

PROMOTING **WOMEN'S** POLITICAL PARTICIPATION: A MONITORING GUIDE



 **UN** 
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GENDER EQUALITY**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	7
MONITORING WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION: A SUMMARY OF INDICATORS	12
1. Motivation and Background	15
1.1. Women's Participation in the National People's Congress	16
1.2. Women's Participation in Village Elections	17
2. Understanding Women's Political Recruitment	19
2.1. Transition 1: Increasing the supply of potential female candidates (eligible → aspirant)	21
2.2. Transition 2: Enhancing elite interest in selecting female candidates (aspirant → candidate)	23
2.3. Transition 3: Gaining support among voters for electing women (candidate → elected)	26
3. Strategies to Increase Women's Political Participation	29
3.1. Women-oriented supply-side strategies for promoting women's political participation	30
3.2. Elite-targeted demand-side strategies for enhancing women's political participation	33
3.3. Voter-targeted demand-side strategies for increasing women's political participation	36
4. Tracking Progress and Adjusting Strategies	38
4.1. Monitoring the supply of potential female candidates	39
4.1.1. Recruitment initiatives and indicators	40
4.1.2. Training and mentoring programs	41
4.1.3. Resource support and indicators	44
4.2. Monitoring elite demand for female candidates	46
4.2.1. Recruitment initiatives and indicators	46
4.2.2. Candidate selection and indicators	49
4.2.3. Gender quotas and indicators	50
4.2.4. Resource support and indicators	51



TABLE OF CONTENTS

4.3. Monitoring support among voters for electing women	53
4.3.1. Public opinion and indicators	53
4.3.2. Awareness-raising campaigns and indicators	54
5. Conclusions and Recommendations	56
5.1. Designate a lead agency to coordinate monitoring efforts	56
5.2. Create a visible public source for statistics on women's political participation	58
5.3. Facilitate exchange of information on 'best practices' at provincial and village level	59
5.4. Leverage partnerships across government and civil society to collect and share data	60
REFERENCES	62

ACRONYMS



ACWF	All-China Women's Federation
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
FGE	Fund for Gender Equality
FWN	Fabian Women's Network
IFE	Federal Electoral Institute
iKnowPolitics	International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NPC	National People's Congress
NWCCW	National Working Committee for Children and Women
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
Progen	Center "Partnership for Development"
UN Women	The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UWF	Ukrainian Women's Fund

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

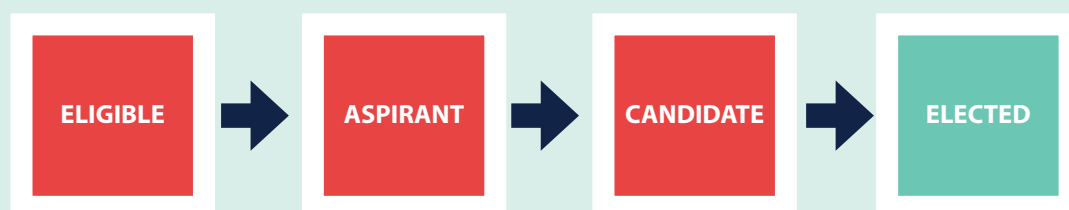
With the support of the UN Women's Fund for Gender Equality, the All-China Women's Federation (ACWF) is implementing a program on "Enhancing Women's Political Participation in China." Program activities extend from the national to the provincial and village levels. Three provinces, Heilongjiang, Shanxi, and Hunan, plus four villages in each province, serve as the program's pilot sites.

The program seeks to enhance Chinese women's political participation by pursuing three objectives: (1) improving laws and policies to create an institutional environment promoting gender equality; (2) enhancing women's influence in government; and (3) strengthening government, women's groups, and civil society monitoring of Chinese women's political participation and rights.

This Monitoring Guide was developed in accordance with the third objective, with the goal of outlining international best practices and elaborating a set of criteria for how the ACWF and other actors might monitor developments in women's political participation in China.

After providing a short introduction to the current state of women's political participation in China, the Guide presents a four-stage model of political recruitment (eligible → aspirant → candidate → elected) that identifies three key transitions: from citizens who are eligible to run to those who aspire to run for political office (the 'supply' of potential candidates); from citizens who aspire to those who are nominated to run for political office (the 'demand' from candidate selectors); and from citizens who are nominated to those who are elected (the 'demand' from voters on election day).

FOUR-STAGE MODEL OF POLITICAL RECRUITMENT



These transitions indicate three moments at which strategies might be pursued to enhance women's political participation by (1) increasing women's political resources and ambitions, (2) revising selectors' attitudes towards female candidates, and (3) changing public attitudes towards women in politics. These strategies may take a variety of forms, as illustrated by initiatives in China and elsewhere to enhance the supply of and demand for female politicians.

These three broad aims, in turn, suggest a set of indicators for tracking progress in women's political participation, measuring the outcomes of various strategic interventions while keeping an eye on levels of progress overall. Ideally, this data would be disaggregated by both sex and age, capturing differences among women and men as well among younger and older women. Indicators for monitoring progress at different stages of the recruitment process include the following:

ELIGIBLE → ASPIRANT STAGE

(THE 'SUPPLY' OF POTENTIAL FEMALE CANDIDATES):

The supply of female aspirants to political office is shaped by women's access to resources, like time, money, and experience, and their levels of motivation, such as drive, ambition, and interest in politics.

QUANTITATIVE INDICATORS

- » How many women have been approached by the initiative as potential aspirants
- » How many women have agreed to apply to be a candidate
- » How many of these women have been recruited as candidates
- » How many of these women have gained a nomination
- » How many of these women have been elected
- » How many women participated in women and politics training programs
- » How many of the trained women ran for office
- » Do women and men have similar financial and material resources for their campaigns – what are the disparities, if any, in women's vs. men's resources
- » What are the win rates of female vs. male candidates
- » What are the retention rates of female vs. male office-holders

QUALITATIVE INDICATORS

- » Who are the women who have not agreed to apply to be a candidate and what are their objections
- » When and where were trainings organized and how were the participants recruited
- » What was the content of the training
- » What skills were attained, based on pre- and post-training questionnaires

- » Who provided support to women's vs. men's campaigns
- » Were women's financial resources sufficient to wage an effective campaign
- » Did women face special challenges in getting financial resources
- » How did family obligations affect women's campaigns, positively or negatively

ASPIRANT → CANDIDATE STAGE

(THE 'DEMAND' FOR FEMALE CANDIDATE FROM ELITES):

Once female aspirants come forward, their selection as candidates hinges upon perceptions of their abilities, qualifications, and experience – assessments that are often highly gendered and discriminatory.

QUANTITATIVE INDICATORS

- » Among female candidates, how many were previously approached to run by political elites
- » How many trainings on women's political participation have targeted political elites
- » What are the positions in village committees female candidates run for – women's representatives' or also other positions
- » How many women are presented as candidates
- » How many women are elected
- » What is the ratio of elected men vs elected women
- » How many women are re-elected
- » How many quota policies are implemented fully at the local level
- » How many women are elected as a result of these policies
- » How many subnational political assemblies at village and provincial levels remain all-male bodies
- » Are resources divided proportionally among male and female candidates

QUALITATIVE INDICATORS

- » Were there systematic attempts to reach out to women on the part of elites
- » Are women restricted to "women's work" once elected to village government, or are they assigned a broader array of policy roles
- » Have elite attitudes and practices changed as a result of trainings targeted at elites
- » Perceptions as to whether electoral opportunities are similar for both women and men
- » Are there any discriminatory policies or practices against women, such as different age requirements for male and female candidates, and what efforts have been made to eliminate them

- » What types of “clarifying” policies exist in the provinces to elaborate the quota requirements regarding “an appropriate number” of women
- » What support is there for raising the NPC quota to 30%
- » What support, financial, social or otherwise, do female candidates receive from nominating organizations

CANDIDATE → ELECTED OFFICIAL STAGE (THE ‘DEMAND’ FOR FEMALE CANDIDATE FROM VOTERS):

Elections constitute the final transition in the political recruitment process, as citizens cast their votes to elect office-holders – although their choices are restricted to the slate of approved candidates.

QUANTITATIVE INDICATORS:

- » How do opinions towards women as candidates differ, when disaggregated by sex and age
- » How much support do voters express for quotas or other measures to promote women in politics
- » How many awareness-raising campaigns were organized and how much did they cost
- » How many people did awareness-raising campaigns reach in terms of audience
- » Has public acceptance of women as leaders changed as a result of awareness-raising campaigns

QUALITATIVE INDICATORS:

- » What opinions do voters hold regarding women as candidates to political office, including for positions not traditionally held by women
- » How is the performance of female village committee representatives perceived
- » What did awareness-raising campaigns entail in terms of message and medium
- » Did awareness-raising campaigns have an effect on citizens – and what evidence, preferably sex-disaggregated, is available to measure this

Monitoring women’s political participation in a more comprehensive fashion thus requires: (1) exploring trends beyond simply the electoral moment, opening up for close examination what occurs during the aspirant and candidate selection stages; (2) searching for both quantitative and qualitative indicators, with these two sets of data together providing a richer picture of progress and setbacks in women’s political participation; and (3) probing both traditional and less conventional sources of data. This type of holistic approach can, in turn, help with assessing programming, tracking progress, and designing new interventions, through careful attention to evidence and impact.

To achieve effective monitoring of women's political participation, four recommendations for future action are advised: (1) designate a lead agency to coordinate monitoring efforts; (2) create a visible, publicly-accessible space – ideally a website – where citizens can access statistics on women's political participation, disaggregated by level of government; (3) encourage the exchange of information on provincial and village 'best practices' to inspire new initiatives and solutions, possibly in tandem with a website posting statistics on women's political participation; and (4) leverage potential partnerships across government, women's groups, and civil society to collect and share information and data on the impact of specific initiatives for change.

MONITORING WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION: A SUMMARY OF INDICATORS



STAGES

ELIGIBLE → ASPIRANT STAGE

The 'supply' of potential female candidates: The supply of female aspirants to political office is shaped by women's access to resources, like time, money, and experience, and their levels of motivation, such as drive, ambition, and interest in politics

INDICATORS

QUANTITATIVE INDICATORS

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QUALITATIVE INDICATORS

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- When and where were trainings organized and how were the participants recruited
- What was the content of the training
- What skills were attained, based on pre- and post-training questionnaires
- Who provided support to women's vs. men's campaigns
- Were women's financial resources sufficient to wage an effective campaign
- Did women face special challenges in getting financial resources
- How did family obligations affect women's campaigns, positively or negatively

STAGES

ASPIRANT → CANDIDATE STAGE

The 'demand' for female candidates from elites: Once female aspirants come forward, their selection as candidates hinges upon perceptions of their abilities, qualifications, and experience – assessments that are often highly gendered and discriminatory.

INDICATORS

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- Among female candidates, how many were previously approached to run by political elites
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STAGES

CANDIDATE → ELECTED OFFICIAL STAGE

The 'demand' for female candidates from voters: Elections constitute the final transition in the political recruitment process, as citizens cast their votes to elect office-holders – although their choices are restricted to the slate of approved candidates.

INDICATORS

QUANTITATIVE INDICATORS

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- How much support do voters express for quotas or other measures to promote women in politics
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- How is the performance of female village committee representatives perceived
- What did awareness-raising campaigns entail in terms of message and medium
- Did awareness-raising campaigns have an effect on citizens – and what evidence, preferably sex-disaggregated, is available to measure this

1. Motivation and Background



The program “Enhancing Women’s Political Participation in China,” implemented between 2011 and 2015 by the All-China Women’s Federation (ACWF) with the support of the UN Women’s Fund for Gender Equality, has three goals: (1) to improve laws and policies to create an institutional environment promoting gender equality; (2) to enhance women’s influence in government; and (3) to strengthen government, women’s groups, and civil society monitoring of Chinese women’s political participation and rights. This Monitoring Guide contributes to the third objective: elaborating criteria for how the ACWF and other actors might monitor developments in women’s political participation in China.

Given the political system, with close ties between government structures and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), the term ‘political participation’ in Chinese (canjia zhengzhi or canzheng) refers to women serving as politicians, public servants, and party cadres. Women in the ACWF have thus long argued that, while it is important to increase the number of women in the National People’s Congress, it is vital to address women’s involvement at all levels of government and the Party.¹ Although a survey from 1990 observed that Chinese women participated less in all aspects of politics,² more recent data find there to be no significant gender gaps in electoral participation: women turn out to vote in local elections at similar rates as men.³ Party membership, however, continues to be largely male: in 2013, 24.3% of CCP members were women.⁴ Keenly aware of this gender disparity, one survey noted that 81% of rural women felt that more female cadres were needed in their village.⁵

Women’s political participation in China has fluctuated quite significantly over the years. In terms of numbers, Chinese women enjoyed their highest level of representation in top political positions in the 1970s, as township directors and deputy directors and as part of the CCP Central Committee.⁶ This was due to strict quotas for women’s participation, as well as to campaigns launched by central authorities to train women for leadership positions.⁷ This situation reversed after 1978, with the diminishing salience of mass politics and restructuring of the economy pushed many women back into the home. While the country’s resulting economic growth in recent years appears to have had a positive impact on women’s likelihood of voting in elections, the share of women in political bodies has either declined or remained level over the same period of time. This decline, however, has also inspired debates as early as the late 1980s in China on the need to increase women’s presence at all levels of government.⁸

1.1. WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS

Since 1978, women have consistently constituted approximately 21% of the delegates to the National People's Congress (NPC).⁹ Two decades ago, this level of participation was impressive: in 1994, China ranked #12 in the world in the share of women parliamentarians. However, this comparative advantage has eroded significantly in the years since: with roughly the same number of female delegates, the country now ranks #53 for the percentage of women in parliament.¹⁰ The share of women in the NPC rose to its highest level ever, 23.6%, after the 2013 elections – but notably, the previous record, 22.6%, had been achieved in 1975.¹¹

Between 1995 and 2015, nearly 90% of countries around the world saw improvements in the numbers of women elected to their national parliaments. In 1995, almost all countries (88.1%) had fewer than 20% female parliamentarians. A mere 2.8% had attained a share of 30% or more. By 2015, however, the picture had changed dramatically. A slightly majority (53.4%) of countries still had less than 20% women in parliament, but nearly one in five (21.7%) had achieved 30% or more female parliamentarians. As a result, the world average nearly doubled in this time, from 11.3% in 1995 to 22.1% in 2015.¹²

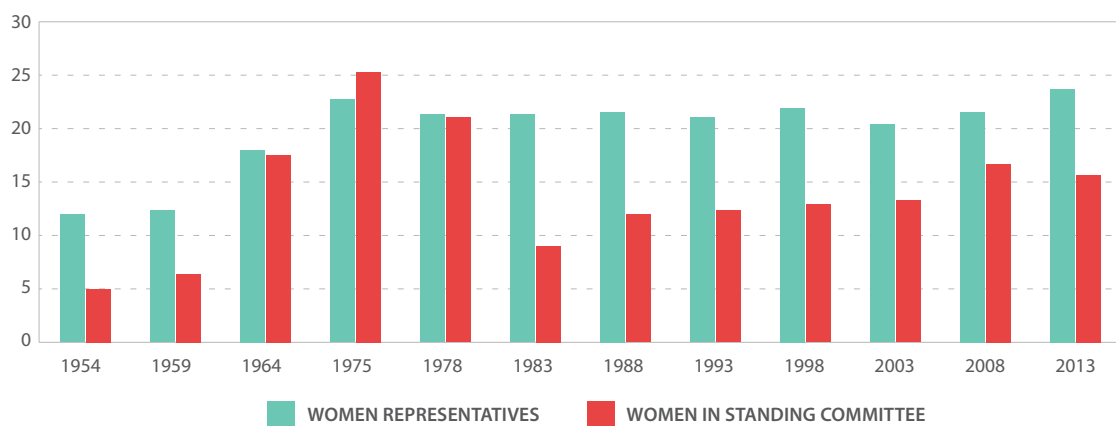
A key motor behind these developments was the Beijing Platform for Action, signed unanimously by delegates to the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. Described as a “new agenda for women’s empowerment,” its mission statement called for the removal of all “obstacles to women’s active participation in all spheres of public and private life.” Among its strategic objectives, the Platform for Action identified a minimum 30 per cent target for women in decision-making, to be achieved through a wide range of strategies including positive action, public debate, and training and mentoring women as leaders.¹³

China thus has been an outlier during a period of great change, remaining stable as other states have expanded opportunities for women to be nominated and elected to political office. Notably, more than 130 countries have introduced some form of quota for women in politics, with a growing number now raising their quota provisions from 30% to 50%.¹⁴ In contrast, in China a strict quota system that guaranteed relatively high participation by women fell into disfavor in the 1980s. Previously, women were guaranteed 20% of the seats in all Chinese political structures, with the exception of the highest organ of power, the Central Committee of the CCP.¹⁵ Other groups were also the subject of hard and soft quotas, including minorities, workers, peasants, and intellectuals, in line with the mandate that deputies should be drawn from “all walks of life.”¹⁶

In the mid-1990s, measures were re-introduced to ensure women’s political participation, albeit in a less rigorous fashion than before – and compared to elsewhere

around the world. In 1995, the amended Law of Elections for the NPC and Provincial People's Congresses specified that these bodies "should have an appropriate number of women and gradually increase the proportion of women" (Article 3). In 2008, the government stipulated that 22% of the NPC should be female. Prior to that, the exact number of women in the NPC had fluctuated slightly from election to election. The importance of targets can be seen in the divergence between the share of women in the NPC as a whole and in the NPC Standing Committee (see Figure 1), where no specific measures apply – despite calls in the Program for Development of Chinese Women (2001-2010) for all party and government bodies include at least one woman.

Figure 1: Women in the National People's Congress and the NPC Standing Committee



Source: <http://www.nwccw.gov.cn/upfiles/topics/tuidongfunvcanzheng/tdzgfncz1.php>

1.2. WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN VILLAGE ELECTIONS

The 1982 Constitution declared that villages were self-governing bodies and established that the chairman, deputy chairman, and members of the village committees were to be elected by local residents. In 1987, an Organic Law on the Village Committees was promulgated, taking effect in 1988, putting these reforms into action. The Organic Law was revised in 1998 to add secret ballots, direct nominations, and the requirement that more candidates be nominated than the number of seats to be filled. Members of political bodies at other levels of government, in turn, are elected by members of the bodies in the level immediately below, following the same five-year electoral cycles.

The provisions of the 1998 revised Organic Law and the Article 6 of the 2010 Amended Electoral Law included a similar mandate that there be "an appropriate number" of women in each village committee, typically composed of three to seven members. The vagueness of this formulation has meant that many view having one woman on each committee as sufficient for meeting this requirement – but with many village committees not meeting this minimum standard. The addition in 1998 of open nominations has further complicated this mandate, as there is no effective mechanism

to ensure a number of women on the list of nominated candidates.^{17, 18} The vague quota has thus, some suggest, cast a “bamboo ceiling” over women’s political participation.¹⁹

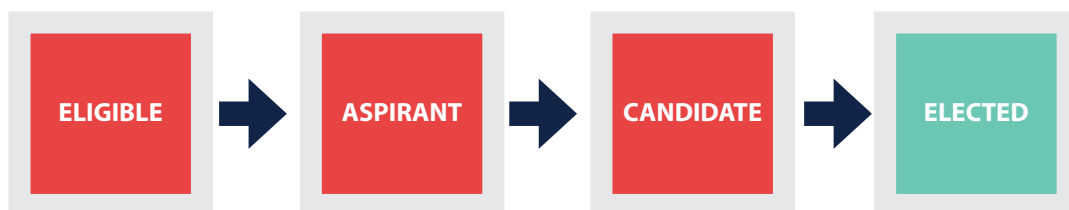
In the early to mid-2000s, approximately 76% of village committees had a female member and about 42% of villages had female party branch members.²⁰ Women constituted a mere 14% of CCP members overall, dropping as low as less than 10% in many rural areas.²¹ Women’s presence at the pinnacle of power was even scarcer: only about 1% of the leaders of Party and government bodies at the county, town, and township levels were women.²² Although other data suggest that women in urban China are more highly represented in local governance,²³ the overall assessment of most studies is that women’s share in village committees and party branches is on the decline.²⁴

-
1. Edwards 2007.
 2. Jennings 1998.
 3. Tong 2003, 138.
 4. Calculation based on data here: <http://www.statista.com/statistics/249975/number-of-chinese-communist-party-ccp-members-in-china-by-gender/>
 5. Wang and Dai 2013, 98.
 6. Guo, Zheng, and Yang 2009; Jacka 2008; Rosen 1995.
 7. Howell 2002.
 8. Edwards 2007.
 9. Edwards 2007, 380.
 10. See <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm> (accessed 5 May 2015)
 11. Howell 2006, 608.
 12. See www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/WIP20Y-en.pdf
 13. See <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/decision.htm>
 14. Krook 2009. For details on individual cases, see <http://www.quotaproject.org>
 15. Edwards 2007.
 16. O’Brien and Li 1993.
 17. Guo, Zheng, and Yang 2009.
 18. Jacka 2008, 504.
 19. Howell 2006.
 20. Guo, Zheng, and Yang 2009, 156.
 21. Jacka 2008, 503.
 22. Jacka 2008, 502.
 23. Wang and Dai 2013.
 24. Guo, Zheng, and Yang 2009, 155-156.

2. Understanding Women's Political Recruitment

Devising effective strategies for change requires beginning with an analysis of the status quo. Models of political recruitment typically present the path to elected office as occurring in four stages, progressing from the (1) the large number of citizens who are *eligible* to run for political office to (2) the smaller pool of citizens who *aspire* to run for political office to (3) the small group of citizens who are *nominated* to run for political office to (4) the smallest band of citizens who are elected to political office. If there are no mechanisms of distortion, the characteristics of the individuals present at each of these four stages should be roughly the same. However, this is rarely the case: "legislatures worldwide include more of the affluent than the less well-off, more men than women, more middle-aged than young, and more white-collar professionals than blue-collar workers."²⁵ These disparities are perhaps most evident in the case of women: despite being more than half of the world's population, only 22.1% of all members of parliament around the world are female.²⁶

Figure 2: The Political Recruitment Process



Breaking down the political recruitment process into these four stages yields three crucial "transition moments," which provide distinct perspectives as to why women are under-represented in politics – and in turn, which solutions are the most appropriate for enhancing women's political participation. The first transition, from eligible to aspirant, concerns the *supply* of female candidates. Supply-side explanations propose that the main reason behind women's under-representation stems from gender differences in political ambition that cause fewer women than men to consider running for political office. The second transition, from aspirant to nominee, reflects the *demand* for female candidates on the part of selectors. Demand-side accounts at

the selection stage suggest that biases against women lead political elites to nominate fewer female candidates than male candidates. The third transition, from nominee to elected official, is determined by *demand* among voters for female representatives. Demand-side explanations at the election stage imply that popular prejudices lead voters to elect men over women.

Although the supply-and-demand metaphor implicitly assumes that the “political market” operates efficiently, many economists remain doubtful, pointing to distortions that may be introduced through formal and informal rules and norms governing individual and collective behavior.²⁷ Norms and practices surrounding gender – the socially constructed differences between women and men, leading to distinct views on the proper roles of women and men – come into play in the political recruitment process.²⁸ Gender ideologies in most societies are rooted in what feminist theorists term the “public/private divide,” whereby men tend to be associated primarily with the public sphere of politics and the economy, while women are connected more closely to the private sphere of the home and family.²⁹

The public/private divide is reflected in the Chinese phrase *nan zhu wai, nu zhu nei* – variously translated into English as “man outside, woman in the home,” “men govern outside, women govern inside,” and “a man takes charge outside the household, while the woman takes charge of domestic issues.”³⁰ Due to this mentality, potential female aspirants to political office may confront lingering stereotypes – within themselves, in the eyes of gatekeepers, and among citizens – that politics is not a place for women. These challenges may be heightened when women struggle to balance work and family obligations, strengthening perceptions that they may be less committed and capable politicians.

These theoretical starting points suggest, collectively, that promoting gender equality in elected office requires strategies to *enhance the supply* of women who might be encouraged to become candidates, as well as efforts to alter the demand for female candidates and elected officials on the part of elites and voters. As the economic model proposes, the number of women nominated and elected to political office is the result of the interaction between supply and demand. Both aspects thus need to be taken into account in campaigns to enhance women’s political inclusion – and, in turn, in efforts to monitor progress in women’s political participation. To be fully effective, strategies for change must account for and seek to mitigate the power of the public/private divide, which poses metaphorical and practical challenges to women’s political participation, reducing the supply of and demand for women in politics.

2.1. TRANSITION 1: INCREASING THE SUPPLY OF POTENTIAL FEMALE CANDIDATES

(ELIGIBLE → ASPIRANT)

Two key factors shaping the supply of aspirants to public office are (1) resources, like time, money, and experience, and (2) *motivation*, such as drive, ambition, and interest in politics.³¹ Both elements inform the calculations of citizens when deciding to run – or not run – for election, requiring them to evaluate whether they are “qualified” and willing to come forward as candidates. The available scholarly evidence reveals important gender dynamics at work at this stage of the political recruitment process. A study of nearly 4000 men and women in the four professions that most often precede a career in politics in the United States – law, business, education, and political activism – found that the women were much less likely than the men to have considered running for office and declared themselves a candidate. The men and women, it is worth emphasizing, had comparable socioeconomic and professional backgrounds and similar levels of political activism and interest. Yet the women were more than twice as likely as the men to say that they were “not at all qualified” to run for office. The authors of the study attribute this gap to traditional patterns of socialization, especially gender-specific family roles and expectations, leading to sharp differences among women and men in terms of their levels of confidence, desire for achievement, and inclination to self-promote.³²

Research from other countries observes similar patterns, whereby women tend to underestimate their own qualifications. As a result, interestingly, the women elected are often more qualified in many ways their male counterparts: they have more years of prior political experience³³ and higher average levels of education.³⁴ They are also among the most diligent and active elected officials, attending more sessions, asking more questions, and producing more concrete gains for their districts.³⁵ These trends may stem, at least in part, from a perceived need by women to accumulate more experience before they believe themselves qualified to run – and once elected, to prove that they can do the job as well as any man. In other cases, elected women and men have very similar levels of objective qualifications.³⁶ Twenty years of data from Swedish local elections, moreover, finds that the quality of *men* increased after gender quotas were introduced, most likely due to increased competition among men for fewer available slots.³⁷ The international data thus suggests that stimulating women’s political participation may not only open doors for qualified women, but also raise the quality of elected officials overall.

Discourses regarding the “quality” of female candidates are pervasive in debates on women’s political participation in China.³⁸ Since the 1950s, women’s “low quality” (*suzhi di*) has been used to explain why there are few women in politics, with the concept referring not only to lower levels of education, culture, and literacy, but also to women’s own psychological internalization of inferiority, resulting in low levels of self-esteem and self-confidence. These discourses tap into related beliefs about women’s physical weakness, emotionality, and vulnerability.³⁹ The implication is a focus on women’s supposed inadequacies, rather than the gender norms and practices that maintain women’s marginalization – displacing a structural explanation for women’s under-representation with one focused on personal shortcomings.⁴⁰ This leads to the belief that women cadres must improve their own “quality” before they can be considered for political positions – a demand that is rarely made of men, whose quality is assumed or at least not questioned.⁴¹

An illustration of this view can be seen in the responses by female NPC delegates to a question posed by a foreign journalist at a March 2014 news conference, asking why there were so few women at the top of Chinese politics and state-owned companies. Li Yalan, an NPC delegate, answered: “Our male leaders are just too superb...I hope we women can be as wonderful as they are.” Zhang Hui, the deputy party secretary, similarly responded: “I am confident that when...we Chinese women have a bunch of really excellent-quality females, then the number of women in the top levels of government will rise.”⁴² A survey carried out at the provincial level in China, similarly, finds that – when asked why there had been so few female village chairpersons in recent years – most women answered that “women are of lower ability than men.”⁴³ Calls to improve women’s quality, importantly, do not question the lack of evidence for women’s poor quality – or reflect on the fact that the poor quality of men is never generalized to be a characteristic of their sex.⁴⁴

Research on voting patterns in China finds that women and men are similarly aware of the importance of voting and they apply similar criteria when selecting leaders.⁴⁵ Nonetheless, when it comes to running for local office, village women appear to have internalized their political exclusion and subordination. When asked in a survey whether they had ever thought about running for the chair position of the villagers’ committee, female respondents almost unanimously responded “never.”⁴⁶ When questioned in another survey if they had ever intended to compete as a candidate, most rural women answered “no,” and gave as their reason, “I have no ability to do that.”⁴⁷ When they do run, and even after they are elected, women report being actively discouraged from taking up political roles by family members who view their primary role to be inside the home.⁴⁸

When women do consider running for local office, they often face a distinct disadvantage compared to men, due to the common practice of marrying outside their home villages. When they move, they lose the social networks they developed during childhood – groups of classmates, family, and friends that men can mobilize to build support in elections.⁴⁹ These patterns of migration delay, if not suppress, women's participation in rural governance, leading politically inclined women to depend heavily on their husband and his family to build up the necessary "social capital" to run successfully for office in the new community.⁵⁰ In addition, women are often excluded from political cultural practices like heavy drinking, toasting, and smoking that can consolidate bonds of solidarity among men that are often necessary for political advancement.⁵¹

The women who do succeed in being elected to positions in local government tend to have higher levels of education than the average female villager,⁵² and many female village leaders interviewed in Hunan had first succeeded as entrepreneurs, with economic success appearing to expand their social networks and giving them confidence and credibility among villagers.⁵³ Yet a variety of studies also find that the few women who are elected to village committees tend to be assigned political tasks seen as linked to "women's roles," like family planning and mediating disputes. This means that women generally do not get the opportunity to accumulate experience in other areas of decision-making, at the same time that doing their jobs well – for example, by enforcing the one-child policy by levying fines – may lead them to become unpopular in the village. These trends may affect women's ability to be re-elected and advance in their political careers.⁵⁴ Altogether, these dynamics mean that the supply of women willing to come forward is likely to remain low, unless conscious efforts are made to activate women's political ambition – convincing them that, objectively, they *are* qualified to run for public office.

2.2. TRANSITION 2: ENHANCING ELITE INTEREST IN SELECTING FEMALE CANDIDATES

(ASPIRANT → CANDIDATE)

Once aspirants come forward, their selection as candidates hinges upon perceptions of their abilities, qualifications, and experience. Desired qualities for political candidates vary cross-nationally and even among political parties within the same country. These may include level of education, party service, legislative experience, speaking abilities, financial resources, political connections, kinship, name-recognition, group membership, and organizational skills.⁵⁵ Assessments of individual aspirants are strongly shaped by the preferences and opinions of political elites, who choose which candidates will be on the ballot before a single vote is cast in an election. In other words, they make the "choice before the choice," structuring the menu of candidates for voters.⁵⁶

Although selectors may justify their decisions as being based strictly on “merit,” the fact that it is generally impossible for elites to know all aspirants on a personal level means that many will look – consciously or unconsciously – to background characteristics as a proxy measure of abilities and character. These “information short-cuts” may take the form of *direct discrimination*, in which aspirants are judged on the basis of characteristics associated with their group, or *imputed discrimination*, in which aspirants are overlooked by selectors who would choose candidates from a particular group but do not, fearing voter bias against members of that group.⁵⁷ Far from being objective assessments of candidate quality, these evaluations are often influenced by the descriptive characteristics of elites themselves. Male elites, for example, have been found to express a consistent preference for candidate traits associated stereotypically with men – and qualities, incidentally, that they see in themselves.⁵⁸ Conversely, parties with greater numbers of women on their executive committees tend to elect more women, according to a twenty-year study of political parties across Western Europe.⁵⁹

Historically, political parties have tended to view women as liabilities rather than assets in the search for votes. As a result, men are much more likely than women to be encouraged by party elites to consider running for office.⁶⁰ When quotas are introduced to remedy women’s exclusion, some parties refuse to nominate the requisite number of women, place women in list positions and districts where they are unlikely to be elected, and select the female relatives of prominent male politicians.⁶¹ Elites justify their actions on the grounds that, in their view, women are less viable candidates than men. At the same time, male party members displaced as candidates as a result of quotas may set up rival candidacies as a way to embarrass the party, motivated by beliefs that they will garner more votes by virtue of being a man.⁶² The available evidence suggests that this resistance is not well-founded: when controlling for factors like the winnability of the district and the newness of the candidate, women perform



Women representatives attending the National Women's Congress in the great Hall of the People in central Beijing

equally or better than male candidates.⁶³ A growing number of parties around the world have thus come to view the nomination of female candidates as an effective way to capture greater voter support, particularly among women, transforming “woman” into a positive electoral characteristic.⁶⁴

The rapid economic development witnessed in recent years in China has expanded women’s political consciousness and motivation to participate in politics as voters, but appears to have had little or no impact on their election to positions of political responsibility.⁶⁵ Patterns in the implementation of the requirement to include “an appropriate number” of women in each village committee indicate some resistance on the part of elites to recruit and nominate female candidates. Because the law itself is ambiguous, political will plays a key role in how this provision is interpreted and put into practice: there is no clear guidance on how many women are “appropriate,” nor are there any specific methods in place to guarantee that this quota will be respected.⁶⁶ Some provinces, including Hunan, have introduced local regulations stipulating that “appropriate” means “at least one woman.” Others adopt a more ad-hoc approach, with county and township committees in charge of organizing elections encouraging villagers to nominate women in order to ensure compliance with family planning targets.⁶⁷ Still others elect not a single woman, producing a sizeable share of all-male village committees. Across these examples, there is a tendency to think about “one woman” at a ceiling rather than a baseline for women’s participation.

Control over candidate nomination has gradually opened up in China over the last 25 years, with every voter entitled to nominate primary candidates in 26 provinces and other forms of open nomination, including joint and self-nomination, permitted in seven provinces.⁶⁸ Although CCP membership is not a criterion for standing as a candidate for a village committee, the Party is nonetheless still an important channel for nomination and election, given its extensive symbolic and material resources for supporting candidates. The tendency for women to be largely under-represented in village Party branches, in turn, means that women often lack a viable institutional channel to be successful in village elections. Despite greater formalization in recent years of candidate selection criteria, towards an emphasis on promotion through the ranks,⁶⁹ however, selectors continued to mention vague criteria like “willing to serve the masses” and “should love doing things” when asked about the desirable attributes of village leaders.⁷⁰ Lack of clear requirements – together with male-dominated political structures – therefore opens up space for gendered attitudes and beliefs to affect the nomination of candidates.

The line between who is and who is not part of the elites in China is not always clear, but the assessments and surveys conducted by Women’s Federations in China provide some indications. A survey conducted by the Heilongjiang Women’s Federation in Heilongjiang province in 2015 found that if leaders and decision makers at the county, township or village level recognize the ability of women and encourage women to participate in politics, they can play a very positive role in enhancing women’s

participation. At the village level, resistance against women's political participation comes largely from members of the village committee, instead of villagers. At the township and county levels, some township cadres believe that enhancing women's participation at the village level could destabilize village governance and therefore resist change. This is particularly true for considerably wealthy villages.

2.3. TRANSITION 3: GAINING SUPPORT AMONG VOTERS FOR ELECTING WOMEN

(CANDIDATE → ELECTED)

Elections constitute the final transition in the political recruitment process, as citizens cast their votes to elect the members of a political assembly. As noted above, however, the range of voter choice is limited to picking among the available alternatives: those who select the candidates make the "choice before the choice," determining the list of candidates up for election. Although some early academic research found that the public was reluctant to vote for female candidates,⁷¹ this explanation for why women are under-represented in electoral politics has largely been rejected by the evidence. Indeed, studies find that voters not only vote for male and female candidates at equal rates, but may even vote in greater numbers for women over men.⁷² Moreover, cross-national survey data show that both men and women believe that political institutions are more legitimate when they include a larger share of women.⁷³

Nonetheless, this fact has not prevented this view from being expressed by elites and the mass media in many countries when discussing the electoral prospects of women. This imputed discrimination against female candidates on the part of voters, in turn, has served to justify overlooking women who might otherwise prove to be very viable candidates – a relic of elite bias, not voter bias, against women. This is true even in countries where citizens may hold very stereotyped views about men's and women's roles: party allegiance generally trumps negative attitudes towards gender equality when deciding to vote or not vote for a particular female candidate.⁷⁴

In China, cultural attitudes – "remnants of the feudal past" – are often blamed for women's low levels of political participation. Survey data from one county, for example, reveals that 73% of respondents, male and female, felt that "participating in politics is men's business."⁷⁵ Ironically, the move to more "market solutions" may have contributed to the resurgence of traditional cultural prejudices against women in public life.⁷⁶ In the popular imagination, this problem has been linked especially with national minority populations, who are believed to be more bound by "tradition." The accuracy of this view, however, is refuted by evidence showing that minority women actually have a higher proportional representation than Han women.⁷⁷ Further, blaming the legacy of the past "effectively distances the current social and political system from responsibility for the current prejudices."⁷⁸

Gender stereotyping does appear to play a role in the opportunities – or lack of opportunities – given to the women elected and nominated as candidates. Women are much less likely than men to occupy top positions of political responsibility, with female leaders overwhelmingly holding positions as deputy rather than as primary leaders.⁷⁹ This second-tier status is compounded by the tendency to place women in policy roles based on stereotypes about what constitutes “women’s work,” like family planning, health, education, children, and conflict resolution.⁸⁰ Yet these patterns are due, again, to decisions made by political elites – not voters themselves. The only evidence to corroborate potential voter bias against women is a survey on village election finding that female citizens tended to ask men for advice when casting their vote, leading the authors to conclude that women may be socialized into following male-dominated public opinion.⁸¹ This does not conclusively demonstrate, however, that voters are biased in any systematic way against female candidates. A survey on women’s empowerment conducted by the Shanxi Women’s Federation in 2014 gives indications that in fact, under certain circumstances, the opposite could be true: The findings show that if the former male leader did not do a good job, women are more likely to be both nominated and elected. If voters are very disappointed with the previous male leaders and want to see a change, they may prefer female candidates over men.

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25. Norris, 1997, p. 6
 26. See <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm> (accessed 5 May 2015).
 27. North 1990
 28. Krook 2010
 29. Elstain 1981
 30. Howell 2002; Jacka 2008; Wang and Dai 2013.
 31. Norris and Lovenduski 1995.
 32. Lawless and Fox 2005.
 33. Nugent and Krook forthcoming; O’Brien 2012.
 34. Sater 2012.
 35. Anzia and Berry 2011; Nugent and Krook forthcoming.
 36. Allen, Cutts, and Campbell 2014; Franceschet and Piscopo 2012; Murray 2010.
 37. Besley et al, 2013.
 38. Discussions of “quality” are not restricted to women, but have also appeared in relation to a host of groups that were previously guaranteed representation in various types of political bodies in China (O’Brien and Li 1993).
 39. Howell 2002.
 40. Howell 2002; Jacka 2008.
 41. Edwards 2007; Howell 2006.
 42. Tatlow 2014.
 43. Guo, Zheng, and Yang 2009, 160.
 44. Edwards 2007.
 45. Guo, Zheng, and Yang 2009.
 46. Wang and Dai 2013.
 47. Guo, Zheng, and Yang 2009, 161.
 48. Guo, Zheng, and Yang 2009.
 49. Howell 2006.
 50. Wand and Dai 2013.
 51. Howell 2006.
 52. Wang and Dai 2013.
 53. Lalkaka 2013.
 54. Howell 2006; Rosen 1995.
 55. Rahat and Hazan, 2001
 56. Rahat 2007.
 57. Norris and Lovenduski 1995.
 58. Niven 1998.
 59. Kittilson 2006.
 60. Lawless and Fox 2005.
 61. Franceschet and Piscopo 2014; Krook 2009; Murray, Krook, and Opello 2012.

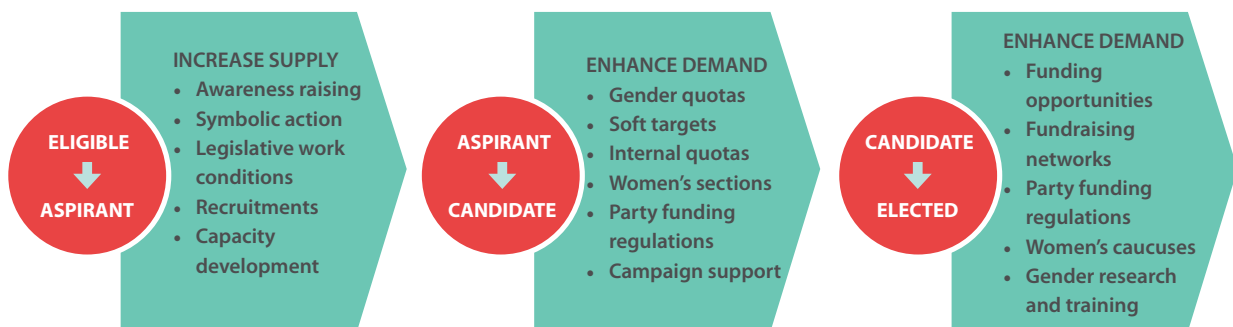
62. Cutts, Childs, and Fieldhouse 2008; Frechette et al 2008.
63. Murray 2008; Nugent and Krook forthcoming.
64. Kittilson 2006; Matland and Studlar 1996.
65. Guo, Zheng, and Yang 2009.
66. Wang and Dai 2013.
67. Howell 2006.
68. O'Brien and Han 2009.
69. Manion 2008.
70. Howell 2006, 612.
71. Ekstrand and Eckert 1981.
72. Black and Erickson 2003; Murray, Krook, and Opello 2012; Norris, Vallance, and Lovenduski 1992.
73. Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005.
74. Matland and Tezcür 2011.
75. Wang and Dai 2013.
76. Rosen 1995.
77. Edwards 2007, 385; Rosen 1995, 324.
78. Edwards 2007, 386.
79. Howell 2002; Jacka 2008.
80. Guo, Zheng, and Yang 2009; Rosen 1995.
81. Guo, Zheng, and Yang 2009.

3. Strategies to Increase Women's Political Participation

The political recruitment model presents a framework for understanding the current situation of women and politics, as well as for strategizing ways to alter the status quo and to monitor progress in women's political participation. Identifying three transition moments – shaped by the supply of potential female aspirants and the demand for female candidates on the part of elites and voters – suggests that multiple strategies, tackling each of these stages, may be required to make the greatest and most enduring gains in women's political participation. The doubling of the world average of women in national parliaments over the last twenty years suggests that dramatic changes are possible through immediate, concrete interventions to promote women as political actors – rather than simply having to wait for the fruits of broader social, economic, and political transformations. Indeed, as research on China and the rest of the world shows,⁸² economic development on its own has not resulted in the greater presence of women in elected political bodies.

The target of 30% female representation, identified as a goal in the Beijing Platform for Action, has now been achieved by more than 40 countries – up from only five states in 1995. By early 2015, moreover, 11 countries had elected more than 40% women parliamentarians, including three that elected 50% or more.⁸³ The most successful cases reveal concerted efforts by governments, political parties, civil society organizations, and – in some cases – international partners, to devise strategies that enhance both the supply of and demand for female candidates.⁸⁴ The basic elements already exist in the Chinese case, with the ACWF and its local offices implementing various projects over the years to enhance women's political participation, with overseas donor agencies playing a growing role over the last ten years in efforts to stimulate rural women's political participation in particular.⁸⁵

Figure 3: International Best Practices for Promoting Women's Political Participation



Source: Krook and Norris 2014.

3.1. WOMEN-ORIENTED SUPPLY-SIDE STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

The **eligible → aspirant transition** requires getting women to believe that they have the qualifications and resources to run for office. A key barrier is overcoming perceptions that women do not belong in politics. One way to do this is through *awareness-raising* and *monitoring*, highlighting the exclusion of women and the ways in which women may contribute to political debates. Civil society actors are well-placed to organize such efforts, but these campaigns may also benefit from financial and moral support from the state. A related tactic that can be undertaken by parliaments is *symbolic action* within political institutions recognizing the roles that women do play in political life. Combined with reforms to *legislative working conditions*, these steps can make politics more 'women-friendly' by suggesting that this arena is open to and values women's participation.

A second obstacle in the move from eligible to aspirant concerns women's interest and self-confidence in pursuing a political career. Civil society organizations and political parties have the most to contribute in this respect. The first task is to identify women who might be excellent candidates, but may have thus far been overlooked by existing political networks. This can be done via various kinds of *recruitment and outreach initiatives*, assembling lists of names through personal contacts, group mailings, or even on-line suggestion boxes. The next step is to cultivate the skills, knowledge, and connections these women might need in order to wage a political campaign, in turn inspiring confidence in their own abilities to stand as candidates. These goals are best served through *capacity development programs* for women from different ages and backgrounds, which might also include a mentoring component. Together, these various "transition one" strategies can enhance the supply of female candidates, undermining dynamics of personal socialization and public prejudice to produce a more supportive environment for women to pursue a career in politics.

Supply-side initiatives are particularly well-developed in the **United States**, where gender quotas – the preferred strategy for promoting women's political participation in much of the rest of the world – are unlikely to reach the political agenda.⁸⁶ A necessary first step towards greater gender equality in elected office is to identify and encourage women to run for office, whether in the immediate or distant future. A recruitment initiative along these lines was the 2012 Project, a non-partisan campaign initiated by the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University.⁸⁷ The campaign targeted women aged 45 and older, believing that women this age bracket were more likely to be at the top of their professions, hold fewer family responsibilities, and be financially independent. These women were then connected to leadership institutes, think tanks, training programs, and fundraising networks.

Running Start, an organization based in Washington, DC, centers its work on a younger demographic, focusing on getting more women engaged in politics and elected to

office at a younger age. Its Young Women's Political Leadership Program introduces secondary school girls to the importance of women in leadership and trains them in public speaking, networking, on-camera media training, and platform development. The Running Start/Wal-Mart Star Fellowship places seven university-aged women in the offices of female representatives for a semester long internship, with each Friday spent in a seminar learning the "nuts and bolts" of political office.⁸⁸ The program thus provides mentoring and networking opportunities, in addition to illuminating potential role models.

Capacity building initiatives have developed exponentially since the 1980s, when only a few programs existed worldwide. Globally, such programs are now run by non-partisan networks, university centers, and even international organizations. In the **United States**, the Rutgers' Center for American Women and Politics runs a number of programs for women interesting in running for office. The Ready to Run program is divided into two parts, one tailored to women who plan to run in the near future and one for those who are thinking about running sometime in the future. Additional sessions are targeted towards African-American, Hispanic, and Asian-American women, to address potential group-specific challenges in the campaign process.⁸⁹

Finally, fundraising initiatives seek to ensure that women have the financial resources to wage successful campaigns. Perhaps the most well-known initiative in the United States is EMILY's List, a group founded in 1985 which recruits and trains women, but more uniquely, publicizes their names to solicit campaign contributions from supporters across the country.⁹⁰ Recognizing that early campaign money is crucial for establishing the viability of a political campaign, EMILY is an acronym which stands for "Early Money Is Like Yeast" – because it makes the dough [another world for "money"] rise. The group claims to have helped elect 87 pro-choice Democratic women members of Congress, 16 senators, 9 governors, and over 500 women to state and local offices.⁹¹



Training of trainers workshop on women's leadership

In **Canada**, the Liberal Party sought to encourage women to come forward as candidates by establishing an internal party fund to assist women with their campaign costs. This strategy recognized that women often lack access to the formal and informal networks that supply campaign funds and, moreover, may have additional expenses not usually incurred by men, for example to help with household tasks and childcare.⁹² The money is raised through fundraising events, direct mailings, and the internet, and the party maintains centralized control in determining who is prioritized in receiving contributions. Female candidates can also be reimbursed up to CAD 500 for childcare expenses incurred when seeking a nomination, CAD 500 for travel when campaigning in geographically large constituencies, and a further CAD 500 when pursuing a nomination in districts where an incumbent is retiring.⁹³ These provisions recognize that women often assume primary parenting responsibilities, while seeking to encourage them to contest “winnable” districts.

Some of these strategies have been pursued in **China**, but might be revisited or expanded based on ideas from international best practices. To respond to concerns about the “quality” of women, the ACWF has established databases of potential female leaders and provided education and political training for women.⁹⁴ Training opportunities have also enabled women from different villages to share experiences and gain confidence in pursuing a political career.⁹⁵ In many cases, the trainings have involved and been supported by women’s research institutions. The content of the trainings have largely focused on communicating knowledge about the political system and introducing women to concepts related to gender equality. The mid-term evaluation of the “Enhancing Women’s Political Participation in China” program, therefore, suggested adding a greater focus on more concrete and practical knowledge, like campaign skills needed to get elected and governance skills that might help women perform better in their positions and gain re-election.⁹⁶ To ensure a larger pool of future female candidates, the ACWF has also engaged in a mentoring program to influence young women to become more involved in politics. Another possibility, inspired by the observation that many women who had become village leaders had previously found success in the business world, would be to reach out to female entrepreneurs and businesswomen who might be recruited to run for office and win.

A project conducted in Heyang, funded by the Ford Foundation and run by West Women, a Chinese women’s NGO, together with the county office of the ACWF, illustrates a comprehensive supply-side strategy to strengthen the participation of women in local governance. Working in sixteen townships and 100 villages, West Women and the Women’s Federation in Heyang approached women who might be good potential candidates, focusing on those who were relatively well educated, had a good reputation in the village, and had previous experience in the public sphere (for example, as a WF representative or family planning worker or someone with a family business). Mobilizing all their connections, they went from door to door to persuade

individual women and their families, as well as local party cadres, that these women should run for office. Many women expressed reluctance to run, and some of their family members sought to persuade them not to run. Many also said, however, that until the WF exposed them to the idea, it had never occurred to them that women could be village cadres. Alongside this time-intensive recruitment effort, the project held training sessions with more than 250 women to develop their gender and political awareness, as well as self-confidence and ability to participate in politics. Together, these initiatives result in 40 women being nominated for positions as heads of village committees and another 368 being nominated as committee members. In the 2005 elections, 20 women were elected as village heads and several villages elected their first ever female leaders. Still, more than 60% of all villages failed to elect at least one woman to their party branch.⁹⁷

3.2. ELITE-TARGETED DEMAND-SIDE STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Interventions at the **aspirant** → **candidate** stage seek to compel gatekeepers – most often, party elites – to revise their implicit or explicit biases against potential female candidates. Electoral gender quotas operate primarily at this moment in the recruitment process. These measures may take one of three forms: reserved seats, which set aside seats for women in political assemblies; party quotas, which involve pledges by individual political parties to include a certain percentage of women among their candidates; and legislative quotas, which entail reforms requiring all parties to nominate a minimum proportion of women.⁹⁸ In countries with reserved seats, parties have an incentive to put forward female candidates in order to maximize their seat allotment in political assemblies. In the case of quotas applying to the number of candidates, parties have more leeway to comply with quota regulations. An important obstacle, as noted above, is that elites may believe that women are not viable candidates. As a result, elites may seek to mitigate the impact of quota regulations by taking advantages of loopholes and other structures to elect fewer women.

A number of strategies can help combat the perception that women are not desirable candidates. Within the party, *soft targets* and *women's sections* can expose male elites to party women and afford women leadership opportunities crucial to accumulating political experience. State actors can also play a significant role when parties are reluctant, by using *party funding regulations* and *campaign support opportunities* to create incentives or impose sanctions on parties to encourage them to include women. As a group, therefore, these “transition two” measures address the demand for female candidates, employing both direct and indirect strategies to combat outdated beliefs about women being ineffective or unqualified candidates.

The rapid diffusion of gender quotas around the globe – and their mixed numerical effects – provides a great deal of evidence regarding the most effective quota interventions. First, details of quota policies – namely differences in their wording, requirements, sanctions, and perceived legitimacy – are vital in shaping their impact. In **France**, for example, financial penalties associated with the 50 percent quota law have been found to create distinct incentives for parties of different sizes: larger parties tend to ignore the requirements, while smaller parties are more likely to comply, for the simple reason that the latter are under greater pressure to maximize the amount of state funding they receive.⁹⁹

Second, how quotas “fit” with other political institutions influence how they might be implemented in practice. Party and legislative quotas often have the greatest impact in countries with proportional representation electoral systems with closed party lists and high district magnitudes. In **Sweden**, for example, multiple seats are available in each constituency and candidates are elected from lists put forward by political parties. In contrast, it is more difficult to apply quotas where only one seat is available per district, unless the quota entails reserved seats, as in **Tanzania**.

Third, political will is decisive in determining the success of quota policies. Party elites in most countries are most directly responsible for variations in quota impact, since effective application of quotas largely hinges around their willingness to recruit female candidates. However, other actors may play a direct or indirect role in enforcing quota provisions, including women’s organizations, national and international courts, and ordinary citizens, all of whom may monitor party compliance with quota measures in ways that lead elites to honor, and possibly even exceed, quota requirements.¹⁰⁰

In addition to quotas, a number of non-quota measures have also been pursued, primarily by women’s wings within political parties, to enhance elite demand for female candidates. In the **United Kingdom**, women in the Conservative Party, which does not use gender quotas, established the Women2Win initiative in 2005 to elect more Conservative women to parliament by “sourcing and helping more women of high calibre into government.” The group’s aim is two-fold. On the one hand, it seeks to promote women as potential candidates for the party through support, advice, and training in public speaking and media skills, as well as through networking events for women at all levels of politics. On the other hand, it seeks to convince the party’s grassroots associations of “the benefits of putting their trust in female candidates.”¹⁰¹ In this sense, Women2Win seeks to promote capacity building among women and elites, transforming how both sides view the value of having more female candidates.

Women inside the Social Democratic Party in **Sweden** employed a similarly transformative strategy, albeit taking a much more long-term approach. They

first proposed instituting party quotas in the 1920s, but this idea was rejected by the party at the time. During the 1930s, however, they succeeded in gaining one “obligatory woman” on the party’s various electoral lists. They continued to call for quotas throughout the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s, and finally gained a commitment to include women in greater numbers as candidates in the 1970 elections. During the 1970s and 1980s, the party adopted a softer recommendation and then a stronger target of nominating at least 40% and no more than 60% of either sex. These policies evolved into a formal 50-50 quota policy in the early 1990s.¹⁰² This example highlights the importance of ongoing mobilization over time in generating a stronger gender consciousness among party selectors, culminating in a commitment to fully equal representation between women and men.

The predominance of the “at least one woman” strategy in local politics in **China** suggests that this last example may provide inspiration for deepening the commitment – legal and personal – of elites towards the greater political participation of women. Such an evolution is not guaranteed, however, and as noted above, many political organs continue to lack the inclusion of even one woman. Some positive developments can be witnessed, nonetheless, in two of the pilot provinces in the “Enhancing Women’s Political Participation in China” program. The Women’s Development Plan for Hunan (2011-2015), for example, specified for the first time quotas for women’s participation in village governance, requiring that women constitute no less than 30% of members of village committees, no less than 5% of village committee heads in the province, and “about 50%” of members of village representative assemblies. For city, prefecture, and county governments, the plan requires that there be at least one woman in a senior leadership position and that this number should steadily increase over time.¹⁰³ The plan does not, however, include very clear incentive or punishment mechanisms that would encourage and support implementation of the quotas.

Another option for promoting women’s political participation is to reserve a certain position for a woman in a political organ, for example, “women’s representative in village committee”. This measure can immediately increase the number of women in village committees in the short term. However, in the long term, it can also limit the way in which women participate in politics. If women can only be elected as a “women’s representative” to do “women’s work”, they may be viewed as incapable to fulfill other roles and positions in village committees, such as village head, secretary or accountant. Moreover, because the mandate of women’s representative is often associated with or an extension of their role in households, this system can reinforce gender stereotypes and limit the space of women in political participation.

3.3. VOTER-TARGETED DEMAND-SIDE STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

The **candidate** → **elected** transition involves ensuring that women have the support from voters to win. In addition to “transition one” strategies focused on expanding women’s resources to wage successful campaigns, and “transition two” interventions aimed at ensuring that elites nominate and place women in “winnable” positions, this stage entails targeting voters to raise awareness on the need for gender equality and cultivate favorable public opinion towards women as political leaders. Changing traditional gender stereotypes can increase the number of women considering a political career, as well as alter how voters and political parties view female candidates. Efforts at this “transition three” moment, therefore, can feed back into the first two stages of the political recruitment process.

Strategies for combating such stereotypes by reshaping public attitudes towards women in politics include *media- and social media-based campaigns* aimed at changing how citizens think about gender and politics. A related tactic is the *generation and publication of data* on women’s participation, raising public awareness of women’s exclusion and the need to take steps to ameliorate it.

Media campaigns are quite varied, but share the basic goal of highlighting the current lack of gender balance and the need to elect more women. In **Turkey**, the Association to Support Women Candidates, KA.DER, has waged a series of public campaigns. In preparation for general elections in 2007, for example, the group created posters of well-known businesswomen and female artists wearing a tie or mustache, asking “Is it necessary to be a man to enter parliament?” In the run-up to local elections in 2009, they used billboards depicting the three male leaders of the main parties shoulder to shoulder, with text implying that the three were united in preferring male candidates over female ones.¹⁰⁴

Data collection can also be a powerful tool in cultivating impetus for change. The data produced by university research centers,¹⁰⁵ as well as international organizations like the **Inter-Parliamentary Union**,¹⁰⁶ have been instrumental in raising awareness on the extent of women’s exclusion – as well as where and when major gains have been made.

In **China**, the ACWF is well-positioned to engage in public awareness campaigns. In addition to its own publishing house, producing journals and magazines, the group has opportunities to influence the public through a special monthly column in the *People’s Daily* and special women’s television programs.¹⁰⁷ As part of a project in Heyang, funded by the Ford Foundation and conducted by West Women, a Chinese women’s

NGO, together with the county office of the ACWF, a public education campaign was organized to promote gender equality and the importance of women's political participation, using a variety of formats and media of communication: messages on television, the internet, and newspapers; posters and slogans painted on village buildings; and plays in the local style of traditional opera by playwrights and actors recruited for the project.¹⁰⁸ Additionally, the ACWF is working with the media itself, seeking to cultivate greater gender awareness in political reporting.

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82. Guo, Zheng, and Yang 2009; Matland 1998.
83. See www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/WIP20Y-en.pdf
84. Krook and Norris 2014.
85. Jacka 2008.
86. Krook 2006.
87. <http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu>
88. <http://www.runningstartonline.org/>
89. http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/education_training/ReadytoRun/Diversity_Initiative.php
90. <http://www.emilyslist.org>
91. http://emilyslist.org/who/we_are_emily/
92. Sidhu and Meena 2007, 10-11.
93. UNDP-NDI 2011, 28.
94. Edwards 2007; Howell 2002.
95. Howell 2006.
96. Lalkaka 2013.
97. Jacka 2008.
98. Krook 2009.
99. Murray, Krook, and Opello 2012.
100. Krook 2009.
101. <http://www.women2win.com>
102. Krook 2009.
103. Lalkaka 2013.
104. <http://www.ka-der.org.tr/>
105. See for example http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/fast_facts/index.php
106. The Inter-Parliamentary Union is a global inter-parliamentary institution established in 1889. It has 166 members and 10 associate members <http://www.ipu.org/english/whatipu.htm> For data on national parliaments, see <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm> and <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif-arc.htm>
107. Howell 2003.
108. Jacka 2008.

4. Tracking Progress and Adjusting Strategies



Breaking the political recruitment process down into its successive stages reveals three outcomes required to make substantial gains in women's political participation: increasing women's political resources and ambitions, revising selectors' attitudes towards female candidates, and changing public attitudes towards women in politics. The effects of working toward each of these individual goals is likely to be amplified when multiple strategies are pursued simultaneously, at the same time that the impact of specific interventions may be muted if there is lack of progress in another area. Gaining a clearer picture of progress would be enhanced by data disaggregated by both sex and age, capturing differences among women and men as well among younger and older women.

Monitoring women's political participation is a relatively new idea, with most existing data measuring progress and setbacks coming in the form of *statistics on the share of women* elected from one election to another. Perhaps the most well-known example is the monitoring work of the **Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)**, which maintains a website ranking the share of women in national parliaments in 190 countries worldwide – data on both lower and upper chambers that is updated every few months as new elections are held.¹⁰⁹ The IPU also uses this data to generate world and regional averages, enabling not just comparisons among countries but also regions and the world as a whole.¹¹⁰ More recently, the IPU began to publish yearly reports, summarizing the impact of elections over the last year in terms of their impact on women's parliamentary representation. The most recent report also included an analysis of changes over the last twenty years, marking the 20th anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action.

Monitoring women's political participation in a more comprehensive fashion, however, requires: (1) exploring trends beyond simply the electoral moment, opening up for close examination what occurs during the aspirant and candidate selection stages; (2) searching for both quantitative and qualitative indicators, with these two sets of data together providing a richer picture of progress and setbacks in women's political participation; and (3) probing both traditional and less conventional sources of data, given innovations in communications, in particular, presenting new opportunities to

learn about trends in the political world. In providing a holistic approach to measuring trends at all stages of the political recruitment process, this methodology can help assess programming, track progress, and design new interventions, strengthened by careful attention to evidence and impact.

A variety of monitoring tools can be utilized to capture the data for these indicators. *Quantitative data* might be collected through street, phone, or postal surveys of female candidates and elected officials, political elites, and the general public; self-reporting from organizations engaged in efforts to train and mentor women on the number of programs and participants; follow-up surveys of women participating in training and mentoring programs, one or two years after finishing the programs; and interviews with the organizations involved in awareness-raising regarding the reach of their campaigns. Quantitative monitoring efforts could also make use of existing official statistics. Electoral statistics can provide data on the share of women standing as candidates and elected to political office. Similar, statistics on village committees can be used to calculate the number of women in local government and the roles they hold in these bodies, as well as to determine the number of all-male committees.

Qualitative data can be gathered through interviews with female aspirants, candidates, and elected officials to learn more about their motivations, experiences, and resources and support received. This data might also be collected through more participatory research tools like focus groups, where women – elected or not – might be brought together to discuss the challenges and successes of women standing for political office. Pre- and post-training questionnaires could also provide insight into the concrete skills gained over the course of training programs, as well as suggest new avenues for programming. A focus group approach could be employed to gather information from political elites and/or the general public to learn more about the impact of trainings and awareness-raising campaigns on views towards women's political participation. Elites could also be surveyed to gain insight into their efforts to recruit women as candidates and the impact of training programs directed at changing elite attitudes, as well as to gauge elite support for extending and raising gender quotas. A policy review, finally, could be used to gather information on the presence and nature of quota policies at the provincial and local levels.

4.1. MONITORING THE SUPPLY OF POTENTIAL FEMALE CANDIDATES

The supply of female aspirants to political office is shaped by women's access to resources, like time, money, and experience, and their levels of motivation, such as drive, ambition, and interest in politics. Although both of these elements may be difficult to measure directly, it is possible to devise indicators to monitor the effectiveness of particular interventions intended to increase the supply of female candidates and the existence of changes, if any, in the numbers of women coming

forward to run for and win public office. Ideally, this data would also be broken down by age to capture the degree to which younger women are the focus of outreach, training, and encouragement.

4.1.1. RECRUITMENT INITIATIVES

Survey evidence from the **United States**, together with anecdotal evidence from around the world, suggests that women who run for office usually come forward as candidates upon the recommendation of someone else. This can be a time-intensive process: a study finds, for example, that women need to be asked on average seven times before they will agree to be considered as candidates for political office.¹¹¹ Together, all of this information suggests that women often need to be asked and encouraged – and asked and encouraged often – to stand as political candidates.

Party women's organizations, including the ACWF in **China**, have developed databases of potential female leaders as a means to identify women and provide their names at candidate selection time. A number of university research centers in the **United States**, similarly, maintain such databases. The Center for Women, Politics, and Public Policy at the University of Massachusetts-Boston, famously sent three-ring binders filled with information on a long list of women, along with their qualifications, to Mitt Romney upon his election as governor of Massachusetts in 2003. The intention was to remind the new governor that there were many qualified women whom he could appoint to serve on his cabinet, at a time when the majority of other names being considered were almost exclusively male. The strategy succeeded, as he appointed a large number of women to senior leadership positions in the state.

The Sue Shear Institute for Women in Public Life at the University of Missouri-St. Louis similarly maintains a "Talent Bank," which it created in 1996 as a resource for those interested in appointing qualified women to public boards and commissions in the state of Missouri. It works actively with elected officials and other authorities charged with filling these positions to connect them to women interested in such an appointment. In recent years, the Institute has extended its mission to include compiling information on state boards and listing their vacant posts to encourage more women to seek appointments for these positions. As part of this work, it maintains up-to-date statistics on the current gender composition of every board and commission, as a means to monitor how the share of women is changing over time. The Institute publishes all of this information in hard copy and on its website.¹¹²

These two examples speak to the *power of information* in ensuring that women are made aware of opportunities and that those in positions of power have the opportunity to consider well-qualified female candidates that may not previously have been known to them. A common response to calls to recruit more women, indeed, is often

that “there are no qualified women.” Identifying such women enable this objection to be overcome by providing information and contact details to interested elites. Yet, to date, there has not been much data on exactly how effective such strategies are. To be sure that recruitment strategies are working as they are intended, quantitative indicators could be used to track *how many women have been approached by the initiative, how many have agreed to share their details for the database, how many have subsequently be recruited as candidates, and how many have been successful in gaining election or nomination*. Qualitative information could also be collected on the *women who have not agreed* to be included in the database, or accept a position as a candidate or elected official, to learn more about their objections and what else might be done to attract them.

Indicators:

- » How many women have been approached by the initiative as potential aspirants (quantitative)
- » How many women have agreed to apply to be a candidate (quantitative)
- » How many of these women have been recruited as candidates (quantitative)
- » How many of these women have gained a nomination (quantitative)
- » How many of these women have been elected (quantitative)
- » Who are the women who have not agreed to apply to be candidate and what are their objections (qualitative)

4.1.2. TRAINING AND MENTORING PROGRAMS

Capacity-building initiatives are common around the world as a means to equip women with the skills and contacts they might need to wage a political campaign. These initiatives have been organized by a wide range of different groups, including civil society organizations, political parties, and even international organizations and NGOs. Despite their prevalence as a strategy to promote women’s political participation, little is known about the effectiveness and impact of these training and mentoring programs in shaping women’s electoral prospects, in terms of giving women the tools they need to run for office and win.

To facilitate the sharing of information on best practices in training programs, the **National Democratic Institute (NDI)**¹¹³ published comprehensive training materials on-line in 2013, drawing on its work around the globe over the last thirty years to increase women’s voice in politics in **Central and Eastern Europe**, the **Middle East** and

North Africa, and Southern and East Africa.¹¹⁴ The materials include practical exercises, presentations, and handouts designed to increase the quality of training programs to enhance women's political participation. The fourteen modules address skills that women often require when thinking about launching a political career, including campaign management, fund-raising, political party participation, communications, management, and leadership. The NDI training manual outlines how to develop a training program, organize effective workshops, and measure their effectiveness.

The NDI manual proposes that monitoring and evaluation should be incorporated into all phases of the training program to ensure that adequate time, personnel, and financial resources are allocated to this task. It proposes a five step monitoring and evaluation process. First, detail the program's expected results and identify key indicators. Second, determine what methods will be used to collect this data – for example, written evaluation forms, staff-led interviews, or roundtable discussions – and when to use them. Third, establish a timeline for the evaluation process and allocate resources for implementation. Fourth, prepare materials and tools based on the evaluation strategy – for example, the questions and questionnaire forms. Fifth, identify measurable, achievable results and tailor the monitoring exercise to capture those results.

On a practical level, the NDI training manual highlights the benefits of collecting immediate feedback and ways in which this information can be collected – for example, informally during breaks, at the end of each day, and during the closing session. The NDI also suggests that participants can be asked for written feedback through daily and/or final evaluations and in before- and after-questionnaires, or alternatively, can be interviewed following the workshop if they are unable or uncomfortable giving written feedback. The aim of the exercise is to evaluate the degree to which participants gained new knowledge and skills, as well as their views on the structure and content of the training itself.¹¹⁵

In order to gain the practical skills needed to run effectively, however, women also need to know where training programs exist and how to apply to participate. To this end, the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University in the **United States** developed an interactive on-line database of country-wide resources to support women interested in running for political office.¹¹⁶ These resources include leadership development courses, campaign training initiatives, and organizations and programs committed to supporting and encouraging women in politics, at both the national and state levels. The database was developed within the framework of the Political Parity project, a nonpartisan initiative of the Hunt Alternatives Fund.¹¹⁷

In addition to civil society groups, governments and political parties may also provide training programs. A series of legal reforms in **Mexico** between 2007 and 2008

culminated in a new article in the electoral code mandating that each party designate at least 2% of its public funding for training, promotion, and development of women's political leadership – a mandate that was increased to 3% with new reforms in 2014. Because it was not clear how these funds were being spent, a network of women, 2% and More Women in Politics, pressured the accounting unit of the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE) to scrutinize more carefully the receipts provided by political parties. This collaboration led to the publication of a guide to the 2% rule published on IFE's website and the creation of a toolkit for both the auditors and women's groups with specific indicators to help monitor party compliance. This example points to the potential cooperation between women's groups and government agencies to ensure compliance with state regulations at the grassroots level – in this case, related to training programs.

Finally, mentoring programs have grown in popularity in recent years. A particularly well-designed program with a monitoring component is the one organized by the Fabian Women's Network (FWN) in the **United Kingdom**. Importantly, the program is designed for women who want to pursue a career in politics or in public life more broadly. Highlighting five skills needed to succeed in political and public life, the FWN asks potential mentees to identify which of these skills they most need help with, at the same time that potential mentors are asked which skills they believe they are most proficient in – and then partnerships are formed, matching these areas to ensure that the mentoring relationship is as productive as possible. Over ten months, participants meet with their mentor, as well as take part in organized training and networking activities, including a study trip to parliament.

In addition to asking each cohort to rate itself on a range of skills before and after the program, after two years the FWN commissioned two academics to evaluate the program in greater depth, combining interviews with more quantitative data. The resulting report found that of the group of 75 women who had received mentoring, 30 had put themselves forward as candidates for local, national, or European elections; three had been selected as Labour parliamentary candidates; several had become trustees of charities; and two had become corporate board director. The report also noted that lasting networks had emerged within and across mentoring cohorts, enabling the women to continue to support each other long after the mentoring experience had formally ended.¹¹⁸

In **China**, numerous trainings, workshops and experience sharing meetings for women have been organized over recent years, as part of the ACWF's work to promote women's political participation. In many trainings, women village leaders share their stories and give advice on how to win the support of villagers during the campaigning period.

Chinese social media networks and tools such as QQ, wechat and weibo have been used to support meeting follow-up and facilitate easy and low-cost communication between mentors and their mentees.

These various examples suggest that various training and mentoring initiatives have been highly effective in promoting women's political participation – in elected and appointed office, within political parties, and in public life more generally. These cases also demonstrate a keen awareness of the need for continuous monitoring to ensure that programming is as effective as possible, highlighting when immediate adjustments might be needed and – in the longer term – how more effective programming might be designed. Based on these experiences, some quantitative indicators could be developed to assess how accessible and useful these trainings are for participants, in terms of *how many women participated in the programs, how many of the trained women later stood as candidates or were otherwise recruited for political positions, and how many of these women were successful in winning political positions*. Qualitative indicators that could provide further information on the utility of these programs – and ways to adjust them – include information on *how participants were recruited; when, where, and for how long the training program was organized; what was included in the content of the program; and what skills were attained according to participants, comparing before and after surveys*.

Indicators:

- » When and where was the training organized, how were the participants recruited (qualitative)
- » How many women participated in the training (quantitative)
- » What was the content of the training (qualitative)
- » What skills were attained, based on pre- and post-training questionnaires (qualitative)
- » How many of the trained women ran for office, how many won (quantitative)

4.1.3. RESOURCE SUPPORT

Financial resources are crucial for women to view standing as a candidate to be a more realistic proposition. In a **global survey** of 300 MPs, lack of finances emerged as one of the most significant factors deterring women from entering politics.¹¹⁹ Women, in particular, also often struggle in balancing work and family obligations, due in large part to the tendency – and often, expectation – for women to assume most

private sphere responsibilities even as they take on public sphere roles. These patterns suggest that women, as compared to men, may require resources not immediately available to them in order to make running for political office a more viable option.

As noted above, there are a variety of strategies that have been employed around the world to increase the financial resources available to female candidates. These include fundraising networks organized by civil society, like the case of EMILY's List in the **United States**, and special political party funds to support and encourage women's candidacies, like those provided by the Liberal Party in **Canada**. These efforts, however, focus on enhancing the financial resources available to women for launching and running their political campaigns. Comparisons with the campaign resources of men, however, provide clearer insight into the challenges faced by women who decide to run for office – and the degree to which women and men enjoy conditions of equality in their pursuit of public office.

In **Brazil**, a quota law was passed in 1997, requiring that political parties reserve 30% of the positions on their electoral lists for women. Yet, in negotiations leading up to passage of the law, legislators agreed to expand the number of candidates that parties may nominate, from 120% to 150% of the total number of seats available. They are not required to nominate that many candidates, however, and lawyers for several parties argued that list positions must simply be “reserved” for women – it was not mandatory to fill these positions with female candidates. As a result, far fewer than 30% female candidates were nominated. After a change to the wording of the law in 2009, stipulating that parties must nominate women, the share of female candidates rose to 30% in the 2009 and 2014 elections, but the proportion of women elected remained largely stable, below 10% overall.

The Brazilian example suggests that parties may hesitate to nominate women, even when required by law, and – when required by law to do so – may provide fewer resources to female as compared to male candidates. This case indicates, in turn, that efforts to monitor women's political participation must consider closely the degree to which men and women enjoy equal access to the resources – time, money, and experience – needed to successfully wage a political campaign. Some quantitative indicators that could be developed in this respect include *whether women, compared to men, are similar or different in terms resources for campaigns, the rates at which they win office, and the length of time they stay in office*. Qualitative measures could include more in-depth exploration of whether women feel that they had *sufficient resources to wage an effective campaign, faced special challenges in getting these resources, or confronted challenges related to their family obligations*.

Indicators:

- » Do women and men have similar financial and material resources for their campaigns – what are the disparities, if any, in women's vs. men's resources (quantitative)
- » Were women's financial resources sufficient to wage an effective campaign (qualitative)
- » Did women face special challenges in getting financial resources (qualitative)
- » How did family obligations affect women's campaigns, positively or negatively (qualitative)
- » What are the win rates of female vs. male candidates (quantitative)
- » What are the retention rates of female vs. male office-holders (quantitative)

4.2. MONITORING ELITE DEMAND FOR FEMALE CANDIDATES

Once female aspirants come forward, their selection as candidates hinges upon perceptions of their abilities, qualifications, and experience – assessments that are often highly gendered and discriminatory. A straightforward measure of whether electoral opportunities are fair and equal is whether women are selected and elected at similar rates to men. However, there are also more subtle trends that can capture whether or not discrimination against women occurs in the candidate selection process.

4.2.1. RECRUITMENT INITIATIVES

Although women often need to be asked before they agree to stand as a political candidate, men are more likely to receive a suggestion to run, especially from party elites.¹²⁰ One exception is when women are actively recruited to fulfill what are seen to be particularly feminine political assignments. In government cabinets, for example, many studies find that when women are appointed to cabinet positions, they tend to be assigned "feminine" portfolios like women's affairs, children, health, and social welfare.¹²¹ In other words, women's participation involves "de-gendering" (including women in a position, cabinet minister, which has historically been seen as "male") and then "re-gendering" (assigning them tasks seen as being naturally "feminine").¹²²

One way to foster elite encouragement of female candidacies is to provide training programs for elites on the importance of women's political participation. Raising the

gender consciousness of elites – who are usually male – can be vital for changing attitudes towards women as potential political candidates and leaders. Such trainings can explicitly address myths about women not being “qualified,” as well as highlight the gains to the party and the country of women’s greater political participation. In **Vietnam**, for example, a module of the Strategic Leaders Training Program – a several months-long training course targeting senior and future leaders at the party, national, provincial, and local levels at the Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics – included a module to this effect in its program in 2015. Participants were presented with statistics on women in politics globally, data on the effectiveness and broader impact of gender quotas, and reasons that men and boys should engage in efforts to promote gender equality.

This trend, as noted above, has been observed in the case of **China**, whereby the few women in the village committees tend to be assigned tasks associated particularly with women, like implementing family planning policies and mediating disputes within the village. These symbolic connections have contradictory effects on women in politics, who may as a result be actively recruited to run for a place on the village committee – but then be relegated to filling a narrowly defined “female role.”

Resistance to “de-gendering,” the first step in this process, can also be witnessed in China. As noted above, the legal requirement to include “an appropriate number” of women on village committees is ambiguous: there is no clear guidance on how many women are “appropriate,” nor are there any specific methods in place to guarantee that this quota will be respected.¹²³ Some provinces, including Hunan, have introduced local regulations stipulating that “appropriate” means “at least one woman.” However, there continue to be a large number of all-male village committees, suggesting that – at least in the eyes of some – “appropriate” means “none.”



Villagers are getting their ballots

In the 1980s, a similar measure – the share of all-male local councils – was employed by activists across the five Nordic countries – **Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden** – to measure progress in women's political participation at the local level. In the 1960s, a large number of local councils in all five countries had only male members. By 1985, however, Denmark and Sweden had achieved a level of “zero” all-male councils.¹²⁴

These various patterns, observed in numerous case studies of women's political roles in China,¹²⁵ suggest that monitoring efforts should take care to recognize these nuances when gauging progress in women's political participation in China. Quantitative indicators for this purpose could include the *number of women who stood as candidates who reported being recruited to run by political elites*; the *number of training courses offered to political elites on the topic of women's political participation*; the *share of women elected to village committees who are assigned to fill “women's roles”* as compared to other policy assignments; and the *number or proportion of all-male village committees*. Qualitative indicators could entail interviews to learn *whether there were systematic attempts to reach out to women on the part of political elites, the impact of training courses targeting political elites, as well as the nature of elite motivations in seeking out women*.

Indicators:

- » Where there systematic attempts to reach out to women on the part of elites (qualitative)
- » Among the women who stood as candidates, how many were previously approached to run by political elites (quantitative)
- » How many trainings on women's political participation have targeted political elites (quantitative)
- » Have elite attitudes and practices changed as a result of trainings targeted at elites (qualitative)
- » What are the positions in village committees female candidates run for – women's representatives' or also other positions (quantitative)
- » Are women restricted to “women's work” once elected to village government, or are they assigned a broader array of policy roles (qualitative)
- » How many subnational political assemblies at village and provincial levels remain all-male bodies (quantitative)

4.2.2. CANDIDATE SELECTION

Selection as a candidate is a prerequisite for winning public office. At the same time, however, there is not always a correlation between the share of female candidates and the share of female office-holders. Party confidence in and support for women in politics can be ascertained from gaps between these two proportions. Information on the share of women as candidates compared to the proportion of women ultimately elected has been crucial in countries like **Brazil**, in order to monitor political party compliance with the country's legislative gender quota law. Prior to 2009, the 30% quota resulted in far fewer than 30% female candidates and consistently less than 10% women elected.

Another explicit monitoring example can be seen in the case of **Moldova**, where the Center "Partnership for Development" (Progen) monitored three national and two local elections between 2006 and 2010 in order to better understand gender equality issues within the election process.¹²⁶ Progen collected data and compared the level of women's representation on candidate lists and in the election management positions of each political party. Progen also monitored the media coverage of female candidates throughout the campaign to explore whether there were problems of gender bias.¹²⁷

A slightly distinct approach is to request "gender impact assessments," as the **Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)** does with local partners when reviewing political party regulations on women's political participation. In an audit conducted in **Tajikistan**, local think tanks working with the OSCE found that several political party legislative provisions regarding candidate registration were potentially discriminatory towards women. First, the required candidate deposit for Tajik parliamentary elections is approximately 24 times higher than the average monthly salary – a requirement that is likely to disproportionately affect women, who earn significantly less than men. Second, the Tajik electoral law stipulates that parliamentary candidates must have higher education. Women are, again, especially affected by this rule, given that men in tertiary education in Tajikistan outnumber women by a ratio of 40 to 1.¹²⁸

Performing an audit of party's candidate selection procedures and outcomes, therefore, can generate information on the conditions shaping women's rates of success in being nominated as candidates and elected to political office. Quantitative indicators to this effect could include *how many women are selected as candidates, how many women are elected, what is the ratio of elected men vs elected women, and how many women are re-elected*. Meanwhile, qualitative indicators could seek to capture *whether these electoral opportunities are fair and equal among women and men*.

Indicators:

- » How many women are presented as candidates (quantitative)
- » How many women are elected (quantitative)
- » What is the ratio of elected men vs elected women (quantitative)
- » How many women are re-elected (quantitative)
- » Perceptions as to whether men and women enjoy equal electoral opportunities (qualitative)

4.2.3. GENDER QUOTAS

Quota policies, if effectively designed, can prove crucial in generating breakthroughs in women's political participation.¹²⁹ In **China**, quotas apply to the National People's Congress but involve vaguer requirements at the subnational level, calling for political bodies to include "an appropriate number" of women. Yet several provinces have issued their own local regulations to strengthen this requirement, imposing a variety of different requirements. To give an example of a localized regulation, after a request of the Hunan Women's Federation and the Provincial Bureau of Civil Affairs, the city of Liuyang issued a requirement that 10% of the candidates elected in the ninth village election must be women. As a result, 14% of the elected candidates were women, even more than what was required.

In addition to issuing local regulations for specifying Chinese quota requirements, it is also important to address written and unwritten discriminatory policies and restrictions that prevent women's equal political participation. These regulations may, for example, include unequal age restrictions for certain positions or unequal retirement ages. Initiatives such as "gender discrimination screening classes" have proved effective in addressing both discriminatory policies and devising localized quotas in China. After such classes were provided by the Hunan Women's Federation, two villages in Hunan province proposed to revise and remove more than 100 gender discriminatory articles from their village rules. The revisions included that at least 10% of heads of villager subgroups should be women and some of them were later adopted by the Provincial Bureau of Civil Affairs. Sharing information could play a vital role in the diffusion of such initiatives to different parts of the country.

A well-known and very successful initiative in this regard is the **Quota Project**, an on-line database that is the result of collaboration between Stockholm University, the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, and the Inter-Parliamentary Union.¹³⁰ First launched in 2003, the website reports up-to-date data on the presence and details of electoral gender quotas used in countries around the

world – as well as, where possible, information on prior quota policies and initiatives. This website is the premiere source of information on gender quotas worldwide, and as such, has informed not only scholarly research but also political practice in countries that have consulted the database as they have considered adopting gender quotas. Each country entry also includes data on the share of women elected to national parliaments following the introduction of quota policies.

The success of the Quota Project in shaping quota debates around the world points to the power of an on-line resource for exchanging information on gender quotas. The growing number of provinces in China with various types of quota provisions suggests that publicizing these initiatives through a website or similarly accessible resource might spark quota introduction in other provinces or counties as well – clarifying in regulation as well as practice what “an appropriate number of women” means. Quantitative indicators could include the *number of these policies* and their *numerical impact*. Qualitative indicators could entail *basic descriptive data on these policies*. It might also be helpful to track through interviews and statements *what support there might be for raising the NPC quota from 22 to 30%*, taking the drive for gender quotas up to the national level to fall in closer alignment with global norms.

Indicators:

- » Are there any discriminatory policies or practices against women, such as different age requirements for male and female candidates etc. and what efforts have been made to eliminate them (qualitative)
- » What types of “clarifying” policies exist in the provinces to elaborate the quota requirements regarding “an appropriate number” of women (qualitative)
- » How many of these policies are implemented fully at the local level (quantitative)
- » How many women are elected as a result of these policies (quantitative)
- » What support is there for raising the NPC quota to 30% (qualitative)

4.2.4. RESOURCE SUPPORT:

Given that women tend to have fewer personal resources than men to wage a political campaign, women may rely more than men on support from parties for their campaigns. The resources granted to women versus men by political parties or other groups reflects the degree to which such groups “invest” in women’s electoral success, providing insight into the broader demand for female candidates – as well as the degree to which women gain the resources they need to be elected.

In **Brazil**, the Supreme Electoral Tribunal seeks to promote greater transparency in the electoral process by requiring that all candidates report their campaign expenses, including the amounts received from various sources, as well as how these resources were spent (transportation, posters, etc.). Although these measures were introduced to mitigate corruption, the availability of this data on the tribunal's website provides a means to analyze the resources given to male versus female candidates. A study of patterns in the 2009 elections revealed that women appeared to have been systematically denied the financial resources necessary to wage successful campaigns: they not only received less money overall, compared to men, but they were also much less likely to receive funds from political parties – relying instead on other sources of campaign funding.¹³¹

In another move towards greater transparency and accessibility, the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies created an open data portal on its servers, with records on deputies' activities and links to the electoral tribunal's datasets. In November 2014, a computer programming 'hackathon' was organized by the Congress, inviting projects that could transform the open data into websites and apps that could make Brazilian politics more accessible to citizens. One of the resulting websites, using data on campaign expenditures, found that nearly 80% of female candidates received no money for their campaigns – a far higher proportion than was the case among men. Interestingly, it also showed that, while a relatively large share of female candidates were housewives, most of the women who were actually elected had more professional backgrounds.¹³² This suggests, among other possibilities, that women whose primary sphere of activity was the home were largely disadvantaged in the electoral process – or at a minimum, not seen as serious political actors.

The Brazilian example suggests strong disparities in the resources given by political parties and other actors to male versus female candidates – patterns that are likely to be present in other cases, but which are most evident in this country given the greater accessibility to the relevant data. Monitoring in the case of China could focus on developing a quantitative indicator capturing *whether resources – financial or otherwise – are divided proportionally among male and female candidates*. A qualitative indicator could explore *what support – financial or otherwise – female candidates received from nominating organizations*, which in the case of China might include the CCP but also the ACWF and other groups.

Indicators:

- » What support, financial, social or otherwise, do female candidates receive from nominating organizations (qualitative)
- » Are resources divided proportionally among male and female candidates (quantitative)

4.3. MONITORING SUPPORT AMONG VOTERS FOR ELECTING WOMEN

Elections constitute the final transition in the political recruitment process, as citizens cast their votes to elect office-holders. It is important to note, however, that voters are limited in their choices to selecting among those on the slate of approved candidates. In other words, citizens cannot cast their votes for – or against – women unless female candidates are presented in the elections. Gauging support among voters for more women in politics can be captured through voter surveys and public opinion polls, which can provide hard data on citizen opinions. Another possibility is to explore the nature and impact of the various campaigns waged to raise voter consciousness on the need to elect more women, analyzing how effective they have been in influencing popular views regarding women in the political realm.

4.3.1. PUBLIC OPINION

The available evidence from quantitative studies, conducted in countries around the world, indicates that voters, in general, do not appear to be opposed to electing female candidates. Indeed, in some cases, they appear to award an “electoral bonus” to women, preferring them to male candidates.¹³³ Nonetheless, perceptions on the part of elites persist that citizens are reluctant to vote for women over men – given broader cultural norms associating men with the public sphere of politics and women with the private sphere of the home and family.

Although public opinion surveys have traditionally been done by large polling organizations or by academic researchers, women’s groups and other civil society organizations can also develop and commission such studies. In **Ukraine**, for example, the Ukrainian Women’s Fund (UWF) partnered with the Democratic Initiatives Foundation and the Ukrainian Sociology Service to conduct a national public opinion survey on voter attitudes towards women in politics as well as gender-based voter preferences. The UWF study found that Ukrainian voters support gender parity in politics in greater numbers than representatives of political parties. More than half of those polled favored the introduction of legislative gender quotas as a means to increase women’s political participation, although women tended to be more favorable than men towards this strategy. Significantly, respondents did not think that a person’s sex was an important criterion when determining suitability to hold senior positions with political parties or other political organizations. Citizens felt that a person’s personal skills and abilities were far more important.¹³⁴ The study thus shows that voters in Ukraine, a country sharing a Communist history with China, do not feel that women as women are inherently unqualified to hold political office. Rather, they feel that the state should take more active measures to ensure that more women are included in political decision-making positions.

This example, couched in the findings of the larger academic literature on this question, suggests that public opinion studies can provide useful data for addressing the myth

of voter-based objections to women in politics. In China, monitoring citizen views on this topic – and possibly their evolution over time – could be done at the county, provincial, and/or national levels. Quantitative indicators could include ascertaining *how voters' opinions towards women as candidates differ, when disaggregated by sex and age* as well as *how much they support gender quotas or other measures to promote women in politics*. Moreover, one could also investigate in qualitative terms *the opinions of voters regarding women as candidates to political office* and *how the performance of elected female representatives is perceived*.

Indicators:

- » What opinions do voters hold regarding women as candidates to political office, including for positions not traditionally held by women (qualitative)
- » How do opinions towards women as candidates differ, when disaggregated by sex and age (quantitative)
- » How is the performance of female village committee representatives perceived (qualitative)
- » How much support do voters express for gender quotas or other measures to promote women in politics (quantitative)

4.3.2. AWARENESS-RAISING CAMPAIGNS

Efforts to promote women in politics around the world, including **China**, have invested substantial resources in waging campaigns to raise citizens' consciousness on the need to elect more women and to change public attitudes regarding women's ability to be leaders. Yet little is known about what impact these campaigns actually have in changing how voters think about female candidates – and whether their election preferences change in any way as a result.

One way to monitor these effects is through longer-term changes in voter attitudes towards women in politics, building on the previous strategy by comparing the results of public opinion surveys over time. A related, but slightly less reliable strategy would be to compare actual voting patterns in favor of male versus female candidates. However, as numerous academic studies have shown,¹³⁵ these outcomes are often shaped by the many dynamics outlined above, with women often having fewer resources than men to wage effective political campaigns.

Quantitative indicators for monitoring might thus track *whether public acceptance of women as leaders has changed* as a result of awareness-raising campaigns. A more qualitative approach, however, could also be to *analyze the content of the awareness-raising campaign itself*, in terms of its message (what did it seek to communicate?), medium (did the campaign appear on television, in print, or on-line, and in what

language?), and reach (how large was its potential audience?). Another qualitative strategy is to search for the *effects of the campaign on citizens*, searching more inductively for evidence through interviews, for example. A final quantitative indicator could include basic data on the *cost and number of these campaigns*, which may help to assess whether resources were well-spent.

Indicators:

- » How many campaigns were organized and how much did they cost (quantitative)
- » How many people did awareness-raising campaigns reach in terms of audience (quantitative)
- » What did the campaign entail in terms of message and medium (qualitative)
- » Did they have an effect on citizens – and what evidence, preferably sex-disaggregated, is available to measure this (qualitative)
- » Has public acceptance of women as leaders changed as a result (quantitative)

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109. <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>
110. <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm>
111. <http://www.politicalparity.org/steps-to-the-capitol-initial-reason-to-run/>
112. <http://www.umsl.edu/sueshear/Boards-and-Commissions/index.html>
113. The National Democratic Institute is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, nongovernmental organization that works to support and strengthen democratic institutions worldwide. It was founded in 1983. Its key areas of work include citizen participation, democracy and technology, and democratic governance. https://www.ndi.org/about_ndi
114. <https://www.ndi.org/democracy-and-the-challenge-of-change>
115. National Democratic Institute 2013.
116. http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/education_training/trainingresources/index.php
117. <http://www.politicalparity.org>
118. <http://fabianwomen.org.uk/mentoring/>
119. Ballington, 2008, 18.
120. Lawless and Fox 2005.
121. Krook and O'Brien 2012.
122. Borelli 2002.
123. Wang and Dai 2013.
124. Sinkkonen 1985.
125. Edwards 2007; Howell 2002; Howell 2006; Jacka 2008; Rosen 1995.
126. <http://www.progen.md/index.php?pag=proiecte&opa=view&id=134&tip=&start=&l=en>
127. Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe 2014.
128. Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe 2014.
129. Krook 2009.
130. <http://www.quotaproject.org>
131. Speck and Mancuso 2014.
132. <http://www.meucongressonacional.com/mulher>
133. Black and Erickson 2003; Murray, Krook, and Opello 2012.
134. Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe 2014.
135. Murray, Krook, and Opello 2012.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations



This Monitoring Guide adopts a holistic view of political recruitment, observing that the outcomes of three transitions (eligible → aspirant, aspirant → candidate, and candidate → elected) together shape patterns in women's political participation. Each of these transitions indicates a moment at which strategies might be developed and pursued to increase the supply of potential female candidates, as well as the demand for female candidates on the part of elites and voters. To ensure that resources are being used efficiently, it is vital to assess how effective the particular strategies employed have been in terms of meeting their goals. To this end, this Guide elaborates a methodology for monitoring progress in women's political participation over time, offering a set of indicators for measuring the nature and degree of change at each of the three stages of the political recruitment process.

Experiences around the world illustrate the importance of measuring and analyzing trends in women's political participation. Based on international best practices, as well as reflections on consultations with various stakeholders in China, this Guide proposes four recommendations for future action to assist in these monitoring efforts.

5.1. DESIGNATE A LEAD AGENCY TO COORDINATE MONITORING EFFORTS

Monitoring women's political participation in China is more likely to be effective if there is a lead agency charged with coordinating these efforts. Various options have been suggested for the lead agency, including the Chinese People's Political Consultative Congress (CPPCC) and the Section on Women, Youth and Trade Union under the Committee of Judiciary and Internal Affairs of the National People's Congress (NPC). One possibility is the National Working Committee for Children and Women (NWCCW), a government agency under the State Council. It has close working relationships with the ACWF and government departments and it has already undertaken some monitoring, especially in connection with the National Programme for Women's Development.

Another possibility is the ACWF. Serving as a bridge between the female masses and the CCP, the ACWF has access to the centers of political power of China and benefits from an impressive infrastructure connecting women's groups from the national to the subnational level, enabling both vertical and horizontal cooperation.¹³⁶ The ACWF has also been engaged for decades in campaigns to promote women's political participation in China. All of these factors mean that the organization not only has legitimacy in this area, as the sole officially recognized group representing women's interests in China, but is also well-positioned to collect, store, and analyze data on women's participation at all levels of government. Being formally recognized, further, it can use its contacts with government and Party officials, as well as NPC delegates, to ensure that these issues become matters for debate and action.

To ensure that there is clear responsibility for monitoring, the ACWF might consider establishing a sub-organ, with the specific task of monitoring developments in women's political participation. A useful international model in this regard is the High Council on Equality between Women and Men in **France**, which was initially founded in 1995 as the Observatory on Parity between Women and Men.¹³⁷ The Observatory was created by French president Jacques Chirac (and maintained by his successors), with the intention of providing institutional support for policies related to parity between women and men in political life. Its mission was to centralize, produce, and diffuse data, analyses, studies, and research on women in politics at the national and international levels; evaluate the persistence of inequalities and identify the obstacles to parity, especially in the political sphere; give advice on legislative proposals and regulations issued by the prime minister; and offer recommendations and legal proposals to the prime minister to combat inequalities between women and men in order to promote gender parity.

When the French constitution was reformed in 1999 and the electoral law revised in 2000, the duties of the Observatory were extended to include monitoring the implementation of the new law requiring that 50% of candidates be male and female, respectively. The Observatory collected electoral statistics as well as qualitative data from interviews with various stakeholders (political party officials, lawyers, and women's groups) to gain a better sense of how the parity law was being translated into practice. The resulting reports – monitoring elections at various different levels, from local and provincial councils to the Senate and National Assembly – were distributed widely, both on-line and in hard copy form. In addition to evaluating the application of the parity requirements, the reports concluded in each case with recommendations for further reforms to ensure better compliance over time. Known as the High Council since 2013, the group's most recent work includes organizing a colloquium on women's political participation and several reports on continuing resistance to the full application of the principle of parity in French political life. In its different manifestations, therefore, the Observatory has played a key role in keeping public and political attention on the issue of women's political participation in France.

5.2. CREATE A VISIBLE PUBLIC SOURCE FOR STATISTICS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Data on women's representation at all levels of government can be a crucial tool for women's groups seeking to promote women's political participation in China. Monitoring efforts are also likely to gain greater public visibility if this data is made widely available. A second recommendation of this guide, therefore, is to create a visible public source – ideally a website – where citizens can access statistics on women's political participation, disaggregated by level of government. This may not require much more than what the government and ACWF already collects in the way of statistics. The issue, however, is how to consolidate the data from different sources and make it more accessible and user-friendly, enabling citizens and civil society groups to monitor progress themselves. Creating a central location for this data, moreover, can create an impetus towards the continual updating of statistics with new elections, in turn rendering visible the progress (or lack of progress) in women's political participation over time.

The most well-known international example is the data published on-line every other month by the **Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)**, which reports the share of women in national parliaments around the world, updated each time with the results of new elections. In addition to maintaining an archive of this data,¹³⁸ the IPU posts this information as a world ranking of individual countries,¹³⁹ as well as reports on the global and regional averages.¹⁴⁰ Every February, the IPU also publishes a study on the progress and setbacks in women's share of national parliaments over the past year, putting country developments in broader comparative perspective. Occasionally, the IPU commissions and publishes more qualitative studies on women's participation, gathering data from surveys, interviews with parliamentarians, and fieldwork in various countries to identify, for example, views on gender equality in politics¹⁴¹ and ways to create more gender-sensitive parliaments.¹⁴²

Another example from the **United States** is the website of the Center for Women and American Politics (CAWP) at Rutgers University.¹⁴³ It provides an easy-to-access source for data on women in American elections, reporting the share of female office-holders at all levels of government – information which is continually updated with new information as elections occur. CAWP also provides fact sheets, graphics, and research reports analyzing the data to make this data as accessible as possible to different kinds of audiences. More recently, it has introduced various types of “election watch” projects, monitoring the coverage of female voters and candidates in – for example, during recent U.S. presidential elections.¹⁴⁴ This data is viewed as so complete that it has now become the official source of statistics on women in American politics, recognized by the U.S. government and its various entities.

One option is that NWCCW takes the lead in coordination of the public database in China, supported by different departments/ministries, media, research institutions and other relevant stakeholders. The functions of monitoring and statistics should also be clarified and could be differentiated. For example, NPC could be responsible for monitoring the policies and laws to promote women's participation in politics, while the National Statistics Bureau could take the lead in data collection and statistics.

It should also be recognized that further efforts are needed to not only publicize, but also collect data on women's political participation in China. Some indicators, such as numbers of female representatives in NPC and of female village heads have already been included in the National Program on Women and Development 2011-2020, which is monitored by the NWCCW. This data can be easily acquired. But other indicators, such as the number of women in representative organs of villagers, are not yet part of the National Program. Further efforts need to be made to collect this data through surveys, interviews and other mechanisms.

5.3. FACILITATE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON 'BEST PRACTICES' AT PROVINCIAL AND VILLAGE LEVEL

Over the last several years, several provinces in China have adopted more specific quota requirements for village elections, clarifying that "an appropriate number" of women should be understood to mean "at least one woman" on every village committee. These innovations could serve as useful resources for women and government officials in other provinces, if these quota rules were more widely known across China as a whole. Further, local women's federations have developed novel initiatives in individual villages and countries, with the aim of recruiting women to run and training them once they have been elected. A comprehensive monitoring plan in China should include opportunities for actors across the country to share and exchange information on these emerging "best practices" at the village and provincial level. This data could be integrated into a public website providing statistics on women's political participation – providing a central, easily accessible location for both statistics and strategies that is accessible to both citizens and women's groups across China.

The **Quota Project** was mentioned above as one possible model of a website providing information on gender quotas to a wider audience. Another model of international "best practice" is the **International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics** (iKnowPolitics), a joint project by several organizations committed to improving women's status in political life, including the United Nations Development Programme, UN Women, the National Democratic Institute, the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, and the Inter-Parliamentary Union. This

initiative provides a web-based forum for exchanging information on the status of women in politics around the globe.¹⁴⁵ Its goal is to increase the participation and effectiveness of women in political life by utilizing a technology-based forum. The website provides users with opportunities to access resources, including an online library and the expertise of other users, experts, and practitioners; create knowledge via mediated discussion forums, information exchange, and consolidated expert responses to member queries; and share experiences by using tools specifically designed to facilitate the exchange of lessons learned and best practices among members of the global community committed to the advancement of women in politics.

5.4. LEVERAGE PARTNERSHIPS ACROSS GOVERNMENT AND CIVIL SOCIETY TO COLLECT AND SHARE INFORMATION

A final recommendation is closely linked to all three previous recommendations and is to forge partnerships across the different actors engaged in various strategies to promote women's political participation. One reason to coordinate efforts is to take advantage of the relative strengths of distinct actors, whether that is in terms of information, resources, or expertise. To some degree, such coordination is already occurring in some provinces and villages between the ACWF and local women's federations, for example, or among local women's federations and international donor agencies. Yet in order to monitor developments more effectively, it may be fruitful to systematize these collaborations – both to know what other groups are doing and to know what they have done that seems to have been the most effective. Opportunities for learning and exchange could be invaluable for inspiring action and using scarce resources in a more efficient manner.

One method for doing this might be to organize “learning meetings,” for example at conferences and other events of the ACWF featuring reports from local and provincial women's federations on innovative programs they have developed and implemented at the village, county, or provincial levels. A second, possibly more accessible method would be to use the existing web-based platforms and social media channels such as weibo and wechat or create a new web-based portal with this information. One key advantage would be the ability to access this information at any time, by organizations and individuals who did not attend the meetings where these experiences were presented – as well as by those who did attend but would like to access this information again. A web-based portal may also be useful as a platform for filing reports and academic research on women's political participation in China. Two models along these lines include the Research Inventory at **Political Parity**,¹⁴⁶ organized according to topic with the aim of identifying strategies that can be used to elect more women, and the **Gender Action Portal** developed by the Women and Public Policy Program at the Harvard Kennedy School,¹⁴⁷ which catalogues scientific evidence on the impact of policies, strategies, and practices aimed at closing various types of gender gaps, including in the political sphere.

In conclusion, efforts to promote women's political participation may include interventions to increase women's political resources and ambitions, revise selectors' attitudes towards female candidates, and change public attitudes towards women in politics. Tracking progress in women's political participation must therefore attend to shifts – or not – in both the supply of and demand for female politicians. A holistic approach to political recruitment entails examining the electoral moment, but also what occurs at the aspirant and candidate selection stages. Indicators in this Guide suggest, further, that effective monitoring should involve gathering both quantitative and qualitative data, with these two sources together providing a richer picture of progress and setbacks in women's political participation – using this data, in turn, as evidence to assess programming, track progress, and design new interventions.

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136. Howell 2003.
 137. <http://www.haut-conseil-egalite.gouv.fr/parite/accueil-36/>
 138. <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif-arc.htm>
 139. <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>
 140. <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm>
 141. www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/equality08-e.pdf
 142. www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/gsp11-e.pdf
 143. http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/fast_facts/index.php
 144. http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/fast_facts/elections/presidential_watch.php
 145. <http://www.iknowpolitics.org>
 146. <http://www.politicalparity.org/research-inventory/>
 147. <http://gap.hks.harvard.edu/>

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The All-China Women's Federation (ACWF) was founded on April 3, 1949. It is a mass organization that unites Chinese women of all ethnic groups and from all walks of life, and strives for their liberation and development. The mission of ACWF is to represent and uphold women's rights and interests, and to promote equality between women and men.

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UN Women is the UN organization dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women. UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality, and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to implement these standards. UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system's work in advancing gender equality. The Fund for Gender Equality (FGE) is a UN Women grant-making mechanism dedicated exclusively to the economic and political empowerment of women worldwide.

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