



THE SPIRIT OF WOMEN IN PARLIAMENTS: ADVANCING SOCIETY

WOMEN IN PARLIAMENTS GLOBAL FORUM INPUT TO THE WORLD BANK GROUP GENDER STRATEGY CONSULTATION

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Female Parliamentarians are active agents of change

By addressing female Parliamentarians via the Women in Parliaments network, the World Bank could help advancing issues at the core of its own development policies to end extreme poverty and promote shared prosperity. Below are three reasons to why Female parliamentarians are central development partners:

1. Female Leadership is key for achieving development; Equality between women and men is a fundamental value and principle for the World Bank and core of its development policies. Female leadership is also an essential part World Bank's international commitments such as the Sustainable Development Goals. More women in decision-making bodies are key to achieving sustainable development, a fact established by internationally recognised organisations.

2. Investing in Women is an intelligent development strategy; The World Bank claims that putting earnings in women's hands is the intelligent thing to do to speed up development. Women usually reinvest a higher portion of their earnings in their families and communities than men. Female Parliamentarians are key as they are more inclined to put certain topics on the political agenda. Female Parliamentarians are therefore a unique agents to monitor and influence the implementation of development initiatives, such as the goals and targets of the post 2015 Agenda. Female Parliamentarians can help bring MDG-related topics to the attention of their Governments and push them forward to make them national priorities.

3. Female Parliamentarians hold their Governments accountable; Members of Parliaments have a unique position in society to formulate political priorities and vote on legislation. Their constituencies give them a mandate to act on their behalf. Parliamentarians also hold governments accountable while implementing policies and programmes. Parliamentarians therefore have the potential to play a very powerful role in the effective implementation of programmes. They are highly legitimate agents to demand their Governments to set political



priorities according to the needs of its people. Investing in a network of 9000 female Parliamentarians equals reaching out to millions of women around the globe as well as National Governments.

Background about WIP

Women in Parliaments Global Forum is an independent, international and post-partisan foundation. It is a fully registered and recognised not-for profit and tax-exempt foundation. The below listing outlines the key players in the WIP Network.

WIP Secretariat: The success of WIP is driven by the skills, experience and enthusiasm of its diversely talented and dynamic team. As a foundation with global outreach, the WIP secretariat is made up of individuals from various national and cultural backgrounds who ensure communication between WIP entities and the coordination of WIP activities.

WIP Global Network: The WIP Global Network is made up of all female Parliamentarians at national level, including the European Parliament, of whom there currently are around 9000. WIP's Global Network engages in a multitude of activities, taking place in different regions of the world.

WIP Ambassadors: Within this Global Network, WIP cooperates particularly closely with a network of WIP Ambassadors made up of senior Members of Parliament who serve as advocates of WIP activities and contact points in their national context.

WIP Advisory Board: The WIP Advisory Board is made up of outstanding political leaders and influential personalities from civil society, the private sector, intergovernmental organisations and academia. These members endorse the WIP mission and oversee and provide guidance for WIP activities.

WIP Advisory Council: Beyond the high level network of the Advisory Board, a supporting Advisory Council is made up of influential people within specific industries and international organisations. Members of the WIP Advisory Council consult with WIP regarding specific thematic areas and industries, and enable WIP's strategic activity in these key areas.

WIP Partners: WIP cooperates closely with many international organisations that share WIP's belief in advancing society through female leadership. In this respect WIP has forged partnerships with UN Women, UNDP, the UN Foundation, the World Bank, the OECD, the World Economic Forum, the International Parliamentary Union and several civil society actors and companies. WIP also works closely with Regional Parliamentary Networks, as well as the Parliamentary Networks of the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, NATO and the OECD.



WIP Friends and Family: In addition to the WIP Advisory Board and Council, WIP maintains contact with a broad group of senior and influential supporters who advocate for WIP and can participate in WIP activities in their capacity as high-level speakers or industry experts.

WIP Core Activities

WIP Global Network Outreach: WIP maintains regular contact with the 9,000 Members of Parliament belonging to the WIP Global Network. This outreach includes monthly newsletters, participation in WIP events and activities, social media engagement, and informing parliamentarians about the advocacy campaigns and special areas of interest.

WIP Advisory Board: Beyond the worldwide network of female Parliamentarians, WIP draws on a broad network of influential political leaders at government level as well as leaders in business, civil society, intergovernmental organizations and academia. WIP's high level and well-connected [Advisory Board Members](#) participate in WIP Advisory Board Meetings, WIP conferences and WIP Advocacy campaigns and are a continuous source of advice and inspiration for WIP's activities.

WIP High-level Summits, Regional Meetings and Study Trips: WIP brings together Members of National Parliaments, high-level speakers and international experts to exchange knowledge and experiences, and discuss issues placed high on the global policy agenda. These activities provide a platform for female legislators from around the world to discuss a wide range of issues, spanning from development cooperation to economic empowerment. [Previous WIP Summits](#) have been co-hosted with the European Parliament ([Brussels, 2013](#)), a National Parliament ([Rwanda, 2014](#)), and the African Union Commission ([Addis Ababa, 2015](#)).

WIP Awards: WIP believes that best practice examples are most convincing, and encourage others. As such, WIP presents a series of awards to countries which are recognised as regional and global champions in areas related to female political participation. The WIP Awards are based on data of the International Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the rankings of the World Economic Forum's "Global Gender Gap Report". Videos of WIP Award highlights and acceptance speeches can be found on the [WIP Youtube channel](#).

WIP Advocacy Campaigns: WIP's advocacy campaigns raise awareness and highlight topics on the global agenda, by mobilizing its network of female Parliamentarians. Active WIP campaigns currently include [UpForSchool](#), [Make it Happen](#) and [A Call to Action to Step it Up for Gender Equality](#).

WIP Academic Contributions: WIP collaborates with academic institutions and research



organisations to ensure academic data is available to underline the importance and societal benefits of gender balanced political leadership. A recent WIP collaboration with the World Bank, Yale University, UC Berkeley and the London School of Economics resulted in the publication of an [extensive WIP study](#) analysing barriers to the female political career across 84 countries.

WIP Partnerships with International Organisations and Institutions: WIP collaborates with international and regional institutions and networks that strive to empower women and actively engage in promoting female leadership via specific activities such as conferences and outreach campaigns, promoting the inclusion of female parliamentarians at the highest level of discussions. WIP has previously partnered with organisations such as the European Commission, the African Union Commission, UN Women, the OECD, as well as Parliamentary Networks of the World Bank, IMF, NATO, and the Pan-African Parliament.

WIP Media Outreach: WIP maintains continuous [media outreach](#) via social media ([Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Flickr](#), [YouTube](#)), press releases, and direct contact with targeted journalists and media outlets. This activity is bolstered by the WIP Media Council – a group of influential journalists, editors and media professionals who are committed to promoting WIP and the message of female political empowerment. The WIP Summit 2015 [online coverage](#) generated over 738,000 views and 5580 social shares.