



PRIMERS IN GENDER AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE #3

Electoral Financing to Advance Women's Political Participation: A Guide for UNDP Support

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**3. ELECTORAL FINANCING TO ADVANCE WOMEN'S
POLITICAL PARTICIPATION: A GUIDE FOR UNDP SUPPORT**

This primer offers an introduction to the intersection of gender and electoral financing. Money is a prerequisite for competing in most political systems today, but patterns of gender discrimination force women candidates to make do with more limited resources than men. The primer outlines the role that political systems play in shaping electoral financing options and outcomes, and gives a summary of basic campaign financing constraints that women face. It provides UNDP policy advisors and programme staff with a framework and entry points for supporting women's increased access to funds and the political system at large.

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The other four primers in the Primers in Gender and Democratic Governance Series are:

- Quick Entry Points to Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality in Democratic Governance Clusters
- Gender Equality and Justice Programming: Equitable Access to Justice for Women
- Gender Responsive E-Governance: Exploring the Transformative Potential



- Corruption and Gender Relations: Five Dimensions for Democratic Governance

These resources are framed by the human rights-based approach to development, which now informs the work of the UN development system (see the Quick Entry Points primer for a discussion of the approach and what it means for work on gender equality).

UNDP intends for these primers to contribute to the empowerment of women and the advancement of gender equality through democratic governance. We encourage colleagues to continue to share their experiences and ideas through dgp-net@groups.undp.org, the electronic discussion network serving UNDP democratic governance practitioners.

Acronyms and Definitions

Gender

The social attributes associated with being male and female and the relationships between women, men, girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those between men. These attributes and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization. They are context- and time-specific and changeable. Gender is part of the broader socio-cultural context. Other important criteria for socio-cultural analysis include class, race, poverty level, ethnic group and age (UN/OSAGI, n.d.). The concept of gender also includes the expectations about the characteristics, aptitudes and likely behaviours of both women and men (femininity and masculinity). The concept of gender, applied to social analysis, reveals how women's subordination (or men's domination) is socially constructed. As such, the subordination can be changed or ended. It is not biologically predetermined nor is it fixed forever (UNESCO, 2003).

Gender relations

The social relationships between men, women, girls and boys, which shape how power is distributed between women, men, girls and boys and how that power translates into different positions in society. Gender relations vary depending on other social relations, such as class, race, ethnicity, etc. They will greatly impact how an individual man or woman experiences processes and institutions such as trials and courts and how they interact with other individuals within those institutions.

Gender mainstreaming

“The process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action,

including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetrated. The ultimate goal of this strategy is to achieve gender equality” (UN/ECOSOC, 1997).

Gender equality

The equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities

ACRONYMS

BCPR	Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery
BDP	Bureau for Development Policy
CEDAW	The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
DEVAW	Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women
DGG	Democratic Governance Group
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach (to development)
ICC	The International Criminal Court
MDGs	The Millennium Development Goals
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OAS	Organization of American States
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women

of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men (UN/OSAGI website).

Gender equity

The process of being fair to men and women. To ensure fairness, measures must often be put in place to compensate for the historical and social disadvantages that prevent women and men from operating on a level playing field. Equity is a means—equality is the result (UNESCO, 2003).

Gender analysis

The collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated information. Men and women perform different roles in societies and within institutions, such as police forces and courts. These differing roles lead to women and men having different experience, knowledge, talents and needs. Gender analysis explores these differences so that policies, programmes and projects can identify and meet the different needs of men and women. Gender analysis also facilitates the strategic use of distinct knowledge and skills possessed by women and men, which can greatly improve the long-term sustainability of interventions (UNESCO, 2003).

Gender neutrality

An assumption that development interventions will benefit men and women equally, leading to a failure to analyse and plan for the social relationships between men and

women and how those relationships will impact programming.

Gender justice

“The protection and promotion of civil, political, economic and social rights on the basis of gender equality. It necessitates taking a gender perspective on the rights themselves, as well as the assessment of access and obstacles to the enjoyment of these rights for both women, men, girls and boys and adopting gender-sensitive strategies for protecting and promoting them” (Spees, 2004). Much of the broader gender justice agenda falls outside the scope of UNDP Access to Justice programming. However, increasing women’s access to justice, be it formal or informal, hinges on removing economic, political and social barriers to participation, as articulated by the gender justice agenda (UNIFEM & ILAC, 2004).

Gender-based violence (GBV)

A generic term used to describe any harmful act perpetrated against an individual against his or her will based on his or her socially defined identity as male or female (UN, 2005). The UN General Assembly defined violence against women in the 1993 Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private” (UN, 1993).

“ Gender is defined as the social attributes associated with being male and female and the relationships between women, men, girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those between men.”

Introduction

“[The] most incapacitating pitfall women in politics face is the lack of access to the financial resources of the party they belong to.... [I]n spite of advances in incorporating women into politics, the gender perspective has not yet penetrated the area of political funding...”

~ Laura Velásquez, as cited in Griner and Zovatto 2005, p. 43

Modern democracies struggle with a contradiction: Theoretically, democratic political systems are supposed to be representative, allowing each segment of a given population a voice in the public policy decisions affecting their lives. Realistically, financial resources often determine whose voice is loudest and most often heard. The financing of political institutions that establish representation—namely, political parties and elections—can often reflect and even worsen democratic imbalances.

Nowhere is this more significant than in the global under-representation of women in elected positions. While the number of women in politics is steadily increasing, women worldwide still constitute just over 17 percent of legislators, around 14 percent of ministers, and only a handful of heads of state or government, according to data from the Inter-Parliamentary Union. Money, or the lack of it, partly explains why.

Much has been written about enlarging women’s presence in politics, as reflected in many national and international commitments to gender equality. Women’s political participation can be a cornerstone for progress on women’s rights as a whole, because once a critical mass of women are in office—generally agreed as around 30 percent of legislators in a given country—they can begin to influence



policy and laws in general, and potentially move the gender equality and women’s empowerment agenda forward (see the list of gender-related definitions on pages 3–4 for a quick introduction to basic gender terms). From a broader perspective, striving to achieve gender equality strengthens democracy and advances human development at large.

A number of countries have taken laudable steps to open doors to women, through legislation to end discrimination and quota systems to reserve legislative seats. However, much less has been said or done about the essential role played by campaign financing in getting more women into political offices. On the one hand, powerful existing entities

have a vested interest in protecting their hold on resources. On the other, money is closely linked to the cynicism about politics that has grown in both established and emerging democracies. Its influence is frequently perceived as excessive, whether the issue is that it creates pressure through campaign contributions or vote-buying. Some evidence suggests that women still shy away from politics because they view it as a ‘dirty game’.

Money is a prerequisite for competing in most political systems today. Campaign costs in many countries are escalating, even as women candidates, due to patterns of gender discrimination, frequently make do with more limited resources than their male counterparts. The intersection of gender and electoral financing thus requires concerted attention. Equipping women with sharper fundraising skills, or reforming campaign financing laws to redress gender inequities are necessary preliminary steps forward.

This primer, prepared for UNDP policy advisors and programme staff, offers an introduction to the issues at stake. It is in-line with UNDP support for both gender equality as integral to human development, and for inclusive and fair electoral systems, processes and institutions, as two of the essential components of democratic transition and good governance.

Political finance is a broad term. This primer narrows in on the specifics of financing for candidate nominations and election campaigns, as common entrance points to the political arena that deserve focus in any discussion about enlarging women’s participation. It does not make a strong distinction between financing for candidates and parties, partly because political systems are so diverse, and because the starting point for discussing women and electoral financing is the lack of resources, regardless of the source of funds.

It is important to acknowledge from the start that information and hard data on political financing in general are extremely scarce, although the subject has begun to gain traction and a number of major research studies have now been conducted. Some regions, such as Latin America, have been studied more than others. However, when it comes to gender and electoral financing, very little research has been done, so this primer should be used as a general guide, with close attention paid to the needs and realities on the ground in individual countries.

The primer includes six sections, structured to follow the typical process of thinking through and formulating a UNDP programme. As an overview, the first section opens with a review of the UNDP mandate for work on women and electoral financing. Section 2 lists some of the expenses women face for campaigning—which are both the same and different from those incurred by male candidates. It touches on the timing of financing, since some stages of campaigns are more expensive than others. Section 3 discusses the influence of political systems on electoral financing, followed by a brief presentation of current financing issues. This section also summarizes the obstacles and opportunities that women face in expanding their access to campaign funds.

Since the money-politics nexus can be riddled with potential political complexities, section 3 sketches basic guidelines for programme design, including lists of questions to guide the process of assessment and analysis. This section also explores what UNDP can and cannot do as a multilateral organization and provides basic guidelines for programme design. In section 4, readers will find ideas on entry points for electoral financing programmes for women. These span the political system, including campaign finance reform, internal political party reform, incentives and direct support.



Mandates for UNDP Work on Women and Electoral Financing

Most countries have signed international agreements to support gender equality, uphold women’s human rights and improve the record on political participation—and many have adapted national laws accordingly.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights laid the foundation for the call for gender equality in political participation by declaring that everyone has the right to take part in the government of her or his country. The

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence against Women requires state parties to “take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country.”

“ Given its mandate, experiences and close relationships with national counterparts, UNDP is ideally positioned to advance discussion and action on women and electoral financing. In doing so, it will help to close longstanding gaps that will otherwise continue to undercut other democratic governance initiatives, as well as progress in upholding women’s rights and the pursuit of more equitable societies. ”

The 1995 Beijing Platform for Action acknowledges the high cost of contesting elections as one of the many barriers to women in politics. It calls for measures to ensure women’s full political participation, including by reviewing and adjusting the different impacts of electoral systems on women. Most recently, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have called for promoting gender equality and empowering women by designating the third goal as the gender equality goal, and one of the indicators for measuring progress towards goal three is the

percentage of women in parliamentary seats. Given its mandate, experiences and close relationships with national counterparts, UNDP is ideally positioned to advance discussion and action on women and electoral financing. In doing so, it will help to close longstanding gaps that will otherwise continue to undercut other democratic governance initiatives, as well as progress in upholding women’s rights and the pursuit of more equitable societies.

As the world’s leading provider of international election support, UNDP works in diverse situations providing many different forms of assistance. In some polls, particularly in post-conflict countries, UNDP and other UN partners aid in nearly all aspects of the election process as a way of helping nations put new systems in place. In more established democracies, or in countries undergoing a peaceful transition, UNDP will likely assist with more specific election processes, based on national priorities. Projects to support financing for women candidates can operate in either environment.





Key Gender Issues for Electoral Financing

“A female member of Parliament in one southern African country had heard that male candidates for her party received three times as much as she did.”

~ Bryan and Baer 2005, p. 13-14

The low but increasing number of women in politics tells two stories: 1) women still face many obstacles hindering their equal participation in politics, and 2) women do find sources of support for their candidacies. Both sets of issues apply to electoral financing. To date, few concrete steps have been taken to improve

women’s access to financing, but momentum could build from the many broader commitments to democracy and women’s political participation. This section provides a general discussion on the potential barriers specific to women, the costs women face when they campaign and possible sources of support.

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Common barriers facing women's participation

Patterns of gender discrimination: Women have made tremendous progress on many fronts in recent decades, but gender discrimination persists in every society, at times involving flagrant violations of women's rights. Perceptions of women's roles—in some cases codified by legal statutes—still ensure that women are not educated, cannot own land, earn less than men, are not protected from violence, and so on. These discriminatory practices leave women less equipped than many men to enter or function effectively in the political arena.

Psychological barriers: Women themselves have internalized many of the gender biases woven through their societies. They may believe stereotypes about politics being a 'man's game', or be hesitant to compete, exercise leadership or ask for money because these are traditionally male behaviours.



A lack of political will: All political systems have the capacity to begin redressing gender imbalances in political participation, whether through more equitable financing mechanisms or other means. The growing number of legislatures where women hold more than 30 percent of the seats proves what can be done. Gender discrimination, however, still constrains the willingness to act. Within parties, for example, women candidates may be dismissed as incapable of winning elections—despite much evidence to the contrary.

A lack of networks: Women in general still have fewer links to both the formal and informal networks that influence campaigns in many countries. They are less likely to have ties to the business and professional communities that supply campaign funds, and they are more likely to be excluded from male-dominated networks within parties that might otherwise help new candidates gain a foothold through contacts, funding and other essential resources.

Incumbency: Some systems favour incumbent candidates, the vast majority of which are men.

Security: It can be more risky for women than men to move around in countries emerging from instability. Women may incur additional security expenses, and/or find they cannot access constituencies and, as a consequence, their financial support.

Fragility of democracy: In post-conflict countries or those taking the first tentative steps towards democracy, ensuring women's political participation may be dismissed as less important than establishing new political systems and conducting a first round of elections. National resources in these situations may be extremely limited, a reality that can make discussions about electoral financing difficult. Women have made essential contributions to peace processes, however—even beyond the issue of their right to participate. As candidates, they can reinforce messages of reconciliation, and highlight potential stumbling blocks that might otherwise go un-addressed. The formation of new political institutions can be an ideal time to make gender equity provisions, including for electoral financing, part of routine practice.

Costs women face when campaigning

Women overall have fewer economic resources than men (see Box 1 for an example of how this translates into patterns of representation). Globally, men earn more than women and women occupy a disproportionate number of poorly paid and unprotected jobs, including in the informal sector and migrant labour pools.

For some women, campaign expenses will be the same as those for male candidates, however, a study in Canada found that women candidates outspend men by about 10 percent. This difference in the rates of spending by male and female candidates reflects differences in gender roles, such as costs incurred to pay for women's greater household and childcare responsibilities, and the need for women to outspend men in an effort to counteract male incumbency or overcome negative perceptions about women's potential to act as effective politicians.

Electoral costs fluctuate during the course of an election cycle. Much of the research on

BOX 1. TANZANIA: CONSTITUENCY SEATS ARE TOO EXPENSIVE

The Tanzania Gender Networking Programme has chronicled how women's limited access to resources affects their political choices. Women in Tanzania have had a much greater success rate with intra-party elections for reserved seats than with constituency seats. In the 2000 parliamentary elections, 12 women won constituency seats; 37 gained the reserved seats.

Interviews with women from opposition parties suggested their biggest obstacle was campaign financing. Many candidates could barely afford campaign materials. Transport was a major issue in rural areas, where the population is dispersed. Some candidates opted for door-to-door campaigning, which proved to be time-intensive and limited in impact.

Source: Ballantine 2003

women and electoral financing suggests that one of the greatest hurdles women face is financing the process of gaining a nomination. Nomination costs require women to come up with funds to build name recognition, travel, attend party meetings, organize a campaign team and cultivate a constituency. After nomination, public financing may kick in, party support may increase, and greater visibility may attract additional sources of funding. An American organization, Emily's List, or Early Money Is Like Yeast (it helps raise the 'dough'), has had a high rate of success in supporting women candidates in the pre-nomination stage (see Box 2).

Examples from the Eastern Caribbean illustrate that early support is not necessarily a universal need. In this region, the early stages of elections are considered less expensive because primaries take place at the district level, where the constituency branch membership is on average only 500 people (Barrow-Giles 2005). An assessment of campaign timing issues should be part of preparing a gender-focused electoral programme. A related issue is whether programmes should stress short-term support in the months or weeks leading up to a single election, or take a longer, more systemic approach.

BOX 2. THE MERITS OF EARLY MONEY

Emily's List, a political action committee founded by a wealthy feminist in 1985, solicits and distributes contributions to female candidates in the United States. Candidates must be members of the Democratic Party and must support women's abortion rights. Candidates are screened carefully for viability. Once selected, a candidate will receive an early infusion of money to jump-start her quest for a nomination, followed by a steady flow of funding during her campaign.

Members of Emily's List write cheques to individual candidates, which the organization bundles together and passes on to the candidate, circumventing restrictions on the amount that political action committees can normally contribute.

With 100,000 members, Emily's List is now considered the largest grass roots political network in the United States, offering \$11 million during the 2006 election cycle. It has helped elect 67 members of Congress, 13 senators and eight state governors, and claims to be the largest financial resource for minority women seeking federal office.

Source: www.emilyslist.org

Some of the basic requirements for women to guide the use of financing will be:

- A financial plan outlining deadlines and objectives, and linking activities to revenues;
- Financial advice, including on how to ensure compliance with party requirements or national laws; and
- Fundraising support from professionals and/or well-respected individuals with the authority to reach out to interested sponsors.

Funds need to be sought from as many sources as allowed, with the bulk raised before campaigning begins in earnest. Parties and individual candidates may cover expenditures in different proportions, but expenses facing women will generally comprise some or all of the following:

- Campaign tools such as a microphone and platform;

- Campaign materials, such as brochures, business cards, posters and a campaign platform;
- A campaign team with administrative, financial, outreach and other capacities;
- Targeted expert advice (political strategists, financial advisors, etc.);
- Party dues and/or election deposits;
- Training (public speaking, fundraising, message crafting, etc.);
- Appropriate professional clothing;
- Childcare and/or support for other household duties;
- Transportation (huge cash outlays can be required particularly in countries with poor transportation infrastructure and largely rural constituencies);
- Security as required;
- Media, including research and monitoring, the production of press materials, outreach to secure interviews and the purchase of time for campaign spots (often a large expense in more developed countries with a spectrum of media options);
- Research and data collection on constituencies, campaign issues, other candidates, etc.;
- Meetings with the public, constituencies, donors, etc. (these comprise some of the biggest expenditures in some countries);
- Strategic public outreach through appearances at sports and cultural events, rallies, etc.; and
- Polling day activities, such as stationing and briefing agents at polling stations, polling station visits and so on.



The Track Record on Women and Electoral Financing in UNDP Programming

Political and institutional considerations in electoral campaign financing

Embarking on a programme to support women's political participation through improved access to campaign financing begins with understanding the political system and culture, and the diverse ways that money may be channeled into electoral support for parties and individuals. While women's right to

political participation should be the guiding framework for the programme, defining the political context will help uncover the most effective entry points. These will vary depending on the intersection of some or all of the five factors described below.

1. POLITICAL SYSTEMS

Political systems determine the frequency and nature of elections, whether candidates will contest as party members or candidates,

“While women’s right to political participation should be the guiding framework for the programme, defining the political context will help uncover the most effective entry points.”

the collection and expenditure of electoral funding, and the quantity of funds required.

Most democracies today have a presidential, parliamentary or hybrid political system. Presidential systems may have separate parties dominating the executive and legislative branches, and separate elections for the two. A study of countries in the Americas, where presidential systems predominate, found that presidential elections absorb the majority of party and candidate resources. Most of the funds go to candidates or their inner circle, rather than to the formal party structure.

In parliamentary systems, where an individual party is the majority in the legislature and also appoints the prime minister, party discipline may be tighter and political power more concentrated within a single political entity.

2. ELECTORAL SYSTEMS

Electoral systems fall into three general categories: majoritarian/plurality, proportional representation and mixed. Majoritarian systems

tend to both strengthen a few parties and emphasize the visibility of individual candidates, which can make campaigns more expensive. In the United States, for example, which has this kind of system, campaigns spend heavily on media exposure. From 1990 to 2000, the total costs for candidates running for the national legislature doubled, surpassing US \$560 million (International IDEA 2003).

Proportional representation, or ‘PR’, systems are commonly based on lists of candidates drawn up by parties, with a party’s share of legislative seats in rough proportion to its share of the national vote. PR systems can reduce costs for individual candidates when political parties are responsible for campaigning, and are therefore seen as favourable to women who face barriers in raising money. However, some PR systems favour women’s representation more than others, such as those guaranteeing high party magnitudes. More seats in the national legislature and a smaller number of districts can both increase party magnitudes (Matland 2005). Open-list PR systems can pose financing obstacles because candidates have to compete in their districts (see Box 3).

Electoral systems with multiple rounds of voting automatically increase costs, as do those that allow a long lead time before the poll.

3. POLITICAL PARTIES

Although some countries ban political parties, the more typical practice is for different configurations of political parties to compete within an electoral system. They serve as the

BOX 3. DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: QUOTA LAWS COME UP AGAINST OPEN LISTS

The Dominican Republic approved a quota of 33 percent for women in both chambers of Congress as well as city councils. But then the Electoral Tribunal changed the system of closed lists to one of open tickets with a preferential vote. Like other candidates, women had to run expensive campaigns to secure votes in their districts, rendering the quota laws ineffectual. Women’s representation in the lower house has more than doubled since 1990, but by 2005 it had just crossed 17 percent. In the upper house, women had about 6 percent of the seats.

Source: OAS 2003

main channels for consolidating political representation, and often for collecting and distributing electoral funds. Most democracies have two or more parties. Some have single parties, within which caucuses or factions express different interests. A problem in nascent democracies has become the proliferation of parties—at times the number rises into the hundreds. These can absorb and fragment resources, without necessarily offering gains in efficiency or representation.

Systems with intra-party elections can generate additional demands for resources.

4. MAPPING THE POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

Basic information for designing a financing programme includes knowing where a country is in the elections cycle, and understanding the current distribution of power, including which parties are represented in the legislature, which control important leadership positions, and which have strong ties to powerful private sector interests.

It is also essential to understand the issues influencing the practices and culture of governance. How long has a country been a democracy? Are there major gaps in governance capacity? How centralized is political power? Is corruption pervasive? Is there room for vibrant and progressive political debate? Are civil society groups active and welcomed? Do media serve as watchdogs—or lap dogs? What is the public perception of government effectiveness?

Different issues may be at work at the local and national levels. Countries in crisis, whether from conflict, extreme economic duress or natural disaster, will require additional considerations. Post-conflict states, for example, have offered opportunities for vigorous political reform, including in ways that have



increased women's political participation. But these situations may also be rife with partisanship and require skilful manoeuvring to avoid increasing instability. Electoral financing is a particularly sensitive issue because it consumes (often scarce) money (for more, see section 3 on what UNDP can and cannot do).

5. THE STATE OF THE ECONOMY

Economic health affects the quantity and sources of electoral finance. Wealthier countries may have more capacity for public financing programmes (see Public and Private Funds on page 17). Private funding flows more readily from a reasonably functioning private sector. Other issues relate to informal or illegal economic activities, which make large contributions to some economies. In Guyana, for example, an influx of drug trafficking proceeds from Colombia and other Latin American neighbours is reportedly increasing competition for political power (Bryan and Baer 2005).

Campaign financing: the basics

A Member of Parliament from Ghana noted, “the political parties law is anachronistic and followed by no one. The funds required for campaigns are now so colossal that parties rely on undisclosed sources of income. If party laws were implemented, all of the country’s major political parties would be sanctioned.”

~ Bryan and Baer 2005, p. 20

BOX 4. THE AMERICAS: REASONS FOR CAMPAIGN SPENDING INCREASES

Although there are no definitive, comprehensive, quantitative data on campaign spending by political parties (across most of the Americas), most experts taking part in this study pointed to an upward trend in campaign spending. This increase is due to the following factors, among others:

- Population growth and the need for political parties to convey their message to millions of voters, forcing them to invest large sums in electronic media.
- An increase in the number of television sets in all Latin American countries. According to the *1997 Human Development Report*, there were 200 television sets for every 1,000 inhabitants in Latin America in 1997. By 2000, the World Bank reported 255 television sets per 1,000 inhabitants. This rise has turned television into an ideal medium for conveying political messages, especially during presidential campaigns.
- The change in the way election campaigns are conducted in the region, making them increasingly similar to the US model, has accorded electoral marketing, opinion polls, image advisors and production experts a decisive role in the effort to reach voters.

Source: Griner and Zovatto 2005

Election costs: The expansion of democracy has made elections increasingly prevalent around the world. While a recent UNDP/IFES study found that the overall cost of elections can decline as countries gain experience in conducting them and as they establish infrastructure such as election commissions, the role of money in campaigning has become a growing concern.

Very few figures are available to measure how much parties and candidates spend—in part because of the reluctance of politicians to reveal this kind of information. Anecdotal evidence suggests that expenditures are rising, dramatically in some cases (see Box 4). In some countries, media costs have shot up. Other nations face expensive inefficiencies such as corruption or a lack of infrastructure needed to easily reach constituents.

Local and national campaigns vary in their demands for travel, media use and interactions with constituents, among other issues. See Box 6 at the end of this section for descriptions of election costs and practices in a few selected countries.

The influence of money: Campaign financing is a legitimate part of an election, but it can both reflect and magnify deficits in democracy, especially when it is controlled by a few powerful sources. This results in an uneven playing field where co-opted politicians no longer represent the people who elected them, and public policy decisions are skewed in favour of some groups over others.

One scenario can be found in states that have shifted from single party to multiparty systems, where wealthy ruling parties have frequently used state resources to consolidate their position and marginalize alternative political movements. Another case is when wealthy businesses and individuals use their own resources to exert undue pressure on a political system. A recent review of political financing in 22 countries (the *Money in Politics* study, Bryan and Baer 2005) found that wealthy individuals or businesses were the second largest source of funds to political parties, after routine party-related sources such as membership dues and fundraisers, and ahead of public and individual financing.

“Public financing is often seen as a tool for levelling the playing field, reducing election costs, cutting down on corruption and increasing oversight. Private funds may be important in making up for public resource shortfalls.”

Half of the respondents said that money from the business sector exerts a negative influence on the political life of their country.

The survey found that candidates must largely finance their own campaigns. As a result, especially in countries where election costs are soaring, three types of candidates are increasingly common: wealthy individuals seeking office to advance their own interests; candidates financed as proxies by wealthy individuals; and candidates who go into debt. Those in the last category at times end up in bankruptcy, and once they win a seat may not have any resources left to service their constituencies.

A Kenyan political party leader said, “For the nomination, as much as 90 percent may come from your own personal money...and if you lose the nomination you’ll be struggling for a very long time. Candidates often end up selling their houses, cars and other assets in order to pay debts incurred while campaigning” (Bryan and Baer 2005, p.13).

Public and private funds: Electoral financing laws and practices vary, but there are two broad categories of funds: public and private. Laws may stipulate one or the other, or a combination of both. Some regional variations are apparent. In East Asia, financial obligations are expected to link candidates and their constituencies. Public subsidies have become important in Central and East Europe, but less so than private donations. Latin America prefers public cash subsidies to discourage illicit contributions, and over 70 percent of the countries in the region ban foreign contributions. Candidates in Africa can often collect from foreign donors and they also receive some public funds and business investments—it is not uncommon for a candidate to ‘own’ a party as a businessperson (International IDEA 2003; Griner and Zovatto 2005).

Public financing can take the form of direct financial contributions, or more indirect options such as free airtime on television and radio stations. It can include incentives such as tax credits or matching grants to stimulate grass roots membership. Funds may be targeted to specific activities, such as capacity development, used for campaigning or applied towards operational expenses. They can be allocated in different ways, such as according to votes cast or parliamentary representation, through the distribution of equal amounts, or through a combination of methods.

Private sources of financing include donations from individuals and organizations, party-run



BOX 5. UNITED STATES: MORE WOMEN TURN TO PUBLIC SUPPORT

A study in the United States found that women are much more likely than men to take advantage of public funding programmes. Public funding thus may help to broaden the pool of candidates running for office. Other research on two states offering public funding found, however, that the end results are not clear. In one state, the number of women who won seats in the legislature increased for one election and then dropped back. In the other state, the proportion of women actually declined.

Source: Werner and Mayer 2005

businesses or investments, and illicit sources. Arguments circulate both for and against public and private financing—although evidence suggests that some level of diversity in funding best supports the reduction of disparities, including in terms of gender discrimination (see Box 5 for the mixed results of one public funding initiative in the US).

Public financing is often seen as a tool for levelling the playing field, reducing election costs, cutting down on corruption and increasing oversight. It can be linked to public interest considerations such as the need to increase women's political participation. One argument for the public funding of parties is that the state should ensure they have the resources to operate and run campaigns since they play a decisive role in most representative democracies.

Concerns about public financing include the potential for additional cost burdens in countries where public resources are already limited. Public funding can still be misused by vested interests to exclude new political movements, and, in making parties less dependent on individual contributions, can encourage centralization and disconnection from constituencies.

Private funds may be important in making up for public resource shortfalls. They can deepen

links between parties and constituencies, and support independent candidates, who may not qualify for public funds normally channelled through parties. Private funds have proven important to groups, including women, who are otherwise excluded from mainstream political processes and resources, especially when they can form strong networks to generate resources.

The obvious drawbacks of private funds include more limited oversight, and the potential for corruption, distorted political influence and the escalation of campaign costs.

Managing funding: The lack of transparency in managing electoral financing, whether by individual candidates or parties, has proven to be a major problem. It fosters the public perception of politics as a moneymaking enterprise, which hinders the engagement of ordinary citizens in democratic political discourse, including through campaign contributions that could support more representative political candidates.

Obfuscation may be deliberate: Under-reporting resources, keeping two sets of books, parallel funding structures and the diversion of contributions are well-known practices in many countries. Parties without much internal democracy may allow a few individuals to make all the money decisions. In more benign cases, parties simply lack the expertise to establish financial management systems.

The Money in Politics survey found that less than a third of respondents said their party had a system to manage party funds; an even smaller number reported that their party had an audit system. A USAID/IFES survey found that out of 118 countries, less than a third had the kind of financial disclosure laws that could encourage transparency (USAID 2003).

Electoral finance laws: Laws governing electoral financing, along with enforcement mechanisms, offer an important framework. They mostly fall in four categories: disclosure requirements, spending ceilings, restrictions on donations and public funding. Enforcement, however, often remains plagued by challenges such as limited resources, overstretched election commissions and cultures of impunity.

Quotas: A number of countries now have quotas in place that guarantee women at least some level of political representation. These have noticeably boosted the number of women representatives (see Box 7). If some level of campaign financing is a prerequisite for attaining office, increasing women's access to funds could help fill quotas.

BOX 6. PRACTICES FROM FOUR COUNTRIES: HOW IS THE MONEY SPENT?

Bangladesh: It is common practice for candidates in Bangladesh to violate spending limits. Campaign workers are listed as 'volunteers' and posters are 'sponsored by the people'. The financial reports submitted usually reveal only a fraction—the costs of a few meetings and some posters—of what is really spent.

Because candidates are expected to pay for their own campaigns, they must have independent sources of income. They usually rely on their personal and business funds, but will also sometimes get money or loans from friends and family. Interviewees reported that if a candidate is not independently wealthy or a businessperson, he/she will accept contributions from businesspersons and industrialists.

Constituency relations represent a significant cost for candidates. All candidates must employ canvassers who purchase votes, organize events, and build networks with local patrons. In addition, candidates must spend money on gifts and handouts to voters and local patrons.

Bulgaria: The largest amounts of campaign funding come from private and business donations. Parties do not universally mandate that candidates contribute to their own campaigns, although most do. Most candidates felt that the amount of personal money donated did not influence where they were placed on the party list; however, one former MP admitted that his party required a contribution of 5,000 BGL from those candidates in the first five places on the party list.

Media purchases were estimated to be the largest campaign expenditure. Many respondents noted that campaign expenses depend heavily on the duration of the campaign, and welcomed the shortened campaign period of thirty days as opposed to forty-five.

Peru: Candidates are primarily responsible for providing their own funding. They often have to take out personal loans from banks and sell their own property to cover campaign expenses. Most businesses contribute directly to parties, but a small minority may choose to bypass the party structure and contribute cash straight to candidates. In both instances contributions are made anonymously and without receipts. Candidates rely on family and friends in their regions to help finance their campaigns.

In general, most campaign spending is for travel and related logistical and operational costs such as gasoline, food, and vehicles. In many rural districts, candidates have to cover large distances and difficult terrain to reach their constituencies. One interviewee said that a lack of resources and logistical difficulties allowed him to campaign in only 5 of his province's 11 districts. A significant proportion of respondents campaigning in urban areas, however, indicated that they spent most of their resources on media-related materials such as campaign leaflets, brochures, posters, billboards, and radio time.

Zambia: The majority of respondents stated that voters may be offered money for their votes. Votes can be sold for between K5,000 and K50,000. Candidates also pay their polling agents, with each agent usually receiving about K20,000. Candidates need to establish staff constituency offices so as to ensure their continued 'presence' in an area throughout a campaign. Offices are set up at the district and provincial levels and party functionaries are posted at every polling station. It is also customary to give alms to chiefs.

Zambian political parties are not entitled to any state funding, and must seek money from alternate sources. One source is the sale of membership cards. Parties also tend to receive funds from local and foreign interest groups and foreign governments, though these funds tend to be very small. Parties also host various fund-raisers. Leaders of opposition parties often bankroll their own political parties. For this reason, opposition political parties usually last only as long as the party leader can finance his/her party. Other sources of funding include donations from well-wishers and businesses. The poor state of the economy limits candidates' ability to fund their own campaigns.

BOX 7. THE NUMBERS ARE RISING—SLOWLY

According to the IPU, 111 countries now have some kind of quota system. While quotas are not always upheld, an IPU study released in early 2006 found that most of the 20 countries that had reached a threshold of women comprising 30 percent of legislators had some kind of quota system in place. Significant gains have been made in Africa and Latin America, which the IPU attributes to the adoption of positive action programmes. Rwanda, for example, has the highest percentage of women in parliament of any country—nearly 50 percent.

Source: IPU 2006

BOX 8. LEGAL PROVISIONS FOR RESOURCES IN THE AMERICAS

Costa Rica's 1990 Law for the Promotion of the Social Equality of Women calls on political parties to increase the number of women candidates, and to set aside funds to train women and promote their participation. The statutes of all political parties now mention gender equality and the dedication of funds for women's political development. Several have committed a specific percentage of their training budget to women.

In Panama, Law 60 of the Electoral Code stipulates that parties use at least 25 percent of public funds for capacity development, out of which at least 10 percent should go to women.

Canada's 1974 Elections Act allows childcare expenses to be included in the personal expenses of a candidate for a campaign, but not for the initial nomination process. The Royal Commission in Canada, highlighting the unequal burden of childcare on many women, has proposed offering a tax deduction for nomination-related expenses.

Source: Garcia Quesada 2005 and Ballantine 2003

BOX 9. EL SALVADOR: SPECIAL FUNDS FOR FEMALE PARTY MEMBERS

In El Salvador, the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN) sends money from the party budget to the National Ministry for Women, which uses it for national assemblies for party women, trainings and consultations with women. The party also has a special fund to train its own female members. Some FMLN women work with the business sector on fundraising for women candidates.

Source: Garcia Quesada 2005

Financing laws: Political financing has received much less attention than quota systems, but a few countries have adopted legislation to help steer resources towards women. The mechanisms used include tax breaks, provisions for campaign expenses and guidelines on the use of public funds (see Box 8).

Party statutes: Some political parties have made their own commitments to gender equality, including by adopting internal quotas or reserving funds for women. In Latin America, the widespread adoption of quotas has led some parties to allocate funds to providing citizens' with information on quotas, as part of their voter education budgets, and to support the establishment of women's committees for the party. Some now stipulate that a certain percentage of resources should go to women (see Box 9).

Women's activism: All over the world, women have formed political caucuses and civil society movements, some of which have become staunch advocates for women's political participation. The issue of financing has been less visible. These groups can provide expertise on what women candidates want and need; they may also benefit from support for capacity development, additional resources, information on activities in other countries and networking opportunities.

The demand for democracy: Grass roots groups and some political figures have made an increasingly vocal case for meaningful and inclusive democracy, an objective that cannot be achieved without women.

UNDP and electoral financing programmes

Electoral financing, even if the goal is to increase women's political participation, is a controversial issue. As a neutral multilateral

organization, UNDP must exercise particular awareness and care with electoral financing programmes. It should not:

- Be perceived as attempting to influence national politics;
- Offer direct financial support in a manner construed as a political donation; or
- Support financing for activities that contradict national laws or basic international standards of good governance (such as the purchase of nominations, even if that is the prevailing practice).
- A programme of support for women candidates will most likely intersect with the political parties that field candidates. UNDP may risk being accused of political favouritism, especially if choices have to be made in engaging with women from some parties and not others. (For a more comprehensive discussion of party work, see the UNDP publication *A Handbook on Working with Political Parties* (UNDP n.d.).

Additional risks stem from the role of money in politics, given the ample evidence that financing can undercut democracy and fuel corruption. By associating itself with campaign financing, UNDP could be viewed, rightly or wrongly, as contributing to these problems. In exploring assistance options for women's access to campaign financing, several general guidelines apply:

- Programmes should be couched in terms of advancing gender equality;
- The UNDP mission is capacity development, not endorsement;
- The programme should have a clear, well-documented rationale. If individual candidates participate, there should be a transparent selection process that is publicly explained;

- Before implementation, programme planning should map potential political risks and make necessary preparations to manage or avoid them; and
- Some attention should be paid to the distribution of support, even beyond

BOX 10. BAHRAIN: WEIGHING OPTIONS TO SUPPORT WOMEN CANDIDATES

Bahraini women gained the right to vote and run for office in 2002. In the election that followed shortly after, 31 women ran for municipal elections and eight for parliamentary seats. Of the parliamentary candidates, two made it into the second round but failed to attain seats.

For the 2002 poll, UNDP and the Supreme Council for Women collaborated to train women leaders on skills that would help them become candidates, lobbyists or campaign managers. Civil society networks were established among Sunni and Shia religious leaders to help promote new ways of thinking about women politicians, given the prevalence of conservative religious beliefs, and journalists were trained to report on women's issues.

For Bahrain's 2006 elections, UNDP considered several options for funding mechanisms to support women candidates. The first was the formation of a network of civil society organizations to manage funds initially provided by UNDP, somewhat of the order of Emily's List. This would be a more time-consuming approach, but it would develop national civil society capacities and protect UNDP politically by distancing it from the distribution of funds.

A second option was to establish a public fund through the Ministry of Justice. This, in addition to a law under consideration that would provide public funds, might help create incentives for political associations (Bahrain has no parties). The law under consideration might possibly be drafted with incentives specifically aimed at increasing the number of women candidates. A third option was to work again with the Supreme Council for Women, although this would have meant a more public profile for UNDP, and civil society participation would be more limited.

UNDP provided the equivalent of \$8,000 in support for each female candidate, in the form of providing access to printing facilities, hospitality expenses, transportation, and research and training resources. Twenty-three candidates used UNDP assistance. Eighteen women were among the 220 candidates in the parliamentary elections, and five women contested in the municipal polls. Only one woman was elected to Parliament (she was one of the two women who went to the second round in 2002)—but in becoming the first female member, she set a historical precedent.

BOX 11. TRICKY ISSUES: VOTE-BUYING

Vote-buying might seem automatically qualified for the category of ‘poor governance’. Yet it is accepted and even counted as a campaign expense in many countries. It provides an example of the kinds of issues that electoral financing programmes may find difficult to negotiate.

According to the *Money in Politics* survey (Bryan and Baer 2005), vote-buying is a poorly defined practice that stretches along a continuum, from bribes to constituency development projects to, in its most innocuous form, campaign promises. Many respondents to the survey described vote-buying as integral to the social and political fabric of their countries, and legitimate when it involves providing services to a community that are otherwise unavailable. These might include installing water pumps or providing medicine. In Tanzania, candidates can legally give gifts to their constituents prior to elections.

UNDP obviously cannot be involved with anything that is illegal, immoral, violent or a denial of human rights, but an electoral financing programme for women may confront questions such as: *Should women be asked not to engage in practices that may seem on the border of clean campaigning if that means they cannot effectively compete?*

Appropriate answers will require skilful programme managers. Once a standard has been adopted, it should be publicly explained and uniformly applied.

parties or political ideologies. Affirmative Action programmes, for example, have been criticized in some cases for installing women—particularly elite women or those closely associated with prevailing social or political centers of power—who fail to act as advocates for their constituents, women’s rights or broader human development goals. As a result, opportunities are lost to demonstrate the value of women’s political participation.

Generally, direct support to women candidates may be more feasible in stable countries with established democratic traditions, a reasonable number of parties, a mid- to low-level of corruption, and a relatively balanced political discourse. Direct support could include activities such as training candidates on

fundraising skills, and providing goods and services required for campaigning.

Countries with more fractured or contentious politics—where UNDP may run a greater risk of being accused of interference—may call for the organization to take a more *indirect role*. This might comprise activities such as working through traditional channels such as women’s parliamentary caucuses or in support of women’s non-governmental organizations (see Box 10 for an example of the different funding mechanisms considered by UNDP in Bahrain).

Basic guidelines for programme design

UNDP programmes should uphold the principles of national ownership, inclusive participation, transparency, accountability, and partnership, including in the context of UN reform.

GENDER EQUALITY IS AN OBJECTIVE OF ALL UNDP PROGRAMMES...

Achieving gender equality is a core corporate priority that builds on these tenets and should be considered an objective of all programmes. This concurs with the UNDP gender mainstreaming policy, which requires, “taking account of gender concerns in all policy, programme, administrative and financial activities in organizational procedures, thereby contributing to a profound organizational transformation.”

GENDER EQUALITY HAS TO BE INTEGRATED INTO OUR DEFINITION OF POLITICS...

Gender mainstreaming in electoral processes implies not only increasing the numbers of women in elected positions, but also changing the way politics is defined so that support for equality becomes integral to institutions and practices. Gender and women’s concerns should feature in all aspects of the electoral system,

“In the past, UNDP support to elections tended to be event-driven, but over the past several years there has been an increasing emphasis on linking elections to the greater political, social and economic context, with a view to achieving transformative change over the longer-term.”

including rules and policies, management and administration, party politics and candidate screening, resource mobilization and distribution, stakeholder analysis, boundary delimitation, voting and counting votes, election results and post-election analysis. This may involve using gender-disaggregated data to pinpoint gender equality gaps; dedicating resources and expertise accordingly; and monitoring progress with indicators sensitive enough to capture different impacts on men and women.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING NEEDS TO BE ACCOMPANIED BY WOMEN-FOCUSED PROGRAMMES...

The danger of mainstreaming is that if gender is integrated everywhere, it becomes nobody's business. Therefore, the process requires both integration and a concerted focus on women's specific concerns. The latter may entail separate programmes, staff and budget lines. Highly competent people with proven skills in gender mainstreaming should contribute to needs assessments and programme design. Both processes should involve consultation with male and female stakeholders, with women's perspectives clearly visible in the end results.

Two approaches: short- or long-term: Two avenues of programme support for women's electoral financing are possible. They can be considered together or alone. Short-term programmes can be tied to particular elections or election events. They can build on the

momentum of an election, even as they carry the potential to influence the longer-term objectives of upholding women's political rights. This approach may not, however, significantly contribute to transforming the structures that exclude women from politics. Long-term programmes look at the bigger picture of women's political participation, including the systems, processes and practices that must take gender equality into account. These programmes could have a budget line to support women's electoral financing, along with others related to, for example, developing the capacities of women parliamentarians, supporting women's parliamentary caucuses, training women leaders and assisting women's political advocacy movements.

In the past, UNDP support to elections tended to be event-driven, but over the past several years there has been an increasing



“ While quantitative data will likely reveal patterns of inequality, qualitative data may tease out some of the subtleties of the issues that need to be addressed. ”



emphasis on linking elections to the greater political, social and economic context, with a view to achieving transformative change over the longer-term. This approach—which is known as the ‘electoral cycle’ approach to programming—is entirely consistent with gender mainstreaming.

Formulating a programme

STEP ONE: ASSESSMENT

An initial assessment should provide both qualitative and quantitative data on women in politics (see Box 12 on conducting assessments and other activities from a gender perspective). While quantitative data will likely reveal patterns of inequality, such as women’s more limited number of parliamentary seats or campaign funds, qualitative data may tease out some of the subtleties of the issues that need to be addressed, such as what kinds

of stereotypes or psychological barriers women find most challenging, or what expenses are most difficult to meet (child care, for example).

The assessment may need to analyse some or all of the following elements. The questions offer general guidelines and are not meant to be comprehensive.

The legal/political context

- What political and legal issues should UNDP understand in order to protect its multilateral mandate—including any bans on financing by foreign groups?
- What is the prevailing political culture—does it favour diversity and inclusion, or do a few people have most of the power?
- What are national and international perceptions (including women’s) of the track record on democracy and women’s rights?
- Are there constitutional provisions spelling out women’s legal and political rights?
- Is there legalized discrimination?
- Is the government a signatory to CEDAW and other international/regional instruments for promoting gender equality? If so, have these instruments been nationally ratified or adopted?
- Do gender machinery and/or gender policies exist?
- Are standard public data disaggregated by gender?

Women in the economy

- What are key gender gaps in employment and education?
- Are women heavily concentrated in the formal or informal economy, agriculture or industry?
- What is the general picture of women's access to resources?
- Are there potential links to new resources?
- Are women engaged in identifying these—or can they be?

Women in politics

- What is the current proportion of women in the three branches of government?
- What are the observed trends?
- Do quotas exist for the legislature, within parties or for other political structures?
- What positions do women have in ministries, parliamentary committees, major political parties, etc.?
- How many women are in leadership positions?
- What do women and men see as the factors affecting their political and leadership role(s)?
- Are there specific legislative processes that women have influenced?
- Can this information be useful for advocating for women's increased participation in politics?
- Are particular constituencies or social groups more/less supportive of women's political participation?
- What are the relationships between constituencies and existing women politicians?
- What is the general public perception of the record of women politicians?

- What is the general public perception of women and issues such as electability, capacity for leadership, susceptibility to corruption, etc.?
- Who are the key women's and gender organizations? Have they been vocal in advocating women's political rights?
- Have they or other groups (academic or human rights organizations, for example) conducted research on women's political participation?

BOX 12. KEY CONCEPTS FOR PLANNING AND EVALUATING GENDER WORK

The following basic concepts may be useful in the formulation and monitoring of a gender and campaign-financing programme.

Gender assessment mechanisms identify differences between women and men in perceptions, attitudes, opportunities and access to resources and decision-making. They capture how programmes and policies affect social understandings of what it means to be a woman or a man, as well as gender relations in the household, community, economy and beyond. Gender impact assessments monitor positive and negative impacts of a particular project on gender relations so the findings can feed back into the project and gender policies at large.

Gender planning is when gender issues are taken into account in each and every stage of a project or programme. A gender analysis is used to guide the planning, including through the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated information. Gender analysis facilitates the strategic use of men's and women's distinct knowledge and skills, which can improve the long-term sustainability of interventions.

Gender audits assess whether an institution's work contributes to gender equality. They focus on conditions created to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment, the initiatives implemented to achieve these goals, the perceptions of those involved and recommendations for improvement. As part of a campaign financing project, they could be performed on leading political parties, for example.

Gender budgets are an analytical tool to disaggregate budgets, and map the effects of expenditure and revenue policies on women, men, girls and boys. They could be used to determine campaign financing patterns—for instance, in looking at the collection and distribution of contributions within political parties.

The electoral system and processes

- What type of electoral system (the method used to translate votes cast into seats or offices won) is in place?
- To what degree does it tend to distribute or concentrate power?
- Has this affected women's political participation, and if so, how?
- Are independent candidates allowed to run for office?
- What are the existing patterns of electoral finance: public/private, urban/rural, licit/illicit, and so on?
- How much transparency is there in electoral financing?
- Do any laws govern electoral financing, and if so, who implements them? Are there any gender provisions? What is the record on enforcement?
- What is the schedule for upcoming elections—local, regional and national, and for both the executive and legislative branches?
- What do women see as the most effective entry points to political participation?
- Are some elections more winnable than others?
- Can some make a greater impact on women's advancement?
- What is the role of the media in campaigns?



Previous elections

- What gains or losses did women have as voters and candidates?
- What challenges and opportunities did women encounter?
- What lessons did they learn?
- Who funded women's activities, and what were the impacts?
- How much money did they raise? Was this more or less than what they needed?
- Did they have particular needs they were unable to fulfil?
- Did women have equitable access to the media?
- Did they have equitable access to their constituencies?
- Has there been any success in using gender equality/women's rights as a campaign issue?

“ Programme implementation strategies should specify time frames and financial commitments; spell out all activities and responsibilities; and clearly define the reporting mechanisms, monitoring framework and indicators. ”

- Which groups, if any, were particularly vocal in either supporting or opposing women's campaigns?
- Can knowledge be used from UNDP election experiences in other countries? From the experiences of other international/national organizations?

STEP 2: PROGRAMME DESIGN

In general, programme implementation strategies should specify time frames and financial commitments; spell out all activities and responsibilities; and clearly define the reporting mechanisms, monitoring framework and indicators (see Box 13). Building on the more general gender analysis above, an electoral financing programme should account for the following issues in particular:

- Who are the actual and potential candidates?
- In working with candidates, should UNDP make any distinctions based on political agendas? For example, should UNDP assist women candidates that support traditions that harm and discriminate against women? (See *A Handbook on Working with Political Parties*, UNDP n.d., for a longer discussion on choosing to work with some or all candidates).
- Are the candidates broadly representative of women in the country, or heavily drawn from one group (such as the elite)? Are any major groups completely absent? Can UNDP encourage national partners to redress these gaps?
- What costs will women candidates incur during the nomination process?
- What will election campaigns cost?
- Will women find some campaign needs more difficult to finance than others?
- Which capacities related to electoral financing (fundraising, money management, etc.) require more development?

- What are the existing and potential sources of financing, both public and private, including such non-monetary sources as free media time?
- Are any groups already active on the issue of campaign financing for women candidates? What are they funding? Can the UNDP programme build on these initiatives?
- Which entry points will maximize the use of resources? Should the programme work on parallel tracks, such as capacity development for individual candidates and advocacy for a strengthened electoral commission, for example?
- How should the financing programme connect to other electoral assistance initiatives, including those on election day?

BOX 13. MONITORING AND EVALUATION— A WORD ABOUT INDICATORS

A gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation framework should use sex-disaggregated data to measure progress on women's access to and use of electoral funding. Two types of indicators can be included:

Process indicators capture inputs such as: financial resources for general election support, allocations for women's campaigns in proportion to election allocations overall, the number of training sessions for women candidates, media coverage for women and candidates at large, transport needs, child-care support facilities, campaign administrative costs, etc.

Impact indicators help reveal the effects of investing in women candidates. They can include: the number of women who demonstrated interest in competing for electoral seats, the level of articulation of women's/gender issues in campaign platforms and media messages, the number of political parties willing to sponsor women candidates, the number of civil society organizations supporting women candidates, the types of questions raised by voters on gender accountability, the number of male candidates articulating women's/gender issues, the number of political parties with voluntary quotas, the number of women candidates who win the election and get appointed to key parliamentary committees, and observed changes in parliamentary discourses and management of parliamentary business.

“ Budget structure will vary depending on how the programme is conceived—as short- or long-term, as a stand-alone project or as a component within a larger electoral assistance strategy.”

- Should the programme include post-election analysis to inform activities in subsequent elections, and/or sessions to share lessons from the campaign process?

STEP 3: BUDGETING

Budget structure will vary depending on how the programme is conceived—as short- or long-term, as a stand-alone project or as a component within a larger electoral assistance strategy. Regardless, budgets should contain:

- Specific and visible lines to counter gender imbalances; and
- Gender-tracking tools that demonstrate, as implementation progresses, how men and women will benefit from the resources allocated, including in terms of redressing inequities.

Some potential results

Programmes should aim to achieve some or all of the following outcomes:

- More women gain higher ranks on electoral lists;
- More women are elected;
- More women have leadership positions;

- Funding for women’s campaigns increases;
- Campaign finance reform makes explicit reference to gender equity in the distribution of public funds;
- Party leaders express more public support for women candidates;
- More women politicians and activists are willing to advocate for financing as being critical to expanding women’s political participation;
- Women’s concerns, including their funding needs, are visible across the total election cycle;
- Achievements are accompanied by longer-term planning for women’s political empowerment, so that the focus of support can shift from campaign events to the longer-term transformation of the structures, practices and processes that have excluded women from politics; and
- The process creates space for women to start questioning the structures of power, including how parties are organized and managed, how parliaments are run and managed, and how resources for political financing are generated and distributed.



Entry Points for Promoting Women in Campaigns and Elections

Entry points for women's campaign financing programmes will need to be sought within individual countries and political systems. The following section offers some general ideas for consideration and adaptation as appropriate. They may be applied individually or combined with each other.

Training of candidates: Women candidates, on top of combating gender stereotypes or negative perceptions about women in positions of power, may be breaking new ground in attempting to become the first woman ever in a given seat. They may need to be more competitive than men to win. Different forms of training have been

provided to women candidates to hone skills such as public-speaking, campaign planning and so on. More specific capacity development efforts could focus on fundraising or financial management skills.

Training of advocates: Many women are already staunch advocates of women's political

BOX 14. THE AMERICAS: POLITICAL LEADERS COMMIT TO POLITICAL FINANCE REFORM

In March 2003, the Council of Presidents and Prime Ministers of the Americas agreed on a far-reaching declaration on political financing. It refers to the following six principles, all of which can bolster gender equality:

- **Fostering stronger representative and accountable political parties.** In their representation and participation functions, political parties need access to adequate resources to function effectively and ethically.
- **Ensuring effective electoral competition.** Parties and candidates must have a fair chance to campaign for their ideas: access to the media and adequate resources is crucial. Unfair incumbency advantages should be addressed and the use of state resources that are not made available to all electoral candidates should be prohibited.
- **Promoting political equality and citizen participation.** Citizens, rich or poor, must have equal opportunity to participate in the political process and to support candidates or parties of their choice. Financial contributions are a legitimate form of support. Inequalities related to gender, race, ethnicity or marginalized populations should be rectified. The principle of one-person, one-vote must be preserved.
- **Preserving the integrity of the electoral process through transparency.** Voters need to be informed about the resources and support behind candidates and parties and empowered to vote as autonomous and informed citizens, free from pressures, intimidation or seduction through economic benefits.
- **Enhancing accountability and eliminating corruption.** Elected office-holders should represent their constituents as a whole and be free from financial dependence on a few. Donations should not be used to buy access to politicians or civil servants, personal favours (contracts, tax breaks, etc.), or policy favours.
- **Strengthening rule of law and enforcement capacity.** There must be assurances of timely justice and an end to impunity in cases of abuse of political financing. The enforcement of political finance laws and regulations requires the existence of independent oversight authorities and an effective system of sanctions to end impunity.

Source: International IDEA 2003

participation. These women come from across the spectrum of organizational types, including women's groups, human rights organizations and women's parliamentary caucuses. Training and advocacy could help

raise awareness and knowledge of campaign finance as a means to increase political participation, bring together new networks and potentially mobilize new resources for women candidates.

Training of the media: Briefing journalists on the gender aspects of campaign financing could encourage them to publicly highlight issues faced by women candidates, monitor gender commitments made by political parties and leaders, and report on the progress (or lack of) that women are making.

Networks: Given women's more limited access to the kinds of political, business and other networks that provide campaign funding, programmes could help women candidates develop capacities to forge new links or even to create new networks, following the Emily's List model.

Direct support: In poorer countries, and perhaps particularly in local elections, women candidates may lack even rudimentary campaign tools. There could be justification for providing goods and services directly, as in Ethiopia (see Incentives below) and Bahrain (see Box 10), with care to avoid the perception that these qualify as campaign contributions.

Research: Campaign financing and political party spending patterns are notoriously hard to pin down; gender is a nearly invisible issue. Research on campaign financing for women could shed new light on the factors at work in individual countries, and support both potential financing programmes and those pursuing the overarching goals of increasing women's political participation and strengthening democratic governance. It could also raise the visibility of the issue through enlisting the participation of national women's groups, political caucuses and academics.

“Experts on campaign finance warn about reforms that may be too hasty or over-idealistic. Donation limits, for example, may be more pragmatic than outright bans on private financing, even if they do not immediately ensure a more equitable division of resources.”

Campaign finance reform: There is an urgent need for campaign finance reform in many nations, in terms of both basic laws and enforcement mechanisms (see Box 14 for an example of high-level consensus on the types of reforms required in Latin America). UNDP could advocate for inserting gender considerations, including by encouraging the participation of women in shaping the reform agenda. Women who are less beholden to existing sources of funding may offer more independent insights or be willing to mobilize public opinion to support reforms that challenge the status quo.

Experts on campaign finance warn about reforms that may be too hasty or over-idealistic. Donation limits, for example, may be more pragmatic than outright bans on private financing, even if they do not immediately ensure a more equitable division of resources. It might require time to build a workable consensus among parties or other political forces about what constitutes desirable funding and how it should be distributed, including in ways that consider gender. Women need to participate in this process, and may be more equipped to do so through the development of skills related to fundraising, negotiating and advocating for their political rights.

Incentives: Several countries have experimented with incentives to encourage parties

to nominate more women (see also Box 15). Timor Leste provides more broadcast media airtime to parties with female candidates. In Ethiopia, international organizations jointly provided a basket fund with allocations of goods and services for parties and individual candidates in the 2005 elections. Parties fielding women candidates received an extra allocation.

Electoral systems: Some options reduce costs and bolster inclusiveness, providing more accessible opportunities for women candidates. There may be opportunities to advocate for these systems during political reforms, or in post-crisis countries creating new governance structures.

Electoral commissions: Electoral management bodies are the most common overseers of campaign financing regulations (other

BOX 15. FRANCE: A LINK BETWEEN PARITY AND PUBLIC FINANCE

France's parity principle requires that 50 percent of candidates on party lists must be women. It covers elections for the European Parliament, the National Assembly, and provincial and municipal assemblies (exempting communes with fewer than 3,500 people).

The parity principle is tied to sanctions on public funding. When the difference in the number of candidates of either sex goes beyond two percent of the total, the sanctions are applied, becoming progressively steeper according to the size of the gap.

options include government departments and special regulatory agencies). Regulations generally focus on candidates rather than political parties. Advocacy and awareness-raising could help ensure that laws are applied fairly to women and men, and that

women obtain resources due to them—for example, under public funding schemes.

BOX 16. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REMOVING OBSTACLES

At the 2003 Inter-American Forum on Political Parties, organized by the Organization of American States (OAS), a seminar explored whether finance is an obstacle to women's political participation. It made the following recommendations:

- Political financing and gender equality are not variables independent of each other. Any analysis should be closely linked to electoral regimes, party systems and forms of government.
- The political participation of women should be viewed as a process with multiple stages. It is important to illustrate how financing issues affect each stage of the process—from stage one, being a citizen eligible to run for political office, to the final stage of assuming political office—and what corrective measures can promote greater gender balance.
- Financing should be studied in terms beyond a simple monetary interpretation. Hidden or indirect costs, in-kind contributions, microcredits and seed money are equally as important as large flows of money.
- The success of Emily's List demonstrates that the multi-dimensional and diverse nature of obstacles to women's political participation requires prioritizing areas that need attention. Such prioritization will enable the effective use of limited resources and maximize the impact. In the United States, for example, it was decided to target the problem of financing with an early money strategy. In other countries, priorities might include integrating women in closed-party structures, addressing regulatory distortions or encouraging the recruitment of women leaders.
- It is also pertinent to study in greater depth the dislike or apparent lack of interest in political activity of some women. Preliminary interviews and studies in the United States, Canada, and Latin America show that these feelings could also represent an important explanatory factor for women's low participation rates.
- It is necessary to emphasize the value of motivational and awareness-raising campaigns for women in politics...many women participate in the political process only when they receive external motivation to do so.

Internal political party reform: The *Money in Politics* study (Bryan and Baer 2005) found that half of the 22 countries surveyed reported the lack of political party organization as the greatest party challenge. The confusion and limited transparency that result can make it difficult for women to pinpoint how the money is being spent, and how they may or may not be benefiting. Advocacy and capacity development work can support reform initiatives within or across parties, while raising awareness of gender equality and women's rights. Specific initiatives might target transparent decision-making, the establishment of accounting systems, agreement on codes of conduct, and revised party by-laws or constitutions. There may be opportunities for inserting gender provisions in all of these.

Potential partners: who else might come on board?

As is the case with other UNDP programmes, those who support electoral financing for women should emphasize cooperation and participation. Given the potential political sensitivities of election campaigning, strong partnerships with national and international organizations may be particularly crucial in helping to build a supportive consensus, broaden programme impacts, connect different forms of expertise and pool resources.

Close attention must be paid to the affiliations that partners bring with them, as these can also have political ramifications. The intent of UNDP might be to work with women candidates from across the political spectrum, for example, while some international agencies might be willing to work only with those candidates from parties with a specific orientation.

Source: OAS 2003

Nationally, potential partners include:

- **Political parties**, as the most common sponsors of women candidates;
- **Legislative caucuses**, which may be willing to work across parties or push campaign finance reforms that support women's political participation;
- **Women's groups**, particularly those with experience in advocating for women's political rights;
- **Academic institutions and/or think tanks**, which have the capacity to conduct research on gender and campaign financing, or have already gained expertise on this or other issues tied to women's political participation; and
- **The private sector**, as a source of funding and given its vested interest in a well-functioning, stable and inclusive democracy.

International programme partners could include:

- UNIFEM, which runs a governance programme, within which legal reform and increased political participation are major components;
 - The OAS, which works with parties, candidates and civil society in Latin America and the Caribbean, including in partnership with the Inter-American Development Bank;
 - Bilateral agencies such as the US Agency for International Development (USAID),
- which has produced the *Money in Politics Handbook* (USAID 2003);
- Organizations working on political finance standards, including the OAS, the Council of Europe, the World Bank, the African Union, the Asian Development Bank, and the Association of Central and Eastern European Election Officials;
 - International parliamentary associations such as the Commonwealth Parliamentary



“ Given the potential political sensitivities of election campaigning, strong partnerships with national and international organizations may be particularly crucial in helping to build a supportive consensus, broaden programme impacts, connect different forms of expertise and pool resources. ”

“ A few international organizations have done extensive research on campaign financing, with some reference to gender. ”

Association and the Inter-Parliamentary Union, which offer training for parliamentarians;

- Organizations that provide political party assistance, such as the Institute for Multiparty Democracy (for more, see *A Handbook on Working with Political Parties*, UNDP n.d.); and
- The Department of Political Affairs and the Best Practices Unit of the Department of Peacekeeping, both of the United Nations Secretariat, have compiled lessons

learned on promoting the participation of women in elections, particularly in post-conflict elections. See <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpa/ead/> and <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/lessons/> for more.

A few international organizations have done extensive research on campaign financing, with some reference to gender. The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) has produced a report called *Funding of Political Parties and Election Campaigns* (International IDEA 2005), which takes a regional approach and includes recommendations on campaign finance reform and regulation. IDEA collaborated with the OAS in a related investigation and report: *Funding of Political Parties and Election Campaigns in the Americas* (Griner and Zovatto 2005).

The National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) has compiled research on political party funding sources, patterns of expenditures, and legal and legislative initiatives under its African Political Party Finance Initiative. In 2005, it undertook the *Money in Politics* survey (Bryan and Baer 2005). UNDP has collaborated with NDI on governance projects in several countries.

IFES, the International Foundation for Election Systems, is a US-based nonprofit group that runs a political finance and public ethics programme (www.moneyandpolitics.net). It is working with a number of international partners to draft and build consensus around a set of global political finance standards.



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Additional Web Resources

- The Ace Electoral Knowledge Network, with comparative data on elections, electoral materials and advice, and a calendar of polls (http://aceproject.org/ace-en/topics/pc/topic_index)
- The Democracy and Gender page of International IDEA, including information on quotas, parliaments and voting (www.idea.int/gender/index.cfm)
- The Global Database of Quotas for women, run by International IDEA and Stockholm University, with information by country and quota type (www.quotaproject.org)
- The IFES Program on Political Finance and Public Ethics, with news, research and other resources from around the world (www.moneyandpolitics.net/index.php)
- The International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics, with news, regional resources and discussion boards (www.iknowpolitics.org)
- The IPU’s Women in National Parliaments, with comprehensive statistics on women in parliament, including the PARLINE database on national parliaments (www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm)
- The National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, Global Programs for Women’s Participation (www.ndi.org/global/women/women.asp)
- Win with Women, an NDI strategy to support women’s political leadership (www.winwithwomen.ndi.org)



PHOTOGRAPHS

Page 2. A signature campaign for quotas is organized by the UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States. (UNDP)

Page 5. Currency exchanges hands in the Philippines. (Adam Rogers/UNCDF)

Page 7. People line up to vote in Guinea Bissau. (UNDP/Democratic Governance Group Thematic Trust Fund)

Page 8. Women attend UNDP-sponsored voter education classes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. (UNDP)

Page 9. Under the eyes of international observers, a woman gets voter's cards for the election of communal councillors in Cancuzo, Burundi. (Martine Perret/UN Photo)

Page 10. Lesotho's parliamentarians receive training in information technology in Maseru. (N. Motsamai, Speaker of the National Assembly)

Page 13. Women of the matriarchal Minangkabau culture vote in Indonesia. (UNDP)

Page 15. A client gathering at the Centre for Agriculture and Rural Development (CARD), a microfinance NGO in the Philippines financed by UNCDF and UNDP. CARD is committed to providing continued access to financial services to an expanding client base by organizing and empowering landless rural women. (Adam Rodgers/UNCDF)

Page 17. A woman participates in a seminar. (UNDP)

Page 23. Counting ballots. (Kenesh Sainazarov/IFES)

Page 24. Workshop in Deir Ezour, Syria. (UNDP)

Page 26. A woman participates in a seminar. (UNDP/Democratic Governance Group Thematic Trust Fund)

Page 29. Women engage in a traditional song and dance at the United Nations Mission in Eritrea and Ethiopia. (UNMEE)

Page 33. A woman gives a press interview in Niger. (UNDP/Democratic Governance Group Thematic Trust Fund)

Page 34. A woman casts her vote in a polling station in a suburb of Maputo, Mozambique. (P. Sudhakaran/UN Photo)

“ Given its mandate, experiences and close relationships with national counterparts, UNDP is ideally positioned to advance discussion and action on women and electoral financing. In doing so, it will help to close longstanding gaps that will otherwise continue to undercut other democratic governance initiatives, as well as progress in upholding women’s rights and the pursuit of more equitable societies. ”



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