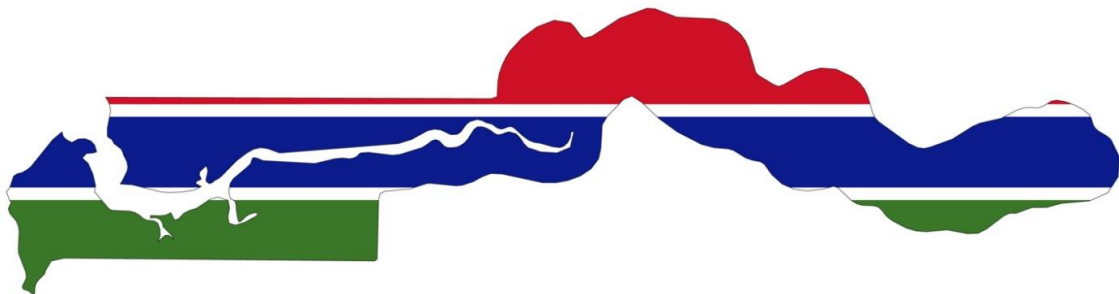




Resource Mobilization Strategy for Female Political Candidates in The Gambia



NOVEMBER 2024

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	2
Introduction	3
Literature Review	4
Methodology	5
Evaluation & Analysis	7
Testing the Central Concept – What is the demand for female participation in Politics?	11
Supporting Female Political Participation: Key Observations and Recommendations	12
The Funding Landscapes	13
Funding Opportunities – bilateral and multilateral international donors	14
Funding Opportunities - private trusts and foundations	16
Funding Opportunities - Targeted Funds	17
Implication for Supporting Female Political Participation	19
Key Recommendations	21
Communication and Advocacy Strategy	22
Monitoring & Evaluation	25
Results Framework	26
<i>Annex: Data Analysis, Supporting Material Prepared for the Operationalization Document and Gallery of Picture References</i>	<i>32</i>

Executive Summary

This report outlines a strategic framework to mobilize resources¹ for female political candidates in The Gambia, aiming to eliminate financial obstacles and enhance gender equity in political representation. Gambian women face unique challenges in securing campaign funding and navigating a predominantly male political environment at national and local levels. To address these barriers, the strategy incorporates four key pillars: resource mobilization, capacity building, strategic partnerships, and policy advocacy.

The report begins with an analysis of the funding landscape, detailing public, private, and international funding sources. Key funding opportunities include government-initiated public funds, potential legislative amendments to support women candidates, and partnerships with bilateral and multilateral donors such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), African Development Bank, European Union, UN Women, and other development partners. Additionally, private foundations like the Open Society Foundations and Ford Foundation, committed to gender equality and leadership, present valuable opportunities for sustainable support.

The strategy also identifies essential legislative and policy reforms to make political financing more gender-sensitive, including proposed quotas, reduced nomination fees, and incentivized public funding for female candidates. Capacity-building initiatives, including training in public speaking, campaign management, leadership, grassroots mobilization and fundraising, are recommended to bolster the competitive advantage of female candidates, complemented by workshops and mentorship programs.

Key findings highlight critical financial barriers to women's political participation and representation, such as the lack of personal funds, party financial support and heavy reliance on international donors, which underscore the need for sustainable domestic funding. The private sector, though underutilized and developing, represents an untapped source of potential in-kind and financial support.

The report's recommendations prioritize establishing a Women Empowerment Fund backed by public and private donors, managed by Inter-party Committee, followed by the institutionalization of mentorship programme under the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare (MoGCSW), introducing legislative quotas for party funds allocation to female candidates based on the number of elected women under each political party, and creating a

¹ Resources refer to the financial, material, technical, and human assets necessary to support women candidates effectively in their campaigns and leadership journeys. **Financial Resources include** funding for campaign activities, advertising, transportation, and logistics. This is often a critical barrier for women candidates who may face limited financial backing. **Material Resources** vary from campaign materials like posters, banners, flyers, and digital tools for outreach, which are essential for visibility and voter engagement. **Technical Resources** refer to expertise in areas like campaign management, public speaking, policy knowledge, and communications to strengthen female candidates' capacity to run effective campaigns. **Human Resources** include access to grassroots networks and skilled personnel and volunteers, such as campaign managers, advisors, and mentors, who provide support throughout the election process.

Public-Private Partnership platform to centralize resources from private, civil society, and international contributors. Additional recommendations include implementing capacity-building programs for female candidates and fostering media partnerships to boost their visibility during campaigns. Finally, the Women Branch of the Inter-Party Committee (WOBIPC) should be strengthened at national and regional levels, as well as Women Wings of Political Parties and key women grassroots networks in the regions. These entities are key resources for mobilizing support for women leaders, especially aspiring female candidates

The monitoring and evaluation framework will track financial support, funds raised, capacity building, data generation and female candidates' success rates. Regular reports will inform stakeholders on progress and guide adjustments to resource mobilization efforts. This strategy urges collaborative action across government, civil society organizations, the private sector, and international entities to create a supportive ecosystem that empowers women in Gambian politics and fosters long-term gender parity.



Introduction

Women represent over half of The Gambia's population and 57% of its registered electorate. Yet, their political participation remains limited, especially in the National Assembly and local government. In the most recent local elections for councilors held in April 2023, out of 120 elected councillors, only 18 (15%) were women. To strengthen the legitimacy of the proposed female-reserved parliamentary seats, it is recommended that women be elected rather than appointed to these positions. While there are concerns that such measures may risk reinforcing fixed perceptions of "women" as a single group and could challenge equal voting rights, this approach is considered a necessary, temporary measure to empower historically marginalized groups, particularly women. Political parties in The Gambia operate largely within a patriarchal framework, where leadership roles are predominantly held by men, and women often occupy token positions with limited influence.

Within political parties, Gambian women continue to serve primarily as mobilizers, campaigners, supporters, and voters, with none of the 18 registered political parties led by a woman and only a few holding deputy leadership roles. In the December 2021 elections, Marie Sock was the sole female presidential nominee, but her candidacy was rejected by the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) due to unmet requirements. This underscores the critical need for an Affirmative Action Bill to support women's participation in political processes and decision-making roles, including in parliament. Increasing the visibility of women as credible candidates and active voters is essential.

In the April 2022 legislative elections, only 19 (8%) of candidates were women. Of the 19 female candidates, only three were elected, with one representing a political party and two as independents. This outcome mirrors the results of the 2017 elections, reflecting stagnation in women's political empowerment in The Gambia. Women therefore remain underrepresented

at all levels of elected office. In the current Cabinet, only three of the 22 ministers (13.6%) are women, down from 21% in the previous Cabinet.

Overall, inadequate personal financial resources in addition to a lack of gender sensitive political financing have deprived qualified women from joining politics, contributing to a small or lack of a pool of women willing to run for public office. The April 2022 legislative election had 19 (7.5%) female candidates out of the total 251 who contested for the national assembly elections while the last presidential election had no female contestant. Compounding this challenge is the increasing transactional approach to politics since the political transition of January 2017. Research reveals that candidates in The Gambia spend huge financial capital to convince voters to support and vote for them. In many instances during 2017 and 2022 elections, voters demanded money from candidates in exchange for support and votes. Political parties only give financial support to candidates after the selection process – and given that women's participation in elections is not supported during the selection of candidates, neither economically or socially, they don't get to be supported after the primaries and men mainly get that space. After selection, political parties and candidates spend a lot of time and money investing in communities to gain electoral returns. It is only by investing heavily in community projects or giving financial support at individual levels that candidates are likely to secure voters' political support and succeed during elections.

Therefore, one of the critical issues also affecting female candidates is the bribery of the electorate which requires a lot of financial capital. Unfortunately, and given limited individual financial resources, women in The Gambia cannot compete equally with men to get selected as candidates by political parties and win elections.

A resource mobilization strategy is essential for female candidates in The Gambia as it directly addresses the financial constraints that often prevent women from fully participating in politics. Without sufficient access to funding networks or substantial backing from male-dominated political parties, female candidates face marginalization, limiting their visibility and effectiveness in elections. This strategy would not only help mobilize much-needed resources but would also act as a structured guide for potential donors, such as UN agencies and other organizations committed to gender equality, to prioritize interventions that foster women's political engagement. Furthermore, it would support candidates in building social capital within their communities and enhance their skills in areas critical for successful campaigning, such as public speaking, voter outreach, and media engagement. By systematically tackling these financial and capacity-building needs, the resource mobilization strategy can empower more women to pursue political roles, leading to greater representation and shaping policy outcomes that reflect women's perspectives and priorities across The Gambia.



Literature Review

The literature review explores international best practices, examining how countries like Rwanda, Kenya, and Ghana have addressed gender gaps in political participation through strategic resource mobilization. Notable themes include:

- 1. Gendered Campaign Financing Barriers:** Studies highlight systemic financial barriers that disproportionately impact female candidates, such as restricted access to traditional funding

networks, limited support from male-dominated political parties, and gender biases in campaign finance regulations.

2. International Examples of Successful Interventions: Rwanda's Women's Caucus and Ghana's Women's Fund are cited as effective models, where dedicated funding mechanisms and political support helped increase female representation. This report draws on these examples to recommend similar support structures for The Gambia.

3. Impact of Capacity Building on Campaign Success: Training in fundraising, public speaking, and media engagement has been shown to improve campaign outcomes for women. Capacity building remains critical, equipping women with the skills to effectively leverage available resources.

4. Role of Gender-Specific Policies: Gender-targeted policies, like Kenya's affirmative action quota and Ghana's fee reduction initiatives for female candidates, show a measurable impact on increasing women's participation, providing a framework for policy recommendations tailored to The Gambia's context.

Methodology

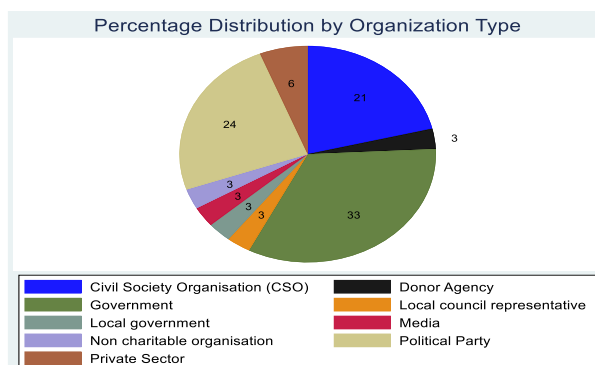
This study applies a robust mixed-methods approach to assess financial barriers faced by female candidates in The Gambia, combining both quantitative and qualitative data. This comprehensive approach informs actionable strategies for resource mobilization to support female political engagement.

Data Collection and Analysis

Quantitative Surveys: A survey was administered to 33 female candidates, assessing financial constraints, funding requirements, and political party support. Data were analyzed to determine the frequency and severity of financial barriers encountered by these candidates.

Qualitative Interviews: In-depth interviews with key stakeholders such as civil society organizations (CSOs), international donors, and political party representatives provided nuanced insights into existing resource gaps and explored potential solutions.

Throughout the interviews, we targeted four types of stakeholders:



- a) **Senior policymakers in The Government of The Gambia:** These were targeted in order to develop a clear sense of their reform priorities to ensure that gender is focused on policy issues where there is *potential* for policy change. We needed to ensure their reform agenda is focused on the most relevant policy issues of the day, in alignment with the national and regional targets. The second thing we probed was their view of how women can significantly contribute to the policy-making processes, to ensure meaningful engagement with the government of The Gambia in promotion of gender equality.
- b) **Senior figures in civil society and the private sector:** We targeted these key stakeholders to understand the issues they consider to be the most important for female candidates in resource mobilisation strategy; to understand where the key funding gaps are that the strategy might potentially fill; to understand the wider political environment and in particular to understand what other similar institutions are focused on to avoid duplication, and to understand from their point of view how they think change happens in The Gambia which can inform the resource mobilization strategy.
- c) **Key Donors/Funders:** Donors were a critical group to engage for three main reasons. First, understanding their funding priorities helps us position the strategy to effectively compete for support. Second, the interviews provided an opportunity to introduce the resource mobilization strategy for female candidates, increasing their awareness of the research findings and its potential as a collaborative platform.

Finally, with their experience in The Gambia, we sought their insights on policy change processes and how these may impact female candidates' participation and success.

- d) **Inter-party committee:** We targeted stakeholders at the Inter-Party Committee (IPC)² to understand how the strategy can operate within the committee; and how the IPC can take advantage of the opportunities of the outcome of this project to establish women's fund in collaboration with other stakeholders. IPC has established the Women Branch of IPC (WOBIPIC) at national and local levels to promote women's participation in politics and decision making. This is a key network and resource for mobilizing support for female candidates in a bipartisan manner, and their role in

² The Inter-Party Committee (IPC) serves as the umbrella organization representing all political parties registered with The Gambia's Independent Electoral Commission (IEC). Its primary role is to promote democratic governance, ensure peaceful elections, and advance gender equality in political representation and participation.

monitoring the implementation of the strategy and establishment of the women's fund will be important.

Additionally, a review of the funding landscape for potential funding of the proposed resource mobilization strategy was conducted through desk-based research, allowing and enabling a more extensive scope of coverage with regard to donor availability. The desk-based research was supplemented with follow-up interviews with a select group of donors to enable us have a broader understanding of their priorities and the degree to which these fit within our strategic approach; consideration of the implications of donor priorities for the female candidate and gender equity; and practicalities around how each donor work to ensure the strategy is well-prepared for future funding applications.

Limitations and Assumptions

This report acknowledges potential limitations, including the biases in self-reported data from female candidates and variability in stakeholder engagement. An assumption is made that stakeholder interests align with the promotion of gender equity, which may influence the feasibility of certain recommendations.



Evaluation & Analysis

This section provides an in-depth analysis of the political environment, financial barriers, and socio-cultural factors that inhibit female participation in politics:

- **Political and Socio-Cultural Environment:** Women in The Gambia faces severe under-representation, with only 8% of National Assembly members being female. Cultural biases, patriarchal norms, and inadequate political party support are significant barriers, often limiting women's roles to mobilizers rather than leaders.

Traditional gender roles assigned to women as caregivers and domestic workers have tended to confine women into the private realm and are therefore traditionally valued more than their personal political ambitions, interests, and achievements. Gambian communities are built on patriarchal foundations fuelling the actions and perception of society to make decisions and form norms and roles that are detrimental to women's participation in leadership. Boys and girls, from a young age, are distinguished to work towards their contributions to society, giving them distinctive roles to each with the justification of what an organized setting and society should be. Boys are taught as they grow up, to be custodians, controlling and being the face of success in areas of national and global development, while young girls are constantly reminded to be submissive and nurturers. This system not only leverages power to young boys and men but encourages conformity among young girls and women to limit their capabilities to fit the standards of society.

- **Political Party Support:** Limited financial backing from parties results in inconsistent or minimal support, often only during campaign periods. Only 12% of respondents indicated sustained party support, underscoring a need for systematic reforms within party structures to support female candidates.

- **Media and Public Visibility:** Media access remains restricted, with coverage often focused on men. Lack of media visibility further marginalizes female candidates, making it difficult for them to connect with voters and promote their campaign manifestos.

- **Financial Constraints Analysis:**

Campaign Financing Needs: Campaign costs are prohibitive, covering materials, advertising, voter outreach, and administrative expenses. With 75.75% of female candidates citing campaign funding as their biggest challenge, the need for accessible financing options is critical.

Strengthening the economic capacities of women could strategically be done by building the social capital of women interested in vying for elective seats. It is well documented that a candidate's social capital in the community can reduce the monetary costs of seeking political office. This could be generated by the community development work an aspirant does at her constituency or by drawing on the legacy of their parents or family members in the same environment. In previous elections, there were cases where the political machinery of the ruling or dominant party was not sufficient to assist their candidates win elections largely because of the strong social capital of opposition or independent candidates. Therefore, in the context of this strategy, identifying more women interested in vying for local elections early and building their social capital in communities is likely to increase the number of elected women in future elections.

Additionally, in the absence of campaign financing laws, wealthy male candidates outspend women during campaigns, and this disadvantage can be minimized by the introduction of campaign finance legislation in The Gambia. It is also important for The Gambia, as a step towards democratic consolidation, to have an Act of Parliament and electoral law that allow the State financing of political parties based on electoral percentages won during previous elections and the number of women elected from each political party. No policy in the Gambia directs the state to support political parties during elections, although we have seen cases where candidates having access to state funds use it for election purposes especially if the candidate is an incumbent as observed in the last elections.

Summary of the key findings:

- **Establish a Women's Empowerment Fund through the Inter-Party Committee (IPC):**

Given the strong demand across stakeholders, it is crucial for the IPC to establish a dedicated Women's Fund to provide sustainable support for female candidates in The Gambia. This fund could reduce reliance on international donors and establish more consistent domestic funding sources, encouraging female participation in politics. The fund would also increase female representation in decision-making roles, promoting diversity and inclusivity in governance.

- **Reduce Reliance on International Donors:** Currently, 57.6% of campaign funding for female candidates is derived from international sources, highlighting the importance of establishing sustainable domestic funding channels. To address this, the IPC could pursue a dual approach:

- **Identify Strong International Leads:** International partners like UNDP, the African Development Bank (AfDB), the European Union, and UN Women are likely contributors, along with potential funding from foundations like the OPEC Fund, Trust Africa, Robert Bosch Stiftung, and the King Baudouin Foundation.
- **Build Domestic Credibility:** Initial projects funded by the Gambian government could establish the Women's Fund's value, demonstrating to international donors the tangible impact of their contributions, and making a compelling case for further investment.

■ **Strengthen Strategic Alliances with CSOs, Media, and Government Ministries:** Building robust partnerships with civil society organizations, media, and government—especially the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Welfare (MoGCSW) can amplify the IPC's advocacy efforts. These alliances could foster a supportive ecosystem for policy change, public awareness, and a greater commitment to supporting female candidates.

■ **Create a Mentorship Unit for Female Leaders within MoGCSW:** The establishment of a mentorship unit for female leaders within the MoGCSW is important. This unit could serve as a cornerstone for building the confidence, skills, and knowledge women need to succeed in leadership roles, especially within government, where women remain underrepresented. Through structured mentorship programs, experienced female leaders could guide and support emerging women leaders, helping them navigate the unique challenges they face, such as limited networking opportunities and navigating male-dominated spaces. Moreover, the mentorship unit would empower female leaders to contribute to and influence policy decisions, reinforcing their roles as advocates for gender equality and community development. By supporting both professional and personal growth, the unit would cultivate a pipeline of capable, confident female leaders, ultimately increasing women's representation in decision-making positions and shaping policies to reflect women's needs and perspectives. This initiative aligns closely with MoGCSW's mission to advance gender equality and could inspire similar mentorship efforts across other sectors, thereby creating a broader, long-lasting impact on gender equity in The Gambia.

■ **Address Campaign Funding Barriers with Structured Financial Support:** With 75.75% of female candidates citing campaign costs as a major obstacle, there is an urgent need for dedicated funding mechanisms that can alleviate financial constraints. In addition to direct funding, political parties should be encouraged to provide greater support to female candidates. Such assistance would enable women to compete more effectively and foster a more inclusive political environment.

■ **Engage the Private Sector in Supporting Female Candidates:** The private sector remains an underutilized resource for supporting women's political participation. The IPC should explore opportunities to involve private sector entities in contributing both direct funding and in-kind resources. This approach could include incentivizing corporate social responsibility initiatives focused on gender equality and encouraging private businesses to provide sponsorship or logistical support to female candidates.

■ **Leverage Grassroots Women's Networks (Kafos) to Support Aspiring Female Leaders:**

Engage grassroots women's networks, known as Kafos, as strategic partners to support aspiring female leaders in their political journeys. These networks are deeply rooted in local communities and have established trust and influence, making them invaluable resources for mobilizing grassroots support. By connecting Kafos with female candidates, the IPC can foster a support system that boosts local engagement and increases the visibility and credibility of female leaders at the community level.

This collaboration would provide several benefits, including the following:

- **Community mobilization and advocacy:** Kafos can serve as champions for female candidates, advocating on their behalf, helping them build a local support base, and addressing potential concerns within the community. Their advocacy could play a crucial role in reducing resistance to female leadership.
- **Increased electability of female candidates:** With backing from trusted community networks, aspiring female leaders are more likely to gain community endorsement, which can significantly enhance their chances of being elected.
- **Knowledge sharing and mentorship:** Kafos can offer insights on community-specific issues and share local knowledge that candidates can integrate into their campaign strategies, making their platforms more relatable and responsive to community needs.
- **Mobilize community-based financial support to fund aspiring women leaders' campaigns.** This will involve organizing community events, awareness campaigns, and small-scale fundraising efforts to gather contributions from local community members, thereby reducing candidates' reliance on external funding sources and building grassroots ownership of women's political participation. Training sessions will be provided to Kafos on effective fundraising strategies and financial management to ensure transparent and impactful contributions.

To implement this effectively, the IPC could establish partnerships with prominent Kafos, develop training sessions on effective campaign support, and create feedback loops that ensure both Kafos and female candidates can continuously adapt their strategies. This approach not only enhances female representation but also strengthens the ties between political leaders and the communities they aim to serve, fostering long-term support for women's political participation.

Testing the central concept – what is the demand for female participation in Politics?

The first key point tested through the interview involves examining public and political willingness to support female leaders, addressing both socio-cultural barriers and the potential for policy interventions.

Public Perception and Voter Support:

Surveys indicate that while the public supports the idea of gender equity, active demand for female representation is low, especially in rural regions where patriarchal norms persist. Sustained awareness campaigns highlighting the benefits of female leadership could increase public acceptance.

Political Party Endorsement and Establishment of Women's Fund:

Political parties remain gatekeepers for candidacies, but the minimal commitment to gender equality within parties has limited opportunities for women. There is a clear demand for party-led initiatives that promote female participation through reserved quotas and equitable funding mechanisms.

Strong support for female leadership was expressed across all four stakeholder groups we spoke to: senior policymakers in government; senior leaders in civil society; key donors and funders; and key officials at the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) and IPC. We repeatedly heard how female candidates have the potential to fill a **“vital gap”** in The Gambian policy-making environment. There is therefore a commitment for gender equality across the board.

Political party representatives highlighted the importance of a resource mobilization strategy specifically supporting female political candidates, emphasizing that such a strategy must be informed by a deep understanding of the local policy and political landscape. This awareness of “what is possible and practical” would enable the strategy to align with The Gambia’s unique challenges and opportunities, making it more effective in advancing gender equity in political representation. Government officials further underscored the demand for increased female leadership within government, pointing to current gaps in women’s representation across government ministries. This strategy, they explained, could help close these gaps by equipping more women with the resources and support needed to enter and thrive in government leadership roles, thereby strengthening governance and promoting inclusive decision-making.

Donors expressed strong support for this strategy, highlighting the need for The Gambia to shift from relying on a male-dominated leadership many of whom lack an understanding of the realities faced by the majority of the population (women) toward a more inclusive policy development process that benefits all citizens. They emphasized that supporting gender equity financially aligns with their priorities, as women leaders are likely to drive policies that impact the broader population, making such investments highly cost-effective. Donors also recognized that building local capacity for female candidates to capitalize on emerging opportunities will take time. They viewed the decision to base the female

candidate fund within The Gambia's Inter-Party Committee positively, as it allows the strategy to leverage cross-party networks and influence to support and elevate its impact.

Inter-Party Committee members shared strong enthusiasm for the strategy, highlighting it as a valuable opportunity for political parties to support the selection and financing of female candidates, including those with disabilities. The Co-Chairperson emphasized the Committee's consultative role, noting its capacity to inform public debate through research and evidence, use its convening power to foster dialogue and serve as a bridge connecting key stakeholders—including academia, government, the private sector, and civil society organizations.

In summary: there is strong buy-in and support for the women's fund and the inter-party committee hosting it. In the next sections, we develop this theme by considering how this strategy can realize its potential.

Supporting Female Political Participation: Key Observations and Recommendations

Establishing a Women Empowerment Fund on a Minimal Budget

Female candidates face unique challenges when entering politics, notably, the need to secure funding without an established track record. To overcome this, the Women's Fund should leverage support from the Inter-Party Committee (IPC), emphasizing its established networks and the strong demand for gender equity from policymakers. Housing the Fund within the IPC enables it to benefit from bipartisan support and a reputable profile, facilitating access to broader networks. Even with limited resources, the IPC can host events or debates on gender equity in politics, attracting funders by showcasing the Fund's influence. For example, a high-level policy event could bring together leaders from the government, the private sector, academia, CSOs, and donors to discuss key challenges for women in politics. Marketing such gatherings as women's leadership events can underscore the Fund's influence potential. Additionally, sharing event insights on social media is an effective, low-cost way to build awareness and credibility for the Women's Fund.

Core Funding vs. Project Funding

Core funding non-earmarked resources for operational and advocacy needs provides financial security for new politicians, allowing them to focus on strategy and impact. However, most funders now prefer project-based funding, potentially requiring match-funding with other donors. While project funding supports specific initiatives (e.g., electoral violence reduction or gender equity projects), it limits flexibility for broader organizational needs, like hiring an Executive Director or administrative staff. A sustainable funding strategy might involve securing a core "foundation" project (e.g., with the Ministry of Gender) while running smaller complementary projects. This approach could enable the Women's Fund to build a modest advocacy and administrative team, conduct research on topical issues, and establish early visibility in public discourse.

→ Emphasizing Policy Impact

Funders prioritize initiatives with clear strategies for policy influence. For the Women's Fund, aligning with gender equity's intrinsic purpose to empower women in leadership to shape policy is a natural advantage. Funders are increasingly interested in projects with defined pathways for influence rather than general interventions. A strong focus on policy impact should be central in funding proposals, detailing how the initiative will contribute to meaningful policy changes. To assist, an annotated funding proposal has been created, outlining key areas that proposals should cover to demonstrate potential for policy impact. This template can serve as a guide, though each proposal should be tailored to specific funder requirements. By establishing a Women's Fund with clear strategic, operational, and relational foundations, The Gambia can build lasting support for female political participation and lay the groundwork for gender-responsive policies.

→ Building Relationships with Funders

For new initiatives, cultivating strong relationships with key funders is crucial. It's important to invest time in demonstrating both the Fund's vision and an understanding of donor priorities. Engaging funders early, articulating clear objectives, and showing how the Women's Fund aligns with their goals will increase their confidence in supporting the initiative. Building these relationships ensures funders see the Women's Fund not only as a recipient but as a strategic partner committed to impactful gender equity advancement.

The funding landscapes


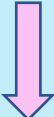

A comprehensive understanding of the funding landscape is critical for this initiative to effectively support female political candidates. To craft a robust strategy for identifying and pursuing funding opportunities, the review team conducted an in-depth assessment of potential funders, focusing on two key categories:

- (i) Bilateral and multilateral donors, such as the FCDO, USAID, European Union and the World Bank, which often support gender equity and governance initiatives.
- (ii) Trusts and foundations that prioritize issues related to women's empowerment, democracy, and inclusive leadership.

By mapping out these funding sources, the initiative aims to strategically align its objectives with funders' priorities, positioning itself to secure diverse support that will enable a sustainable impact on female political participation in The Gambia.

Funding opportunities – bilateral and multilateral international donors

As set out in the table below, the most promising potential funders for Gender Equity are UNDP, the African Development Bank, and the European Union. The World Bank and USAID might also be promising options, although the current opportunities available for the Women's Fund from these institutions are unclear.

Potential Funders	Overview
World Bank	 <p>Have multiple projects in The Gambia. However, a lot of these are focused on public service delivery as opposed to gender equity projects.</p>
USAID	 <p>There is no USAID mission in The Gambia but they do work with organisations in the region through an office in Senegal. This includes working with the Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development. There isn't currently anything directly supporting gender equity, but they do have an objective to work to 'lay the foundations for democratic processes' in their governance stream of work.</p>
UNDP	 <p>Have objectives to support institutional enhancement and civic engagement as well as strengthen gender equity and mainstreaming policy. They have a project to support economic management and women empowerment, although this focuses mainly on providing TA to the government as opposed to funding direct intervention. UNDP would align well with the aims of the project and UNDP goals more generally.</p>

African Development Fund



A large donor to The Gambia. Projects focus mostly on agriculture and infrastructure. They also fund some work on governance which could be appropriate for this initiative, and they used to have an inclusive growth programme that focused on economic governance to strengthening women's empowerment. commitment

FCDO



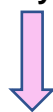
They fund some gender empowerment projects in The Gambia. However, as stated above we believe that FCDO might potentially be interested in supporting gender equity, though it has recently seen its country office budgets reduced significantly in light of the decision to reduce the GNP commitment.

EU



Significant funder, though not clear the extent to which these funds female candidates in politics. We suggest the inter-party committee engage the EU to better understand their areas of interest in The Gambia.

IDRC (Canadian research funder, generally interested in supporting research which leads to policy change)



IDRC does not appear to have many projects in The Gambia, but there is one large 5-year programme working with the Ministry of Education on health education. The programme appears to be doing policy-relevant research and then coming up with recommendations to influence government policy.

JICA (Japan Cooperation Agency)

International



They don't have an office in The Gambia but work from the Senegal office. Projects in The Gambia focused on service delivery as opposed to policy research.

Funding Opportunities - Private Trusts and Foundations

An initial analysis of relevant trusts and foundations was conducted through desk-based research to identify those aligned with the strategic goals of women’s empowerment. This research helped generate a long list of potential funding organizations that support gender leadership, and democratic inclusion initiatives. The list contains twenty organizations in total, each selected for its potential to support aspects of the proposed initiative, whether through grants, partnership opportunities, or capacity-building resources. Some promising organizations from this list are highlighted below, demonstrating a strong foundation for targeted engagement and resource mobilization efforts;

- ✚ Action Aid
- ✚ Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- ✚ C&A Foundation - Laudes Foundation
- ✚ Charles Stewart Mott Foundation
- ✚ Open Society Foundations
- ✚ Oxfam
- ✚ Save The Children
- ✚ The African Economic Research Consortium
- ✚ The Ford Foundation
- ✚ UN Democracy Fund

Although a number of these organisations have strategic alignment with gender equity and women empowerment, many did not accept unsolicited applications and had no relevant open calls currently, however keeping abreast of potential opportunities from the above organisations is advisable.

The remaining organizations identified as the most promising options for securing funding were those that either accepted unsolicited proposals, had relevant open calls for applications, or offered alternative funding pathways that were equally accessible. These organizations present valuable opportunities for collaboration, as they provide a streamlined process for female political candidates to apply for financial support without the barriers typically associated with traditional funding mechanisms. The following organizations exemplify these promising options.

Potential Funders

Overview

OPEC Fund



Supports capacity-building initiatives and projects to meet the needs of disadvantaged populations in developing countries. Wide range of strategic priorities including women empowerment and gender equity but aims to be responsive to the needs of partner countries. Accepts submissions from non-OPEC developing countries and accepts unsolicited applications. Contributes up to 50% of the overall total cost of a project.

Trust Africa



The HQ in Senegal is an independent foundation that has three key strategic priorities: 1) Securing the conditions for democracy 2) Fostering African enterprise and shared prosperity 3) Cultivating African resources for democracy and development. These overall strategic priorities demonstrate some alignment with the proposed gender equity potential focus areas. Does not accept unsolicited proposals, prefers to convene workshops where organisations/individuals can outline priorities and present their ideas and make grants off the back of that.

Robert Bosch Stiftung



The key strategic priority is women's empowerment, however also focuses on global themes e.g. migration, democracy, and inequality. This demonstrates some compatibility with the proposed strategic objectives. Can select from existing projects or make an unsolicited application.

King Baudoin Foundation



Relevant strategic priorities such as 'Decent Work and Social Protection' and developing Education & Skills. Prefer applicants that bring together actors from the private sector, civil society, academia, and public sector. The Gambia is not included on the eligible countries list, however, a number of other West African nations including Senegal are eligible and, therefore it may be valuable in making an application to one of the over 50 open calls currently live.

Potential Funding opportunities – Targeted Funds

- ◆ **Apolitical Foundation** - commits an investment of up to \$250,000 by 2025 in projects and services supporting the Political Leadership Entrepreneur Network (PLEN), a non-partisan, global community of 80+ organizations working to cultivate more ethical, diverse, prepared, and supported people to run for political office, including efforts to support women running for office.
- ◆ **The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace** - through its Democracy, Conflict, and Governance Program, will build on recently published research critically examining international support for women's political empowerment with a new research project

analyzing the ongoing global pushback against women's rights and gender equality, its drivers, and ways to limit or reverse such developments.

◆ **The Daniel Sachs Foundation** - commits \$1 million by 2025 to promote the participation of women and other underrepresented populations in politics and democracy through a network of partners, including women-led organizations such as the Apolitical Foundation, the Raise Your Voice Foundation, and the Multitudes Foundation. This investment supports initiatives that promote women into positions of political power and help to advance women's participation in democratic processes in countries around the world.

◆ **The International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES)** - is advancing women's civic and political participation and leadership through the implementation and expansion of its flagship "She Leads" and "Allies for Equality" programs in new countries and contexts around the world. "She Leads" works to provide women with the skills and knowledge to take on leadership roles in political and electoral processes. In 2024 IFES will launch a new "She Leads" program in the West Bank and Gaza, which will be informed by a new gender-responsive political economy analysis. The "Allies for Equality" program focuses on harnessing men's support for women's leadership in political and democratic processes by addressing the social and cultural attitudes and gender norms that can impede women's equal participation in political and public life.

◆ **The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)** - in partnership with UN Women, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, and United Cities and Local Governments, is implementing the Women and Youth in Democracy Empowerment (WYDE) initiative, financed by the European Commission. Through WYDE, International IDEA commits \$1.7 million to strengthen the rights and participation of women and youth in public and political life, including through the International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics (iKNOW Politics) platform. Launched in 2007, iKNOW Politics is a collaborative project of the International IDEA, Inter-Parliamentary Union, the United Nations Development Programme, and UN Women that serves as an online resource hub for experts and practitioners dedicated to women's political participation.

◆ **The International Republican Institute's Women's Democracy Network (WDN)** - commits \$1 million through 2025 to advance women's political and civic participation, supporting more than 12,000 women from 120 countries. Through its country chapters, regional networks, and direct assistance, WDN provides resources, mentorship and networking opportunities, and training to women in politics, civil society, and government. In close collaboration with our local partners, WDN works to amplify women's voices in advocacy and policy-making, counter gender-based violence, including TFGBV, and advance democratic movements in a new digital era.

◆ **The Women's Political Leadership Fund (WPLF)** - with seed funding from OSF, will invest \$25 million in the next four years to advance women's political leadership and democracy in the Global South, with a focus on serving women leaders from marginalized backgrounds. WPLF will support women political leaders through developing networks and alliances that foster solidarity and community, strengthening financial and technical capacities, deepening strategies to counter all forms of gender-based violence, including TFGBV and gendered disinformation, and promoting holistic protection, well-being, and safety.

- ◆ **The Women Political Leaders Global Forum** - is committing \$150,000 by 2025 in support of high-level convenings to connect women political leaders globally and provide a safe space for coordination and community-building, with a focus on tackling violence against women in politics, both online and offline.
- ◆ **Skoll Foundations** - is investing \$2.4 million to advance democracy and women's political leadership and participation in the U.S. and globally. This includes support to: Vote Run Lead, which trains women across the United States to run for elected office at all levels of government; She the People, which supports training, research, and polling that helps women of color candidates identify and advance their policy priorities; and The Keseb Democracy Fellowship, which aims to counter authoritarianism and advance inclusive and resilient democracies through support for democracy entrepreneurs across South Africa, Brazil, and the United States—a majority of whom are women.
- ◆ **The National Democratic Institute (NDI)** - is working to accelerate the pace of change on gender equality in politics by 2030 through efforts including the Changing the Face of Politics campaign, and DISRUPTHER, a program that promotes the political engagement of adolescent girls and young women through education and training. NDI will continue advancing solutions to TFGBV and gendered disinformation against women political leaders, including as an advisor to the Global Partnership for Action on Gender-Based Online Harassment and Abuse.
- ◆ **The Women Political Leaders Global Forum** - is committing \$150,000 by 2025 in support of high-level convenings to connect women political leaders globally and provide a safe space for coordination and community-building, with a focus on tackling violence against women in politics, both online and offline.

Supporting Female's Political Participation

The following strategic framework offers actionable steps to enhance female political participation and leadership:

1. Legislative Reforms for Gender-Sensitive Financial Policies

Reforming legislation to support gender equity in politics can significantly impact female representation. Suggested reforms include gender quotas and reducing nomination fees for women candidates. Mandated public funding allocations for female candidates, along with incentives for political parties to support women, could create a more equitable playing field.

2. Capacity Building for Financial Independence and Leadership Development

Building financial and leadership capacity is essential for empowering female candidates. This can be achieved through comprehensive training programs covering public speaking, fundraising, and campaign management. Prioritizing workshops and mentorship programs will

foster the skills needed for self-sustaining campaigns and ensure female candidates are well-prepared for the demands of political life.

3. Strategic Partnerships with Key Stakeholders

Establishing partnerships with civil society organizations, women grassroots networks, private entities, and international donors is crucial for creating a supportive ecosystem for female political candidates. Collaborative efforts can help address funding gaps and improve access to essential resources, such as training and media platforms, creating a network that encourages and sustains female political participation.

4. Targeted Advocacy Strategies for Policy Influence

A nuanced advocacy approach is required to maximize influence in a political landscape. Public advocacy through events, media, and social campaigns can raise an issue’s profile, while private advocacy such as memos, presentations, and policy briefings help navigate politically sensitive discussions and offers policy-makers insights without public pressure. Balancing these methods is essential for gaining support across various decision-making channels.

5. Timing Interventions for Maximum Impact

Timing is critical for effective policy influence. By aligning advocacy efforts with key government processes, such as budget cycles or election seasons, female-focused initiatives can integrate seamlessly into broader policy discussions. Additionally, maintaining a consistent presence in public debates, through media or community events, demonstrates expertise, and establishes female advocacy groups as trusted sources on gender-sensitive policies.

Table 1: A generic approach to how to build the profile of the strategy throughout the life of a project

	Launch / early phase	Throughout	Launching major outputs	After the project is completed
IN PRIVATE	Consult key decision makers to assess ‘demand’ & barriers to change.	On-going communications with key decision-makers & influential stakeholders ‘Float’ ideas with policy makers to gauge their views	“No surprises” ahead of major publications. Present to ministers / senior officials (in person or through briefing notes.	Follow-up notes/advice to policy makers.

IN PUBLIC	Let the world know you are doing the project on gender equity. E.g. an article or press release on launch. Launch events and seminars.	'Float' ideas in public to gauge their views. Be opportunistic – ongoing commentary on key issues!	Trail findings or key arguments – let the world know the report is coming. Launch events and full press/communications strategy.	Be opportunistic – ongoing commentary on key issues! You can “reheat” research as and when there is demand and a potential influencing opportunity.
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To supplement the above advice, we also provide feedback from the stakeholder interviews. These views and assumptions should be kept under review and updated as the landscape evolves.

Key Recommendations

1. **Establish a Women’s Political Fund:** Develop a dedicated fund supported by both government and private donors to alleviate financing barriers for female candidates. This fund could include contributions from women’s kaffo groups and grassroots fundraising efforts.
2. **Innovative Resource Mobilization Strategies:** Community-driven, innovative funding solutions are emerging as promising avenues to empower female candidates and boost local support. Examples include:
 - ✦ *Crowdfunding Platforms:* Digital fundraising allows candidates to connect with a wider audience, including the diaspora.
 - ✦ *Women’s Kaffo (Savings Groups):* Regular contributions from these groups could provide reliable financial support.
 - ✦ *Grassroots Community Initiatives:* Host community events such as car washes, local product sales, and community fairs foster direct community involvement and financial backing for female candidates.
3. **Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Platform for Resource Mobilization:** Create a PPP platform that unites private sector partners, civil society organizations (CSOs), and international donors to centralize resources supporting women’s political empowerment.
4. **Capacity-Building Programs:** Offer training in financial management, public relations, and digital campaigning to enhance female candidates’ competitiveness and independence.
5. **Increase Media Access for Female Candidates:** Partner with media outlets to ensure equitable coverage of female candidates, including dedicated platforms that promote women’s leadership and public visibility.
6. **Enhanced Financial Support Programs:** Establish targeted financial assistance programs supported by local and international contributions from government

agencies, the private sector, and CSOs, enabling female candidates to cover campaign costs effectively.

7. Cultural Sensitization Programs: Launch initiatives to challenge societal norms restricting women's political participation, using community-based approaches to address patriarchal attitudes.

8. Political Party Reforms: Advocate for party policies that mandate gender inclusion, establishing quotas or specific guidelines to secure female representation in leadership positions.

9. Joint Resource Mobilization Efforts: Promote collaboration among government, civil society, the private sector, and international donors to establish a sustainable, transparent framework supporting women's political participation.

Strategic Approaches for Policy Change and Impact:

To foster impactful policy changes that promote gender equity, strategic partnerships with key government institutions, such as the Ministry of Gender and Women Affairs and the Interparty Committee, are critical. Joint projects with these bodies will bolster advocacy for women's empowerment and promote supportive policies for sustainable progress. The Interparty Committee should focus its policy research on actionable, solution-oriented strategies addressing women's specific needs in politics.

Furthermore, engaging the public in discussions about gender equity will enhance support and alignment with national goals for inclusive leadership.

Communication and Advocacy Strategy

This comprehensive communication and advocacy will be needed to supporting resource mobilization for female political candidates. The approach leverages tailored messaging, diverse engagement channels, and continuous monitoring to build stakeholder support, mobilize resources, and increase public awareness of the importance of women's participation in political leadership.

1. Stakeholder Identification and Segmentation

A clear understanding of stakeholders is crucial for targeted messaging and effective engagement. Segment stakeholders based on their interests and potential contributions to resource mobilization efforts:

- **Existing and Potential Donors:** Fundraising partnerships, grants, and sponsorship.

- **Public Sector Agencies:** Engage government departments like the Ministry of Gender.
- **Private Sector Partners:** Highlight CSR and branding benefits.
- **Political Parties & Inter-Party Committees (IPC):** Emphasize political alignment with gender equality goals.
- **Media and General Public:** Public awareness and community engagement.
- **CSOs, Women's Networks, and International Organizations:** Focus on community impact and global commitments.
- **Female Political Candidates:** Empowerment through training and capacity-building.
- **Influencers and Digital Advocates:** Drive visibility and public support.
- **Foundations and Trusts:** Resource mobilization through grants and donations.

2. Key Messaging

Craft messages that convey the core objectives of the resource mobilization initiative while resonating with each stakeholder group:

- **Core Message:** Emphasize the societal, political, and economic advantages of increased female representation in leadership.
- **Tailored Messaging:**
 - **Government Agencies:** Align with national policies on gender equality.
 - **Private Sector:** Highlight corporate social responsibility (CSR) benefits.
 - **CSOs/Women's Networks:** Empowering communities through gender parity.
 - **International Organizations:** Address global commitments to women's empowerment.

3. Communication Channels

Choose channels that maximize reach and effectiveness among targeted stakeholders:

- **Government Agencies:** Official reports, policy briefs, and high-level meetings.
- **Political Parties:** Internal forums and discussions with party leadership.
- **Private Sector:** Business forums, direct communication, and CSR events.
- **Media:** Press releases, interviews, and partnerships for increased visibility.
- **CSOs/Women's Networks:** Workshops, advocacy meetings, and webinars.
- **Digital and social media:** Social media platforms, newsletters, and online events to engage a broader audience.

4. Engagement Tactics

Use diverse methods to foster engagement, collaboration, and public awareness:

- **Collaborative Events:** Host roundtables, town halls, and workshops to build partnerships and discuss strategies.
- **Advocacy Campaigns:** Targeted campaigns to gain support for policy reforms and financial backing.
- **Capacity-Building:** Offer training for female candidates on fundraising, public engagement, and campaign management.
- **Public Awareness Initiatives:** Social media and public campaigns highlighting the importance of female representation.

Monitoring & Evaluation

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

Number of female candidates receiving financial support.

Total funds raised and disbursed to female candidates.

Percentage increase in successful female candidacies.

Data Collection Methods:

Conduct biannual surveys and interviews with female candidates to monitor financial needs.

Track funding sources, amounts raised, and disbursement effectiveness.

Evaluate campaign outcomes to assess the impact of capacity-building programs.

Reporting and Learning Mechanism:

Regular stakeholder reports detailing progress on KPIs and adjustments to resource mobilization strategies.

Annual impact assessments to identify successful initiatives and areas for improvement.

RESULTS FRAMEWORK

A PROJECT INFORMATION

PROJECT NAME: Strengthening women's political participation and leadership through reformed legislation, community-level leadership, and political parties' engagement in The Gambia	COUNTRY/REGION: The Gambia
OBJECTIVE: To develop a resource mobilization strategy for female political candidates in The Gambia with the aim to increase financial and material resources, enhancing their political participation and representation.	
ALIGNMENT INDICATOR (S):	

B RESULTS MATRIX

RESULTS CHAIN AND INDICATOR DESCRIPTION	INDICATOR	UNIT OF MEASUREMENT	BASELINE (date)	TARGET (date)	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
PROJECT OUTCOME STATEMENT: <i>Strengthened conditions to advance women's political empowerment through aspiring women candidates' capacity-building and sustainable campaign-funding schemes</i>					
OUTPUT: Women's Political Empowerment Fund for supporting female candidates at national and local levels established.	# of Women's Fund established and operational	Number	0	1 2025	Consultants' reports
ACTIVITY 1.1: Recruit a consultant to develop fund implementation plan	# of implementation plans.	Number	0	1 2025	Consultants' reports; Implementation plan
ACTIVITY 1.2: National launch of the Women's Political Empowerment Fund by the Inter-Party Committee (IPC).	# of participants at the national launch event.	Number	0	120 2025	Meeting report
ACTIVITY 1.3: Recruit and assign staff to the IPC to manage the Fund.	# of staff members assigned to the Fund	Number	0	2 2025/2026	Staff recruitment reports
ACTIVITY 1.4: Support IPC's institutional capacity to mobilize resources and manage the Women's Fund through equipment provision (1 TV for projection, 2 laptops, 2 Accessories Monitors and 2 desks)	# of equipment procured	Number	0	6 2025/2026	Procurement reports; inventory of equipment
ACTIVITY 1.5: Develop IPC communication tools to enhance resource mobilization and visibility of activities (website, communication strategy, brochures, social media channels).	# of communication tools developed and in use.	Number	1	5 2026/2027	Consultant and activity reports
ACTIVITY 1.6: Annual resource mobilization activities to secure funding from partners (annual donor conference, call for proposals, networking, etc)	Amount of funding raised from partners each year.	Number	0	\$ 1,500,000 mobilized annually.	Activity reports, donor conference attendance and fundraising records, proposal submission and approval documentation,

					and financial statements.
ACTIVITY 1.7: Conduct quarterly Fund Board meetings to support, monitor, and oversee resource mobilization efforts and fund utilization. ³	# of Board meetings held per year.	Number	0	4 (annually)	Fund Board reports/minutes
ACTIVITY 1.8: Create a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) platform to unite private sector partners, CSOs, and international donors for centralized support of women's initiatives.	# of active members (private sector, CSOs, and donors) engaged on the PPP platform.	Number	0	30 2026	Platform membership records, meeting minutes, partnership agreements, and participation logs.'
OUTPUT 2: Women Leaders Mentorship Unit established at the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare (MoGCSW)	# of operational Mentorship Units with staff, resources, and mentorship framework in place.	Number	0	1 2026	Activity Report
ACTIVITY 2. 1: Mentorship program framework, policies, and guidelines for the Women Leaders Mentorship Unit developed.	# of mentorship program framework, policies, and guidelines completed.	Number	0	5 2025	Consultants' reports; developed framework, policies and guidelines
ACTIVITY 2.2: Recruit and assign staff to the Mentorship Unit.	# of staff members assigned to the Mentorship Unit.	Number	0	2 2025	Staff recruitment reports
ACTIVITY 2. 3: Allocate resources and establish operational infrastructure for the Mentorship Unit.	% of annual budget allocation. # of operational infrastructure established	Percentage; Number	0	15% of allocated annual budget- 2026 1 allocated office space; 2 laptops - 2025	Budget allocation reports; procurement reports
ACTIVITY 2. 4: Launch the Mentorship Unit and initiate the mentorship program.	# of women leaders enrolled in the mentorship program.	Number	0	30 2026	Launch report; enrolment report
ACTIVITY 2.5: Annual resource mobilization activities to secure funding from partners.	Amount of funding raised from partners each year.	Number	0	\$ 2,000,000 mobilized annually.	Activity reports, donor conference attendance and fundraising

³ The Fund's Board will be composed of IPC and key partners. It will be Co-Chaired by IPC and UNDP.

					records, proposal submission and approval documentation, and financial statements.
ACTIVITY 2.6: Conduct two Programme Unit Board meetings every year to support, monitor, and oversee resource mobilization efforts, implementation of programme activities and resource utilization. ⁴	Board meetings held per year.	Number	0	2 (annually)	Programme Unit Board reports/minutes
OUTPUT 3. Enhanced capacity of elected and aspiring women leaders	# of women leaders who complete capacity-building programs.	Number	0	100 (annually)	Training manuals and reports; Pre- and Post-Training Assessments; Mentorship Program Records; Peer Learning Session Reports; Community Sensitization Campaign Reports; CSO and Media Training Records; Participant Feedback Forms.
ACTIVITY 3.1: Train aspiring female candidates on campaign techniques, grassroots mobilization strategies, networking and resource mobilization, communication and media engagement.	# of aspiring female candidates trained	Number	100	50 (annually)	Training attendance sheets, pre- and post-training assessments, training materials, and participant feedback forms.
ACTIVITY 3.2: Implement mentorship program pairing experienced women leaders with new and aspiring leaders.	# of mentorship pairs established and actively participating.	Number	0	25 (annually)	Mentorship agreements, program participation records, and feedback forms.

⁴ The Programme Unit Board will be composed of MoGCSW and key partners. It will be Co-Chaired by MoGCSW and UNDP.

ACTIVITY 3.3: Support women grassroots networks (Kafos) to connect and support aspiring women at all levels.	# of grassroots networks supported and active.	Number	10	20 (annually)	Network membership lists, meeting records, and activity reports.
ACTIVITY 3.4: Conduct community sensitization campaigns to raise awareness of the value of women leaders.	# of community sensitization events conducted.	Number	18	10 (annually)	Event attendance sheets, media coverage/links, awareness campaign materials, and photos.
ACTIVITY 3.5: Organize regional peer-learning sessions for elected women leaders to exchange best practices.	# of peer-learning sessions conducted.	Number	0	1 (annually)	Session attendance sheets, agendas, and summary reports.
ACTIVITY 3.6: Build the oversight and advocacy capacity of CSOs and media to support women's leadership and promote accountability.	# of CSO and media representatives trained.	Number	0	15 (annually)	Training attendance lists, pre- and post-training assessments, and training materials.
ACTIVITY 3.7: Support District Tribunals by providing training and advocacy to increase women's representation.	# of District Tribunals with increased female representation following training and advocacy efforts.	Number	0	7 (annually)	Training attendance records, advocacy meeting reports, tribunal membership rosters before and after intervention, and feedback from District Tribunals.
ACTIVITY 3.8: Track the success rates of female candidates in elections and leadership positions within national and local governance institutions.	# of reports produced on female candidates' success rates in elections and leadership roles.	Number	TBD	2 2026, 2027, 2028	Election and leadership data records, analysis reports, and tracking documentation.
OUTPUT 4: Strengthened legislative reforms, policies and institutions to support women's political participation and leadership.	Number of legislative reforms, policy and institutions supported	Number	0	4 (legislations & policies) 6 (institutions) 2026/2027	Policy and legislative documents, Official Government Records, review reports, meeting minutes,

					stakeholder consultation records, Institutional Capacity Reports, media coverage
ACTIVITY 4.1: Support the review or development of key legislation (Constitution, Women Reservation Bill, Political Parties' By-Laws, Local Government Act, District Tribunals Act, etc) to mainstream quota systems for women's leadership.	# of key legislative documents revised or developed with gender quota provisions	Number	TBD	5 2026/2027	Revised or drafted legislative documents, policy review reports, meeting minutes, and stakeholder consultation records.
ACTIVITY 4.2: Conduct advocacy with parliamentarians, lawmakers, and policymakers on legal frameworks for review or development through lobbying, consultations, town hall meetings, and capacity-building sessions.	# of advocacy engagements held with lawmakers and policymakers	Number	TBD	2 (annually)	Event attendance records, meeting minutes, training materials, and advocacy reports.
ACTIVITY 4.3: Organize awareness campaigns on existing laws, gender strategies for political parties, and adopted quota systems across electoral cycles by the Inter-Party Committee (IPC) among key stakeholders and influencers.	# of awareness campaigns conducted and stakeholders engaged	Number	TBD	5 awareness campaigns (annually)	Campaign materials, event attendance records, participant feedback, and awareness campaign reports
ACTIVITY 4.4: Conduct advocacy among key community stakeholders (community influencers, traditional chiefs, and women's groups) on the review of key legislations and policies to ensure the inclusion of women as leaders and members in governance institutions.	# of advocacy sessions held with key community stakeholders	Number	TBD	3 (annually) with 150 community stakeholders	Session agendas, attendance records, advocacy materials, and feedback from participants.
ACTIVITY 4.5: Provide capacity-building training for national and local institutions to support women's political participation.	# of national and local institutions trained	Number	TBD	5 (annually)	Training attendance sheets, training reports, and evaluation forms.
ACTIVITY 4.6: Build the capacity of the Women and Youth branches of IPC to advocate for and mobilize support for women's leadership.	# of capacity-building sessions conducted	Number	TBD	4 2026	Session agendas, attendance records, training materials, and participant feedback forms.

ACTIVITY 4.7: Build the capacity of Women Wings of political parties to mobilize the selection of more women candidates for national and local elections.	# of Women Wings of political parties trained on candidate mobilization strategies.	Number	TBD	19 2025/2026	Training attendance records, session materials, and post-training evaluation forms.
OUTPUT 5: Comprehensive data collected, and knowledge generated, organized, and stored for supporting women’s participation in politics and leadership.	Amount of data collected, and knowledge generated and organized.	Number	TBD	2 (data reports) 2025/2026 3 (knowledge resources) 2026/2027	Data reports, knowledge resources (e.g., policy briefs, research papers), data management system records, and usage analytics.
ACTIVITY 5.1: Collect data on women’s participation in politics and leadership at national and local levels.	# of data points collected on women’s participation in politics and leadership.	Number	1	500 data points 2026/2027/2028	Data collection tools (surveys, questionnaires), raw data files, and data analysis reports.
ACTIVITY 5.2: Generate knowledge products (e.g., research papers, policy briefs) to highlight trends, challenges, and opportunities for women’s leadership.	# of knowledge products produced.	Number	TBD	4 2026/2027	Published research papers, policy briefs, and knowledge product dissemination reports.
ACTIVITY 5.3: Organize and structure data and knowledge for easy access and future use.	# of knowledge and data resources organized and stored in a digital database.	Percentage	TBD	100% of collected data and generated knowledge stored and organized. 2026/2027	Database records, data management system reports, and file organization structure.
ACTIVITY 5.4: Disseminate data and knowledge resources to stakeholders and partners for informed decision-making.	# of stakeholders and partners who receive data and knowledge products.	Number	TBD	100 2026/2027	Distribution logs, feedback forms from stakeholders, and dissemination reports.
ACTIVITY 5.5: Document and promote success stories from project interventions, including stories from beneficiaries.	# of success stories documented and shared.	Number	TBD	5 (annually)	Written success stories, photos or videos, and dissemination reports (e.g., newsletters, social media posts, or project and media

					coverage reports).
ACTIVITY 5.6: Support the Ministry of Local Government in collecting, reviewing, and analyzing data on women's representation at the local and national levels.	# of data collection, review, and analysis reports produced.	Number	TBD	2 2026/2027	Data collection tools (surveys, questionnaires), analysis reports, and meeting minutes from review sessions

Annex: 1 Gallery of Picture Reference

This picture gallery contains a few of the engagements during the Data Collection process:



Meeting with Independent Electoral Commission Gender Unit



Interview with Deputy Mayoress KMC

Meeting with KMC Councillors



Meeting with the Chairman of Bankers Association



Meeting with the Minister of Gender



Focus Group Discussion with Basso Womem Kafo



Meeting with IPC Members



Validation & Training with Stakeholders on the Resource Mobilization Strategy

Annex: 2

Table of Contents

<i>List of Tables</i>	34
<i>List of Figures</i>	34
4. METHODOLOGY	35
4.1. Research Design	35
4.2. DATA COLLECTION APPROACHES	35
4.2.1. Primary Data Collection Method	36
4.2.2. Secondary Data Collection Method	36
4.3 Data Analysis Method	37
4.3.1. Quantitative Data	37
4.3.2. Qualitative Data	37
5. Survey Administration	37
6. Data Analysis and Report Writing	37
7. Data Presentation and Analysis and Report Writing	37
Section 1: General Information of Respondents	37
Distribution of Respondents by Organization Type	37
Section 2: Understanding Financial Barriers	38
Section 5: Women in Leadership Role	42
Section 7: Final Thoughts	45
FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION(FGD)	47
Section 6: Recommendations for Strategy Development Error! Bookmark not defined.	
<i>To what extent do political party structures in The Gambia support or hinder female candidates financially</i>	47
8. Discussion of Findings	47
Section 2: Understanding Financial Barriers	50
Main Financial Challenges for Female Candidates faces when participating the political processes in the Gambia..... Error! Bookmark not defined.	
How do these financial barriers differ between national and local elections?..... Error! Bookmark not defined.	
Are there particular sectors or regions where female candidates experience greater financial obstacles? If yes, please provide details. Error! Bookmark not defined.	
<i>Organizational Support for Female Candidates</i> <i>Error! Bookmark not defined.</i>	
Resource Mobilization Strategy for Female Political Candidates in The Gambia	33

Broader Implications.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Section 3: Existing Resource Mobilization Efforts	50
Key Stakeholders in Financial Support.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Critical Resources for Female Candidates	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Awareness of Resource Mobilization Initiatives	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Are you aware of any existing initiatives in The Gambia focused on mobilizing resources for female political candidates?	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Section 4: Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships	51
Section 5: Women in Leadership Role	52
Section 6: Recommendations for Strategy Development	54
To what extent do political party structures in The Gambia support or hinder female candidates financially?.....	54
Extent of Political Party Support for Female Candidates	54
Resource Mobilization Strategies for Female Candidates	54
Section 7. Final Thought.....	56
Would your organization be interested in collaborating on future efforts to support female candidates?	56
Key Findings.....	57
9. Conclusion.....	58
Key Challenges.....	58
10. Key Policy Recommendations.....	59
References	60

List of Tables

Table 1: Table 1: Percentage Distribution of Main Financial Challenges Faced by Female Candidates.....	39
Table 2: Percentage of Organizations Directly Supporting Female Candidates in Overcoming Challenges.....	39
Table 3:Percentage Awareness of Existing Initiatives in The Gambia for Resource Mobilization for Female Political Candidates	41
Table 4: Proportion of respondent by Factors that constraints to women’s access to leadership role in the Gambia.....	42
Table 5: Percentage of Organizations Interested in Collaborating on Future Efforts to Support Female Candidates	46

List of Figures

Figure 1: Distribution of Respondents by Organization Type.....	38
Figure 2: Distribution of Respondents by key stakeholders in financial support for female candidates.....	40
Resource Mobilization Strategy for Female Political Candidates in The Gambia	34

Figure 3: Percentage distribution of critical resources for female candidates 41
 Figure 4: Distribution of Crucial Partnerships for Resource Mobilization for Female Candidates..... 42

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1. Research Design

This section will present the study plan, methods, sample selection, size, and areas where the study will be conducted. It also presents analysis of the data. It highlights the survey's comparability, consistency, best quality, credibility, transferability and dependability. Moreover, this study employed purposively sampling techniques to interview key stakeholders and institutions.

4.2. DATA COLLECTION APPROACHES

To fulfill the requirements of this assignment, we conducted face-to-face in-depth interviews with key local stakeholders operating in The Gambia's socio-political landscape, as well as desk-based research.

There are two important reasons for applying such a purposively sample techniques; firstly, it allows you to focus on a specific subset of the population that has the characteristic you need to answer your research questions. Secondly, it can also guide in selecting participants who have in-depth and most relevant knowledge about the subject under investigation.

In women's resource mobilisation strategy for female candidates in The Gambia , it is deemed that the most suitable and convenient sampling technique is purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method used in research, particularly in the social sciences, when the individual has suitable knowledge of that topic. After using the purposively sampling method to get the sample from the target population, we will use primary data collection methods, including questionnaires and face-to-face, in-depth interviews with key stakeholders. These questionnaires and interviews will be conducted targeting respondents from the available government officials, political figures, civil societies, academia, youth representatives and media, etc. To complement the information from the primary data collection, a secondary data collection method were used to obtain information from official documents.

4.2.1. Primary Data Collection Method

The primary data collection method relies on survey questionnaires, a Focus Group Discussions and key Informant Interview (KII).

4.2.1.1. Survey Questionnaires

Survey questionnaires designed and administered to targeted groups. In this survey questionnaire method, a set of questions were developed, and the data was collected using a Google Form.

4.2.1.2. Key Informant Interview

Key Informant Interview (KII) guide was developed and pretested, and interviewers were trained on the administration of the guide to ensure consistency of information collected. In this exercise key stakeholders including government officials, activist, NGOs, media, political figures and among others were interviewed.

4.2.1.3. Focus group discussion workshop

A focus group discussion workshop with active female politicians, females in leadership positions was conducted as part of the qualitative approach to mapped out female resources' mobilization strategies in politics in The Gambia.

4.2.2. Secondary Data Collection Method

The secondary data collection method involves collecting existing data and information through desk reviews of various official documents. This includes the review of The Gambia Beijing Platform for Action, Fourth World Conference on Women, 1995; the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights (African Charter), G.A. Dec. 115 (XVI) (1981/1986); African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, (1990/1999); African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG), the African Youth Charter Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979/1981); and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989. G.A Res. 44/25 (1989/1990); ECOWAS Protocol on Good Governance and Democracy; International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, G.A. Res. 2200A (XXI), 999 U.N.T.S. 171 (1966/1976); International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, G.A. Res. 2200A (XXI), (1966/1976) and Nabeneh, S. (2022). Women's political participation in The Gambia—One step forward or two back?.The Gambia in Transition: Towards a New Constitutional Order, 125–152. Moreover, according to the United Nations (2015), women have a full and equal role to play in this regard, as emphasized by SDG 5 on gender equality, which includes a specific target to “ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic, and public life. These reviews provided more insights into the status of existing

women political resource mobilization and the way forward for women to get enough resources in order to participate in politics and leadership positions in the Gambia.

4.3. Data Analysis Method

4.3.1. Quantitative Data

Quantitative data from the completed questionnaire will be downloaded from Google Docs, cleaned, coded, and prepared for analysis. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the data based on the objectives using STATA statistical software.

4.3.2. Qualitative Data

Qualitative data from the FGDs was transcribed, manually sorted according to themes. The major findings on the research issues was summarized and where necessary triangulated with the findings from the quantitative research.

5. Survey Administration

The surveys questionnaire were developed, and enumerators were recruited and trained on how to use and administer Google form. Three days of training were held to train the enumerators on how to administer the questionnaire using digital devices (tablets, and smartphones). A pre-test was also carried out to assess the quality of the tools, the time it takes, the efficiency of the enumerators, and the preparedness of the respondents.

6. Data Analysis and Report Writing

The quantitative data generated by the survey were cleaned and analyzed using STATA/MP/16.0 .The data generated from the qualitative aspect of the study were transcribed and translated.

7. Data Presentation and Analysis and Report Writing

7.1. Quantitative Data Analysis

In this study, the data were analysis using descriptive statistic which includes frequency and percentage. In addition to, each section were analysis using stata 16 and finally, discussion of result were carried out and also reference with the finding of other researcher in this female resource mobilization strategy.

Section 1: General Information of Respondents

Distribution of Respondents by Organization Type

The provided pie chart illustrates the percentage distribution of respondents by their organization type. The chart shows the relative size of each category concerning the total sample. From the chart, it is clear that the largest category of respondents is Government (about 33%) . This is followed by political party(about 24%) and Civil Society Organization (CSO) (about 21%) and Private Sector (6%). The remaining categories have relatively smaller percentages, with Media and Donor Agency being the smallest (about 3%) each. This shows that the survey sample is dominated by government representatives, followed by political party, CSOs and private sector organizations. The relatively smaller representation of other categories shows that these organizations are less involved in the specific area being studied in the survey.

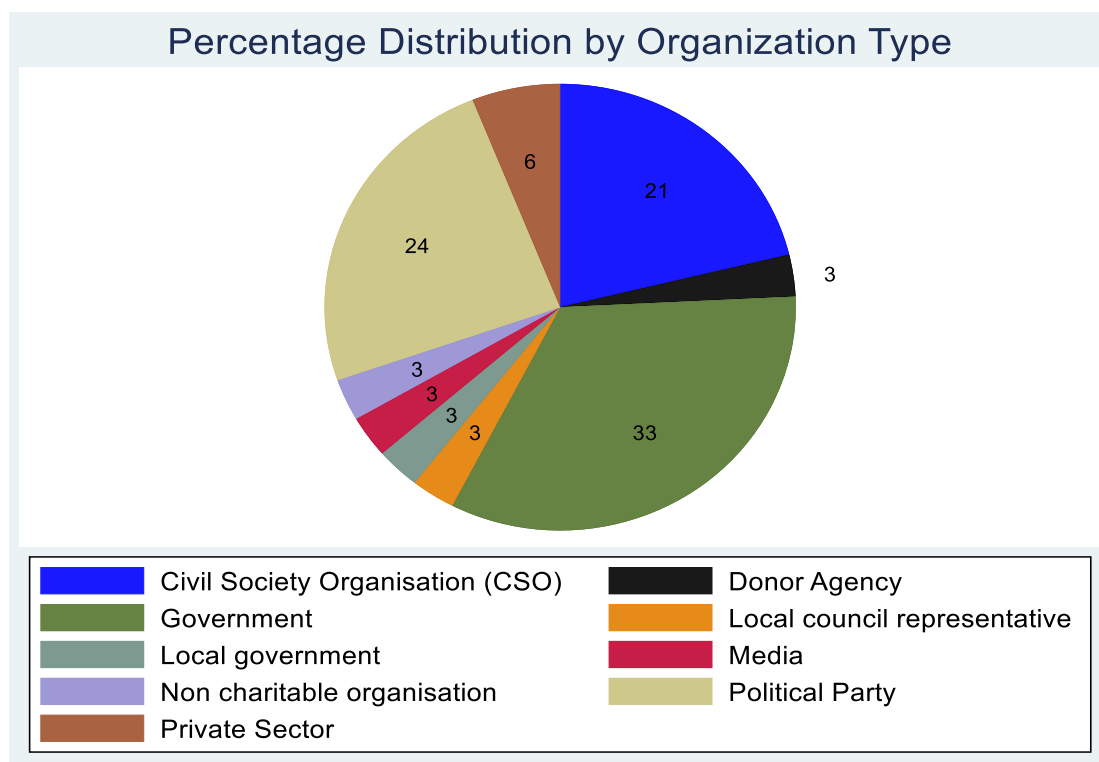


Figure 1: Distribution of Respondents by Organization Type

Section 2: Understanding Financial Barriers

The table below shows the financial challenges female candidates face when participating in political processes in The Gambia. The majority of respondents (75.75%) cited campaign financing as the main financial obstacle preventing them from participating in politics. Female candidates may find it challenging to run campaigns without sufficient funding, which would reduce their visibility and voter turnout. 15.15% of respondents identified access to funds for outreach activities as a significant challenge. Outreach activities are essential for connecting with the electorate and raising awareness about the candidate’s platform, and the lack of funds for this purpose further limits the ability of female candidates to compete effectively. Despite the fact that 6.06% of respondents cited personal financial constraints, it appears that some

female candidates face difficulties in financing their campaigns independently. Finally, 3.03% of respondents cited partnership and networking as a challenge, indicating that while some female candidates have access to certain networks, these are not strong enough to mitigate financial constraints.

Table 1: Table 1: Percentage Distribution of Main Financial Challenges Faced by Female Candidates

financial challenges female candidates face when participants in politic	Frequency	Percentage
Access to funds for outreach activities	5	15.15
Campaign Financing	25	75.75
Partnership and networking	1	3.03
Personal Financial constraints	2	6.06
Total	33	100.00

Table 2 shows whether female candidates get direct support from their organization in overcoming financial barriers. The result shows that 48.48% of respondents said their organizations provide financial support, while 51.52% indicated that no such assistance is offered. This result shows a gap in the support given to female political candidates.

The slight majority of respondents who answered No suggests that there are still significant barriers to access, possibly due to limited organizational capacity, resources, or prioritization of female political participation. These findings emphasize the need for more targeted and structured financial support to ensure a greater number of female candidates can overcome financial constraints and fully participate in the political process.

Table 2: Percentage of Organizations Directly Supporting Female Candidates in Overcoming Challenges

Has your organization directly supported female candidates in overcoming	Frequency	Percentage
No	17	51.52
Yes	16	48.48
Total	33	100.00

Section 3: Existing Resource Mobilization Efforts

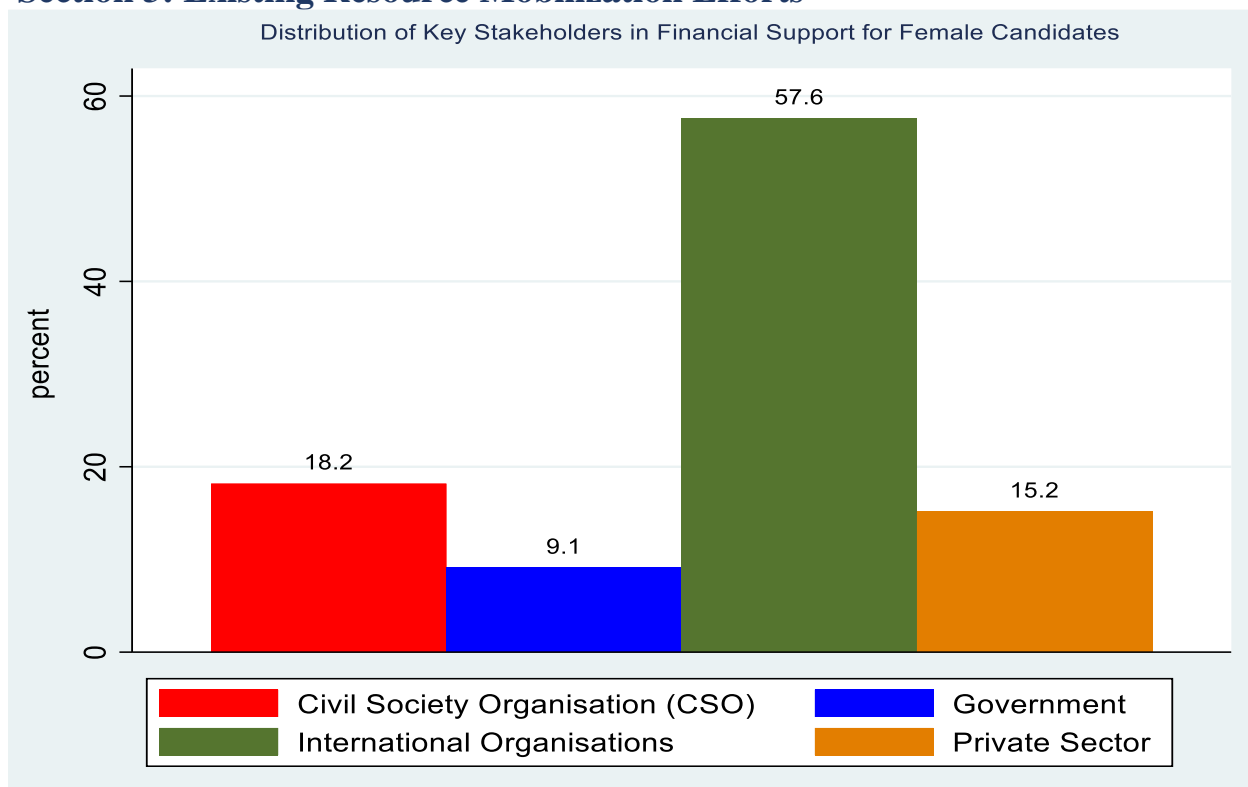


Figure 2: Distribution of Respondents by key stakeholders in financial support for female candidates

The bar chart above illustrates the percentage distribution of key stakeholders in financial support for female candidates. The chart shows the relative size of each stakeholder contribution in the financial support of female candidates in the total sample. From the respondents obtain, it clearly indicates that international organizations are the stakeholders that have the most significant impact in financially supporting female candidates accounting for 57.6% of the total. Civil society organization are the other stakeholders that has the second highest percentage in offering financial support for the female candidates. They contribute about 18.2% of the financial support female received from key stakeholders compare to private sectors and Government contributes about 15.2% and 9.1% respectively. This suggests that international organizations play a crucial role in providing financial resources to support female candidates. While CSOs also contribute significantly, their contribution is not as substantial as that of international organizations. The relatively smaller percentage of government may as result of the budget constraint that Government usually face which reduces their ability to be able to financially support female candidates.

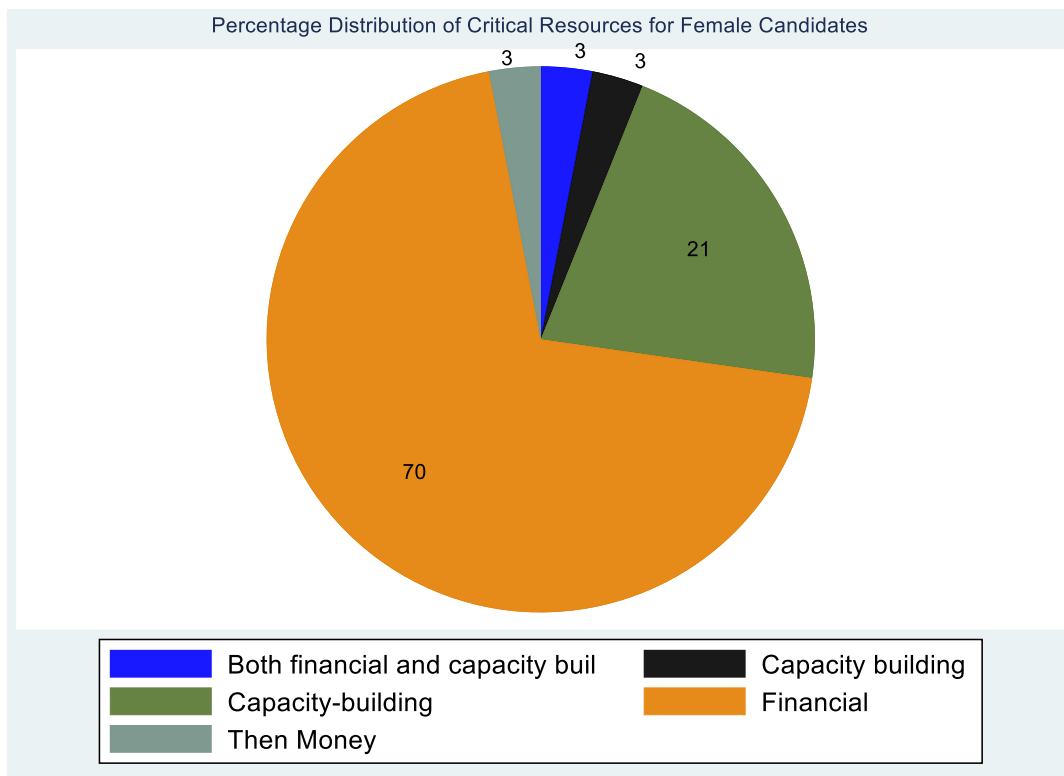


Figure 3: Percentage distribution of critical resources for female candidates

The pie chart above illustrates the percentage distribution of critical resources for female candidates. The chart shows the level of contribution of each critical resource in total from the respondents. Financial resource is the significant for female candidates as it accounts about 70% of the total. Capacity building is also a very important resources as it accounts 21% of the total which is relatively higher than the other remaining resources. This clearly highlights the challenges faced by women in politics. The solid emphasis on financial resources underscores the financial obstacles that women often face in running for office. This can be as result of factors such as gender pay gaps, limited access to networks, and discriminatory practices. The significance of capacity building recommends that women need access to training and mentorship programs to develop the skills and confidence necessary to run successful campaigns. This includes skills like public speaking, fundraising, and campaign management. Table 3:Percentage Awareness of Existing Initiatives in The Gambia for Resource Mobilization for Female Political Candidates

Are you aware of any existing initiatives in The Gambia focused on mobilizing resources for female political candidates?	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	10	30
No	23	70

Total	33	100.00
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The table 3, shows the result of survey question asking individuals if they are aware of the any existing initiative in the Gambia focused on mobile. The majority of the respondents about 69% of them are not aware of any existing initiatives focused on mobile technology in The Gambia and only 30.3% of the respondents indicated awareness of such initiatives. This unawareness about existing mobile initiatives can potentially hamper women's resource mobilization in The Gambia. Mobile technology has the probable to be a powerful tool for women to engage in economics activities, access to information and connect with people or stakeholders who can give them huge support.

Section 4: Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships

Results from figures 4 below show that the main partners in resource mobilization for female candidates in politics is international bodies (54.5%), followed by Local partnership (39.4%) and the least is regional partnership (6.1%). This suggests that international organizations plays a key role in supporting female candidate than local and regional partnership. This imbalance highlights the highly dependence on external funding and support in women resource mobilization for politics.

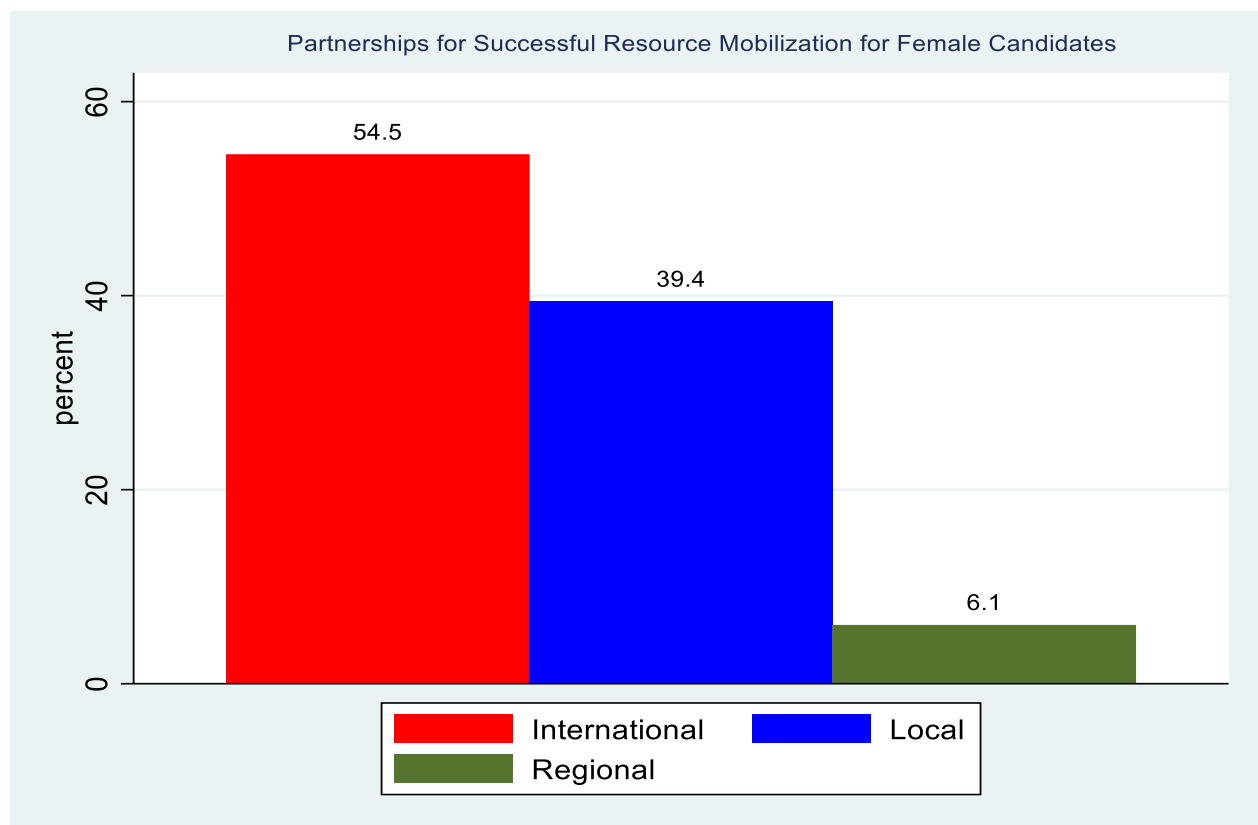


Figure 4: Distribution of Crucial Partnerships for Resource Mobilization for Female Candidates

Section 5: Women in Leadership Role

Table 4: Proportion of respondent by Factors that constraints to women's access to leadership

role in the Gambia.

No	Factors that constraints to women's access to leadership role in the Gambia	Strongly Agree (1)		Agree (2)		Neutral (3)		Disagree (4)		Strongly Disagree (5)	
		fre	%	fre	%	fre	%	fre	%	fre	%
1.	Educational or Literacy Level	9	27.27	13	39.39	4	12.12	5	15.15	2	6.06
2.	Financial Stability	4	12.12	10	30.30	2	6.06	2	6.06	4	12.12
3.	Resource Mobilization	14	42.42	9	27.27	4	12.12	4	12.12	2	6.06
4.	Access to media	7	21.21	14	42.42	5	15.15	4	12.12	3	9.09
5.	Influence within society	15	45.45	9	27.27	5	15.15	3	9.09	1	3.03
6.	Electoral laws	7	21.21	7	21.21	4	12.12	8	24.24	7	21.21
7.	Political Party rules and regulations	6	18.18	5	15.15	7	21.21	6	18.18	9	27.27
8.	Cultural practices, values, belief systems and norms	21	63.64	3	9.09	5	15.15	2	6.06	2	6.06
9.	Patriarchal Attitudes of Society	20	60.61	6	18.18	3	9.09	4	12.12	0	0
10.	Lack of ambition	1	3.03	4	12.12	9	27.27	10	30.30	9	27.27
11.	Time Constrain	4	12.12	6	18.18	11	33.33	6	18.18	6	18.18
12.	Lack of support from men	12	36.36	8	24.24	5	15.15	3	9.09	5	15.15
13.	Lack of civic education	5	15.15	13	39.39	8	24.24	3	9.09	4	12.12

Distribution Of Respondents By Factors That Constraints To Women's Access To Leadership Role In The Gambia.

Educational/Literacy Level

The table analyzes the perceived constraints to women's leadership in The Gambia, based on responses from a group of stakeholders. The findings indicate that educational/literacy levels are a major barrier, with 27.27% of respondents strongly agreeing and 39.39% agreeing, 15.15% and 6.06% disagreed and strongly disagreed with this notion. This proposes that determination and efforts to promote women's leadership should focus on improving educational

opportunities for girls and women, addressing gender disparities in education, challenging traditional gender roles, and implementing affirmative action measures.

Financial Stability

The table displays data on the professed limitations to women's leadership in The Gambia, based on responses from a group of stakeholders. Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with various factors, using a 5-point Likert scale. The data shows that financial stability is another significant constraint affecting women leadership role in the Gambia. A percentage 12.12% of respondents strongly agreeing and 30.30% agreeing, 6.06% disagreed and 12.12% strongly disagreed that financial stability is a constraint to women participation in leadership. This demonstrates the evidence that financial resources play a crucial role in enabling women to pursue leadership positions and overcome the challenges associated with them.

Resource Mobilization

The analysis of the table discloses that resource mobilization is a significant constraint to women's leadership in The Gambia. A substantial portion of respondents, 42.42%, strongly agreed with this statement, while an additional 27.27% agreed, 12.12% of the respondents are neutral and 6.06% strongly disagreed with the notion that resources mobilization is a constraint to women's leadership. This indicates that access to financial and other resources is a major challenge for women seeking leadership positions in the country. These findings highlight the importance of addressing resource inequalities and providing women with the necessary support to overcome these obstacles.

Access to Media

The analysis of the table reveals that access to media is a significant barrier to women's leadership in The Gambia. A substantial portion of respondents, 42.42%, strongly agreed with this statement, while an additional 21.21% agreed. This indicates that limited media exposure and representation can hinder women's ability to gain visibility and recognition as potential leaders. These findings underscore the importance of improving women's access to media platforms and promoting gender-balanced media coverage to create a more equitable leadership landscape.

Influence within Society

The results from the table discloses that limited societal influence and recognition pose significant obstacles to women's leadership in The Gambia. A considerable portion of respondents, 45.45%, strongly agreed with this declaration, 27.27% agreed, 9.09% and 3.03% disagreed and strongly disagreed as well. This signifies that societal norms and expectations often impede women's ability to gain the necessary influence and support to ascend to leadership positions. The findings dispaly the importance of challenging traditional gender roles, promoting women's empowerment, and fostering a more comprehensive and equitable society to create a conducive environment for women's leadership.

Electoral Laws

The data shows different views on the effect of electoral laws on female's access to leadership in the Gambia. While 42.42% of respondents regard these laws as a constrain female's political participation, 24.24% disagree, suggesting opposite perspectives. This indicates that perceptions of these laws' impact on gender equality may depend on other factors.

Political Party Rules and Regulations

The evaluation indicates that political party rules significantly obstruct female leadership in The Gambia, with 33.33% of respondents agreeing. These restrictive regulations limit women's success in political roles, emphasizing the need for party reforms to improve gender equality and inclusivity.

Cultural Practices, Values, Belief Systems, and Norms

The analysis highlights that cultural norms and practices significantly restrict women's leadership in The Gambia, with 72.73% of respondents agreeing. These entrenched issues limits women's advancement and contribute to a hostile political environment. The findings highlight the necessity for cultural transformation and campaigns to eliminate harmful gender stereotypes and promote gender equality.

Patriarchal Attitudes of Society

The study further indicates that patriarchal attitudes significantly restrict women's leadership in The Gambia, with 78.79% of respondents agreeing to this issue. These confirmed beliefs distort women's success stories in The Gambian political arena. The evidence emphasizes the need for a campaign to create awareness and demolish these harmful gender stereotypes and promote gender equality.

Lack of Ambition

The data shows that perceptions of a lack of ambition as a barrier to female leadership in The Gambia are minimal. 15.15% of the respondents agreed with this claim. This suggests that a lack of ambition is not a widespread challenge to female participation in Gambian politics, and other factors identified in previous questions are more substantial obstacles to women's leadership.

Time Constraints

The data reveals mixed perceptions about time constraints impacting female leadership in the country. While 30.30% of the respondents agreed with this fact majority of them disagreed with the claim that time constraint is an obstacle to female political participation. This indicates that, although time constraints may impact some women, they are not considered a widespread hurdle to leadership aspirations.

Lack of Support from Men

The data reveals that many respondents view a lack of support from men as a significant barrier to women's leadership, with 60.60% of the respondents agreeing. This suggests that societal norms often negatively impact women's advancement in political processes in the country. However, some respondents hold differing views: 24.24% disagreed with this claim, while another 15.15% remained neutral, indicating a range of perspectives on this issue.

Lack of Civic Education

The data shows that many respondents believe that lack of civic education is a significant barrier to female participation in The Gambia, with 54.54% of the respondents agreeing. This reflects a common view that limited knowledge of civic rights and processes impacts female political endeavors. However, 36.36% of the respondents disagreed with this claim, showing that this concern is not universally held, while 9.09% remained neutral, suggesting more nuanced perspectives.

In conclusion, the data highlights many factors limiting women's access to political processes in The Gambia, requiring a comprehensive approach that promotes gender equality, challenges stereotypes, and enhances support and opportunities for women's leadership participation.

Section 7: Final Thoughts

Table 5: Percentage of Organizations Interested in Collaborating on Future Efforts to Support

Female Candidates

Would your organization be interested in collaborating on future efforts to support female candidates?	Frequency	Percentage
No	4	12.12
Yes	29	87.88
Total	33	100.00

The table above shows the statistics of the responses of respondents on their organizations interest in collaborating on future efforts to support female candidates. The data shows that 87.88% of the respondents indicated that their organizations would be interested in future collaborations to support female candidates while 12.12% of the respondents show no interest in future collaborations to support female candidates. This shows that there is a strong potential for partnerships and collaborations among the surveyed organizations.

7.2. Qualitative analysis

Section 6: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

The focus group discussions (FGDs) about Stakeholders/Organization which includes Government, Civil Society Organization (CSO), Political Parties, Donor Agencies, Private Sector, and Others were interviewed.

8. To what extent do political party structures in The Gambia support or hinder female candidates financially

From the quantitative data analysis, it is clear that there is a wide range of opinions regarding the extent to which political party structures support or hinder female candidates in The Gambia. Some respondents believe these structures provide significant support, while others believe they have little or no impact. This is consistent with the findings of qualitative research, FGDs, which stated that political parties support female candidates financially by paying for their application forms, supporting them with registration, and giving them some campaign materials. Political parties hinder female candidates financially by not creating a conducive platform for female candidates to excel. However, the political party hinders women's participation in politics due to a lack of trust in winning elections. In The Gambia, female

candidates receive less funding due to a political structure that is not sensitive to gender issues. Additionally, committees at all levels are predominantly male, leading to underrepresentation of women. As a result, the participation of females in national and local elections is hindered by a lack of financial support, making it difficult for them to compete effectively.

12. How can resource mobilization efforts for female candidates become more sustainable and impactful?

The quantitative analysis indicates that resource mobilization efforts for female candidates in The Gambia are becoming less sustainable and impactful. This finding aligns with insights from the focus group discussion that identified effective strategies for supporting female candidates. Participants emphasized the importance of establishing networks among women, strengthening their capacities, and creating dedicated institutions to promote female leadership. They highlighted the critical need for financial independence, fundraising initiatives, and government support to ensure female candidates have access to essential resources. Additionally, the discussion stressed the significance of socialization, community engagement, and collaboration among political parties in enhancing resource mobilization for women. Participants also underscored the need for sustainability in these efforts and advocated for structured, community-driven initiatives to generate long-term impacts. While financial support was recognized as a crucial factor, the importance of providing resources in a timely and targeted manner to maximize their effectiveness was also noted.

15. What role can private sector entities play in financially supporting female candidates?

The focus group discussion provided information on the potential role of the private sector in financially supporting female candidates in The Gambia. The private sector can support female candidates by establishing funding schemes directed at aiding aspiring candidates within the context of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Subsequently, the private sector can help build the capacities of candidates, establishing initiatives that will bring donor agencies and female candidates on the same platform. In other words, creating online and offline fundraising campaigns will act as a way to support female candidates in the Gambia. In addition, participants emphasized the importance of building strong relationships, collaborating with relevant institutions, and offering project-based support. Additionally, they highlighted the need for advocacy, resource mobilization, and capacity-building initiatives as key elements in strengthening the private sector's involvement. Finally, the focus group findings emphasize the significant potential for the private sector to contribute to the financial empowerment of female

candidates. To effectively support female leadership in The Gambia, it is essential to create a conducive environment through policy reforms and collaborative efforts.

17. Are there opportunities for joint resource mobilization efforts among multiple stakeholders? Please explain.

The focus group discussion examined the potential for joint resource mobilization efforts among various stakeholders in The Gambia. Most of the participants highlighted that there are no opportunities for joint resource mobilization efforts among multiple stakeholders in The Gambia. However, some indicated that there are joint resource mobilization efforts among multiple stakeholders, by collaborating with local networks like the Network of Women in Politics and Leadership, civil society organizations, private sector entities, and international donors that can pool resources and expertise. This collective approach ensures a more comprehensive support system for female candidates. Joint efforts can lead to shared funding initiatives, coordinated training programs, and unified advocacy campaigns, maximizing impact and sustainability. Such collaborations foster a more inclusive political environment, empowering women at the grassroots level and enhancing their chances of success in politics. Moreover, participants expressed diverse perspectives on the feasibility and impact of such collaborations, while some were optimistic about the potential benefits, others were uncertain or unaware of existing efforts in this area. Thus, numerous key themes emerged from the discussion, including the importance of transparency, collaboration among multiple organizations, and the potential for greater impact through joint resource mobilization. Participants stressed the need for stakeholders to work together toward common goals to achieve meaningful and sustainable results. Yes, when stakeholders come together, there is a greater impact. For instance, when the different UN agencies in the Gambia comes together to seek funds for all contesting female candidates from local to national levels, there is a higher chance of getting funds than individual organizations doing this. Finally, the discussion also highlighted challenges and uncertainties related to joint resource mobilization.

8. Discussion of Findings

This current study on ‘enhancing Resource Mobilization Strategy for Female Candidates in The Gambia’s arrived at some important findings that largely corroborated existing knowledge on the state of progress on women’s Resource Mobilization Strategy. The study anchored on a mixed methodological approach combined a survey with qualitative data sourced from focus group discussions and key informant interviews with critical stakeholders conducted in

communities across Gambia's administration regions. The sections outlined present key insights into various aspects of female political resource mobilization strategy in The Gambia.

Section 2: Understanding Financial Barriers

The analysis of the survey results shows significant financial barriers that female candidates face in The Gambia when participating in political processes. These findings echo the challenges faced by women in political systems globally, as documented by various studies on gender and political participation.

Financial Barriers for Female Candidates

The results reveal that campaign financing is the most significant financial challenge. This is consistent with international findings where financing campaigns has been one of the largest obstacles for female political candidates (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2008). Studies from different regions have shown that women often have more difficulty accessing the funds needed for political campaigns than their male counterparts. A study by Sakurai & Menezes (2011) on elections in Brazil found that women candidates often face higher barriers in securing funding, leading to lower participation rates in elections. Access to funds for outreach activities was also another challenge, although less significant than campaign financing. This finding aligns with the work of Bardall (2013), who highlighted that women in politics often struggle with accessing resources needed to build extensive grassroots networks and conduct outreach, which are crucial part of a successful political campaign. The lack of financial resources for outreach limits the ability of female candidates to mobilize supporters and build a strong political base.

Organizational Support for Female Candidates

When asked whether their organizations have directly supported female candidates in overcoming financial barriers, the responses were almost equally split. Around **48.48% of respondents** indicated that their organizations had provided support. This aligns with studies by **Wängnerud (2009)**, which suggest that while some institutions may be offering financial or in-kind support to women candidates, these efforts are often sporadic and not institutionalized across sectors.

Broader Implications

The predominance of financial barriers for female candidates highlighted in this study suggests that efforts to improve women's political participation in The Gambia must focus on developing more sustainable resource mobilization strategies. The literature supports this assertion, as research conducted by **Geisler (2000)** in Southern Africa suggests that without addressing the

issue of funding, policy initiatives aimed at increasing women's representation in politics are likely to have limited success.

Section 3: Existing Resource Mobilization Efforts

Key stakeholders in financial support female candidates

We found out that International Organizations financially offers more by support by large to female candidates compare to other stakeholders like Government, Civil Society Organization and Private Sectors. It respondent indicates that 57.6% support female candidates received financially is from stakeholders is from International Organizations. This could as a result of many international organizations especially those focused on human rights, democracy and development, have a core mandate to promote gender equality and empower women. Supporting female candidates aligns directly with these objectives. Civil Society Organizations are the other stakeholders that contribute relative more than the other stakeholders with 18.2% in financially supporting women candidates. The contribution of CSOs is commendable, demonstrating their dedication to promoting women's rights and their ability to mobilize resources for this cause. However, their capacity may be limited, and they may require additional support to expand their reach and impact. The relatively smaller role of the government in providing financial support just 9.1% is a concern. While government initiatives are essential for creating a conducive environment for women's political participation, their limited involvement in this specific area may hinder the progress of female candidates. The limited involvement of the private sector is an area for further exploration. Understanding the reasons for this lack of engagement can inform strategies for encouraging greater private sector participation in supporting female candidates. This finding is in line with the hypothesis in which according to (Island, 2019) gender equality and the empowerment of women are neglected aspects in the Paris Declaration and that they are not emphasized enough in the aid effectiveness dialogue.

Are you aware of any existing initiatives in The Gambia focused on mobile?

This finding suggests a notable gap in awareness or accessibility of mobile initiatives in The Gambia. It implies that a substantial portion (69.70%) of respondents were unaware of such initiatives, 30.30% indicated that they were aware. Several factors could contribute to this lack of awareness, including limited outreach efforts, insufficient communication channels, or socio-economic barriers. Mobile phones can facilitate access to information, networking, and communication platforms, which are crucial for political participation. This finding is in line with the hypothesis in which according to (Varriale et al., 2022) who's results stated that

regular use of mobile phones is associated with more positive attitudes toward women's participation in politics. We found out that the most significant resource required by female candidates in The Gambia is **financial support**. This category accounts for a substantial 70% of the total resources needed. This finding suggests that financial constraints are a primary barrier to female participation in politics and that providing adequate financial assistance is crucial for increasing their representation. We also found out that capacity building is second most important resources required. It indicates 21% of the total resources in that category, which shows a strong need for programs that empower female candidates with required talents and knowledge to succeed. The result also shows that about only 3% of the resources required by female is money. This finding is in line with the hypothesis in which according to (Right, 2007) women have less money than men as well as less access to powerful and moneyed networks.

Section 4: Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships

The analysis reveals that international partnerships are the predominant source of resource mobilization for female candidates, constituting 54.5% of the total partnerships identified. This is followed by local partnerships at 39.4%, while regional partnerships account for only 6.1%. These findings align with previous research (Lawless, 2004), who found that international organizations play a pivotal role in supporting women's political participation. Furthermore, (Yadav et al., 2020) highlights the importance of local partnerships in mobilizing resources, but suggests that their effectiveness may be limited by factors such as geographical constraints and cultural differences. The relatively small percentage of regional partnerships may be attributed to challenges in coordinating efforts across multiple countries. Overall, these results underscore the significance of international cooperation in advancing women's political representation, while also emphasizing the need for strengthening local and regional partnerships to ensure more equitable and inclusive resource mobilization.

Section 5: Women in Leadership Role

Educational/ Literacy Level

This study shows that many women face barriers to leadership due to low educational levels. To address this, we need to focus on improving educational opportunities for girls and women, challenging traditional gender roles, and implementing affirmative action measures. The findings reveal 27.27% of the respondents strongly agreeing and 39.39% agreeing to this finding. However, this finding is in line with a research conducted by (Kiamba, 2008) who revealed in his study that there is a concerted efforts to make sure that women representation

across all level of governance is now recognized as fundamental human rights. Also, in another explanation as by (Grove & Montgomery, 2000) as cited by (Kiamba, 2008) some people believe that women are underrepresented in educational administration because they are unenthusiastic to seek leadership positions, are not self-assured enough, or are unwilling to engage in the political aspects of the job.

Financial Stability

This study shows that many women in The Gambia face financial barriers to leadership. To address this, we need to provide women with more financial resources to help them pursue leadership positions and overcome their challenges. Similarly, in a study conducted by (Mertzanis et al., 2024) they reveal that women in leadership positions can improve a company's access to financing, especially in larger and more developed countries. However, the size and type of the company, the country's economic conditions, and its laws and policies on gender equality also play a role. While women in leadership can positively impact a company's financial standing in developed countries, The Gambia could benefit from implementing more supportive policies to promote women in leadership roles. This would align with the positive effects seen in other countries where women have made significant strides in leadership.

Resource Mobilization

This study shows that many women in The Gambia face challenges in accessing financial and other resources needed for leadership. To address this, we need to provide women with more resources and support to help them overcome these obstacles. (Karuhanga, 2010) revealed that Women-only development programs can help women build confidence, learn new skills, and be inspired by successful role models. These programs can be helpful in addition to other strategies for increasing the number of women in leadership positions. However, other factors such as organizational culture and women's own career choices also play a role in career advancement.

Access to Media

This study shows that many women in The Gambia face challenges in accessing media platforms and representation. To address this, we need to provide women with more access to media and promote gender-balanced coverage to create a more equitable leadership landscape. In a study by (Shockley et al., 2020) they show that women in Qatar are using social media to engage with the public and support other women in leadership roles. However, this trend is not seen among men.

Section 6: Recommendations for Strategy Development

The survey results and focus group discussions provide a nuanced understanding of how political party structures in The Gambia support or hinder female candidates, as well as strategies for improving resource mobilization for these candidates.

To what extent do political party structures in The Gambia support or hinder female candidates financially?

According to the survey, the structures of political parties play a crucial role in either assisting or deterring female candidates financially. In the Gambia, most political parties to which political parties support female candidates are highly dependent on the leadership dynamics of the party, internal policies, and commitment to gender equality. We can summarize from the data that because of the patriarchal nature of the Gambian society and the fact that women are not seen as “winnable” political parties fail to put in place the required internal mechanisms to ensure females’ participation.

Extent of Political Party Support for Female Candidates

The survey reveals a wide range of opinions on the extent to which political party structures in The Gambia support female candidates. The most common response, accounting for 12.12%, is that support exists "to a little extent." This suggests that while some parties may make efforts to assist female candidates, these efforts are often perceived as limited or insufficient. Other responses, such as "During campaign period" (9.09%) and "In our party setup we try as much to" (6.06%), further indicate that support may be inconsistent or restricted to certain phases of the political process, such as during elections. These findings point to the conclusion that political party support for female candidates in The Gambia is generally weak or sporadic. Parties may not have well-structured or sustained mechanisms in place to provide meaningful financial or organizational support for women seeking political office.

Resource Mobilization Strategies for Female Candidates

One of the ways to ensure that resource mobilization efforts for female candidates is improving and strengthening local fundraising Networks this is likely to ensure more unwavering and long-lasting support for female candidates. Creating a cordial relationship between female candidates and grassroots organizations, funds can be raised locally, thus reducing the dependence on external bodies for campaign funds. Another way to ensure sustainable and impactful resource mobilization efforts for female candidates is to increase financial literacy and capacity building among female candidates. Having the skills necessary to single-handedly manage financial and other resources will undoubtedly improve and sustain mobilization resources.

Building networks among women: Stronger connections among women can foster solidarity and mutual support.

Strengthening capacities: Providing training and capacity-building programs to prepare female candidates for the challenges of campaigning.

Government support and fundraising initiatives: Crucial for ensuring female candidates have access to necessary financial resources. Sustainability and timely provision of resources were identified as key factors in the effectiveness of these strategies. These discussions underscore the need for a more organized and structured approach to resource mobilization to create a long-term impact.

The Role of the Private Sector: The private sector was recognized as a potentially valuable source of financial support for female candidates. Focus group participants suggested strategies like:

Collaborating with private companies: Establishing partnerships to secure project-based or direct financial support.

Advocacy and lobbying for policy reforms: Creating an environment where private companies are incentivized to support female political participation, for instance, by reducing deposit fees for candidates or offering donations. Despite some challenges, participants were optimistic that private sector involvement could significantly improve resource mobilization for female candidates, especially if these efforts are supported by favorable policies and advocacy initiatives.

Joint Resource Mobilization: The potential for joint resource mobilization across various stakeholders—such as political parties, civil society, and the private sector—was also discussed. Participants agreed that collaboration could lead to a more significant impact, but they also acknowledged the challenges. These include:

Coordination complexity: Organizing efforts across multiple entities can be difficult, especially when transparency and accountability are concerns.

Conflicts of interest: Some organizations might have competing agendas, making collaboration more challenging.

Overall, while there is optimism about the benefits of joint efforts, stakeholders will need to work through these challenges to create effective resource mobilization strategies. The results show that political party structures in The Gambia currently provide limited support to female candidates, often in an inconsistent manner. However, there is significant potential for improvement through better resource mobilization strategies, greater involvement of the private sector, and collaborative efforts among stakeholders. These initiatives, if well-

coordinated, could provide the financial and organizational support needed to enhance female political participation in The Gambia.

Section 7. Final Thought

Would your organization be interested in collaborating on future efforts to support female candidates?

The finding that 87.88% of respondents expressed interest in collaborating to support female candidates in resource mobilization and political participation represents a significant opportunity for advancing gender equality in leadership roles. This high level of interest reflects the growing awareness among organizations of the barriers women face in achieving political and economic representation, such as underrepresentation and limited access to financial resources. Research shows that gender-diverse leadership not only fosters more inclusive decision-making processes but also improves governance and socio-economic outcomes, benefiting the wider society. By actively supporting women's participation, organizations can help promote more balanced development.

Additionally, studies from (Allen, 2020; Kucharzewska, 2022) reinforce the importance of women's involvement in politics, indicating that empowering female leaders can lead to more equitable resource distribution and improved governance. UN Women's global initiatives show that increasing female representation in leadership positions results in more effective policies that address diverse societal needs, driving inclusive growth.

(Allen, 2020)^b evidence review further highlights that supporting woman through resource mobilization, training, and mentorship is essential for overcoming barriers and ensuring their sustained political engagement.

Still, the 12.12% of respondents expressing disinterest points to the continued existence of resistance, likely influenced by traditional gender norms and biases. Studies like those from the (*Lund University Master of Science in International Development and Management, 2019*)^a illustrate that while support for female leadership is growing, biases remain, especially in regions such as Eastern Europe and Central Asia, where more people still view men as better political leaders. These ingrained biases highlight the need for continuous advocacy and policy reform to eliminate systemic barriers to women's political participation. In order to translate this strong interest into meaningful change, it is critical to develop clear strategies for collaboration. This includes establishing networks to share resources, creating mentorship programs, and implementing long-term policies that address structural challenges. Additionally, it is essential that these efforts are inclusive, extending support to women from marginalized and underserved communities. Collaboration must go beyond short-term

initiatives and focus on sustained advocacy, cultural change, and institutional reforms to create a more gender-responsive political environment. (Lund University Master of Science in International Development and Management, 2019)^b.

Overall, the data points to a need for stronger financial and organizational support for female candidates, improved awareness of initiatives, and greater collaboration among key stakeholders in The Gambia. Addressing societal constraints, particularly cultural norms and patriarchal attitudes, will be essential and go a long way for fostering female leadership.

9. Key Findings

The key findings of the study on Women resources mobilization and access to leadership in The Gambia highlight several significant challenges, despite some progress in addressing discrimination since the 1995 Beijing Conference.

1. **Distribution of Respondents by Organization Type:** Government organizations represent the largest group (24%), followed by Civil Society Organizations (21%), and the private sector (18%). Smaller representation from media and donor agencies (3%) indicates lower involvement from these sectors.

2. **Main Financial Challenges for Female Candidates:** A majority (72.72%) cited campaign financing as the biggest challenge, highlighting a significant financial barrier in running for office. Access to funds for outreach activities and personal financial constraints were less common but still important obstacles.

3. **Support for Female Candidates:** Approximately half of the surveyed organizations (51.52%) have not directly supported female candidates, indicating that more organizational involvement is needed to provide assistance to women running for office.

4. **Awareness of Resource Mobilization Initiatives:** A large majority (70%) of respondents are unaware of existing initiatives in The Gambia to mobilize resources for female political candidates, suggesting a need for increased awareness and visibility of such efforts.

5. **Key Stakeholders in Financial Support:** International organizations provide the largest proportion of financial support (57.6%), followed by civil society organizations (18.2%). The government and private sector provide much smaller portions of financial assistance (9.1% and 15.2%, respectively).

6. **Crucial Partnerships for Resource Mobilization:** International partnerships are the most prevalent (54.5%) in mobilizing resources for female candidates, with local partnerships also playing a significant role (39.4%). Regional partnerships are minimal (6.1%).

7. Constraints to Women's Leadership: Cultural practices, values, and patriarchal attitudes were identified as significant barriers to women's leadership 63.64% and 60.61% respectively. Lack of financial stability (42.42%) and access to media (42.42%) also emerged as important factors hindering leadership opportunities for women.

8. Collaboration on Future Efforts: An overwhelming majority (87.88%) of respondents indicated that their organizations are interested in collaborating on future efforts to support female candidates, showing a strong willingness for partnerships.

9. Recommendations: Suggestions included increasing civic education, reforming political party rules, and mobilizing financial resources through joint stakeholder efforts to support female candidates in The Gambia.

10. Conclusion

The data presented in this report sheds light on the significant financial, social, and cultural barriers that female political candidates in The Gambia face. Key challenges identified include a lack of financial resources, insufficient media access, patriarchal societal attitudes, and restrictive political party structures. Most respondents noted that financial constraints, particularly related to campaign financing and personal resources, pose the most significant obstacle to female candidates. Additionally, cultural practices and patriarchal attitudes were frequently cited as barriers that discourage women from pursuing leadership roles. The report also highlighted a general lack of awareness about existing initiatives focused on mobilizing resources for female candidates. Despite these challenges, there is strong interest from surveyed organizations in collaborating on future efforts to support female political candidates. International partnerships and civil society organizations (CSOs) were identified as key players in financial resource mobilization, although local and private sector support remains underrepresented.

11. Key Challenges

1. Financial Constraints: Securing funds for outreach and campaign financing is the largest challenge female candidates face. Resource mobilization is difficult due to limited access to local and private sector financial support.

2. Cultural and Patriarchal Barriers: Deep-seated cultural norms and patriarchal attitudes significantly limit women's participation in politics, with more than 60% of respondents agreeing that these societal issues hinder female candidates.

3. Limited Access to Media: Media exposure is a challenge, limiting the visibility and outreach of female candidates, which is crucial during elections.

4. **Political Party Structures:** Political party regulations and practices are often unfavorable to female candidates, which hinders their ability to progress within party structures or gain significant nominations.

5. **Lack of Knowledge about Existing Initiatives:** The majority of respondents (70%) were unaware of initiatives in The Gambia focused on resource mobilization for female candidates, pointing to a gap in communication and outreach by supporting organizations.

12. Key Policy Recommendations

1. **Increased Financial Support:** Develop targeted financial assistance programs specifically for female candidates, involving local and international actors, including government agencies, the private sector, and CSOs. These programs should provide fundraising support and strategies, as well as subsidies for campaign-related expenses.

2. **Cultural Sensitization Programs:** Implement widespread educational campaigns aimed at shifting societal attitudes and cultural norms that restrict women from participating in leadership. Community-based initiatives can help to dismantle patriarchal attitudes.

3. **Media Access Initiatives:** Encourage media houses and platforms to prioritize equal representation and coverage of female candidates. Partner with media organizations to create platforms specifically promoting female leadership.

4. **Political Party Reforms:** Advocate for policy reforms within political parties to establish clear guidelines supporting gender inclusion. This could include quotas or specific rules ensuring that female candidates are equally represented in nominations and leadership positions.

5. **Capacity-Building Programs:** In addition to financial support, capacity-building programs aimed at developing the skills, knowledge, and networks of female candidates should be expanded. This includes leadership training, media engagement workshops, and campaign strategy development.

6. **Promoting Joint Resource Mobilization:** Encourage joint resource mobilization efforts among multiple stakeholders, including civil society, international organizations, government, and the private sector. Establish clear frameworks and transparency mechanisms to ensure collaboration is effective and sustainable.

By addressing these challenges and implementing the recommended strategies, The Gambia can create a more inclusive and equitable political environment for female candidates, thereby enhancing their participation in leadership roles.

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