

# CHALLENGES FACED BY WOMEN CANDIDATES IN ACCESSING CAMPAIGN FINANCING



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# CHALLENGES FACED BY WOMEN CANDIDATES IN ACCESSING **CAMPAIGN FINANCING**

ZIMBABWE, MALAWI & ZAMBIA







Zambia's Minister of Gender Elizabeth Phiri meets Councilors and partners from Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe at the Regional Linking and Learning Event, 2020



CHALLENGES FACED BY WOMEN  
CANDIDATES IN ACCESSING  
CAMPAIGN FINANCING  
**ZIMBABWE, MALAWI  
AND ZAMBIA**



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# List of Acronyms

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
ECZ	Electoral Commission of Zambia
EMB	Electoral Management Board
FPTP	First Past The Post
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
ISAL	Income Savings and Lending
MEC	Malawi Electoral Commission
MP	Member of Parliament
PR	Proportional Representation
PWD	People With Disabilities
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nations
USD	United States Dollar
WIPSU	Women in Politics Support Unit
WOLREC	Women's Legal Resources Centre
ZANU PF	Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front
ZEC	Zimbabwe Electoral Commission
ZNWL	Zambia National Women's Lobby
ZRA	Zambia Revenue Authority

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## Executive Summary

### ■ STUDY BACKGROUND

This report discusses key findings of a Research study on the Challenges faced by female candidates in Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe conducted by two independent consultants between July and August 2020 using narratives and key informant interviews with civil society organisations, male and female politicians, and representatives of election management bodies. Relevant literature was also reviewed.

### ■ KEY FINDINGS

The governments of Zimbabwe, Malawi, and Zambia have committed to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment through enacting laws and policies on gender equality and women's empowerment as well as signing and ratifying international and regional legal frameworks on the same. Despite these commitments, the three countries are struggling with the inherent contradictions between customary and general laws, with the former being rooted in patriarchal values that afford women limited rights. To this end, gender disparities in the three countries continue to be evident in a number of areas, including resource distribution; economic empowerment and involvement and high unemployment rates of women in the formal sector as compared to men which have a direct bearing on women's participation in decision-making and in political representation.

### ■ CHALLENGES FACED BY WOMEN IN ACCESSING CAMPAIGN FINANCING

#### **Funding Regulations related challenges**

Political parties in the three countries are entitled to both private and public financing. Even after accessing private funding, political parties have not been able to use the funds to support women candidates, leaving these candidates with no choice but to rely on own private funding. Most of the female MPs and councillors interviewed from the three countries used their own resources to support their election

campaigns, while others received campaign funding from their party although it was not adequate to cover all the campaign expenses. Those who secured private donations received them from family, friends and fellow party members. Potential donors, because of gender related prejudices and stereotypes, do not see female candidates as viable candidates that can win the election. Furthermore, stakeholders revealed that men are good at resource mobilisation and have networks that can support them to raise campaign funding compared to women. Women in general still have fewer links to both the formal and informal networks that influence campaigns in the three countries. Women aspiring candidates in the three countries have had to sell their property, borrow from friends and family and get financial support from individual supporters because of the difficulties that they have encountered in accessing finance. Resorting to depletive strategies to self-finance their election campaigns has left many female candidates in a weakened social-economic position. Some of the aspiring candidates in the three countries have not been able to recover fully from the financial losses they incurred during their campaigns. This has led to cases of depression and mental illness, loss of property and conflict within families. The post-election trauma that these candidates have gone through only serves to dissuade other aspiring female candidates from participation in future elections. Female candidates across the three countries face challenges of sexual harassment by potential male benefactors, lack of collateral security to obtain loans from financial institutions because of the unwillingness of banks to fund political projects including elections and limited access to and control of resources.

Development partners and CSOs have been a source of support for aspiring female candidates in the three countries. Development. The 50-50 campaign programmes in the three countries have been funded by various development partners that include Hivos' WE4L programme, UN Women, Oxfam and UNDP to support female candidates with campaign materials such as t-shirts, flyers, banners, cash, mentorship, capacity building and media campaign among others. This type of support has significantly contributed to the success of election campaigns by female candidates. However, the study revealed that the challenge with donor and CSO support relates to



failure to support female candidates throughout the whole electoral cycle. Most donors provide election related support during the election year, leaving little time for the candidates to be sufficiently prepared for the election.

Regarding public funding, a review of the legal framework governing political parties in the three countries revealed that Zambia has no political finance regulations and in Malawi and Zimbabwe the political finance regulations have not been introduced with gender equality in mind, particularly as it relates to access to campaign financing by female candidates. All parties therefore rely on donations, from sponsors and well-wishers, membership fees and fundraising for their campaigns. Despite the existence of legal frameworks for political party funding in Zimbabwe and Malawi, women have not been able to access campaign funding from their parties that would have been publicly funded. Female candidates in both Zimbabwe and Malawi noted that corruption, favouritism and patriarchy in the distribution of the funds within political parties has forced candidates to rely on private sources of funding to which women do not have the same access as men. Level of education, age, geographical location, family relations and phenotype of women candidates were mentioned in both countries to be factors that affect one's access to campaign financing from their respective parties. Women with low levels of education (and thus less assertive) and women in remote locations are less likely than their educated and articulate and urban based counterparts to access funding from their political parties. There is also a perception in political parties that women offer a weak challenge to their opponents, and therefore are unlikely to win an election which can cost the political party votes. Because of this perception, men are regarded to be a less risky investment and hence are preferred recipients of the political party funding than women. Without legislative requiring a stipulated proportion of the funding to go to female candidates, women will continue to benefit very little from public funding of political parties.

### **Electoral System Related Challenges**

A consideration of the relationship between the type of electoral system and campaign financing revealed that majority-based and candidate-centered systems used in Malawi and Zambia tend to require more self-funding from candidates, putting women at a disadvantage. Campaign funding will be concentrated and focused on one candidate who has a potential to win a particular race. In this case, women have to be particularly persuasive to convince their political parties or supporters, if

running as individual candidates, that their potential to win is worth investing considerable resources. There usually is a tendency to prefer men in such systems, both because incumbents are often men and because men are traditionally perceived to project strength, aggressiveness, and the ability to win that is perceived as necessary in the zero-sum majoritarian race. Costs will often be incurred in attempting to win a primary election, and then the general election. Interviews across the three countries revealed that party primaries can be very expensive and act as an obstacle for women's participation as they often require significant self-funding.

Proportional Representation systems used for Zimbabwe's National Assembly typically reduce costs for individual candidates because political parties bear the biggest costs for campaigning, hence they are therefore seen as favourable to women who face barriers in raising money. Proportional representation systems may also provide increased opportunities for candidates of lesser prominence and profile (often the case for women), because competition as part of a party's list suggests the possibility of teamwork and a chance to pool resources. It is therefore less costly to compete against a list of incumbents than only one incumbent. The nature of this system is therefore preferential for women candidates as resources, both material and availability of institutional knowledge, are more accessible. The challenge in Zimbabwe, however, is that there is no special measure in the Constitution for women in local government urban and rural councils, hence councillors are still elected through the First-Past-the-Post system which as described above, puts the full burden for campaigning on the candidate, hence presenting serious challenges on female candidates.

### **Institution related challenges**

This study revealed that political parties in the three countries lack internal democracy; they often nominate men they believe are more likely to attract more private funding and to win the election. Funding is particularly critical during the nomination stage. Aspirants bringing resources for the party or the campaign are often given priority and women, even if proven competent organizers and leaders, are often overlooked due to ingrained gender stereotypes. Nomination fees and the practice of vote buying were considered to be costly for women. In addition, electoral violence, in particular against female candidates, increased the cost of participating in elections as aspiring candidates have to increase their investment in security before, during and after elections.

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## ■ INNOVATIVE STRATEGIES USED FOR CAMPAIGN FINANCING

The following innovative strategies were noted:

- In Malawi the Hivos supported CSOs under the WE4L programme mainstreamed ISALs in their election support programme;
- In Malawi and Zambia, the electoral boards have lowered the nomination fees for aspiring female candidates, with the former also lowering the fees for aspiring youth and aspiring candidates living with disability;
- In Malawi WOLREC under the WE4L programme established women's advocacy forums consisting of 30 people (10 men and 20 women) educating communities about the importance of voting for women. They complimented the campaign efforts of campaign teams for female candidates;
- In Zimbabwe, the ruling party gave campaign financing for its candidates (both male and female) for both local government and parliamentary elections. The funding went a long way in assisting female candidates who had won primary elections. The funding was however not adequate to cover all the funding needs of the candidates.
- Some female candidates in the three countries made use of social media to fundraise from their supporters using Facebook, twitter and WhatsApp platforms. The use of social media and internet allows candidates to reach out to a greater number of voters more easily and at a lower cost. Though innovative, the attempt needs to be developed so that aspiring candidates can tap into networks of women and constituencies that support them.

## ■ BEST PRACTICES ON HOW WOMEN CAN BETTER ACCESS CAMPAIGN FINANCING

### Case study 1: Costa Rica

Costa Rica's 1990 Law for the Promotion of the Social Equality of Women calls on political parties to increase the number of women candidates, and to

set aside funds to train women and promote their participation. The statutes of all political parties now mention gender equality and the dedication of funds for women's political development. Several have committed a specific percentage of their training budget to women. A combination of voluntary party quotas and legislated quotas for the single/lower house and at the sub-national level and gender targeted public funding have resulted in 46% of seats in the Legislative Assembly being held by women.

### Case Study 2: Albania

Since 2008 in Albania, political parties are required to nominate at least 30% of both genders, or else their public funding would be reduced. Additionally, parties that fail to place women in at least one of the top three positions in candidate lists are subject to sanctions. After these measures entered into effect, Albania experienced a sharp increase in the number of women nominated by parties, growing from 9% to 32% in the 2009 election. Since then, the number of women candidates and women elected have been steadily rising, with 40% of women candidates and 28% of women elected in 2017. Gender-targeted public funding can work to increase women's political participation. There is an important link between the proportion of public funding and the level of gender balance achieved among candidates and elected office.

### Case study 3: Mexico

Article 78 of the electoral code includes a "Two Percent Law" which mandates that two percent of the public funding of political parties be used specifically for building women's capacity as candidates and politicians.

### Case study 4: Canada

In Canada the Election Law foresees that child care expenses incurred due to candidacy are reimbursable expenses because they would not normally occur if there was no election. At the national level, a financial assistance program allows women and minority candidates to be reimbursed for up to CAD\$500 for child care expenses incurred in seeking a nomination, and CAD\$500 for travel costs in geographically large ridings. An additional CAD\$500 is provided for costs incurred in seeking a nomination in constituencies where an incumbent retires. The Liberal Party has provided subsidies to women candidates for campaign-related expenses such as reimbursement of childcare expenses, travel

costs, allocation for clothing allowance and provision of campaign expenses such as printed materials. This political party established the Judy LaMarsh Fund, which is a party mechanism for money to be raised and spent on women candidates to help them get elected to parliament. The Liberal Party has direct control over how the money is spent and which women candidates are prioritized in receiving funds. The Fund works within Canada's party finance regulations, and it raises money primarily through fundraising events, direct mailings, and the Internet. The Fund has contributed greatly to increasing the number of women elected in the party's caucus. In Cambodia, the Sam Rainsy Party provides women candidates with some basic items, including clothing appropriate to wear while campaigning and a bicycle for moving around.

#### Case study 5: Nigeria

COWAN, an NGO in Nigeria promotes saving schemes which has allowed women in politics to have access to loans for their election campaigns.

#### Case Study 6: Female MP in Zambia

(Support from party and business community)  
It was difficult for me to raise money for the campaign because of the resource constraints that we have as an economy in general and as a woman in particular. My party gave me K100, 000 (about USD5, 000) to help me with my campaign but that was not enough. I needed about K500, 000 (about USD 25,000) to adequately cover election campaign expenses. It is very expensive to campaign in my constituency because it cuts across a lake so you have to use boats to reach some of the communities during the campaign. One trip with a boat can cost you up to K3, 000 and that is expensive because you want to make several trips before the elections. I managed to use some of the savings I had to fund my campaign, I also approached some local companies who also put in money into my campaign, which helped me a lot. Since this was my second term business people in the community were happy with the work that I had done in my first term and they thus donated to for my campaign. Had it not been of these business people, my campaign would not have been effective. The major problem is that some of them would say "I will give you money for the campaign, what will give me in return" and that can mean anything, including sexual favours". So for many women, it is difficult to raise money from these business people, especially the young aspiring women because they will fall victim"

#### Case study 7: Female MP in Zimbabwe (Self Financing)

I am a widow, my husband passed away 20 years ago. In 2013, I ran for council elections and lost, partly because I did not have sufficient campaign resources. There and then I decided that I needed to contest in the 2018 parliamentary elections so in 2013 I started saving for the 2018 elections. I am a business woman, running an events management company. I have tents, public address system, furniture, utensils and a truck. When the 2018 elections campaign started, I had US\$5000 in my account. I then made use of my business equipment to support my campaign. I used my truck to ferry people, my tent for public gatherings and utensils for food. I won this election because I had planned early and made the necessary savings. At the moment I am mentoring young women who want to venture into politics.

### ■ RECOMMENDATIONS ON HOW WOMEN CAN BETTER ACCESS CAMPAIGN FINANCING

This study proposes the following recommendations for female candidates to access campaign financing:

1. At African Union and SADC levels, lobbying and advocacy initiatives for the adoption of legal mechanisms that include:
  - a. specific measures on campaign finance for women and gender equality;
  - b. national legislation on political campaign finance and parties' expenditure that coincide with international conventions and agreements that promote gender equity in political participation.
  - c. strengthening the mandate and operating budget of the Electoral Management Body to properly monitor campaign spending and hold political parties to account.
2. In the three countries, there is need for lobbying for gender responsive political institutions. The starting point being gender audits of political parties to ensure availability of gender responsive systems including gender mainstreaming strategies and action plans and gender awareness of leadership of key structures of these institutions;



3. Lobby political parties to put in place measures to dedicate a certain proportion of their budget to the women's wing. This should be legislated and public funding of political parties should be conditional upon meeting specific quotas for women. This would allow women wings to train women candidates and support their campaign efforts in election times. For this to be effective, it is important to have accountability and enforcement mechanisms to monitor the implementation of such initiatives.
4. In Zimbabwe, the Women's Bank can provide interest free loans to women candidates.
5. There is need for capacity building of female candidates to engage in fundraising and strategically manage their campaign resources.

## 1. Background and context of the research

Full equality between men and women in all aspects of life cannot be achieved if equality between men and women is not achieved in governance and political representation. Women's voices are indispensable for democracy to embrace the plurality of needs and interests of the whole society. Moreover as Azza Karam (2000) notes, women's presence in the political arena changes the nature of the political agenda itself and the way political institutions work. According to the recommendations of the Beijing Platform for Action,

Women's equal participation in political life plays a pivotal role in the general process of the advancement of women. Women's equal participation in decision-making is not only a demand for simple justice or democracy but can also be seen as a necessary condition for women's interests to be taken into account. Achieving the goal of equal participation of women and men in decision-making will provide a balance that more accurately reflects the composition of society and is needed in order to strengthen democracy and promote its proper functioning. Without the active participation of women and the incorporation of women's perspectives at all levels of decision-making, the goals of equality, development and peace cannot be achieved. (*Beijing Platform for Action Strategic Objective G:181*)

Gender equality in decision-making and political participation is both a question of human rights and a democratic and socio-economic imperative. Occupation of key institutional positions by women is a pre-requisite for their meaningful participation in

national development processes and the attainment of their rights. A greater presence of women in public office, consultation with women clients of public services to capture their voices, responding to their needs and demands and reforms to legal and policy frameworks and judicial systems are all key democratic factors that cannot be realized in the absence of women's participation in politics and governance.

Gender analyses of the political landscape in most African countries show that apart from the challenges related to prohibitive legal systems, patriarchal political party structures, negative attitudes towards female leaders, low levels of education, poor access to information, higher vulnerability to violence, lack of political experience, and lack of support for family care obligations, lack of access to financial networks to raise funds for political campaigns are an important barrier<sup>1</sup>. The results of the 2008 survey by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) of 300 MPs affirm that campaign financing was one of the biggest obstacles faced by women<sup>2</sup>. This was later confirmed in a research by UN women in 2013, whereby over 80% of the respondents identified access to financing as one of the biggest barriers to enter politics<sup>3</sup>. Due to this barrier, even where progressive laws and special measures exist, they have not meaningfully benefitted women.

Realising the importance of women in political leadership and the dearth of literature on the challenges faced by women candidates in accessing campaign financing, Hivos, a Dutch development organization that seeks new solutions to persistent global issues, under its Open Society programme's Women's empowerment component commissioned

<sup>1</sup>Gender Links 2011 Barometer Newsletter: Zimbabwe: Women in Politics Support Unit

<sup>2</sup>Inter-Parliamentary Union 2008 Equality in Politics: A Survey of Men and Women in Parliaments

<sup>3</sup>UN Women undertook an assessment of parliamentarians and activists during the 57th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women in New York in March 2013 and with members of the iKNOW Politics network.

a research on the challenges faced by women candidates in accessing campaign financing in Zimbabwe, Malawi and Zambia. Overall, owing to the different socio-economic and legal contexts governing elections it means the experiences and costs related to registering as a candidate and running for a political position differs across the three countries and the barriers faced by women differ depending on context. Hence the study was conducted in the three countries to draw important lessons from the different contexts.

Realising the challenges that women face in accessing leadership positions, Hivos is implementing a five year Women Empowered for Leadership (WE4L) programme (2016-2020 in 5 countries. Two of the participating countries are in the Middle East and while the other three countries are in Southern Africa, namely Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The programme seeks to promote women's leadership at the political level, in public administration and within civic organizations. It focuses at the sub-national level where decisions are made and policies are implemented that directly affect people's day-to-day life. It moreover allows for women's leadership skills to grow and mature. The main catalyzing forces in this programme are women's organizations and (aspiring) women leaders. The goal of the WE4L is "collaborating for increased and effective participation by women in politics and public administration."

## ■ 1.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of the study was to explore challenges and opportunities of accessing campaign financing for women candidates in politics in Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi. Overall, the study aimed at gaining an understanding of the challenges faced by women candidates in accessing campaign finance in the different countries as well as explore opportunities and strategies on how to overcome these.

### 1.1.1 Specific Objectives

The following were the specific objectives of the study:

- To understand the dynamics of the challenges women candidates face in accessing campaign finance in the different countries.
- To provide recommendations, best practices and strategies on how women can better access campaign financing.

## ■ 1.2 SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH

The research focused on campaign financing and its importance, the regulations governing political party financing in the different countries, the challenges faced by women in accessing campaign financing, the various innovative strategies used for campaign financing, three case studies of success stories and best practices from countries in the region and beyond and recommendations.

# 2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

## ■ 2.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research employed a participatory mixed-method or a pluralist method approach to integrate data from different data gathering methods. Use of mixed methods not only offers diverse perspectives to the research issue but also promotes participation of different groups of stakeholders, allows multiple voices to be heard, provides a more holistic picture of the research issue being investigated and allows for triangulation of data for reliability and validity as data from different sources can be compared and any inconsistencies followed up on. Data from multiple

sources provide means to develop defensible conclusions about the issue at hand.

The combination of multiple methodological practices, empirical materials, perspectives and observers in a single study is a strategy to add rigor, breadth, complexity, richness and depth to the inquiry. Denzin (1978 in Lindlof 1995:127) identified four basic types of triangulation which are data triangulation-use of a variety of data sources in a study; investigator triangulation-use of several different researchers or evaluators; theory triangulation-use of multiple perspectives to interpret a single

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set of data and lastly methodological triangulation which is the use of multiple methods to study a single problem. This study used all the four in order to get a clearer picture of the challenges faced by women candidates in accessing campaign financing in Zimbabwe, Malawi and Zambia. To expand on methodological triangulation, documents review, in-depth interviews and narratives were utilized to ensure triangulation and cross-validation of data. A participatory ethos was adopted in this assessment to ensure participation of all the key stakeholders including leaders of political parties, civil society organisations and male and female politicians among others. Participation ensures ownership of the results and facilitates adoption of proposed recommendations.

Appropriate methods of data collection and data sources, relevant to the needs and purpose of each data collection phase, were deployed.

## ■ 2.2 Data Collection Process and Methods

The study was purely qualitative, meant to generate thick descriptions of women's experiences with campaign financing in the three countries. A

mixed-method approach was used integrating primary and secondary data, thereby bringing out diverse perspectives and a more holistic picture of the research issue for defendable conclusions. The study purposively sampled stakeholders with knowledge and experience on issues of campaign financing by virtue of being politicians, civil society organisations working with politicians and entities responsible for elections work in the three countries of Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe. These included members at the electoral bodies, female and male members of parliament, female and male councillors and members of civil society organisations that are supporting women in politics. The study deliberately targeted both rural and urban stakeholders to capture the experiences of women in both setups. COVID-19 travel restrictions made it impossible to conduct field visits as part of the data collection process, hence data was collected remotely over Skype, Whatsapp, Zoom and telephone, depending on what was convenient to the stakeholder. In executing the study, key research ethics such as voluntary participation, informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality were upheld. Most of the stakeholders, particularly politicians spoke on conditions of anonymity especially on information relating to their political parties, hence in this report, names of respondents are not revealed.

The table 1 below provides a summary of people who were interviewed in each country.

**Table 1: Key informants interviewed**

Country	CSO	Politicians	Electoral Commission)
Zambia	4	4	-
Malawi	4	3	2
Zimbabwe	4	5	1

A total of 26 key informants were interviewed across the three countries (Please see annex for details of key informants)

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## ■ 2.3 Research Constraints

Owing to the virtual and remote nature of the data collection process, some key informants particularly councillors and MPs could not be accessed as either their phones were not reachable, emails were not responded to or they kept on postponing the

interviews due to work commitments. Repeated follow ups and emails failed to increase the response rate among the key informants. This reduced the size of the key informants that the study had anticipated. However, a diversity of stakeholders and documents were engaged to ensure that the results are representative of the situation in the three countries.



### 3. FRAMEWORK OF ANALYSIS

Three frameworks of analysis listed below were used to guide analysis of study findings:

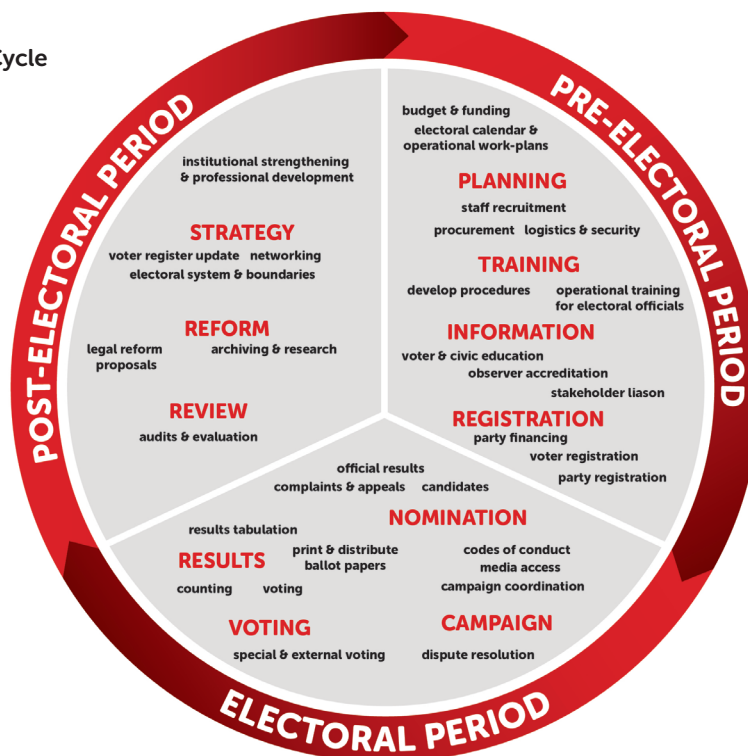
- The Electoral Cycle Approach.
- Thenjiwe Mtintso's Access-Participation-Transformation framework.
- The Inclusive Development Analytical Framework.

#### ■ 3.1 The Electoral Cycle Approach

An Electoral Cycle approach was followed so that the issues of campaign financing are tracked throughout the process. As Figure 1 below indicates, the electoral cycle appreciates elections as continuous processes

rather than isolated events. At the most general level, the electoral cycle is divided into three main periods: the pre-electoral period, the electoral period and the post-electoral period. Notably, the electoral cycle has no fixed starting or ending points, which is also true for the three periods and for the segments within the cycle. In theory, it may be said that one cycle ends when another begins. However, some post-electoral period activities may still be ongoing when activities related to the subsequent electoral cycle commence. Similarly, some segments, such as support to political parties, cut across the whole cycle and are therefore to be considered ongoing activities throughout all three periods.

Figure 1: Electoral Cycle



Elections are composed of a number of integrated building blocks, with different stakeholders interacting and influencing each other. Electoral components and stakeholders do not stand alone. They are inter-dependent, and therefore the breakdown of one aspect (for example the collapse

of a particular system of voter registration) can negatively impact on another. The fusion and cross-cutting of electoral related activities and the inter-dependence of the stakeholders highlights the cyclic nature of electoral processes. (<http://aceproject.org/electoral-advice/electoral-assistance/electoral-cycle>)

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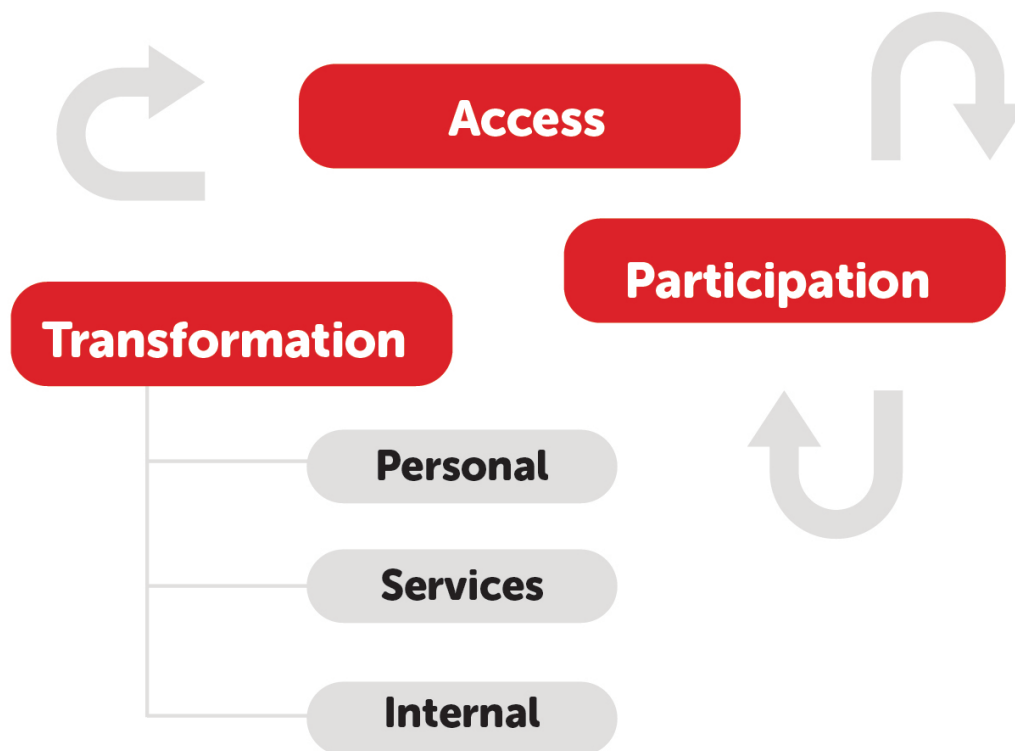
### ■ 3.2 Mtintso's Access-Participation Transformation Framework

The njiwe Mtintso's Access-Participation-Transformation framework posits that for women to make a difference, they must first have access to decision-making positions from which they have been excluded through formal and informal barriers. At its at this stage of access to decision making positions that campaign finance issues matter the most. Mtintso argues that access alone is not enough. Women can be in decision-making positions but still be excluded as a result of not

occupying leadership positions in those structures, capacity constraints, and or informal barriers that effectively still silence them, as is the case in political parties in the three countries. Measures therefore need to be taken to enhance women's effective participation. Access and effective participation provide the basis for transformation or change. This is measured internally through changes in institutional culture, and externally through the services delivered. At a personal level change is measured through the increased agency of women, and changes in the attitudes of men. This framework was used to analyse the gender equality situation at political party level.

Figure 2: Mtintso's Access-Participation-Transformation Framework

#### Mtintso's framework



### ■ 3.3 Inclusive Development Analytical Framework

This framework was used to explain factors affecting access to campaign finance. It looks at this phenomenon through three basic lenses namely 'access to services and assets', a lens which essentially seeks to understand the extent to which women

have access to publicly or privately provided socio-economic resources including campaign financing; 'voice and influence', which investigates whether women as an excluded group can in fact influence decisions on campaign financing; and 'rules of the game', that is socio-cultural norms, legislative and policy frameworks that have a direct bearing on women's exclusion from campaign financing.

Figure 3: Inclusive Development Analytical Framework



Source: Adapted from DFID, 2007



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## 4. STUDY FINDINGS

### ■ 4.1 Context Setting: Gender Equality Situation in the Three Countries

#### 4.1.1 Legal and Policy Framework on Gender Equality and Women's empowerment in Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe

The governments of Zimbabwe, Malawi, and Zambia have committed to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment through enacting laws and policies on gender equality and women's empowerment as well as signing and ratifying international and regional legal frameworks on the same. All the three countries are members of SADC. The three countries have ratified the Convention on all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW 1979) and the provisions of the convention have been domesticated in the SADC region through the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. The three countries have signed the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, including the revised protocol of 2016, as well as the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa through which they have reaffirmed their commitment to gender equality as enshrined in the Constitutive Act of the African Union Article 4, Dakar Platform for Action (1994), Beijing Platform for Action (1995), United Nations Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (2003), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Africa Union Agenda 2063. The countries have also recently reviewed their gender policies to align the policies to the Amended Protocol.

Under Article 2: 1 (a) of the Revised SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, State Parties are mandated to "harmonise national legislation, policies, strategies and programmes with relevant regional and international instruments related to the empowerment of women and girls for the purpose of ensuring gender equality and equity" and "State Parties shall adopt the necessary policies, strategies; programmes and special measures to facilitate the

implementation of this Protocol". (Revised SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, 2016). It is in this context that the three countries have developed policies and strategies on Gender Equality as part of binding commitments to the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. Malawi developed a Gender Policy in 2005 and reviewed it in 2015 for the second addition for increased alignment with SDGs and to address adequately issues related to HIV, environment and climatic change. Zambia launched its first National Gender Policy in 2000 and the policy was reviewed in 2014. The reviewed policy took into cognizant global best gender practices; research findings; increase in gender based violence, human trafficking, as well as drug abuse and gender disparities in positions of decision making; emerging health issues affecting mostly women and the negative impact of climate change, among others issues. Zimbabwe reviewed its 2004 policy and launched the revised National Gender Policy in July 2017. The policy seeks to increase alignment with emerging issues at the national, regional and global level including alignment to the SDGs, the SADC Gender Protocol and the African Union Agenda 2063.

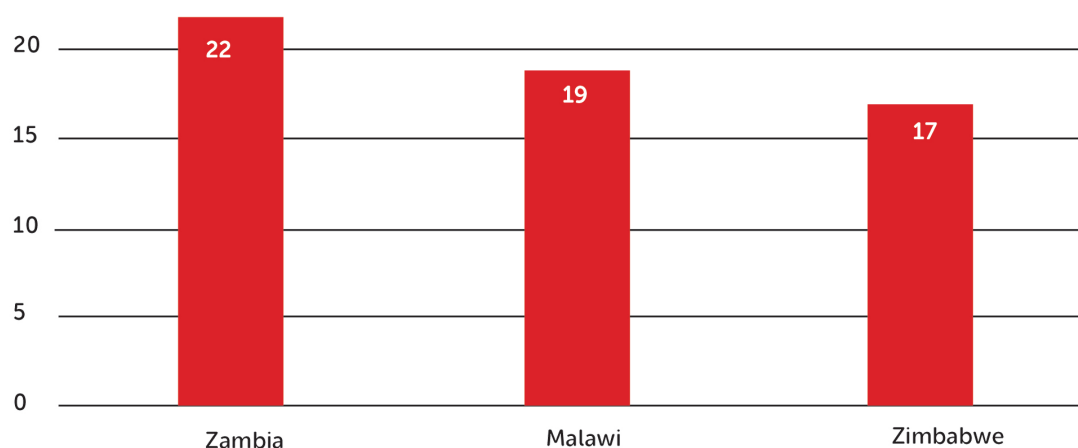
IN Malawi, the Gender equality Act (2013) promotes visibility of women in decision making positions, particularly in the public service where quotas for employment are provided for. The Act does not provide for the same in politics. In Zimbabwe, a major gap in the 2013 Constitution is the absence of special measures targeting women in local government. In Zambia, while the Gender Equity and Equality Act (2015) provides for the domestication of regional, continental and international legal instruments, the constitution exempts Personal law from anti-discriminatory provisions under the Bill of Rights. Along with Malawi and Zimbabwe, Zambia is struggling with the inherent contradictions between customary and general laws, with the former being rooted in patriarchal values that afford women limited rights. To this end, gender disparities in the three countries continue to be evident in a number of areas, including resource distribution; economic empowerment and involvement; participation in

decision-making and in political representation; access to education and training opportunities; access to adequate and quality health services; high unemployment rates of women in the formal sector as compared to men; rampant sexual and gender-based violence; harmful cultural practices; and inadequate budgetary allocation for gender-specific needs; among other notable disparities. The Gender Index Scores for SDGs for the three countries for 2019 show significant gender equality gaps in these countries, which will make it difficult for these countries to attain the 2030 targets for the SDGs. Zimbabwe is ranked 10th with a GIS of 53.7 out of a possible score of 100, Malawi is ranked 13th with GIS of 51.8, and Zambia is ranked 15th with a GIS of 50.1.

#### 4.1.2 Women Economic Empowerment

A discussion on access to campaign financing has to be within the context of women economic empowerment. Women's access and control over productive resources and assets has a direct bearing on campaign financing. A review of literature revealed that women in the three countries continue to be economically marginalised as they are over-represented in the informal sector, are involved in unpaid care work and under-represented in economic decision making positions as shown in Figure 1 below.

**Figure 4: Women in economic decision making positions across the three countries**



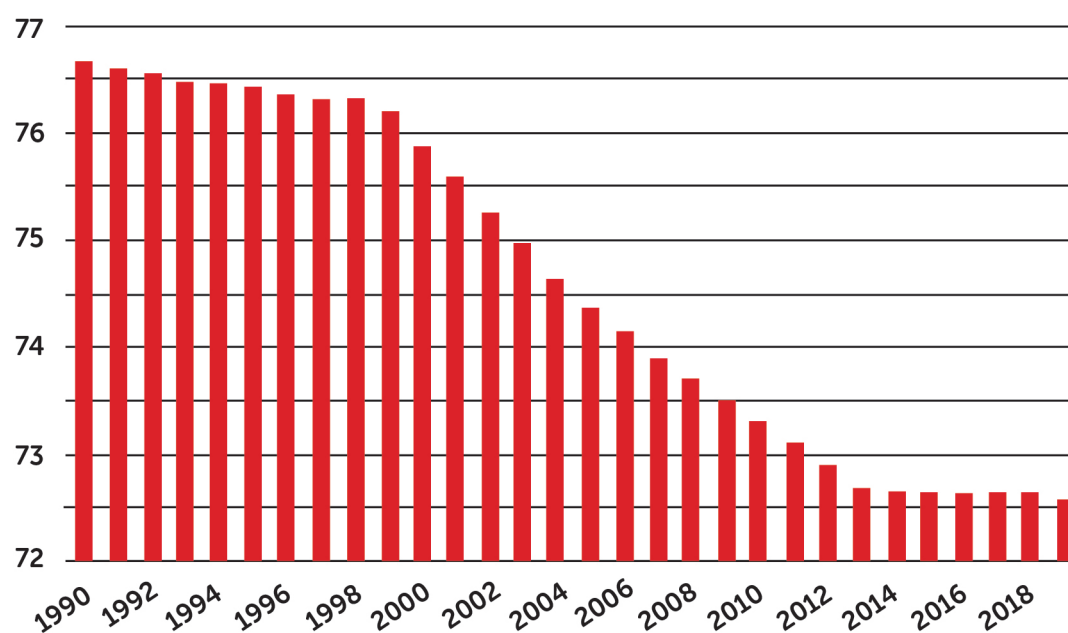
Source: Gender Links, 2019

Among the three countries, Zambia has a relatively high proportion of women in economic decision making positions at 22%, while Malawi has 19% and Zimbabwe has 17% (Gender Links, 2019). Overall, the proportion of women in economic decision making position is low across the three countries.

In all the three countries, the female labour force participation is lower than that for males. According to the World Bank (2019), the average value for Zimbabwe for female labour participation between

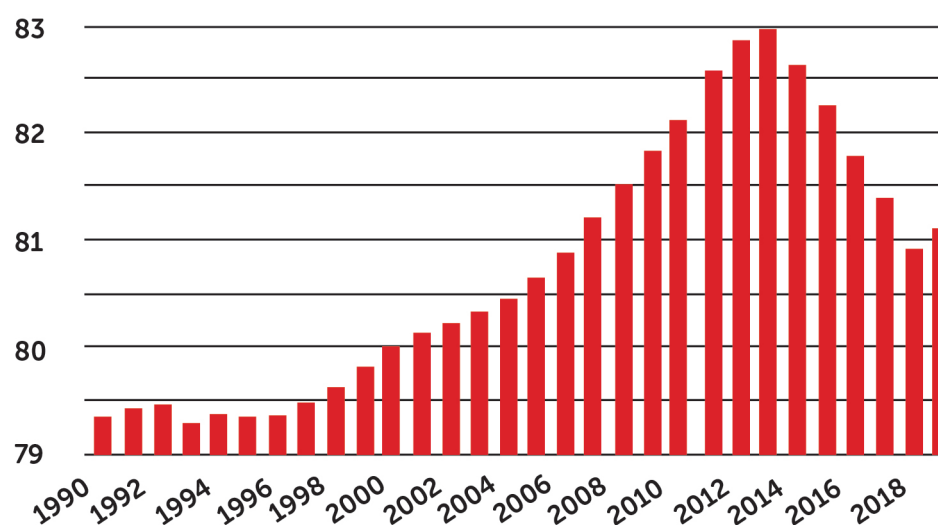
1990 and 2019 was 75.7% with a minimum of 70.79% in 1999 and a maximum of 78.11% in 2019; while for males during the same period, the average was 88.95% with a minimum of 87.29 in 1999 and a maximum of 91.35 in 1990. The 2019 labour force participation rate for females was 78.11% against 89.81% for males. The following figures (2-4) show the trend in female and male labour force participation rate in the three countries between 1990 and 2019.

Malawi - Female labor force participation



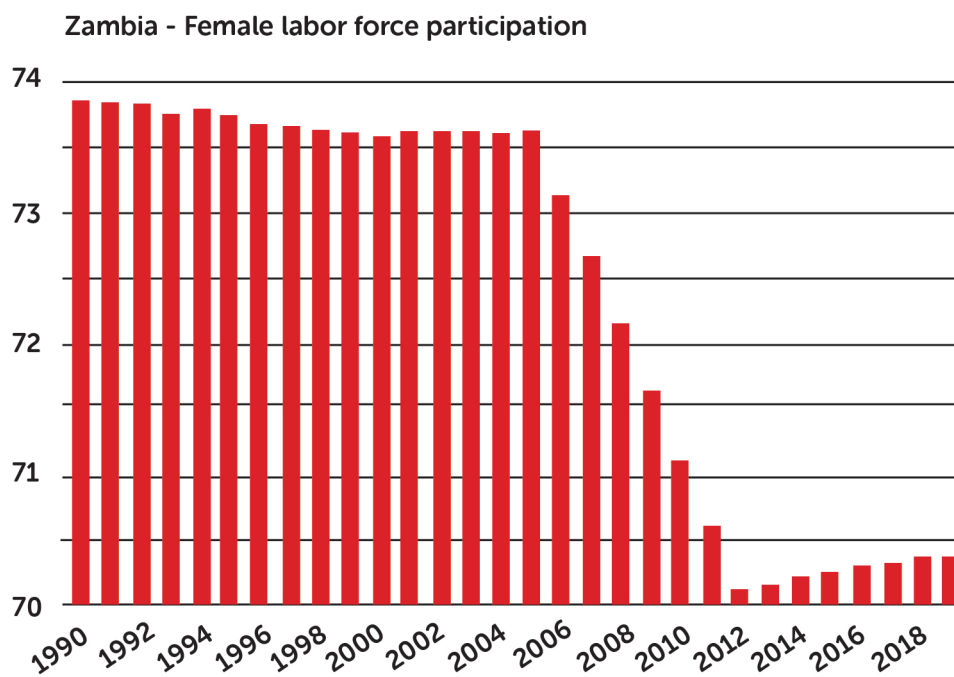
Source: TheGlobalEconomy.com. The World bank

Malawi - Male labor force participation



Source: TheGlobalEconomy.com. The World bank

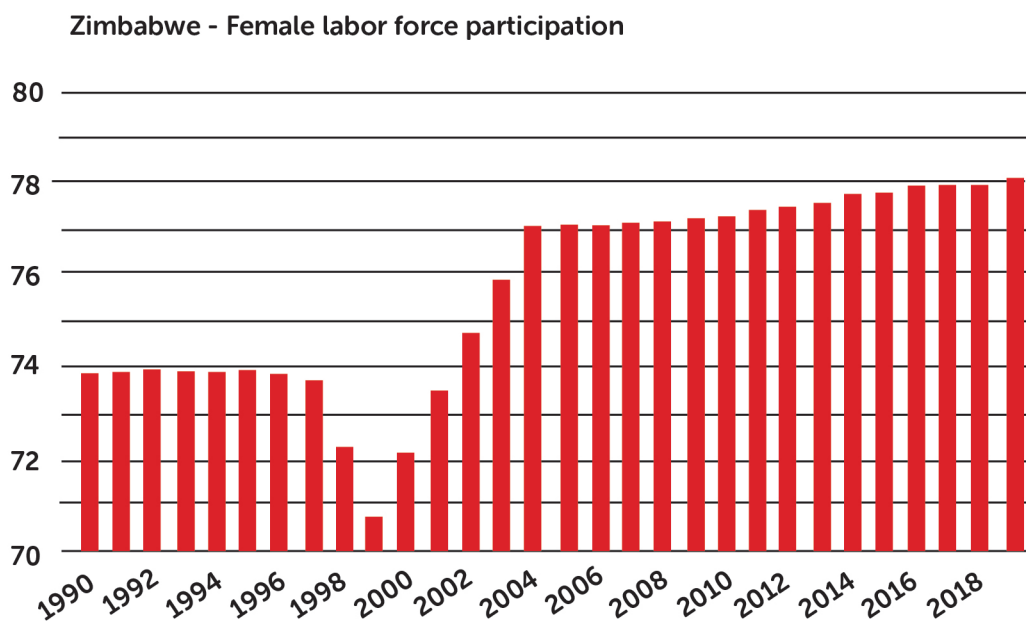




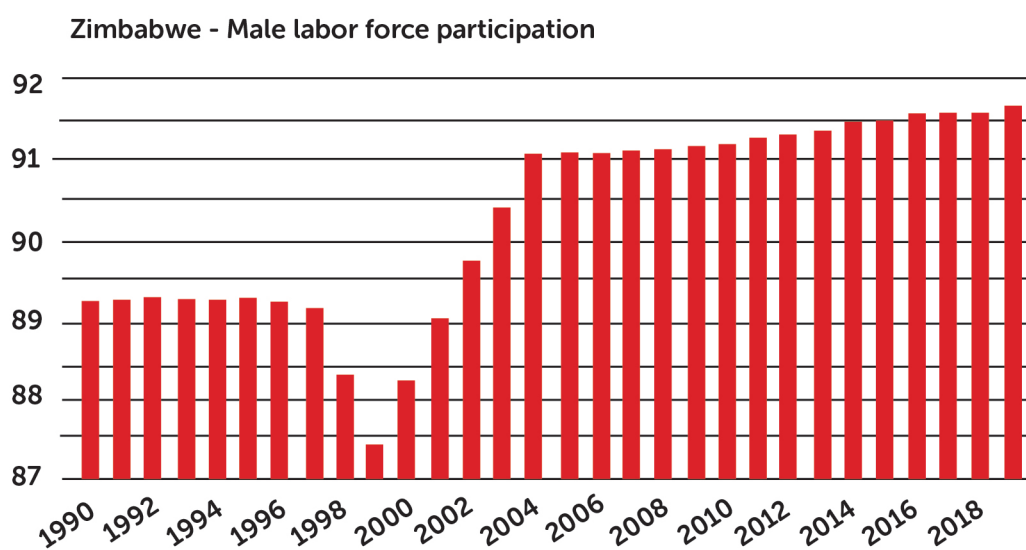
Source: TheGlobalEconomy.com. The World bank



Source: TheGlobalEconomy.com. The World bank



Source: TheGlobalEconomy.com. The World bank



Source: TheGlobalEconomy.com. The World bank

In 2019 Zambia the labour force participation rate for females was 70.37% against 79.08% for males while in Malawi it was 81.1% for males and 72.59% (World Bank, 2019).

Access and control over productive resources and assets such as land is also skewed towards men in the three countries. In Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe, women constitute more than 60 per cent of the labour force in agriculture and yet they do not own the land due to customary laws that govern land in communal areas. Although laws in all the three countries provide for joint registration, they do not make such registration mandatory<sup>4</sup>. Absence of title to land ultimately limits women's access to loans that require collateral security.

Limited economic empowerment for women in the three countries thwart women's voices in the private sphere and ultimately affect their access to public offices that require financial capital, such as political offices.

#### 4.1.3 Women in Politics and Decision Making Positions

The governance sectors made significant progress in increasing the proportion of female representation in parliament in the three countries. Although female representation is still short of the 50% SADC target, Zimbabwe has managed to go beyond 30% female representation in its Lower House. Zimbabwe has 31.4% and 43.8 % of its MPs in the lower house and upper house respectively as women. Malawi and Zambia are lagging behind as the countries have 23% and 17.9% female representation in parliament respectively. Improvements in female representation in Zimbabwe are largely attributed to electoral systems of proportional representation and special constitutional measures at parliament level. All the three countries have less than 30% female representation in local government. Zambia has below 10% representation while Zimbabwe and Malawi have slightly more than 10% female representation as Table 2 below shows:

**Table 2: Female Representation in Political Decision Making in Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe**

	Malawi	Zambia	Zimbabwe
% women in Parliament	23	18	36
% women in Local Government	13	8	16
% women in top party positions	33	17	19
% women in cabinet	19	25	14

Source: SADC Gender Protocol Barometer, 2019 and interviews with CSOs

In the three countries, 50-50 campaigns have been supported to increase the representation of women in politics. Support to female candidates under the 50-50 campaign in the three countries included capacity building, broadcast time, campaign materials like flyers and t-shirts. However, the position of women in political decision making in the three countries is partly explained by historical imbalances. Other reasons advanced for the under-representation of women in political spaces include: stereotyping of politics as a "dirty game" meant for "real men" only; lack of structures to ensure 50:50 representation in constituencies at party level; the difficulty of balancing their gender care roles and the demands of political office; violence and intimidation, lack of enough campaign resources to challenge men; and the masculine nature of politics, characterized by stigmatization of female

candidates. Women who seek political office are widely considered as women of questionable character who are most likely to be single or divorced and lacking a man's guardianship. Those who are married have their husbands being taunted as weak men who are not able to keep their wives in check. Women, who are courageous to hold public office, must be able to withstand the intense scrutiny and pressure of doing so. Women are usually scrutinised on irrelevant issues such as the manner in which they dress, present themselves and their marital status. There is rarely an interest in their political ideology, their contributions or their commitment to governance and public office. Ultimately, the needs of women are often not adequately recognized and addressed when they are not equally represented in decision making positions.

<sup>4</sup>AkinaMama wa Africa 2017 Women's Land Rights in the Wave of Land Acquisitions in Malawi, Swaziland and Zambia

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## ■ 4.2 Campaign Financing and Its Importance

Campaign financing includes monetary and in-kind contributions and expenditures incurred by candidates, their political parties and supporters for electioneering. Way back in 1995, the Beijing Platform for Action acknowledged the high cost of contesting elections as one of the many barriers to women in politics. To date this challenge still remains. Candidates require campaign financing to publicise their electoral platforms and to pursue effective campaigns. Financial resources often determine whose voice is loudest and most often heard, hence the importance placed on gender responsive political party finance regulations (UNDP, 2019). Despite the importance of campaign financing, female candidates continue to face challenges in accessing such an important resource, yet they incur more campaign related expenses than their male counterparts. A study in Canada found that women candidates outspend men by about 10 percent. This difference in the rates of spending by male and female candidates reflects differences in gender roles, such as costs incurred to pay for women's greater household and childcare responsibilities, and the need for women to outspend men in an effort to counteract male incumbency or overcome negative perceptions about women's potential to act as effective politicians.

Electoral costs fluctuate during the course of an election cycle. Much of the research on one of the greatest hurdles women face is financing the process of gaining a nomination. The costs of nomination campaigns have proven to be crucial to women's participation in electoral processes. Women's performances in the early stages of campaigning will to a great extent define the number of women running and being elected. Such costs tend to be considerable and constant for periods of two or more years. Building reputation and recognition among constituencies as well as among party members requires continuous work with significant amounts of time and money spent by potential candidates. Hidden costs in communication (telephone, postage, transport), interviewing (travel to meet constituencies, clothes for public events and interviews, overnight and weekend accommodation, attending training sessions and party meetings), organise a campaign team, the expectation of the constituents to receive handouts, cultivate a constituency and family-related expenses are all mentioned as barriers to women's political participation (Ballington, 2003:158-159,161). After

nomination, financial support from the political party where it is available may kick in and greater visibility may attract additional sources of funding.

All the MPs and councillors that participated in this study across the three countries mentioned campaign financing as the biggest obstacle for women who are seeking election. The costs of running for office varies greatly across the three countries and the barriers faced by women differ depending on context as the following sections will show. Systemic issues such as lower economic status and lack of economic independence affect women, effectively placing barriers for women's participation in politics.

Financial resources are a pre-requisite for successfully competing in elections. With inadequate funding, it is unlikely that we are going to witness an increase in the number of women elected into parliament or local authorities in the three countries. As long as women continue to have limited access to resources and by extension, campaign funding, men will continue to dominate public institutions such as parliament and local councils.

## ■ 4.3 Challenges Faced by Women in Accessing Campaign Financing

The challenges of campaign financing faced by female candidates across the three countries can be put into three main categories which are described in detail below:

- Funding Regulations related challenges;
- Electoral Systems related challenges; and
- Institutions related challenges.

### 4.3.1 Funding Regulations Related Challenges

Political parties can use two types of sources of financing, namely, public and private financing. Both types of funding are always complemented by a regulatory framework to foster accountability, transparency, to control corruption, and ultimately level the playing field and promote a healthy and competitive democracy. Some of the elements of this regulatory framework include: ceilings on total campaign donations and campaign expenditures; bans on particular types of campaign advertising; and transparency requirements. All these provisions are meant to level the playing field but with less regard given to their financial status and gender. Institutional bodies, usually public entities with legal



authority to enforce the law and apply sanctions against violators such as an Electoral Management Board (EMB), government institution, auditing agency, court, or party registrar, are put in place to monitor enforcement of the established regulations. In situations where this body fails to use its powers, civil society and the media can take over the oversight role.

### a) Private Funding

Political parties in the three countries are entitled to private financing. This can be financial or in-kind contribution. In Zambia, political parties rely on private funding as currently there is no legislation that provides for public funding of political parties. Most of the funding is from membership fees. The law is silent on the nature and type of funding political parties can have access to. The proposed Political Parties (Finance) Bill is currently under review after being shelved for some years after failing to pass through parliament. The Bill provides for technical assistance from a foreign agency or foreign political party that shares the same ideology with a political party registered in Zambia as a form of private funding that is acceptable. Sources of private financing can, among others, be private donations (national or foreign), political party own investment and membership fees.

In Malawi, the Parliamentary and Presidential Elections Act (Chapter 2:01) (66) provides that every political party may, for the purpose of financing its campaign, appeal for and receive voluntary contributions from any individual or any non-governmental organisations or other private organization in or outside Malawi. This is reiterated in the Political Parties Act of 2018 which states that “political parties are permitted to solicit donations from its members, private individuals and organisations within or outside of Malawi (Political Parties Act of 2018, 27 (2)). Subject to the following:

- Donations with a monetary value of at least K1000 000 (US\$1 400, 19 February 2019) from an individual donor and at least K2000 000 (US\$2 800, 19 February 2019) from an organization must be declared to the Registrar within thirty days of receipt (Political Parties Act of 2018, 27 (2)(a)).
- Furthermore, aggregate donations donated within a month with a monetary value of at least K1000 000 from an individual and at least K2000 000 from an organisation need to be declared (Political Parties Act of 2018, 27 (2)(b)).

In Zimbabwe political parties can have access to private funding as long as it is not foreign funding. The Political Parties (Finance) Act, Section 6 states that “No political party, member of a political party or candidate shall accept any foreign donation, whether directly from the donor or indirectly through a third person”. This leaves political parties having access only to domestic private funding, including membership fees and private donations.

In all the three countries, aspiring women candidates have had to largely rely on own private funding to compete in the elections. Political parties, even after accessing private funding, have not been able to use the donated funds to support women candidates, leaving these candidates with no choice but to rely on own private funding. Most of the female MPs and councillors interviewed from the three countries used their own resources to support their election campaigns, while others received campaign funding from their party although it was not adequate to cover all the campaign expenses. In Zimbabwe however, MPs and councillors from the ruling party ZANU PF who had won party primary elections were given party funding to assist them in their campaigns. The party funding still fell short of the required resources and female candidates had to supplement the party funding with their own private funding. The female candidates complained that they were not given support during party primary elections, which are as rigorous as the national election and require same levels of funding.

*“We were given the equivalent of USD 2,000 by our party to fund our campaign during the 2018 elections. This is the first time that the party had given us campaign funds. The money was given to both male and female candidates who had won party primary elections. I understand that those campaigning to be MPs were given more. All along we used our own resources to fund our campaigns and it has been very difficult particularly for us women who have limited access to financial resources. Although the money was a good gesture of support from the party, it was not enough. I had to sell one of my residential stands to fund my campaign. Campaigning requires resources right from primary party elections through to the national elections and most aspiring and very good female candidates have fallen by the way side because they could not bear the cost of the campaign. What pained me most is that men who were in my campaign team wanted to control the money that was given*

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*to me by the party and the money ended up being a source of conflict within my team” (ZANU PF female councillor).*

**In Zambia** a female MP also lamented the lack of funding support for female candidates, leading to aspiring candidates resorting to own private funding for the election.

*“Here in Zambia, our system has no room for public funding of political parties. So if you want to run for office you have to use your own resources to meet the campaign costs such as food for the campaign team, campaign material such as T-shirts, transport and registration fees. Our political parties do not give us any campaign funding because the parties themselves rely on membership fees to meet their running costs. In fact the parties require registration fees for you to run in the party primary elections and the registration fees at party level are much higher than the registration fees we pay to the Zambian Electoral Commission. So we pay twice, at party level and when you enter the race at national level. The primary election is also costly and the whole struggle starts at primary level. By the time you win the primaries, you will have already exhausted your resources you will have saved and most women end up borrowing or selling property to finance their national election campaign. And this spells trouble for many women, particularly if you lose the election. We have had female candidates who have had their properties attached after elections and some end up in conflict with their families for “wasting” family resources on the campaign. We have had cases of candidates who have gone into depression and having mental problems after losing elections. It is tough and traumatic for female candidates” (Zambian female MP).*

**In Malawi**, a female councillor shared the same sentiments,

*It is very expensive to run an election campaign particularly for female candidates. I used around K6,000,000.00 (US\$8,000) for my campaign. My ward is very big. I used my late husband’s car to go from one area to another during my campaign. I did not get*

*anything from my party except for 30 t-shirts and chitenjes.*

In all the three countries, women have found it difficult to access donors or private funding. Those who secured private donations received them from family, friends and fellow party members. Potential donors, because of gender related prejudices and stereotypes, do not see female candidates as viable candidates that can win the election. This failure to attract private funding has led aspiring female candidates to rely on own resources to fund their campaigns. Furthermore, stakeholders revealed that men are good at resource mobilisation and have networks that can support them to raise campaign funding compared to women. Women in general still have fewer links to both the formal and informal networks that influence campaigns in the three countries. Interviews revealed that women lack links to the business and professional communities that supply campaign funds, they are more likely to be excluded from male-dominated networks within parties that might otherwise help new candidates gain a foothold through contacts, funding and other essential resources and they lack resource mobilisation skills. The gaps in women economic empowerment therefore have a bearing on women’s political participation.

Own private funding has brought a number of challenges to aspiring women candidates because of their limited access to financial resources compared to their male counterparts. This is particularly difficult for female candidates because they have to go through two campaign cycles, at party primary level and in the national elections. Gender stereotypes and limited access to and control of resources has made the electoral playing field uneven for female candidates.

Women aspiring candidates in the three countries have had to sell their property, borrow from friends and family and get financial support from individual supporters because of the difficulties that they have encountered in accessing finance. Resorting to depletive strategies to self-finance their election campaigns has left many female candidates in a weakened social-economic position. Some of the aspiring candidates in the three countries have not been able to recover fully from the financial losses they incurred during their campaigns. This has led to cases of depression and mental illness, loss of property and conflict within families. The post-

election trauma that these candidates have gone through only serves to dissuade other aspiring female candidates from participation in future elections. Some of the female candidates in the three countries complained that because of lack of resources, they have had to accept funding or “donations” from male colleagues within or outside their political parties. As one female MP from Malawi noted, this can be a source of trouble for the recipient of the funding.

*“Because we lack resources, sometimes aspiring female candidates are forced to accept funding or donations from male colleagues or supporters. Although some of the supporters are genuine, more often than not, the donations are conditional. Some of the funders can demand sex in exchange of the financial support which in actual fact is sexual abuse, while others would want to control you and tell you what to say in parliament. That is the biggest challenge with private funding, when you cannot access funding from your party. It becomes a dog eat dog situation, and women suffer the most” (Malawi female MP).*

A female councillor in Malawi remarked,

*My MP supported me with K20,000 (US\$25). I also received K40,000 (US\$50) from UN Women for communication and transport, but it was disbursed late. We lack collateral to access bank loans. The challenge of lack of control over productive resources and assets affects us all as women but young women who wish to pursue careers in politics are more affected because of gender and age. This is because people generally tend to accrue assets with age, the older the person, the more the assets owned”.*

As the narratives above show, cases of sexual abuse emerge as aspiring female candidates solicit for funding. The main challenges that female candidates face across the three countries are sexual harassment by potential male benefactors, lack of collateral security to obtain loans from financial institutions because of the unwillingness of banks to fund political projects including elections and limited access to and control of resources.

Development partners and CSOs have been a source of support for aspiring female candidates in the

three countries. Development. The 50-50 campaign programmes in the three countries have been funded by various development partners that include Hivos’ WE4L programme, UN Women, Oxfam and UNDP to support female candidates with campaign materials such as t-shirts, flyers, banners, cash, mentorship, capacity building and media campaign among others. This type of support has significantly contributed to the success of election campaigns by female candidates. In Malawi, women were given start-up capital to support their businesses through Income Savings and Lending Schemes (ISALs). UN Women also supported them with communication funds worth between K40,000 and K66,000. In Zambia, through the Hivos WE4L programme, CSOs such as Zambia National Women’s Lobby, NGOCC and Zambia Centre for Inter-Party Dialogue have supported female candidates with capacity building and campaign materials.. In Zimbabwe CSOs including Gender Links, Women in Politics Support Unit, Zimbabwe Women’s Resource Centre and Network, Institute for Young Women Development (IYWD) and Women in Leadership Development (WILD), Election Resource Centre amongst others supported female candidates through capacity development and mentorship and had good success records with candidates nominated as MP and Councillors. Some consortium partners involved in the ‘We Pay You Deliver’ project under Transparency, Responsiveness, Accountability and Citizen Engagement (TRACE) supported candidates debates and manifesto presentations by female candidates. The major challenges related to funding from development partners that were cited include late start of election campaign support programmes, funding mostly disbursed to candidates in kind not cash and if it is in cash it was tied to specific actions.

A female candidate in Malawi remarked,

*In a family setup, a woman can not use lots of family resources to campaign because culturally the resources do not belong to her but to the husband. T-shirts and money from UN Women came late, on the last day of the campaign so during the campaign period I was using a motorcycle and we would be three or four on that motorcycle while men were using vehicles. Do you think I was taken seriously? The advantage I had though was that I had been trained, so I knew the issues that I needed to articulate to the electorate.*

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The study revealed that the challenge with donor and CSO support relates to failure to support female candidates throughout the whole electoral cycle. Most donors provide election related support during the election year, leaving little time for the candidates to be sufficiently prepared for the election. Some donors cease providing their support soon after an election and the momentum created by their programmes fissile out gradually, leaving women needing to start afresh the during the next election season. The Hivos Women Empowered for Leadership project addressed this gap by providing support for at least two years before or after elections in each of the three countries thereby taking a longer and systematic approach to election support. The WE4L programme has continued to support candidates in office in trying to strengthen their capacity to deliver as a way of preparing them for the next election. In 2019, the programme hosted the Regional Councillors Summit in Lusaka which drew participation from all 3 countries. The purpose of the summit was to provide a regional learning network towards achieving gender equality in local government which provided a platform for collaboration, learning and strategizing to enhance the participation of women in political office.

### **b) Public Funding**

Public financing consists of funds from the government budget in the form of public subsidies or non-financial resources provided to political parties, in between or during elections periods, to cover different political activities such as electoral campaign costs and day to day functioning. Public financing can be directly or indirectly allocated to political parties. Direct public funding is monetary, while indirect public financing can consist of different benefits such as tax exemptions; free access to public media; free access to public premises for campaign activities or meetings; free access to public spaces for the posting of campaign materials; free or subsidised transport or postage. The state simply establishes clear objectives, and fair and reasonable criteria for distribution. In some instances, public funds are legally earmarked to finance certain expenses of political parties. Three models or criteria can be adopted for allocations of public resources: the proportional model, equitable model or a combination of the two. In the proportional model, the total amount provided is distributed to each political party in proportion to the number of votes or seats won (normally only) in the parliamentary elections, as is the case in the three countries of Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

In Malawi, provision for the funding of political parties by the state is provided for in the Constitution of the Republic of Malawi (1994, Article 40.2.) which states that the State must provide funds so as to ensure that, during the life of any Parliament, any political party which has secured more than one tenth of the national vote in elections to that Parliament has sufficient funds to continue to represent its constituency. The Political Parties Act of 2018 elaborates on the laws as well as the rules and regulations around party funding. The Political Parties Act makes provisions for political parties to receive funding for the following purposes:

- Promoting the representation of the party in Parliament;
- Promoting active participation of individual citizens in political life;
- Covering of the election expenses of a political party and the broadcasting of the policies of the political party;
- The organization by the party of civic education in democracy and other political processes; and
- Administrative and staff expenses of the party (Political Parties Act of 2018, 22 (1)).

In Zimbabwe, the Political Parties (Finance) Amendment Act of 1997 provides for funding to political parties that have secured 5% of seats in Parliament. Zambia has no legislation that provides for the public funding of political parties. Parties have to rely on private funding for their activities. However, a bill that sought to provide public funding for political parties, the Political Parties Bill of 2017, failed to pass through parliament because of disagreements among political parties on clauses in the bill that required political parties to disclose the source of their funding. The bill also sought to provide state funding, through the proposed Political Parties Fund. The funds would be distributed according to the number of seats each political party has in the National Assembly and the funding will be used for promoting the representation in Parliament of women and youth among other things.

The provision of State funding to political parties and/or candidates can play an important role in improving women's access to, and participation in, the electoral process for several reasons. A major reason is that state funding can be regulated in such a way as to ensure that parties nominate a certain percentage of female candidates. Provision of these funds can also be provided conditionally, for example, disbursement can be based on the number



of women that are successful in that election, thus providing an incentive to parties to prioritize female candidates; additional funding can be given to political parties that meet the criteria and vice versa; and parts of funding can be earmarked for gender related activities. In Haiti for example, to access the gender-targeted public funding political parties have to nominate women to at least half of the available seats and succeed in having half of those elected. In Georgia, political parties that receive public funding can get 30% additional funding if their candidate lists have at least 30% of both genders in each of the first three sets of 10 names on lists. In Moldova, political parties that nominate women to 40% or more of their seats in the single member constituencies have access to more funding.

A review of the legal framework governing political parties in Malawi and Zimbabwe revealed that the political finance regulations have not been introduced with gender equality in mind, particularly as it relates to access to campaign financing by female candidates. All parties therefore rely on donations, from sponsors and well-wishers, membership fees and fundraising for their campaigns. There have however been attempts to ensure the gender responsiveness of funding to political parties. For example, in Zimbabwe, the Political Parties (Finance) Bill, of 2020 proposes that a percentage of the funds be applied to promoting gender parity, representation of the youth and persons with disabilities and the percentage to be applied to administrative and staff expenses; while in Zambia the Political Parties (Finance) Bill, of 2018 provides for a percentage of the funds to be used for representation of women and youth.

Despite the existence of legal frameworks for political party funding in Zimbabwe and Malawi, women have not been able to access campaign funding from their parties that would have been publicly funded. In theory, all candidates from a political party that has been publicly funded should access campaign funding from their party once they have secured nomination. Public funding is considered in many states that have adopted the concept to be a desirable and positive measure as it equalises expenditures among candidates in electoral campaigns. However, in practice, that has not been the case as women often complain that the funding that they get is not enough to cover their expenses. In both Malawi and Zimbabwe, female candidates complained that they do not have the same access to the funds as men. An MP in an opposition party in Zimbabwe remarked;

*"Yes as a party we have been receiving government funding under the Political Parties. But the problem is that there are no regulations governing how the party funds will be utilised, there is no framework. So utilisation of the funds is at the discretion of the leaders, and in most cases access to the funds is based on patronage, seniority and allegiance. The party leadership is dominated by men, so obviously the bulk of the funding is accessed by men and this leaves us women with no alternative but to self-fund during election campaign. Without regulations stipulating what proportion of the funds should be set aside for women, this funding will remain a pie in the sky for female politicians. It will not help us" (Female MP in Zimbabwe)*

Female candidates in both Zimbabwe and Malawi noted that corruption, favouritism and patriarchy in the distribution of the funds within political parties has forced candidates to rely on private sources of funding to which women do not have the same access as men. Level of education, age, geographical location, family relations and phenotype of women candidates were mentioned in both countries to be factors that affect one's access to campaign financing from their respective parties. Women with low levels of education (and thus less assertive) and women in remote locations are less likely than their educated and articulate and urban based counterparts to access funding from their political parties.

There is also a perception in political parties that women offer a weak challenge to their opponents, and therefore are unlikely to win an election which can cost the political party votes. Because of this perception, men are regarded to be a less risky investment and hence are preferred recipients of the political party funding than women. Without legislative requiring a stipulated proportion of the funding to go to female candidates, women will continue to benefit very little from public funding of political parties.

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### 4.3.2 Electoral Systems Related challenges

While there are several factors that affect women's political participation, electoral systems are key among them. The electoral system has been taken by feminists as a key aspect that should be reformed if gender parity in political representation could be realised. This realisation stems from the apparent malleability of electoral systems compared to cultural systems that promote male dominance. The International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES, 2009) identified three main families of electoral systems.

#### a) Plurality-majority

This is based on individual candidatures for office within designated electoral districts such as wards or constituencies. A district may have one or multiple candidates. Where there is one candidate, this candidate is elected on the basis of having received the highest number of votes. This can be determined in a first round simply by choosing the candidates or candidates with the highest number or votes (plurality) or by choosing a candidate with the majority of the votes (majority). Majority systems may require a second round or run off process so that voters choose the most preferred candidate. In the case of plurality majority systems, candidates stand as independents or on behalf of political parties. Even though the candidates have been chosen by the parties, the final choice is in the hands of the voter. The challenge for women in this system is that voters may have their own traditional biases against women which may cause them to reject female candidates. These systems are also known as First Past the Post (FPTP) and they promote accountability of elected representatives to their constituents.

#### b) Proportional representation (PR)

In this system, seats are allocated to parties according to the proportion of the total vote that the party has won. A particular number of seats in the national legislature may be allocated to a province and parties receive seats in that province based on the proportion of the vote that the party has won in that province. If done nationally parties will receive the number of seats in the country based on the proportion of the total national votes which they have received. Parties allocate the seats based on a list that is prepared and submitted to the electoral management body before the election with names for each of the seats available in the legislature. In an open list the voter chooses first the party, but because the list is open, the voter has a choice of candidates within the same party and therefore the voter has

the final say. Again, where women are competing against men, pre-existing voter bias may negatively affect choice. The advantage of the PR system is that the voter just votes for a party and it is the party that determines who gets into power. Where parties are committed to promoting female politicians they can use the list to achieve this purpose.

#### c) Mixed systems

A mixed system combines both FPTP and PR systems. The intent is to ensure that parties are proportionately represented in the legislature whilst ensuring that there are parliamentarians aligned to constituencies and maintain accountability. Research on electoral systems and women's representation shows that it is easier for women to get into parliament in countries that use a proportional representation (PR) electoral system. While there is consensus that most electoral systems favour men when implemented, there is considerable agreement that the PR system, where it has been implemented, has resulted in more women being elected than where other systems have been used. Women have always had a slight advantage in proportional representation (PR) systems compared to other systems. There is a considerable accumulation of comparative evidence that underlines the structural advantages of PR in advantaging women's representation. All the top countries in terms of women's representation – Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Mozambique, Seychelles Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark, the Netherlands, Germany, New Zealand, Argentina, and Austria – all utilized various forms of proportional representation. Several individual country situations, in which electoral systems have been changed, have further emphasized the apparent structural superiority of PR systems.

A consideration of the relationship between the type of electoral system and campaign financing revealed that majority-based and candidate-centered systems used in Malawi and Zambia tend to require more self-funding from candidates, putting women at a disadvantage. Campaign funding will be concentrated and focused on one candidate who has a potential to win a particular race. In this case, women have to be particularly persuasive to convince their political parties or supporters, if running as individual candidates, that their potential to win is worth investing considerable resources. There usually is a tendency to prefer men in such systems, both because incumbents are often men and because men are traditionally perceived to project strength, aggressiveness, and the ability to win that is perceived as necessary in the zero-

sum majoritarian race. Costs will often be incurred in attempting to win a primary election, and then the general election. Interviews across the three countries revealed that party primaries can be very expensive and act as an obstacle for women's participation as they often require significant self-funding. A key informant in Malawi remarked,

*A major challenge with First Past the Post systems is that political parties tend to field candidates with resources to support their campaign. This automatically excludes women from participating because of their historical background of limited access to resources. For primary elections, some political parties demand contributions from members who wish to contest. For example in my case, my party demanded K500,000 from me if I was to participate in the election.*

Proportional Representation systems used for Zimbabwe's National Assembly typically reduce costs for individual candidates because political parties bear the biggest costs for campaigning, hence they are therefore seen as favourable to women who face barriers in raising money. Proportional representation systems may also provide increased opportunities for candidates of lesser prominence and profile (often the case for women), because competition as part of a party's list suggests the possibility of teamwork and a chance to pool resources. It is therefore less costly to compete against a list of incumbents than only one incumbent. The nature of this system is therefore preferential for women candidates as resources, both material and availability of institutional knowledge, are more accessible. The challenge in Zimbabwe, however, is that there is no special measure in the Constitution for women in local government urban and rural councils, hence councillors are still elected through the First-Past-the-Post system which as described above, puts the full burden for campaigning on the candidate, hence presenting serious challenges on female candidates.

#### 4.3.3 Institution Related Challenges

Political parties often stand as gate-keepers, considering a number of factors in candidates' nomination, including the aspirant's track record, activism in the party and access to funds. Laura Velásquez, as cited in Griner and Zovatto (2005: 43) " remarked, 'The most incapacitating pitfall women in politics face is the lack of access to the financial resources of the party they belong to. In spite of advances in incorporating women into politics, the gender perspective has not yet penetrated the area of political funding.' This study revealed that

political parties in the three countries lack internal democracy; they often nominate men they believe are more likely to attract more private funding and to win the election. Funding is particularly critical during the nomination stage. Aspirants bringing resources for the party or the campaign are often given priority and women, even if proven competent organizers and leaders, are often overlooked due to ingrained gender stereotypes.

A female councillor in Malawi reported,

*The system favours those with money. The political party expects to benefit from candidates so they endorse those with financial muscle. Female candidates are therefore disadvantaged as their male counterparts have access to resources, including political party resources. Political parties do not want to fund us because they think it is a waste of resources*

The study revealed that there is lack of political will on the part of the leadership of political parties to promote gender equality. Men dominate leadership of political parties, hence participation of women and representation of women's issues in political party decision making bodies is limited. Even where gender policies with equality provisions exist, they are just for window dressing, as they are not implemented.

In Zambia, through working with national Zambia National Women's Lobby (ZNWL), all the major political parties pledged to consider adopting women for local government and parliamentary seats. Other political parties pledged to reserve a percentage of the available seats for female candidates. For example the PF pledged to reserve 40% of the available seats at parliamentary and local government levels to women, while the FDD pledged to reserve 50% of the available seats to women. However, despite these pledges only 106 women were adopted compared to 545 men who contested in the parliamentary elections, 37 women were adopted compared to 293 men to contest as Mayors/Council Chairpersons and 427 women were adopted compared to 4, 141 men to contest as councillors from the 11 political parties that participated in the elections<sup>5</sup>. At parliamentary level, fewer women were adopted (106) to contest the 2016 General elections compared to 2011 general elections where 138 women contested at parliamentary level.

<sup>5</sup>Zambia National Women's Lobby: A Gender Analysis of the 2016 Elections in Zambia

Institutions bottlenecks and prejudices against female candidates at party level prevented political parties in Zambia to honour their pledges to adopt more women. Lack of party financial support for aspiring candidates elbowed out a number of aspiring women candidates who could not fund their elections. A study by ZNWL revealed that corruption was one of the major challenges faced by women vying for adoption as they were asked to pay bribes for them to secure party nomination. This placed an additional financial burden on the aspiring female candidates, which many failed to carry leading to their withdrawal from the electoral race.

The ZNWL study revealed that the lack of transparency in the adoption processes resulted in some women who had won political party primary elections not making it on the final adoption list. In some cases, women who were legally adopted by some political parties and awarded adoption certificates, were dropped at the last minute and replaced by their male counterparts on the day of nomination. As such, some women who were quite popular in their areas ended up standing in the elections as independent candidates. The political parties in Zambia pegged their adoption fees at between K2, 000 (US\$100) and K5, 000 (US\$250) for aspiring candidates. The fees were too high for women to afford and as such a significant number of women dropped out of the race.

**Table 3: Women and men who participated in the 2016 elections in Zambia.**

Position	Women	Men	Total
Presidential	1	8	9
Parliamentary	106	545	651
Mayor/Council Chairperson	39	293	332
Councillors	427	4,141	4,566
			5,558

Source: Zambia National Women's Lobby

The above table clearly shows that the participation of women in elections in comparison to men is still very low. Only 10% of the candidates who participated in the elections at all levels were female. Some of the reasons for the low representation of women included the costly requirements by the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) such as lack of a decentralised nomination process which required candidates to travel all the way to Lusaka to submit their nomination papers; the need to submit educational qualifications for verification by the Examinations Council of Zambia; getting a tax clearance from Zambia Revenue Authority (ZRA) and submission of the documents to ECZ for authentication. This process came at a great expense

to aspiring female candidates, particularly those in rural constituencies who need to foot their transport and accommodation costs in Lusaka. Some became disillusioned and abandoned the nomination process.

Nomination fees in the three countries were considered to be high by aspiring female candidates, which led to some of the candidates pull out because they could not raise the required fees. In Malawi, in order to encourage marginalised groups to participate in elections, in 2019, the Malawi Electoral Commission reduced by half the nomination fees for female candidates for Parliamentary and Local government elections as follows:

**Table 4: Nomination Fees in Malawi, 2019**

Election type	Fee for male candidates		Fee for Female Candidates		Fee for Youth		Fee for People with Disabilities	
Presidential	K2,000,000.00	US\$2500	K2,000,000.00	US\$2000	-		-	
Parliamentary	K500,000.00	US\$500	K250,000.00	US\$300	K375,000.00	US\$350	K250,000.00	US\$250
Local Government	K40,000.00	\$50	K20,000.00	US\$25	K30,000.00	US\$30	K20,000.00	US\$25

Source: Malawi Electoral Commission, 2018



In Zimbabwe, the nomination fees for the 2018 elections were \$1000 and \$100 for Presidential and Parliamentary elections respectively. Councillors were not paying any fees for nomination. In Zambia, even when ECZ reduced the amounts from K2, 000 (US\$100) to K1, 500 (US\$75) for councillors and from

K10, 000 (US\$500) to K7,500 (US\$350) for MPs, some women still failed to raise the nomination fees and they gave up.

Table 5 below shows the nomination fee hike from by the ECZ between 2011 and 2016 elections.

**Table 5: Nomination fees for 2016, Zambia**

	2016 Fees (ZMW)	2016 Fees (US\$)
President	K65,000	\$3250
Member of Parliament	K7,500	\$375
Councillor (City and Municipalities)	K1,500	\$150
Councillor (District and Councils)	K750	\$75

The nomination of US\$375 for MPs and \$150 for councillors was considered too high by aspiring female candidates in Zambia. In an effort to address the concerns by women over nomination fees the ECZ has revised the nomination fees for the

2021 elections and has introduced lower tariffs for female, youth and candidates living with disability at all levels as shown in Table 6 below

**Table 6: ECZ nomination fees for the 2021 elections**

Election Type	Category	Amount in Kwacha	Amount in US\$
Presidential	Male	K95,000.00	\$4700
	Female	K75,000.00	\$3700
	Youth	K60,000.00	\$3000
	PWD	K60,000.00	\$3000
Parliamentary	Male	K15,000.00	\$750
	Female	K13,500.00	\$670
	Youth	K10,000.00	\$500
	PWD	K10,000.00	\$500
Mayoral	Male	K15,000.00	\$750
	Female	K13,500.00	\$670
	Youth	K10,000.00	\$500
	PWD	K10,000.00	\$500
Council Chairperson	Male	K3,500.00	\$175
	Female	K3,000.00	\$150
	Youth	K2,500.00	\$125
	PWD	K2,500.00	\$125
Councillors (City/Municipal)	Male	K1,500.00	\$75
	Female	K1,000.00	\$55
	Youth	K1,000.00	\$55
	PWD	K1,000.00	\$55
Councillors (Town/District)	Male	K600.00	\$30
	Female	K500.00	\$25
	Youth	K500.00	\$25
	PWD	K500.00	\$25

As shown in the table above, the nomination fee for a presidential candidate is pegged at \$4,700. Women will pay a nomination fee that is 21% lower than their male counterparts (\$3700); youth and people living with disability will pay a nomination fee that is 37% lower than the male candidates (\$3000). For parliamentary elections, male candidates will pay \$750 while female candidates will pay 10% lower (\$670), youth and persons with disability 34% lower (\$500). The same rates apply for the mayoral elections. Aspiring male councillors for cities will fork out \$75 while their female counterparts will pay \$55 (34% lower than male candidates) the same amount that aspiring youth and PLWD will pay. Although the new tariff structure has been made gender sensitive and inclusive to promote participation by women, youth and PWD, it remains to be seen if this will translate into increased participation by women, youth and PWD in the 2021 elections. Some of the MPs and councillors interviewed still felt that the nomination fees would still be beyond the reach of many aspiring candidates.

Electoral violence, in particular against female candidates, increase the cost of participating in elections as aspiring candidates have to increase their investment in security before, during and after elections. In the 2016 elections, ZNWL recorded several cases of female candidates that were physically attacked, humiliated (e.g being publicly undressed), blackmailed and threatened. Increased investment in security will continue to push the cost of participating in elections beyond the reach of many women.

Results in the three countries reveal that primary elections involve politics of patronage, characterised by vote buying. One male key informant in Zimbabwe remarked,

*“unonwiwa, unodyiwa, unopfekedza  
(you buy beer, food and clothe the electorate)*

All the three countries are members of SADC and have committed to the regional block’s guiding principles on conducting elections. Section 4.1.4 of the SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections stipulate that “Member States shall take all necessary measures and precautions to prevent corruption, bribery, favouritism, political violence, intolerance and intimidation.” Vote buying or bribery is illegal in all the three countries. However, despite this commitment, vote buying is a common practice in the three countries.

In Malawi, the Political Parties Act bans use of handouts three months to an election but as the respondents to this study revealed, political parties do not comply because there is no Registrar of Political parties. In Zimbabwe, “vote buying” is illegal but the practice is rampant towards national elections. Reports on the 2018 elections in Zimbabwe by CSOs that included the Anti-Corruption Trust of Southern Africa (ACT), Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN) and the Election Resource Centre (ERC) all reported that towards the 2018 national, aspiring candidates from both the ruling party and the opposition were dishing out free food, money and residential stands to potential voters in their constituencies. The practice of vote buying has also been noted to be common practice in Zambia<sup>6</sup>. Election monitoring CSOs such as Action Aid Zambia; Governance, Elections, Advocacy and Research Services (GEARS) Initiative; Alliance for Community Action Zambia (AAZ); Caritas Zambia; NGOCC, Transparency International Zambia (TIZ); and the Zambia Council for Social Development have all reported incidences of voter bribery during elections.

The practice of vote buying puts women at a disadvantage because they do not have enough resources to compete with men as noted by a female councillor in Zambia.

*Although it is illegal to bribe voters here in Zambia, the practice of vote buying is common. Men, because they have resources buy the electorate beers, give them food and all the other goodies and when you go to the same electorate campaigning and you have nothing, they will say “mama, what have you brought us. We cannot vote you for nothing”. And if you brought them nothing, they can actually chase you away. Election time for many people is time for eating and unfortunately as women we do not have the resources to make every warn eat and we lose out” (Councillor, Zambia)*

Media coverage before, during and after elections in all the three countries was biased in favour of male candidates. Female candidates in the three countries complained about low media coverage and when they got coverage, they were portrayed mostly in negative light and were scandalised through adverse stories about their personal lives. In Zambia for example, the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) survey concluded that women candidates

<sup>6</sup>Chulu, J: 2012. Vote Buying of Electorates: A Case Study of Zambian Parliamentary By Elections, Copperbelt University, Zambia

received less than 30% media coverage during the entire electoral process in 2016. For increased and favourable coverage, female candidates have to invest more in advertising, thus pushing up their campaign funding requirements.

#### ■ 4.4 Innovative Strategies Used For Campaign Financing

The study sought to identify innovative strategies that were employed in the three countries for campaign financing for female candidates. The observation across the three countries was that although some innovations could be identified, the gaps already referred to left most female candidates relying on their own resources to fund their campaigns. The following innovative strategies were noted:

- In Malawi the Hivos supported CSOs under the WE4L programme mainstreamed ISALs in their election support programme;
- In Malawi and Zambia, the electoral boards have lowered the nomination fees for aspiring female candidates, with the former also lowering the fees for aspiring youth and aspiring candidates living with disability;
- In Malawi Women's Legal Resource Centre (WOLREC) under the WE4L programme established women's advocacy forums consisting of 30 people (10 men and 20 women) educating communities about the importance of voting for women. They complimented the campaign efforts of campaign teams for female candidates;
- In Zimbabwe, the ruling party gave campaign financing for its candidates (both male and female) for both local government and parliamentary elections. The funding went a long way in assisting female candidates who had won primary elections. The funding was however not adequate to cover all the funding needs of the candidates.
- Some female candidates in the three countries made use of social media to fundraise from their supporters using Facebook, twitter and WhatsApp platforms. The use of social media and internet allows candidates to reach out to a greater number of voters more easily

and at a lower cost. Though innovative, the attempt needs to be developed so that aspiring candidates can tap into networks of women and constituencies that support them.

#### ■ 4.5 Best Practices on How Women Can Better Access Campaign Financing

##### Case study 1: Costa Rica

Costa Rica's 1990 Law for the Promotion of the Social Equality of Women calls on political parties to increase the number of women candidates, and to set aside funds to train women and promote their participation. The statutes of all political parties now mention gender equality and the dedication of funds for women's political development. Several have committed a specific percentage of their training budget to women. Article 2 of the Law 8765 of 2009 establishes that "The political participation of men and women is a human right acknowledged in a democratic, representative, participatory and inclusive society under the principles of equality and non-discrimination. Participation shall be governed by the principle of parity which implies that all delegations, electoral lists and other entities with an even number of members must be composed of 50% of members from each gender, and in delegations, electoral lists or entities with an odd number of members the difference between the total number of men and women shall not exceed one". Additionally, article 148 establishes that "All official lists of candidates for popular elections and official list of candidates for positions in the administrative and political representation organs shall be prepared in line with the principles of party and gender alternation. The first position on each electoral list of candidates for popular election by province, canton and district shall be determined by the political parties." Article 148 establishes that "The Electoral Registry shall not register official lists of candidates for popular elections by province, canton and district of political parties that do not comply with the principle of parity and gender alternation." According to Article 2 of the electoral law, two persons of the same sex cannot be subsequently included on the list of candidates.

**Table 7: Voluntary Political Party Quotas in Selected Political Parties in Costa Rica**

Party	Official name	Details, Quota provisions
National Liberation Party	Partido Liberación Nacional [PLN]	PLN alternates men and women candidates on electoral lists (Article 85 and 108, party statutes; Jager Contreras 2008, p 15-19). Nominations to be defined by provincial election in National Plenary Assembly, is to respect the representation of at least 40% for each gender. (Article 85, Partido Liberación Nacional Estatuto).
Christian-Social Unity Party	Partido Unidad Socialcristiana [PUSC]	PUSC alternates men and women candidates on electoral lists (Article 65, party statutes; Jager Contreras 2008, p 15-19). In the integration of all party structures, no more than 60% of its members shall be of the same gender, except for the District Assemblies and the Womens Front. (Article 10, Partido Unidad Social Cristiania Estatuto). The configuration of all candidate lists to elected office shall be held in such a way that no more than 60% of the members are of the same gender. (Article 61, Partido Unidad Social Cristiania Estatuto).
Citizen Action Party ]	Partido Acción Ciudadana [PAC]	50 percent of the candidates must be women, placed at every second place (zipper system) on electoral lists (Article 36, party statutes; Jager Contreras 2008, p 15-19).
Libertarian Movement Party	Partido Movimiento Libertario [PML]	At least 40% of the seats to be allocated, in a possible government of the Libertarian Movement Party, will be occupied by women. Future internal party structures shall be formed with at least 40% women. The positions to elective office that are presented by the party must be integrated of at least 40% of women, who must be placed in electable positions. (Article 72, Partido Movimiento Libertario Estatuto).

(Source: IDEA, 2020)

A combination of voluntary party quotas and legislated quotas for the single/lower house and at the sub-national level and gender targeted public funding have resulted in 46% of seats in the Legislative Assembly being held by women.



### Case Study 2: Albania

Since 2008 in Albania, political parties are required to nominate at least 30% of both genders, or else their public funding would be reduced. Additionally, parties that fail to place women in at least one of the top three positions in candidate lists are subject to sanctions. After these measures entered into effect, Albania experienced a sharp increase in the number of women nominated by parties, growing from 9% to 32% in the 2009 election. Since then, the number of women candidates and women elected have been steadily rising, with 40% of women candidates and 28% of women elected in 2017. Gender-targeted public funding can work to increase women's political participation. If the share of total party income received from public sources is high, like it is the case in Albania where roughly 90% of political parties' budget comes from public funding, the incentive to nominate women is then significant. There is an important link between the proportion of public funding and the level of gender balance achieved among candidates and elected office.

### Case study 3: Mexico

Article 78 of the electoral code includes a "Two Percent Law" which mandates that two percent of the public funding of political parties be used specifically for building women's capacity as candidates and politicians.

### Case study 4: Canada

Active campaigning demands a level of funding, time, and flexibility which few people, particularly women with families, can afford. In many families, women assume primary parenting responsibilities, which are often extremely difficult to combine with long hours of campaigning. In Canada the Election Law foresees that child care expenses incurred due to candidacy are reimbursable expenses because they would not normally occur if there was no election. At the national level, a financial assistance program allows women and minority candidates to be reimbursed for up to CAD\$500 for child care expenses incurred in seeking a nomination, and CAD\$500 for travel costs in geographically large ridings. An additional CAD\$500 is provided for costs incurred in seeking a nomination in constituencies where an incumbent retires. The Liberal Party has provided subsidies to women candidates for campaign-related expenses such as reimbursement of childcare expenses, travel costs, allocation for clothing allowance and provision

of campaign expenses such as printed materials. This political party established the Judy LaMarsh Fund, which is a party mechanism for money to be raised and spent on women candidates to help them get elected to parliament. The Liberal Party has direct control over how the money is spent and which women candidates are prioritized in receiving funds. The Fund works within Canada's party finance regulations, and it raises money primarily through fundraising events, direct mailings, and the Internet. The Fund has contributed greatly to increasing the number of women elected in the party's caucus. In Cambodia, the Sam Rainsy Party provides women candidates with some basic items, including clothing appropriate to wear while campaigning and a bicycle for moving around.

### Case study 5: Nigeria

COWAN, an NGO in Nigeria promotes saving schemes which has allowed women in politics to have access to loans for their election campaigns.

### Case Study 6: Female MP in Zambia

(Support from party and business community)

It was difficult for me to raise money for the campaign because of the resource constraints that we have as an economy in general and as a woman in particular. My party gave me K100, 000 (about USD5, 000) to help me with my campaign but that was not enough. I needed about K500, 000 (about USD 25,000) to adequately cover election campaign expenses. It is very expensive to campaign in my constituency because it cuts across a lake so you have to use boats to reach some of the communities during the campaign. One trip with a boat can cost you up to K3, 000 and that is expensive because you want to make several trips before the elections. I managed to use some of the savings I had to fund my campaign, I also approached some local companies who also put in money into my campaign, which helped me a lot. Since this was my second term business people in the community were happy with the work that I had done in my first term and they thus donated to for my campaign. Had it not been of these business people, my campaign would not have been effective. The major problem is that some of them would say "I will give you money for the campaign, what will give me in return" and that can mean anything, including sexual favours". So for many women, it is difficult to raise money from these business people, especially the young aspiring women because they will fall victim".

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### Case study 7: Female MP in Zimbabwe (Self Financing)

I am a widow, my husband passed away 20 years ago. In 2013, I ran for council elections and lost, partly because I did not have sufficient campaign resources. There and then I decided that I needed to contest in the 2018 parliamentary elections so in 2013 I started saving for the 2018 elections. I am a business woman, running an events management

company. I have tents, public address system, furniture, utensils and a truck. When the 2018 elections campaign started, I had US\$5000 in my account. I then made use of my business equipment to support my campaign. I used my truck to ferry people, my tent for public gatherings and utensils for food. I won this election because I had planned early and made the necessary savings. At the moment I am mentoring young women who want to venture into politics.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS ON HOW WOMEN CAN BETTER ACCESS CAMPAIGN FINANCING

This study proposes a set of measures for female candidates to access campaign financing as follows:

1. At African Union and SADC levels, lobbying and advocacy initiatives for the adoption of legal mechanisms that include:
  - a. specific measures on campaign finance for women and gender equality;
  - b. national legislation on political campaign finance and parties' expenditure that coincide with international conventions and agreements that promote gender equity in political participation.
  - c. strengthening the mandate and operating budget of the Electoral Management Body to properly monitor campaign spending and hold political parties to account.
2. In the three countries, there is need for lobbying for gender responsive political institutions. The starting point being gender audits of political parties to ensure availability of gender responsive systems including gender mainstreaming strategies and action plans and gender awareness of leadership of key structures of these institutions;
3. Lobby political parties to put in place measures to dedicate a certain proportion of their budget to the women's wing. This should be legislated and public funding of political parties should be conditional upon meeting specific quotas for women. This would allow women wings to train women candidates and support their campaign efforts in election times. For this to be effective, it is important to have accountability and enforcement mechanisms to monitor the implementation of such initiatives.
4. In Zimbabwe, the Women's Bank can provide interest free loans to women candidates.
5. There is need for capacity building of female candidates to engage in fundraising and strategically manage their campaign resources.

## List of people interviewed

Zimbabwe	Designation	Institution
Margaret Nyahoda	Council Chair	Nyanga RDC
Priscilla Maposa	Country Manager	Gender links
Tawanda Chimhini	Director	Election Resource Centre
Siphatisiwe Moyo	Cluster Lead, Politics and Decision Making	Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe
Glanis Changachirere	Director	Institute for Young Women Development
Antony Chikutsa	Director, Research and Development	Zimbabwe Electoral Commission
Josiah Makombe	Mayor and President	Gweru City Council/Urban Councils Association of Zimbabwe
Patricia Mwale	Deputy Mayor	Victoria Falls
Sichelesile Mahlangu	Member of Parliament	MDC Alliance
Stella Ndlovu	Member of Parliament	MDC Alliance
Zambia	Designation	Institution
Faggy Chibanga		Zambia National Women's Lobby
Chilufya Siwale	Director	NGOCC
Sophie Kaoma	Information and research officer	Zambia Centre for Inter-Party Dialogue
Doreen NK	Director	
Sarah Sayifwanda	Former MP	Zambia Parliament
Emmerine Kabanshi	Member of Parliament	Zambia Parliament
Doris Ding'ombi	Councillor	Zambia Local Authority
Bernadette Chabakale	Councillor	Chivombo Local Authority
Malawi		
Cecilia Chiyunga Kachali	Project Coordinator	Tovwirane
Dimeria Rocha	District Elections Officer	Malawi Electoral Commission
Emma Kaliya	Executive Director	Malawi Human Rights Resources Centre/ Acting Chairperson Malawi Electoral Commission
Pyela Kalimandanda Chiumia	Councillor	United Transformation Movement
Joseph Njala	Programme Manager	Non-Governmental Organisation Gender Coordinating Network
Tisungane Irene Ntonga	Project Officer	WOLREC
Gondwe Sakala	Member of Parliament	Malawi
Esnart Pumphi	Election Candidate	Malawi

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## ■ Research Tools

### In-depth Key Informant Interview Guide for Political Parties and CSOs

Name of Organisation	
Position	
Date of Interview	

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. What is the current proportion of female representation in parliament, local government level, the executive and in political party structures in your country?</li><li>2. What explains the situation of female representation in parliament, local government level, the executive and in political party structures that you have shared?</li><li>3. What is the legal framework governing elections in your country and/or political party?</li><li>4. Are there any regulations in place governing political party financing and campaign financing and how responsive are they to the needs and experiences of female candidates?</li><li>5. What are the mechanisms of disbursement governing political party financing and campaign financing and how have they affected female candidates in the last election?</li><li>6. What other challenges and gaps are presented by the regulations for female candidates?</li><li>7. What systems/policies/constitutions/laws exist in your country and/or political party for the promotion of women's participation in elections as candidates?</li><li>8. What mechanisms are in place regarding nomination of candidates and campaign financing in your country and/or political party?</li></ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>9. How responsive are these to the needs and experiences of female candidates?</li><li>10. In your opinion, what challenges affect female candidates in terms of campaign financing in your country and/or political party? In your response share examples of women's experiences in political parties in general and in election campaigns in particular in the last election?</li><li>11. In your view, how important is campaign financing for female candidates in your country and /or political party?</li><li>12. What innovative strategies has your organisation/country implemented to address the challenge of campaign financing for female candidates? How have you funded the campaigns in the past election?</li><li>13. What gaps still exist in campaign financing for female candidates in your country?</li><li>14. 14. other countries on how women can better access campaign financing?</li><li>15. What recommendations can you proffer for improved campaign financing for female candidates?</li></ol> <p>Thank you</p> |
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## ■ Narrative Tool

Can you tell us about your experiences as a female candidate in the last election in relation to campaign financing.

In your discussion, among other things feel free to make reference to:

- Key gender equality and equity challenges relating to campaign financing in your country and political party that you have faced in the last election.
- What you consider to be the “root” causes of those challenges and their implications on you on a female candidate.
- Any Laws, Policies, Regulations, Institutional Practices as well as Cultural Norms and Beliefs in the last election that influenced the challenges that female candidates faced in relation to campaign financing.
- How patterns of power and decision making in political parties and at household level influence access to campaign financing for women.
- How access and control over resources at household level influences the participation of women in elections as candidates.
- Factors that limit women’s ability to participate meaningfully in politics, with particular focus on campaign finances.
- Mechanisms put in place by your political party and other stakeholders that promote meaningful participation by women in politics, including young women.
- How you have benefitted from any such mechanisms in the last election?
- The gaps and opportunities in campaign financing for female candidates in your country/ political party.
- Any experiences with Gender Based Violence (GBV) and Violence against Women related to campaign financing and elections in general
- Any resources developed to address GBV as it relates to campaign financing.
- Any lessons learnt and best practices on campaign financing for female candidates that you can share from your personal experiences.









with financial support from:



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the  
Netherlands