



**Global 50/50 Campaign - *Get the Balance Right***

## **Women Candidates and Campaign Finance**

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## Women and Campaign Finance

### 1. Introduction

### 2. Basic Framework

#### 2.1. Financial Resources and Women's Political Careers

##### 2.1.1. Deciding to Run as Candidates

##### 2.1.2. Winning a Nomination

##### 2.1.3. Conducting an Electoral Campaign

#### 2.2. Parties Finance Modalities and Women

#### 2.3. International and National Normative Frameworks

### 3. Gender Differences and Campaign Finance: Lessons Learned

#### 3.1. Resources

#### 3.2. Electoral Systems

#### 3.3. Public Funding and Setting Limits

#### 3.4. Incumbency

#### 3.5. Transparency and Accountability

#### 3.6. Planning and Networking

### 4. Good Practices

#### 4.1. Training

#### 4.2. Good Practices within the Parties

### 5. Recommendations

#### 5.1. To Political Parties

#### 5.2. To States & Governments (Legislative & Executive Powers)

#### 5.3. To Organisms that Control Electoral Processes and Parties Expenditure

#### 5.4. To Women within Parties

#### 5.5. To Women Candidates

#### 5.6. To Women's Organizations and Networks

#### 5.7. To Academia and Researchers

#### 5.8. To International Organisms

#### 5.9. To Financial and Private Sector

### 6. Bibliography

#### Annex: Case Studies

##### 1. Africa: Nigeria – COWAN

##### 2. United States: EMILY'S List

## 1. Introduction

Lack of economic resources is one of the major obstacles to women's participation in political and electoral processes. Research has shown that women face specific and diverse economic and financial challenges at various times in their political careers. In recent years, increased resource mobilization has been identified as central to achieving gender equity in the political realm. However, there has been insufficient documentation on gender differences in campaign finance and strategies to obtain the needed resources by women's organizations, political parties, or social-science researchers (Barreiro, 2004; Barrow-Giles, 2005; Baker, 2006).

This paper was produced to advance the research and understanding of the relationship between financial resources and women's political campaigns. It presents examples of successful campaign finance strategies used by women candidates. While these strategies—which have evolved in different geographical, cultural and political contexts—may not be universal in their application, they do, however, provide valuable examples of “best practices” and “lessons learned.”

The organizations involved in this initiative are the Women's Parliament Forum, the Network of NGOs of Trinidad and Tobago for the Advancement of Women, the United Nations Democracy Fund and Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO)<sup>1</sup>.

Research was conducted through interviews with experts in the field, women's organizations, women candidates and party members. These interviews were conducted in person, via telephone and through e-mail. A special experts meeting was held in Trinidad and Tobago in December 2007, where an abridged version of the report were presented. Participants delivered recommendations that are included in this final report. The research was conducted through March-December 2007. Despite best efforts to document and present best practices from every region in the world, the regions of Asia and the Pacific and the Middle East are not represented.

The report is organized in six sections. It begins with an introduction that is followed by a basic framework and outline of the relationship between women and campaign finance. The third section is a summary of current research on the topic along with lessons learned. Section four presents best practices and section five delivers stakeholder recommendations. The annex provides two case studies from Nigeria and the United States

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<sup>1</sup> This research was conducted by Dr. Marcela Tovar (Phd, Anthropology); it was revised and edited by WEDO.

## **2. Basic Framework**

### **2.1. Financial resources and women's political careers**

An analysis of the relationship between economic resources and electoral processes reveals important differences between women and men candidates. Women's unequal access to economic resources restricts their engagement in political activities. These restrictions range from women's exclusion from certain circles of power and moneyed networks, to their own actual economic status, which is documented to be inferior to that of men (Brodie, 1991; CAPWIP, 1999; Carroll, 1994; Ballington, 2003).

Both women and men rely on direct resources and indirect resources for their campaigns. Direct resources can be characterized as cash money that comes from private donors, political parties, state budgets or subsidies, or a candidate's own personal resources. This money is more freely designated to pay for the candidate's campaign needs, allowing more autonomy in structuring political strategies.

Indirect resources can be defined as economic contributions that are not given in cash money but that benefit political activities or campaigns. Indirect resources are usually made by individuals, political parties, associations or constituencies that donate unpaid work on behalf of a candidate. They can also be material resources, such as communication equipment or physical spaces that are needed to carry out campaign activities. The most common are volunteers, infrastructural and office support, communication materials, and networking.

It is important to distinguish between direct and indirect resources because they play different roles in men's and women's campaigns. Women, in particular, are forced to rely heavily on a variety of indirect economic sources due to their more limited access to financial resources. Access to both direct and indirect resources is critical during three distinct phases of women's political careers: deciding to run, winning a nomination and conducting an electoral campaign.

#### **2.1.1. Deciding to run**

Having access to direct and indirect financial resources critically affects women's decision to run for office. Across several regions including Africa, Asia and Latin America, women tend to be reluctant to become political candidates for a variety of economic reasons. This includes investing family resources, which they do not feel they individually own, asking for credit and risking their own or the family's capital, paying for domestic/caring work they will not be able to do, leaving their jobs and reentering the labor market in cases where they do not get elected.

Guilliam Guifarro, elected as deputy in Honduras (quoted by García, 200:161) confirms that women not only consider the costs of preparing a campaign in the public sphere, they also consider the money they will have to invest in the domestic sphere to cover their absence. Such costs as child care, dependant adults, home care and domestic duties, in general, will have to be covered by women all the way through the different phases of their campaigns.

Monique Essed-Fernandes (2007:3), a presidential candidate in Suriname (2000/2005), also states: "Women who run for public office are either single, have no children, have grown children or have a support network for childcare. Childcare is an issue which starts before nomination, because in practice those who have a problem with childcare are either excluded or exclude themselves from the system".

According to Walsh (2007) women at this stage have to be “asked to run.” Burrell (1998:37) has also made this observation, stating that, specifically in the U.S., women need to be convinced that they are capable of raising as much money as male candidates. That is why it is critical, particularly in the initial phases, to address the economic and financial obstacles to women’s political participation. Unless women are relieved of the economic burden or the “economic threat” associated with political participation, they will not feel capable of and confident in their participation.

### **2.1.2. Winning 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 conferences) and family-related expenses are all mentioned as barriers to women’s political participation (Ballington,2003:158-159,161).

To respond to these economic needs, women’s organizations in different places have implemented mechanisms to provide female candidates with early money such as establishing Political Action Committees (PACs) in the U.S., i.e. EMILY’s<sup>2</sup> List or the WISH List. They maintain that providing early money to women increases the likelihood of acquiring more money during the election campaign.

Furthermore, the decisive importance of providing direct and indirect economic resources during this stage, has driven women to strongly recommend establishing limits on the amount of money and time spent in nomination campaigning.

### **2.1.3. Conducting an electoral campaign**

It is necessary to access substantial funds to conduct an electoral campaign. In those countries where there is public funding along with quota systems and other measures that favor women, all candidates, including women generally access funds through their political parties. Thus once they have secured nomination, funding is partially guaranteed. However in those countries where candidates themselves have to raise the funds, large amounts of money are often essential to running a successful campaign.

Public funding, considered by many states to be a desirable and positive measure, has been adopted by countries in Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean in order to equalize expenditures among candidates in electoral campaigns. In some cases however, women candidates have argued that it is not enough to cover their expenses for two reasons: 1) women have unequal access to these funds within their party, and 2) candidates rely on means from private sources to which women do not have the same access. As a result men end up being the main recipients of public funding.

Social factors can also lead to a greater need for investment in electoral campaigns. Income level, race and ethnicity, level of education, dominant language skills, geographical location, sexual orientation, age, family relations, and phenotype of women candidates all tend to affect their

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<sup>2</sup> EMILY stands for: Early Money is Like Yeast Because It Makes the Dough Rise.

political participation throughout their careers, especially the ability to acquire campaign funds during electoral campaigns. The poorest and most disempowered women from developing countries, including women from ethnic minorities, face a completely different economic reality when campaigning than do women from developed countries who are supported by their parties or other mechanisms. (Dow, 2007:2).

Women who run to represent women depend significantly on their feminist constituencies during election campaigns. The indirect resources that women collectively contribute with their unpaid work to female candidates are pivotal to the victory, as Carmen Alborch, elected Deputy in Spain has illustrated (<http://www.carmenalborch.com/pages>; Morata, 2007). This collective unpaid work of women can be understood as a collective cost that women have to assume, given its great importance to their candidates' success. Male candidates, however, who also rely on unpaid work of both men and women from their constituencies, do not require--or at least do not need as much--unpaid work from their male constituents to ensure better performance in representing their interests.

## **2.2. Parties' finance modalities and women**

There are three different legal financial modalities under which parties get resources: a) public finance; b) private finance; and c) combined public/private finance.

Depending on the political and socio-economic context different modalities of finance might or might not favor women. However in order to identify what financial modality favors women, further research is needed in order to understand a) what modality (if any) tends to provide resources such that the parties expending them are required to consider different gender needs; b) what modality requires and exercises control with monitoring and accountability mechanisms applied by State electoral bodies in order to examine parties' expenditure from a gender perspective; and c) what correspondence there is between party budget expenditures and its ideological protocols and compromises with women.

Corrupt and illegal channels for campaign financing also exist and can infiltrate political structures in developed and developing countries (Dugger, 2007; Sefaker, 2005:3,13,16). To what extent are women in politics involved in these illegal networks, if at all? How does this differ from men's campaign financing? These constitute additional questions that can be studied, especially in contexts where it has been proven that corruption and unclean money have had an important presence in political campaigning.

## **2.3. International and national normative frameworks**

There is little mention of financial resources and women's campaigns in international legislation or women's conventions. CEDAW<sup>3</sup>, the Beijing Platform of Action<sup>4</sup>, the Millennium Development Goals (MDG)<sup>5</sup>, the III and IV Summits of the Americas (Declaration of Quebec City [2001] Declaration of Nuevo León [2004]), and the Quito Consensus 2007<sup>6</sup>, all contain some articles that allude to gender equity in political participation and decision-making instances. However, none of them explicitly address meeting the economic and financial needs of women in order to permit them to enter the political and electoral process on even footing with men.

Despite this fact, it is possible to find some examples where countries inspired by these international agreements have encouraged and triggered reforms in electoral laws and parties'

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<sup>3</sup> Articles: 1, 2, 2a, 2b, 2e, 3, 4, 7a, 7b.

<sup>4</sup> Paragraph. 186, 190d, 190h, 191a, 191b, 191c, 192

<sup>5</sup> MDG 3 is to promote gender equality and empower women.

<sup>6</sup> Articles: 17, 25 (ii, iv, vi, vii, viii, ix, x, xi, xix)

statutes. National laws on gender equity can also bring about changes in this terrain. Costa Rica's gender equity law, sanctioned in 1990, is a good example of how a normative measure can induce and derive modifications within parties, and provide instruments to monitor State electoral control bodies.

An explicit call should be made to include specific measures relating to financial resources, gender equality and party's campaigns, in any international normative legislation or instrument. Similarly, state bodies that control parties and hold them accountable and transparent should be lobbied by women in order to ensure their good performance on including a gender perspective.

### **3. Gender Differences and Economic Campaign Resources: Lessons learned**

Many questions have emerged regarding how gender differences relate to financial issues and political campaigns. Are women and men equally capable of raising money for their campaigns? What are the main factors that prevent women from accessing economic resources? Are there psychological barriers associated with financial issues that women should overcome in order to successfully run as candidates? To what extent does the socio-economic context interfere with women's access to resources? Have measures designed to channel campaign funds to female candidates made a difference? Are there sets of rules governing campaign finance that have a demonstrable effect on the representation of women in legislatures?

#### **3.1. Resources**

- Women have less money than men as well as less access to powerful and moneyed networks.
- Men are more likely to become money donors to campaigns, while women are more likely to become time donors, largely due to women's generally lower income level. With income being the key element determining who gives and how much is given, (both in numbers of donors and number of dollars,) men surpass women (Day and Hadley, 2005:8).
- Providing women with early money for nomination campaigns is key to increasing their potential for raising more money in electoral campaigns and increasing their numbers in elected seats.
- Citing evidence specific to the U.S., but relevant to the larger discussion of gender differences in relation to donors' activities, Baker (2006:20) corroborates the following:
  - Individual contributions overwhelmingly comprise the most important source of financing for all candidates, both women and men.
  - The average size of individual donations to most female candidates continues to be smaller than the average donation to male candidates.
  - The vast majority of large donors to political campaigns are men.
  - Female candidates generally depend upon female donors for financial viability and win monetary support from men only as their odds of election approach certainty.
  - The small individual contributions received by females suggest that they must attract far greater numbers of individual contributors than their male counterparts just to equalize the total monetary value of their contributions.
  - Women who win raise significantly more money than women who lose, while male winners collect only marginally more money than their losing counterparts.
  - Female candidates require more money than men to reach the thresholds of both campaign viability and electoral success; thus, a decline in female candidates' fundraising and/or funding needs to be interpreted as a decline in their ability to participate in the electoral process.

#### **3.2. Electoral systems**

- Access to campaign financial resources is only one of many components in getting women elected. A set of measures that would favor female candidates include but are not limited to:
  - quota systems within parties' structures and their candidates' lists;
  - quotas in decision-making positions, both by popular elections and by designation;
  - adoption of legal mechanisms—national electoral laws, decrees—that include specific measures on campaign finance for women and gender equality; and
  - training for women candidates to engage in fundraising and strategically manage their campaign resources.



- The nature of the electoral system also plays a role in women's access to financial resources within their parties since they may or may not be favorable to women candidates. An important distinction in this regard between the Single Member Plurality System and the Proportional Representation (PR) System should be noted. In the former, women are confronted by a candidate selection process in a winner-takes-all situation where they will have to individually compete to gather their own resources, mainly private funding. In the latter, a woman candidate might be regarded as one among many team members whose individual expectations to generate resources are lower and whose campaign expenses are usually taken care of by their party (Ballington, 2003:136, Abdela, 2007).
- PR systems can help guarantee the access of women who, for cultural, racial or religious reasons, are excluded from electoral processes.
- An electoral system may influence the places women occupy on their party's list as well as the electoral zone in which they are running. These facts also determine to an important extent the feasibility of acquiring direct and indirect resources. More or less attention will be paid to female or male candidates depending on their possibility of being elected.
- Closed lists rather than open lists tend to favor women since they guarantee that women will not have to compete against males or females within their own party (Sampler, 2007).

### **3.3. Public funding and setting limits**

- Although public funding favors women's candidacies, public funding alone may not be sufficient to promote women candidates since they often have less power within their political parties which control the allocation of funds.
- In the Caribbean potential women candidates usually have to rely on their parties' funds. It is reported that parties provide little or no special assistance, financial or otherwise, to promote women because they do not see them as necessary to win elections. In Belize, for example, "large donors make contributions to the political party, which in turn distributes that money amongst its candidates. Nevertheless, such amounts are insignificant compared with the large donations received and distributed by the central powers within the party, where women candidates are often slighted" (Selwyn, 2005:166).
- The Center for Legislative Development (Philippines) and the UNDP-Asia Pacific Gender Equality Network suggest that campaign economic limits should be applied to every national and local election, as well as to donations used for "party building," voter registration, membership campaigns, and payments to party-related "think tanks." Aside from having a positive effect on women, these measures would also tend to reduce possibilities for the exercise of undue influence on a candidate or party by contributors. For example, in Mexico the law limits the amount of contributions from nongovernmental organizations and bars funding from foreign citizens, religious officials and private businesses. Sanctions include economic penalties and fines, suspension of public funding for parties or revocation of party's registration. Countries with contribution limits as of 1995 include India, Taiwan, Japan, Israel, Russia, Mexico, Brazil, France, Italy, Spain, Turkey and the United States (Women in Government Source Kit, <http://iknowpolitics.org/>).
- Together public funding and campaign contribution and spending limits have been suggested as mechanisms to ensure more democratic elections. They are expected to help guarantee

equitable participation of different social groups in electoral processes, and prevent having only those with better access to economic resources as candidates.

- Establishing time limits at different moments of campaigning constitutes another measure that works in favor of women. Women's time availability is not as flexible as men's, since they are usually committed to spending more time in the domestic sphere. Limiting time with constituencies, party activities, and propaganda exposure will help women to balance their timetables and perform better in their campaigns.

### **3.4. Accountability and transparency**

- Measures to ensure accountability and transparency in campaign finance are required to guarantee democratic electoral processes and diminish gender imbalances. These rules generally require candidates to disclose the identity of donors, the contribution amounts and the amounts spent during different time periods of a campaign. They help to prevent channels of corruption through which a candidate, whether female or male, may be acquiring direct and indirect resources, buying votes, or trafficking in influence where preferential or special treatment is given to big donors.
- Electoral monitoring bodies require accountability mechanisms to ensure that gender equality measures are being correctly implemented, especially as they relate to allocating direct and indirect financial resources to female candidates.
- Women's activists include transparency and accountability as key recommendations. As Lilian Soto from Paraguay confirmed, "[A] lack of transparency within internal parties' campaigns, as well as in external campaigns, affect women in a negative way. When resources are managed by powerful groups within parties, they are destined [for] the members of these same groups—that most frequently happens to be males" (Soto, 2007).
- Denmark, New Zealand and the U.S. have adopted "reporting of campaign fund" mechanisms, where sources of funding and public reporting of accounts by candidates, political committees and parties are disclosed. In Denmark, political parties are required to submit a list of all donors' contributions. In New Zealand, every registered party is required by law to appoint a qualified auditor to audit the financial return of the party. At the federal level in the United States, campaign committees including parties and political action committees must present to the Federal Election Commission quarterly reports on funds raised and spent (Women in Government Source Kit, <http://iknowpolitics.org>, 2007).

### **3.5. Incumbency**

- Incumbency has also been reported as a factor that impedes women's access to resources, primarily to direct resources (Burrell, 2005:144, Rios,2007). Empirical data from the U.S. shows that the incumbent candidate has a great advantage over challenger candidates. Given the worldwide gender gap in elected seats, most incumbents are males. In most contexts they have better chances to succeed for reasons of tradition—"historically inherited seats" kept within the party or passed from one male family member to another for example, or because the whole system simply favors them, as Day and Hadley (2005:20) have documented. This puts women in a more difficult position from which to raise resources as challengers.
- Many female candidates are deterred from running because they know that in their Electoral District/ or Zone they will confront incumbents can raise far more resources as reportedly happened in St. Lucia and Barbados (Barrow-Gilles, Ibid:224).

- Women's organizations and U.S. PACs are well aware of the barrier presented by incumbency. They have even stated that incumbency is a greater barrier to women's entrance into politics than their gender. As a consequence, PACs prefer to support candidates in open-seat races where there is no incumbent running. In the same manner, they tend to protect female incumbents already in office.

## 4. Good Practices

### 4.1. Training

Political training for women is the most visible form found in the spectrum of good practices adopted by international donors, women's organizations, electoral laws, gender equity laws and parties' protocols and statutes. Training constitutes the most common form of indirect resources destined for women. It is difficult to find overall long- or short-term evaluations that assess the direct impact of training on a) an increase of the amount of women participating in political processes or b) an increase in the number of women being elected.

Although it has been difficult to assess the impact that political training has had, numbers reported by The National Democracy Institute (NDI)—an organization with extensive experience training women political candidates—are persuasive.

In Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan, NDI conducted training workshops for a total of 3,567 women party activists, candidates, and elected representatives in May 2004. Nine of the 30 Master and Provincial Trainers from Afghanistan ran for parliamentary and provincial council elections in September of 2005; three of these women won seats, and a number of other trainers were involved in supporting campaigns. A number of women trained in Pakistan are serving as local councilors, members of the National Assembly or members of a Provincial Assembly. In September of 2005, four Divisional Trainers in Bangladesh were elected to reserved seats for women in the Parliament.

In Bolivia, NDI implemented the Winning with Women candidate training school for women running in the December 2004 municipal elections. Among the participants, 93 women obtained their parties' official nomination as primary municipal council candidates. A total of 39 participants won their elections.

In Georgia, NDI initiated a women candidates training program in spring 2006. NDI received approximately 400 applications for the program, 141 were trained. In the October 5 municipal elections, 27 of the women trained by NDI sought local office.

Judging effectiveness of the training component has to be carefully and contextually studied keeping in mind its varied long/short term purposes. Many women agree on the need to have continuous training during the different phases of their political career (Psoe, 2006; Felicia Ramirez, 2007; Experts meeting-Trinidad and Tobago, 2007). Nevertheless, it is important to establish the different contents and types of training women need at different phases<sup>7</sup>. When and what kind of training has a more effective impact on increasing elected women that represent women's interest is the main question that needs to be approached by evaluation studies.

Furthermore, other questions can also be addressed when studying if resources are being effectively spent: a) are indirect financial resources being used as effectively as they can be to get women elected?; b) are there other ways to use these (national and international) resources to get women elected?; c) are most efforts being focused on training at the expense of other strategies?<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>The material covered by parties when training women candidates include a great variety of topics such as: electoral mechanisms, women's political empowerment, gender planning, and the local history of the women's movement, among others (Fundación Oscar Arias, 2006; Organización Manuela Ramos, 2006; Psoe,2006)

<sup>8</sup> This question is especially relevant in relation to resources spent at the national level by local parties. National parties could spend resources supporting women directly in their campaigns. The question does not apply as

Some women have suggested alternatives to training programs. For example, Patricia Palacios (2007) from Asamblea de Mujeres de Quito in Ecuador argues that funds destined for training can be more successfully applied to getting elected men and women to formulate and implement policies and programs on gender equity or to mainstream a gender perspective in decision making processes.

#### **4.2. Electoral laws and parties**

Electoral laws and parties' statutes are structural components in the democratic development of political processes in any country. They are decisive to the way political appointments are made, electoral seats are voted and won, and political bodies' compositions are shaped. After decades of women's struggles to gain political equity in electoral contests, today we know that unless work is also done directly with the parties and state offices that define and control political and electoral processes, gender equity is difficult to reach. Despite some successful experiences, women, unfortunately, have not yet gained sufficient ground. Needless to say, they have not been successful enough at directing economic and financial resources towards women, either within their parties or in national budgets.

Another way in which electoral laws can promote women's participation is by giving financial incentives to parties that adopt measures to increase the number of women participating. Penalty inscription fees and taxes or, conversely, bonus reductions in fees can be effective at inducing parties and political collectives to encourage women's participation. Women also benefit when costs such as childcare and dependant care are included in nomination and election campaign budgets. A few cases from a variety of contexts where some of these measures were put in practice are presented below.

#### **4.3. Context specific good practices**

The following are examples of various strategies that have been used in Africa, the Caribbean, Europe, Latin America and North America to increase women's political participation.<sup>9</sup>

##### **Africa**

- The African Women's Development Fund (AWDF) implements a fundraising and grant-making initiative, which aims to support the work of the African women's movement. The Fund began grant-making in October 2001; by November 2006, they had awarded grants worth nearly U.S.\$5,000,000 to 386 women's organizations in 40 African countries. Examples include: Akina Mama wa Afrika in Uganda which was provided with \$25,000 for leadership development for West African women, and Association Dushirehamwe in Burundi that has been given \$8,000 for information sharing and an awareness campaign on women's political participation<sup>10</sup>.
- COWAN was founded in Nigeria in 1982 as a response to the perceived marginalization of women and their condition of abject poverty, especially in the rural communities. COWAN's activities span 32 states in the country with at least 260,000 registered

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much as for international resources (i.e. international aid resources) that cannot be spent in direct political campaigns of political candidates.

<sup>9</sup> Finding examples of good practices from Asia was not possible. Many women organizations showed their interest on the topic, but none of them provided any good practice or research study to work with.

<sup>10</sup> [http://www.awdf.org/pages/grants\\_theme.php?pid=2&theme=Political+Part](http://www.awdf.org/pages/grants_theme.php?pid=2&theme=Political+Part)

members. The organization promotes traditional saving schemes by developing an African Traditional Responsive Banking (ATRB). This has allowed women in politics to have access to loans, enabling them to compete with their male counterparts. This strategy has had positive and sustained results at the local level, with rural women making significant gains. During the 1999 election, 26 women were given financial support to run for election. (More detailed information about the COWAN experience can be found in Annex No. 1).

## Caribbean

- In Haiti, the electoral law requires candidates to pay a filing fee, the amount of which depends on the position being contested, and if the candidate is not from a political party, the filing fee increases tenfold. However, the law permits a party's candidates discounted inscription fees if at least 30% of their lists are women, and the filing fee is lowered by two-thirds for women candidates representing political parties (Selwyn, 2005:174).
- Barrow-Giles (2005:221-223) argues that in Suriname, unlike other Caribbean states, fundraising for elections is centrally organized by the various political parties, and personal fundraising for an individual candidate violates the rules of conduct of the political party. Female candidates in Suriname, therefore, are in fact not adversely impacted by the need to raise large sums of money. However, candidate Monique Essed-Fernandes from Suriname states that "in reality women do have to raise their funds given that traditionally women are not placed in the higher positions on the party list. The central organization of campaign fundraising by the political parties goes hand-in-hand with traditional political parties' demand for closed list voting and discouragement of voting for a preferential candidate, both of which are possible in the Surinamese system. It seems to me that women candidates in Suriname should benefit from the open list system to get elected, yet experience has shown that this requires enormous voter recognition and much more individual campaigning than is presently done or accepted. This would also mean that they would need even more support for individual campaign financing and that it would have to be accepted within their own party. Experience has shown that individual campaigning is almost not accepted by the larger parties and that the system of preferential voting has worked more often for men than for women" (2007:5).
- Another legal regulation in Suriname that favors women is a decree enacted in 1987, which seeks to regulate campaign financing. It provides that the governing board and in particular the treasurer and the auditing committee should publish each year a report or balance of revenues and expenditures of the political organizations in the *Advertentieblad van de Republiek Suriname* (Gazette of the Republic of Suriname) and in at least one of the Surinamese dailies. Political parties are also obliged to record this rule in their statutes. An examination of the statements filed by political parties revealed that, other than in election years, political parties do not normally adhere to this disclosure obligation." Griner and Zovato (2005:181) report that the measure has not been judiciously complied with in all elections periods, one of the major reasons for the failure to comply being the absence of any controlling mechanism or entity to which annual reports of political parties should be submitted. Likewise, there is no sanction to act as a deterrent.
- In Suriname and Guyana, the fact that elections are fought on the basis of proportional representation (PR) enables small parties to obtain more funding than is available in

states operating without this system Selwyn (2005:162). However, Essed-Fernandes (2007:5) states that for Suriname this is true when small parties seem to have a chance to play a role in forming a coalition government, in which case donors will give them more financial support. In the smaller parties even more than the larger parties, however, women have to be ranked at the top of the party's list to make a good chance to win.

## Europe

- In the Nordic countries, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland and Iceland, which have reached and sustained high numbers of women in their parliaments, political parties receive a state subsidy or some form of assistance (e.g. free, equal broadcasting time on TV and radio for campaigns or party-related activities such as research) (Women in Government Source Kit, <http://iknowpolitics.org/>).
- Indirect resources for women's campaigns can be provided through parties or through national, federal or local governments in various ways: allocating financial resources for gender equality awareness-raising, supporting operative costs for gender equity organisms within the party, or employing functionaries who spend part of their time monitoring and ensuring the implementation of quotas. In Spain, for example, the party currently in power, Partido Socialista Obrero Espanol,<sup>11</sup> has a Gender Equality Office that coordinates different activities with women candidates and supports them in their governmental activities.
- In France a modification of article 3 in the Constitution was approved in June 1999 whereby the law now "favors the equal access of women and men to electoral mandates and elected offices and positions". The parity principle requires that 50 percent of candidates on lists forwarded for election must be women, or political parties face financial sanctions. The reform is designed to ensure parity between men and women in access to political office in all list elections in France—for the European Parliament, provincial and municipal assemblies as well as elections for the National Assembly. The reform will also apply to list elections in the Territorial Assembly of French Polynesia and for Wallis and Futuna, and in elections for the Provincial Assembly and Congress of New Caledonia (communes with less than 3.500 inhabitants are exempt). For local elections in constituencies with over 3.500 inhabitants, the lists must be made up of an equal number of candidates of both sexes; the lists that do not respect these rules are not registered. As a direct result of this sanction, in 2001 47.5 percent of the councilors elected in towns with more than 3.500 inhabitants were women. For the election of candidates to the lower house, political parties face financial sanctions if they do not put forward 50 percent candidates of both sexes (Doublet quoted in Ballington, 2003:165)

## Latin America

- In Nicaragua, the women's commission from the Partido Liberal Constitucionalista created a leadership school for women, and the Partido Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional also created mechanisms to work with women's organizations to train women and organize electoral activities.
- García (2004: 158-171) further identifies good practices within Latin American parties that take into account national and international legislation on gender equity/equality. For example, some parties in Costa Rica and Panama have internal regulations that designate financial resources for women's activities within the parties and electoral

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<sup>11</sup> Spanish Socialist Worker Party

processes. In the case of Costa Rica, the national law that promotes social equity, “Ley de Promoción de la Igualdad Social,” sanctioned in 1990, triggered innovative measures within a number of parties. The statutes of a.) Liberación Nacional (art. 171 reformed in May/97), b.) Movimiento Libertario (art. 72), c.) Partido Acción Ciudadana (art. 37), and d.) Partido Unidad Social Cristiana (art. 52) designate financial resources for training of women candidates.

- In 2002 Panama’s electoral law was reformed<sup>12</sup> to establish subsidies for political parties, of which 25% is earmarked for training activities and 10% for women’s training workshops and activities. El Partido Arnulfista (The Arnulfista Party) went further, establishing within its internal statutes the designation of 30% of state subsidies to women’s political training. In order to achieve the goal stated in the electoral law, women may use these resources in forums, seminars, congress and other training activities that promote gender equity.
- In Chile, the executive power has presented a bill to the Congress to promote women’s political participation. It provides financial support for women candidates, establishes a minimum number of women that parties have to include in their lists, and penalizes with financial resources to the parties that do not include the minimum number of women in their lists.

#### **North America**

- In Canada progress is related to specific measures that have been adopted at the electoral legislation level. Ballington (2003:162) traces these advances to the Canada Elections Act 1974, section 409(1)(b), which provides for childcare expenses to be included in the personal expenses of a candidate for election. The Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing (RCERPF) in Canada noted that the cost of childcare imposes an unequal burden on many women seeking elected office. Therefore childcare should be considered a legitimate tax deduction. Moreover, the left-of-center New Democratic Party has also implemented a financial assistance program through which women and minority candidates are eligible for reimbursement of up to C\$500 for childcare expenses incurred while seeking a nomination; C\$500 for travel costs in geographically large ridings, or regions; and an additional C\$500 for costs incurred in seeking nomination in ridings where the NDP incumbent is retiring. The party also allows female and minority candidates three times as much as other candidates for expense funding through the party for the purpose of allowing donors to take advantage of the generous tax credit afforded to parties who run women and minorities (Young, 2005: 137).
- Women’s organizations in the U.S. have established political action committees (PACs) to directly finance women candidates. PACs, such as Emily’s List, are organizations that solicit contributions from individuals and redistribute funds to candidates. Many PACs are affiliated with businesses, unions or other organizations, but some—known as non-affiliated PACs—have been formed independent of another organization. One distinct subcategory of political action committees are women’s PACs, which contribute money only to female candidates. This method has become one of the most successful for providing women running as Democrats with early money, provided some specific conditions are met, including being pro-choice. (More detailed information about EMILY’s List experience can be found in Annex No. 2).

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<sup>12</sup> The electoral law from 1997 was modified through Ley 60/2002 , ordinal c numeral 4, art.169).



## 5. Recommendations<sup>13</sup>

### To political parties:

- A gender equity policy should be included in national parties' statutes, ensuring that women candidates can benefit from an equitable internal distribution of resources. Parties' resources would, therefore, more equally support the promotion of women running as party candidates, contribute towards women's nomination processes (during which women often require resources to establish a political reputation, both within and outside of their parties,) and contribute toward electoral processes.
- Parties committed to gender equality should a) ensure equal access to incoming resources for both women and men; b) designate a specific amount of resources for women candidates as an affirmative action; and c) incorporate gender equality criteria into parties' internal transparency and accountability mechanisms.
- The administration of money designated for a party's *elected* candidates should also adhere to gender equality criteria, ensuring that women continue to receive equal support once they assume office.

### To National Governments (Executive and Legislative bodies):

- National legislation on political campaign finance and parties' expenditure should coincide with international conventions and agreements that promote gender equity in political participation.
- As governments and parliaments are ultimately responsible for preventing all forms of gender discrimination, any policy or national plan formulation process concerning political participation should include a gender-sensitive finance component that secures the presence of, adequate training of, and monitoring of women candidates and decision-makers.
- Measures supporting women's effective election, such as legislation in favor of public funding, limits to contributions and expenditures in nomination/election campaigns, and quotas within parties or cabinets, should be included in Constitutional Reforms and secured at the Constitutional level.
- Wherever public funding of political parties is possible, including government subsidies, legislation should establish incentives to support women candidates. For example, the amount of funding or refunding of election campaign expenses should be linked to the percentage of women candidates put forward by each party and/or elected to Parliament. Furthermore, in countries where funding is provided to parliamentary political groups, an additional premium linked to the proportion of women elected should be offered (Pintat, 1998:6).
- As sanctioned in the Beijing Platform of Action, national governments should keep their commitment to women's political participation at a minimum percentage of 30% representation.

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<sup>13</sup> These recommendations were produced during the Women Candidates and Campaign Finance Experts Meeting in Trinidad-and-Tobago, Dec. 2-4, 2007.

**To public bodies that control electoral processes and monitor campaigns expenditures:**

- Realistic limits on and “control” of campaign funding and campaign time, both in the nomination and election periods, should be in place.
- Data should be gender disaggregated.
- There should be effective accountability and transparency mechanisms, and information and resources should be publicly available, including data on voting patterns which can be extremely useful to candidates.
- Limits should be placed on candidates’ expenditures, rather than parties’ expenditures.

**To women within parties:**

- Establishing an effective and functional women’s caucus would empower women candidates and help ensure equal access to the party’s resources, guaranteeing that financial management has a gender perspective.
- Strategizing with women from other parties would be beneficial to all women candidates and has proven to be an effective method for institutionalizing means for securing financial resources across parties.
- Partnering with women’s organizations can provide campaign finance training and help identify key financial issues that women face when running.
- Women within parties or elected parliamentarians who are generally not beholden to big business or unclean money should address the issue of campaign finance reforms. They can, for example, initiate public hearings on the topic and initiate a process of mobilizing public opinion in favor of reforms.
- Including supportive men from the party who agree to stand for gender equity can fortify the network of women working on campaign finance issues.

**To women candidates:**

- Establishing networks with women’s organizations can secure indirect resources: women’s organizations can offer effective trainings, advice on campaign finance strategies, and references to best practices and “lessons learned”.
- Establishing connections with constituencies should be a part of the mobilization of resources: rural and grassroots women have, in some contexts (i.e. in Nigeria,) been successful in providing campaign finance.

**To women’s organizations and networks:**

- Campaign finance should be incorporated into the gender equality agenda, bringing attention to the gender-specific needs and financial obstacles women candidates face in different geographical, cultural and political contexts. Campaign finance issues should also be included on the agendas of international forums, such as the United Nations’ Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), during which gender equity is a cross cutting issue.

- Documenting best practices and presenting women candidates with effective strategies for raising both direct and indirect resources, as well as effective ways to use those resources, should be a part of trainings.
- Demanding and monitoring parties' accountability mechanisms for campaign expenditure and internal budgets, especially when parties have established budget compromises with women, should be a priority. Developing score cards has been an effective tool, making visible gender differences and identifying politicians that represent gender equity interests.
- Impact evaluations of the content of and methodologies promoted during training workshops should be in place.
- Continuing to support elected women to make gender-informed decisions and advance gender campaign finance reform would supplement potential candidates' indirect and direct resources.
- Highlighting the economic value of unpaid work that women's organizations devote to women's political training and candidacies would contribute to the evidence that gender campaign finance reform is necessary.

**To academics and researchers:**

- Researching different electoral and financial systems, with particular attention on gender implications of campaign financing, would contribute to the growing body of analysis for campaign reform.
- More funding should be provided for research on gender equality and campaign finance.
- Research should be participatory and results-oriented, connected to real facts from women's experiences.

**To international donors/organizations:**

- Campaign finance should be considered when making recommendations to national governments about deepening democracy and promoting women's political participation processes.
- Designating a percentage of loans and/or international aid for women's empowerment would uphold international commitments to women's empowerment and increased political participation.
- Support for the creation of a well-funded women's entity at the U.N., which will ensure that international aid includes a broad range of gender equality issues.

**To financial/private sector:**

- Private financial institutions should establish a special line of credit for women candidates, offering them more access to funds and flexible repayment options.
- Transparency and accountability policies should be incorporated to facilitate democratic and clean financial processes during electoral periods.



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- Chief Bisi Ogunleye, COWAN, Nigeria
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- Olabisi Kuboni, Constitution Reform Forum, Trinidad
- Joan Yuille-Williams, People’s National Movement, Trinidad
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- Michelle McQueen, Ministry of Science and Agriculture/ Gordon’s Women’s Group, Trinidad
- Ingrid Jackson, National Democratic Congress, Grenada
- Linnette Vassell, Women’s Resource and Outreach Centre, Jamaica



## ANNEX Case Studies

### 1. Country Women Association of Nigeria (COWAN)<sup>14</sup>: Democracy and Governance (D&G) Program

#### **Rationale for COWAN's D&G Program:**

It is widely acknowledged that women comprise the majority of the world's oppressed, exploited and underprivileged. In Nigeria, for example, culture and tradition has forced women into a subordinate status, limiting their contribution to the socio-economic and political development of the nation and hindering their effective participation in the decision-making process which directly affects their well-being both within the household and in the public sphere.

In an effort to address the economic and social disadvantages that limit women's ability to make decisions related to their and their family's well-being, COWAN has worked to develop an integrated approach to women's empowerment. In 1997, COWAN became involved in mobilizing rural women's participation in the 1999 election in Nigeria. The Democracy and Governance (D&G) initiative was introduced into COWAN's Program, in partnership with CEDPA, to empower women politically, socially and economically.

#### **Phases I – IV of the D&G Program:**

Awareness-building activities among grassroots women were included in the first phase of COWAN's D&G program, reinforcing the need for women to be part of decision-making in their communities, local government areas (LGAs), states and nation as a whole, and they formed 100 Women Working Groups (WWGs) in their areas.

The strategies adopted by the 100 WWGs to achieve their set objectives included:

- Empowering poor women economically via the "Poorest of the Poor" (POP) program. POP was incorporated into COWAN's D&G program to serve as a link between economic and political empowerment, as a means for sustaining good governance and, most importantly, to create a grassroots constituency for aspiring women politicians, helping to overcome bribery during voting.
- Establishing a Parliamentary Forum for regular discussion/dialogue with political associations, national officials, and officials of LGAs and states to increase accountability.
- Advocating for women representation at the LGA level.
- Demanding transparency and accountability of elected officials on welfare programs.
- Mobilizing to demand for their rights.
- Encouraging young females to participate.

The Phase II activities further strengthened the 100 WWGs and increased the program to cover 74 LGAs. It also ensured the formation of Parliamentary Forum (PF) in Ondo and Ekiti States, which helped to increase women's political participation and involvement in the decision-making process in their communities. The Parliamentary Forum is a mechanism which brings together all the 100 WWGs' representatives. The forum uses local response to present solutions to issues affecting rural women. It enhances the capacity of the 100 WWGs to identify local political issues, deploy pressure groups around stakeholders (e.g. LGA Chairmen, opinion leaders and politicians in the State,) to seek redress on women's issues and ensure their active participation in the political process and development the community, state and the national levels.

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<sup>14</sup> This case is presented by Chief Bisi Ogunleye, COWAN's Director.

The Phase III D&G activities were targeted at enhancing the capacity of the 100 WWGs and PFs in the 4 States (Ondo, Ekiti, Ogun and Lagos) to network and advocate for effective participation of women in decision-making. It also ensured the formation of the Inter Parliamentary Forum (IPC) in the 4 States (Ondo, Ekiti, Ogun and Lagos) which discusses common problems, offers solutions to these problems, and develops appropriate information networks to ensure regular systematic information flow to members in their respective states. The objectives of the council include:

- To act as a watch-dog and ensure proper implementation of programs
- To access elected politicians for areas of priority needs
- To establish a fund
- To create constituency among the women
- To “Catch Them Young” (i.e. to develop a youth program)

Phase IV of the D&G program further strengthened all the mechanisms previously put in place. It further sponsored the drafting of bills on widows’ rights and poverty eradication to address the vast problem of widowhood. This was accomplished by the formation of lobby groups and Vanguard of Democracy (VOD). The lobby groups linked citizens to their respective legislators and elected officials in order to voice their needs, particularly with respect to widowhood and poverty eradication, to the government. To facilitate this, the Phase IV program activities ensured the formation of the lobby groups in COWAN’s D&G states and equipped them with training in lobbying, advocacy and networking skills. Under the program, the lobby groups were expected to present the bills drafted to the Speakers of the Houses of Assembly in their states.

#### **Success Stories of COWAN’s D&G Program:**

COWAN’s D&G program has enhanced the living standard of many people and succeeded in increasing their political knowledge and capacity. Notably, the D&G program recorded the following successes:

- Using the “ten trusting ten” strategy, a total of 9,554,600 100WWGs were mobilized from the household to state level
- 8,600 100WWGs were mobilized in 86 LGAs of Ondo, Ekiti, Ogun, Oyo, and Lagos States in southwest of Nigeria
- 86,000 100WWGs were mobilized in 86 LGA x 10 Villages x 100WWGs
- 860,000 100WWGs were mobilized in 86 LGA x 10 villages x 10 communities x 100WWGs
- 8,600,000 100WWGs were mobilized at households in 86 LGA x 10 villages x 10 communities x 10 households x 100WWGs
- 9,554,600 from all levels were mobilized altogether for two elections
- The mobilization of the grassroots women enhanced their capacity to participate actively in political programs and be involved in decision-making processes that affect their lives on a daily basis.
- The program enforced responsible behavior promoting the morals and values widely expected of women in the society. The lobby group was able to motivate the women to effectively lobby for their rights in their respective communities. It also helped the women to present issues relating to their well-being in a logical and reasonable way that ensured possible solution to the problems. It assisted the women to demonstrate interest and capability in political participation.
- It became a strong and formidable constituency for women politicians.

- It enabled women at all levels to know their rights and take appropriate action. This is confirmed by a bill on widowhood rights and poverty eradication prepared and presented to the State House of Assembly by the lobby group. The bill included, among other things, the need to rectify injustice pertaining to widowhood rights (e.g. customs that dehumanize widows, inadequate access to land, farm inputs and implements and the problem of poverty among women.)
- The formation of the Lobby group, Parliamentary Forum (PF), Implementation Programme Committee (IPC) and 100WGs in Ondo, Ekiti, Lagos and Ogun States enabled the women to come together to present a common front, also using group pressure and speaking with one voice, they were able to present their needs to the community, state and relevant authorities for prompt intervention. A sample of the success story recounted by one of the beneficiaries is captioned below.

**Tools:**

The following are the tools COWAN utilized in helping rural women in Nigeria effectively participate in politics:

A. Mobilization:

1. What is the meaning of Mobilization?

Mobilization is a way of getting people together for a common goal.

2. What do we mobilize?

We mobilize ideas

- (i) People
- (ii) Resources, money
- (iii) Support
- (iv) Time
- (v) Rural Women
- (vi) Less privileged people
- (vii) Needy

3. Who can mobilize?

A respected person a community who is approachable, humble, able to problem-solve and generous.

4. Why do we mobilize?

- (i) We mobilize for visibility and recognition
- (ii) To seek solutions to problems
- (iii) To bring an issue to sharp focus
- (iv) To gain support for an issue
- (v) To bring about change
- (vi) For women's greater voice, participation and performance in politics

5. Where do we mobilize?
  - (i) Market places
  - (ii) Bus stops
  - (iii) Village squares
  - (iv) Restaurants
  - (v) Taxis
  - (vi) Churches and Mosques
  - (vii) House to House
  - (viii) Meetings
  - (ix) Workshop/Seminars
  
6. How do we mobilize?
  - (i) Person to person sharing information
  - (ii) Radio/Television
  - (iii) Newspapers
  - (iv) Town crier, talks
  - (v) During meeting
  - (vi) Group of people
  - (vii) Churches/Mosques

**Campaign finance:**

Encouraging savings gradually became a central component to COWAN's development approach over the years and culminated in COWAN developing its own traditionally-based method called African Traditional Responsive Banking (ATRB). Traditional "ESUSU", "AJO" and "AARO" strategies have been common saving schemes in African societies, and across African communities, saving together to solve a common problem or achieve common goal is the norm.

COWAN's ATRB is very effective in helping poor women, who previously had no means to save, to generate regular savings and build working capital from their own income-generating activities. Several key features of the Daily Savings Program have helped poor rural women increase:

- Their economic self-sufficiency
- Their social purchasing power
- Their political voice and inclusion
- Their ability to save continuously in groups, contributing small amounts according to their income (One of COWAN's philosophies is that "rural women can save".)
- Their access to larger loans
- Their financial independence, both individually and for their families

During the 1999 election, 26 women were given financial support to stand for election. Sixteen won various positions. In 2003 election, 58 women out of those who participated in COWAN's D&G program also ran for political positions, and 46 were elected to positions such as Local Government Chairmanship, Councilors, seats in the State House of Assembly, and on the various Board and Parastatals in their states. Some of these women hold executive positions at various levels (wards, local government, states) for their political parties.

Strategies for Fundraising Include:

- a. 1999 Election - Voluntary savings by total numbers of women mobilized up to village level:  $86,000 \times N10 \text{ per month} \times 12 \text{ months} \times 3 \text{ years} = N30,960,000$ .

2003 Election - Voluntary savings by total numbers of women mobilized up to village level =  $120,000 \times N10 \times 12 \text{ months} \times 3 \text{ years} = N43,200,000$ .

(For the two elections, the women saved N74,160,000.)

- b. God Motherism, or calling on well-to-do Nigerian women for donation, which amounted to only N5,850,000.
- c. Promises of over N15,000 from the state governments which never came through.

Overall, and through two election cycles, COWAN was able to offer N73,300,000 in financial assistance. Eighty-four women political aspirants received assistance, and 62 won their elections. (Additionally, among other accomplishments, approximately N40,000,000 was given as POP loans to about 20,000 rural and urban women, at N3,000 each, and N5,000,000 was given as educational loans to 100 COWAN children in 12 states.)

This initiative of campaign financing was adopted by Nigerian women at the national level during the INEC, FMWA, UNIFEM Stakeholders' Conference on Women and the elections held in Abuja from December 5 – 7, 2006.

## **2. Early Money is Like Yeast ....Because it Makes the Dough Rise<sup>15</sup> - United States of America.**

Early Money is Like Yeast (EMILY's List) was founded in 1985 by Ellen Malcolm, an independently wealthy feminist, and a group of U.S. women who saw the clear need for a strategy to increase feminist women's participation in politics. At the time it was formed, women held only 5 percent of congressional seats and barely 15 percent of state legislative seats and statewide offices. As an initiative of feminist women supportive of the Democratic Party, this project sought to defend pro-choice politics in a political context within which the abortion issue had emerged as one of the most debated topics between conservative and progressive social sectors. This also explains the consequent and later emergence of two other PACs with decade apart, the WISH List<sup>16</sup> and the Susan B. Anthony List<sup>17</sup>, both also involved with the abortion issue. Having important antecedents in feminist groups that worked on recruitment, training and electing women from the early 1970s, PACs found a way to channel a significant proportion of the women's movement's energy, work and demands through partisan expression.<sup>18</sup>

Examining the powerful influence of male incumbency in elections, these women realized the urgent need of female candidates to have seed or early money to build a name, hire a proper team and acquire more resources for campaigning. Women understood that without early money it was difficult to demonstrate a woman's political potentiality and competence as a candidate. EMILY's List thus specialized in providing early money to competitive female candidates well in advance of the primary election, in order to strengthen their potential to raise more money. Rather than supporting with token contributions candidates who had little chance to win, this organization learned to select solid and politically viable candidates, assure them early money and help them to raise a continuous flow of contributions. Around 1994 they introduced other activities that enhance women's success, such as voter analysis; recruitment of candidates; voter contact; public opinion monitoring through surveys and focus groups; studies of the real probability each female candidate has to be elected at the local, federal and national level; training and voter mobilization campaigns.

By the early 1990s EMILY's List had become a point of reference for other PACs due to the fact that they had raised more than a million dollars to invest in successful campaigning. Since then they have continued to surpass all other PACs and have continued as well to receive more resources in every electoral cycle. 1992 was a particularly good electoral year for the PAC, with its benefits clearly demonstrated in election results. A record number of women were elected to Congress, state legislatures, and statewide office. For this reason it came to be known as "the year of the woman."

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<sup>15</sup> There is an extant bibliography that documents the history of EMILY's List, but the most comprehensive study in our judgment is "Women's PACs: Abortion and Elections," by Christine L. Day and Charles D. Hadley, published in 2005 in the Real Politics in America Series, New Jersey, Prentice Hall Ed. Most of the information here cited comes from this main source. A number of attempts to get firsthand information directly from EMILY's List were made; however it was not possible to get an audience with them to pursue interviews and research in their archives.

<sup>16</sup> WISH stands for Women in Senate and House. This PAC supports pro-choice Republican women candidates. It has provided resources to both candidates against Democratic opposition as well as against pro-life opposition within their own party.

<sup>17</sup> This PAC supports pro-life female candidates. It is named after a women's rights activist who was an outspoken critic of abortion.

<sup>18</sup> This point has been made by various authors, such as L. Witt, K. Paget, G. Matthews, J. Rozell, C. Day and C. Hadley, who have compared it to other countries and contexts where political parties have not served women's interests in an instance such like this one.

As noted, all candidates selected by EMILY's list must be running in the Democrat Party and must protect abortion rights. They also should be viable candidates, meaning they should have community service experience, local political expertise, some public recognition, and if possible a network of supporters and some campaign organization already started. Each candidate is scrutinized by staff members for review by group leaders. The final selection of candidates to be endorsed is taken by the board. Once the candidates are selected, holding them accountable with regard to the abortion rights issue is critical for this organization. In the event that they judge an elected candidate has voted against their political commitment, they withdraw their support.

EMILY's List provides financial support by bundling individual contributions to their endorsed candidates as well as by making direct contributions. Members write checks not to the PAC but rather to one of the candidates endorsed by the organization. The donation is mailed to EMILY's List, which "bundles" it together with other contributions and then passes it on to the candidate. The bundled contributions are legally reported to the Federal Election Commission (FEC) as individual contributions and not as PAC contributions. The FEC reports them publicly. Candidates know which organizations made contributions at the same time that they are benefited from this mechanism, since the PAC contributes more to a given candidate than the legal established limit. Donors are informed about candidates' profiles so they can decide which candidates to support and at the same time send a political message.

EMILY's List's main strategy is to target open seats or vulnerable incumbents who have not built sufficient support networks or do not have enough money. The number of incumbent women has grown at every level of government and in this case, this PAC also continues supporting them. They are increasingly focusing on state and local level races, which may be a long-term strategy to cultivate future national candidates. In 2002 the PAC turned its training and focus on state legislatures, contributing a total of \$9.7 million, with \$9.1 million going to 27 recommended congressional and gubernatorial candidates, and another half million dollars to 246 candidates at the state and national levels.

Emily's List has been replicated in Australia (1996) and the United Kingdom (1993).

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