



# Annual Narrative Progress Report

## 2 0 1 7

**WE4L**

Women Empowered for Leadership

Women Empowered for Leadership  
<https://womeninleadership.hivos.org/>

**Hivos**  
people unlimited

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Women should be recognized and supported as leaders and agents of change, but require equal opportunities and capacities to fully participate in decision-making processes. Women Empowered for Leadership (WE4L) joins forces with and influences women's organisations, trade unions, political parties tribal leaders and media in Jordan, Lebanon, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe. We train, coach, and build coalitions, focusing at the sub-national level, as this is where decisions are made and policies implemented that directly affect people's daily lives.

1. More women participate fully and effectively in politics and public administration at sub-national level.
2. Female leaders, linked with women's rights organisations, have more influence on political and societal developments and on public opinion.
3. There is more recognition and support from the general public for women in leadership positions.

4. Civic organisations such as trade unions and political parties promote full and equal participation of women in leadership positions and demonstrate significant changes in their own policies and practices.

This report documents key progress and results in 2017, building on the foundations laid in 2016.

## THEORY OF CHANGE

In 2017 we revisited our **Theory of Change (TOC)** as a reflection tool. We confirmed the validity of the overall TOC, but added two assumptions: "When women are in leadership positions, they will work for women's issues / gender equality" and "By engaging media, they will positively portray women in leadership roles". While these assumptions cannot be universally valid, our task is to optimize them for the WE4L programme.

We also reviewed our risk analysis, including the probability, impact and controllability of each risk. In all countries, partners observed that the space for civil society is shrinking further necessitating need closely monitoring of civic space and devising accompanying strategies in the TOC. One possible scenario is substantial contraction in the run-up to elections which may affect implementation.

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**In Zimbabwe**, with elections scheduled for July 2018, partners emphasised the urgency of advocating for election reforms that promote women's participation in politics. Lobby and advocacy work has thus been scaled up through the National 50-50 Conference attended many political party's leadership and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Political parties committed to 50-50 representation for the upcoming elections.

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**In Lebanon**, with no women's quota in the new 2017 election law, we lobbied political parties to include women in their electoral lists. The TOC originally focused on convincing the party leadership, but we gradually decided to target and mobilise female party members to make demands to their leadership. The Participatory Gender Audit (PGA) project with political parties showed that our assumption that political parties would be willing to work with us on women's participation was not always valid, with significant resistance from top party male leaders, who often shut out the two dozen high-level female party members who are our consistent allies. Another assumption challenged, was that women needed communications training to advance in politics. A study conducted by Hivos on women's participation in political TV shows showed that women have the requisite skills but need access and media-savviness.

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**In Jordan**, we had already decided not to focus on political parties, because they are weak and tribes play a much more influential role in political life. The 2017 elections confirmed this, and the validity of our choice. In the Ma'an district, for example, the local tribal leadership forced candidate Lana Krishan to step down in favour of a male member of her tribe. It was decided to focus on women's participation on the sub-national decision-making level through awareness raising and capacity development, as well as gender-mainstreaming of policies.

## MOST SIGNIFICANT OUTCOMES

***Middle East countries adopts Southern African Gender Barometer.***

At first glance, the Middle East and Southern Africa are not culturally similar. Yet, when in October 2017, Hivos organised the first WE4L linking and learning event, the 80 participants gathered in Zimbabwe were surprised with the commonalities in the political landscapes.

These included:

1. The negative portraits of women leaders in the media.
2. Patriarchal culture.
3. The hard-to-eradicate dominance of men in political leadership.
4. The high standards women impose on themselves. A significant result from the 2017 WE4L linking and learning event was the decision by **MENA WE4L to adopt and adapt the Southern African Gender Barometer**. This evidence-based tool will be used to lobby governments as it provides information on the real political and economic participation of women.

*Public debate in Jordan fuelled youth engagement in gender equality using new technologies.*

In Jordan, there was a **public debate on women in leadership positions and the challenges they face** after, fourteen female opinion-makers had published articles on topics such as the double burden faced by working mothers and women's empowerment in the day-wage labour movement, with our encouragement and assistance. These articles stimulated debates on various social media platforms, reaching thousands of people. Women's political participation has improved through the quota, but women continue to face negative stereotyping, social scrutiny, and restrictions in mobility, networking and financial stability. During the 2017 Jordan Technological Summit, organized by WE4L, 86 young women and men found creative technological solutions to empower and depict women as leaders. Three winning teams were granted financial support for their projects as follows:

1. A website to increase the participation of female students in university activities.
2. A mobile application to facilitate communication between women and local councils on complaint procedures.
3. An app to promote home businesses for women who are unable to work outside their homes.

*Lebanese challenge gender stereotypes: Two major political parties commit to gender equality*

In September 2017, at a town hall meeting with seventy members of the Kataeb Party **in Lebanon, fifteen women directly challenged male party members** who were skeptical about women's political participation and expressed conservative and sexist opinions. One of these women, Maggie Helou, submitted her candidacy for the 2018 parliamentary elections. This is relevant because despite a high percentage of female members (49%), women in the Kataeb Party are largely absent in leadership roles, constituting only 20% of political bureau members. The Kataeb Party has never fielded any female candidates or nominated female ministers. By the end of 2017, the Free Patriotic Movement (the party of Lebanese President Michel Aoun) and The Future Movement (Prime Minister Hariri's party) **committed to our Participatory Gender Audit process** with high-ranking female members from both parties as allies. These parties are now committed to making their internal regulations more gender-sensitive and to working on gender equality within their own circles. WE4L has caused this change.

During our nation-wide grassroots and media campaign, aimed at changing public perceptions about women's political participation, 300 local officials and leaders engaged in **intense debates about gender stereotypes in politics**. Seventy young men and women who had participated in a gender equality camp, stated they had become more supportive towards gender equality and women's political participation. Our TV advertisement which challenged traditional gender roles assigned to women, and a corresponding series of online success stories, reached over 20,000 people on social media in 2017.

*Increase of Malawian women leaders, male councillor supports female successor*

Towards the end of 2017, there was a **significant increase in female leadership in community committees** in Mzimba district (Northern Malawi), a patriarchal area where women hold only 8% of chieftainship positions. Our awareness work with traditional and religious leaders as well as the Area Development Committees, helped convince community leaders to promote women's leadership by restructuring some of their development committees to accommodate women. In the same district, Traditional Authority Khosolo appointed two female Chiefs, as a direct result of our lobbying and community engagement on the importance of women leadership.

**In Zambia, 5 political parties** (The Patriotic Front, Forum for Democracy and Development, Alliance for Democracy and Development, Movement for Multi-Party Democracy and the National Restoration Party) **developed gender equality plans with quota systems** for women, as a direct result of our lobbying to mainstream gender in their party constitutions and manifestos. As a result of our awareness and capacity building on women's leadership, 15 community radio stations across Zambia stimulated **positive debates about women in leadership** roles by broadcasting 289 interactive radio programmes and community debates in local languages, and profiling local female leaders. Radio as a communication outlet is especially wide-reaching because rural communities, which have the highest numbers of voters, do not have access to mainstream and social media.

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**In Zimbabwe,** we managed to cross party lines by organising 17 mentorship cafes, enabling 33 aspiring women leaders from different parties **to share experiences and knowledge** with 17 established female politicians (councillors, members of parliament and senators). Additionally, 17 political parties, significantly higher than 6 in previous years, have actively supported women representing the party in different forums. This is supported by the number of political parties which participated in various programmes as well as the 11 political parties which signed on to the Gender Parity pledge ahead of the 2018 harmonised elections. **551 women in 17 political parties from seven provinces, having been sensitised** on Voter Regulations, Code of Conduct, the Constitution and the Electoral Act. This ensures they have the knowledge, skills and confidence to challenge misinformation within political parties. If misinformation is not countered, less women contest or win election seats. For the first time, women's party teams of different political parties ran door-to-door campaigns on voter education, civic awareness, and women's rights.

In 2017, Zimpapers H-Metro, a daily newspaper, published a defamatory article accusing MP Susan Matsunga of abusing her partner. Applying the confidence and skills she gained through WE4L media training, Matsunga filed a complaint with the Voluntary Media Council of Zimbabwe which organised a mediation meeting with Zimpapers and Matsunga, supported by WE4L partner Gender and Media Connect.

On 31 October 2017, H-Metro published Susan Matsunga's Right of Reply headlined "I'm a victim of Domestic Violence: MP" in which she **gave her account of the story and openly shared her domestic violence experience.** By showing that even women leaderships can be victims of violence she gave an empowering lesson to other women. Matsunga has been vocal in parliamentary debates about genderbased violence, and supports other victims in her own community. Our capacity building has empowered a female leader to speak publicly about her domestic violence experience, and in the process, raising the confidence of others to do the same.

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Updated regional gender-related information can now be accessed through an innovative Gender Protocol Community of Practice (COP) involving the 9 Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) countries.

This online platform was launched during the 16 2017 Days of Activism campaign. The COP is an important online tool through which we can **engage in advocacy for common interests across the SADC region.** It strengthens existing networks and creates new partners as information is cascaded through it. The sustainability of the COP is critical to future programmatic engagements. Many SADC countries will have elections, and the COP provides a vehicle for targeted lobby and advocacy .

*Five Zambian parties embrace women's quota; community radios profile women leaders*

*Zimbabwean women leaders mentor aspiring female politicians, female candidates are fully equipped for elections*

*Southern African Gender Protocol Community of Practice accessible*



# SUCCESS STORIES

## Malawian male councilor makes room for female successor

On 17 November 2017, councilor James Nkhoma of Nkhotakota Central Boma Ward publicly announced on Malawi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) state television that he would not re-contest his seat in the May 2019 elections. He said his decision was based on engagement with WE4L and the fact that all Ward Councillors

in the district were male, and thus that he was standing down in to support an aspiring female successor, Mercy Kaluzi. He stated: "I like the WE4L concept of supporting women aspirants and have decided to support Ms. Mercy Kaluzi who is determined and really wants to contest". James Nkhoma is a male champion for women's participation.

He currently acts as a WE4L frontrunner and ally, mentoring women leaders in his home district and has attended many gender forums at district and national levels. He urges other men to support women leaders aspiring for higher positions in politics and public administration as well.



## Encouraging women's political participation by engaging young people in Lebanon

Without political and financial networks, it is difficult for Lebanese youth to enter mainstream politics. Young women face further discrimination making politics a hostile arena. When youth are disinterested in politics and prefer to stay at home rather than make their voices heard, any chance at meaningful political and social reforms fades. WE4L organised a gender youth camp in August 2017 in Kfardibyan village to address these questions. 70 young men and women aged 18 to 27, took part in interactive and outdoor activities. They discussed the new election law, human rights in Lebanon, and women's political participation. Group exercises pushed them to think and develop solutions. The aim was to show young people that politics means working together to identify social and economic problems and develop solutions. At the onset of the camp, several young women from rural areas were reluctant to actively participate fearing that they would tarnish their social values. However, by the end, they were enthusiastic and engaged, developing alternative solutions to gender inequalities. A key lesson learnt was that young Lebanese people need basic universal human rights education, awareness on women's rights and political engagement. Ultimately women's political participation can only be addressed when there is belief in universal human rights. Having more women in politics cannot be addressed in a vacuum.

*Significant increase in women elected officials and new appointees at sub-national political and administrative level, participating fully and effectively*

*To increase women in elected and appointed positions, we build their capacities.*

OUTCOME 01

In August 2017, local and provincial elections took place **in Jordan**, with the percentage of female local councilors rising from 36% to 41%. We have trained 60 women to be ready for these elections.

**In Malawi**, we observed an increase in the number of female leaders in community development committees and chieftainship positions in the Mzimba district during the last months of 2017, following our awareness work among traditional leaders, religious leaders and the Area Development Committees.

**In Zambia**, 140 female current and aspiring councillors from all provinces representing 5 political parties enhanced their capacities in 4 trainings that we conducted. By sharing their experiences and aspirations they encouraged each other to actively participate in political and community leadership.

**As Zimbabwe** prepares for elections in 2018, more women, young women in particular, have expressed interest in running for seats as councillors or members of parliament, as a direct result of our capacity building initiatives where over 650 women have gone through training. Party lists for primary

elections, which are still to be published will show how many women made it to the lists as possible party candidates for the next harmonised elections. Officially accredited by the Zimbabwean Electoral Commission, we conducted voter education on biometric voter registration (BVR) from September 2017, simplifying and translating materials on BVR requirements into Shona and Ndebele. Materials were also distributed through WhatsApp, which contains over a thousand women in political parties in all ten provinces of Zimbabwe.

*To have more women in elected and appointed political positions, we also focus on the introduction of women's quotas (for councils, state bodies and political parties), the development of policies and practices in state institutions and councils that promote work-life balance and strengthen women's participation and leadership, with support and advice if necessary.*

Despite a robust campaign in which WE4L took part, the **Lebanese Parliament** did not include the women's quota in the new election law that was adopted in June 2017. To strategise for the next phase and shore up support amongst top level female party representatives, WE4L organised a national conference with the National Commission for Lebanese Women and the National Coalition for Women in Politics in November. 57 female party representatives, politicians and advisors, attended and discussed how to ensure that more women will run for party lists. A key result was that female leaders agreed to work together to influence public opinion to be more supportive of female candidates.

**In Zambia**, 80 representatives from political parties, district councils, community leaderships, churches, civil society organisations, educational institutions, and media in four districts completed our training on gender equality, women's leadership, decision-making

processes, gender protocols and policies, women's representation and participation. There has been an increase in the deployment of Zambian police officers in foreign missions, following WE4L gender-mainstreaming efforts. Of the twenty female officers trained, twelve have been deployed in Sudan and Somalia. The officers deployed engaged authorities and communities on sexual exploitation of women and girls. The work of the female police officers in the two countries resulted in the call for more officers and the recognition of Zambia as an important ally in peacebuilding. Zambia police have finalised their draft gender policy, to be validated by mid 2018.

**In Zimbabwe**, our work with councils has led to recognition of the need to have gender policies in place. The councils appointed gender focal point persons, whom we supported to be effective in their work. We developed capacity to advocate for gender equality in both appointed and nominated positions in the

council. Women's wings of political parties have received our support in advocating within their political parties for the recognition of 50/50 representation when nominating candidates to represent the party.

**The Jordanian** Independent Electoral Commission approved the Ain Coalition as a local election monitoring body from a gender perspective. WE4L aims to achieve that in the following years the results of the gender-based election monitoring in four governorates will be used in all Jordanian governorates and be institutionalised for gender sensitivity plans to promote women leaders.

All 5 major political parties **in Malawi** have consistently engaged with the WE4L programme concerning policies, quota systems and strengthening of women's participation. We have also lobbied, advised and trained council representatives on enabling policies and practices for women's leadership.

*Women's CSO's and established and aspiring women leaders collaborate and impact political and societal development and opinions We focus on linkages between (aspiring) women leaders and women's rights CSO's, as well as linkages with media, the creative sector, and networks, aiming to streamline political and social support of women leadership and enabling women leaders participation in autonomous virtual and real-world spaces - via events, platforms, and debates on women leadership, in which women leaders participate and are visible.*

**In Zambia**, 265 female leaders, including councillors, mayors, heads of women's wings from eight political parties, women's rights CSO's and media participated in our national conference, '50/50 Gender Representation: Enhancing female leaders' effective participation and representation in Zambia'

which took place in October 2017. The conference deepened understanding of the SADC Gender Protocol among women leaders, promoted increased networking, sharing experiences and lessons learnt from previous elections, and recommendations for the future. To provide support to aspiring female leaders the conference revamped The Women Campaign Support Fund

which mobilises resources to fund female candidates' campaigns and capacity building in preparation for the 2021 general elections.

**In Zimbabwe**, our mentorship programme and dialogue sessions were instrumental in providing platforms for established and aspiring women leaders, enabling discussions with senior representatives of



*We focus on improving the communication skills of women leaders, which is particularly relevant for media engagement, and training and assisting women's CSO's in supporting women leaders, building their networks, building capacities and learning to explore financial support. This creates a supportive environment for women in leadership roles.*

**In Zimbabwe**, WE4L provided media skills support to female Members of Parliament and women from civil society. They met with journalists and discussed the challenges each face. The baseline survey of the Zimbabwean Women's Coalition highlighted gaps in women leadership in government, public administration and civil society, paving the way for leadership capacity building support targeting women in all ten provinces. Another result of the baseline survey was the project concept on the Women Leadership Academy which will be piloted in 2018. 600 **Zambian** women leaders also enhanced their communication skills through media mentorship and public speaking trainings. Women's rights CSO's **in Lebanon** used evidence-based data to lobby for more space for female media leaders. In August twenty women's rights CSO's used the findings of the gender-based media monitoring report of the 2016 municipal elections to formulate recommendations to media organisations, with the aim to increase the media appearance of female leaders.

OUTCOME 03

*The general public increasingly recognises and supports women in leadership positions. Here we focus on increasing balanced positive media content on female leadership and on increasing the access to sources of information on this topic. We focus on gender sensitisation of media personnel, and enabling women to become visible and influential as opinion makers.*

**In Zambia**, evidence on media marginalisation of women was monitored on a monthly basis and used to challenge, through consultative meetings, media actors and other stakeholders to address the situation. 45 Zambian journalists were trained to profile more balanced images of women leaders and at least 72 articles were recorded in print and radio media profiling

women as capable leaders. Through media skills training for female Members of Parliament and women in civil society **in Zimbabwe**, we provided interfaces with journalists to discuss challenges that each of the groups face. An outcome is that journalists increasingly covered women leaders. The "According to Her" women source directory, developed in the framework of WE4L, has proved to be useful for journalists when they need female analysts or

sources for articles. The directory is categorised per professional area e.g arts, politics, media and is available online and as hard copy. We helped fourteen female opinion makers **in Jordan** to increase their capacities and visibility. These women provoked the public debate on women in leadership positions and the challenges they meet.

*We also aim to address target populations to develop a more positive attitude towards women in leadership positions.*

**In Lebanon**, we organised a dozen town hall meetings in Beirut, North Lebanon and Mount Lebanon areas, targeting over 500 local leaders, facilitating discussion on

gender roles in politics, patriarchal obstacles to women's political participation, and sexism towards women in politics. Town hall meetings were accompanied by a nation-wide media campaign, aiming

at changing public perceptions about women's political participation. We highlighted the social and cultural challenges women face when it comes to gender equality.

OUTCOME 04

*Civic organisations demonstrate a significant change in their policies and practices on full and equal participation of women in leadership positions*

We want commitment from civic organisations, such as trade unions, syndicates and political parties, to become more gender-sensitive and introduce procedures and regulations for equal participation of men and

women in leadership structures. We want to see more women in board positions in trade unions, syndicates and political parties. Political parties **in Zimbabwe** tend to be closed institutions which distrust the political agendas of outsiders. We managed to convince

them by showing our commitment to gender equality through open and transparent engagement. We deliberately sought to ensure a non-partisan, inclusive and progressive approach in selecting the parties.

*Preconditions for women's rights and gender equality improve*

We want public and private sector institutions to promote women's rights and gender equality and actively and contribute to it. Our focus is on strengthening the capacity of civil society organizations to advance women's rights and gender equality. The WE4L programme contains a linking & learning component. At the first WE4L **linking and learning** event, in October in Zimbabwe, the eighty participants discovered how much they have in common with similar challenges to gender equality such as patriarchy, religious conservatism and political will being cited.

## CHANGING CONTEXT

### *Political crises*

***In 2017, Zimbabwe and Lebanon*** went through political crises. In November 2017, Robert Mugabe was removed from the Zimbabwean leadership. This was supported by the country's security sector lead by the army. With Emmerson Mnangangwa as President, there is increased military presence within the government, with key ministerial positions going to senior army personnel and no increases in female Cabinet representation. Militarization of the government may negatively impact the WE4L programme as it does not

prioritise gender equality. Partners have therefore escalated advocacy efforts to push for gender equality, given that this is provided for in the country's constitution. In November, Lebanon was plunged into crisis when Prime Minister Saad Hariri abruptly resigned. Over a period of 3 weeks, until Hariri withdrew his resignation, the Lebanese people endured an unprecedented national crisis. While there was no long-term discernible impact on the WE4L programme, the PGA project with political parties, including Hariri's The Future Movement, was put on

hold as the communication with the two main parties under audit was suspended until February 2018. Political instability characterized ***Zambia*** in 2017, riots took place in several parts of Zambia and a period of uncertainty followed with allegations of vote rigging. Opposition leader Hakainde Hichilema and five others were arrested in April on treason charges for blocking the Presidential motorcade. They were released after a hundred days in August following a mediation visit by the Commonwealth Secretary.

### *Shrinking space for civil society*

In all programme countries, civil society space shrank. ***In Zambia***, more post-election authoritarianism led to a clampdown on democratic freedoms and dissenting voices. Incidents have included threats by the government to close down student unions, arrest

opposition party members and CSO representatives, and silence mainstream and social media. Meetings require prior police approval. This has not affected the WE4L programme dramatically as Hivos and the WE4L partners had support from political parties and the

Ministry for Gender. ***In Jordan***, the political and economical challenges led to security measures and restriction of civil liberties that also affected civil society. It did not influence the WE4L programme in 2017.

### *Legislative changes*

#### **JORDAN**

The Jordanian women's movement scored significant achievements in 2017. The Domestic Violence Protection Law was adopted, and two articles in the Penal Code were. Article 62 granted mothers consent to approve their children's surgeries, and Article 98 repealed mitigating circumstances in murder cases on the grounds of honour. Article 308,

which gave rapists impunity in case they married their female victims, was abolished. Although promising, these amendments to the law are still insufficient to reach gender equality, as personal status laws, labour laws, and associations and elections laws still need amendment. Statistics indicate that women's participation in public life is at its lowest. Although

the Jordanian government declared it would distribute resources fairly and transparently, governorate and executive councils argue that the allocations are insufficient. This may de-prioritize women issues, and affect the WE4L programme, as we are involved in gender mainstreaming on governorate and local level.



In Lebanon, political leaders were questioned on their internal and external gender equality policies, and the discrepancy between the percentage of female members and the percentage of women in their leadership positions. The establishment of the Office of the Minister of State for Women's Affairs

(OMWSA) showed political will from the government to improve women's rights and political participation. The actual impact of OMWSA on public affairs was still to be felt legislatively. The National Commission for Lebanese Women (NCLW), the semi-governmental post-CEDAW institution, has been invigorated by

new leadership, and has embarked on a more progressive and active gender equality programme. We will enter a strategic partnership with them in 2018. In quantitative terms, women's political participation remains very weak in Lebanon.

## MALAWI

In Malawi, with tripartite elections scheduled in May 2019, Parliament has vetoed election-related bills or kept them pending, such as the controversial 1+50 bill which stated that not only presidential candidates, but also candidates in parliamentary and local government elections

would need a 50+% majority to gain office. The Constitutional Amendment Bill proposed a quota of 28 district seats for female MPs, but the Cabinet removed this provision before passing it to Parliament. The Electoral Reforms Bill was voted out. These developments led the Malawi

Electoral Commission to issue a warning that electoral reforms need to be passed expediently since these will require adjustments by political parties, the electoral commission and civil society engaging in civic and voter education.

## ZIMBABWE

Although women in Zimbabwe currently occupy almost one third of Parliamentary seats due to a provisional constitutional quota, the announcement of the Mnangagwa Cabinet was a blow to women as only 4 women ministers were appointed

out of a total of 22. The impact of Grace Mugabe's attempts to manoeuvre into the leadership raised important questions for women's gains in leadership and for WE4L. It is unclear whether Grace Mugabe's unpopularity and downfall (given

the patriarchal nature of society) will affect other women's election chances. Thus WE4L will need to track political developments and adapt strategies accordingly.

## CHALLENGES

*Patriarchal societies*

Despite different contexts and realities, **the patriarchal**, cultural and religious norms and values in all five countries play an important role in maintaining the status quo. Women are taught from a young age to confine themselves to submissive roles and are discouraged by their families and communities from attempting to seek leadership positions. Economical disadvantage and lack of campaign money also plays a negative role in dissuading women from entering politics. Changing these perceptions, and more importantly, behaviours remains a challenge.

*Political parties*

We dedicated our 2017 WE4L linking & learning event to 'How to engage with political parties' because it is often difficult to get access to decision-makers in parties, and rigid party hierarchies can make it difficult to achieve real progress. Access to party manifestos and constitutions is also difficult and much time is spent lobbying as promises are not always followed by corresponding actions.

*Elections*

Although elections are planned well in advance, **election** dates are often postponed in some countries, and if they are announced, they require immediate and substantial time investment by some WE4L partners. ***In Zimbabwe***, implementing projects at the grassroots level is a challenge as we move closer to the election date in 2018, because some local leaders devised unfavourable rules for operating in their areas.

*Learning*

The WE4L offers opportunity for cross-regional and cross-sectoral learning, but it is challenging to make this a continuous process, also outside the context of the linking & learning activities organised by Hivos.

**Power cuts** are common particularly *in Malawi and Lebanon*. Hivos offices in Lilongwe and Beirut have backup systems. However, Malawi is currently experiencing a nationwide electricity power cuts of up to 8 hours per day, which has slowed communications as Hivos and partners (despite having back-up systems) are affected by poor internet and telephone connections. We are mitigating this forward planning and ensuring communications allow adequate response times.

## Choice of CSOs to partner with

The Syrian humanitarian crisis has had an unforeseen impact on the WE4L programme *in Lebanon and Jordan*, as local CSO's shifted much of their focus to humanitarian work, concentrating on gender-based violence, child marriage and UNSC 1325. It has become difficult to find activists and experts focused on political rights for women. *In Zambia*, the reduction in donor funding and shifting donor priorities has urged

CSO's to downscale their staff. Also *in Zimbabwe*, CSO's (including WE4L partners) are often not sufficiently staffed, which results in personnel taking on multiple roles and compromising on their personal well-being. This conflicts with our ambition to promote work-life balance. Donor funds for women's empowerment also appear to be reducing across the two regions which may potentially impact on efforts for scale up and replication.

## LESSONS LEARNED

### Political parties

The PGA with political parties in Lebanon, and our general lobbying efforts, have shown that since we could not affect the party leadership, **creating solid alliances with female party leaders leads to quicker results**. Prominent political parties tend to embrace women's participation and gender equality in words but not in actions. They do little to legislate on women's issues or

push forward women leaders in their parties. Verbal support for gender equality is perhaps related to their public image and for international funding purposes. Our lesson learned is that accountability measures are needed and will be implemented *in Lebanon* in 2018.

### Campaign funding

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### Integrated approach

The youth camp on gender equality organised in August 2017 in Lebanon showed that women's political

participation cannot be addressed in a vacuum but has to **include human rights and citizenship**.

### Collaboration

WE4L partners have experienced that **collaboration delivers** better results and has more effect than when

implemented individually. This was particularly the case in *Zimbabwe and Lebanon*.

### Linking & learning

We organised our first WE4L linking & learning event in October 2017 in Zimbabwe. As a result of the sharing of experiences and information, **linking clearly prevailed over learning** in this event. We will bear this in mind for the next event. Some important learning moments

did occur, such as the gender barometer, which serves as an important lobby tool produced by Gender Links for women in Southern Africa, and will now be adapted for use in the Middle East.



In 2017 we achieved solid results in each of the five outcome areas, building on the foundations established in 2016. We achieved this despite sometimes unpredictable circumstances, including sudden political change in Zimbabwe. Some of our successes are more significant than others, but they are

all small steps toward our long-term goal: that women have equal opportunities and capacity to fully participate in political and societal decision-making processes, and are recognized and supported in politics and society as leaders and agents of change. Together with WE4L partners we have confirmed the validity of the

overall Theory of Change, meanwhile leaving space for context-specific variations to the TOC. We have updated our risk and actor analyses, added a few assumptions and did some textual changes in the TOC. Our planning for 2018 builds further on the achievements and lessons learned from 2017.

## EXPENDITURES

**In 2017 we have spent € 2.9 million, versus € 1.5 million in 2016. So, comparing the first and the second project year of WE4L, our expenditures level has almost doubled. The planned budget for 2017 was € 3.5 million.**

| Expenditures 2017<br>Women Empowered for Leadership |                   |                |                |                |                |                     |                |                  |
|---|-------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Amounts in €  | Political Parties | Public Admin.  | Women Leaders  | Women's CSOs   | General Public | Civic Organisations | Overall Costs  | Total            |
| JORDAN  | 1,835             | 63,052         | 211,783        | 20,045         | 121,252        |                     |                | 417,966          |
| LEBANON   | 69,860            | 72,480         | 68,603         | 159,067        | 508,018        | 12,511              |                | 890,539          |
| MALAWI  | 68,966            | 1,916          | 44,800         | 62,003         | 17,522         | 1,362               | 28,648         | 225,218          |
| ZAMBIA  | 25,095            | 9,955          | 52,074         | 35,386         | 62,633         | 1,099               |                | 186,243          |
| ZIMBABWE  | 122,949           | 36,614         | 71,376         | 32,263         | 51,729         | 20,866              | 5,000          | 340,799          |
| REGIONAL  |                   |                | 78,745         |                |                |                     |                | 78,745           |
| ALL COUNTRIES                                       |                   |                |                |                |                |                     | 65,449         | 65,449           |
| PROGR. MANAGEMENT                                   |                   |                |                |                |                |                     | 688,672        | 688,672          |
| OTHER COSTS   |                   |                |                |                |                |                     | 3,370          | 3,370            |
| <b>GRAND TOTAL</b>                                  | <b>288,705</b>    | <b>184,017</b> | <b>527,381</b> | <b>308,765</b> | <b>761,154</b> | <b>35,839</b>       | <b>791.138</b> | <b>2,897,000</b> |

*The "Overall costs" in this overview include linking & learning (L&L) and project communication. The "Other costs" include external evaluations, financial audits and participation in the annual FLOW policy dialogues.*