

## 5. Recommendations<sup>1</sup>

### To parties:

- A gender equity policy should be included in national parties' statutes, ensuring that women candidates can benefit from an equitable internal distribution of resources. Parties' resources would, therefore, more equally support the promotion of women running as party candidates, contribute towards women's nomination processes (during which women often require resources to establish a political reputation, both within and outside of their parties,) and contribute toward electoral processes.
- Parties committed to gender equality should a) ensure equal access to incoming resources for both women and men; b) designate a specific amount of resources for women candidates as an affirmative action; and c) incorporate gender equality criteria into parties' internal transparency and accountability mechanisms.
- The administration of money designated for a party's *elected* candidates should also adhere to gender equality criteria, ensuring that women continue to receive equal support once they assume office.

### To legislative and executive powers:

- National legislation on political campaign finance and parties' expenditure should coincide with international conventions and agreements that promote gender equity in political participation.
- As governments and parliaments are ultimately responsible for preventing all forms of gender discrimination, any policy or national plan formulation process concerning political participation should include a gender-sensitive finance component that secures the presence of, adequate training of, and monitoring of women candidates and decision-makers.
- Measures supporting women's effective election, such as legislation in favor of public funding, limits to contributions and expenditures in nomination/election campaigns, and quotas within parties or cabinets, should be included in Constitutional Reforms and secured at the Constitutional level.
- Wherever public funding of political parties is possible, including government subsidies, legislation should establish incentives to support women. For example, the amount of funding or refunding of election campaign expenses should be linked to the percentage of women candidates put forward by each party and/or elected to Parliament. Furthermore, in

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<sup>1</sup> These recommendations were produced during the Women Candidates and Campaign Finance Experts Meeting in Trinidad-and-Tobago, Dec. 2-4, 2007.

countries where funding is provided to parliamentary political groups, an additional premium linked to the proportion of women elected should be offered (Pintat, 1998:6).

- As sanctioned in the Beijing Platform of Action, national budgets should allot a minimum percentage of resources for gender issues, including women's political participation and campaign finance.

**To public bodies that control electoral processes and campaigns expenditure:**

- Realistic limits on and "control" of campaign funding and campaign time, both in the nomination and election periods, should be in place.
- Data should be gender disaggregated.
- There should be effective accountability and transparency mechanisms, and information and resources should be publicly available, including data on voting patterns which can be extremely useful to candidates.
- Limits should be placed on candidates' expenditures, rather than parties' expenditures.

**To women within parties:**

- Establishing an effective and functional women's caucus would empower women candidates and help ensure equal access to the party's resources, guaranteeing that financial management has a gender perspective.
- Strategizing with women from other parties would be beneficial to all women candidates and has proven to be an effective method for institutionalizing means for securing financial resources across parties.
- Partnering with women's organizations can provide campaign finance training and help identify key financial issues that women face when running.
- Women within parties or elected parliamentarians who are generally not beholden to big business or unclean money should address the issue of campaign finance reforms. They can, for example, initiate public hearings on the topic and initiate a process of mobilizing public opinion in favor of reforms.
- Including supportive men from the party who agree to stand for gender equity can fortify the network of women working on campaign finance issues.

**To women candidates:**

- Establishing networks with women's organizations can secure indirect resources: women's organizations can offer effective trainings, advice on campaign finance strategies, and references to best practices and "lessons learned".

- Establishing connections with constituencies should be a part of the mobilization of resources: rural and grassroots women have, in some contexts (i.e. in Nigeria,) been successful in providing campaign finance.

#### **To women's organizations and networks:**

- Campaign finance should be incorporated into the gender equality agenda, bringing attention to the gender-specific needs and financial obstacles women candidates face in different geographical, cultural and political contexts. Campaign finance issues should also be included on the agendas of international forums, such as the United Nations' Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), during which gender equity is an interlinking issue.
- Documenting best practices and presenting women candidates with effective strategies for raising both direct and indirect resources, as well as effective ways to use those resources, should be a part of trainings.
- Demanding and monitoring parties' accountability mechanisms for campaign expenditure and internal budgets, especially when parties have established budget compromises with women, should be a priority. Developing score cards has been an effective tool, making visible gender differences and identifying politicians that represent gender equity interests.
- Impact evaluations of the content of and methodologies promoted during training workshops should be in place.
- Continuing to support elected women to make gender-informed decisions and advance gender campaign finance reform would supplement potential candidates' indirect and direct resources.
- Highlighting the economic value of unpaid work that women's organizations devote to women's political training and candidacies would contribute to the evidence that gender campaign finance reform is necessary.

#### **To academics and researchers:**

- Researching different electoral and financial systems, with particular attention on gender implications of campaign financing, would contribute to the growing body of analysis for campaign reform.
- More funding should be provided for research on campaign finance.
- Research should be participatory and results-oriented, connected to real facts from women's experiences.

#### **To international donors/organizations:**

- Campaign finance should be considered when making recommendations to national governments about deepening democracy and promoting women's political participation processes.

- Designating a percentage of loans and/or international aid for women's empowerment and campaign finance training would uphold international commitments to women's empowerment and increased political participation.
- Conditionalities on grants to governments should allocate a percentage of funds for gender issues, including women's campaign finance.
- Developing monitoring mechanisms per the Paris Declaration should be in place for all funds.
- Support for the creation of a well-funded women's entity at the U.N., which will ensure that international aid includes gender issues and is managed in conformity with the Paris Declaration, would emphasize the importance of transparency and accountability.

**To financial/private sector:**

- Private financial institutions should establish a special line of credit for women candidates, offering them more access to funds and repayment strategies.
- Transparency and accountability policies should be incorporated to facilitate democratic and clean financial processes during electoral periods.