

**CONSOLIDATED RESPONSE - E-DISCUSSION: Political Financing for Women”,
open from May 6th, 2013 to May 27th, 2013.**

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iKNOW Politics organized an online discussion on “Political Financing for Women” in Arabic, English, French and Spanish. The discussions went on for a period of 3 weeks and received contributions from over 70 members from different countries. We received feedback from over 40 countries: Argentina, Australia, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea Conakry, Haiti, India, Iraq, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Kosovo, Panama, Paraguay, Lesotho, Liberia, Mali, Mexico, Mauritania, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Peru, Senegal, Somalia, Sweden, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda and Yemen.

LAUNCH MESSAGE:

Money is essential for the operations of political parties and particularly affects candidates in electoral processes. Political financing regulations can affect women’s capacity to run as candidates, be elected, campaign and reach out to the population. Regulations on political funding are used to level the playing field in electoral competition. They can also work to ensure that women are able to compete on a more equal footing with men. This in turn may result in women’s increased political participation - a key feature of democracy.

Funding regulations need to be context-specific and respond the realities on the ground. iKNOW Politics is seeking to collect information on laws, regulations or practices that have been put in place to address challenges women face in raising money in politics. We would like to know about good experiences in this area, in particular related to the following questions:

- Are there formal (legislated) mechanisms that work to level the (financial) playing field between women and men candidates? If so, what are they (e.g. spending limits, campaigning time limits, disclosure or reforms to public funding that may benefit women)?
- Are there adverse effects for women candidates in the existing laws on political finance? What can/should be changed, or what provisions could be strengthened (e.g. ensuring enforcement of campaign finance regulations, including disclosure; prohibition of illicit funding)? Are there any controls in place?

- How have political parties addressed the gender funding gap (e.g. voluntary – not legislated – practices such as internal fundraising mechanisms, in-kind contributions for campaigns)? If so, what are they?
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- Are there differences in how women and men candidates spend their campaign funds? E.g. higher spending for women due to lack of security, childcare costs, etc.

The majority of participants in the discussion clarified that no legislation pertaining to women's access to political financing exists in their countries. The issue of access to campaign finance emerged as a debilitating factor for women candidates all over the world. It has also been noticed that the issue is of particular significance to women candidates in low income countries. Many participants from Sub Saharan countries asserted that women are disproportionately affected by poverty in their countries. Many participants from this region also referred to the need for the provision of financial/ other incentives to gain support of the electorate in their countries. They cited the distribution of food items and money among constituents as a commonplace practice to win support. Many of our users have also referred to the necessity to empower women in the political sphere and in political parties not only through the provision of access to campaign finance but also through training.

While we have received contributions from over 40 different countries, the iKNOW Politics team has compiled a brief summary of country specific data and information extracted from the E-discussions which were held on all 4 language platforms. The complete discussions can be viewed at:

Arabic: <http://iknowpolitics.org/ar/2013/05/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D9%85%D9%88%D9%8A%D9%84-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B3%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%B3%D9%8A-%D9%84%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B1%D8%A3%D8%A9>

English: <http://iknowpolitics.org/en/2013/05/political-financing-women>

French: <http://iknowpolitics.org/fr/2013/05/financement-politique-pour-les-femmes>

Spanish: <http://iknowpolitics.org/es/2013/05/financiamiento-pol%C3%ADtico-para-las-mujeres>

Argentina

Argentina is currently preparing legislation to be presented to parliament regarding financial incentives for parties that apply gender quotas effectively - specifically the provision of a grant for every woman who has been able to get elected, which is deemed necessary because while women often appear on lists to meet the quota, "various circumstances" lead them to give up and forfeit the right to hold office. (Submitted by Susana Campari in Spanish¹)

¹ <http://iknowpolitics.org/es/comment/7637#comment-7637>

Bolivia

In Bolivia, the national debate on financing electoral processes is focused mainly on the issue of public vs. private funding of electoral campaigns (nowadays a private funding mechanism is in place). Gender issues are not on the main debate agenda. The new Constitution adopted in February 2009 and the 2010 electoral laws guaranteed mandatory application of parity and alternation in the election and appointment of all authorities and representatives. Additionally, the creation of the Technical Audit Unit (UTF) for the regulation, control and management of funding of all organizations participating in electoral processes and referendums, for purposes of transparency and accountability, documented and monitored expenditure of these entities.

There is no longer a provision to recognize any public financial support for parties before or during the elections. Such a provision existed between 1997 and 2005. The dominant ruling bloc is against public funding, whatever its form.

Public funds were administered and distributed according to certain criteria, making parties accountable and transparent in terms of origin, quantity, use and allocation of resources, both public and those raised privately.

Recently, the issue of public financing has been brought once more to the table for discussion. Some of the points made during a recent international workshop organized by the Electoral Body, International IDEA, UN Women, UNDP and the NGO network "Coordinator of Women" (committed to the empowerment and advancement of females) that called on the reinstatement of public political finance included:

- There are more advantages to public political finance than disadvantages and the disadvantages can be neutralized through mechanisms of control and accountability of resource use;
- Public funding must be used as a mechanism to guarantee women's political participation;
- There must be regulations limiting any kind of excess;
- Ensure presence of mechanisms of social control;
- Comprehensive support should be provided including research, training, campaigns, etc.;
- Ensure internal control mechanisms incorporating women's interests;
- It is recommended to ensure equal access to media coverage, as well as to limit unrestricted use of advertising in various media of mass communication;
- Set registration fees and regulations for political propaganda on public and private channels.

The Political Forum for Bolivian Women is discussing the creation of a project called "Luggage for Women Candidates". This project intends to provide women with resources and basic tools that can strengthen their political skills. The project aims to:

- Investigate and make a diagnosis of the most common items of expenditure demanded by women;
- Design and organize the supply of different products / tools necessary to address electoral competition (eg, design and print a poster, banners, conducting three events with various citizen groups, and optional: conducting a TV spot);
- Identify a decentralized organization responsible for the management of this programme - one which has the credibility to channel resources and specific support from international organizations and private networks to support women candidates (eg. EMILY's List) (Submitted by Maria Eugenia Rojas Valverde and Erika Brockmann in Spanish²)

Brazil

The issue of funding campaigns is essential for women to participate in elections on equal terms with men. However, the lack of oversight, transparency and available information complicates the task of measuring with hard data the obstacles that women face in gaining access to resources for their campaigns.

Only 4 countries in Latin America (Brazil, Costa Rica, Mexico and Panama) have laws that obligate the allocation of part of public funding granted to political parties to training and promoting women's political participation. These countries outline minimums between 2% and 10% to be spent on training and the political development of women. However, these cases do not have strict controls to corroborate that these funds are being effectively allocated to designated purposes. There are no mechanisms to monitor the financial activities of political parties and ensure that resources are effectively directed to strengthen women's political participation.

Brazil is an interesting case because, by law, party propaganda must promote and disseminate the political participation of women: at least 10% of the total time of propaganda and advertising must be allocated to promote female political participation. This indirect public funding mechanism could be adopted by other countries. In campaign season, for example, governments could provide free airtime on state media for political parties. Such spaces may be distributed on the basis of meeting certain gender-related criteria.

Other mechanisms that promote equality of opportunity between men and women in the electoral arena are to limit the length of campaigns, private contributions and campaign spending as well as the creation of organizations which finance the campaigns of women candidates, such as EMILY's List and Susan B. Anthony List. (Submitted by Vivian Roza in Spanish³)

² <http://iknowpolitics.org/es/comment/7633#comment-7633>
<http://iknowpolitics.org/es/comment/7837#comment-7837>

³ <http://iknowpolitics.org/es/comment/7688#comment-7688>

Burkina Faso

Traditionally, expenditure of state political funding is left to the internal management of the various parties. Therefore, the share allocated to women depends on their position and influence within the party. However, through the joint work of the Ministry of Advancement of Women and the movements and associations of civil society, a law has finally been passed requiring political parties to have at least 30% women candidates on their lists for parliamentary and municipal elections. If a party fails to comply with this provision, they lose 50% of public funding for their campaigning. This law has encouraged more women to get involved in politics. However, experience has shown that additional measures are needed. Women candidates need special support because of socio-cultural constraints that make it difficult for a woman candidate to raise funds for her campaign. They also need training. Training and capacity building of women politicians are proving essential for enhanced participation and success of women in politics. The NDI provides such training for women candidates, which enables them to better approach their electorate. (Submitted by Silgaseni⁴ and Wendyam Micheline⁵, President of the Association of Women and Development in Burkina Faso in French)

Colombia

In Colombia, 5% of total state funding for political parties will be proportionally distributed to the parties that have elected women in the national institutions (Article 17 of the Law 1475, 2011). The Colombian constitution not only calls for equality between men and women, but also guarantees the adequate and effective participation of women in government, as well as gender equality within political parties. There is a quota law providing women 30% representation in both parliament and high level Government positions. Additionally, the National Development Plan establishes, in one of its gender components, the creation of a national policy on Political Gender Equality.

In parallel to these laws, the Supreme Court has made several statements and rulings supporting a higher level of women's participation in electoral processes, and in their role in political parties.

Regarding access to funding for political campaigns, women and men face similar conditions. However, despite the number of women that are given the opportunity to participate, inequality persists in the form of the type of women who are supported. Political parties' elites normally select women that can be manipulated, overpassing any internal democratic decision. So, the issue is more the need to reform the internal selection process within political parties to guarantee a democratic process. (Submitted by Francisca in Spanish⁶)

⁴ <http://iknowpolitics.org/fr/comment/7670#comment-7670>

⁵ <http://iknowpolitics.org/fr/comment/7713#comment-7713>

⁶ <http://iknowpolitics.org/es/comment/7843#comment-7843>

Dominican Republic

The Dominican Republic is currently discussing a draft law on political parties as well as electoral laws. Although Article 39 of the constitution asserts gender equality, there is no reflection of this principle in the proposals that are being discussed or is there mention of specific actions to contribute to equality of opportunity in political funding for women. Reality has shown that the distribution of resources in political parties remains far from equitable. (Submitted by Guadalupe Valdez in Spanish⁷)

Ecuador

In the year 2000, a law for gender quotas was approved. However, the rules for funding electoral campaigns do not have any gender component, meaning men and women have to fund themselves through the same mechanisms. (Submitted by Sandra Novaro and Roxana Silva Ch. in Spanish⁸)

Egypt

Election campaign financing for women candidates represents one of the main obstacles preventing women candidates from being endorsed as candidates by their political parties. During parliamentary elections in November 2011 the percentage of women candidates in most political parties' electoral lists was low; this was equally true for political parties self-classified as Islamists, as it was for self-classified "civil" parties. The number of women did not exceed 16% of candidates on most parties' lists. It is important for political parties to understand the importance of submitting and supporting women candidates because this will help widen the popularity of the party, nominating women with different social backgrounds and different profiles will help increase popular support for the party. Entrusting more leading roles to women represents an opportunity for political parties to renew themselves. Additionally, it is important for women to encourage their parties to establish funds for financing election campaigns for their women candidates. This issue should be considered by each party individually. (Submitted by Doaa Abdelaal in Arabic⁹)

Georgia

A provision was introduced in December 2011 into the Law on Political Unions, stipulating that the election subject, receiving funding from the state budget will receive 10% supplementary funding if in its nominated party list (during municipal elections – in all lists) will include at least 20 % candidates of a

⁷ <http://iknowpolitics.org/es/comment/7524#comment-7524>

⁸ <http://iknowpolitics.org/es/comment/7448#comment-7448>

⁹ <http://iknowpolitics.org/ar/comment/7894#comment-7894>

different gender in a group of every 10 candidates: (Art 30.7 (1) Organic Law of Georgia on Political Unions of Citizens, 1997 (as of 2012). (Submitted by Drude Dahlerup, professor, Stockholm University in English¹⁰)

Ghana

Almost all political parties allow women to pay 50% of what their male counterparts pay for nomination forms but there are no further provisions or legislation on political financing for women. There have, however, been efforts to support women through the establishment of a "women's fund", which hasn't materialized yet. Women, because of traditional and cultural barriers, find it difficult to solicit funding.

Money is very essential for political success, especially in Ghana. Campaigns during elections in Ghana have become very expensive. Attractive billboards, posters, T-shirts, fliers and others are needed to push politicians forward. Additionally, people in the campaign team need to be motivated, most times financially, before helping one win power. Candidates often distribute items such as cloth, motor bikes, cooking utensils, food items and money to win votes. This practice requires additional resources.

While men are able to raise funds from many sources including friends, individuals, club members and many others, women have more restricted access to such sources of financing and therefore their pursuit of political activities is often curbed. And money is just one of the many sources of hindrance to women actively taking part in politics and being part of decision making bodies. There are other barriers such as lack of political will, illiteracy, cultural and religious norms, practices and beliefs, etc. (Submitted by Gariba Boya¹¹ and Amponsah¹² in English)

Guatemala

There is no legal mechanism for funding women candidates. Political parties do not promote or facilitate conditions for the participation of women. A study conducted in Guatemala with former candidates demonstrates a variety of factors curbing women's access to political finance. The study also indicated that local candidates faced more obstacles in raising money. Local chiefdoms and political patronage represented political barriers for women.

Most women candidates depended on raising funds from their relatives and asserted that having economic autonomy empowers and gives freedom to decide: "If I have my own income I'm not subject to the will of man" (indigenous former candidate for mayor). It takes a lot of money to negotiate the best positions in a Guatemalan party, and the value increases, as does the position of the party, the constituency and the box. Lack of money also limits candidates' ability to compete and win over the

¹⁰ <http://iknowpolitics.org/en/comment/7825#comment-7825>

¹¹ <http://iknowpolitics.org/en/comment/7424#comment-7424>

¹² <http://iknowpolitics.org/en/comment/7661#comment-7661>

electorate: "The other candidate won because they had to bring gifts to people and to buy votes" (candidate for mayor of Suchitepéquez).

The modernization of campaigns, using increasingly diversified media and specialists, also increases investment costs.

Finally, the study revealed the debilitating impact of campaign financing for women candidates. Many borrow, spend savings, mortgage equity - "I spent everything I had" (indigenous candidate Councillor V Solola) - and even dispose of personal items: "I started to sell my new clothes...to pay the loan. I'm ashamed to say, but I had to do it "(indigenous candidate for mayor of Huehuetenango)."I made three loans. Do not know when I will repay"(Jutiapa legislative candidate). This impacts candidates' families as well: "I spent two months without paying tuition for my children, because I had to pay 11 buses for the feedback" (indigenous candidate for Alderman IV Chimaltenango). (Submitted by Sofia Vasquez Vargas¹³ and Demetrio Antonio Pérez Ordoñez in Spanish¹⁴)

India

When a candidate addresses, directly or indirectly, the interests of a particular group that candidate is financially supported by that group. Though poor people are numerically more, only the affluent get their candidates elected through expensive campaigns. Women candidates should ideally represent women, but women are economically disadvantaged. As such, often women candidates depend on financing that is conditional upon their work towards the mainstream instead of supporting women's causes. Access to finance is thus an influential factor not only in the determination of the number of women who access the political arena but also the roles they play and their ability to impact other women. (Submitted by Dr. Neelavalli in English¹⁵)

Iraq

Electoral law in Iraq makes it mandatory for parties and movements in the election to include a percentage of women candidates in their candidates list of no less than 25%. However, there is no legislation to regulate the work of political parties and movements, thus the financing of these parties and political movements remains exclusively the domain of the head of the coalition or the party. Usually, even members of the party leadership do not know how much of this financing is at the disposal of the party head or how much will be spent or where it comes from. (Submitted by Karim Alsahfie in Arabic¹⁶)

¹³ <http://iknowpolitics.org/es/comment/7878#comment-7878>

¹⁴ <http://iknowpolitics.org/es/comment/7705#comment-7705>

¹⁵ <http://iknowpolitics.org/en/comment/7666#comment-7666>

¹⁶ <http://iknowpolitics.org/ar/comment/7477#comment-7477>

Ivory Coast

In the recent parliamentary elections of 2012, in Ivory Coast, all women candidates, irrespective of their political convictions, received funding from the current President to support their campaign. However, so far, there is no law on financing women in politics. (Submitted by Beniss in French¹⁷)

Kenya

Of late, a law has been enacted to fund political parties during campaigns. Parties use the money to fund campaign activities of presidential candidates. It follows, therefore, that a woman would only benefit from this if she is a presidential candidate. Politics in Kenya is therefore reserved for rich women. It is not possible for an ordinary woman to get into politics since most women candidates rely primarily on personal sources of finance and support from family and friends. Women are often accused of being involved in affairs with rich men in order to get money for their political activities. This also explains why when most women are elected to political positions they add no value to the status of women in society since they are at the mercy of their political masters. The new Constitution, which augmented the opportunity for women to run for candidacy in the National Assembly and for other positions such as Governors, Senators and County Representatives, also served as a wake-up call, which shed light on the fact that many women are not able to successfully pursue these positions simply because of lack of access to finance. Some NGOs and international organizations, like UNDP, offered women candidates assistance through printing material, for example, and some parties that were stable financially could also provide more support for their candidates. However, there is no formal process to guarantee women's access to political financing. (Submitted by Fardosa Muse in English¹⁸)

Kosovo

While electoral law in Kosovo provides that every third candidate in electoral lists be female, there is no legal mechanism in Kosovo to regulate campaign financing and women's campaign finance mainly depends on small family budgets. Recent trends in Kosovo and during the January 2011 parliamentary elections, have shown that only women that have the support of male members of their parties – who have certain interests in supporting these women - and those that come from rich families are able to finance their campaigns while women political activists that have built their career step by step do not have sufficient financial means to develop their campaign and are often overlooked. (Submitted by Drita Kadriu; Political Adviser to the Minister of Education, Science and Technology of the Republic of Kosovo in English¹⁹)

¹⁷ <http://iknowpolitics.org/fr/comment/7861#comment-7861>

¹⁸ <http://iknowpolitics.org/en/comment/7608#comment-7608>

¹⁹ <http://iknowpolitics.org/en/comment/7374#comment-7374>

Liberia

Money is one of the essential elements that facilitates the election of women and increases their participation in politics. One must have sufficient money to transport potential voters to rallies, feed them, print t-shirts, fliers and on top of that give them money to buy their time. Candidates also need to pay their campaign teams and keep them motivated. The whole electoral process has been commercialized and the people with the cash carry the highest votes. This is just one aspect of the challenge that women are faced with in Liberia. (Submitted by Cerue Konah Garlo in English²⁰)

Mali

Mali has not yet formally adopted the quota system for women in politics. However, some measures have been taken to promote women's participation in political life. The government agreed to increase funding of political parties that have at least 10% women candidates on their lists. This incentive can be a decisive factor for the inclusion of women on party lists especially in light of how dependent political parties are on public funds.

The 1991 Charter of Political Parties defined as "a set of principles that govern the life of the parties" and "codify rules for the formation, operation and financing provides for public funding of parties by 0.25% of state revenue." The criteria for allocating this aid also involve issues of gender equality. 10% of this funding is allocated in proportion to the number of elected women (5% for Members of Parliament, 5% for local councilors). (Submitted by Moussa Cisse²¹, Yaba and Nadège Chell, Policy Specialist and Expert on Globalization, President of RESO-women, International and West-African Network and ²²)

Mauritania

In Mauritania women representation in Parliament is 20% and in Municipal Councils about 30%. These percentages were established through a law passed in 2006 during the last legislative and municipal elections. Unfortunately, the law has been changed recently to ensure only 13% of seats for women. There is no support to encourage women candidates or provide financing for their campaigns or political struggle. Lack of control over sources of campaign financing and lack of legal mechanisms which could encourage political parties to better represent women significantly impact women's chances for election. (Submitted by Mariem Bilal in French²³)

²⁰ <http://iknowpolitics.org/en/comment/7739#comment-7739>

²¹ <http://iknowpolitics.org/en/comment/7489#comment-7489>

²² <http://iknowpolitics.org/en/comment/7559#comment-7559>

²³ <http://iknowpolitics.org/fr/comment/7378#comment-7378>

Mexico

There are no legislative mechanisms or otherwise providing specifically for the political financing of women. There are campaign stops but these do not distinguish whether it is male or female and the duration of the campaigns is limited by law but without making the distinction between women and men. Under the current system women face unequal costs in order to participate in elections and being elected often comes at a high social price. Gender quotas established by electoral laws are used to install women from particular political families when the husband or other male relative could not participate. (Submitted by Marina Tapia Diaz in Spanish²⁴)

Nigeria

In Nigeria, there is no legislation put in place regarding finance for women during elections. Some parties wave the money for the purchase of nomination forms for women but there is a strong argument that women will not be given the chance to pick the party ticket considering the fact that their male counterparts, who have spent a fortune for the party, asked the women to surrender their tickets. Some NGOs assist by printing campaign materials for the women aspirants and building their capacities in areas related to campaigning and leadership but women's main source of funding is from their families and friends. (Submitted by iKNOW Politics member from Nigeria²⁵)

Papua New Guinea

Pacific women traditionally have a lower economic status than men. This has two consequences for women's political leadership: 1) women are less able to save the required amount of money to pay their nomination fees, and 2) they lack the professional and business networks that generate the financial support needed for their campaign. The Beijing + 15 Review of progress in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action in Pacific Island countries and territories found that in the Pacific, this is compounded by women's reluctance to leave well-paid positions (often in the public sector) to risk losing an election. Electoral systems in some Pacific countries are also more susceptible to vote or preference buying.

There are very few laws on political campaign financing in the Pacific. One stand-out example is Papua New Guinea's Organic Law on Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates (2001), which provides some financial incentive to political parties to put forward women candidates. This law states that if a woman candidate gets 10% of the votes in her constituency, the Central Fund Board of Management is required to refund 75% of expenses incurred during her campaign (see Elise Huffer, 2007, Desk Review of the Factors Which Enable and Constrain the Advancement of Women's Political Representation in Forum Island Countries).

²⁴ <http://iknowpolitics.org/es/comment/7396#comment-7396>

²⁵ <http://iknowpolitics.org/en/comment/7400#comment-7400>

Despite the challenges, work continues to assist women in running for office in this region. In 2008, a Guide to Campaigning for Pacific Women was jointly produced by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and the UNDP, with funding from the Australian Government. One of its key messages in terms of campaign financing is that it takes both money and people: “Even if you don’t have a lot of financial capital, use your ‘human capital’. Rely on your personal networks - your family, your friends, your fellow church-goers, people you know who are in community groups and sporting mates.”

A new initiative, established in 2013, with funding from AusAID and in partnership with the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Australia Region Committee, aims to support Pacific women in politics. One of its main activities will be to foster peer-to-peer mentoring and training between Australian and Pacific women, including candidates. This will see, for example, Pacific women going to Australia to spend time in their mentor’s shoes to learn about campaigning, public speaking and self-assertion. (Submitted by Lisa Baker, Chair, Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Australia in English²⁶)

Paraguay

While electoral law in Paraguay establishes that certain funds must be allocated to supporting and building the capacity of women candidates, these funds are not always used for what they are intended.

Electoral law also calls for equal “visibility” of women and men during political campaigns, but this is not practiced either.

Traditional political parties do not have any gender sensitive policies and have not advocated for any gender equality reform. Some international organizations, like the Inter-American Development Bank, OEA, UN Women, NDI, IDEA International, and AECID, have collaborated and helped woman to finance political campaigns.

In order to improve the gender equality on electoral competitions, political campaigns should cost less, so there could be more opportunities for women and any other person that wants to participate as well as installing financing mechanisms for women in order to compete in an autonomous and independent manner. (Submitted by Carmen Colazo²⁷ and Gricelda Cañete Ribeiro²⁸ in Spanish)

Peru

The discussion about gender quotas in congress is still being discussed, but it is unlikely to be approved. Also, there are no mechanisms for funding women’s political activities, which diminishes women’s access to public/political offices. Lucy Vargas, Secretary General of her party for four years, says this is

²⁶ <http://iknowpolitics.org/en/comment/7709#comment-7709>

²⁷ <http://iknowpolitics.org/es/comment/7795#comment-7795>

²⁸ <http://iknowpolitics.org/es/comment/7653#comment-7653>

how she had to finance her campaign: “I had some savings to buy an apartment which I invested in the campaign, I brought my whole family into debt: my brothers, my children, my father and I had no financial support from my party”. In Peru, political financing is largely dependent on private funding, which is male dominated. (Submitted by Lucy Margot Niivin Vargas, Aurea López²⁹ and Nancy Cabrera in Spanish³⁰)

Senegal

Today, the funding of political parties is an emerging issue that will enter public debate in coming times and it bears a particular interest and a unique opportunity to consolidate the law on parity, which was adopted in 2010 with the support of the Senegalese Council of Women (COSEF) (law n ° 2010-11 of 28 May 2010 establishing absolute gender equality in totally or partially elective institutions) . The model of political parties financing requires control measures to strengthen the rules of campaign financing such as the limitation of expenses. In the same way, it must include in its spirit, in its form and in its practice, fair and equal distribution of political funding between women and men. (Submitted by Awa Fall Diop, Former Minister of Relations with Institutions, President of the National Women's Movement AJ-PADS and President of the Observatory of Gender Relations in Senegal – ORGENS in French³¹)

Sweden

It is a serious problem for women’s political empowerment that more and more money is needed for electoral campaigning. In general, fewer women than men have access to the financial means needed for an effective electoral campaign. For one group of female candidates this is a particularly serious problem, namely for those female candidates who are not elected, and who may have spent a large sum of the family’s money. Many are not willing to take this risk and consequently abstain from a candidature.

The way forward is firstly, to work against the trend that more and more money are being spent during electoral campaigns. Expensive commercials in TV are seldom empowering the voters and giving them new information, but rather make citizens passive political consumers. Secondly, the amount of money spent by individual candidates should be diminished and instead the political parties, not the individual candidate, should cover most of the cost of campaigning. (Submitted by Drude Dahlerup, professor, Stockholm University, in English³²)

Togo

²⁹ <http://iknowpolitics.org/es/comment/7898#comment-7898>

³⁰ <http://iknowpolitics.org/es/comment/7444#comment-7444>

³¹ <http://iknowpolitics.org/fr/comment/7624#comment-7624>

³² <http://iknowpolitics.org/en/comment/7825#comment-7825>

Amendments to the Electoral Code adopted on 15 February 2013, foresaw measures for women's participation in politics. The cost of application forms for parliamentary and local elections has been cut by 50% for women candidates and political parties that meet parity on their lists are entitled to bonuses. (Submitted by djamilasi in French³³)

Uganda

We need to address the matter in terms of what kind of political financing would allow for women's effective participation. That is to say that while many parties finance the campaigns of women candidates, often these women fail to support women concerns just because they are 'tied' with the so called party position or, as it is usually referred to in Uganda, 'collective responsibility'. We live in patriarchal societies where the majority in any political party would definitely be men. Few women are able to penetrate political parties and advocate women's concerns but at the end of the day they must support their party's agenda and position – even when their positions are detrimental to the struggle for women's advancement – simply because they were financed by that party to secure their positions. Therefore, the challenge goes beyond raising money for campaigns but also managing to secure political finance that will not force women to compromise their independence in decision making. (Submitted by iKNOW Politics member from Uganda in English³⁴)

Yemen

Past experience of elections shows high participation of women in the voting, yet lower women participation as candidates. As voters, Yemeni women are a major force in elections. Women represented 47% of total voters in the Yemeni legislative elections which took place in April 28, 2003 (these were the most recent elections in Yemen). Yet only one woman candidate won a seat out of 37 independent women candidates since no parties included women on their lists. This has many reasons and one major reason is the inability of women to secure funding for their campaigns. Since poverty is widespread in Yemen and since women are the poorest members of society, their inability to secure funding for their election campaign reduces their chances as candidates. There is no legislation in Yemen to help provide women with financing of their election campaign. Amending electoral law to provide a system based on electoral lists instead of individual constituencies, will allow more women to accede to decision making positions. (Submitted by Bilqis Abuosba in Arabic³⁵)

³³ <http://iknowpolitics.org/fr/comment/7720#comment-7720>

³⁴ <http://iknowpolitics.org/en/comment/7799#comment-7799>

³⁵ <http://iknowpolitics.org/ar/comment/7865#comment-7865>

For more information on political financing, we invite you to explore the International IDEA political finance database which contains information on political finance control provisions in more than 175 countries around the world, making it the largest collection of such information. The database shows the use of different types of regulations in individual countries and can also be used to compare the prevalence of various provisions between countries and regions. The database answers 43 questions on political finance within four broad categories:

1. Bans and limits on private income
2. Public funding
3. Regulations of spending
4. Reporting, oversight and sanctions

It can be accessed and downloaded at our partner International IDEA's website at the following link:

<http://www.idea.int/publications/political-finance-regulations/loader.cfm?csModule=security/getfile&pageid=52121>

We would like to thank all our members who contributed to this discussion.