous economic growth, however high levels of inequality and poverty persists. While a majority of countries experience political stability, there have also been social unrest and political discontent. The governments in the South African region are committed to achieving gender equality and women's empowerment and many countries have made significant progress. Still many challenges remain.

With respect to women's rights, all of the countries in the South African region have ratified CEDAW. With the exception of Botswana, all other Southern African countries have ratified the Maputo Protocol. While a number of the countries (Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland) in this region are part of the Regional Action Plan, 'South African Protocol on Gender Development' to implement UNSCR 1325 and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda.<sup>1627</sup> In 2017, Angola adopted a National Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325.

In the majority of countries women received the right to vote and the right to stand for election from the late-1960s to mid-1970s, slightly later than other regions on the continent. Malawi was ahead of the curve, with women's suffrage taking place in 1961,<sup>1628</sup> while Namibia did not do so until 1989.<sup>1629</sup> In South Africa and Zimbabwe white women received voting rights long before women of colour. While 'white' women in South Africa received the right to vote and stand for election in 1930, it was not until 1994 that 'black' women received the same rights.<sup>1630</sup> Similarly, before 1957 only men and 'European women' could vote in Zimbabwe, and after 1957 a qualified right to vote was gradually extended over the years to black women.<sup>1631</sup> Women in Zimbabwe gained the right to stand for election in 1978.<sup>1632</sup>

While women in the South African region have had the right to stand for elections for some time, it was not until the new millennium that women were elected to leadership positions. For example, Dr. Joyce Banda served as Malawi's first female President from 2012 – 2014, and Namibia elected its first female Prime Minister, Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila in 2015.

Voter data, and in particular data disaggregated by sex, was not available for a significant number of countries in the region. For the countries with available data, it appears that women comprise well over 50% of voters. In South Africa, women made up 55% of registered voters; Malawi women made up 53.81% of voters in the 2014 elections<sup>1633</sup> and Swaziland had 53% of female registered voters on Election Day in 2013. In 2014, 53% of registered voters in Namibia were women.<sup>1634</sup> In contrast, in Zambia, while women comprise 50.4% of registered voters, only 33% voted in the last election.<sup>1635</sup>

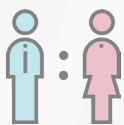
## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

A number of countries have been successful in adopting legislation protecting victims of violence and harassment, while in others the proposed legislation is facing opposition. In 2011, South Africa adopted the Protection from Harassment Act. The passing of the Act is significant in that it not only addresses sexual harassment but because it expands the definition of harm caused from physical harm to include mental, psychological and economic harm, and also provides a protection order for incidences of stalking.<sup>1636</sup> The Government of Angola adopted the Law 25/11 on Domestic Violence. The Law aims to prevent, combat, and punish those who commit acts of domestic violence and guarantees the rights of the victim.

In other countries proposed legislation addressing sexual violence has not yet become law. In 2017, the Government of Zimbabwe proposed legislation that would increase mandatory sentences for rape to 60 years for cases involving a child under the age of 12. If adopted, the sentences would be the highest in the SADC region. While in Swaziland, the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Bill has not been adopted into law as the King and traditional leaders have raised concerns on provisions concerning marital rape and child marriage among others. The Bill addresses all forms of violence against women and children and expands on the definition of rape.

With respect to child marriage, both Malawi and Mozambique have taken steps to end the practice. In 2015, Malawi passed the Marriage, Divorce and Family Relations Bill under which the age of marriage is 18 but allows for children 15 – 18 to marry with parental consent. However, two years later Parliament voted in favour of a Constitutional amendment to outlaw child marriages between the ages of 15-18 with parental consent.<sup>1637</sup> In Mozambique, the Government adopted a national strategy to end child marriage by 2019.





## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

Of the countries in Southern Africa, only Angola, Lesotho and Swaziland have legislated quotas for women in parliament. In the case of Lesotho, there are only legislated quotas for the lower house and at the sub-national level, but not for the upper house. While in Swaziland, there are legislated quotas for both houses of Parliament. In Angola the introduction of the quota in 2010 has had a positive effect as women's representation remains about the 30% quota set.

A number of countries (Namibia, Botswana, Malawi, South Africa and Mozambique) do not have legislated quotas, rather voluntary quotas have been adopted by the political parties. In Botswana both the Botswana Congress Party (BCP) and the Botswana National Front (BNF) introduced 30% quotas for women on electoral lists.<sup>1638</sup>

Zimbabwe currently uses gender quotas though a special measure in the Constitution, this provision was only valid for the first two parliaments following its entry into force. Thus, it was used for the 2013 election and will be used for the 2018 election. There are no indications as to what will happen with respect to stimulating women's representation in parliament through the use of quotas in the election in 2023.<sup>1639</sup>

In a number of countries (Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe) women's representation is above 30%. The standout countries are Namibia and South Africa where female representation is above 40%. The highest number of female representatives in parliament can be found in South Africa where 41.8% of the seats in the lower house are held by women.<sup>1640</sup> In Namibia, women hold 41.3% seats in the lower house.<sup>1641</sup>

In Zimbabwe, the introduction of the quota systems in 2013 appears to have had a positive effect on women's representation in both houses. In 2010, female representatives held 15% of the seats, but since 2017, women represent 32.6% of the members of the lower house.<sup>1642</sup> Similarly, in the Senate, women's representation grew from 24.2% of the seats in 2010 to 48.1% in 2017.<sup>1643</sup>

In a number of countries, the number of women in parliament has decreased. For example, in Malawi, women held 20.8% of seats in parliament in 2010 but in 2014 this decreased to 16.7% in 2014 where it remains today.<sup>1644</sup>

The lowest representation of women is found in Botswana, where 9.5% of the representatives are women, an increase from 6.5% prior to the 2014 election.<sup>1645</sup> Thus women's representation remains far below the SADC target



## WOMEN MINISTERS

The number of women who hold ministerial positions in Southern Africa varies, with South Africa leading the way. There has been an increase in female ministers in South Africa in recent years, from 34.3% in 2010,<sup>1646</sup> and now standing at 41.7%.<sup>1647</sup> In Swaziland, the representation of women in ministerial positions slightly increased from 23.8% in 2012 to 26.3% currently.<sup>1648</sup> In recent years, the number of women in ministerial positions in Zambia has risen to 33.3% from 16.7% in 2010.<sup>1649</sup>

Angola has seen a decrease in female ministers from 29%<sup>1650</sup> in 2012 to 22.5%<sup>1651</sup> in 2017. There has been a significant decline in female ministers in Lesotho, from 36.8% in 2012, to 18.2% in 2017.<sup>1652</sup> Similarly, in Zimbabwe there has been a decline in the number of women who serve as ministers from 18.5% in 2010,<sup>1653</sup> to 11.1% in 2014.<sup>1654</sup> Since then the number of female ministers has increased from 11.5% in 2015 to 16.1% in 2016.<sup>1655</sup>

A few countries have fluctuated, in such a way where they initially improved, but then ultimately declined. In Mozambique, women made up 25.9% in 2010, increasing to 28.6% in 2014, and decreasing again to 23.8% in 2016.<sup>1656</sup> In Namibia, women comprised 24% in 2010, decreasing to 21.7% in 2014, and then returning back to 24%.<sup>1657</sup> Malawi saw the most dramatic fluctuations with women comprising 21.2% in 2012, 32% in 2014, and 22.2% in 2016.<sup>1658</sup>

## STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



### WOMEN MPS

None of the countries in the South African region attained the goal of at least 50% women in parliament by 2015 as set forth by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Gender and Development. Although falling short of this goal, in some countries women's representation in parliament are improving, others are stagnating, or decreasing.



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

Some countries in the region (such as Lesotho, Zambia and Zimbabwe) are doing remarkably well in promoting female leadership at the judicial level. Female representation in the judiciary is exceptionally high in Lesotho at 67%,<sup>1659</sup> and Lesotho also boasts the third ever-female Chief of Justice in Africa.<sup>1660</sup> Zambia has had nearly equal representation every year since 2011,<sup>1661</sup> and the Chief Justice and Deputy Chief Justice are both women.<sup>1662</sup> Section 184 of Zimbabwe's Constitution states that 'appointments to the judiciary must reflect broadly the diversity and gender composition of Zimbabwe'.<sup>1663</sup>

Other countries are having some moderate success. In Namibia, 40% of judges on the Supreme Court are women, 25% on the High Court,<sup>1664</sup> although none on the Constitutional Court. Regarding Superior Court Judges, Angolan women held 36% of posts from 2012 to 2016<sup>1665</sup> and in South Africa 35.4%.<sup>1666</sup> Swaziland has 37.5% female magistrates, but only 23% of their judges are female.<sup>1667</sup>

Women in the judiciary are at low levels in Botswana, Mozambique and Malawi. In Malawi, the proportion of women in the judiciary has fluctuated from 9% in 2011, to 27% in 2014,<sup>1668</sup> and 19% in 2017.<sup>1669</sup> In Botswana, women comprise only 14% of judges, and there has never been a woman appointed to the Court of Appeal, the highest court in the country.<sup>1670</sup> In Mozambique, the number of judges on the Supreme Court and Constitutional Court combined is at 11.8%,<sup>1671</sup> the lowest in the region, however, the Chief Justice is female.<sup>1672</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Data with respect to the proportion of women in the private sector, in particular the percentage of firms with female participation in ownership and firms with female top managers, is limited for Southern Africa. However, in Zimbabwe and Namibia, there is slightly more data available. It appears that female participation in ownership, as well as the percentage of firms with female top managers, has decreased in Zimbabwe. In 2011, 56.2% of firms had female participation in ownership and 17.4% of firms had female top managers.<sup>1673</sup> In 2016, the percentage of firms with female participation in ownership dropped to 42.5% and the percentage of firms with female top managers to 16.3%.<sup>1674</sup> Similarly, in Namibia, percentage of females in top management was at 27.4% in 2014 but has since decreased to 22.4% in 2016.<sup>1675</sup>

In Mozambique on the other hand, the percentage of firms with female participation in ownership increased, albeit slightly. In 2016, 24.4% of firms had female participation in ownership<sup>1676</sup> compared to 2012 when 24% of firms had female participation in ownership.<sup>1677</sup>



## BEYOND NUMBERS:

### THE IMPACT OF WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS AND DECISION-MAKING

In the Southern African region, women have played an important role in initiating policies and legislation vis-à-vis women's rights. The advocacy work by female members of parliament and women's rights organisations and activists has resulted in positive changes for women's participation in decision-making and women's human rights. This includes increasing numbers of women judges, preventing legislation that would negatively impact women's human rights and increasing access to education:

In Angola, women used their political leverage as voters and as members of the government, campaigning strongly to produce the Law on Domestic Violence.<sup>1678</sup> Within the Angolan government, Genoveva Lino, Minister for Women and Family Promotion, led the fight to criminalise domestic violence with the support of many women's organisations. The new law criminalises domestic violence and offers protection to victims and their families as well as financial and legal assistance and medical treatment.<sup>1679</sup> Moreover, the new law introduced new definitions of domestic violence, which include withholding food from a child, failing to adequately support a pregnant woman and sexually abusing a minor or elderly person in your care.<sup>1680</sup>

In Malawi, while women are underrepresented in decision-making, female MPs and women activists are working towards improving women's rights and reducing gender inequality. The National Assembly Women's Caucus in Malawi promotes women's rights and gender equality. The 2014 election result sparked action by the National Assembly Women's Caucus to launch a nationwide campaign to fight for more females in parliament.<sup>1681</sup> Many activists argued that the drop was in part due to the lack funding.<sup>1682</sup> For the upcoming elections in 2019, in an attempt to retain and increase the number of female MPs, the Caucus is reaching out to chiefs and community leaders to support female candidates.<sup>1683</sup> The Caucus is also focusing on capacity building, strengthening technical skills and support for cross-cutting party issues such as encouraging political parties to support the retention of women.<sup>1684</sup>

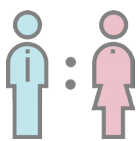
In Mozambique, women's organisations and activists play an important role in advocating for women's rights and gender equality. In 2014, organisations such as Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA) Mozambique, Women's Forum (Fórum Mulher) and other Mozambican NGOs protested against the adoption of a new Penal Code by organising protest marches and a publicity campaign to persuade Parliament to reconsider.<sup>1685</sup> The proposed Penal Code, which was preliminarily approved by the Parliament in 2013, included vague and limited definitions of rape, allowed rapists to escape prosecution by marrying their victims, and defined rape of a minor as the rape of someone under the age of 12.<sup>1686</sup> The protest resulted in the Parliament revising some of the language in the proposed Code. For example, rape in marriage is now a crime and a rapist cannot escape justice by marrying his victim.<sup>1687</sup> The controversial Penal Code became law in 2015 despite protests and a presidential veto.

In South Africa, female members of Parliament and the government, as well as women activists, are leading the way on a number of issues with respect to women's rights and gender equality. In 2014, the National Assembly passed the Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill. The introduction of the Bill was led by Minister of Women, Children and People with Disability, Lulu Xingwana.<sup>1688</sup> Among its goals, the Bill calls for a 50/50 of women in decision-making bodies both in the private and public sectors.<sup>1689</sup> It also seeks to improve access to education, training and skills development, promote and protect women's reproductive health and eliminate discrimination and harmful practices, including gender-based violence.<sup>1690</sup>

In Swaziland, although there are few women in parliament, female MPs and female activists do pursue gender issues. For example, female MPs contributed to the debates of the Prevention of Human Trafficking Bill, which was passed into law, and the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Bill.<sup>1691</sup> Doo Aphne, a prominent human rights activist, challenged the Deeds Registry Act on the basis of the equality clause in the Constitution. Under Section 16(3) of the Deeds Registry Act, Swazi women married in community of property are prevented from registering immovable property in their names, and it also allowed the husband to be the sole administrator of the property.<sup>1692</sup> The court ruled that women married in community of property have the right to register property in their names and have equal partnership with their husbands in its administration.<sup>1693</sup> Many in the women's movement in Swaziland view the judgement as an important step in reforming the country's laws and as an opportunity for women's economic advancement.<sup>1694</sup>

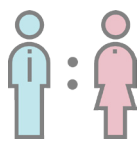
In Zambia, the Ministry of Gender has also played an important role in introducing important legislation with respect to women's right and gender equality. For example, the National Strategy on Ending Child Marriage (Marriage Bill) was enacted by the Minister of Gender, Victoria Kalima, preventing citizens from marrying anyone under the age of 21.<sup>1695</sup> The Ministry of Gender along with the women's movement in Zambia played an important role in the passing of the Gender Equality and Equity Bill into law by parliament.<sup>1696</sup> The Law is widely held by women's groups as demonstrating the Government's commitment in implementing at a domestic level the international and regional instruments that promote gender equality and women's empowerment in Zambia.<sup>1697</sup> Moreover, the Gender Equity and Equality law also provides for the establishment of a Gender Commission which will help safeguard and monitor the implementation of the Act.<sup>1698</sup>

In Zimbabwe, in 2016, Jessie Majome, a female Member of Parliament, introduced draft amendments to laws that impact on child marriage.<sup>1699</sup> These laws include the Births and Deaths Registration Act, the Children's Act, the Customary Marriages Act, the Marriages Act and the Criminal Law Codification Act. The introduction of the amendments follows a landmark ruling by the Constitutional Court that outlawed child marriage and would align relevant laws with the ruling.<sup>1700</sup> In March 2017, the Vice President announced that a bill to outlaw child marriages in line with Constitutional Provisions and the Constitutional Court ruling was being drafted.<sup>1701</sup>



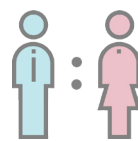
**41.8%**

Women in the **Parliament**  
in **South Africa**



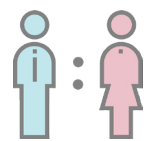
**22.2%**

Women **Ministers** in  
**Malawi** in 2016



**67%**

Women in the **Judiciary** in  
**Lesotho** in 2016



**42.5%**

Women **Firm Owners** in  
**Zimbabwe** in 2016

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Political parties in the South African region exist in a largely male-dominated environment where patriarchal views and personal relationships present barriers to women's equal representation and participation. In Angola, a study by Conciliation Resource noted that women's low participation in parliament can in part be explained by their comparative absence from the hierarchies of political parties.<sup>1702</sup> Similarly, in Malawi, few women hold leadership positions within the political parties.

The patriarchal culture impacts women's roles and the extent to which they hold leadership positions within the political parties and in parliament. A report by the National Democratic Institute showed that the patriarchal nature of Basotho society confers decision-making powers and headship on males and contributes largely to the absence of women in politics.<sup>1703</sup> In Zimbabwe, female politicians face stigma from their male colleagues and are appointed to peripheral roles within the parties and in government rather than to positions for which they are qualified.<sup>1704</sup>

Threats of violence and assault also present barriers to women's participation in decision-making bodies and civil society organisations. In Zambia there have been reports of harassment towards women and during the 2016 election, candidates were reportedly also beaten, intimidated and even stripped naked.<sup>1705</sup> Violence resulted in a suspension of campaigning following the fatal shooting of a female opposition supporter by police.<sup>1706</sup> Thus women's ability to fully and equally participate is greatly reduced by an unsafe environment.



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

As is true for the majority of countries on the continent, there are deep seated traditional beliefs about the roles of women and men that challenge women's opportunities to become leaders in the country or community. Cultural norms often position men as the decision-makers and more suited for political life. This contributes to women's low representation in leadership roles. There is often a perception that women should not present themselves in the public sphere outside of domestic duties in private life.

Women who pursue political ambitions are often called names and may be viewed as entering a sphere that is not theirs. In Zimbabwean women who enter politics often face inappropriate attention and are described as loose and immoral.<sup>1707</sup> Moreover, many Zimbabwean voters reportedly perceived women as belonging to the private sphere and holding more traditional roles.<sup>1708</sup> Similarly in Zambia, men are seen as decision-makers while women are viewed as submissive and lack confidence in their ability to be leaders. Moreover, cultural perceptions also impact how candidates are viewed. In Malawi, voters see women as less credible leaders and representatives than men.



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

In many Southern African countries, there exists a general income disparity between women and men, which impedes women's ability to run for office. More women than men live in poverty and women often lack access to resources such as land or property. While countries such as Botswana have seen strong economic growth, high rate of poverty among women prevent them from accumulating resources. In Lesotho, women struggle to access credit, in particular in rural areas where women often lack property to put up as collateral. Moreover, women in Lesotho are more financially dependent than men. In Mozambique, women have little control over or access to productive resources, are often unaware of their rights with respect to property and inheritance for example and are typically prevented from participating equally at the decision-making level.<sup>1709</sup>

Additionally, where women live, and their level of education also impact on their ability to influence and participate in decision-making. In Swaziland, women with higher levels of education and living in urban areas have better access to decision-making and influence than women living in rural areas. In Angola, reports showed that poorer women faced different challenges from those more privileged women, as poorer women are more likely to be displaced and widowed.<sup>1710</sup> Thus poorer women in Angola were found to focus attention on the family and community and be involved in economic and social welfare, whereas more privileged women engaged in politics.<sup>1711</sup>

In the Southern African region, women are often at a financial disadvantage when it comes to running for office as women are more likely to struggle to get the resources necessary to run a political campaign.



## MEDIA

The media in many Southern African countries is a male-dominated environment that devotes little attention to women and gender issues. While the media can be an important tool for mobilising support and raise awareness, in many countries it perpetuates stereotypes. For example, in Malawi the media rarely report on gender inequality and so there is little awareness about it. It furthermore, perpetuates gender stereotypes by portraying women as victims and men as powerful and influential.

Moreover, female politicians often receive less coverage by the media than their male counterparts. In Botswana, female politicians have highlighted the media's negative coverage of their campaigns and work. One candidate noted that not only was her election treated as a non-event, but her face and voice were absent while the media chose to focus on her party's success and not hers.

Women's representation in media across the region remains low. In Lesotho, the low representation of women journalists is in part due to the persistent belief that certain issues can only be covered by men, and women are barred from promotion because they are believed to be vulnerable. In South Africa, the number of women who hold positions of seniority in media houses appears to be declining. According to the State of the Newsroom report in 2014, there was a decline of approximately 9% in the proportion of women holding editor-in-chief positions at major South African media titles.<sup>1712</sup> The low representation of women in Zimbabwean media can in part be explained by the high rates of violence and discrimination. Gender discrimination in Zimbabwean newsrooms and violence against female journalist is common. However, these issues are often not dealt with as the abusers are often those who hold power within the media.



# ANGOLA

## OVERVIEW

The Republic of Angola lies on Africa's Southwestern coast, sitting on a large oil wealth that has fueled decades-long conflict.<sup>1713</sup> After twenty-seven years of civil war, which came to an end in 2002, Angola continues to administer and cope with the humanitarian impacts of prolonged conflict and struggle. It is estimated that half a million lives were lost, and 4 million people displaced. While the country is experiencing relative stability, over a third of the population lives below the international poverty line.<sup>1714</sup> Although women played a significant role during the conflict, since the end of the war, Angola women have struggled to participate in decision-making and to overcome high rates of poverty.<sup>1715</sup>

From a gender perspective, Angola ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discriminations Against Women (CEDAW) on 17 September 1986 and the Maputo Protocol on 30 August 2007. In 2017, Angola adopted its first National Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 for the period 2017 - 2020.<sup>1716</sup> The United Nations have been unable to provide rankings of Gender Inequality Index and Gender Development Index due to lack of relevant data.<sup>1717</sup>

Angola has a unicameral parliament, the National Assembly with legislated quotas. As of 2017, women hold 67 (30.5%) out of 220 seats in the National Assembly.<sup>1718</sup> The members of the National Assembly are elected every four years by proportional representation. The 2010 Constitution abolished the direct election of the President.<sup>1719</sup> As a result, elections are now held every five years whereby the public elects a presidential candidate at the head of the party list.<sup>1720</sup> The inauguration of João Lourenço as the third President of Angola and leader of the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) in August 2017 ended the 38 years of rule of former President José Eduardo dos Santo.

With regards to female political participation, women received the right to vote and stand for election in 1975. To date, no woman has been elected President of Angola. However, in 2010, Luisete Macedo Araújo made history as the first female presidential candidate, standing for the country's second biggest party UNITA.<sup>1721</sup>

While disaggregated data of registered voters is not available by the National Electoral Commission for the elections of 2012<sup>1722</sup> and 2017,<sup>1723</sup> statistics show that representation of women with electoral capacity is 59.9%.<sup>1724</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

In order to address gender inequality, the Angolan government has taken a number of steps. In 2011, the government adopted Law 25/11 on Domestic Violence to prevent, combat, and punish those who commit acts of domestic violence, and to guarantee the rights of the victim regarding psychological, social, medical and legal support.<sup>1725</sup> The Law also complies with provisions of international human rights instruments to which Angola is a party.<sup>1726</sup> To ensure the implementation of Law 25/11, a number of plans and policies have been adopted. For example, the Action Plan to Combat Domestic Violence 2013-2017, and the corresponding timeline of action seeks to prevent the occurrence of domestic violence and the protection of the victims. They have also adopted and developed multi-sectoral actions to ensure full, humane and quality care for victims of situations of violence.<sup>1727</sup> Additionally in 2013, the National Policy for Gender Equality and Equity was adopted. The National Policy seeks to contribute to reducing disparities between genders and promote gradual change in the mentality and behaviour of both men and women.<sup>1728</sup>

The Angolan Government has also taken measures to reduce the gender inequality by paying special attention to rural women. To support women in rural areas and promote rural development, Presidential Decree No. 138/12 was issued in 2012.<sup>1729</sup> The Decree approves the National Programme to the Support of Rural Woman which aims at contributing to fighting against hunger and poverty through the promotion of rural women's involvement in socio-economic processes and includes objectives such as promoting the development of the local and community economy, and minimising migration from rural to urban areas.<sup>1730</sup>

Together with UNDP, the National Office of Gender Equality and Equity (NOGEE) of Angola's Ministry of Family and Women's Affairs (MINFAMU) has initiated a project for institutional strengthening in the implementation of the National Policy of Gender Equality and Equity (NPGEE).<sup>1731</sup> Under its 2017 Annual Work Plan, the focus is on promoting gender equality through the systematization and production of statistical gender.<sup>1732</sup> The goal of these efforts is to strengthen Angola's capacity to implement the NPGEE as well as monitor progress on SDG 5 on gender equality targets and indicators.<sup>1733</sup>



## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

In 2010, Angola adopted Law 22/19 implementing legislated quotas for parliament. Under Article 20 (2-m) political parties "must include rules which encourage the promotion of equal opportunities and equity between men and women, as well as a gender representation of not less than 30% in their governing bodies at all levels".<sup>1734</sup> There are currently no voluntary quotas adopted by political parties, nor is there a legislated quota for sub-national level elections.<sup>1735</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

Women in the judiciary remain at a steady level of 36% from 2012 to 2016.<sup>1741</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

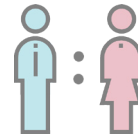
Little data was available in the sources consulted for this report on women in the private sector in Angola. However, according to data available from the World Bank in 2010, 56.6% of firms in Angola had female participation in ownership, and 13.5% of firms had female top managers.<sup>1742</sup>

## STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



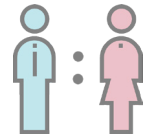
### WOMEN MPS

The introduction of quota appears to have had a positive effect on women's representation in Parliament in Angola, as the mandated quota of 30% was not only attained but exceeded. In 2010, women held 38.6% of the seats in Parliament.<sup>1736</sup> However, female participation in Parliament declined slightly in 2011 to 38.2%, and the number continued to drop to 34.1% in 2012.<sup>1737</sup> Following the 2012 elections to the National Assembly, women's participation in Parliament increased to 36.8% where it remained until the 2017 elections when the number dropped to 30.5%.<sup>1738</sup>



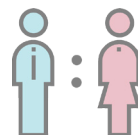
**36.8%**

Women in the **Parliament**  
in **Angola** in 2017



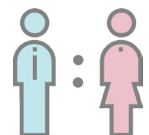
**22.2%**

Women **Ministers** in  
**Angola** in 2015



**36%**

Women in the **Judiciary** in  
**Angola** from 2012-2016



**56.6%**

Women **Firm Owners** in  
**Angola** in 2010



### WOMEN MINISTERS

The proportion of women who hold ministerial positions in the government of Angola has fluctuated and remains below 30%. In 2010, women occupied 27.8% of the ministerial positions, and by 2012 the number increased to 29%.<sup>1739</sup> The number of female ministers declined in 2014 to 19.4%, however, by 2015 it increased to 22.2% where it remains.<sup>1740</sup>

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Although the Angolan Constitution recognizes women's rights, the male dominated environment and patriarchal structure prevents Angolan women from fully participating in political life. Women's low participation in parliament and government is in part due to their comparative absence from the hierarchies of political parties, according to a study by Conciliation Resources.<sup>1743</sup> Moreover, the study noted that time constraints also prevent women from competing on an equal footing in the political sphere.<sup>1744</sup> Additionally, while the creation of the Ministry for Family and Women was seen by some as advancing women's role in the political sphere, the Ministry is struggling with limited resources and capacity.<sup>1745</sup>

According to the Justice, Peace and Democracy Association, personal connections play a significant role in entering and advancing in Angolan political life.<sup>1746</sup> The deeply entrenched system of favouritism, according to the Association, makes harder for women to become politicians as women must also overcome entrenched social barriers.<sup>1747</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

The Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, in its most recent report on developments in Angola, noted the persistence of adverse cultural norms, practices and traditions as well as patriarchal attitudes and deep-rooted stereotypes regarding the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and society.<sup>1748</sup> Societal perceptions continue to hinder progress towards increasing the percentage of female candidates and women participating in elections. In an atmosphere of violence and threats, female voters expressed fear and concern about participating and expressing their views.<sup>1749</sup>



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

In Angola, women's economic situation plays a significant role in their ability to pursue a political career. In Angola, poverty has a gendered dimension, as more women than men live in poverty. A report by Conciliation Resources found that poorer women in Angola faced different challenges from those more privileged women, as poorer women are more likely to be displaced and widowed.<sup>1750</sup> The result is that poorer women tend to focus attention on the family and community and are involved in economic and social welfare, whereas more privileged women engage in politics.<sup>1751</sup>



## MEDIA

Although the constitution guarantees freedom of expression, laws on state security and defamation impede free journalism.<sup>1752</sup> According to a report published by Freedom House, media is highly restricted in Angola and authorities suppress coverage of reports it considers sensitive, such as corruption and human rights' violations.<sup>1753</sup> Moreover, the ruling party gives preferential treatment to state-owned and pro-government media as these tend to ignore, or report unfavorably, critics of the government.<sup>1754</sup>

There are few independent media outlets in Angola, and independent journalists are often harassed, closely monitored or arrested.<sup>1755</sup> As a result, the majority of news comes from government-owned media. Although online sources are becoming increasingly important for accessing news, this form of media tends to be most common in urban areas where more people have access to the internet.<sup>1756</sup>

With respect to gender, Angolan media plays a role in reinforcing gender-stereotypes through images of masculinity and providing support for the perpetuation of violence.<sup>1757</sup> When it comes to issues concerning women, coverage often focuses on events such as beauty contests.<sup>1758</sup>

# BOTSWANA

## OVERVIEW

Since gaining independence in 1966, the country can be regarded as one of the continent's most stable countries, as it is the longest African multi-party democracy.<sup>1759</sup> Although the country has transformed into a middle-income country, in part due to being the world's largest producer of diamonds, Botswana still struggles with high levels of inequality and poverty.<sup>1760</sup> While the country adopted democracy early, female activists argue that when it comes to empowering women in politics much work remains as there have been few improvements since the country's independence.<sup>1761</sup>

Botswana ratified CEDAW on 13 August 1996.<sup>1762</sup> However, despite being successful with the Maputo Plan of Action concerning aspects on Sexual Reproductive Health & Rights (SRHR),<sup>1763</sup> Botswana has not signed and ratified the Maputo Protocol.<sup>1764</sup> The country has not adopted a National Action Plan for the implementation of the UNSCR 1325. Botswana ranks 95 out of 159 countries on the UNDP Gender Inequality Index.<sup>1765</sup>

The Government of Botswana is structured as a unicameral parliament (the National Assembly) with the use of voluntary party quotas.<sup>1766</sup> The National Assembly consists of 63 members of which 57 are directly elected, and four are indirectly elected by the National Assembly.<sup>1767</sup> The remaining two seats are held by ex officio members (the President of the Republic and the Speaker). All members of parliament serve a five-year term of office. Female parliamentarians currently hold 6 (9.5%) out of 63 seats.<sup>1768</sup> The President is indirectly elected by the National Assembly for a five-year term and is eligible to serve two terms.<sup>1769</sup> The President appoints the Vice President.

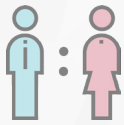
With regard to women's position in politics, women received the right to vote and to stand for election in 1965.<sup>1770</sup> Despite this, the country has yet to elect a female President.<sup>1771</sup> Although no woman has been elected President, in 2009 Dr. Margaret Nasha made history by become the first female Speaker of the National Assembly.<sup>1772</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

In order to address gender inequality, the Angolan government has taken a number of steps. In 2011, the government adopted Law 25/11 on Domestic Violence to prevent, combat, and punish those who commit acts of domestic violence, and to guarantee the rights of the victim regarding psychological, social, medical and legal support.<sup>1725</sup> The Law also complies with provisions of international human rights instruments to which Angola is a party.<sup>1726</sup> To ensure the implementation of Law 25/11, a number of plans and policies have been adopted. For example, the Action Plan to Combat Domestic Violence 2013-2017, and the corresponding timeline of action seeks to prevent the occurrence of domestic violence and the protection of the victims. They have also adopted and developed multi-sectoral actions to ensure full, humane and quality care for victims of situations of violence.<sup>1727</sup> Additionally in 2013, the National Policy for Gender Equality and Equity was adopted. The National Policy seeks to contribute to reducing disparities between genders and promote gradual change in the mentality and behaviour of both men and women.<sup>1728</sup>

The Angolan Government has also taken measures to reduce the gender inequality by paying special attention to rural women. To support women in rural areas and promote rural development, Presidential Decree No. 138/12 was issued in 2012.<sup>1729</sup> The Decree approves the National Programme to the Support of Rural Woman which aims at contributing to fighting against hunger and poverty through the promotion of rural women's involvement in socio-economic processes and includes objectives such as promoting the development of the local and community economy, and minimising migration from rural to urban areas.<sup>1730</sup>

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## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

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## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

While a woman has never been appointed to the Court of Appeal, the highest court in the country, there are currently four female judges out of 28.<sup>1787</sup> Whereas in 2013 there were three female judges out of 21, showing no increase, as the percentage of female representation in the judiciary remains at 14.2%.<sup>1788</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Outside the government, in 2016 women occupy 16.5% of top management positions.<sup>1789</sup> According to data from the World Bank, 55.3% of firms in Botswana have female participation in ownership.<sup>1790</sup>

# STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



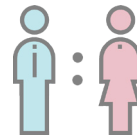
## WOMEN MPS

Compared to its neighbours, female representation in parliament remains low in Botswana. In 2010, there were 7.9% of women in Parliament.<sup>1782</sup> While only 6.5% of the candidates were female in the 2014 election,<sup>1783</sup> following the election the proportion of female representatives increased to 9.5% where it remains.<sup>1784</sup>



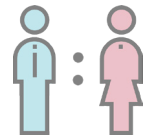
## WOMEN MINISTERS

Although women's proportion of ministerial positions is low, women's representation has slowly increased in recent years. In 2010, 11.8% of the ministers were women.<sup>1785</sup> By 2014 women's proportion of ministerial position grew to 12.5% and is currently at 15.8%.<sup>1786</sup>



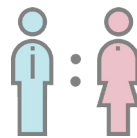
9.5%

Women in the **Parliament**  
in **Botswana** in 2014



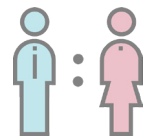
15.8%

Women **Ministers**  
in **Botswana** in 2018



14.2%

Women in the **Judiciary** in  
**Botswana** in 2013



55.3%

Women **Firm Owners** in  
**Botswana** in 2016



# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

There are few women in parliament and in government, and according to a report by the SADC Gender Unit, this can in part be explained by the first past the post electoral system.<sup>1791</sup> This makes it difficult for women to enter the male-dominated political system.<sup>1792</sup> It can also be explained by the political parties' policies vis-à-vis increasing the number of female candidates. The SADC report also found that although parties like the Botswana Congress Party adopted affirmative action policy in 2013, it is a thorny issue among its members for its implementation.<sup>1793</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

Social and cultural barriers detrimentally affect female political representation. Botswana is a fairly conservative society with traditional views on the roles of men and women. Men are often seen as more capable at leading and running for office than women.<sup>1794</sup> According to gender activists, women often subscribe to traditional cultural values and so are often reluctant to vote for other women.<sup>1795</sup> Moreover, the dual legal system affects women's status in Botswana as customary law limits access to public space and freedom of movement for women, according to the 2010 CEDAW report. This reduces the number of potential females to campaign for candidacy, as women are often not allowed to campaign at night by their partners.<sup>1796,1797</sup>

Attitudes and perceptions of women as political leaders also keep women in Botswana from entering politics. According to a study, published by the Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis, women in Botswana tend to shy away from politics because of harsh and derogatory words used by men during the campaigns.<sup>1798</sup> The study also found that society does not see women as leaders and this has an impact on women seeing themselves as leaders in their own right.



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

Although the country has seen strong economic growth, women are still struggling. Many women in Botswana experience high rates of poverty and the income disparities between men and women make it difficult for women to run for office.<sup>1799</sup> Running for office is expensive in Botswana as political parties in Botswana are not centrally funded, thus requiring candidates to raise or possess resources. According to a 2014 report published by the Gender Affairs Department in the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs, despite the voluntary party quotas, female political participation remains low due to economic barriers, namely that 'many women are not attracted to active politics due to the substantial finances, time and energy needed for political campaigns and ultimately to win elections.'<sup>1800</sup> Moreover, gender activists argue that women are often nominated in regions they have a scant chance of actually winning as they are paired against a male candidate with significant financial means.<sup>1801</sup>



## MEDIA

Although the constitution guarantees freedom of expression, laws on state security and defamation impede free journalism.<sup>1752</sup> According to a report published by Freedom House, media is highly restricted in Angola and authorities suppress coverage of reports it considers sensitive, such as corruption and human rights' violations.<sup>1753</sup> Moreover, the ruling party gives preferential treatment to state-owned and pro-government media as these tend to ignore, or report unfavorably, critics of the government.<sup>1754</sup>

There are few independent media outlets in Angola, and independent journalists are often harassed, closely monitored or arrested.<sup>1755</sup> As a result, the majority of news comes from government-owned media. Although online sources are becoming increasingly important for accessing news, this form of media tends to be most common in urban areas where more people have access to the internet.<sup>1756</sup>

With respect to gender, Angolan media plays a role in reinforcing gender-stereotypes through images of masculinity and providing support for the perpetuation of violence.<sup>1757</sup> When it comes to issues concerning women, coverage often focuses on events such as beauty contests.<sup>1758</sup>

# LESOTHO

## OVERVIEW

Lesotho gained independence from Britain in 1966 and established itself as a constitutional monarchy with a dual legal system of customary law and common law.<sup>1808</sup> The country's development has been negatively impacted by political instability, violence and increasing levels of corruption in all sectors of government and public life.<sup>1809</sup> Lesotho also face significant challenges; more than half of the population live below the poverty line and the country has some of the highest rates HIV/AIDS in the region.<sup>1810</sup> Women in Lesotho bear a higher burden of the challenges of customary practice where the law restricts women's rights in areas such as property, inheritance, marriage and divorce.<sup>18111812</sup>

With respect to women's rights, the country ratified CEDAW on 22 August 1995<sup>1813</sup> and the Maputo Protocol on 26 October 2004.<sup>1814</sup> Like many of its Southern African neighbours, Lesotho has not yet adopted a National Action Plan for the implementation of UNSCR 1325.<sup>1815</sup> Lesotho ranks 132 out of 159 countries on the UNDP Gender Inequality Index.<sup>1816</sup>

Lesotho has a bicameral parliament with legislated quotas for the lower house. Legislated quotas are also used at the sub-national level. The 120 members of the National Assembly, the lower house, are elected using the mixed member proportional system. 80 members are elected in single-seat constituencies and 40 from the national constituency elected via proportional representation.<sup>1817</sup> The members of the National Assembly serve five-year terms. Women hold 27 (22.1%) out of 122 seats in the lower house.<sup>1818</sup> The upper house, the Senate has 33 members of which 8 (24.2%) are women.<sup>1819</sup> Of the 33 members, 22 hereditary Principal Chiefs and 11 Senators nominated by the King on the advice of the Council of State.<sup>1820</sup> As the country is a constitutional monarchy the King serves as ceremonial head of state, and the leader of the majority party becomes Prime Minister and Head of Government.<sup>1821</sup>

Women were granted the right to vote and stand of election in 1965.<sup>1822</sup> To date, Lesotho has not had a female head of government.<sup>1823</sup> However, in 2014, Lesotho appointed its first ever Chief Justice, Nthomeng Majara.<sup>1824</sup> In 2017, Mrs. Mamonaheng Mokitimi was elected as the new President of the Senate (Upper House).<sup>1825</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

In 2010, the Government passed the Education Act, which legalises the right to free and compulsory primary education. Moreover, the Act makes provision for education for all in accordance with the provisions of Section 28 of the Lesotho Constitution.<sup>1826</sup> Section 28 b states that Lesotho shall endeavour to make education available to all and shall adopt policies aimed at securing that primary education is compulsory and available to all.<sup>1827</sup> Following the adoption of the Education Act, the country saw a slight increase in net enrolment in primary education, in particular of girls, from 79.91% in 2010, to 81.09% in 2011 and 82.46% in 2012. While dropping to 80.55% in 2013, it has since increased to 81.1%.<sup>1828</sup> The main challenge to the full realisation of the Act is reaching the most vulnerable children, such as orphans.<sup>1829</sup>

The government has also taken steps that allow women to access productive resources such as adopting the Land Act in 2010.<sup>1830</sup> The Act is significant in that it has significant gender provisions and protects women's economic rights and gives security of tenure on immovable property.<sup>1831</sup> Among other clauses, the Act grants joint ownership of land to spouses married in community of property regardless of their number, whether monogamously or polygamously married, ensuring that every woman's name appears or is implied in the registration.<sup>1832</sup> Additionally, the National Strategic Development Plan 2012 – 2017 advances women's rights with respect to access to land by providing for representation of women in land allocation structures.<sup>1833</sup> In Lesotho, women, specifically widows, account for 35% of land owners, thus leaving many women poor and economically dependent.<sup>1834</sup>

In 2014, the government of Lesotho adopted the National Decentralisation Policy. The objectives of the Policy includes increasing participation of all citizens and non-state organisations in governance, promoting equitable economic development, enhancing local autonomy by ensuring that local government institutions are capacitated and organized with a strong collective voice, and increasing citizens' access to public services.<sup>1835</sup> With respect to gender equality, the Policy states that decentralisation must ensure gender equality and equity, and the effective participation of youth, people with disabilities and other excluded groups.<sup>1836</sup> Furthermore, among its strategic actions, the plan includes a specific focus on women. For example, with respect to promoting public-private partnerships to attract investment in rural areas, there is a call for establishing mechanisms with special attention to benefit poor women.<sup>1837</sup>

Lesotho has high rates of gender-based violence and is currently developing the Domestic Violence Bill 2018. The proposed Bill provides for protection, prevention and criminalisation of domestic violence as well as advocating for rights of victims of domestic

violence.<sup>1838</sup> Moreover, the proposed Bill also includes provisions on sensitizing, prevention and detection and the rights of survivors of domestic violence, creates specific institutional mechanisms to address domestic violence, introduces regulations under law and establishes judicial protection for survivors.<sup>1839</sup> At the time of writing this report, no information was found regarding whether the proposed Bill is under consideration and may be put to a vote in parliament



## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

Lesotho has adopted legislated quotas for the lower house of parliament and at the sub-national level.<sup>1840</sup> Under the National Assembly Election Amendment Act of 2011, the rule for the proportional contest was established and stated that "a political party shall 'arrange the candidates in order of preference from top to bottom, with a female or male candidate immediately followed by a candidate of the opposite sex; and include equal numbers of women and men." <sup>1841</sup> However, progress has been slow to increase the number of women in Government, thus Lesotho failed to achieve the 50% mark for female representation.

With respect to the sub-national level, the Local Government Elections Act as amended in 2011, states that 30% of the total number of seats in municipal, urban and community councils are reserved for women and are distributed proportionally among the parties.<sup>1842</sup>



## WOMEN MINISTERS

The proportion of women holding ministerial positions in Lesotho continued to drop after initially increasing. In 2012, women held 36.8% of the ministerial positions in Lesotho, an increase from 31.6% in 2010.<sup>1845</sup> The number has now declined to 21.7% in 2014 and 18.2% in 2016.<sup>1846</sup>



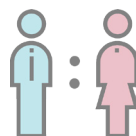
## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

Female representation in the judiciary is at 67%.<sup>1847</sup> Lesotho also has the third ever female Chief of Justice in Africa.<sup>1848</sup>



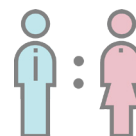
## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

There was little data available in the sources with respect to women in the private sector in Lesotho. However, according to data published by the World Bank, in 2016, 36.2% of firms had female top managers and 39.2% of firms had female participation in ownership.



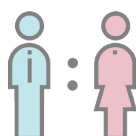
**25.8%**

Women in the **Parliament** in **Lesotho** in 2017



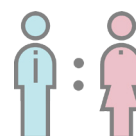
**18.2%**

Women **Ministers** in **Lesotho** in 2016



**67%**

Women in the **Judiciary** in **Lesotho**



**39.2%**

Women **Firm Owners** in **Lesotho** in 2016



## WOMEN MPS

Lesotho has had uneven and fluctuating levels of progress with regards to female political representation. In the Lower House, 24.2% of women held seats in 2010, which rose to 26.7% in 2014, and then declined to 22.9% in 2017.<sup>1843</sup> The Upper House has followed a similar pattern with 27.3% of seats held by women in 2014, and decreasing to 25.8% of women in 2017.<sup>1844</sup>

# STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

According to a policy brief produced by the Lesotho Council of NGOs, women experience a number of barriers that inhibit their political participation. These barriers are entrenched in the country's traditional and feudal structures that are influenced by cultural ideologies and religion, negatively affecting the promotion of female political engagement and participation.<sup>1849</sup> The policy brief argues that while female representation at a local level is relatively strong, female politicians in the central government are regarded as 'spectators who play the role of voting others into political space'.<sup>1850</sup>

Moreover, politics in Lesotho remains a male-dominated environment, and the structure creates a barrier for women. According to a report by the National Democratic Institute, while there are legislated quotas for the lower house, political party structures and top-level positions remain overwhelmingly male.<sup>1851</sup> During the 2017 election, the political parties were criticized for failing to include more female candidates.<sup>1852</sup> Moreover, the patriarchal nature of the Basotho society confers decision-making powers and headship on males which contributes largely to the absence of women in politics.<sup>1853</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

Society in Lesotho is described as patriarchal and traditional views of the family consider men as the head of the household.<sup>1854</sup> According to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the persistence of harmful norms, practices and traditions, patriarchal attitudes and deep-rooted stereotypes regarding the roles, responsibilities and identities of women and men in all spheres of life, perpetuate discrimination against women and girls.<sup>1855</sup> Moreover, this is reflected in the disadvantageous and unequal status of women in many areas, including education, public life, decision-making and in the persistence of violence against women.<sup>1856</sup>

Traditional views of gender roles impact women's ability to influence decision-making but also in influencing women's own perception of their role in politics. A study published by the Welsh Government showed that while more women get an education, and some even hold leadership positions, women still have little power to influence and take a back seat when decisions are being made.<sup>1857</sup> The power to make decisions rests with the men and the men's families. The study also found that while women in Lesotho voted during the elections, they did not believe they could take part in politics.<sup>1858</sup>



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

Women in rural areas, in particular, face significant economic barriers that impact on their ability to run for office and participate in decision-making. Women who live in urban areas in Lesotho enjoy a higher degree of education and economic empowerment.<sup>1859</sup> Moreover, Lesotho has a high poverty rate, and the majority of those living in poverty are women.<sup>1860</sup> Unemployment is also higher among women than men.

Constituency candidates, in accordance with the Constitution of Lesotho and the National Assembly Electoral Act 2011, are required to pay a nomination fee of 200 loti (15 USD), while the nomination fee for proportional representation list is 8,000 loti (585 USD).<sup>1861</sup> As women are more financially dependent than men, the cost of running a campaign negatively affects women. Moreover, despite the legal framework, women struggle to access credit and often lack knowledge about the laws regarding credit.<sup>1862</sup> Furthermore, women in rural areas often lack their own property to use as collateral.<sup>1863</sup>



## MEDIA

Since the 2017 election, the media environment in Lesotho is changing. According to Reporters without Borders, political pressure has increased and harassment, death threats and arrests are common and often go unpunished.<sup>1864</sup> Many journalists have left the country and those who remain censor themselves.

With regards to women in media and coverage of gender issues, many challenges remain. UNESCO found that there is little coverage of gender issues and women's achievements, and when there is coverage, it tends to focus on women as victims of rape and other forms of violence in Lesotho.<sup>1865</sup> Moreover, women's representation in the media remains low as the belief that certain issues can only be covered by men and not women persists.<sup>1866</sup> According to the Lesotho Journalist Association Coordinator, this bars most women from getting top posts or even promotions in the newsrooms because they are believed to be vulnerable.<sup>1867</sup>





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Women standing with one another in the political sphere



# MALAWI

## OVERVIEW

Malawi gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1964, and the country's first multi-party elections were held in 1994 following more than 30 years of autocratic rule.<sup>1868</sup> In May 2014 the country held its first tripartite elections in which presidential, parliamentary and local government elections occurred at the same time. The country has a fast growing and young population. It is estimated that 40% of the population is between ages 10 and 29.<sup>1869</sup> The rapid growth is in part due to limited access to family planning, high rates of illiteracy, especially among women, and gender-related traditional and cultural practices that make it difficult for women to use family planning.<sup>1870</sup> While the Government is taking steps to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, women in Malawi face significant challenges such as high rates of poverty, illiteracy and income inequalities.

With regards to women's rights and gender equality, Malawi ratified CEDAW on 12 March 1987<sup>1871</sup> and the Maputo Protocol on 20 May 2005<sup>1872</sup>. There is no National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325. Malawi ranks 145th out of 159 countries on the UNDP Gender Inequality Index.<sup>1873</sup>

Malawi has a unicameral parliament with voluntary party quotas. The parliament is comprised of 193 single-member constituencies, directly elected every five years through a majority first-past-the-post system.<sup>1874</sup> Women hold 32 (16.7%) out of 192 seats in parliament.<sup>1875</sup> The President is directly elected by simple majority popular vote for a 5-year term and may serve a second term.<sup>1876</sup>

Women received the right to vote and stand for election in 1961.<sup>1877</sup> Malawi has had one female head of government, Dr. Joyce Banda. Dr. Banda served as President for two years from 2012, and was the second woman to lead a country in Africa.<sup>1878</sup>

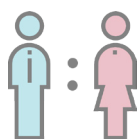
Female participation in elections as voters for the 2014 elections currently stands at 53.81% compared to the 46.19% of men who voted.<sup>1879</sup> However, the number of women running for office is quite low, at 19.2% for the 2014 elections.<sup>1880</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

Malawi has taken a number of steps with respect to women's rights and gender equality. In 2012, the government introduced the Gender Equality Act. The Act focuses on the prohibition of sex discrimination, sexual harassment and harmful practices; sexual and reproductive health rights; employment opportunities and conditions of work; and education opportunities and practice.<sup>1881</sup> It also addresses sexual harassment in the public sphere, defining it as, 'any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.'<sup>1882</sup> Moreover, the Bill states that a person committing sexual harassment is liable to pay a fine of 1 million Kwacha (\$192) and to a term of five years imprisonment. The Act also addresses sexual harassment in the work place, for which there are no clear criminal sanctions. In 2013, the Gender Equality Act Implementation and Monitoring Plan was launched with the aim to reach out to the most vulnerable groups, as well as to promote gender equality in all sectors of the society.<sup>1883</sup>

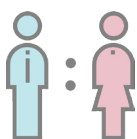
In order to address high rates of school drop-outs and the low retention of girls at both primary and secondary levels, the Government was implementing the National Girls Education Strategy in 2014. The Education Strategy aims to accelerate girls' education and the barriers that girls face in terms of their participation and access to education in comparison to boys.<sup>1884</sup> Specifically, the document indicates interventions for increased enrolment and retention of girls in school as well as creating environments for girls to excel.<sup>1885</sup>

Malawi has also taken important legislative steps to outlaw child marriage. In 2015, the Malawi Parliament passed the Marriage, Divorce and Family Relations Bill into law.<sup>1886</sup> Under the new Law the age of marriage is 18. However, under the Malawi Constitution, children aged 15-18 may still marry with parental consent.<sup>1887</sup> Two years later, in 2017, the members of Parliament overwhelmingly voted in favour of a Constitutional Amendment to outlaw child marriages between the ages of 15-18 with parental consent.<sup>1888</sup> However, despite the adoption of the Marriage, Divorce and Family Relations Bill, the UN reports that 46% of women aged 20 to 24 years were first married or in a union before age 18.<sup>1889</sup>



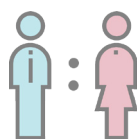
16.7%

Women in the **Parliament**  
Malawi in 2017



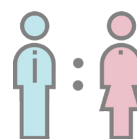
22.2%

Women **Ministers**  
Malawi in 2017



19%

Women in the **Judiciary** in  
Malawi in 2017



28.1%

Women **Firm Owners** in  
Lesotho in 2016



## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

Malawi has not adopted legislated quotas, rather using voluntary party quotas.<sup>1890</sup> Two of the country's political parties, the United Democratic Front (UDF) and the Malawi Congress Party (MCP), have implemented voluntary quotas. The UDF, which currently has 14 seats in Parliament,<sup>1891</sup> aims to have 25% of its parliamentary seats held by women according to the party constitution, and the MCP, which currently has 48 seats in Parliament,<sup>1892</sup> aims to have 33% of seats for women at all levels of the party structure.<sup>1893</sup> Moreover, according to the MCP manifesto, the party will ensure that women occupy 30% or more of all decision, policy and managerial positions in the government, however there is no clarification on exactly how this will be achieved or monitored.



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

The number of women in the judiciary has also fluctuated from 9% in 2011, to 27% in 2014.<sup>1897</sup> Currently there are 4 female justices on the Constitutional Court out of a total of 25, which means female representation was 19% in 2017.<sup>1898</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

There were only 14.2% of women in top managerial positions in private institutions recorded in 2014, but 28.1% of businesses had women as participants in ownership.<sup>1899</sup>

## STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



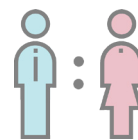
### WOMEN MPS

In the last seven years, the percentage of female representatives in Malawi's parliament has decreased. In 2010, there were 20.8% of women in parliament, which rose to 22.3% over the next three years and has since decreased to 16.7% in 2014 until 2017.<sup>1894</sup>



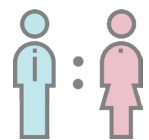
### WOMEN MINISTERS

The proportion of women who hold ministerial positions in Malawi fluctuates. In 2010, women represented 27.3% of the ministers.<sup>1895</sup> The percentage of female ministers rose from 21.2% in 2012 to 32% in 2014, however this has dropped to 22.2 in 2016.<sup>1896</sup>



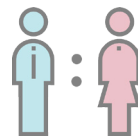
**16.7%**

Women in the **Parliament**  
**Malawi** in 2017



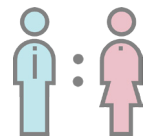
**22.2%**

Women **Ministers**  
**Malawi** in 2017



**19%**

Women in the **Judiciary** in  
**Malawi** in 2017



**28.1%**

Women **Firm Owners** in  
in **Lesotho** in 2016

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Female representation and women in leadership positions in political parties in Malawi remains low. Politics and decision-making in Malawi is a male-dominated environment, where more men hold leadership positions. There are no legal obligations for political parties to promote equal representation. The UN notes that political parties are some of the most important institutions that affect female political participation as they determine who is nominated and thus elected. In Malawi, most parties do not have affirmative strategies to promote women.<sup>1900</sup> A report by the Overseas Development Institute showed that few Malawi women hold leadership positions within political parties, and their participation is often delegated to what are considered less important roles.<sup>1901</sup> Moreover, the report also showed that weak and fragmented party systems and prejudice against women's leadership significantly influenced whether parties nominated women, and in 2014 few political parties were willing to support female candidates.<sup>1902</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

Malawi has been described as a patriarchal socially conservative society where dominant beliefs are held about the roles of men and women and their capabilities.<sup>1903</sup> Perceptions play a significant role in who voters will support. Traditional and cultural beliefs continue to act as pertinent barriers to female political participation, where it is believed that women should not present themselves in the public sphere outside of domestic duties in private life.<sup>1904</sup> A CEDAW report found that during the 2014 female political candidates did not receive support from their spouses, instead their husbands complained that participation lead the wives to neglect the domestic chores.<sup>1905</sup> Moreover, the Overseas Development Institute found that Malawian voters are likely to see women as less credible leaders and representatives and men.<sup>1906</sup>



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

According to a study by the Overseas Development Institute, Malawi women are at a disadvantage and have less access to financial resources and to male-dominated clientelist networks due to the patronage-based political and electoral system.<sup>1907</sup> The cost of campaigns often falls on the individual candidate, particular for opposition candidates, who cannot rely on access to state resources or donations from party leadership.<sup>1908</sup> According to a report by the Overseas Development Institute, female MPs said that they received little or no financial support from their respective political parties.<sup>1909</sup> Candidates often have to resort to personal resources, as one candidate noted, she was spending her life savings in order to fund her campaign.<sup>1910</sup>



## MEDIA

While Malawi has strong constitutional guarantees for freedom of the press, according to a report by Freedom House, there are several laws which restrict it in practice.<sup>1911</sup> Moreover, the report also noted that there is a strong pro-government bias. During the 2014 election, there was a disproportionate amount of attention paid to the Presidential election while parliamentary and local elections were neglected.<sup>1912</sup>

Although media can play an important role in educating the public about women's issues, according to the Malawi Global Media Monitoring Project, the media in Malawi rarely reports on gender inequality and therefore there is little awareness about it.<sup>1913</sup> Moreover, the media in Malawi perpetuates stereotypes of women and men, often portraying women as victims and men as powerful and in influential positions.<sup>1914</sup> Ahead of the 2019 elections, the Malawi Parliamentary Women's Caucus is urging the media to provide objective reporting.<sup>1915</sup>

# MOZAMBIQUE

## OVERVIEW

Republic of Mozambique gained independence from Portugal in 1975, and is recovering from the effects of a 16-year civil war.<sup>1916</sup> Political instability is relatively common in Mozambique, where corruption has become a major concern and tensions between the ruling Frente de Libertação de Moçambique/Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO) party and the opposition, former rebel movement, Renama, continue.<sup>1917</sup> While the discovery of gas fields in Mozambique in 2011 has the capacity to transform its economy, more than half of the population lives below the poverty line.<sup>1918</sup> Although there have been advances and the Government is committed to addressing gender equality and women's empowerment, most notably in the country's constitution, progress remains uneven.<sup>1919</sup>

With respect to gender equality, the country's legal framework, detailed in Article 68 declares, 'women and men equal before the law in all domains of economic, social, political and cultural life.'<sup>1920</sup> Mozambique ratified CEDAW on 21 April 1997<sup>1921</sup> and the Maputo Protocol on 9 December 2005.<sup>1922</sup> There is no National Action Plan on the implementation of UNSCR 1325. Mozambique ranks 139 out of 159 countries on the UNDP Gender Inequality Index, making it the lowest ranked country in the region and the country where gender inequality is the highest.<sup>1923</sup>

Mozambique has a unicameral parliament with voluntary party quota. The 250 members of the National Assembly are directly elected every five years via a proportional representation system.<sup>1924</sup> Women hold 99 (39.6%) out 250 seats in the National Assembly.<sup>1925</sup> The President, who is elected by popular vote for up to two five-year terms, appoints the prime minister.<sup>1926</sup>

Women received the right to vote and stand for election in 1975.<sup>1927</sup> While Mozambique has not had a female President, Dr. Luisa Diogo served as the first female Prime Minister from 2004–2010, prior to which she served as Minister of Finance. Verónica Nataniel Macamo Dlovo is the first women to be elected as Speaker of the National Assembly; she was elected in 2010 and re-elected in 2015.<sup>1928</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

Mozambique has adopted a number of legislative and policy decisions with respect to women's rights. In 2010, the Domestic Violence Perpetrated against Women Act of 2010 became operational. The Act addresses domestic violence within family and defines who the perpetrator may be.<sup>1929</sup> Under the Act, the perpetrator can be a partner or former partner – from legal and common law unions – as well as other relatives of the woman.<sup>1930</sup> Moreover the Act defines domestic violence to include physical abuse; sexual abuse; emotional and psychological abuse; intimidation; harassment; stalking; damage to property; any other controlling or abusive behaviour that harms or may cause harm to a person.<sup>1931</sup> A person found guilty of domestic violence may either be fined, sentenced to community work, or imprisonment between 3 days to 8 years.<sup>1932</sup>

While Mozambique has seen significant economic growth, the job market has not improved and the poverty rate is high.<sup>1933</sup> To promote employment opportunities and more decent work, the Government adopted the Decent Work Country Programme 2011 – 2015. The central objective is to reduce poverty through more inclusive economic growth and the promotion of decent work.<sup>1934</sup> Among its goals, the Programme aims to provide a special focus on employment opportunities for the most vulnerable groups, such as women and persons living with HIV/AIDS in urban and rural areas. The Programme also places a special emphasis on eliminating child labour.<sup>1935</sup>

In 2016 the Government of Mozambique adopted a new national strategy to end child marriage by 2019.<sup>1936</sup> The strategy focuses on improving girls' access to education, providing sexual and reproductive health services and legal reforms.<sup>1937</sup> According to data published in the SADC Gender Protocol 2017, Mozambique has the highest incidences of child marriage in Southern Africa at 48% of children getting married before the age of 18, and 14% of children married before the age of 15.<sup>1938</sup> The strategy has been praised by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) for providing a holistic approach to children and girls and their rights.<sup>1939</sup>



## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

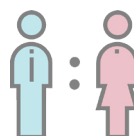
There is currently no legislation on quotas for the Lower House or at sub-national level, instead voluntary party quotas are used with respect to gender parity.<sup>1940</sup> The majority party, Frente de Libertação de Moçambique

(FRELIMO), has used gender quotas since 1994 and requires 40% of candidates for parliament and local government to be women.<sup>1941</sup>



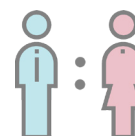
## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

The 2016 Global Gender Gap Report found that 24.4% of firms had female participation in ownership.<sup>1948</sup> This is a slight increase from 2012 when 24% of firms had female participation in ownership.<sup>1949</sup>



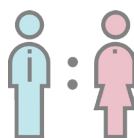
**39.6%**

Women in the **Parliament**  
**Mozambique** in 2015



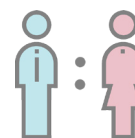
**23.8%**

Women **Ministers**  
**Mozambique** in 2016



**11.8%**

Women in the **Judiciary** in  
**Mozambique** in 2018



**24.4%**

Women **Firm Owners** in  
**Mozambique** in 2016



## WOMEN MPS

The number of female representatives in Parliament has remained at a steady level in the last seven years. In 2010, 39.2% of women made up the National Assembly.<sup>1942</sup> Since 2015, women represent 39.6% of the members in Parliament.<sup>1943</sup>



## WOMEN MINISTERS

The number of female ministers has altered marginally since 2010 at 25.9%, increasing to 28.6% in 2014, and decreasing again to 23.8% in 2016 where it remains.<sup>1944</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

Currently one of seven justices on the Constitutional Court is a woman,<sup>1945</sup> as is the Chief Justice.<sup>1946</sup> Combining the judges on the Supreme Court and Constitutional Court, female representation is at 11.8%.<sup>1947</sup>



# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Political parties in Mozambique are male-dominated. When it comes to participating in decision-making, women face significant challenges. Women are still very much in a secondary position in politics as parties in Mozambique are dominated by men.<sup>1950</sup> According to a report by the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, women do not hold decision-making positions, but rather hold positions without much influence within the political parties.<sup>1951</sup> Of the three main parties in Mozambique, only 25.6 percent of the members top bodies (the Political Commission, or the equivalent) are women.<sup>1952</sup> When it comes to local government, in only four of the country's 53 municipalities is the mayor a woman.<sup>1953</sup> Moreover, discrimination and sexual harassment is widespread within the political parties, and women are often disadvantaged when it comes to distribution of resources.<sup>1954</sup>

While more women serve in parliament, the advancement of women in decision-making and the removal of barriers have been uneven. The Friedrich Ebert Stiftung report found that the low impact of women on gender equality can in part be explained by strong patriarchal culture in Mozambican politics. It can also be explained by the strong allegiance to the party, which often demands putting interest of the party over issues such as gender equality.<sup>1955</sup> According to the study, many women who are in politics and in decision-making positions are not automatically advocates for gender equality and women's empowerment. Rather, the study found many women have their own personal agendas and are not necessarily advocating for a general empowerment of women.<sup>1956</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

Mozambique has a strong patriarchal culture and men dominate both the formal and informal institutions, including the family, where there are clear divisions of labour between men and women.<sup>1957</sup> Cultural understanding and expectations influence women's behaviour and choices.<sup>1958</sup> According to Maria Helena Langa, President of the Mandlakazi City Council, the conservative division of roles within the family, fragility of laws in the area of women's protection and cultural taboos all impact on women's considerations for seeking decision-making posts.<sup>1959</sup> She also called attention to low self-esteem and the guilt of having to give up certain socially prescribed duties such as motherhood and dedication to the family as factors that hinder women's participation and ascension in politics.<sup>1960</sup>



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

Despite the gains made in political representation, social indicators demonstrate that women in Mozambique are lagging behind men in most social and economic measures. Women in Mozambique, to a large extent, are marginalized with higher levels of poverty and unemployment, and social norms usually undermine women's positions in society vis-à-vis men.<sup>1961</sup> According a report by the UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, the number of female-headed households is increasing and that these represent an increasing portion of the poorest of the population in Mozambique.<sup>1962</sup> The increase in the number of women who live in poverty is, according to the report, in part due to the fact that while more women work in the agricultural sector, men are still the principal owner of land.<sup>1963</sup> The result, the Special Rapporteur found, is that women in Mozambique have little control over or access to productive resources, are often unaware of their rights with respect to property and inheritance for example, and are typically prevented from participating equally at the decision-making level.<sup>1964</sup> Additionally, women and young girls take on the largest share of taking care of the household and family which prevents them from fully participating in politics and in decision-making, and therefore remain in the periphery of the economy.<sup>1965</sup>



## MEDIA

While the Government recognizes the importance of media in promoting democracy and recognizes freedom of the press, journalists and media staff and owners who upset the authorities continue to be exposed to threats and intimidation, with the result that self-censorship is widespread, especially in rural zones.<sup>1966</sup>

The media in Mozambique is largely a male-dominated environment, and female reporters are often harassed by their male colleagues. Although the media can play a key role in promoting awareness and understanding, reporting on gender issues is largely ignored or underreported.<sup>1967</sup> According to a report by IREX, when there are reports of issues such as gender-based violence, the coverage does not include a variety of sources and the language used often stigmatises the victims, thus further contributing to misconceptions and misunderstandings about gender issues.<sup>1968</sup>

# NAMIBIA

## OVERVIEW

After a long struggle against rule by South Africa, Namibia gained independence in 1990.<sup>1969</sup> Since its independence, the country has enjoyed political stability and political life has been dominated by South West African Peoples' Organization (SWAPO). This large and scarcely populated country, is rich in natural resources and its economy is largely dependent upon the export of minerals. Namibia has seen strong economic development, but socio-economic inequality and poverty are increasing, preventing disadvantaged groups, such as women, from fully participating in society and political life.<sup>1970</sup> Although women's empowerment and gender equality are integral parts of Namibia's Constitution, challenges remain to ensuring that women's rights are protected in all areas.<sup>1971</sup>

When it comes to gender equality and women's rights, the country ratified CEDAW on 23 November 1992<sup>1972</sup> and the Maputo Protocol on 11 August 2004.<sup>1973</sup> Additionally, the National Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 was signed in 2000.<sup>1974</sup> Namibia ranks 108 out of 159 countries on the UNDP Gender Inequality Index.<sup>1975</sup>

Namibia has a bicameral parliament using voluntary party quotas as well as legislated quotas at a sub-national level. The upper house, the National Council, is comprised of 42 seats and its members are appointed by regional councils for five-year terms.<sup>1976</sup> Women hold 10 (23.8%) out of 42 seats in the National Council.<sup>1977</sup> The lower house, the National Assembly is made up of 96 seats, and its members are elected by popular vote for five-year terms using party-list proportional representation.<sup>1978</sup> Under the Third Constitutional Amendment passed in 2014, the President may appoint 8 additional non-voting members to the National Assembly.<sup>1979</sup> Of the 104 seats in the National Assembly, women hold 43 (41.3%).<sup>1980</sup> The President is directly elected for a five-year term, and may serve a second term. The Prime Minister is appointed by the President.

Women in Namibia received the right to vote and stand for election in 1989.<sup>1981</sup> Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila is the country's first female prime minister.<sup>1982</sup> Moreover, the position of Deputy Prime Minister is also held by a woman, Nandi-Ndaitwah Netumbo.<sup>1983</sup>

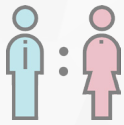
There was little disaggregated data available with respect to voters in the sources consulted for this report. However, according to data published by the Legal Assistance Centre for the Delegation of the European Union to Namibia, in the 2014 election, 53% of registered voters were women.<sup>1984</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

In order to improve women's rights and address gender inequality, the Government of Namibia has adopted a number of comprehensive policies and plans. For example, in 2010, the Government adopted the National Gender Policy 2010 – 2020. The Policy aims to "guide actions towards the integration and mainstreaming of gender perspectives in the broad development framework", and "to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women in the socio-economic, cultural and political development of Namibia".<sup>1985</sup> The comprehensive plan focuses on programme areas such as gender-based violence, gender and poverty, gender and rural development, reproductive health, and gender, governance and decision-making.

In an effort to expand upon its commitment under the National Gender Policy with respect to gender-based violence (GBV), the Government of Namibia adopted the National Plan of Action on Gender-Based Violence 2012-2016. The Plan was developed in part to ensure that the government fulfils its mandate to ensure gender equality, equitable socio-economic development of women and men, and the wellbeing of children.<sup>1986</sup> Under the Plan of Action, the Government commits to take actions designed to prevent GBV, to improve the implementation of laws and services for victims and survivors of GBV and to identify areas for improvement in access to and delivery of effective and efficient services.<sup>1987</sup>

In 2014, the Government adopted the National Human Rights Action Plan 2015 – 2019. The Human Rights Action Plan has seven overall focus areas that include: the right to health, the right not to be discriminated against, the right to access to justice and the right to land. The Plan includes interventions that specifically address women. For example, under the Plan, the Government commits to expanding the accessibility and availability of sexual and reproductive health services in rural areas, develop and deliver a comprehensive awareness programme on the "right to education", including the realisation of this right for girls in rural and traditional communities, and undertake formal research on the gender-responsiveness of the national budget with recommendations for improvement.<sup>1988</sup>



## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

Namibia does not have legislated quotas for the lower and upper houses of parliament, but rather uses voluntary party quotas.<sup>1989</sup> The ruling South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) is committed to filling half its seats in parliament with women. The party has adopted the "zebra system" which requires the alternation between men and women on candidate lists, and whereby if a minister is a woman, the deputy minister will be a man, and vice versa.<sup>1990</sup> According to this new system, the roles will be switched in successive elections, which mean that SWAPO is committed to appoint a woman to the presidency in 2019.<sup>1991</sup> However, legislated quotas exist on a sub-national level whereby Electoral Law and the Local Authorities Act dictates that in the election of a local council with 10 or less members, party lists must include at least three females.<sup>1992</sup>



## WOMEN MINISTERS

The percentage of women in ministerial positions has fluctuated, with 24% in 2010, decreasing to 21.7% in 2014, and then rising back to 24% in 2016.<sup>1999</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

There are only three justices on the Constitutional Court, none of whom are women, nor is the Chief Justice a female.<sup>2000</sup> However, two out of five judges on the Supreme Court are women. On the High Court, three of the 12 judges are women.<sup>2001</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

The percentage of females in top management positions in private or non-governmental institutions was at 27.4% in 2014 but has since decreased to 22.4% in 2016.<sup>2002</sup> While it has been recorded that 41% of business ownership includes women,<sup>2003</sup> only 25.6% of firms have a majority of female ownership.<sup>2004</sup>

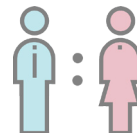
# STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



## WOMEN MPS

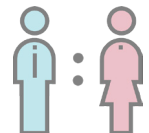
While overall female political participation remains low, it has steadily increased over the past ten years. In 2010, 24.4% of females were in the Lower House.<sup>1993</sup> Since the election in 2014, female political representation in the Lower House gradually increased to 41.3% in 2015 where it remains.<sup>1994</sup> The increase in women's representation in the 2014 election has been credited to the introduction of SWAPO's zebra list, and the fact that out of the 16 political parties which took part in the election, three had 50% or more women on their party lists while six had at least 50% women amongst their top ten candidates.<sup>1995</sup>

Female representation in the Upper House decreased from 26.9% in 2010<sup>1996</sup> to 23.1% in 2015.<sup>1997</sup> However, since then, the number has slightly increased and as of 2016 23.8% of the seats are held by women.<sup>1998</sup>



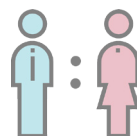
23.8%

Women in the **Upper House** in Namibia in 2018



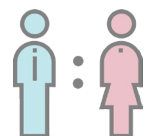
24%

Women **Ministers** in Namibia in 2016



25%

Women in the **High Court** in Namibia



25.6%

Women **Firm Owners** in Namibia in 2016

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Strong patriarchal traditions and perceptions continue to characterize Namibian society and gender continues to be the most striking and systematic ground for unequal opportunities in political life.<sup>2005</sup> Female leaders in Namibia are often associated with what is considered softer aspects of governance and are perceived as devoting their attention to women's issues, health and social issues.<sup>2006</sup> Although women head three standing committees in parliament, the ministries deemed important such as transport, agriculture and those related to the economy are headed by men.<sup>2007</sup>

While more and more women in Namibia enter politics and take on decision-making roles, there is a growing divide between the urban and rural areas. In the urban areas better educated middle class women are more likely to enter politics than their rural counterparts. An investigation by the Guardian showed that, like other countries in South Africa, levels of education and access to resources play a significant role in social mobility and ability to engage in politics.<sup>2008</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

A report by the Legal Assistance Centre for the Delegation of the European Union to Namibia found that women's ability to participate in decision-making is impeded by traditional and patriarchal governance structures and processes.<sup>2009</sup> These, the report argues, tend to favour men's interests over women as most traditional leaders are men and men tend to dominate the institutions.<sup>2010</sup> Moreover, women's roles are defined by negative preconceptions and stereotypes about their ability to contribute, thus the traditional cultures often create a glass ceiling preventing women from participating fully.<sup>2011</sup>



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

According to a report by Bertelsmann Stiftung's, equal gender representation in Namibian politics is dependent upon females overcoming the country's social and economic disparities.<sup>2012</sup> Namibia has one of the highest income disparities in the world, leading to social exclusion whereby women are hit particularly hard.<sup>2013</sup> Moreover, a disproportionate number of women live in rural areas and are dependent on subsistence agriculture in order to care for their families, while men in greater numbers move to urban areas and are able to accumulate greater resources.<sup>2014</sup>

Poverty among women in Namibia is often linked to unequal access to, control over and benefit from an uneven distribution of productive resources such as land, capital, education, labour and limited participation in political and economic institutions.<sup>2015</sup>



## MEDIA

Although the media can play an important role in advancing gender equality and changing perceptions of women in politics and society, the media in Namibia is a male dominated environment and stories are largely told from a male perspective.<sup>2016</sup> According to a report by the Legal Assistance Centre for the Delegation of the European Union to Namibia, women constitute only 19% of Namibian news sources, and this figure has remained largely the same for the past 12 years.<sup>2017</sup> Moreover, women constitute only 40% of all media workers and 34% of media managers.<sup>2018</sup>

# SOUTH AFRICA

## OVERVIEW

South Africa, a culturally diverse country, has a tumultuous history of violence, segregation and disparity. During the apartheid era, women played a significant role in all areas of campaigns and protests to end the policy.<sup>2019</sup> In 1994, the country held its first free and non-racial elections, ending the policy of apartheid. In the years following the historic election, progress on gender equality gained momentum. When the Bill of Rights was adopted in 1996, all women in South Africa received formal recognition as equal citizens.<sup>2020</sup> While progress has been made in terms of women's rights and gender equality since the end of apartheid, women, especially black women, are economically disadvantaged and face high rates of rape and domestic violence.<sup>2021</sup>

In terms of gender equality and women's rights, South Africa ratified CEDAW on 15 December 1995<sup>2022</sup> and the country ratified the Maputo Protocol on 17 December 2004.<sup>2023</sup> South Africa does not have a Plan of Action for the implementation of UNSCR 1325.<sup>2024</sup> While much work remains in regard to gender equality and women's rights, the country ranks 90 out of 159 countries on the UNDP Gender Inequality Index, making it the highest-ranking country in the South African region.<sup>2025</sup>

South Africa has a bicameral parliament, consisting of the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces. The National Assembly is made up of 400 seats, where the members of parliament are directly elected via a proportional representation system; 200 members are selected from national lists, and 200 members are selected from regional lists. The National Council of Provinces is made up of 90 members of which, 54 members are appointed by parties represented in the provincial legislatures, and the remaining 36 members are special delegates representing provincial legislatures.<sup>2026</sup> Members of the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces serve five-year terms. The President, who serves as the Head of Cabinet, is elected every five years by all members of the National Assembly.<sup>2027</sup> As of December 2017, female representatives hold 164 (41.8%) out of 392 seats in the lower house, with 8 seats vacant.<sup>2028</sup> In the Upper House, 19 (35.2%) out of the 54 seats are filled by women.<sup>2029</sup>

Women received the right to vote and stand for election in 1930 for those who were identified as 'white', and in 1994 for those who were identified as 'black'.<sup>2030</sup> Race and gender, amongst other identity factors, perpetuate a system of inequality, discrimination and continued disparity.

While South Africa has not yet elected a female President, South African women have held important government positions. Dr. Ivy Matsepe-Casaburri, served as Acting President for four days in September 2005.<sup>2031</sup> Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka served as deputy president from 2005–2008, and Ms. Baleka Mbete held the position from 2008–2009.

In the 2014 election, women accounted for 57% of voter participation, compared to 43% men.<sup>2032</sup> Voter participation for both genders has held steady since the previous election in 2009. According to the Electoral Commission of South Africa, women currently comprise 55% of registered voters.<sup>2033</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

The Government of South Africa has taken a number of steps to address gender inequality and women's rights. In 2011, the South African Protection from Harassment Act was adopted. The Act is the first in the SADC region to address sexual harassment.<sup>2034</sup> Notably, the Act expands on the harm caused from physical harm to also include mental, psychological and economic harm, and also provides protection order for incidences of stalking.<sup>2035</sup> The Act covers all forms of stalking, including cyber stalking. It also states that if a harasser contravenes the protection order to cease harassment, he or she will be guilty of an offense.<sup>2036</sup> The Act also empowers the police to investigate a potential stalker to identify the person even before a victim applies for a protection order.<sup>2037</sup>

In order to address the prevalence of HIV/AIDS, the Government of South Africa adopted the National Strategic Plan (NSP) for HIV, TB and STIs 2017 – 2022. The NSP focuses on geographic areas and sections of the population that are most affected by the epidemics.<sup>2038</sup> The Plan has eight goals that includes among others to accelerate prevention to reduce new HIV, TB and STI infections; reduce morbidity and mortality by providing HIV, TB and STIs treatment, care and adherence support for all; reach all key and vulnerable populations with customised and targeted interventions; promote leadership and shared accountability for a sustainable response to HIV, TB and STIs; and mobilise resources to support the achievement of NSP goals and ensure a sustainable response.<sup>2039</sup> The Plan also includes a stronger focus on vulnerable groups such as adolescent girls and young women.

Through its National Plan Vision for 2030, the Government seeks to mainstream gender issues into policy planning and makes a commitment to women's economic empowerment.<sup>2040</sup> Inequality remains high in South Africa, and black women in particular face significant challenges, therefore Vision 2030 seeks to eliminate poverty, reduce inequality and increase access to education and employment.<sup>2041</sup>





## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

There are no legislated quotas for the Lower or Upper Houses, but rather uses voluntary party quotas.<sup>2042</sup> South Africa's dominant party, the ANC, has adopted voluntary quotas. The quota of 30% was first put into practice in 1994, which was altered to 50% in 2006.<sup>2043</sup> While it does not have explicit provisions for voluntary quotas, the Congress of People party (COPE), established in 2008, currently has 3 seats in the National Assembly<sup>2044</sup>, ensuring that 50% of its elected Members of Parliament were women.<sup>2045</sup>

However, there are legislated quotas at a sub-national level according to Local Government Act which stipulates that in elections for local councils, parties must seek to ensure that 50% of the candidates are women. There are, however, no legal sanctions for non-compliance to the Local Government Act.<sup>2046</sup>



## WOMEN MINISTERS

Overall, the proportion of women in ministerial positions has increased in recent years. In 2012, women held 40% of the ministerial positions, an increase from 34.3% in 2010.<sup>2052</sup> Although, the proportion of female ministers decreased in 2014 to 37.1%, since 2015 women hold 41.7% of the ministerial positions.<sup>2053</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

Two (15.3%) out of the 13 justices are women.<sup>2054</sup> In 2017, there were 86(35.3%) women judges in the Superior courts nationally out of a total of 243.<sup>2055</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

According to the Business Women's Association of South Africa (BWASA) Census there has been a steady increase in the number of women in South Africa who hold executive management positions. In 2012, 21.4% of executive manager positions were held by women, an increase from 19.3% in 2010.<sup>2056</sup> By 2017, the number had grown to 29.4%.<sup>2057</sup> With respect to female directors, following an initial increase, the number has dropped. In 2010, 16.6% of directors were women, by 2015 the number had increased to 21.9% but has since dropped to 20.7% in 2017.<sup>2058</sup> The most recent data found showed that in 2017 only 22.6% of firms had female participation in ownership.

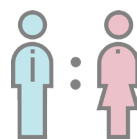


## WOMEN MPS

Political participation of females in South Africa is progressing unevenly. In 2010 the Lower House had 44.5% female representation.<sup>2047</sup> The number declined in 2011 to 42.3% and continued to drop to 41.5% in 2014.<sup>2048</sup>

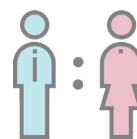
Following the elections in 2014 the number of female representation has increased from 42% in 2015 but has since declined slightly to 41.8%.<sup>2049</sup>

Female representation in the Upper House has seen a steady growth over the years. In 2010, women held 29.6% of the seats.<sup>2050</sup> In 2011, this number increased to 32.1% and continued to grow to 35.2% in 2017.<sup>2051</sup>



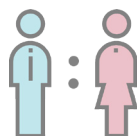
35.2%

Women in the **Upper House in South Africa** in 2017



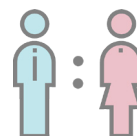
41.7%

Women **Ministers** in **South Africa** in 2015



35.3%

Women in the **Superior Court in South Africa** in 2015



22.6%

Women **Firm Owners** in **South Africa** in 2017

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

When it comes to women's full participation in public and political life, open and indirect mechanisms of exclusion and discrimination in political institutions in South Africa present barriers for female politicians.<sup>2059</sup> While women's equal participation is guaranteed by the Constitution, in reality, political parties have done little to guarantee it.<sup>2060</sup> The ANC is the only party in South Africa to have embraced a voluntary quota of 50% women in local and national elections.<sup>2061</sup> However, the party has not always stuck to its quota, or to have zebra proportional presentation on the party list, usually placing men at the top of the list.<sup>2062</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

Social and cultural barriers for females running for office in South Africa partly pertain to negative perceptions of women as leaders. Discriminatory and traditional stereotypes pose a fundamental challenge to prospective female leaders due to the mismatch between qualities associated with women and qualities associated with leadership. This leads to questioning a woman's capability as a leader, which is internalised by women who often consider themselves less qualified for top-level positions.<sup>2063</sup> Furthermore, women who have become prominent in politics within South Africa have often been referred to as having the 'queen bee' syndrome where they consider their position as a personal struggle and have been accused of failing to support the ascent of their female colleagues.<sup>2064</sup>

MEET OUR  
FEMALE MEMBERS.  
WE NEED THEM  
TO ATTRACT  
WOMEN VOTERS



*Lack of genuine support for women within political parties*



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

Economic and financial barriers are an issue with regards to female political participation. A Gender Links study revealed that female political representatives continue to struggle with male intimidation and are often at a disadvantage to their male counterparts in terms of resources and beneficial connections.<sup>2065</sup> As a result, women are struggling to receive the same financial benefits and resources that are available to men through established connections. Furthermore, subject to male intimidation, women become discouraged at the prospect of vying for political candidacy if they are going to be threatened in the process.



## MEDIA

In recent years, female politicians have received more coverage in South African media. The extent of coverage devoted to female politicians were taken as an indicator of how serious the media viewed women in politics.<sup>2066</sup> While the coverage of female politicians increased, negative and stereotypical presentation of women remains a pervasive problem. Female politicians were often belittled, their role in politics trivialised, their credentials questioned, and their personal relationships debated by the media.<sup>2067</sup>

When it comes to women journalists, gender discrimination is very common in South African newsrooms, and a study by Media Monitoring Africa found that the cause of the gender discrimination, the inequalities and social injustices that continue to persist are due to deeply ingrained patriarchy in society.<sup>2068</sup> The study also found that gender stereotypes are one of the main causes of gender discrimination and that the most common type of discrimination is sexual harassment.<sup>2069</sup> Few reporters are aware of policies for dealing with sexual harassment in the workplace, the study revealed, and that may hinder female journalists from seeking justice after such violations.<sup>2070</sup>

Media in South Africa remains predominantly male, the number of women who hold positions of seniority in South African media appears to be declining. For example, according to the State of the Newsroom report, in 2014, there was a decline of approximately 9% in the proportion of women holding editor-in-chief positions at major South African media titles.<sup>2071</sup>

# SWAZILAND

## OVERVIEW

Swaziland gained independence in 1968, and is the continent's only remaining absolute monarchy.<sup>2072</sup> Under the current system, the King exercises authority over the cabinet, legislature and judiciary.<sup>2073</sup> In recent years, there have been reports of social unrest and public discontent in Swaziland because of the elite's perceived mismanagement of public finances and corruption, poor labour conditions, and resistance to demands for democratic reform.<sup>2074</sup> Approximately 63% of its population live below the poverty line, and the country has one of the highest rates of adults living with HIV/AIDS in the world.<sup>2075</sup> Swazi women frequently face discrimination that prevents them from participating in politics due to strongly held notions of male dominance and the subordination of women.<sup>2076</sup>

The country ratified the CEDAW on 26 March 2004,<sup>2077</sup> and the Maputo Protocol on 5 October 2012.<sup>2078</sup> There is still no action plan for the implementation of UNSCR 1325, but the country passed the National Gender Policy and Action Plan in 2010. The country ranks 137 out of 159 countries on the UNDP Gender Inequality Index and is one of the most unequal countries in the region.<sup>2079</sup>

Swaziland has a bicameral parliament, consisting of the Senate and the House of Assembly, with legislated quotas for both houses. Political parties are not allowed in Swaziland rather individuals are elected to parliament from 55 constituencies, which are sub-divided into 385 chiefdoms.<sup>2080</sup> The Senate has 30 members of which 20 are appointed by the King and 10 are indirectly elected by a simple majority by the House of Assembly.<sup>2081</sup> The House of Assembly consists of 65 members, of which 55 are elected by absolute majority in two rounds if needed in single-seat constituencies, and the remaining 10 are appointed by the King.<sup>2082</sup> Representatives of both the Senate and the House of Assembly serve five-year terms. Women hold 4 (6.2%) out of 65 seats in the House of Assembly, and 10 (33.3%) out of 30 seats in the Senate.<sup>2083</sup> The King is the Head of State, and the Prime Minister is the Head of Government. The Prime Minister is appointed by the King from among elected members of the House of Assembly.<sup>2084</sup>

Swazi women were granted the right to vote and stand for election in 1968, but their involvement in politics is still very low.<sup>2085</sup> To date, Swaziland has not had a female head of government.

53% of registered voters were female and 46% of actual voters on Election Day in 2013. It is difficult to find data from the previous years, but this is generally a good turnout compared to the number of women running for office.

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

The Government of Swaziland adopted the National Gender Policy in 2010, which provides a national framework and strategies for gender mainstreaming and takes into account regional and international gender agreements that the country is a signatory to.<sup>2086</sup> The Policy focuses on nine areas which are deemed critical for the overall advancement of gender equality in Swaziland.<sup>2087</sup> The priority areas include: poverty and economic empowerment; health, reproductive rights and HIV/AIDS; education and training; legal and human rights; politics and decision-making and gender-based violence.<sup>2088</sup>

With respect to gender-based violence, the parliament was set to vote on the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Bill in 2013. The proposed Bill sought to address all forms of violence against women and children.<sup>2089</sup> However, the parliament was dissolved in 2013 before a vote could take place, and the Bill has since lapsed, and the process is set to start anew. The Bill was revised in 2015. In the revised version, the definition of rape was broadened from the common law definition, to cover the insertion even in the slightest degree, of the genital organs of a person into the genital organs, anus or other orifice of another person.<sup>2090</sup> Male rape is also provided for in the Bill. The Bill has not been adopted into law as the King and traditional authorities have raised concerns that provisions might infringe upon Swazi laws and customs,<sup>2091</sup> in particular, the provisions which pertain to stalking, flashing, marital rape and child marriage.<sup>2092</sup>

The Ministry of Education and Training introduced a programme for both students and teachers on girls' empowerment. The programme created a safe space for girls in schools to discuss topics like sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence. Furthermore, as part of the National Development Strategic Plan and Government Targets 2014-2018, the government has included training for the judiciary to recognize CEDAW in their judgments.<sup>2093</sup>

Additionally, the High Court of Swaziland has played a significant role in advancing women's rights and gender equality in Swaziland. In 2013, the High Court declared unconstitutional an element of the common law principle of marital power: a ban on married women instituting legal actions on their own behalf and without the assistance of their husbands.<sup>2094</sup> Under the principle of marital power, a husband married under civil rites and in community of property had veto power over a number of decisions such as in matters of legal representation, and the power to administer the joint estate without consulting his wife.<sup>2095</sup>



## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

The Bill of Rights in the Swaziland Constitution aims to achieve a 30% representation of women in decision-making.<sup>2096</sup> Furthermore, the constitution provides that five out of 10 members of the House of Assembly appointed by the King should be women and states that if 30% of female representation is not reached in parliament, the House may elect up to four additional women per region.<sup>2097</sup> However, this provision has proved to be ineffective as Parliament did not elect four additional women in neither the 2008 nor 2013 elections and even if it had, women's political representation would still remain lower than 30%. The King's Advisory Council has only recently appointed women and allowed them to attend and speak at the Swazi National Council meeting (Sibaya).<sup>2098</sup> Statistics on Women's Political Participation and Leadership Roles



## WOMEN MINISTERS

The representation of women in ministerial positions has largely remained steady. In 2010, women held 26.3% of the ministerial positions, however in 2012 the number dropped to 23.8%.<sup>2102</sup> However, the number increased and since 2014 women's representation in ministerial positions holds at 26.3%.<sup>2103</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

Similarly, women represent only 23% of judges and 37.5% of magistrates.<sup>2104</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

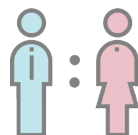
Statistics are scarce overall, especially in relation to women in private sector. However, according to the World Bank in 2016, 36% of firms in Swaziland had female participation in ownership, and 27.4% of firms had females among its top managers.<sup>2105</sup>

## STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



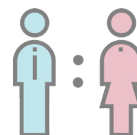
## WOMEN MPS

The 2013 Parliamentary elections resulted in a drop in the proportion of seats held by women in the Lower House of parliament from 13.6% in 2010 to 6.2%, and from 40% to 33.3% in the Upper House.<sup>2099</sup> Only 18% of nominees were women, one of whom was elected.<sup>2100</sup> The King appointed three additional women but representation is still far below the Southern African Development Community (SADC) protocol target, which aimed to reach 50% representation of women in decision-making positions in both public and private sectors by 2015.<sup>2101</sup>



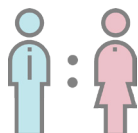
33.3%

Women in the **Upper House** in **Swaziland** in 2013



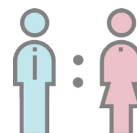
26.3%

Women **Ministers** in **Swaziland** in 2014



37.5%

Women magistrates **Swaziland**



36%

Women **Firm Owners** in **Swaziland** in 2016



# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

According to Women in Law in Southern Africa - Swaziland, the policy and legislative-making processes in Swaziland are problematic as they operate in a patriarchal system.<sup>2106</sup> The patriarchal system limits the female MPs ability to influence policy as the system continues to see governance as a man's issue and men remain the ultimate decision-makers.<sup>2107</sup>

Women's participation in parliament is complicated by a lack of trust in the female representatives' ability to make a difference, often by female voters. One female voter in Swaziland stated that it did not make a difference if her representative was a man or a woman, and she did not believe that life would improve for poor women as she like herself if a large number of women served in parliament.<sup>2108</sup> Another female voter argued that women MPs are failing to advocate for policies and legislation that will help women get out of poverty. Female MPs are often seen as living comfortable lives and once in office fail to advocate for all women, and even disassociate themselves with women's rights issues.<sup>2109</sup>



## SOCIAL|CULTURAL BARRIERS

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## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

Swazi women are considered to be legally minors and cannot own land or property. Although a Government report showed that women own small business, the premises they use are owned by men, making them vulnerable to misappropriations.<sup>2114</sup> Thus few women have resources to run for office. Moreover, women with higher education who are living in wealthier urban areas have better access to decision-making and influence than those with a lower level of education, living in poorer rural contexts.<sup>2115</sup>



## MEDIA

Media in Swaziland is marked by a mix of official censorship and self-censorship, primarily on official or royal matters.<sup>2116</sup> According to a report published by Freedom House, hostile rhetoric from government officials has resulted in self-censorship by both public and private media.<sup>2117</sup> The report also found that journalists censor their work based on concerns about sanctions, job loss, and criminal prosecution. Many operate under pseudonyms to avoid detection by and potential harassment and surveillance from Swazi authorities.<sup>2118</sup> There are also claims that Swazi authorities actively attempt to prevent coverage of events. For example, in 2015, journalists claimed that authorities moved to block them from covering a traffic accident, in which a number of women traveling to the traditional Reed Dance event were killed.<sup>2119</sup>

# ZAMBIA

## OVERVIEW

Zambia gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1964. Although the country's economy has grown tremendously in recent years, in part due to the production of copper, the benefit have not yet reached the most vulnerable, and extreme poverty persists in the country.<sup>2120</sup> It is one of few countries that were able to avoid war and disorder, gaining a reputation for being politically stable.<sup>2121</sup> While Zambia has many challenges in achieving equality in women's political participation, the country gained praise for the efforts it has made toward achieving equality and mobilizing women to participate in politics.

With respect to women's rights, Zambia ratified CEDAW on 21 June 1985<sup>2122</sup>, and ratified the Maputo Protocol on 2 May 2006.<sup>2123</sup> Zambia does not have a National Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325. Although the country is taking steps to address gender inequality, the country ranks 124 out of 159 countries on the UNDP Gender Inequality Index.<sup>2124</sup>

Zambia has a unicameral parliament, the National Assembly, and although the electoral system ensures gender equality in the National Assembly, there is no quota system or reserved seats for women.<sup>2125</sup> The Parliament is made up of 167 members of which 156 directly elected, and 8 appointed by the President, plus the Vice-President, the Speaker and the First Deputy Speaker.<sup>2126</sup> All members of the National Assembly serve five-year terms. As of 2017, 30 (18%) out of 167 seats in the National Assembly were held by women.<sup>2127</sup> The President, who is elected by popular vote to serve a five-year term, is both the Head of State and Head of Government.<sup>2128</sup>

Zambian women received the right to vote and stand for elections in 1962. Although Zambia has not had a female head of government, its first female Vice-President, Inonge Wina, was elected on January 26, 2015. During the 2016 elections, Edith Nawakwi, running for a second time, was the only female presidential candidate.

Although little data on female voters was found, in the most recent election the number of registered female voters was 50.4% although the actual female voter turnout was only 33%.<sup>2129</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

The Zambian Government recognises the importance of gender equality in development and has laid out many policies and programmes to assist in mainstreaming gender equality. In 2010, the Gender and Women in Development Office in Zambia produced the National Plan of Action on Gender-Based Violence (NPA-GBV), 2010–2014 in order to facilitate the implementation of previous recommendations scattered across several national policies, plans of action and reports.<sup>2130</sup> The Plan has four main strategic areas: legislative and policy review; advocacy and awareness creation; capacity-building of relevant stakeholders involved in the delivery of interventions against gender-based violence such as psychological support, health services and security and protection; and strengthening the coordinating mechanisms.<sup>2131</sup> With respect to gender-based violence, the Office also issued comprehensive National Guidelines on the management of cases of gender-based violence which are aimed at providing a uniform and clear framework to manage cases of violence against women and girls.<sup>2132</sup>

In 2012, the Government of Zambia and the Joint UN Programme launched a project to facilitate the implementation of the Zambian Anti-Gender Based Violence Act of 2011. The project aimed to increase the health sector's involvement in addressing GBV in Zambia; establish appropriate justice/legal systems to effectively implement the Anti GBV Act; scale up social protection systems for prevention and management of GBV, including integrated approaches to economic empowerment of GBV survivors; and establish an effective coordination mechanism for an integrated GBV response in Zambia.<sup>2133</sup> As part of the project, the Government launched the Campaign for 'Zero Tolerance' to GBV and consultations were organized by the Zambian Association of Women Judges (ZAWJ) and the Law Association of Zambia respectively. The consultations with local court magistrates and traditional leaders brought forward recommendations that are being used to develop programmes for strengthening the role of statutory and customary adjudicators in the handling of GBV cases.<sup>2134</sup>

The Government of Zambia is committed to ending AIDS by 2030 and adopted its fifth the National HIV/AIDS Strategic Framework for 2017 – 2021. In Zambia, the rate of HIV is higher among women than men, and the gender disparities among adolescents is even greater with girls aged 15 – 24, who are twice as likely to be HIV-positive than boys of the same age group.<sup>2135</sup> Under the new Framework, the Government continues its commitment to achieving gender equity and equality by making sure that no one

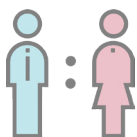
is left behind with regards to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support.<sup>2136</sup> Furthermore, gender-based violence is identified as a significant factor affecting access to and use of HIV services for women. Under the Framework, the Government aims to eliminate gender inequality and gender-based violence. It will also ensure that a gender dimension is included in all programme areas, such as supporting gender responsive programmes to advance sexual reproductive health and rights; implement community programmes to change harmful gender norms, negative stereotypes, and strengthen coordinated government response to HIV, gender-based violence, early marriages, and poor educational advancement of girls.<sup>2137</sup>



## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

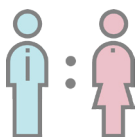
The constitution of Zambia has no provisions for quotas in place to protect women's representation in politics though the Preamble of the Constitution recognizes 'the equal worth of men and women in their rights to participate, and freely determine and build a political, economic and social system of their own free choice.'<sup>2138</sup> In 2016, there was an amendment to the Constitution which established the Gender Equality Commission, a mechanism for monitoring, investigating, researching, educating, lobbying, advising and reporting on issues of gender equity and equality. Zambian President Lungu noted that the constitutional amendment is in line with the UN Women commitments to Sustainable Development Goals– Planet 50:50 by 2030.<sup>2139</sup>

The Government announced that it would pass a Political Parties Act to control the way parties operate and are financed. The Act would provide for equality between sexes and regulate financing, which is a major barrier to women's participation. However, the Bill was never put in place and there are no plans to enforce this legislation.<sup>2140</sup>



**16%**

Women running for  
**National Office in Zambia**  
in 2016



**20%**

Women **Ministers** in  
**Zambia** in 2015

# STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



## WOMEN MPS

Female representation in parliament remains low and is far below the SADC target of 50%. Following the elections in 2011, women held only 11.5% of the seats in parliament, compared to 14% in 2010.<sup>2141</sup> Women's representation in parliament continued to decrease and in 2014 women held 10.8% of the seats.<sup>2142</sup> However, by 2015 the proportion of women in parliament increased to 12.7% and since the election in 2016, women hold 18% of the seats.<sup>2143</sup> By 2016, there were only 16% of women running for national office and 13% for subnational seats.<sup>2144</sup>



## WOMEN MINISTERS

Overall, the number of women in ministerial positions has risen. In 2010, 16.7% of the ministerial positions were held by women, however the number dropped to 11.8% in 2012.<sup>2145</sup> Since then, women's representation in ministerial positions rose from 14% in 2014, to 20% in 2015 and currently stands at 33.3%.<sup>2146</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

Zambia is very successful in its representation of women in the judiciary, with nearly equal representation every year since 2011.<sup>2147</sup> Moreover, the judiciary in Zambia has a female Chief Justice and Deputy Chief Justice showing respect for gender equality.<sup>2148</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Data on women in the private sector in Zambia is scarce. However, according to data presented by the World Bank in 2013, 49.8% of firms had female participation in ownership and 23.8% of firms had female top managers.<sup>2149</sup>

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

In many ways, politics in Zambia is regarded as men's arena and women are just supposed to be spectators.<sup>2150</sup> The political environment in Zambia has also been described as hostile for Zambian women, who are often deterred from entering because of violence and threats.<sup>2151</sup> Almost all political parties in Zambia have reports of harassment towards women at political functions. During the 2016 elections, violence resulted in a suspension of campaigning following the fatal shooting of a female opposition supporter by police.<sup>2152</sup> Female candidates were reportedly also beaten, intimidated and even stripped naked.<sup>2153</sup>

Additionally, some of the functions are held in the evening, in places such as bars and hotels from which they are excluded or deemed inappropriate venues or women are unable to attend due to family obligations.<sup>2154</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

A report by the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences to the United Nations Human Rights Council found that customary law and its institutions play an important role, where traditional leaders continue to influence and shape societal norms.<sup>2155</sup> Moreover, the Special Rapporteur noted that this has an impact on Zambian women as structures and attitudes within the family and the community marginalise women as male preference practices dominates.<sup>2156</sup> The deeply held patriarchal values, the Special Rapporteur stated, have led to discrimination of Zambian women in a number of sectors.<sup>2157</sup>

In Zambian society men are seen as decision-makers while women are seen as submissive.<sup>2158</sup> Society maintains that women have responsibilities to their families at home and a lack of confidence in their ability to be leaders.<sup>2159</sup> Moreover, in rural areas some traditional practices, such as early marriage, side-line women in decision-making processes preventing Zambian women from accessing and enjoying their basic social, political and economic rights.<sup>2160</sup>

Moreover, women's involvement in politics goes against the patriarchal discourse that suggests men should control women.<sup>2161</sup> By standing for a seat, they challenge male authority, which can provoke violent conflicts from male participants or the community as a whole.<sup>2162</sup>



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

A report by the Independent Expert on the Question of Human Rights and Extreme Poverty to the United Nations, noted that gender discrimination remains pervasive in Zambia, and that this discrimination has limited women's access to land, education, and credit and has created a power imbalance.<sup>2163</sup> According to the report, this has resulted in women being overrepresented among the extremely poor, the unemployed and the illiterate, while at the same time being underrepresented in political and decision-making bodies.<sup>2164</sup> The strong patriarchal framework and family structure, the report noted, negatively impact women and pose serious impediments to the advancement of women.<sup>2165</sup> Although the report found that social attitudes are gradually changing, especially in urban settings, women continue to occupy a subordinate position and remain economically dependent on men.<sup>2166</sup>

Recently, there was an increase in nomination fees for candidates in Zambia, as well as the introduction of a requirement for the candidate to hold a full grade 12 educational certificate.<sup>2167</sup> These changes negatively impact women, especially women in rural areas, who often lack the resources as well as educational opportunities, and further marginalizes women from political leadership.<sup>2168</sup>



## MEDIA

Although freedom of speech and the press are guaranteed under the Zambian Constitution, the Government restricts it in practice.<sup>2169</sup> The media in Zambia is a mix of state and private owned organisations, with radio being the main source of information.<sup>2170</sup> According to Reporters Without Borders, the Government of Zambia uses financial pretexts or laws on defamation and sedition to prosecute journalists.<sup>2171</sup> Under the 2016 presidential election a number of broadcasting licences were suspended and The Post, a non-state newspaper, closed down.<sup>2172</sup> With respect to women, it has been noted that unsupportive societal attitudes towards women in politics were furthered by media's negative portrayal of women in these positions.<sup>2173</sup>

# ZIMBABWE

## OVERVIEW

Zimbabwe gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1980, and elected Robert Mugabe, leader of the Zimbabwe African National Union as President.<sup>2174</sup> Politically the country has been shaped by the Mugabe presidency. In 2017, President Mugabe was impeached and after 37 years as the country's president removed from office.<sup>2175</sup> The new President, Emmerson Mnangagwa, began to dissolve the old cabinet and put together a new team of ministers.<sup>2176</sup> Women's rights campaigners are concerned by the apparent lack of women in Mnangagwa's new administration.<sup>2177</sup>

With respect to women's rights and gender equality, Zimbabwe ratified CEDAW on 13 May 1991<sup>2178</sup> and the Maputo Protocol was ratified on 15 April 2008.<sup>2179</sup> The country has not adopted a National Action Plan for the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325. Zimbabwe ranks 126<sup>th</sup> out of 159 countries on the UNDP Gender Inequality Index.<sup>2180</sup>

Zimbabwe has a bicameral parliament with gender parity in candidate lists for Senate (upper house) and provincial elections, and reserved seats for women in the National Assembly (lower house).<sup>2181</sup> As of 2017, women hold 86 (32.6%) out of 264 seats in the House of Assembly, and 38 (48.1%) out of 79 seats in the Senate.<sup>2182</sup> The majority of the members of the National Assembly are elected by plurality votes in single-member constituencies, while 60 members are women elected by proportional representation at the provincial level.<sup>2183</sup> All members of parliament serve five-year terms. Of the members of the Senate, 60 members are elected by proportional representation, 16 are elected by regional governing councils, and among the remaining seats, two are reserved for the National Council Chiefs and two for members with disabilities.<sup>2184</sup> The members of the Senate serve five-year terms. President is elected by absolute majority vote through a two-round system to serve a 5-year term.

Before 1957, only men and 'European women' could vote and after 1957 'a qualified right to vote was gradually extended over the years to black women' but women only gained the right to stand for election in 1978.<sup>2185</sup> While Zimbabwe has not had a female President, Joice Mujuru served as the country's first female Vice-President from 2004–2014.<sup>2186</sup> Following the removal of President Mugabe, female activists are pushing for women to run for president.

There was a strong female voter turnout of 51.93% in the 2013 election, but the data for the actual voter turnout are scarce. It has been suggested that many women will be discouraged from voting in the 2018 election with the government's new proof of residence requirement, as many Zimbabwe women do not have a permanent address or property in their title, even when they are married.<sup>2187</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

In 2013, the new Constitution with strong emphasis on gender equality and women's rights was passed by referendum with 95% of Zimbabweans voting in favour.<sup>2188</sup> It respects key international and regional instruments that Zimbabwe has ratified including the Maputo Protocol, Sustainable Development Goals, the African Union Agenda 2063, and the SADC Gender Protocol.<sup>2189</sup> The new Constitution also includes the creation of a Gender Commission tasked with promoting gender equality in all spheres of life, investigate possible gender rights violations, receiving and considering gender-based complaints from the public, conducting research on gender and social justice issues, recommending changes to discriminatory laws and practices and proposing affirmative action programmes.<sup>2190</sup> Because of the adoption of the new Constitution, existing laws will be reviewed and where gaps exist, additional laws are expected to be drafted.<sup>2191</sup>

In 2017, the revised National Gender Policy (NGP) was unveiled addressing many of the shortcomings of the previous NGP.<sup>2192</sup> The Government of Zimbabwe faces challenges of limited coordination of the national gender management system, inadequate implementation of the national gender policy, partial domestication of international and regional instruments, limited access productive resources, and gender-based violence.<sup>2193</sup> The new policy was developed by the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development with support from UNDP and UN Women and its framework includes ten priority areas including gender, politics and decision-making.<sup>2194</sup> It emphasizes the commitment of the Government to gender issues and inclusion by facilitating resource mobilisation in support of gender equality and equity.<sup>2195</sup>

In July 2017, the Government of Zimbabwe proposed new mandatory sentences for rape.<sup>2196</sup> Under the proposed law, a person convicted of rape of a child below the age of 12 or a disabled person will be imprisoned for 60 years, and 40 years for all other cases of rape.<sup>2197</sup> The proposed legislation was welcomed by many gender activists and women's organisations. The Zimbabwe National Statistics Office (ZimStat) estimates that 22 women are raped daily in Zimbabwe, however, many cases of rape go unreported.<sup>2198</sup> Moreover, there was an 81 percent increase in rape cases between 2010 and 2016.<sup>2199</sup> If the new law is adopted, Zimbabwe would have the highest mandatory sentences for rape in the SADC region.<sup>2200</sup>





## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

In 2013, Zimbabwe joined over 30 countries that use gender quotas to stimulate women's representation in parliament. The special measure in the Constitution led to a large increase in the number of women elected, placing Zimbabwe among the top countries in the region for female representation. Part (4) Section 124 of the new Constitution reads: '... an additional sixty women members, six from each of the provinces into which Zimbabwe is divided, elected through a system of proportional representation based on the votes cast for candidates representing political parties in a general election for constituency members in the provinces.'<sup>2201</sup> However, this provision is only valid for the first two parliaments following the signing, meaning it can only be used for the 2013 and 2018 elections. It is unclear how females will be represented at the following election in 2023.<sup>2202</sup>



## WOMEN MINISTERS

Although Zimbabwe has seen the proportion of women in both houses increase over the past years, a similar trend cannot be seen with respect to women in ministerial positions. In fact, the number of female ministers has declined since 2010, only to show signs of increasing in 2017. In 2010, 18.5% of the ministerial positions were held by women.<sup>2207</sup> However, the proportion dropped to 13.5% in 2012, a trend that continued in 2014 when only 11.1% of the ministers were women.<sup>2208</sup> Since then the number of female ministers has increased from 11.5% in 2015 to 16.1% in 2016.<sup>2209</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

The success of the constitutional requirement for gender equality is better demonstrated through the high representation of women in judiciary, growing further from 45% in 2013 to 47.4% in 2015. Section 184 of the Constitution states that 'appointments to the judiciary must reflect broadly the diversity and gender composition of Zimbabwe.'<sup>2210</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

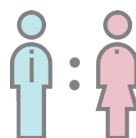
According to data presented by the World Bank, in 2011 56.2% of firms had female participation in ownership and 17.4% of firms had female top managers.<sup>2211</sup> In 2016, the percentage of firms with female participation in ownership dropped to 42.5% and the percentage of firms with female top managers to 16.3%.<sup>2212</sup>



## WOMEN MPS

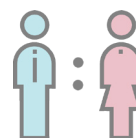
The quota requirement in Zimbabwe's Constitution appears to have had a positive impact on women's representation in both houses. In 2010, female representatives held 15% of the seats, by 2013 the number had more than doubled to 31.5%.<sup>2203</sup> Since 2017, women represent 32.6% of the members of the lower house.<sup>2204</sup>

The Senate also saw a significant increase in female members. In 2010, women held 24.2% of the seats in the Senate.<sup>2205</sup> By 2013, the number of women in the Senate increased to 47.5% of the seats, and in 2017 women hold 48.1% of the seats.<sup>2206</sup>



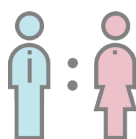
**48.1%**

Women in the **Senate** in  
Zimbabwe in 2017



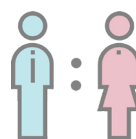
**16.1%**

Women **Ministers** in  
Zimbabwe in 2016



**47.4**

Women in the **Judiciary** in  
Zimbabwe in 2015



**42.5%**

Women **Firm Owners** in  
Zimbabwe in 2016

## STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Political parties in Zimbabwe are characterized as patriarchal.<sup>2213</sup> Female politicians often face stigma from male colleagues and are appointed to peripheral roles within the parties and in government.<sup>2214</sup> Women are not appointed to positions for which they are qualified. Instead, women are more likely to be appointed based on patronage and to window dress as a means to build women's capacity.<sup>2215</sup> Moreover, according to the Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe, women have been deliberately excluded from key ministries such as health, education, and finance.<sup>2216</sup> The patriarchal culture is particularly pervasive in local politics, thus making it even harder for women to run for office.<sup>2217</sup>

Additionally, while there is evidence that Zimbabwean women are interested in politics, they are hindered by violence, fear and negative attitudes towards women in politics.<sup>2218</sup> The government has made a commitment towards equal representation, but women's organisations have highlighted the slow pace of the government to ensure change.<sup>2219</sup> This pace can in part be explained by resistance and strongly held views that women are benchwarmers, and coming in through affirmative action and not merit.<sup>2220</sup> Moreover, those critical of Zimbabwean women in politics argue that the women who entered parliament since the adoption of Section 124 of the new Constitution in 2013 have done very little.<sup>2221</sup>



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

One of the main barriers to women's political participation is access to financial resources to cover the cost of campaigning. Hivos in Southern Africa noted that capacity gaps between men and women mean female candidates are less likely than their male colleagues to have the contacts and resources needed to become effective leaders.<sup>2229</sup> According to a number of female candidates the lack of campaign resources hindered them from running effective campaigns. They also noted that their male counterparts appeared to be loaded with cash and thus could afford expensive campaigns.<sup>2230</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women has raised concerns about the persistence of harmful norms, practices and traditions, patriarchal attitudes and deep-rooted stereotypes, regarding the roles, responsibilities and identities of women and men in all spheres of life in Zimbabwe.<sup>2222</sup> The Committee found that such customs and practices perpetuate discrimination against women and girls and that they are reflected in the disadvantageous and unequal status of women in many areas, including education, public life, decision-making, and in the persistence of violence against women.<sup>2223</sup> According to the Committee, the Government of Zimbabwe has not taken sustained measures to modify or eliminate stereotypes and harmful practices.<sup>2224</sup>

Zimbabwean women who enter politics often face inappropriate attention and are called loose and immoral.<sup>2225</sup> For example, Linda Masarira, who planned on running as an independent in the 2018 election, said that she had been called a prostitute, and that she was behaving like a man.<sup>2226</sup> According to Hivos Southern Africa, many in the Zimbabwean electorate perceive women as belonging in the private sphere and holding more traditional roles.<sup>2227</sup> They are also seen as inferior to men, less powerful and not as suited for political life.<sup>2228</sup>



## MEDIA

Female journalists in Zimbabwe work in an unsafe environment where discrimination and violence occur frequently. According to the study "Power, Patriarchy and Gender Discrimination in Zimbabwean Newsrooms", gender discrimination in Zimbabwean newsrooms is prevalent and the perpetrators of the practice are often the editors.<sup>2231</sup> Women's Empowerment Foundation of Southern Africa, noted that violence against female journalist is common in Zimbabwe, however it is simply swept under the carpet as the newsrooms do not bring the issues to light.<sup>2232</sup> According to the Foundation, this is because the media is male-dominated and decision-makers within the media houses in Zimbabwe abuse their power and sexually harass their female counterparts.<sup>2233</sup>

Moreover, media in Zimbabwe tend to perpetuate gender stereotypes and reporting does not include the voices of women.<sup>2234</sup> Female MPs argue that the media chose to flag negatives about women while praising or ignoring mistakes by male politicians.<sup>2235</sup>

# WEST AFRICAN REGION

## OVERVIEW

The history of West Africa is a series of conflicts: most of the States have seen civil wars (Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast), coups d'état (Gambia, Niger, Guinea) as well as ethnic and religious clashes (Benin, Nigeria, Mali) since gaining independence<sup>2236</sup>. In 2014, few West African countries were hit by the Ebola outbreak such as Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia.

All countries in the region have ratified CEDAW. With the exception of Niger and Sierra Leone, the majority of West African countries have ratified the Maputo Protocol. Twelve countries have adopted National Action Plans for the implementation of UNSCR 1325<sup>2237</sup>. Almost all the countries have enshrined principles of gender equality in their Constitutions and the majority have launched National Action Plans or National Development policies on gender equality.

In the majority of countries, women received the right to vote and to stand for elections during the 1950s. The first countries to grant women these rights were Senegal and Togo in 1945. Women in Guinea-Bissau received these rights in 1977. Although women have run for office in a number of countries, only in Liberia and Guinea-Bissau have women been elected President. Carmen Pereira served as President of Guinea-Bissau, albeit for three days only, in 1984. In 2005, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf made history by becoming the first female President of Liberia. President Johnson-Sirleaf served two terms as President.

Although women have the right to vote and participate in voting, little data on female voters in the West African countries was available in the sources consulted. Of the data available, women form about 50% the registered voters. In Gambia, women constitute 58% of voters<sup>2238</sup>, while in Burkina Faso the representation is only 47%.<sup>2239</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

Governments in West Africa have introduced policies, programmes and legislation for women's rights and empowerment. Gender-based violence (GBV) remains an issue in all countries. Several laws and policies have been introduced to tackle gender-based violence, but in most cases implementation is unsuccessful. For instance, in Cote d'Ivoire the Government introduced the National Plan Against Gender-Based Violence (Document de Stratégie Nationale de Lutte contre les Violences Basées sur le Genre) for 2009 to 2014 to provide a holistic framework of action to address gender-based (GBV) in the country. In Niger, the Ministry of Social Development, Population, Advancement of Women and Protection of Children has launched several awareness campaigns on sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).<sup>2240</sup> In 2013, Guinea-Bissau adopted a law to punish domestic violence and under the law, other members of the household or neighbours can file a complaint on behalf of a woman, as it is classified as a public crime.<sup>2241</sup>

In relation to harmful practices, FGM/C is still not criminalised in all West African countries and remains widely practiced. To address the situation, a number of countries have adopted policies and legislation. In the Gambia, the Women's (Amendment) Act was adopted in 2015 making it an offense for any person to engage in FGM, or to be an accomplice of those engaging in FGM.<sup>2242</sup> Under the Act, a person found guilty may be fined or imprisoned for 3 years or both, and if the act of FGM results in death, the person responsible may be sentenced to life imprisonment.<sup>2243</sup>

Many countries also experience high rates of child marriage. Therefore, the Government of Burkina Faso launched the National Strategy on Ending Child Marriage in Burkina Faso 2016-2025 in order to work towards the prevention and elimination of child marriage by 2025.<sup>2244</sup> Similarly, the Government of Ghana launched the 2017 – 2026 National Strategic Framework on Ending Child Marriage in Ghana with the overall goal of having a society without child marriage by 2030.<sup>2245</sup>

Women often face unequal access to land and discrimination in land rights. To address this inequality, the Government of Mali adopted the Agricultural Land Law (Loi N°2017- 001 Portant sur Le Foncier Agricole), which improves women's access to land by requiring that 15% of public land be allocated to women's associations and other vulnerable groups.<sup>2246</sup> In Togo, the Persons and Family Code was adopted in 2012. While it provides sons, daughters and surviving spouses with equal inheritance rights, it also allows for the application of customary inheritance rules, which are often discriminatory against women, in particular in relation to land ownership.<sup>2247</sup>



## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

Six of the countries in the West African region have adopted legislated gender parity provisions. Niger was one of the first countries to adopt a gender quota and in 2014 the number was raised from 10 to 15%.<sup>2248</sup> Of note, Guinea has adopted legislation for both the National Assembly and at the sub-national level, stipulating that at least 30% of the candidates of proportional representation lists need to be women. While Burkina Faso does not have legislated or voluntary quotas for the Upper House, the country does legislated quotas for the Lower House and at the sub-national level.

The majority of countries do not have legislated or voluntary quotas. To date, no specific legislation or policies have been adopted in the Gambia and Ghana with respect to quota. Although there are no legislated or voluntary quota in Côte D'Ivoire, the Ivorian Public Front has had a 30% quota for women since 2001<sup>2249</sup>, this quota has not always been achieved.<sup>2250</sup>



## WOMEN MINISTERS

The proportion of female ministers in the West African region fluctuates. In several countries the number declined, while in others it increased. The greatest drop was seen in Cape Verde where the number declined from 52.9% in 2015, to 25% in 2016.<sup>2254</sup> However, in Guinea-Bissau, since the 2014 election, the proportion of female ministers increased from 18.8% in 2012 to 31.3%.<sup>2255</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

While the data available with respect to women in the judiciary in West Africa is limited, positive developments can be seen. For example, in Benin in 2010, women made up 16% of the judicial court, increasing to 23% in 2013.<sup>2256</sup> In Burkina Faso, the President of the Supreme Court is a woman and 33% of its members are female.<sup>2257</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

There is limited comparative data available with respect to women in the private sector in the region. In Mali and Togo where comparative data is available, female participation in ownership and female top managers appears to be decreasing. In Mali in 2010, 58.3% of firms had female participation in ownership but by 2016 this had decreased to 15.3%.<sup>2258</sup> In 2010, 21% of firms in Mali had a female top manager, but in 2016 there were only 11.6%.<sup>2259</sup>

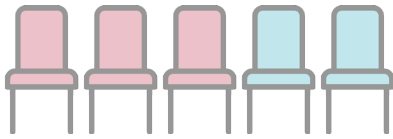
Togo saw a similar development. In 2009, 31.8% of firms had female participation in ownership and 25.3% in 2016.<sup>2260</sup> In 2009, 15.1% of firms had a female top manager but only 11.4% by 2016.<sup>2261</sup>

# STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



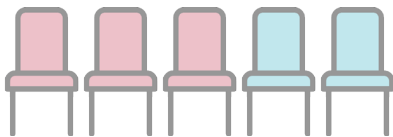
## WOMEN MPS

Women's representation in parliaments in West African parliaments remains low. The standout country in the region is Senegal. Although women's representation has declined from 43.3% in 2014 to 41.8% in 2017, the country has the highest number of women in parliament in the region.<sup>2251</sup> The lowest representation of women in parliament is found in Nigeria, where women hold 5.6%<sup>2252</sup> of the seats in the Lower House and 6.5% in the Upper House.<sup>2253</sup> A



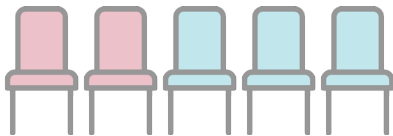
**41.8%**

Women in the **Parliament** in  
**Senegal** in 2017



**31.3%**

Women **Ministers** in  
**Guinea-Bissau** in 2012



**33%**

Women in the **Supreme Court** In  
**Burkina Faso**



**11.4%**

Women **Top mangers** in  
**Togo** in 2016



## BEYOND NUMBERS:

THE IMPACT OF WOMEN'S  
PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS  
AND DECISION-MAKING

Female members of parliament and women in civil society continue to play an important role in initiating policies and advocating for women's rights. For example, female MPs and members of civil society organisations have worked on increasing women's participation in decision-making bodies. Their advocacy work has seen positive developments, but also setbacks. Nevertheless, the organisations and activists serve an important role in advocating for change and holding the political parties accountable.

In Ghana, the women's caucus is advocating for an increase in female participation with the goal to achieve 50-50 parity by 2030. They are also calling for the passing of legislation that will also have a positive impact on women's economic empowerment.

Nigerien women's civil society organisations and grassroots movements, such as the Confederation of Women's NGOs and Associations of Niger, have mobilised to raise awareness of the Quota Law, to support female candidates and urge political parties to comply with the quota provisions. Although women's representation in the Nigerien parliament remains low, by putting pressure on political parties to comply, women's organisations and movements have nevertheless made a significant contribution to the implementation of gender quotas.

In Guinea-Bissau, the Network of Women Parliamentarians (Rede de Mulheres Parlamentares) in Guinea-Bissau has continued to work in conjunction with the UN peace-building office to mobilise women to participate in politics and implement gender quotas. The Women's Political Platform, PPM (Plataforma Política das Mulheres) advocates for women's political participation and has been a key player in the fight for women's rights. In 2016, women's groups proposed legislation for women to have 40% of seats in the National Assembly, but no progress toward its passage into law was made during the year, due to political gridlock<sup>2262</sup>.

MPs, women's organisations and activists in Senegal have seen setbacks with respect to the adoption of a gender quota in electoral lists.<sup>2263</sup> Although a law on gender parity on candidate lists was passed in Parliament in 2007, the Constitutional Council ruled that the law was unconstitutional. However, in 2010, the National Assembly adopted the Law on Equality of Men and Women in Electoral Lists and following the 2012 elections, there was an increase in women's representation.



# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Politics is a male-dominated environment and patriarchal views create barriers to women's political participation and representation in West Africa. In Sierra Leone, patronage is important in political life and serves as a significant barrier excluding women from equal participation in political life. Patronage not only forms important networks, but also determines the allocation of resources.

Political parties often lack an interest in promoting female candidates and including women in leadership positions within the party. In Burkina Faso, although political parties face penalties for failing to include women in their lists, neither political parties nor the National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI) implemented this legal provision during the most recent elections.<sup>2264</sup> In Guinea-Bissau, few women are included on party lists, and when they are, they are usually listed at the very bottom as alternatives.<sup>2265</sup> In Nigeria, in an attempt to prevent women from engaging in the political process, meetings are often scheduled in the late evening, thus preventing women with family responsibilities from attending.<sup>2266</sup> Another barrier is the lack of education, which is a big challenge for women entering politics.



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

Women candidates and female activists in West Africa often lack access to resources and this presents a significant barrier to political engagement. Women often lack economic opportunities and, in many countries, there is a feminisation of the poverty rate. The cost of campaigns is high and often requires significant resources. In Benin, the commodification of the vote poses a significant barrier for women as they lack the necessary resources to engage in politics.<sup>2273</sup> In Senegal, political parties and candidates participating in legislative elections must pay a deposit of 20 million CFA francs (around \$35,000) to participate in elections, which is refundable if the candidate or list receives 5 percent of votes in the first round.<sup>2274</sup>

Additionally, the high rates of poverty among women in West Africa means that women are unable to access credit.

In Cabo Verde, women are locked in poverty, in part due to a lack of formal title to land which limits access to credit and to the ability to build assets.<sup>2275</sup> A study by FAO found that women in rural district in Ghana were particularly disadvantaged as many loan offices are located in urban areas.



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

Gendered division of labour persists, both in public and private life, presenting barriers to women's equal participation in decision-making bodies. For example, in Burkina Faso, women do not enter into politics against the advice of her husband.<sup>2267</sup> While in Cabo Verde, domestic work continues to be considered the responsibility of women and girls, and this limits their ability to undertake other productive work or study.<sup>2268</sup>

Strongly held views of women's capabilities also limit female representation and participation in political life. Although there have been changes in Ivorian society, femininity is still perceived as a weakness.<sup>2269</sup> According to Ivorian culture, men are the ones who can occupy leadership positions whereas women are seen as too fragile and inadequate to engage in politics.<sup>2270</sup> In Niger, men see women's participation in politics not only as incredible, but also impracticable.<sup>2271</sup> With regards to female voters, in Guinea, it is not uncommon for a husband to force his wife to follow his candidate selection, and thus it is difficult for women to make their own political choice.<sup>2272</sup>



## MEDIA

The media in West African countries devotes little coverage of women's issues and female candidates. In Ghana, reports indicate that female candidates received substantially less media coverage than their male counterparts.<sup>2276</sup> Similarly, in Senegal, a study by the Panos Institute showed that only 5.3% or 98 out of a total of 1,848 articles published focused on women.<sup>2277</sup> Moreover, media organisations often perpetuate negative stereotypes of women and reinforce patriarchal views.

In West African countries, the media is a male-dominated environment. In Liberia, only 20% of journalists are women.<sup>2278</sup> This contributes to the invisibility of women and gender issues, and a continuation of stereotypes of women's leadership.<sup>2279</sup> In Burkina Faso a study by DW Akademie revealed that women in this sector have it even harder than women in other areas of employment.<sup>2280</sup> The problems primarily arise from the fact that women's visibility and independence are not encouraged according to the study.<sup>2281</sup> In the Gambia, female journalists have called for media chiefs to stop the exploitation of female journalists by withholding payment of salaries.<sup>2282</sup>

# BENIN

## OVERVIEW

Benin, previously called Dahomey, was a French colony until its independence in 1960. In 1975 the country was renamed the People's Republic of Benin. The country went through a series of single-party regimes, until a constitutional change was made. The year 2002 was the first democratic election.<sup>2283</sup> Benin's economy relies heavily on informal re-export and transit trade to Nigeria, which makes up roughly 20% of GDP, and on agricultural production<sup>2284</sup>. Despite moderate GDP growth of between 4% and 5% annually over the past two decades, poverty remains widespread and is often on the rise in Benin<sup>2285</sup>. Benin is considered a "political laboratory" for democracy in Africa, as both freedom of expression<sup>2286</sup> and religion are protected legally and practically<sup>2287</sup>.

Benin ratified CEDAW on 12 March 1992<sup>2288</sup> and ratified the Maputo Protocol on 20 September 2005. The country has no National Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325. Benin ranks 144<sup>th</sup> out of 159 countries on the UNDP Gender Inequality Index (GII)<sup>2289</sup>.

Benin has a unicameral parliament, the National Assembly, with no quotas at the national or sub-national level. The National Assembly is composed of 83 members who are directly elected using a proportional representation system and serve four-year terms.<sup>2290</sup> Women hold 6 (7.2%) out of 83 seats in the National Assembly.<sup>2291</sup> Under Article 43 of the Constitution, the President of Benin is elected by two-ballot uni-nominal majority voting.<sup>2292</sup> The President serves a five-year term and may serve two terms.

Women gained the right to vote and to stand for election in 1956<sup>2293</sup>. However, though there are some women in legislative and judicial posts, no woman has been elected as Head of Government in the country.<sup>2294</sup> In the last elections of 2016, President Talon appointed only three female ministers to his 21-member cabinet and one woman among the prefects administering the country's 12 geographic departments<sup>2295</sup>.

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

The country has adopted a number of policies and plans aimed at improving rights for women. Benin adopted strategic guidelines for 2006 to 2011, which aimed for the promotion of gender equality, women's empowerment and improved social protection.<sup>2296</sup> Land policy, which was validated in 2009 and approved in 2010 and Land Law approved in 2013 has facilitated women's access to land.<sup>2297</sup>

The National Health Development Plan (2009 – 2018) aims to provide rapid and effective responses to health problems in Benin.<sup>2298</sup> The Plan has five priority areas: Preventing and combating major diseases and improving the quality of care; developing human resources; strengthening partnership in the sector, promoting medical ethics and responsibility; the financing mechanism for the sector; and strengthening the management of the sector.<sup>2299</sup> The Plan also includes measures to support reproductive health and family planning services.<sup>2300</sup>

The Government has also adopted the National Strategy for the Security of Reproductive Health Products (SNSPSR) 2011–2016 to strengthen the provision of reproductive health products in Benin, which continue to be of poor quality.<sup>2301</sup> It also seeks to increase the availability of family planning and access to contraceptives.

In 2012, the Government of Benin adopted Act No. 2011-26 of 9th January 2012 on the Prevention and Repression of Violence Against Women (Loi no 2011-26 du 09 janvier 2012 portant prévention et répression des violences faites aux femmes). Under the Act, violence against women is defined as "all acts of violence directed at the female gender that can or do cause women harm or physical, sexual or psychological suffering, including the threat of such acts, the arbitrary denial of or restrictions on freedom, be it in public or private life".<sup>2302</sup> Acts of violence include sexual and psychological violence, spousal rape, sexual assault and abuse and female genital mutilation. A person found guilty may be fined or sentenced to jail for up to 10 years.



## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

Benin has not established any type of gender quota so far, either at national or subnational levels, or for political parties. The only time it came close to passing a gender quota law was in 2011, when the National Assembly adopted a law establishing a 20% quota for women. However, the Constitutional Court nullified it, stating it contradicted the gender equality guaranteed by the Constitution. Since then, no gender quota law has been passed.<sup>2303</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

In the judiciary, women have presided over the Constitutional Court in Benin since its creation in 1993.<sup>2309</sup> In 2010, women made up 16% of the judicial court, increasing to 23% in 2013.<sup>2310</sup> In 2015, women made up 28.57% of the Highest Court in Benin.<sup>2311</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

While the data found is/are limited, it appears that in the private sphere, women play a part in leading positions. According to data published by the World Bank, in 2016, 36.7% of firms had female participation in ownership and 25.9% of firms had women as top managers.<sup>2312</sup>

## STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



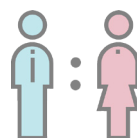
### WOMEN MPS

The number of women in parliament in Benin remains low and following the most recent elections continued to decline. In 2010, 10.8% of the seats in parliament were held by women.<sup>2304</sup> Following the elections in 2011, the percentage of seats held by women dropped to 8.4%.<sup>2305</sup> Since 2015, women represent 7.2% of the members in the National Assembly.<sup>2306</sup>



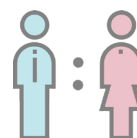
### WOMEN MINISTERS

While the proportion of women who hold ministerial level positions is higher than the percentage of women in parliament, the number of female ministers has declined in recent years. In 2010, only 13.3% of the ministers were female, by 2012 the proportion of women ministers had more than doubled to 30.8%.<sup>2307</sup> Since 2014, the proportion of female ministers has dropped from 22.2% to 14.8% in 2015 and to 14.3% in 2016.<sup>2308</sup>



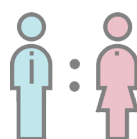
7.2%

Women in **National Assembly** in **Benin** in 2015



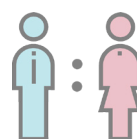
14.3%

Women **Ministers** in **Benin** in 2016



28.5%

Women in the **High Court** in **Benin** in 2016



36.7%

Women **Firm Owners** in **Benin** in 2016

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Politics in Benin is based on a culture of patriarchal. There are neither support systems nor orientation programmes offered to women who want to engage in politics<sup>2313</sup>. In 2015, the government committed to run programmes for women in political and private sector leadership.<sup>2314</sup> Lack of education is a significant barrier to women's political participation. Many students do not pass the exam required to proceed to the secondary education, resulting in many students becoming discouraged from continuing to go to school.<sup>2315</sup> Additionally, according to female MPs, there is also a lack of understanding of politics and what it means to work in government and so girls do not aspire to political careers.<sup>2316</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

Social norms impose a great challenge to increasing women's leadership roles in Benin. In rural areas, most often, women traditionally occupy a subordinate role and are responsible for much of the labour on subsistence farms.<sup>2317</sup> By custom and tradition, women undertake household duties, have less access to formal education and are discouraged from involvement in politics. Even though no laws limit the participation of women and members of minorities in the political process, cultural factors limit women's political involvement<sup>2318</sup>. In June 2016, human rights associations issued a joint statement to express concerns regarding the Government's failure to observe gender parity in its high-ranking appointments, noting a decrease in the number of women appointed to decision-making positions in the Talon administration<sup>2319</sup>.



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

While the country has experienced economic growth in recent years, it has also seen a rise in poverty. Although female-headed households experience lower rates of poverty (28% compared to 38% for male-headed households), they lack economic opportunities and are underrepresented in high-level decision-making positions.<sup>2320</sup> The commodification of the vote is present in Benin. Women who aim to be involved in politics face economic barriers, as often women do not have the resources necessary to enable them to engage in political campaigning?<sup>2321</sup>.



## MEDIA

Benin's reputation as a "political laboratory" for democracy in Africa has favoured a spectacular development of the media. There are no taboo subjects for the men and women in the Benin media, who can speak out on any subject and criticise any person or key figure, even if it means being taken to court<sup>2322</sup>. Although the media environment has been described as free, and the Constitution guarantees media freedom, the authorities have suspended newspapers for publishing material deemed offensive.<sup>2323</sup> Moreover, since Talon became President, state TV has ceased to cover opposition activity.<sup>2324</sup>

# BURKINA FASO

## OVERVIEW

Burkina Faso is a former French colony, independent since 1960, previously named Upper Volta. The country was renamed Burkina Faso in 1984. In 1983 it went through a popular revolution and democracy was installed.<sup>2325</sup> Burkina Faso has one of the highest national poverty rates per capita in the world. Such difficult socio-economic conditions foster strong inequalities between men and women, leading to types of violence against women that are both more distinct and more multifaceted than in other contexts. Manifesting not just as physical or sexual violence, violence against women can also take the form of psychological or moral violence, economic violence (denial of access to monetary resources, income, land), and social violence. Furthermore, such acts are compounded by the local cultural practices and norms, which are contextually founded on strong traditions, customs, and patriarchal interpretations of religion.<sup>2326</sup>

Burkina Faso ratified CEDAW on 14 October 1987, and the Maputo Protocol on 9 June 2006.<sup>2327</sup> The country has introduced a National Action Plan for the implementation of UNSCR 1325.<sup>2328</sup> Burkina Faso ranks 146th out of 159 countries on the 2015 UNDP Gender Inequality Index.<sup>2329</sup>

Burkina Faso has a bicameral parliament, consisting of the Senate with 89 members, and the National Assembly with 127 representatives.<sup>2330</sup> Of the 127 members in the National Assembly, 111 are elected by proportional representation in 45 multi-member constituencies, and 16 members are elected by proportional representation in a nationwide constituency.<sup>2331</sup> As of 2017, women hold 14 (11%) out of 127 seats in the National Assembly.<sup>2332</sup> Of the 89 members of the Senate, 39 are elected by regional governing councils, 21 members are indirectly elected by special interest groups and 39 members are filled by the President.<sup>2333</sup> According to the current Constitution, executive power is shared between the President of Burkina Faso and the Government headed by a Prime Minister. The President is elected by absolute majority to serve a 5-year term, and a Prime Minister is appointed by the President with Parliament's approval.

Women's political participation was marginal until 1983, pending the establishment of the democratic system. Before 1983, women did not have the right to take part in public assemblies. After the revolution, however, women were granted the right to be involved in the political sphere of the country.<sup>2334</sup>

Women gained the right to vote and to stand for election in 1958.<sup>2335</sup> In the 2010 Presidential elections, there were no women candidates<sup>2336</sup>, but in the 2015 elections, two out of the 14 candidates were female.<sup>2337</sup>

In 2015, women formed 47% of the registered electorate in Burkina Faso

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

Burkina Faso has adopted legislation and policies with respect to women's rights and gender equality. In 2012, the Constitution was amended to include Article 101. Under Article 101 the Government committed to promoting gender equality.<sup>2338</sup> Additionally, Burkina Faso signed several Action Plans promoting women's rights. For instance, the National Policy on Gender 2009-2019 aims to reduce gender inequalities and gender discrimination in Burkina Faso.<sup>2339</sup> Its objectives are; to promote participatory economic development and a more equitable access and distribution of resources and income, equal participation of men and women in decision-making and institutionalisation of gender equality at all levels.<sup>2340</sup>

In September 2015, the Government passed the Law on the Prevention and Repression of Violence Against Women and Girls and Support for Victims. Conviction of rape is punishable by 5 to 10 years.<sup>2341</sup> Burkina Faso does not have a law that deals with sexual harassment in the public sphere. However, it does condemn sexual harassment in the work place.<sup>2342</sup>

Burkina Faso has a high prevalence rate of child marriage. In 2017, approximately 52% of girls were married by the age of 18.<sup>2343</sup> The National Strategy on Ending Child Marriage in Burkina Faso 2016-2025 was adopted in 2015 in order to work towards the prevention and elimination of child marriage by 2025.<sup>2344</sup> The strategy has four objectives; to prevent all forms of child marriage, support victims of child marriage, to strengthen national efforts to end the practice and to coordinate, monitor and evaluate the implementation of the strategy.<sup>2345</sup>

In 2017, Burkina Faso released its Family Planning Acceleration Plan 2017 – 2020. The Plan aims to improve maternal and child health and promote economic and social development. It also aims to achieve a contraceptive prevalence rate of 32% by 2020, an increase from the current rate of 22%.<sup>2346</sup>





## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

There are no laws limiting the participation of women and members of minorities in the political process. Although Burkina Faso does not have voluntary quotas or formal quotas for the Senate, it does have quotas at sub-national levels and for the National Assembly. The Quota Law was adopted in 2009 and was implemented for the first time in the 2012 elections. According to this law, each party needs to include at least 30% of either gender in their candidate list. Failure to comply with the law leads to a 50% cut in the party's budget, while complying with the law results in extra funding.<sup>2347</sup> In the November 2015 legislative election, 39 of the 99 parties that participated in the elections adhered to the gender quota law<sup>2348, 2349</sup>.



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

Women have played a bigger part in the judiciary. Since 2015, the Supreme Court has been presided over by a woman, Elizabeth Bado, and 33% of its members are female.<sup>2356</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Only limited data on women in the private sector was found in the sources consulted for this report. However, according to data from the World Bank, in 2009 19.2% of firms had female participation in ownership and 11.3% of firms had women among its top managers.<sup>2357</sup>

## STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



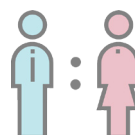
### WOMEN MPS

Women's participation in the National Assembly has grown in recent years and but has plateaued. In 2010, 15.3% of the seats in parliament were held by women.<sup>2350</sup> Following the 2012 elections, the percentage of women in parliament gradually increased to 18.9% by 2014.<sup>2351</sup> However, since 2015, only 9.4% of the seats in parliament are held by women.<sup>2352</sup>



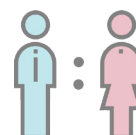
### WOMEN MINISTERS

Regarding the proportion of women in ministerial level positions, the number has dropped. In 2010, 17.9% of ministerial level positions were held by women.<sup>2353</sup> By 2012, the number of women in ministerial positions decreased to 12%. However it increased to 13.8% in 2014.<sup>2354</sup> Since 2016, the proportion of women in ministerial positions holds at 13%.<sup>2355</sup>



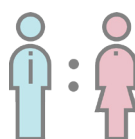
9.4%

Women in the **Parliament**  
in **Burkina Faso** in 2015



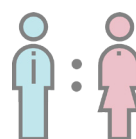
13%

Women **Ministers** in  
**Burkina Faso** in 2016



33%

Women in the **Supreme**  
**Court** in **Burkina Faso**  
in 2015



19.2%

Women **Firm Owners** in  
**Burkina Faso** in 2009

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Current political practices constitute major institutional barriers, as there is a lack of willingness to apply gender-sensitive legal provisions. For example, Article 154 stipulates in Paragraph 5 that "Under penalty of nullity, the lists of candidates must include at least one candidate of one sex or the other".<sup>2358</sup> However, examination of the lists of candidates shows that neither political parties, nor the National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI), implemented this legal provision during the 2015 legislative and the municipal elections in 2016.<sup>2358</sup> According to Burkina Faso's electoral system, the political parties, through their decisions as to the composition of their lists, have the power to designate who will occupy the legislative seats they win. Most of the time women are placed towards the end of the list, and therefore have practically no chance of being elected<sup>2359</sup>.



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

Patriarchy in Burkina Faso prevails. No woman agrees to go into politics against the advice of her husband due to tradition.<sup>2360</sup> Women often lack self-confidence and may be less prepared for political struggle than men, who are often better educated and better informed. Their capacities to carry out several of the tasks demanded of elected representatives, such as reading legislation and communicating with others, are often considered to be limited. Although there is no literacy requirement in the law to hold office, literacy is an unwritten requirement used to exclude women from Parliament<sup>2361</sup>.



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

The lack of resources is another obstacle to women's political participation. Political clientelism requires considerable revenue, which women often lack. Women are, therefore, perceived as candidates who potentially draw fewer voters than men<sup>2362</sup>.



## MEDIA

While the media has seen some improvements since the protests in 2014, restrictions on the media remain. For example, although the prison sentences for libel and other press offenses were eliminated, the fines for those found guilty of violations increased significantly.<sup>2363</sup> However, according to a 2016 report by Freedom House, the content reported by the media in Burkina Faso has become increasingly diversified and include such topics as gender equality.<sup>2364</sup>

When it comes to female members of the media, a study by DW Akademie revealed, that women in this sector have it even harder than women in other sectors.<sup>2365</sup> According to the study, the problems primarily arise from the fact that women's visibility and independence are not encouraged.<sup>2366</sup> Moreover, by the very nature of the job, travel and late nights are often required, which is difficult for women who are often expected to run the household and take care of the family.<sup>2367</sup> In addition, female journalists are often looked down on and frequently encounter negative stereotypes and discrimination.

### THE ELUSIVE PARLIAMENT SEAT



*Expending a great deal of effort to make it in politics despite the barriers*

# CAPE VERDE

## OVERVIEW

Cape Verde was a Portuguese colony and gained independence in 1975. It is a democracy, known for its tradition of peaceful political transition in its 40 years of independence<sup>2368</sup>. It is one of the most developed and democratic countries in Africa with substantial interests in foreign investment. While Cape Verde has made significant progress with respect to women's rights and gender equality, much work remains such as in the area of women's economic empowerment.

Cape Verde ratified CEDAW on 5 December 1980<sup>2369</sup>, and the Maputo Protocol on 21 June, 2005<sup>2370</sup>. The country does not have a National Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325. Due to a lack of relevant data, the Gender Inequality Index has not been calculated for Cape Verde<sup>2371</sup>.

Cape Verde has a unicameral parliament, the National Assembly, with legislated quotas for the national and sub-national levels. The National Assembly consists of 72 members who are directly elected for five-year terms.<sup>2372</sup> As of 2017, women hold 17 (23.6%) out of the 72 seats.<sup>2373</sup> The President is directly elected by absolute majority popular vote, in 2 rounds if needed, for a 5-year term, with eligibility for a second term.<sup>2374</sup> The Prime Minister is appointed by the President after the parliament nominates a candidate.

Women were granted the right to vote and stand for election in 1975.<sup>2375</sup> Although no woman has been elected Head of Government, in 2016, Janira Hopffer Almada, previous Minister of Youth, ran for Prime Minister<sup>2376</sup>. She was defeated, however, by Ulisses Correia e Silva.

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

The Government of Cape Verde/ Cabo Verde has implemented legislation, programmes and policies with respect to women's rights and gender equality. In 2011, the Law on Gender-Based Violence (GBV) was adopted. It mandates services for victims and treatment programmes for offenders.<sup>2377</sup> It also aims to raise awareness about GBV. Moreover, under the Law, domestic violence is a public crime that can be brought to the attention of authorities by anyone and that should be treated by the judiciary as a matter of urgency and priority.<sup>2378</sup>

In 2013, The Government adopted its third Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRSP III) for the period 2012 – 2016. The GPRSP III reflects the Governments development agenda, and focuses on vulnerable groups such as the aged, women, children and youth.<sup>2379</sup> Moreover, the GSRSP III include gender equality programmes, which place an emphasis on professional training activities.<sup>2380</sup>

With respect to non-discrimination of women and combating gender-based violence, the Government has implemented plans: the first, the Third National Plan for Equality (2015 – 2018) includes measures and results focusing on areas such as sexual and reproductive rights, GBV, political participation in decision-making and institutional strengthening.<sup>2381</sup> The second, the Plan II to Combat Gender-Based Violence (2015 – 2018), aims to contribute to the eradication of GBV and the effectiveness of the principle of gender equality by implementing a number of activities. These activities include the creation of call centres for victims on all islands, and the implementation of support in schools, and in the justice, media, health, police and military sectors.<sup>2382</sup>



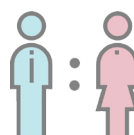
## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

Cape Verde has gender quotas for both national and sub-national elections. The quota stipulates that party lists must have an equal balance between gender. Moreover, public funding will only be awarded to parties whose lists include 25% of female candidates.<sup>2383</sup>



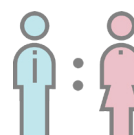
## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

While the data on women in the private sector is limited, in 2016, 33.1% of firms had female participation in ownership and 16.7% of firms had women among its top management.<sup>2389</sup>



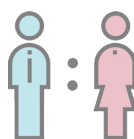
**23.6%**

Women in the **Parliament**  
in **Cape Verde** in 2016



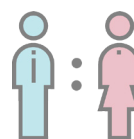
**25%**

Women **Ministers** in  
**Cape Verde** in 2016



**28.5%**

Women in the **Supreme  
Court** in **Cape Verde**  
in 2015



**33.1%**

Women **Firm Owners** in  
**Cape Verde** in 2016



## WOMEN MPS

Women's participation in parliament has increased slowly in recent years. In 2010, 18.1% of women sat in Parliament. In 2011 that number went up to 20.8% and following the 2016 election, increased to 23.6%.<sup>2384</sup>



## WOMEN MINISTERS

The proportion of women in ministerial positions has declined drastically in Cabo Verde. In 2010, 53.3% of ministerial positions were held by women; however, by 2012 it declined to 47.1%.<sup>2385</sup> By 2015, the number increased to 52.9%, but has since fallen to 25% in 2016.<sup>2386</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

Women form a significant part of the judiciary. In 2008, 47% of the judges were women.<sup>2387</sup> In 2015, 2 out of the 7 seats on the Supreme Court are held by women. Moreover, for the first time, the President of the Supreme Court, is a woman, Maria de Fátima Coronel.<sup>2388</sup>

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

The Electoral Code of 1999 establishes various measures for the promotion of women in public and political life, but these measures are unimplemented<sup>2390</sup>. Male dominance in positions of power continues despite efforts to promote women's advancement<sup>2391</sup>. A report published by UN Women found that, while women are better represented at the national level, at the local level men dominate as presidents and members of city councils.<sup>2392</sup> According to the report, out of 22 municipalities, in only one was a woman president of a municipal assembly, and one woman president of a municipal council.<sup>2393</sup> On the other hand, the report found that more women than men hold non-elected leadership positions such as heads of community associations, thus indicating a gender-based bias against women in elected positions.<sup>2394</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

Domestic work continues to be considered a female role, and women and girls face many home responsibilities that limit their time to undertake other kinds of productive work or study<sup>2395</sup>. Even though there are legislative measures aimed at guaranteeing equal employment rights to men and women (e.g. Constitution, art. 61, Electoral Code, arts. 420 and 404), women continue to face de facto discrimination in recruitment, receive lower salaries for the same work and have limited access to traditionally 'male' professions<sup>2396</sup>. Cultural norms and traditions, impose gender roles that hinder the eradication of gender-based discrimination. Women have less representation in local politics, community associations and in parliament. Even in the private sector, women hold fewer management and leadership positions and often receive lower salaries than men for equal work<sup>2397</sup>.



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

Access to resources is a barrier to women's equal participation. Cabo Verde has historically had high numbers of households headed by women, in part due to the persistence of patriarchal attitudes and high rates of emigration of men for jobs.<sup>2398</sup> In 2015, 48% of households were headed by women.<sup>2399</sup> The poverty rate in female-headed households remains high, particularly in rural areas. According to the study by UN Women, many women in Cabo Verde are locked in poverty in part due to a lack of formal title to land, which limits access to credit and to the ability to build assets.<sup>2400</sup>



## MEDIA

The constitution directly provides for freedom of the press as well as confidentiality of sources, access to information, and freedom from arbitrary arrest. The government respects press freedom and generally does not restrict access to, or content of information within the media<sup>2401</sup>.



## OVERVIEW

Côte D'Ivoire was a French colony until its independence in 1960. The country was under a dictatorship until 1993. Though multi-party elections became legal in 1990, the country has had several uprisings over elections throughout the years.<sup>2402</sup>

With respect to women's rights, Côte d'Ivoire ratified CEDAW on 18 December 1995 and the Maputo Protocol on 5 October 2011.<sup>2403</sup> The country has also adopted a National Action Plan for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in 2008. Côte d'Ivoire ranks 155<sup>th</sup> out of 159 countries on the UNDP Gender Inequality Index.<sup>2404</sup>

Following the adoption of the new Constitution in 2016, Côte d'Ivoire now has a bicameral parliament consisting of the National Assembly (lower house) and the Senate (upper house.) There are no legislated quotas, rather voluntary party quotas are used. In addition to establishing the Senate, the new Constitution also added a new executive position, the Vice-President. The President and Vice-President are elected by direct universal suffrage for a term of five years, and the mandate may be renewed once.<sup>2405</sup> The Prime Minister is appointed by the President. The National Assembly's 225 members are elected via direct universal suffrage to serve a 5-year term.<sup>2406</sup> Out of the 225 seats in the National Assembly, women hold 27 (12%).<sup>2407</sup> Of the 99 members of the Senate, two-thirds are elected via indirect suffrage, while one-third are appointed by the President from "Ivorians recognized for their expertise and demonstrated competence in the political, administrative, economic, scientific, cultural, athletic, professional, and social fields."<sup>2408</sup> The senators serve five year terms. The Senate met for the first time in April 2018 and women hold 8 (12.1%) of the 66 elected seats.<sup>2409</sup> The President will appoint the remaining 33 members at a future date. Additionally, under the new Constitution, the National Chamber of Kings and Traditional Chiefs has been established to promote traditional customs and to provide a framework for non-judicial dispute resolution within villages and between communities.<sup>2410</sup> In the 2016 elections, 49.52% of registered voters were women.<sup>2411</sup>

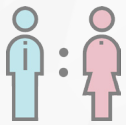
Women were granted their right to vote and to stand for election in 1952. However, it was only recently that women have been candidates in elections.<sup>2412</sup> The 2010 presidential election was the first time a woman ran for president, one out of 14 candidates. The most recent election, in 2015, also had 2 female candidates out of 10.<sup>2413</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

The Government of Côte d'Ivoire has introduced a number of strategies to strengthen women's rights and gender equality, as well as adopting new laws. The National Plan Against Gender-Based Violence (Document de Stratégie Nationale de Lutte contre les Violences Basées sur le Genre) for 2009 to 2014 aims to provide a holistic framework of action to address gender-based (GBV) in the country.<sup>2414</sup> The National Policy on Equal Opportunities, Equity and Gender (Document de Politique Nationale sur l'égalité des chances, l'équité et le genre) for 2009 to 2013,<sup>2415</sup> consists of four parts: gender, governance, human rights and decision-making; gender, macroeconomics and budgeting; gender and social services (such as education, health, sexual and gender-based violence) and gender and capacity building.<sup>2416</sup>

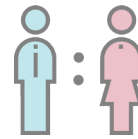
Côte d'Ivoire has a high HIV/AIDS prevalence rate and there is a feminization of the epidemic (4.6% for women and 2.7% for men aged 15 to 49).<sup>2417</sup> In 2014, Law No 2014-430 on prevention, protection and repression relating to the fight against HIV and AIDS was adopted. Among the goals of the Law is to provide women and girls with guidance, information and adequate services to allow them to make decisions on all matters relating to their own health and pregnancy.<sup>2418</sup> This includes providing HIV tests and options to prevent the transmission of HIV to their babies before, during, and after birth.<sup>2419</sup>

In October 2016, the country's new Constitution was adopted. According to the Independent Electoral Commission, about 42% of eligible voters participated, with over 93% voting in favour of the new Constitution.<sup>2420</sup> The 2016 Constitution includes provisions with respect to gender equality and women's participation. For example, under Article 36, the State shall work to promote the political rights of women by increasing their chances of representation in elected assemblies.<sup>2421</sup> Additionally, under the Article 37, the State will not only work to promote gender equality in the labour market but should also encourage the promotion of women to decision-making positions in public institutions and administrations, as well as the enterprise level.<sup>2422</sup>



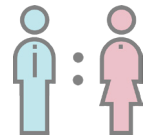
## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

Côte D'Ivoire has no gender quota at a national level. However, the Ivorian Public Front has had a 30% quota for women since 2001.<sup>2423</sup> Nevertheless, this quota has not always been achieved.<sup>2424</sup>



# 10.6%

Women in the **Parliament** in Côte D'Ivoire in 2016



# 20.9%

Women **Ministers** in Côte D'Ivoire in 2016

## STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



### WOMEN MPS

Women's participation in parliament remains low. Following the 2011 election, the proportion of women increased to 11% from 8.9% in 2010.<sup>2425</sup> In 2012 the number of women declined to 10.4% and the percentage of women in parliament continued to drop to 9.2% in 2015.<sup>2426</sup> After the 2016 election, the proportion of women in parliament increased to 10.6%.<sup>2427</sup>



### WOMEN MINISTERS

The proportion of women in ministerial level positions has gradually been increasing. In 2012, women held 13.9% of the ministerial positions, up from 12.5% in 2010.<sup>2428</sup> By 2014, 15.6% of the ministers were women, and in 2015 the number increased to 16.7%.<sup>2429</sup> Since the 2016 election, 20.9% of the ministers are women.<sup>2430</sup>



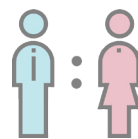
### WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

Out of the 19 judges currently sitting in the Supreme Court, 5 (26%) are women.<sup>2431</sup>



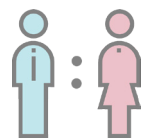
### WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

In 2013, out of 800 new businesses, only 15% were led by women.<sup>2432</sup> In 2016, 24.4% of firms had female participation in ownership and 14.3% of firms had a female top manager.<sup>2433</sup>



# 26%

Women in the **Supreme Court** in Côte D'Ivoire



# 24.4%

Women **Firm Owners** in Côte D'Ivoire in 2016

## CHALLENGES



### INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Women's position in the Ivorian society is still limited. Though the country has laws that grant women equal rights, women still face discrimination and are rarely seen in leadership positions<sup>2434</sup>. There is less access to education and traditional factors play a bigger role in these communities. Few women hold leadership positions in rural areas, even in matrilineal communities.<sup>2435</sup> In addition, the way the political parties currently operate does not allow women to be involved in the public sphere



### SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

Despite the evolution of the Ivorian society over the years, barriers, especially cultural ones, persist in the political world, where femininity is still perceived as a weakness<sup>2436</sup>. Traditionally the woman commands the family, while the man represents her in society.<sup>2437</sup> According to Ivorian culture, men are the ones who can occupy leadership positions whereas women as seen as more fragile and inadequate to engage in politics<sup>2438</sup>. This view is evolving, but its footprint is always present.



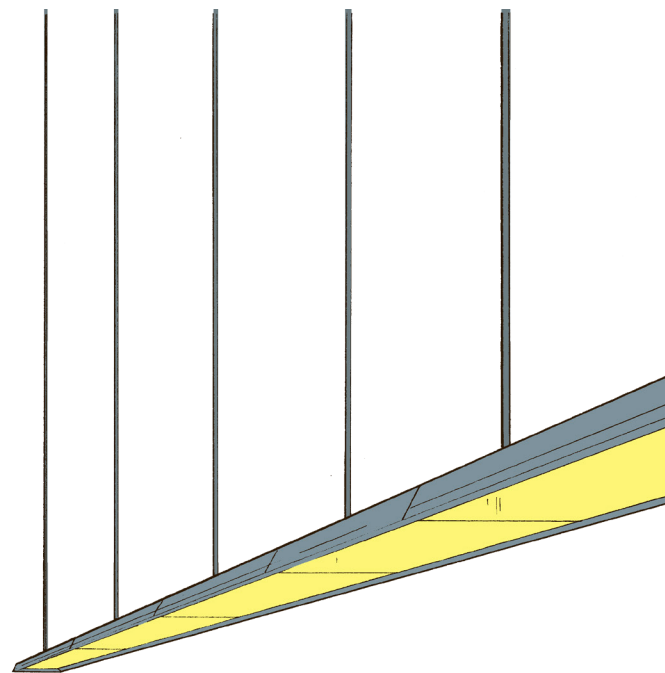
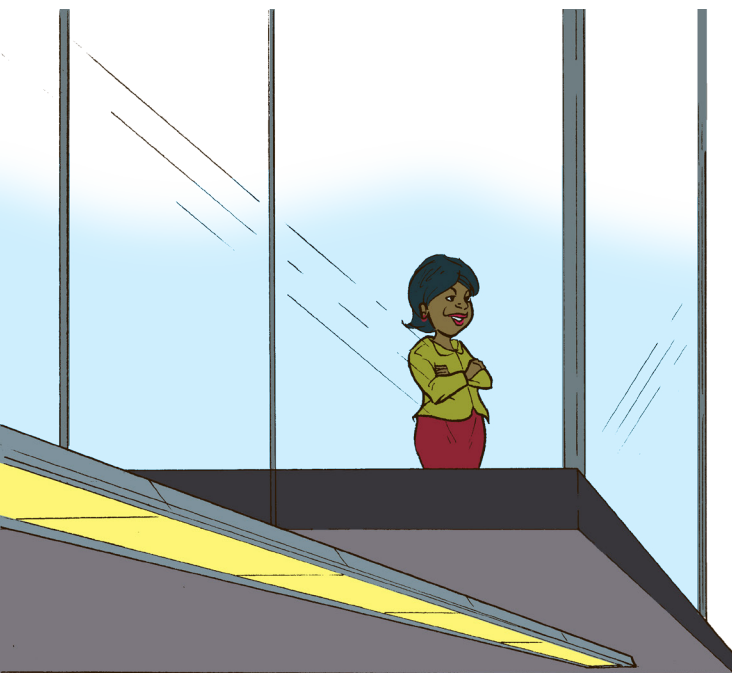
## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

Women generally have more limited financial resources to enter politics. For example, it is more difficult for them to take loans, as banks fear that they will fail. Efforts are being made, but they are still insufficient. In 2011, the Ivorian Government allocated 1 million CFA francs (1,784 US dollars) to all women candidates in the legislative elections<sup>2439</sup>.



## MEDIA

Freedoms of speech and of the press are protected in the Constitution and the country's laws, though there are prohibitions on speech that incite violence, ethnic hatred, or rebellion. In 2014, the Ministry of Communication began public consultations on revising the 2004 press law, with the aim of "further liberating and professionalizing" the media and online media in particular. However, no revisions had been adopted at the end of 2015. There were few reports of journalists having difficulty covering the October 2015 presidential election, marking a departure from the violent repression of the media that has characterised past election years. However, there were some tensions over opposition figures' access to the state broadcaster. Additionally, a number of media outlets and journalists were suspended during the year on ethics violations, some in response to election-related articles<sup>2440</sup>.



Successful female business owner

# GAMBIA

## OVERVIEW

The Gambia was a British protectorate until its independence in 1965. Democracy has not been easy in the country. From 1996 to 2016 Lieutenant Yahya Jammeh served as President of the country. However, in the elections of December 2016, Adama Barrow won and Jammeh left the country in exile.<sup>2441</sup> While the country has experienced long periods of stability compared to its neighbours, stability has not translated into prosperity.<sup>2442</sup> Poverty is widespread and remained stagnant at 48.6% in 2015.<sup>2443</sup> While the country has made progress with respect to legislation concerning women's rights and gender equality, challenges such as female genital mutilation, marital rape or child marriage remain.

The country ratified CEDAW on 16 April 1993 and the Maputo Protocol on 25 May 2005. The Gambia launched its first National Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 in 2014.<sup>2444</sup> Gambia ranks 148th out of 159 countries on the 2015 UNDP Gender Inequality Index<sup>2445</sup>.

The Gambia has a unicameral parliament, the National Assembly, with no legislated or voluntary quotas. The President is elected by popular vote for a 5-year term, the 58-member National Assembly is elected by popular vote and 5 members appointed by the President. All members of the National Assembly serve a 5-year term.<sup>2446</sup> Women hold 6 (10.3%) out of 58 seats in the National Assembly.<sup>2447</sup>

Women have been able to vote and stand for election since 1960 in Gambia<sup>2448</sup>. To date, no woman has been President or stood for presidency. In the latest election, Dr Isatou Touray would have been the first female candidate in a presidential election but she dropped out of the race to support the opposition party.<sup>2449</sup> According to 2011 data, women constitute 58% of voters in Gambia.<sup>2450</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

The Gambia has recently passed legislation regarding women's rights. The country criminalised sexual offenses in 2013 and included in the Criminal Code punitive actions for rape in 2014. It also implemented a National Plan of Action on Gender Based Violence for 2013 to 2017. In the same year, domestic violence was also criminalised.<sup>2451</sup>

The 2010–2020 National Gender and Women Empowerment Policy was recently approved by the Cabinet and focuses on the critical areas of concern, as outlined by the Beijing Platform for Action, including poverty reduction, women's empowerment, education, human rights and governance, among others<sup>2452</sup>.

The Women's Act<sup>2453</sup>, passed in 2010, calls on political parties, the Government and the private sector to enact measures to ensure gender equality. The Act does not, however, regulate family matters for the Muslim population, and many areas remain subject to customary and Sharia law. The Women's Act ensures the continued education of girls who have married and had children at very young ages, prohibiting their expulsion from school for these reasons<sup>2454</sup>.

The MICS4 201 reports that 73.6% of women in Gambia (aged 15–49) have experienced some form of FGM/C<sup>2455</sup>. In December 2015, the Women's (Amendment) Act was adopted. The Act makes it an offense for any person to engage in FGM, or to be an accomplice of those engaging in FGM.<sup>2456</sup> A person found guilty may be fined or imprisoned for 3 years or both. If the act of FGM results in death, the person responsible may be sentenced to life in prison. Under the Act it is also an offence to fail to report that FGM is happening or about to happen.<sup>2457</sup>



### GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

The Constitution<sup>2458</sup> guarantees women's rights to participate in politics and criminalises any form of gender-based discrimination, but no specific law/policies/quota for women's participation in politics have been enacted so far.

# STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



## WOMEN MPS

The proportion of women in parliament remains low but has slowly increased. From 2010 to 2013, 7.5% of the members of parliament were women.<sup>2459</sup> By 2014, the number increased to 9.4% where it remains until the 2017 elections. Since 2017, the proportion of women in parliament is 10.3%.<sup>2460</sup>



## WOMEN MINISTERS

The proportion of women in ministerial positions has slowly decreased. From 2010 to 2012, 31.3% of the ministerial positions were held by women.<sup>2461</sup> In 2014, 27.8% of the ministers were women, and in 2015 the number had declined to 21.1%.<sup>2462</sup>



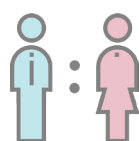
## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

The current Supreme Court is equally distributed in gender, having three (3) men and three (3) women as the newly sworn in judges.<sup>2463</sup>



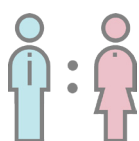
## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

There was limited data found on women in the private sector in the Gambia. In 2015, 21% of firms had female participation in ownership.<sup>2464</sup>



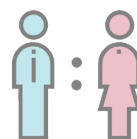
**10.3%**

Women in the **Parliament** in **Gambia** in 2017



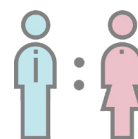
**21.1%**

Women **Ministers** in **Gambia** in 2015



**50%**

Women in the **Supreme Court** in **Gambia**



**21%**

Women **Firm Owners** in **Gambia** in 2015

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

The law does not discriminate against women regarding access to financial services, but women in Gambia face several obstacles in this area. For example, most financial institutions will not grant credit unless the applicant has adequate security or collateral. In most cases, they will insist on property in the form of land. Since access to land is problematic for Gambian women, so is access to credit. In addition, high interest rates charged by microfinance institutions lessen the positive effect the latter may have on women's livelihoods.<sup>2465</sup>

Gambia has a plural legal system consisting of legislative, customary and Islamic Sharia law. The three bodies of law create contradictions and inconsistencies with many discriminatory provisions in all three sources of law, particularly in the areas of family and property law.<sup>2466</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

Hierarchical structures exist in the families and communities, which have been transferred into the public arena of decision making. Social stratification and religious exclusion (The Gambia is 95% Muslim) in society are serious barriers to the participation of women, who are sometimes seen by some segments of society as belonging to the lower rungs of the social ladder.<sup>2467</sup> Therefore, they tend to be excluded from taking part in public discussions and decisions. In addition, the nature of traditional family decision-making at household levels, high illiteracy rate among women and some social and traditional practices such as early marriage, forced marriage and teenage pregnancy limits their wider political involvement. Male child preferences contribute to the production, maintenance and perpetuation of male dominance and resistance to progressive social change that would allow the empowerment of women.<sup>2468</sup>





## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

Stereotypical conceptions lead to women having less access to education and consequently less jobs and less economic empowerment. Candidates need both formal education and economic means to run for office, making it harder for women to do so.<sup>2469</sup> Gender inequality persists in secondary, tertiary and vocational training levels, where in 2011, men made up 71% of all enrolments while female dropout rates were high. The same year, women's literacy levels were at 40% (64% for men)<sup>2470</sup>. Recent statistics also demonstrate that the numbers are still the same and girls' access to education remains limited.<sup>2471</sup> The conditions above would indicate a degree of preference towards sons in regard to access to education, reflecting other forms of discrimination that women and girls face in Gambian society<sup>2472</sup>.

However, both men and women have experienced difficulties in expanding their business, due to the market's small size and constrained access to credit.



## MEDIA

While Gambia's constitution guarantees freedom of speech and of the press, these rights have not been respected in practice according to a report by Freedom House.<sup>2474</sup> However, since the 2017 election, the media is expanding with private actors and Reporters Without Borders who are reporting that journalists are no longer afraid of criticising the Government.<sup>2475</sup> Moreover, Reporters Without Borders found that there are calls to pass a new media law that decriminalises press offenses and protects freedom of expression.<sup>2476</sup>

Journalism in the Gambia is a male dominated environment. There are few female journalists in the Gambia, but women who enter the field report that they not as empowered in the media houses as men are, and their stories do not always get published.<sup>2477</sup> Moreover, female journalists may be overlooked when it comes to covering stories, as travel is perceived as exclusive for male journalists.<sup>2478</sup>

## SUPREME COURT

FEMALE CANDIDATE

MALE CANDIDATE



*Gap between the opportunity given to men & women in the judicial system*

# GHANA

## OVERVIEW

Ghana was a British colony, having its first legislative council elections in 1925. The country gained independence in 1957.<sup>2479</sup> Ghana leveraged its natural resources (gold, oil, cocoa) to produce strong economic growth in the early years of this century. It met the millennium development goal of halving poverty rates by 2015 and was hailed as a model of political stability after peaceful elections. But since 2016, plummeting global commodity prices have pummelled Ghana's economy.<sup>2480</sup> While Ghana has made progress in the areas of women's rights, challenges remain with respect to attaining gender equality.

The country ratified CEDAW on 2nd January 1986 and the Maputo Protocol on 13th June 2007. In 2012, Ghana launched a National Action Plan for the implementation of UNSCR 1325.<sup>2481</sup> Ghana ranks 139<sup>th</sup> out of 159 countries on UNDP Gender Inequality Index for 2015.<sup>2482</sup>

Ghana has a unicameral parliament with no legislated or voluntary quotas. The Parliament consists of 275 members elected by popular vote to serve for 4-year terms.<sup>2483</sup> Women hold 35 (12.7%) out of 275 seats.<sup>2484</sup> The President is directly elected by universal adult franchise by absolute majority for a maximum of two four-year terms.<sup>2485</sup>

Women have been granted the right to vote and to stand for elections since 1954<sup>2486</sup>, however, there has still not been a female Head of State or female candidate for president.

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

In relation to sexual and reproductive rights, the adoption of the Reproductive Health Policy and Strategic Plan for Abortion Care 2007-2011 has resulted in many improvements to women's access to health services. More clinics were established in districts across the country and traditional birth attendants provided with skills training and free pre-natal care were made available to women.<sup>2487</sup>

In 2015, the Government adopted the National Gender Policy. The overarching goal was to mainstream gender equality concerns in the national development process by improving the social, legal, civic, political, economic and socio-cultural conditions for women.<sup>2488</sup> To attain this goal, the Government laid out a number of objectives to address the inequalities. With respect to women's economic empowerment, the Government aimed to accelerate efforts and commitments to providing safe and secure livelihood, and access to economic opportunities while addressing disparities in education, socio-economic and cultural issues, health and agriculture, trade and related matters.<sup>2489</sup> When it comes to women's political participation, it planned to support the passage and implementation of an Affirmative Action Law, that will enable women and men to participate equally in achieving at least 40% women representation in politics, on Boards and at all levels of decision making.<sup>2490</sup> The Government will speed up enforcement and domestication of ratified international treaties and commitments to tackle violence, discrimination and promote gender equality and women's empowerment nationwide.<sup>2491</sup>

The 2017 – 2026 National Strategic Framework on Ending Child Marriage in Ghana was launched in 2016. Approximately 21% of girls are married before the age of 18, however rates can be as high as 39% in the northern part of Ghana.<sup>2492</sup> The overall goal of the Framework is to have a society without child marriage by 2030.<sup>2493</sup> Its strategic objectives include accelerating access to quality education, sexual and reproductive health information and services and other opportunities; ensuring that national laws, policy frameworks and mechanisms related to ending child marriage are in place and effectively enforced and, implementing and empowering girls and boys to be better able to prevent and respond to child marriage.<sup>2494</sup> While efforts to address child marriage have been implemented, these have not been able to affect long-term change. Thus, the Framework aims to ensure that on-going efforts to address child marriage are designed and implemented in a more coordinate and strategic way, so that long-term impact can be achieved.<sup>2495</sup>



## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

To date, there are no legislated quotas at national or sub-national level. Ghana is an ethnically diverse country, and according to the Economic Commission for Africa, it may be the case that ethnic balancing takes priority over gender balancing in electioneering processes<sup>2496</sup>.



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Most women in Ghana work in the informal economy. 80% of women operate in this sector, such as agriculture, manufacturing and services. In the formal sector only 6.2% of employees are women.<sup>2505</sup> However, according to data from the World Bank, in 2013, 31.6% of firms had female participation in ownership and 14.9% firms had female top managers.<sup>2506</sup>

## STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



### WOMEN MPS

Although women's representation in parliament remains low, it has slowly increased. In 2010, women held 8.3% of the seats in parliament.<sup>2497</sup> Following the 2012 elections, the number increased to 10.9% where it remained until the next election.<sup>2498</sup> Since 2017, 12.9% of the members in parliament are female.<sup>2499</sup>



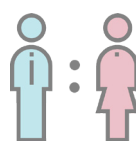
### WOMEN MINISTERS

The proportion of women holding ministerial level positions has fluctuated. In 2010, 21.6% of the ministerial positions were held by women, however, by 2012 the number dropped to 18.4%.<sup>2500</sup> By 2014, the proportion of female ministers increased to 22.5% and continued to grow to 23.1% in 2015.<sup>2501</sup> However, since the 2016 election, the number dropped to 17.4%.<sup>2502</sup>



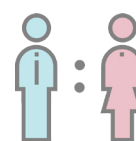
### WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

Currently the Supreme Court has 3 women out of 12 judges<sup>2503</sup>, while the Justices of the Court of Appeal have 11 women out of 26 judges.<sup>2504</sup>



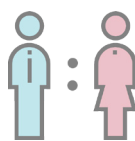
12.9%

Women in the **Parliament**  
in **Ghana** in 2017



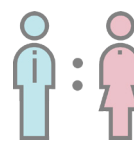
17.4%

Women **Ministers** in  
**Ghana** in 2016



25%

Women in the **Supreme**  
**Court** in **Ghana**



31.6%

Women **Firm Owners** in  
**Ghana** in 2013

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Even though women are becoming active in politics, they are often subordinated in the system. Within political parties, women often face barriers to positions of leadership and decision-making.<sup>2507</sup> Politics is still seen as a man's sphere and women are prevented from participating as meetings are held late at night or out of town, which prevents many women with families from attending.<sup>2508</sup> Although many political parties state that they are sensitive to the gender inequalities in the party system and have taken steps to address it by creating women organising positions, according to Democracy Speaks these positions only perpetuate the belief that women should not vie for any other executive party position than those reserved for them.<sup>2509</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

Traditional gender norms are common in Ghanaian society, where a woman's role is constrained to the household instead of to public life.<sup>2510</sup> Politics is viewed by both men and women the quintessential male sphere of action, where women are both unwelcome and ineffective<sup>2511</sup>. A female organizer noted that society discourages women from joining politics, and that in some cases husbands discourage their wives from running.<sup>2512</sup> Moreover, women who enter politics are often called names and have to overcome barriers such as family demands.<sup>2513</sup>



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

Though women participate in the informal economy, they face hardships to access financial institutions.<sup>2514</sup> Women's access to financial services, including bank loans, is more limited than for men, although there do not appear to be any legal restrictions on women's access to credit. Women are less likely to obtain loans from private banks and more likely to receive credit from family members, traders, NGOs or the government. Weak access to land limits their ability to provide collateral and makes it difficult to obtain credit and, according to the FAO, rural women are particularly disadvantaged since many loan offices are located in urban areas. However, according to a 2012 report by the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, 65% of women who received loans consulted their husbands on the use of the monies from the loan<sup>2515</sup>.



## MEDIA

Reports indicated female candidates received substantially less media coverage than their male counterparts<sup>2516</sup>. Women's participation and representation in media, as well as their access to it, have consistently been an issue of discussion and debate in Ghana. A Media Foundation for West Africa research into the coverage of men and women in Ghanaian newspapers concluded that, already in 2010, women were quantitatively under-represented with other civil society organizations and studies pointing at the same phenomenon. A lack of females as media company owners and managers is believed to be partly responsible for this problem<sup>2517</sup>.

# GUINEA

## OVERVIEW

Guinea was a French colony and became independent in 1958.<sup>2518</sup> On October 11, 2015, the country held its second democratic presidential election, and incumbent President Alpha Conde won with 58% of the vote<sup>2519</sup>. The political campaign was more peaceful than the 2010 presidential and 2013 legislative elections<sup>2520</sup>. Guinea is slowly emerging from the Ebola epidemic and low commodity price shocks that adversely affected its economy in 2014 and 2015. The Government of Guinea has a new development plan for 2016–20. The plan is its only development document, replacing the third Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP3) for 2013–15; the Quinquennial Plan (2011–15); and the Post-Ebola Recovery Plan (2015–17)<sup>2521</sup>.

Guinea ratified CEDAW on 9 August 1982 and the Maputo Protocol on 16 April 2012. The country adopted a National Action Plan for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in 2009 for the period 2009 – 2013.<sup>2522</sup> As of 2016, Guinea has not launched a new National Action Plan.<sup>2523</sup> Due to a lack of relevant data, the UNDP Gender Inequality Index has not been calculated for this country<sup>2524</sup>.

Guinea has a unicameral parliament with legislated quotas for the national and sub-national levels. The National Assembly consists of 114 members who serve five-year terms. Of the 114 members, 38 are elected by a simple majority in single-member constituencies and 76 are chosen by proportional representation.<sup>2525</sup> As of 2017, women hold 25 (21.9%) out of 114 seats.<sup>2526</sup> The President is elected every five years by universal direct suffrage and may be re-elected for a second term. The Prime Minister is appointed by the President.

Women gained the right to vote and to stand for election in 1958.<sup>2527</sup> During the 2015 presidential elections, one (12.5%) out of the 8 candidates was a woman.<sup>2528</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

In recent years, the Government of Guinea has implemented policies and programmes, and adopted legislation with respect to women's rights and gender equality. In 2010, the new Constitution was adopted and reinforced the need to respect the rights of women and girls. The Constitution proclaims the adhesion to the ideals and principles relative to the rights of women such as the revised Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and its protocols on democracy and good governance.<sup>2529</sup> Article 19 of the Constitution, protects youth against exploitation and moral abandonment, sexual abuse, child trafficking and human commerce.<sup>2530</sup>

In 2011, the Government of Guinea adopted the National Gender Policy. The Policy intends to 'make equality between men and women the centre of the values and moral and ethical standards' of Guinean society, in line with the international and regional legal instruments that it has ratified with respect to gender equality.<sup>2531</sup> Moreover, the Policy eliminates disparities between men and women through a systemic approach, that will involve all sectors and all key players in the socio-economic development of the country.<sup>2532</sup>

To address the prevalence of gender-based violence (GBV) and FGM/C, the Government has implemented policies and programmes. In 2011, the National Observatory for the Fight Against Gender-Based Violence was launched. It aims to prevent GBV, and to identify the need for research and advocacy for the region and the establishment of a culture of nonviolence, centralization and management of data on violence.<sup>2533</sup> According to a 2011 government study, 91% of women have experienced gender-based violence and 49% have experienced sexual assault<sup>2534</sup>.

Even though FGM/C is criminalised under the Penal Code<sup>2535</sup> and the Legal Act of 2000, Guinea has one of the highest prevalence rates of FGM/C in the world<sup>2536</sup>. In fact, FGM/C is still nearly universal in Guinea<sup>2537</sup>. To address the situation, in 2012 the Government launched the National Strategic Plan for the Abandonment of Female Genital Mutilation, 2012–2016 (NSP), along with a roadmap for its operationalisation.<sup>2538</sup> Since the launch, the Ministry of Justice has organised several workshops and seminars for members of the judiciary, police, and magistrate to raise awareness of FGM/C.<sup>2539</sup> The Government has also introduced awareness campaigns in schools, as early as in primary education.





## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

Guinea has gender quotas for both the National Assembly and for subnational elections. For the National Assembly, at least 30% of the candidates of the proportional representation list need to be women. Also, if two candidates get the same number of votes, then the candidates from the under-represented sex wins. In addition, 10% of government funding goes to parties that have elected women as parliamentarians or as municipal councillors. For municipal councillors 33% of the seats should be female and 30% of the candidates should be women.<sup>2540</sup> However, there are no penalties for political parties that do not comply.<sup>2541</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

No data regarding women in the judiciary was available.



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Only limited data on women in the private sector was found in the sources consulted. However, in 2016, 9% of firms had female participation in ownership, and 5.8% of firms had females as top managers<sup>2545</sup>

# STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



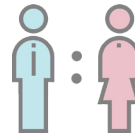
## WOMEN MPS

The 2013 National Assembly election met for the first time since its dissolution after the coup in 2008. Since the 2013 elections, women hold 21.9% of the seats in the National Assembly.<sup>2542</sup>



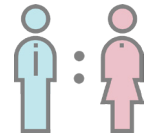
## WOMEN MINISTERS

The proportion of female ministers has nearly doubled since 2012. In 2012, 12.9% of the ministers were female, and by 2014 the number increased to 14.7%.<sup>2543</sup> Since 2016, women make up 23.3% of the ministers.<sup>2544</sup>



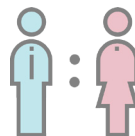
# 12.9%

Women in the **Parliament**  
in **Guinea** in 2013



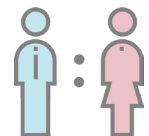
# 23.3%

Women **Ministers** in  
**Guinea** in 2016



# 9%

Women **Firm Owners** in  
**Guinea** in 2016



# 5.8%

Women **Top Mangers** in  
**Guinea** in 2016

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

The low representation of women in decision-making bodies stems in part from the fact that women's rights protection laws are not well known, nor applied in practice<sup>2546</sup>. For instance, according to a 2016 report, even though the electoral code requires at least 30% of candidates for any party competing for seats in the National Assembly to be women, not every party adhered to this rule, which was not enforced.<sup>2547</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

Deeply rooted gender stereotypes and harmful practices to women, such as forced marriages and child marriages, persist in Guinean society.<sup>2548</sup> According to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, these practices and stereotypes persist due to a lack of awareness and strategy to combat them.<sup>2549</sup> In terms of female voters, while women are motivated to vote, it becomes an issue when the husband has a different political leaning to his wife.<sup>2550</sup> It is not uncommon for a husband to force his wife to follow his beliefs, and thus it is difficult for women to make their own political choice<sup>2551</sup>.



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

The low representation of women in political decision-making is connected to women's unequal access of financial resources.<sup>2552</sup> Women make up the majority of Guinea's population living in poverty. One International Monetary Fund (IMF) report on poverty reduction in Guinea underscores that despite making up 80% of the agricultural sector, women are faced with multiple forms of discrimination in accessing productive resources, including credit<sup>2553</sup>. In rural areas, the disparity is even worse, where poverty rates reach 64.7% for women<sup>2554</sup>. The cost of running for office is very high. During the 2015 presidential elections, the deposit required by each candidate was set to 800 million Guinean francs (88,593 US dollars), presenting a significant burden for women.<sup>2555</sup>



## MEDIA

Although Guinea adopted new laws regarding the media following the 2010 democratic transition, these have not been implemented.<sup>2556</sup> A law on access to information was adopted in 2010, however, according to Freedom House it was never effectively enforced, and many government employees were reluctant to disclose their offices' information.<sup>2557</sup>

While there are private media, State media offer meagre criticism of the government.<sup>2558</sup> According to Reporters Without Borders, many journalists have left the country due to controversial stories written.<sup>2559</sup> Moreover, Reporters Without Borders found that the authorities, from time to time, censor critical media by using charges such as insulting state institutions or for non-payment of taxes.<sup>2560</sup>

# GUINEA BISSAU

## OVERVIEW

Guinea-Bissau is former Portuguese colony located on the North Atlantic coast of West Africa. The African Party for the Independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde (PAIGC) led the country in a long battle for independence, where many women were involved as leaders and fighters. The Party created a Women's Commission and began to fight for equal rights between women and men and to fight against female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C).<sup>2561</sup> The country gained independence in 1974, but experienced a high level of political and military upheaval in the following years, with the last military coup occurring in 2012.<sup>2562</sup> A political stalemate since 2015 has resulted in weak governance, but the main power brokers, including the military, are reluctant to dampen the fragile economic recovery and thus likely to continue efforts to improve the management of public finances and tighten spending controls. The judicial system remains inefficient and vulnerable to political interference, and corruption is perceived as widespread. The overall regulatory framework is not conducive to starting businesses and discourages broad-based employment growth.<sup>2563</sup>

Guinea-Bissau ratified CEDAW on 23 August 1985.<sup>2564</sup> The Maputo Protocol was ratified on 19 June 2008.<sup>2565</sup> A National Action Plan for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 was launched in March 2010.<sup>2566</sup> Due to a lack of relevant data, the UNDP Gender Inequality Index has not been calculated for this country.<sup>2567</sup>

The country has a unicameral parliament, the People's National Assembly with no quotas. The People's National Assembly consists of 102 members, who are directly elected for 4 years. As of 2017, women hold 14 (13.7%) out of the 102 seats.<sup>2568</sup> The President, who is the Head of State, is elected by universal direct suffrage for five years. The Prime Minister, who is the Head of Government is appointed by the President.

Women were granted the right to vote and to stand for election in 1977.<sup>2569</sup> The first female President in Africa, Carmen Pereira, was elected in 1984 although she served for three days only.<sup>2570</sup> In the last election in 2015, nearly 53% of registered voters were women.<sup>2571</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

In recent years, the Government of Guinea-Bissau has adopted legislation and implemented policies with respect to women's rights and gender equality. To address the practice of FGM/C, the Government of Guinea-Bissau adopted the Law to Prevent, Fight and Suppress Female Genital Mutilation (Law No. 14/2011) FGM/C, and implemented the 2010 – 2015 National Action Plan to Combat Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C).<sup>2572</sup> The Law prohibits FGM/C, making the practice punishable by a five-year prison sentence and a fine of up to five million CFA francs (\$8,666).<sup>2573</sup> The Ministry of Justice, together with the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Program on FGM/C, worked to strengthen the dissemination and application of the law by building the capacities of officials responsible for its implementation.<sup>2574</sup>

Additionally, the Government adopted the National Gender Policy PNIEG (Política Nacional para a Promoção da Igualdade e Equidade de Género 2012–2015) and the Second Strategy on Poverty, DENARP II (Segundo Documento de Estratégia Nacional de Redução da Pobreza)<sup>2575</sup> in 2012. After the launch of the National Gender Policy, the Ministry of Women, Family and National Solidarity was created to implement the policy and Plan of Action.

Guinea-Bissau adopted a law to end domestic violence in 2013.<sup>2576</sup> Within this law, other members of the household or neighbours can file a complaint on behalf of a woman, as it is classified as a public crime.<sup>2577</sup> However, the 2013 law against domestic violence has received little publicity since it was passed, and it is unclear if the majority of the public is informed regarding the details and provisions of the law. There is no specific law that addresses sexual harassment.<sup>2578</sup>



### GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

There is currently no quota in place in Guinea-Bissau. However, women have urged parties to implement quotas, particularly women from the Bafata Region, who sought quotas by vowing not to vote if there were no women included on the lists.<sup>2579</sup>

# STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



## WOMEN MPS

Women's representation in parliament remains low, only increasing slightly for a period. In 2010, women held 10% of the seats in parliament.<sup>2580</sup> By 2012, the number increased to 14% where it remained until the next election.<sup>2581</sup> Following the 2014 election, the proportion of women in parliament dropped slightly to 13.7% where it remains.<sup>2582</sup>



## WOMEN MINISTERS

While the number of women in parliament is low, it appears that the reverse is true for the proportion of women who hold ministerial level positions. In 2010, women held 23.5% of the ministerial positions.<sup>2583</sup> While the number dropped in 2012 to 18.8%, following the 2014 election the proportion of female ministers increased to 31.3% in 2015.<sup>2584</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

In 2010, 13 out of 79 (16.4%) judges and 12% of judiciary court staff were women. The Minister of Justice recently announced the appointment of a woman to Head of the Judicial Police.<sup>2585</sup> In 2012, the Supreme Court President, two of nine state secretaries, and approximately 10% of senior advisors were women.<sup>2586</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Women are the majority of workers in Guinea-Bissau and are responsible for the livelihood of many people and many families. However, many women still work with the same workload as men and earn less.<sup>2587</sup> No gender disaggregated data on women in the private sector was found in the sources consulted.

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Politics in Guinea – Bissau continues to be dominated by men and few women are included on party lists thus limiting women's political participation. A study by the Igarapé Institute found that while political parties mobilise women during elections to galvanise votes, women are overwhelmingly left off candidate lists.<sup>2588</sup> When women do appear on party lists, they are usually listed at the very bottom as alternatives. Thus, women continue to stress the need for a gender quota.<sup>2589</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

Guinea-Bissau still largely remains a patriarchal and male dominated society, which poses a further challenge to women. They are usually the head of the household and living in extreme poverty and this leads to a high education dropout rate among young girls.<sup>2590</sup> Harmful traditional practices are still prevalent, along with reduced access to education and high levels of illiteracy, which further undermine women's involvement in decision-making.<sup>2591</sup> Women suffer from discrimination flowing from traditional attitudes and practices, particularly in rural areas, that discourage them from participating in political life on the same basis as men.<sup>2592</sup>



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

Women and children remain particularly affected by the country's extremely high rate of poverty.<sup>2593</sup> Although women have limited resources, the social and financial wellbeing of the community and households rely entirely on women.<sup>2594</sup> This prevents women interested in politics from accumulating resources. Personal wealth and power are necessary to get on a party's candidate list in order to gain support from other party members. Although, legally, women have the same rights as men to ownership, often women have no access to land or non-land assets, largely because of discriminatory customary laws relating to inheritance.<sup>2595</sup> Thus, women are unable to access to credit and are financially disadvantaged in their ability to participate politically.<sup>2596</sup>



## MEDIA

Although the Constitution guarantees freedom of expression and freedom of the press, the 2015 political stalemate resulted in an increase of government interference with the media.<sup>2597</sup> According to a 2016 report by Freedom House, the government interference together with influences in politics by organised crime and the military have contributed to fear and self-censorship among journalists in the country.<sup>2598</sup>

# LIBERIA

## OVERVIEW

Liberia was one of two African countries that remained independent during the European scramble for Africa, but this is misleading, as the country was founded by African-Americans in the 1820s<sup>2599</sup>. These Americo-Liberians governed the country until 1989, when they were overthrown in a coup. Liberia was governed by a military dictatorship until the 1990s, and then suffered two lengthy civil wars<sup>2600</sup>. Women's movements played a crucial role in ending the civil conflicts and bringing peace to Liberia in 2003. Although their role was more substantial during the second Liberian civil war, women's movements participated in the resolution of the first civil war. Throughout the two conflicts, their actions consisted of many demonstrations against the different fighting groups. The strength of Liberian women's movement lays in their peacefulness and the refusal to use violence, contrary to all of the other actors of the civil conflict<sup>2601</sup>.

With regards to women's rights and gender equality, Liberia ratified CEDAW on 17th July 1984, and the Maputo Protocol on 14th December 2007.<sup>2602</sup> In 2009, the country adopted a National Plan for the implementation of UNSC Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.<sup>2603</sup> Liberia ranks 150 out of 159 countries on the 2015 UNDP Gender Inequality Index.

Liberia has a bicameral parliament, the House of Representatives and the Senate with voluntary party quota.<sup>2604</sup> The members of the House of Representatives (the lower house) are directly elected, through a majority voting system, whereby the candidates who obtain the highest number of valid votes are appointed.<sup>2605</sup> As to the Senate (the upper house), the two candidates who obtain the highest and second highest number of valid votes are elected.<sup>2606</sup> As of 2017, women hold 7 (9.9%) out of 71 seats in the lower house, and 3 (10%) out of 30 seats in the upper house.<sup>2607</sup> The President is directly elected by an absolute majority popular vote, in two rounds if necessary, and serves for six years.

Women in Liberia received the right to vote and to stand for election in 1946.<sup>2608</sup> In 2005, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf was the first woman to become President of Liberia and of an African nation. She was re-elected in 2011.<sup>2609</sup> In the last 2017 legislative and presidential elections, even though 49% of the registered voters are women,<sup>2610</sup> the latter accounted for only 16% of the candidates, and only 1 woman ran for President.<sup>2611</sup> Under the current President George Weah, the Vice President is a woman, but only one woman sits in the Cabinet as Minister of Gender and Social Protection. In the 2011 elections, approximately 49% of the registered and actual voters were women.<sup>2612</sup> The data for the most recent election was not published at the time of the writing of this report.

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

The Government of Liberia has adopted policies, programmes and legislation aimed at strengthening women's rights and addressing gender inequality. With respect to the rights of young women and girls, in 2011, the President signed the Education Reform Act into law. The Act establishes free compulsory primary education and free compulsory basic education for all Liberians. It promotes the equal access to education without discrimination of any kind and promotes gender equity and equality throughout the educational system and opportunities for education.<sup>2613</sup> The Government also passed the Children's Law of 2011. The Law has been praised as the most comprehensive piece of children's rights legislation in Africa.<sup>2614</sup> For example, the Law provides protection from harmful practices, which has been interpreted as partly addressing female genital mutilation.<sup>2615</sup> It also provides protection from sexual abuse and exploitation and stipulates that children under age 18 cannot enter into marriage, nor can they be betrothed into marriage or promised for marriage.<sup>2616</sup>

In 2015, the Government adopted the Decent Work Act, which inter alia prohibits gender discrimination in relation to remuneration and any employment practice. The 2015 Act also prohibits sexual harassment in the workplace and provides for paid maternity leave (Chapter 20).<sup>2617</sup> Yet, women's participation in the labour force has not significantly increased since the 1990s.<sup>2618</sup>

In June 2017, the National Election Commission (NEC) adopted a "Gender Mainstreaming Policy", with the aim of supporting women in public and political life, and of countering those obstacles that hamper their full participation in decision-making and politics.<sup>2619</sup> Notably, the Implementation Plan provides for specific advocacy and public awareness campaigns to address the different barriers to women's political participation and by including community and religious leaders. The Plan also endeavours to ensure that polling procedures and venues consider the needs of women, in particular pregnant women and women with small children.<sup>2620</sup>



### GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

The 1986 Elections Law was amended in September 2014, so as to include gender quotas.<sup>2621</sup> Notably, Section 4.5 provides that "[1c] A list of candidates submitted to the Commission for an election should endeavour no less than 30% of the candidates on the list from each gender".<sup>2622</sup>



# STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



## WOMEN MPS

After the most recent elections, the proportion of women in the Lower House has increased somewhat, while in the Upper House women's representation has decreased.

In 2011, women accounted for only 9.6% of MPs in the Lower House, compared to 12.5% in 2010.<sup>2623</sup> Following the 2011 elections, women's representation increased to 11% where it remained until the elections in 2017.<sup>2624</sup> Since 2017, women hold 12.3% of the seats in the Lower House.<sup>2625</sup>

The proportion of women in the Upper House is decreasing. In 2011, women held 13.3% of the seats in the Upper House, down from 16.7% in 2010.<sup>2626</sup> Following the 2014 elections to the Upper House, the proportion of seats held by women dropped to 10% in 2015 where it remains.<sup>2627</sup>



## WOMEN MINISTERS

The proportion of women who hold ministerial positions has nearly halved over the past few years. In 2010, 30.4% of the ministers were female, however, by 2012 the percentage of women ministers dropped to 22.7%.<sup>2628</sup> From 2016, 15.8% of the ministers are women, down from 21.1% in 2014 and 20% in 2015.<sup>2629</sup>



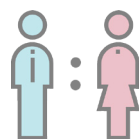
## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

Data on women's representation in the judiciary is lacking. As of 2015, out of the 5 members of the Liberian Supreme Court, 2 were women.<sup>2630</sup>



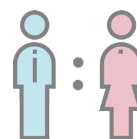
## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

In 2017, 37.4% of firms had female participation in ownership and 20.4% of firms had a female top manager.<sup>2631</sup>



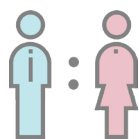
10%

Women in the **Parliament** in **Liberia** in 2015



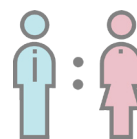
20%

Women **Ministers** in **Liberia** in 2015



40%

Women the Supreme Court in **Liberia** in 2015



20.4%

Women **Top Mangers** in **Liberia** in 2017

## CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

There is lack of political party and constituent support for women.<sup>2632</sup> This is creating a gender gap. According to the advocacy group New Narratives, the gender gap is undemocratic as it means that women are unable to fully exercise their rights, women's voices are absent and makes the passing of gender-sensitive laws unlikely.<sup>2633</sup>

Female politicians are often not in leadership positions in their respective parties, and therefore do not hold equal roles in decision-making.<sup>2634</sup> Moreover, as important meetings are often held late in the day or at times when not all members are around, female members with family commitments are often excluded from taking part in major decision-making.<sup>2635</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

Various structural barriers to organisation and participation in civic life, including poverty, limited education, gender-based divisions of labour, cultural marginalisation and institutionalised gender-based violence. These have resulted in women's inability to gain the skills and qualifications that are critical for building the capacity and confidence needed to effectively organise, advocate for positive social change and access positions of real political power.<sup>2636</sup> Moreover, 36% of girls in Liberia are married before the age of 18<sup>2637</sup>.

In Liberia there are still strong prejudices due to traditions against women who speak out in public and engage in politics. Often, women are prevented from running for offices because of fear of intimidation and violence.<sup>2638</sup>



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

Women in Liberia have less control over economic resources, thereby they lack funding to participate in the election processes. While, women and men have equal rights to access financial services, including credit and bank loans, it is often difficult in practice for women to access credit due to low literacy rates, and/or because they cannot meet the requirements needed to take out a loan<sup>2639</sup>. Moreover, women are responsible for household responsibilities and childcare.<sup>2640</sup>

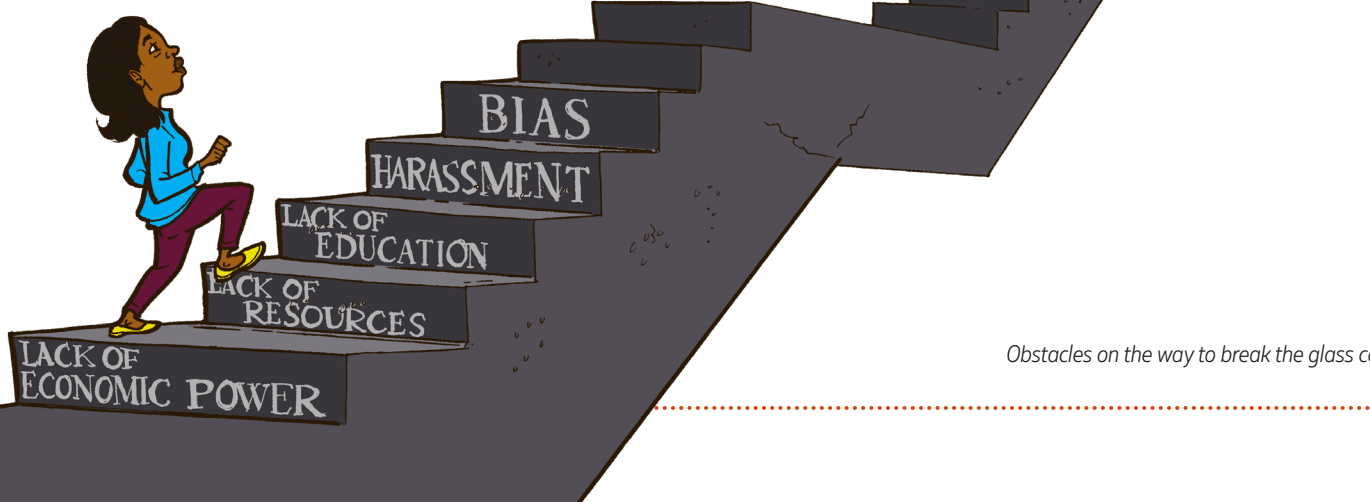


## MEDIA

While there is freedom of the media, according to Reporters Without Borders, authorities in Liberia threaten and intimidate journalists who criticize the government.<sup>2641</sup> Despite becoming a signatory in 2012 to the Declaration of Table Mountain, a pan-African initiative that calls for the abolition of criminal defamation laws, Liberia has long been criticized for its onerous criminal and civil libel laws<sup>2642</sup>. As a result, many in the media impose self-censorship and avoid covering taboo subjects such as government corruption.<sup>2643</sup>

Liberian women are underrepresented in media. Only 20% of journalists are women, thus few women cover politics.<sup>2644</sup> Moreover, women who want to engage in the public sphere lack media support in Liberia<sup>2645</sup>. According to New Narratives, this contributes to the invisibility of women and gender issues, and a continuation of stereotypes of women's leadership.<sup>2646</sup>

# GLASS CEILING



*Obstacles on the way to break the glass ceiling*

# MALI

## OVERVIEW

After decades of French colonial rule and a brief federation with Senegal, the Republic of Mali was established in 1960<sup>2647</sup>. Years of conflict between Mali's military and the country's Tuareg nomads came to a head in 2012, when Tuareg and Islamist forces led an uprising against President Touré. The Islamist groups seized control of northern Mali, including Timbuktu, and imposed Sharia law<sup>2648</sup>. The 2013 legislative and presidential elections, the first after the 2012 coup, were considered generally free and fair by international observers. A democratic government was restored, as well as overall civilian control over the military.<sup>2649</sup> Yet, throughout 2015 and 2016, Islamist forces carried out violent attacks both against the military and civilians.<sup>2650</sup>

During the civil war, the fighting forces engaged in gross abuses and violations of women's rights. However, Mali adopted a National Plan for the implementation of UNSC Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security in 2012<sup>2651</sup>. Mali ratified CEDAW on 10th September 1985, and the Maputo Protocol on 13th January 2005. Article 2 of the 1992 Constitution prohibits gender discrimination.<sup>2652</sup> Mali ranks 156<sup>th</sup> out of 159 countries on the UNDP Gender Inequality Index of 2015<sup>2653</sup>.

Mali has a unicameral parliament with voluntary party quotas. The parliament consists of 147 members who are directly elected and appointed for a 5-year term. The 1997 Electoral Law provides a majority party-list voting system in two rounds of voting, requiring absolute majority in the first round, and simple majority in the second one.<sup>2654</sup> As of 2017, women hold 13 (8.8%) of out the 147 seats in parliament.<sup>2655</sup> The President is elected by universal suffrage by an absolute majority in two ballots for a five-year term and may be re-elected for a second term. The Prime Minister is appointed by the President.

Women gained the right to vote and to stand for election in 1956.<sup>2656</sup> Sidibé Aminata Diallo, a professor at the University of Bamako, is leader of the Movement for Environmental Education and Sustainable Development political party, and in 2007 became the first woman to stand for President of Mali as one of eight candidates<sup>2657</sup>.

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

The Government of Mali has implemented a number of programmes and projects to strengthen gender equality and the rights of women and girls. For example, the Government adopted the National Gender Policy of Mali (PNG- Mali) for the period 2009 – 2018. The Policy included the development and implementation of three-year Action Plans of which the first covers 2011 – 2013. The first Action Plan focuses on 10 priority sectors such as justice, education, health, Employment and Vocational Training, and rural development.<sup>2658</sup> The sectors were chosen as they represent vehicles for major changes in the recognition and exercise of equal fundamental rights, in the fight against gender stereotypes, in the protection of the integrity and dignity of women, and in the allocation of resources for fair and equitable economic development.<sup>2659</sup>

With respect to reproductive rights, the Government of Mali presented the National Family Planning Action Plan (Plan D'Action National de Plantification Familiale du Mali) for 2014 – 2018. The goal of the Plan is to respond to the unmet need for family planning in Mali and to achieve a contraceptive prevalence of 15% by 2018.<sup>2660</sup>

To address inequalities with regards to land rights, in 2017 the National Assembly adopted, and the President enacted the Agricultural Land Law (Loi N°2017- 001 Portant sur Le Foncier Agricole). Despite the Constitution prohibiting gender-based discrimination, women struggled and often formed associations to request land for collective use.<sup>2661</sup> The new Law improves women's access to land by requiring that 15% of public land be allocated to women's associations and other vulnerable groups.<sup>2662</sup>



### GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

In December 2015, a new law was passed, requiring that at least 30% of the candidates on party election lists and 30% of high-level government appointees to be women. At a local level, the 2015 Law mandates that at least 1 of every 3 candidates be a woman.<sup>2663</sup> This provision was retained by the new Electoral Law, adopted on 17th October 2016 (cf. Article 160).<sup>2664</sup>

# STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



## WOMEN MPS

Women's representation in parliament in Mali remains low. From 2010 to 2013, women held 10.2% of the seats in parliament.<sup>2665</sup> Following the 2013 elections, the proportion of women in parliament continued to decrease from 9.5% in 2014 to 8.8% in 2015, where it remains.



## WOMEN MINISTERS

The proportion of women holding ministerial level positions has fluctuated. In 2010, 21.4% of the ministerial level positions were held by women.<sup>2666</sup> By 2012, the number of female ministers decreased to 13.8%, and in 2014 only 12.1% of the positions were held by women.<sup>2667</sup> However, since then, the proportion of female ministers has grown from 16.1% in 2015 to 24.2% in 2016.<sup>2668</sup>



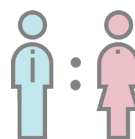
## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

Women's representation in the judiciary is very low. In 2015 only 9 (8.2%) judges out of 109 were women.<sup>2669</sup> Out of the 9 members of the Constitutional Court, 2 are women (22%). Currently, the President of the Constitutional Court is a woman.<sup>2670</sup>



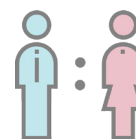
## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

In 2010, 58.3% of firms had female participation in ownership but in 2016 there was a decrease to 15.3%.<sup>2671</sup> Additionally, in 2010, 21% of firms had a female top manager but in 2016 there were only 11.6%.<sup>2672</sup>



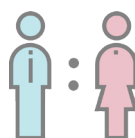
8.8%

Women in the **Parliament** in **Mali** in 2015



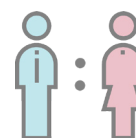
24.2%

Women **Ministers** in **Mali** in 2016



22%

Women the **Constitutional Court** in **Mali** in 2015



11.6%

Women **Top Mangers** in **Mali** in 2016

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Politics in Mali remains dominated by men and the lack of inclusion of female representatives present a significant barrier to women's political participation and representation. Few political parties endorse female candidates, and when they do, the political parties tend to put the names of several men before listing the names of female candidates.<sup>2673</sup> Furthermore, according to a study by the National Democratic Institute, many women in Mali viewed political parties as corrupt and dishonest, and stated that the political parties only express interest in women during electoral campaigns, and that once elected, the women are forgotten.<sup>2674</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

Society in Mali is strongly patriarchal, where many women need to ask permission from their husbands to leave the house.<sup>2675</sup> According to Ramata Daouré, a gender expert, few women are able to continue working after they are married, especially in jobs that may require working late hours as this is unacceptable for many men.<sup>2676</sup> In addition, women in Mali have lower educational attainment than their male counterparts.<sup>2677</sup> There is preference for educating sons over daughters, which is most likely linked to the practice of marrying girls off while they are still very young<sup>2678</sup>.



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

Economic challenges present barriers for women's equal participation and representation. As legal protection tends to favour men, women in Mali are often financially dependent on men and have limited control over resources.<sup>2679</sup> Although government-run, micro-credit development programmes have enhanced women's ability to access credit for agricultural equipment and trade, low incomes and an inability to provide sufficient collateral often prohibit women from accessing larger bank loans. The latest data available shows that only 16% of creditors in Mali are women<sup>2680</sup>.



## MEDIA

Mali's ongoing conflict in the north and attacks by Islamist militants makes reporting in some areas of the country a dangerous task for Mali and foreign journalists alike<sup>2681</sup>. Moreover, reporters who criticise the army may be arrested and charged with contravening standards and undermining troop morale.<sup>2682</sup>

When it comes to women's representation in the media in Mali, it is still very low. According to the Tuwindi Foundation on Monitoring Malian Media, women hold only 15% of the positions in radio; 20% in television; 16% at the news sites and 17% in the print media.<sup>2683</sup> Moreover, the Tuwindi Foundation showed that few media entities have incorporated a gender dimension into their editorials and every day practices, and more than 80% of positions of responsibilities are held by men.<sup>2684</sup>



# NIGER

## OVERVIEW

Niger, became independent in 1960 after its dissolution as French West Africa<sup>2691</sup>. The 1990s were dominated in Niger by a bitter conflict with the nomadic Tuareg in the north of the country. In 1995, the government agreed a peace accord and an amnesty with one of the Tuareg groups. In 1997, the last of them accepted the terms of the agreement<sup>2692</sup>. For the last few years, Niger has been at war with Boko Haram. The conflict has disrupted the country's development, especially public finances, and destabilised the south east, the main scene of armed clashes<sup>2693</sup>.

With respect to women's rights, Niger ratified the CEDAW on 8th October 1999. While the country signed the Maputo Protocol on 6th July 2004, Niger has not yet ratified it. The country has not launched a National Action Plan for the implementation of UNSCR 1325.<sup>2694</sup> Niger ranks 157th out of 159 countries in the 2015 UNDP Gender Inequality Index<sup>2695</sup>.

Niger has a unicameral parliament, the National Assembly, with the use of voluntary party quota. The 171 members of parliament are directly appointed through a mixed, predominantly proportional, electoral system.<sup>2696</sup> As of 2017, women hold 29 (16.9%) out of 171 seats.<sup>2697</sup> Article 109 of the Electoral Code states that the President of the Republic shall be elected by direct, free and equal universal suffrage, that the ballot is to be secret and conducted in a single plurality system with a run-off, with the term in office set at 5 years<sup>2698</sup>.

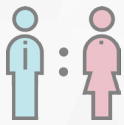
Women received the right to vote and to stand for election in 1948.<sup>2699</sup> Women are still considerably underrepresented in the country. Although the Quota Act requires a minimum of 25% of either sex in key governmental positions, as of 2017, only 8 out of the 43 ministers are women (19%). Women's representation is also low at local level, with only 12% of female serving as regional, municipal and town councillors. Currently, there are no female governors or prefects.<sup>2700</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

The Government of Niger has adopted legislation with respect to women's rights. In 2010, the Constitution of Niger was amended. The amended Constitution enshrined equality before the law without distinction on grounds of sex (art. 8).<sup>2701</sup> Furthermore, it pledged to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women, girls and persons with disabilities, both in public and private life (art. 22).<sup>2702</sup> Domestic violence is not expressly prohibited in Niger. In the last few years, the Ministry of Social Development, Population, Advancement of Women and Protection of Children has launched several awareness campaigns on sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).<sup>2703</sup> In 2012, the Labour Code was amended extending the list of prohibited grounds of discrimination, increasing the penalties for discrimination and prohibiting sexual harassment in the workplace.<sup>2704</sup>

Niger has the highest rate of child marriage in the world: 76% of women were married before the age of 18.<sup>2705</sup> Among the women who were married or in a union at the age of 18, 81% of women aged 20-24 had no education and 63% had only a primary level education.<sup>2706</sup> In 2014, Niger promoted the African Union Campaign to End Child Marriage.<sup>2707</sup> The Campaign aimed at removing barriers to justice and law enforcement and promoting girls' enrolment in school. In August 2016, the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Child Protection created a National Committee to act as a focal point for all activities concerned with ending child marriage.<sup>2708</sup>

In 2015, the Government of Niger together with UNESCO and with financial support from the Government of Japan launched the 'Tackling Gender Inequalities in Niger's Education System' Project. Despite a demonstrated commitment to gender equality and to providing education for girls, gender disparities remain with regards to educational opportunities.<sup>2709</sup> According to UNESCO, the low representation of girls in secondary and higher education is a result of the low school survival rate of girls at the primary level (67%).<sup>2710</sup> Among goals, the project aims support female teachers for them to be role model for girls, build capacities of school administration to monitor the implementation of plan/strategies, policies and programmes, devise advocacy campaigns and provide information on gender equality.<sup>2711</sup>



## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

Niger was one of the first African countries to adopt gender quotas.<sup>2712</sup> Law 2000/08 requires that in both local and national elections, the proportion of elected candidates of either sex in each list be no less than 10% (cf. Article 3). Political parties must adjust the list of their elected members to comply with the 10% requirement, before submitting it to the Constitutional Court. Pursuant to Decree 2001-056 of 28 February 2001, the quota rule applies only to political parties or groups of independent candidates that have obtained at least 3 seats in a constituency. In addition, the 2008 law provides that no less than 25% of high-ranking government posts shall be allocated to persons of either sex.<sup>2713</sup> In 2014, the Quota Act was amended, raising gender quotas from 10 to 15%.<sup>2714</sup> Article 22 of the 2010 Nigerien Constitution provides that the State shall ensure women's equal representation in public institutions and bodies.<sup>2715</sup>



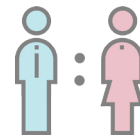
## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

With respect to data on women in the judiciary in Niger, there was little data available in the sources consulted for this report. However, according to data available from the Constitutional Court of Niger, of the current members only one, the President of the Court, is a woman.<sup>2720</sup>



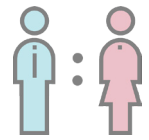
## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

In 2010, 58.3% of firms had female participation in ownership whereas in 2016 the number decreased to 15.3%.<sup>2721</sup> In 2010, 10% of firms had a female top manager but in 2016 there was a slight increase to 1.6%.<sup>2722</sup>



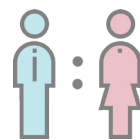
# 8.8%

Women in the **Parliament** in **Niger** in 2015



# 24.2%

Women **Ministers** in **Niger** in 2016



# 16%

Women **Top Mangers** in **Niger** in 2016



## WOMEN MPS

Women's representation in parliament in Mali remains low. From 2010 to 2013, women held 10.2% of the seats in parliament.<sup>2665</sup> Following the 2013 elections, the proportion of women in parliament continued to decrease from 9.5% in 2014 to 8.8% in 2015, where it remains.



## WOMEN MINISTERS

The proportion of women holding ministerial level positions has fluctuated. In 2010, 21.4% of the ministerial level positions were held by women.<sup>2666</sup> By 2012, the number of female ministers decreased to 13.8%, and in 2014 only 12.1% of the positions were held by women.<sup>2667</sup> However, since then, the proportion of female ministers has grown from 16.1% in 2015 to 24.2% in 2016.<sup>2668</sup>

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Niger has adopted several legal frameworks which guarantee the right to women to participate in political activities. However, women remain under-represented in decision-making bodies, both at a national and regional level due to the lack of their implementation. Politicians are reluctant to support women as they fear that they may lose the support of their voters<sup>2723</sup>. Furthermore, decisive meetings of political parties are held at late hours and most often, women are absent because of family duties, and has been described as a plot of men to exclude women from the political sphere.<sup>2724</sup>



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

With a poverty rate of 44.1%, Niger is one of the world's poorest countries, and the majority of those living in poverty are women.<sup>2727</sup> The lack of money to financially run campaigns constitutes a significant obstacle for women. Candidates organise their campaigns by their own means, and usually women cannot afford the costs<sup>2728</sup>. Although the 2010 Nigerien Constitution and Rural Code provides that women are entitled to buy, own and sell land, their access to land ownership is restricted under customary law<sup>2729</sup>.



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

Society in Mali is strongly patriarchal, where many women need to ask permission from their husbands to leave the house.<sup>2675</sup> According to Ramata Daouré, a gender expert, few women are able to continue working after they are married, especially in jobs that may require working late hours as this is unacceptable for many men.<sup>2676</sup> In addition, women in Mali have lower educational attainment than their male counterparts.<sup>2677</sup> There is preference for educating sons over daughters, which is most likely linked to the practice of marrying girls off while they are still very young<sup>2678</sup>.



## MEDIA

While the Constitution guarantees freedom of expression, the media environment in Niger suffers from poor enforcement of legal protections for journalists, who are frequently harassed and arrested in practice.<sup>2730</sup> According to Freedom House, alternative voices and critics of the government get little coverage in the public media.<sup>2731</sup> Moreover, the media in Niger imposes self-censorship, in part due to political pressures or advertising incentives to shape content and coverage of issues.<sup>2732</sup> In recent years, reporting has grown increasingly more dangerous with attacks by Boko Haram.



Political participation of women

# NIGERIA

## OVERVIEW

Modern Nigeria dates from 1914, when the British Protectorates of Northern and Southern Nigeria were joined. The country became independent on 1st October 1960, and in 1963 adopted a republican constitution, but elected to stay a member of the Commonwealth<sup>2733</sup>. The country is currently experiencing turmoil and instability, as Islamic insurgent groups in the North, namely Boko Haram and Islamic State West Africa, continue to be in control of rural areas, carrying out attacks and suicide bombings. As a result, currently 1.8 million persons are internally displaced, and approximately 191,000 Nigerians have fled to the neighbouring countries of Cameroon, Chad, and Niger. Boko Haram has abducted numerous women and girls, who are subject to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), forced marriage, labour and religious conversion.<sup>2734</sup>

Nigeria ratified CEDAW on 13 June 1985, and the Maputo Protocol on 16 December 2004. In 2017, Nigeria launched its second National Action Plan for the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) in 2017–2020.<sup>2735</sup> The second National Action Plan addressed the gaps identified in the first Plan such as the absence of crisis management and recovery strategies, ambiguous language and inadequate monitoring.<sup>2736</sup> Due to a lack of relevant data, the Gender Inequality Index has not been calculated for Nigeria<sup>2737</sup>.

Nigeria is a Federal Republic, composed of 36 States and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). Each State is entitled to pass its own legislation, providing that it complies with federal law and the Nigerian Constitution. In Northern Nigeria, Islamic law is widely applied.<sup>2738</sup> Nigeria has a bicameral parliament, consisting of the House of Representatives and the Senate, with no legislated or voluntary quota. The House of Representative (Lower House) consists of 360 members, who are directly elected for a four-year term. As of 2017, women hold 20 (5.6%) out of 360 seats in the lower house.<sup>2739</sup> The Senate (Upper House) is made up of 109 members, who are directly elected for a four-year term. In 2017, women hold 7 (6.5%) out of the 109 seats in the Upper House.<sup>2740</sup> The President is elected directly by voters in a four-yearly election cycle, with a two-term limit.<sup>2741</sup>

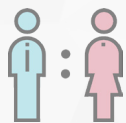
Women in Southern Nigeria received the right to vote and to stand for election in 1958, while women in Northern Nigeria gained the right in 1976.<sup>2742</sup> Women's political participation in Nigeria has seen a negative trend in the last few years. The percentage of female MPs has been decreasing since 2007, despite different attempts to encourage women to run for office. In 2015, it was estimated that 55% of women in Nigeria are registered to vote, however, increases in violence and tension prevent women not only from registering to vote, but also from voting.<sup>2743</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

The Government has taken a number of steps to address challenges affecting Nigerian women and girls. The Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act (VAPP) was adopted in 2015. The VAPP aims to eliminate violence in public and private spheres, and provides protection and remedies for victims of rape, physical violence, emotional, verbal and psychological abuse and other harmful practices, as well as imposing punishments for the offenders.<sup>2744</sup> Rape is criminalised under the VAPP and a person convicted may be sentenced to a minimum of 12 years to life imprisonment. However, if the victim is under 14 years of age, the offender is liable to a maximum of 14 years imprisonment.<sup>2745</sup> The Act also prohibits FGM/C and a person found guilty of performing FGM/C may be sentenced to jail or fined, or both. It is estimated that 20 million women and girls in Nigeria have undergone FGM/C which represents 10% of the global total.<sup>2746</sup>

With respect to the prevalence of child marriage, there are great differences within Nigeria with figures as high as 76% in the North West region compared to 10% in the South East.<sup>2747</sup> The 2015 Violence Against Person Prohibition Act expressly prohibited child marriage. In November 2016, Nigeria launched the African Union Campaign to End Child Marriage,<sup>2748</sup> as well as a National Strategy for the eradication of this practice, which aims at reducing child marriage by 40% by 2020 and eradicating it by 2030.<sup>2749</sup>

In Nigeria about 3.4 million persons are living with HIV/AIDS.<sup>2750</sup> While the country has made significant progress in reducing the prevalence, challenges remain and so the Government has taken a number of steps. In 2014, the HIV and AIDS Anti-Discrimination Act was passed, prohibiting any form of discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS.<sup>2751</sup> Also in 2014, the Nigerian Government launched a National Plan of Action to address intersections between gender-based violence (GBV) and HIV/AIDS.<sup>2752</sup> The National Action Plan aims to reduce the incidence of HIV by addressing GBV using a multi-sectorial approach, including stakeholders at the national, states and local levels.<sup>2753</sup> Moreover, it aims to significantly reduce the incidence of GBV by 30% through prevention education and ensure that integrated GB/HIV services are available at all levels.<sup>2754</sup>



## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

There are no legislated gender quotas in Nigeria. Yet, the 2006 National Gender Policy sets a 35% target for women in elected positions by 2015.<sup>2755</sup> This provision has not been effectively implemented, and Nigerian women remain significantly underrepresented in political and administrative bodies.



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

In the judiciary women are better represented. Approximately 26.2% of Nigerian judges are women,<sup>2763</sup> while 4 out of the 17 Supreme Court's judges are women (23.5%).<sup>2764</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

In 2014, 16.2% of firms had female participation in ownership and 13.9% of firms had a female top manager<sup>2765</sup>. A report in 2016 suggested an increase with 20% owning enterprises in the formal sector, but only 11.7% acting as board directors.

# STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



## WOMEN MPS

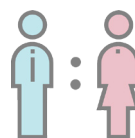
Women's representation in the Nigerian Parliament has seen a negative trend in the last few years. In the Lower House, the number of women remains low and over the years has continued to decline after each election. In 2010, women held 7% of the seats, however, following the 2011 elections, the number dropped to 6.8%.<sup>2756</sup> The trend continued after the 2015 elections, when women gained only 5.6% of the seats.<sup>2757</sup>

In the Upper House, in 2010, women held 8.3% of the seats.<sup>2758</sup> After the 2011 elections, however, the number decreased to 6.4% where it remained until the next election in 2015.<sup>2759</sup> Since 2015 women hold 6.5% of the seats in the Upper House.<sup>2760</sup>



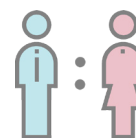
## WOMEN MINISTERS

The proportion of women in ministerial level positions in Nigeria initially increased significantly, but in recent years the positive trend has been reversed. In 2010, women made up only 9.7% of the ministers, however, by 2012, the number grew significantly to 28.1%.<sup>2761</sup> Since then, the proportion of women in ministerial level positions has continued to drop, from 24.1% in 2015, to 12% in 2016.<sup>2762</sup>



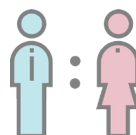
# 6.5%

Women in the **Upper House in Nigeria** since 2015



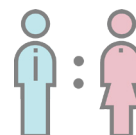
# 12%

Women **Ministers in Nigeria** in 2016



# 23.5%

Women in the **Supreme Court in Nigeria**



# 13.9%

Women **Top Mangers in Nigeria** in 2014



# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Politics in Nigeria is a male-dominated environment with a powerful political elite. Many of the political parties are initiated by men and their network of friends and business partners.<sup>2766</sup> Women often become members at a later stage when the structure is already in place thus denying women many of the benefits accruing to foundation membership, such as important roles within the party.<sup>2767</sup> Additionally, important meetings and decisions are often scheduled late in the day, often preventing women with family responsibilities from attending. This method of scheduling is viewed as an attempt to side-line women from engaging in political process<sup>2768</sup>.

Campaigns and elections in Nigeria tend to be very violent and harsh, candidates are threatened and intimidated, where the risks for female candidates are even higher.<sup>2769</sup> Increases in tension and violence have led to an increase in various forms of violence, such as sexual violence against female voters and candidates.<sup>2770</sup>



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

Nigerian society has been described as patriarchal and cultural practices present barriers for women's participation and representation. Women are seen as belonging in the home, incapable of making decisions and the idea of women exposing themselves to public scrutiny in political activities such as campaign rallies is seen as unbecoming.<sup>2771</sup> Moreover, men see women's participation in politics as incredible and impracticable.<sup>2772</sup> The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination of Women found that the pluralistic legal system, whereby statutory, customary and Islamic law are applicable side by side, allow for various discriminatory provisions to remain in effect.<sup>2773</sup>



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

Competing for political positions in Nigerian requires financial resources and most Nigerian women, who seek these positions, cannot afford the financial obligations<sup>2774</sup>. Major household decisions are taken by the husband. It is estimated that only 26% of lands are owned by women.<sup>2775</sup> Women have limited access to finance, with only 4-10% owning land in the various regions of the country and so lack opportunities to gain credit. Inheritance rules vary considerably among the different ethnic groups, but, in general, women are considerably disadvantaged and often cannot inherit land.



## MEDIA

When it comes to the portrayal of women by the media, many newspapers reinforce patriarchal understanding of politics.<sup>2776</sup> Although women have long been politically active, their participation and engagement in politics is not reflected in media coverage.<sup>2777</sup> When women attain visibility, it is done with biases and negative stereotypes<sup>2778</sup>. A study published in Gender, Place and Culture, showed that female politicians not only occupy limited space in the news media but are also marginalised, despite decades of advocacy for gender equality.<sup>2779</sup> The study argues that the degree of visibility of women in political news entrenches marginalisation and reinforces assumptions that 'only men do politics.'<sup>2780</sup>

# SENEGAL

## OVERVIEW

The Republic of Senegal became independent in 1960, after three centuries of French colonial rule<sup>2781</sup>. Senegal has long been considered a model democracy, with a tradition of stable governments and civilian rule.<sup>2782</sup> The country has experienced modest growth and high poverty levels appear to have fallen in recent years.<sup>2783</sup> While progress has been made in terms of women in parliament, in part due to the 2010 gender parity law, challenges remain for women in Senegal with respect to reproductive and maternal health.

Senegal ratified CEDAW on 5th February 1985. The country ratified the Maputo Protocol on 27th December 2004. Article 7 of the 2001 Constitution provides for gender equality. In 2005, a National Gender Strategy was adopted for 2005–2015.<sup>2784</sup> A National Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 was launched in May 2011<sup>2785</sup>. The country ranks 120<sup>th</sup> out of 159 countries on the 2015 UNDP Gender Inequality Index.<sup>2786</sup>

Senegal has a unicameral parliament with legislated quotas. The parliament consists of 165 members, 105 MPs are elected from constituencies through a party block vote system, while the remaining 60 are chosen from lists of candidates presented by parties, coalitions of parties and independent persons at the national level, through a proportional representation mechanism. The MPs are directly elected for a 5-year term. As of 2017, women hold 69 (41.8%) of the 165 seats in parliament.<sup>2787</sup> The President is elected by universal direct suffrage by a two-ballot majority poll for a five-year term and his/her mandate may be renewed once.<sup>2788</sup> It is the President who appoints the Prime Minister.

Women in Senegal received the right to vote and to stand for election in 1945.<sup>2789</sup> The Ministry of Women, Family and Childhood oversees promoting women's rights and gender equality.<sup>2790</sup> The National Observatory for Party is responsible for monitoring progress in gender equality and gender mainstreaming.<sup>2791</sup> Despite the State's efforts in enacting gender sensitive legislation, discriminatory practices remain very common in Senegal, especially in rural areas, where customary and religious norms still play a crucial role.<sup>2792</sup> No female Head of the State has been appointed.<sup>2793</sup>

## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

The Government of Senegal has adopted legislation and implemented policies and programmes to strengthen women's rights and improve gender equality. The Government launched the National Strategy for Equity and Gender Equality for the 2016–2026 (Stratégie Nationale pour l'Équité et l'Égalité de genre 2016–2026) which clarifies the country's vision with respect to gender and serves as an instrument to remove constraints to equality between men and women.<sup>2794</sup> The objective is to promote empowerment of women and girls, to include gender mainstreaming in all public policies, to improve the legal framework for the protection of women and girls, as well as to strengthen women's leadership and entrepreneurial capacities for inclusive growth.<sup>2795</sup>

Despite the fact that the practice is prohibited by law, approximately 25% of women aged 15 to 49 years have experienced FGM/C in Senegal.<sup>2796</sup> Therefore the Government launched the Second National Action Plan for the Abandon of Female Genital Mutilation covering the period 2010 – 2015. The Plan incorporated prevention of the practice into elementary and junior high schools curricula, and a participatory education programme that combined literacy and essential health education, including information on FGM.<sup>2797</sup> The Plan also included an active role for parliamentarians, in particular women parliamentarians, to speak out against the practice and work with religious leaders in their constituencies.<sup>2798</sup>

With respect to reproductive rights, the Government of Senegal has made family planning a national priority with the goal of rapidly reducing maternal and infant mortality, and set the goal of increasing contraceptive prevalence rate from 12% in 2010 to 27% in 2015 and 45% in 2020.<sup>2799</sup> To support the goal and reduce obstacles, the Government launched the National Family Planning Action Plan 2012 – 2015 which lays out strategic actions such as advocacy programmes, ensuring the availability of contraceptive products and access to family planning services.



## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

In 2010, Law No. 2010-11 introduced gender quotas for legislative, regional, municipal and rural elections.<sup>2800</sup> In 2012, the quota rule was introduced in the new electoral law,<sup>2801</sup> which replaced the 1992 Electoral Code. Notably, candidate lists must include an equal number of male and female candidates. If the number of seats at stake is odd, the quota rule applies to the immediately lower odd number of seats – for instance, for a constituency with 5 seats, parties must present a list with at least 3 women. Noteworthy is that lists that do not comply with the parity rule are inadmissible.<sup>2802</sup>

Although the 2012 amendment has produced a substantial increase in women's representation in the National Assembly, the provision does not apply to other leadership positions, such as judiciary and executive roles, where women's participation is still considerably low.<sup>2803</sup>



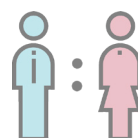
## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

Data on women in the judiciary was scarce in the sources consulted. However, according to information from the Constitutional Council, since 1992, only 3 (10.7%) out of its 28 members were female.<sup>2809</sup>



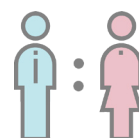
## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

In 2014, 14.1% of firms had a female top manager and 22.9% of firms had female participation in ownership.<sup>2810</sup>



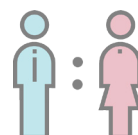
# 41.8%

Women in the **Parliament**  
in **Senegal** in 2017



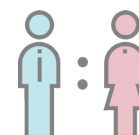
# 20%

Women **Ministers** in  
**Senegal** in 2016



# 10.7%

Women in the  
**Constitutional Council** in  
**Senegal**



# 14.1%

Women **Top Managers** in  
**Senegal** in 2014



## WOMEN MPS

Senegal is currently one of the countries with the highest women's representation in a national parliament. The introduction of the quota appears to have had a positive effect on women's representation. In 2012, women's representation increased to 42.7% from 22.7% in 2010.<sup>2804</sup> By 2014, 43.3% of the seats in parliament were held by women, however, it has since dropped to 41.8% following the 2017 legislative elections.<sup>2805</sup>



## WOMEN MINISTERS

The proportion of women in ministerial level positions has fluctuated. In 2010, women made up only 12.9% of the ministers.<sup>2806</sup> By 2012, the number had nearly doubled to 25%, but decreased to 16.1%.<sup>2807</sup> Since 2015, 20% of the ministers are women.<sup>2808</sup>

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

While the 2010 Law on Parity had a positive effect on women's representation in the national parliament, Senegalese women remain marginalised at the local level and in political parties. In the 2014 local elections, only 13 (0.2%) women were elected as mayor out of the 557 municipalities.<sup>2811</sup> It derives from the fact that political parties do not promote female leadership<sup>2812</sup>. Moreover, concrete political support for equality and anti-discrimination is lagging in Senegal and thus presents challenges to women's equal participation and representation.<sup>2813</sup> A lack of solidarity between women also constitutes an obstacle to women's political participation in Senegal. For instance, when a woman is elected as a leader of a party, other women will try to undermine her<sup>2814</sup>.



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

Society in Senegal is male dominated and as a consequence, men dominate in leadership positions and in the public sphere. According to Abdou Sidath Diagne, a sociologist at the University Cheikh Anta Diop in Dakar, the low representation of women in political parties and in decision-making is due to sociocultural and religious beliefs.<sup>2815</sup> Thus, women are often relegated to the background. Patriarchal attitudes, traditional beliefs and conservative values present significant barriers for women, as well as create unsafe environments where many women experience violence, sexual harassment and rape.<sup>2816</sup>



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

The cost of running a campaign in Senegal is high and requires significant resources. According to a report by the Electoral Knowledge Network, political parties and candidates participating in legislative elections must pay a deposit of 20 million CFA francs (3478 US \$) to participate in elections, which is refundable if the candidate or list receives 5% of votes in the first round.<sup>2817</sup> In a report published by Westminster Foundation for Democracy, the degree of a candidate's access to financial resources is a determining factor in the person's likelihood of being elected.<sup>2818</sup>

The cost of implementing a campaign puts women at a disadvantage. Many candidates are forced to take loans to cover the costs of running a campaign. Under Article 374 of the Family Code, women and men have the same legal rights to bank accounts and bank loans.<sup>2819</sup> However, women often struggle to obtain loans as they tend not to own land and thus are unable to provide the collateral needed to secure a loan.



## MEDIA

Senegal has a diverse media, and freedom of information is guaranteed under the Constitution.<sup>2820</sup> While it is rare that journalists are harassed and abused, some subjects continue to be off limits. Journalists covering topics, such as corruption, face intimidation and although rare, journalists interviewing government critics have reportedly been harassed and convicted of defamation.<sup>2821</sup>

With respect to women and the media, in a survey by the Panos Institute, issues related to women's rights are covered less by the media in Senegal. The survey looked at four of the main daily newspapers and their coverage of women's issues between March 1st to 15th, 2017. It found that during the period, only 5.3% or 98 out of a total of 1,848 articles published focused on women.<sup>2822</sup> The survey found similar results in television, radio and online press, where women's issues only accounted for a very small percentage of the coverage and programming.

# SIERRA LEONE

## OVERVIEW

Sierra Leone became independent on 27th April 1961<sup>2823</sup>. A devastating eleven-year armed conflict, which lasted from 1991 until 2002, was characterised by extreme brutality and widespread human rights abuses against civilians. Most of the crimes were perpetrated by rebels from the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF)<sup>2824</sup>. However, government forces and their allies, notably the Civil Defence Forces (CDF), also committed serious crimes, albeit on a smaller scale and of a different nature than those by rebel groups<sup>2825</sup>.

Sierra Leone signed the Maputo Protocol on 9th December 2003 but has not yet ratified it.<sup>2826</sup> The country ratified CEDAW on 11th November 1988.<sup>2827</sup> A National Action Plan for the implementation of the UNSCR 1325 was launched in 2010<sup>2828</sup>. Sierra Leone ranks 151<sup>th</sup> out of 159 countries with regards to the 2015 UNDP Gender Inequality Index<sup>2829</sup>.

Sierra Leone is a constitutional republic with a unicameral parliament, with legislated quotas for the sub-national level only.<sup>2830</sup> Of the 146 members of parliament, 132 are directly elected, while the remaining 14 are indirectly elected. All members serve five-year terms. Since the last election, not all seats in parliament have been filled. As of 2017, women hold 15 (12.4%) out of the 121 seats in parliament.<sup>2831</sup> The President is directly elected for a five-year term and may be re-elected for a second term.

Women obtained the right to vote and stand for election in Sierra Leone in 1961.<sup>2832</sup> Sierra Leonean women's peace movements represented the first time that women had come together as a large political force and taken such a prominent role in public life. This experience gave women the empowerment, capacity and influence to carve out more space for themselves in politics following the end of the civil war<sup>2833</sup>. In the 2012 elections, women amounted to more than 51% of the registered voters.<sup>2834</sup>

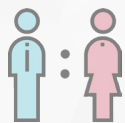
## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

In recent years, the Government of Sierra Leone has taken a number of steps to address women's rights and gender equality. In 2012, the Sexual Offences Act expressly prohibited marital rape and requires the State to provide victims with free and adequate medical assistance.<sup>2835</sup> In the same year, the National Referral Protocol on GBV was adopted, with a view to strengthening criminal law responses to various forms of gender-based violence and traditional harmful practices, notably sexual violence, sexual exploitation, forced prostitution, domestic violence, trafficking, forced and early marriage, FGM/C and honour killings.<sup>2836</sup> While the 2012 Sexual Offences Act prohibits sexual harassment, it does not expressly address sexual harassment in the workplace or perpetrated by individuals in authoritative positions.<sup>2837</sup>

With respect to women and health, the Government of Sierra Leone has taken a number of steps. The Second Poverty Reduction Strategy for 2008-2012 ("An Agenda for Change") implemented a basic package of essential health services, including medical assistance for pregnant women, lactating mothers and children under the age of 5.<sup>2838</sup> More recently, the National Health Policy for 2010-2015, adopted in 2009 specifically addressed the problem of maternal and neonatal mortality.<sup>2839</sup> In 2013, the Government launched a National Strategy for the Reduction of Pregnancy for 2013-2015. The Strategy aims at raising awareness on sexual rights among adolescents and youths and facilitating their access to reproductive health services.<sup>2840</sup>

The Agenda for Prosperity, the National Development Strategy for 2013-2018, provides a gender equality strategy for the country. The Government's strategy focuses on education, increasing women's political participation, access to justice and economic opportunities, strengthening prevention and response to GBV, improving the business environment for women and their access to finance.<sup>284</sup>





## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

Sierra Leone has not yet adopted a gender quota at national level. Yet, the 2004 Local Government Act, which established new local councils, introduced gender quotas for the Ward Committees, elected by each town and entrusted with the coordination of development, self-help and voluntary projects.<sup>2842</sup> In particular, 5 of their 10 members must be women under Article 95.<sup>2843</sup> Women's civil society organisations advocated for the introduction of a quota requirement for the local councils, but this proposal failed.<sup>2844</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

As of August 2017, 7 (26.9%) of the 26 judges on the three highest courts were female.<sup>2849</sup> In 2013, there were three female justices out of seven on the Supreme Court, including the Chief Justice. Four of six judges on the Court of Appeal were women<sup>2850</sup>. In June 2018, Dr. Priscilla Schwartz was appointed Attorney General and Minister of Justice; she is the first woman to hold the post.<sup>2851</sup>



## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

In 2009, 7.9% of firms had female participation in ownership and 7.1% of firms had a female top manager<sup>2852</sup>. In 2017, 18.8% of firms had female participation in ownership and 15.9% of firms had a female top manager<sup>2853</sup>.

## STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



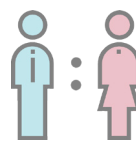
### WOMEN MPS

Women's representation in parliament is low. In 2010, women made up 13.2% of the members in parliament, however, following the 2012 elections the number dropped to 12.4% where it remains.<sup>2845</sup>



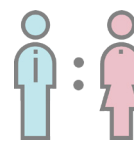
### WOMEN MINISTERS

While, the proportion of women in ministerial level positions has fluctuated, in recent years the number of female ministers has increased. In 2012, 7.7% of the ministers were women, a slightly decrease from 2010, when women represented 8% of the ministers<sup>2846</sup>. Following the 2012 elections the number of female ministers increased to 10.3%.<sup>2847</sup> Although the number dropped in 2015 to 6.9%, it has increased in 2016 to 13.8%.<sup>2848</sup>



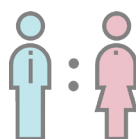
12.4%

Women in the **Parliament**  
in **Sierra Leone** since 2012



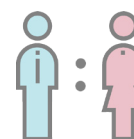
13.8%

Women **Ministers** in  
**Sierra Leone** in 2016



26.9%

Women in the **Supreme**  
**Sierra Leone** in 2017



15.9%

Women **Top Mangers** in  
**Sierra Leone** in 2017

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

The importance of patronage within political life in Sierra Leone is a major factor that prevents women from entering politics. It is through patronage networks that power and resources are allocated at every level, and the importance of these networks in shaping both formal and customary governance cannot be underestimated. Patronage relationships in Sierra Leone exist primarily between men, with women largely excluded<sup>2854</sup>. Gender discrimination and entrenched patriarchal structures within Sierra Leone's political parties act as a barrier both to women entering politics, as well as to women influencing the national political agenda<sup>2855</sup>.



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

Cultural and traditional practices in the northern areas of the country prevents women from holding office as paramount chiefs (a parallel system of tribal government operated in each of the 149 chiefdoms)<sup>2856</sup>. Most women are illiterate, too poor to pay for an expensive political campaign, and scared of entering the patriarchal political arena as the general perception is that politics is a man's game<sup>2857</sup>. Women councillors appeared to have faced the most difficulties in getting a party nomination, and were the group that most frequently reported experiencing hostility from local men while campaigning<sup>2858</sup>.



## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

One barrier to participation, that was cited by all women politicians interviewed, is lack of finance and resources. Those running in national or local elections receive very little financial support from the political parties and must use personal funds for their campaign<sup>2859</sup>. Legally, women have equal right to access bank loans and other forms of credit and may also open a bank account in the same way as a man. The fact that very few women own land as collateral, however, restricts their access to bank loans<sup>2860</sup>.



## MEDIA

Although there is freedom of the media, there are limits to the topics which can be covered, and the authorities use libel laws to punish the journalists who cover taboo topics such as corruption and gay rights.<sup>2861</sup> According to Reporters Without Borders, the threat of defamation charges was widely used to gag the media, forcing journalists to censor themselves, or in some cases even go into hiding during the 2014-2016 state of emergency resulting from the Ebola epidemic.<sup>2862</sup>

Being a journalist in Sierra Leone is challenging and even more so for female journalists. One reporter stated that she was not only questioned more, but she also feared for her safety especially when she works late at night.<sup>2863</sup>

# TOGO

## OVERVIEW

From the 16th century to the 18th century, Togo's coastal region was a major trading centre for Europeans searching for slaves, earning Togo and the surrounding region the name "The Slave Coast". In 1884, Germany declared a region including present-day Togo as a protectorate called Togoland. After World War I, rule over Togo was transferred to France. Togo gained its independence from France in 1960<sup>2864</sup>. At present, thousands of Togolese are taking to the streets in a campaign against the 50-year-rule of the Gnassingbe family, demanding the immediate resignation of President Faure Gnassingbe<sup>2865</sup>.

Togo ratified CEDAW on 26 September 1983 and the Maputo Protocol on 12 October 2005. Article 2 of the 1992 Constitution prohibits gender discrimination.<sup>2866</sup> Togo launched a National Action Plan for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in 2011<sup>2867</sup>. Togo ranks 134<sup>th</sup> out of 159 countries on the 2015 UNDP Gender Inequality Index.<sup>2868</sup>

Togo has a unicameral parliament, the National Assembly, with the use of voluntary party quota. The parliament consists of 91 members who are directly elected and serve a 5-year term.<sup>2869</sup> MPs are elected through a proportional voting system, from closed candidate lists. Each political party or legally constituted group of parties must submit a list of twice as many candidates as the total number of seats to be allocated in the given constituency.<sup>2870</sup> As of 2017, women hold 16 (17.6%) out of the 91 seats in the National Assembly.<sup>2871</sup> The President is elected by universal and direct suffrage under a secret ballot for a mandate of five years, and may serve a second term.<sup>2872</sup> It is the President who appoints the Prime Minister by a parliamentary majority.<sup>2873</sup>

Women obtained the right to vote and to stand for election in 1945.<sup>2874</sup> Women's participation in politics is still low in the country, primarily as a result of cultural and traditional biases.<sup>2875</sup> In 2009, for the first time, a woman was appointed as Presidential Chief of Staff, and in 2010, a woman ran in the presidential elections.<sup>2876</sup> Currently, 17.6% of MPs are women,<sup>2877</sup> as well as 5 of the 26 ministers (19.2%).<sup>2878</sup> Approximately 13.5% of the candidates running in the 2012 elections were women (159 out of 1,174).<sup>2879</sup>

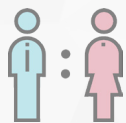
## ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

In 2011, the Government adopted a National Gender Equity and Equality Policy and launched the National Action Plan (La Politique Nationale d'Équité et d'Égalité de Genre et son Plan d'Action National). The purpose is to promote, both in the medium and long-term, gender equity and equality, women's empowerment and effective participation in all levels of decision-making in Togo's development process.<sup>2880</sup> Also, it will establish an institutional, legal, socio-cultural and economic environment that will enable and ensure the effective integration of gender in all sectors of economic and social life.<sup>2881</sup>

Polygamy is common in Togo and expressly recognised by the law, which requires the husband to treat his wives equally. The 2012 Persons and Family Code provides sons, daughters and surviving spouses with equal inheritance rights, yet it allows for the application of customary inheritance rules, which are often discriminatory against women, in particular in relation to land ownership.<sup>2882</sup> As of 2015, more than 33% of women aged 15–49 were in a polygamous marriage.<sup>2883</sup> The Persons and Family Code was amended in 2014, providing for equality among the spouses, so that the husband is no longer the head of the household.<sup>2884</sup>

In 2014, the Ministries of Education, Women's Affairs and Health launched the National Programme Against Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy. The Programme focuses on strengthening girls' education, providing adolescents with access to reproductive health information and services, ensuring social protection for girls married before 18, and organising outreach and advocacy activities with families, communities, traditional and religious leaders. The Programme was adopted within the framework of the April 2014 "Vision 2030", a national development plan.<sup>2885</sup>

To address the prevalence of HIV and improve the lives of persons living with HIV/AIDS, the National Strategic Plan for the Fight Against AIDS and Sexually Transmitted diseases 2016 – 2020 (Plan Stratégique national de lutte contre le Sida et les Infections Sexuellement transmissibles 2016 – 2020) was launched in 2015. The Plan focuses on the reduction of new HIV infections by 50% in the general population and a reduction of mortality rate by 80% by 2020.<sup>2886</sup> Moreover, the Plan focuses on vulnerable groups, such as men who have sex with men and women, and in particular in three districts (Lomé commune, Maritime Region and Plateaux Region) where 80% of persons with HIV/AIDS live. Of the persons living with HIV in Togo, 3.1% are women and 1.7% are men.<sup>2887</sup>



## GENDER PARITY LAW | QUOTA

Togo has not yet adopted mandatory quota rules. In 2013, a voluntary quota system was established, but the law does not provide for sanctions in case of non-compliance. Article 220(5) of the Electoral Code, as amended by Law 2013-004,<sup>2888</sup> requires that candidate lists for parliamentary elections comprise equal number of men and women.<sup>2889</sup>

The 2013 Law on Political Party and Electoral Campaign Funding grants advantageous financial support for political parties with high women's representation. Twenty percent of state funding is allocated to parties and groupings of parties in proportion to the number of women appointed in the last national elections, while a further 10% is distributed in proportion to the number of women who obtained a seat in the last local elections. In addition, the Law provides for a 25% reduction of the nomination fee if a party's list comprises female candidates.<sup>2890</sup>



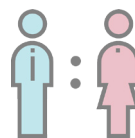
## WOMEN IN THE JUDICIARY

No relevant data could be found



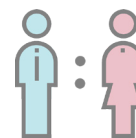
## WOMEN IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

In 2009, 31.8% of firms had female participation in ownership but 25.3% in 2016<sup>2895</sup>. In 2009, 15.1% of firms had a female top manager and 11.4% in 2016<sup>2896</sup>.



# 17.6%

Women in the **Parliament**  
in **Togo** in 2013



# 20%

Women **Ministers** in  
**Togo** in 2013

## STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:



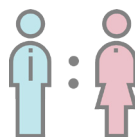
## WOMEN MPS

The proportion of women in parliament has steadily been increasing. In 2010, women held 11.1% of seats in parliament.<sup>2891</sup> Since the 2013 elections women's representation has grown from 15.4% to 17.6% where it currently stands.<sup>2892</sup>



## WOMEN MINISTERS

The proportion of women who hold ministerial level positions is higher than those serving in parliament. In 2012, women held 22.6% of the ministerial level posts, up from 14.3% in 2010.<sup>2893</sup> Since 2014 the number of female ministers have decreased from 21.4% to 20% in 2016.<sup>2894</sup>



# 11.4%

Women **Top Mangers** in  
**Togo** in 2016

# CHALLENGES



## INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Despite the steps taken, women's participation and representation in politics remains low. According to the Secretary General of the UFC (Union des Forces de Changement), the low representation of women on all lists is explained by the fact that women prefer to let their husbands take care of politics.<sup>2897</sup> Additionally, the lack of education is a significant barrier to women's participation in politics, as many women reportedly drop out of school because they become pregnant, and there is a prioritising of boys' education over that of girls<sup>2898</sup>.



## SOCIAL | CULTURAL BARRIERS

Patriarchal attitudes and deeply rooted stereotypes still persist about the role of men and women in the family and society in Togo and present barriers to women's political participation.<sup>2899</sup> In Togo, women assume domestic responsibilities, such as taking care of the children and caring for sick and elderly family members, which prevents many women from not only working but also pursuing political aspirations.<sup>2900</sup> In addition, discriminatory practices and gender-based violence, which are rooted in ancestral customs, constitute significant barriers to women's political participation<sup>2901</sup>. Women who assume leadership positions or take up advocacy work are seen as trouble-makers.<sup>2902</sup>



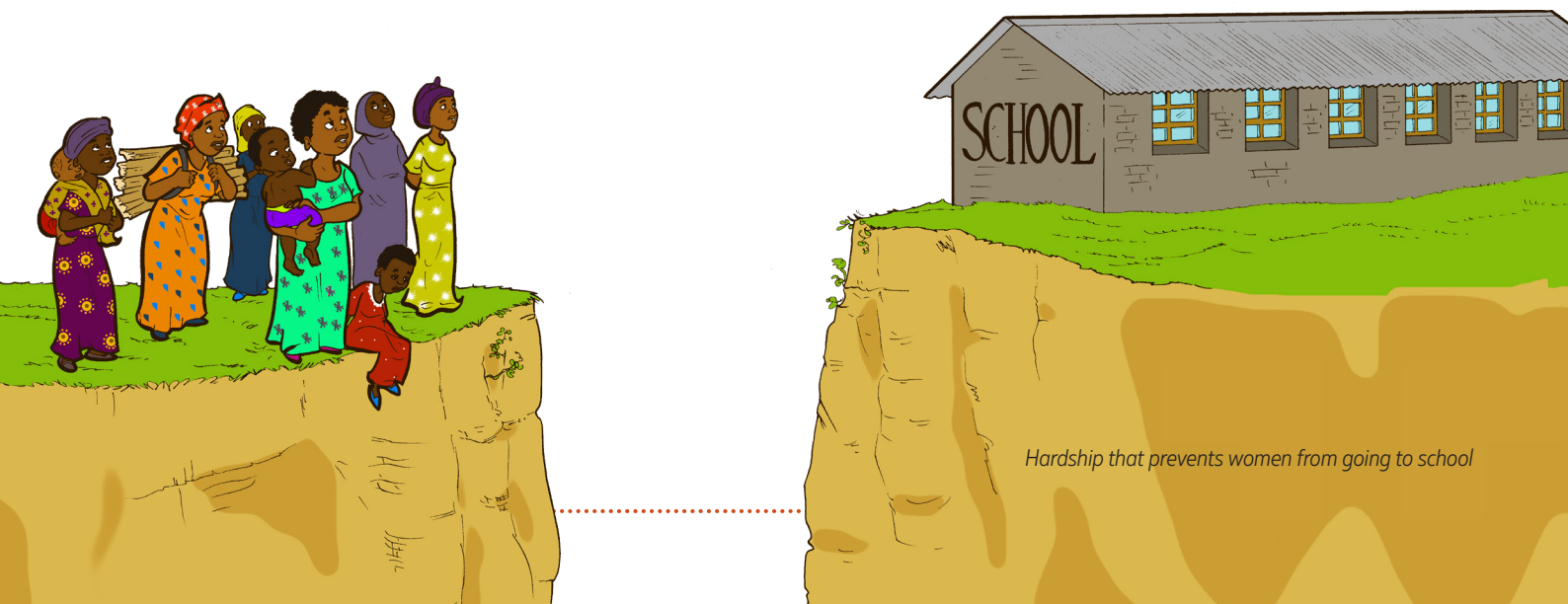
## ECONOMIC BARRIERS

Gender disparities hinder women's empowerment and political participation. The high rates of poverty among women and the feminisation of poverty are key issues. Many women work in the informal sector and are underpaid compared with their male counterparts.<sup>2903</sup> As a result, they do not have access to funds to sponsor a political campaign.<sup>2904</sup> According to a report by the World Bank, women in Togo lack economic opportunities and are underrepresented in high-level positions.<sup>2905</sup> In principle, women and men have the same access to bank loans, but women typically earn lower wages and are often unable to provide the guarantees requested by banks. Moreover, women married under the community of property regime are prohibited from providing such guarantees without their husbands' consent<sup>2906</sup>.



## MEDIA

The constitution and other laws protect the freedoms of speech and the press, but a penal code criminalising defamation and false news was introduced in 2015 raising concerns about media freedom.<sup>2907</sup> Under the new code, a person found guilty may be sentenced to between six months and two years in prison and forced to pay a hefty fine.<sup>2908</sup> Although there have been fewer attacks of journalists in recent years, during the 2015 elections, a female reporter was assaulted by supporters of the opposition candidate while she was covering a protest against the election results.<sup>2909</sup>





# GENDER PARITY (QUOTAS)

## NORTH AFRICA

COUNTRY	PARLIAMENTARY TYPE	QUOTAS IN PLACE	TYPE OF QUOTA
Algeria	Bicameral	Yes	Reserved seats <sup>1</sup>
Egypt	Unicameral	No <sup>2</sup>	
Libya	Unicameral	Yes	Legislated Candidate Quotas <sup>3</sup>
Mauritania	Bicameral	Yes	Legislated Candidate Quotas <sup>4</sup>
Morocco	Bicameral	Yes	Reserved seats <sup>5</sup>
Tunisia	Unicameral	Yes	Legislated Candidate Quota <sup>5</sup>
Western Sahara	Unicameral	No <sup>6</sup>	

<sup>1</sup> There are reserved seats for the lower house, but not for the upper house. Article 2 of the 2012 Law for the Representation of Women requires that a certain number of candidates for parliament be women depending on the number of seats in each electoral district.

<sup>2</sup> Following the adoption of the 2014 Constitution, the quota is deleted in principle.

<sup>3</sup> According to Article 15 of the 2012 Law on the Election of the National General Congress, on the lists submitted by parties candidates must be arranged alternating between alternation male and female candidates, vertically and horizontally.

<sup>4</sup> Mauritania has legislated quotas for both houses.

<sup>5</sup> Morocco has reserved seats for the lower house only.

<sup>6</sup> With respect to women's political participation, there are no legislated quotas.

## EAST AFRICA

COUNTRY	PARLIAMENTARY TYPE	QUOTAS IN PLACE	TYPE OF QUOTA
Comoros	Unicameral	No	
Djibouti	Unicameral	Yes	Reserved seats
Eritrea	Unicameral	Yes	Reserved seats
Ethiopia	Bicameral	Yes	Voluntary Party Quota
Kenya	Bicameral	Yes	Reserved seats/ Voluntary Party Quotas
Madagascar	Bicameral	No	
Mauritius	Unicameral	No <sup>7</sup>	
Rwanda	Bicameral	Yes	Legislated Candidate Quotas
Seychelles	Unicameral	No	
Somalia	Bicameral	Yes <sup>8</sup>	Reserved seats
South Sudan	Bicameral	Yes	Reserved seats
Sudan	Bicameral	Yes <sup>9</sup>	Reserved seats
Tanzania	Unicameral	Yes	Reserved seats
Uganda	Unicameral	Yes	Reserved seats

<sup>7</sup> Mauritius does not have legislated quotas for the national level, only at the sub-national level.

<sup>8</sup> Somalia has reserved seats for the lower house only.

<sup>9</sup> Sudan has reserved seats for the lower house only.

## CENTRAL AFRICA

COUNTRY	PARLIAMENTARY TYPE	QUOTAS IN PLACE	TYPE OF QUOTA
Burundi	Bicameral	Yes	Reserved seats
Cameroon	Bicameral	Yes	Voluntary Party Quota
Central African Republic	Unicameral	Yes	Reserved seats
Chad	Unicameral	No	Legislated Candidate Quotas
Congo	Bicameral	Yes <sup>10</sup>	Legislated Candidate Quotas
Democratic Republic of Congo	Bicameral	Yes	Legislated Candidate Quotas
Equatorial Guinea	Bicameral	Yes	Voluntary Party Quota
Gabon	Bicameral	No	
Sao Tome & Principe	Unicameral	No	

<sup>10</sup> The Republic of Congo has quotas for the lower house, but not for the upper house.

## WEST AFRICA

COUNTRY	PARLIAMENTARY TYPE	QUOTAS IN PLACE	TYPE OF QUOTA
Benin	Unicameral	No	
Burkina Faso	Bicameral	Yes <sup>11</sup>	Legislated Candidate Quotas
Cabo Verde/ Cape Verde	Unicameral	Yes	Legislated Candidate Quotas
Côte D'Ivoire	Bicameral	Yes <sup>12</sup>	Voluntary Party Quota
Gambia	Unicameral	No	
Ghana	Unicameral	No	
Guinea	Unicameral	Yes	Legislated Candidate Quotas
Guinea - Bissau	Unicameral	No	
Liberia	Bicameral	Yes	Voluntary Party Quota
Mali	Unicameral	Yes	Voluntary Party Quota
Niger	Unicameral	Yes	Reserved seats
Nigeria	Bicamera;	No	
Senegal	Unicameral	Yes	Legislated Candidate Quotas
Sierra Leone	Unicameral	No <sup>13</sup>	
Togo	Unicameral	Yes	Voluntary Party Quota

<sup>11</sup> Burkina Faso has legislated quotas for the lower house and at the sub-national level, but not for the upper house.

<sup>12</sup> Of the political parties, the Ivorian Public Front has a 30 percent quota for women.

<sup>13</sup> Sierra Leone does not have quotas for the national level, but it does have legislated quotas for the sub-national level.

## SOUTHERN AFRICA

COUNTRY	PARLIAMENTARY TYPE	QUOTAS IN PLACE	TYPE OF QUOTA
Angola	Unicameral	Yes <sup>14</sup>	Legislated Candidate Quotas
Botswana	Unicameral	Yes	Voluntary Party Quota
Lesotho	Bicameral	Yes <sup>15</sup>	Legislated Candidate Quotas
Malawi	Unicameral	Yes	Voluntary Party Quota
Mozambique	Unicameral	Yes	Voluntary Party Quota
Namibia	Bicameral	Yes <sup>16</sup>	Voluntary Party Quota
South Africa	Bicameral	Yes <sup>17</sup>	Voluntary Party Quota
Swaziland	Bicameral	Yes	Legislated Candidate Quotas
Zambia	Unicameral	No	
Zimbabwe	Bicameral	Yes	Reserved seats

<sup>14</sup> Angola has legislated quotas for the national level, but not at the sub-national level.

<sup>15</sup> Lesotho has legislated candidate quotas for the lower house and at the sub-national level, but not for the upper house.

<sup>16</sup> Namibia uses voluntary party quota for the houses of parliament, but legislated quotas at the sub-national level.

<sup>17</sup> South Africa uses voluntary party quota for the houses of parliament, but legislated quotas at the sub-national level.



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[www.MakeEveryWomanCount.org](http://www.MakeEveryWomanCount.org)

**Email:** [info@makeeverywomancount.org](mailto:info@makeeverywomancount.org)

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