



GOPAC Women's Network

Description: This workshop will consider the introduction of a women's network of current and former parliamentarians and its potential roles. Participants will be invited to share empirical evidence from their own experiences regarding, but not limited to:

- women parliamentarian roles in different national political systems and governance structures¹;
- incentives and barriers for women parliamentarians in preventing corruption and dealing with specific issues²; and
- how to move from advocacy and lobbying to political results which requires political processes, engagement and coalitions.

The aim of the workshop is therefore to:

- test the proposal and get feedback from GOPAC members and potential partners;
- provide an initial list of issues for consideration and an early work plan; and
- adjust this document as needed on an ongoing basis.

This document has been prepared by GOPAC Secretariat in consultation with parliamentarians, UNDP and others although a more significant consultation will be required to identify partners and further engage GOPAC membership.

1. Objective of GOPAC Women's Network

Although there are many women parliamentarian networks³, there does not appear to be one global network focussed solely on the prevention of corruption through good governance and oversight.

The idea for this initiative came out of the GOPAC Global Task Force on the UNCAC (UN Convention Against Corruption) in Manila in October 2010. Parliamentarians discussed the fact that in Africa especially that the voice of women parliamentarians in some cases garnered greater political attention. There are also a number of related ideas, that corruption has a greater impact on women and children and also that the perspective of women parliamentarians could be an important addition on certain issues related to corruption.

¹ E.g. democracies vs. other models or hybrids, centralized vs. decentralized states including various resource allocation approaches, national leaderships styles – including liberal, autocratic.

² Examples of specific issues in terms of corruption could include: representation, and resources for education, healthcare.

³ A Google search on 'women parliamentary networks' produced 6.5 million links. The networks vary with many at the regional and national levels including national caucuses of women.



It is therefore proposed to create the GOPAC Women's Network (GWN) that will **bring together women parliamentarians and supporting partners including male parliamentarians, international agencies and representatives of civil society, media and academia** who have the common goal of furthering the integration of gender considerations in the prevention of corruption. The work of GWN will be aligned with the UN Convention Against Corruption or other conventions where appropriate.

2. Secretariat

Subject to funding availability, the Secretary for this network could be provided by the GOPAC Global Secretariat to build additional links to GOPAC programming.

3. Approach and Potential Impacts

The proposed approach includes multi-stakeholder regional workshops and training events with parliamentarians and others. The aim of these events would be to establish regional strategies that are linked to changes in specific countries by working with GOPAC chapters at both the regional and country level. It is therefore expected that a number of products will also be developed, e.g. handbooks and toolkits of various types at the global and regional levels to support parliamentarians in this effort.

The potential impacts or results of the network include but are not limited to the following:

- provide women with training and tools to raise corruption issues in Parliament;
- establish women's' caucuses on anti-corruption issues to support the implementation and review of the UNCAC where such an approach is feasible;
- create an additional voice to press for parliamentary committee hearings on corruption;
- increase the likelihood that women parliamentarians can use their knowledge and skills in national GOPAC chapters;
- increase the likelihood that state budgets reflect gender concerns; and
- increase female representation in Parliaments in selected countries.

4. Partnerships

Partnerships are seen as a key aspect of GWN at the global, regional and country level. The GOPAC Global Secretariat and individual GOPAC members could contact organizations on the international and national levels respectively such as UNDP, WBI, USAID, Westminster Foundation for Democracy, Hansard Society, TI, OECD and iKNOW politics to name just a few.

5. Strategy

- Develop or identify general products and tools that can serve as a starting point to regionalize or nationalize the ideas.
- Regionalize products and approaches through initial workshops and other events and build formal and informal networks in regions and countries with links to GOPAC chapters to support the implementation and review of UNCAC. Also one GOPAC objective is to ensure chapters have more women members.
- Monitor and evaluate and share lessons learned.



6. Projects

The GOPAC Women's Network, subject to interest and funding from partners, could undertake projects in the above strategic areas.

Products and Tools

- make linkages where appropriate to the UNDP-GOPAC Toolkit re gender based analysis and other aspects;
- identify useful tools from other organizations e.g. UNDP, WBI;
- develop a web site that among other things would capture what women parliamentarians have achieved and the lessons learned in preventing corruption and showing leadership and also work with partners, for example, there could be a dedicated section on iKNOW Politics (pending discussion); and
- build capacity for all GOPAC members in gender based analysis as part of the parliamentary oversight process, including tools and other guidance.

Regionalize

- hold multi-stakeholder events as stated under Approach above;
- advocate integration of women parliamentarians in corruption prevention initiatives and GOPAC chapters;
- identify and develop regional strategies and identify local partners; and
- identify lessons learned and build or strengthen capacity for women parliamentarians in countries where female representation is recognized as a need (e.g. Westminster Foundation for Democracy is working in Arab region in this regard – to be confirmed).

Monitor

- monitor developments and communicate information on parliamentary performance in this area; and
- adjust global and regional strategies as required.

Draft resolution for GOPAC Women's Network

GOPAC resolves to pursue the creation and funding of a GOPAC Women's Network of current and former women parliamentarians and supporting partners, including men parliamentarians, international agencies, representatives from civil society and others such as academia.