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## **INTER PARES | Parliaments in Partnership** *EU Global Project to Strengthen the Capacity of Parliaments*

### **Workshop on Gender Strategies for Parliamentary Development Programmes**

*15 October 2019*

#### Concept Note

#### **1. Introduction**

INTER PARES | Parliaments in Partnership - *EU Global Project to strengthen the capacities of Parliaments* is a three-year programme (2019-2021) funded by the European Union and implemented by International IDEA. The programme targets parliaments' capacity to influence law-making in priority areas; their oversight capacity, in particular levelling the playing field for the opposition to be able to hold the executive accountable; their capacity to adopt the state budget and exercise oversight over its implementation; their representation of a wide array of groups from society, particularly women and youth, as well as members of marginalised and vulnerable groups and minorities, through their inclusion and continued engagement; and their administrative capacity to function effectively, transparently and accountably as public institutions.

INTER PARES focuses both on elected Members of Parliament (MPs), particularly in their capacity as members of parliamentary committees, and on the staff of parliaments' secretariats. It will produce three mutually reinforcing outputs. Firstly, the conduct of peer-to-peer, demand-driven parliamentary strengthening operations between selected parliaments from partner countries and parliaments from European Union Member States (EUMSPs). Secondly, the promotion of sustainable relationships and approaches to inter-parliamentary cooperation with a focus on priority thematic areas. And thirdly, the production of comparative knowledge, and of practical and innovative tools on parliamentary strengthening matters.

#### **A focus on Gender**

Even though over the last 30 years much progress has been made in terms of gender equality (more girls and women follow education, more women are active in politics, more women



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are active in the labour market), we are far from reaching gender equality in all aspects of society, including in governance. As extensive research shows, more women work in the informal sector without necessary social protection, the wage gap between women and men remains persistently high, and women are still underrepresented in national parliaments and ministerial cabinets. Gender inequalities in politics and political leadership correlate with broader gender inequalities in society and the economy. Therefore, enhancing women's representation and leadership in parliaments dovetails with supporting parliaments' role (through their legislative, oversight and representation functions) to make societies more inclusive and equal. INTER PARES thus puts the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment at the centre of its programme.

The project aims to contribute to SDG 5.5 "Ensuring women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life". The gender dimension of the project is also built on the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy (2015-2019)<sup>1</sup> and its objective 13 "promoting gender equality, empowerment and participation of women", and on the EU Gender Action Plan (GAP II), in particular with regard to its priority 3 "Strengthening Girls' and Women's Voice and Participation"<sup>2</sup>.

### **Purpose of the workshop**

In order to increase the potential impact of parliamentary development programmes (in particular peer-to-peer parliamentary strengthening operations) on gender equality and women's empowerment, the INTER PARES Project Team will convene a workshop to brainstorm with parliamentarians, parliamentary staff and development practitioners on how peer-to-peer exchange programmes are contributing effectively to gender equality. The discussions will inform the strategic priorities and actions of the INTER PARES project for the next three years and aims to inspire parliaments and parliamentary development practitioners to mainstream gender in peer-to-peer parliamentary strengthening operations beyond this programme.

### **Objective**

The overall objective of the workshop is to explore new initiatives and methods to increase the impact of parliamentary development programmes on gender equality and women's empowerment. The specific objectives of the workshop are to:

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/30003/web\\_en\\_actionplanhumanrights.pdf](https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/30003/web_en_actionplanhumanrights.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations 2016-2020, available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/staff-working-document-gender-2016-2020-20150922\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/staff-working-document-gender-2016-2020-20150922_en.pdf)



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- A. Reflect on challenges and opportunities for parliaments (MPs and staff) to strengthen women's leadership in Parliament.
- How do institutional structures and procedures empower or undermine the position of women in Parliament?
  - What are the challenges to strengthening women's leadership in parliament?
- B. Explore the various practices and tools used in parliament to enable parliaments to play a key role in promoting gender equality and achieving SDG5.
- What innovative methods to promote gender equality have parliaments encountered?
  - How are parliaments using ICTs to engage with citizens to promote gender equality?
- C. Identify key priorities and actions to include in peer-to-peer parliamentary strengthening.
- How to ensure partnership programmes are gender sensitive?
  - Which activities are ideally suited to promote gender equality through parliamentary partnership programmes?
- D. Reflect on evaluation frameworks to track the impact of peer-to-peer exchanges on gender equality.

## **Expected Outcomes**

1. To identify strategies and tools to develop the expertise of MPs and staff in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment through their legislative, oversight and representation mandated roles, through parliamentary partnership programmes.
2. To identify new themes and methods to promote gender equality through other parliamentary development activities (workshops, discussion forums, e-learning, the production of knowledge resources).
3. To identify different models for gender sensitive monitoring and evaluation for parliamentary development programmes.

## **2. Workshop organization and logistics**

The workshop will take place over the course of one day, on 15 October 2019 at Muntpunt, Munt 6 (Place de la Monnaie 6), 1000 Brussels. The workshop will bring together 20 to 25



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representatives from national parliaments and the European Parliament, the European Commission, International IDEA and expert organizations.

On 16-17 October, International IDEA is organizing the *Inter-Regional Roundtable on the Intersections of Gender and Political Finance*, and it is anticipated some participants will attend both events.

### 3. Draft Agenda

15 October 2019	
09:00 – 09:15	<b>Registration</b>
09:15 – 09:30	<p>Welcome and Introductory Remarks:</p> <p>Ruth Beeckmans, Senior Programme Officer, INTER PARES   Parliaments in Partnership, International IDEA</p> <p>Gonzalo JORRO MARTINEZ, Policy Officer – Democracy – Parliaments and Political Parties, European Commission, DEVCO</p>
09:30 – 10:45	<p><b>Session 1: Engaging parliamentarians and parliamentary staff in the promotion of gender equality.</b></p> <p>In this session we are looking at some of the challenges and opportunities that parliaments face in ensuring parliaments themselves, as well as societies in general become more inclusive and equal.</p> <p>Key questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What does a robust gender-sensitive policy analysis entail?</li> <li>• What are the main challenges to strengthening women’s representation and leadership in parliament?</li> <li>• How to effect change in institutional structures and cultural norms?</li> <li>• How to engage civil society and gender advocates with MPs and their staff?</li> </ul>



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	<p>PANEL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parliamentarians and parliamentary staff from various parliaments to share innovative strategies to help strengthen women’s leadership in parliament.</li> <li>Parliamentarians and parliamentary staff from various parliaments to share innovative strategies to mainstream gender in their legislative, oversight and representation functions.</li> </ul>
10:45 – 11:15	<b>Coffee Break</b>
11:15 – 13:00	<p><b>Session 2: Gender - responsive parliamentary partnership programmes</b></p> <p>Successful parliamentary development programmes, knowledge resources and tools are grounded in an in-depth analysis of the social, cultural, economic and political context in which the parliament is operating. As research shows, there is still high inequality in gender relations.</p> <p>During this session we will discuss practical methods and tools to better support MPs and staff in promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment through their legislative, oversight and representation roles.</p> <p>More specifically, we will focus on the challenges and opportunities for women’s empowerment and the promotion of gender equality through parliamentary partnership projects.</p> <p>Key questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are possible thematic issues on gender equality and empowerment and participation of women which could be integrated into peer-to-peer parliamentary strengthening operations?</li> <li>How to ensure gender balance in peer-to-peer exchanges among parliaments?</li> </ul> <p>PANEL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parliamentarians and parliamentary staff from various parliaments to share good practices on gender mainstreaming in peer-to-peer parliamentary strengthening operations.</li> </ul>



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13:00 – 14:00	<b>Lunch Break</b>
14:00 – 15:30	<p><b>Session 3: How to measure impact on gender equality within the framework of parliamentary partnership programmes?</b></p> <p>Gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation for parliamentary development programmes have proven challenging. Additional difficulties may arise in peer-to-peer parliamentary strengthening operations as national parliaments have ownership of the projects, but often lack the time and evaluation expertise to monitor results.</p> <p>This session will explore good practices for monitoring results with a gender lens in ways that are user-oriented and not overly technical.</p> <p>Key questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the main challenges for organizations and Parliaments engaged in peer-to-peer parliamentary strengthening operations to monitor and evaluate projects from a gender equality perspective?</li> <li>• What are the advantages of self-assessment toolkits to evaluate gender sensitivity of parliaments? How could evaluations better inform global parliamentary development programming and serve as a strong basis for peer-to-peer exchanges?</li> <li>• What are good practices and tools to produce relevant data on gender equality?</li> <li>• How to ensure ongoing evaluation (outcome mapping/harvesting) is gender-sensitive?</li> </ul> <p>PANEL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joakim Molander, International IDEA, on gender-sensitive outcome harvesting.</li> <li>• Parliamentary staff from various parliaments on challenges and good practices to track impact.</li> </ul>
15:30 – 16:00	<b>Coffee Break</b>
16:00 – 17:00	<b>Conclusions and way forward</b>