



HDP Global Women MP Exchange **Empowering, Enhancing, and Mainstreaming Women's Inclusion in** **Parliament**

February 12, 19, and 26, 2021

Featuring Members of Parliament from:
Armenia, Georgia, Kenya, Liberia, North Macedonia, The Gambia, Ukraine

The National Democratic Institute (NDI) is organizing a House Democracy Partnership (HDP) exchange with its partners in Armenia, Georgia, Kenya, Liberia, North Macedonia, The Gambia, and Ukraine to discuss the importance of gender equality in parliaments. This program will also provide an opportunity for members of parliament (MPs) to engage in dialogue on methods to enhance gender mainstreaming in their legislative business and policy making. The program will focus on strategies to increase women's political participation in parliament, and to integrate gender into a parliament's structure and internal working procedures. This event will also focus on best practices for mainstreaming gender in parliamentary debate, and committee and congressional budget processes. Additionally, delegates will discuss strategies to ensure political decision-making space for women when national crises occur, and on how to engage in partnerships with men to continue advancing gender equality and gender mainstreaming in legislatures.

Friday, February 12, 2021

8:30 AM -
9:00 AM EST

Participant Introductions with NDI

Participants will join NDI to introduce themselves and discuss their priorities for the exchange before the formal welcome session begins at 9:00 am.

Facilitator:

Frieda Arenos, Program Director, NDI

**9:00 AM -
9:30 AM EST**

Welcome Session

In this session, participants will be welcomed by Rep. David Price (D-NC) from the House Democracy Partnership and Kristen Sample from the National Democratic Institute, who will provide a brief overview of the themes for the program.

Hon. David Price, Chairman of HDP, U.S. Representative (D-NC)
Kristen Sample, Director of Democratic Governance, NDI

**9:30 AM -
10:30 AM EST**

Women's Role in Consensus Building and Cross-Party Cooperation

Seeking alliances across party lines is crucial to getting gender issues on the agenda and to reform unequal legislative structures or policies. In this session, delegates will discuss the ways in which women MPs can work across party lines to advance shared priorities and support policies that positively affect women and other marginalized communities. For example, women's caucuses and multiparty working groups are effective ways to identify solutions to problems related to gender and to mainstream gender in legislation. This session will offer an outline of these initiatives, including their establishment, agenda-setting, and advocacy strategies.

Speakers:

Hon. Robin Kelly (D-IL), U.S. Representative
Hon. Susan Brooks (R-IN), former U.S. Representative
Hon. Eglantina Gjermeni, Parliament of Albania

Moderator:

Sandra Pepera, Senior Associate and Director for Gender, Women, and Democracy Programs, NDI

**10:30 AM -
11:30 AM EST**

Integrating Gender into Parliament's Structures and Operations

Gender mainstreaming within and across legislative institutions is critical to ensuring parity and inclusion at all levels. For example, it is not enough that parliaments engage women's participation through quotas alone. This must

be paired with efforts to integrate gender-sensitive policies and practices at all levels of a parliament's infrastructure and day-to-day working procedures. This will help ensure that long-standing inequities are not institutionally perpetuated and that transformative change is achieved. This session will present strategies to create more gender-sensitive parliaments, including incentivizing women's leadership in Parliament, creating infrastructure such as gender-focused committees and caucuses, establishing gender-related provisions in codes of conduct, and developing policies and procedures that improve gender equity and internal gender audits, and prevent discrimination and harassment.

Speakers:

Congresswoman Dina Titus (D-NV)

Kareen Jabre, Director of Programs, Inter-Parliamentary Union

Moderator:

Sandra Pepera, Senior Associate and Director for Gender, Women, and Democracy Programs, NDI

Friday, February 19, 2021

**8:45 AM -
9:00 AM EST**

Discussion of Previous Sessions and Upcoming Priorities

This time will be reserved for delegates to share any points that were especially impactful from the previous week's discussions, as well as identify priorities for discussion in the upcoming day's session.

Frieda Arenos, Program Director, NDI

**9:00 AM -
10:00 AM EST**

Gender-Responsive Budgeting: Strategies and Best Practices

Gender-responsive budgeting is an important tool that incorporates gender analysis into the formulation and implementation of government budgets. Budgets that incorporate a gender lens ensure a more efficient and equitable use of national resources and address long standing inequalities. In this session, participants will discuss how to ensure spending is sufficient to meet the needs of all citizens, including women, to promote equal access to resources and services. This session will also analyze how budgets can

decrease the gender inequality gap by incorporating gender-specific expenditures that target women and girls and promote equal opportunities in the public sector. Finally, the session will provide strategies to ensure that budget formulation and implementation is informed by reliable, gender-disaggregated information.

Speakers:

Dr. Angela O'Hagan, *Parliamentary Budgeting Expert for the Scottish Parliament*
Hon. Birgitta Ohlsson, *former Member of the Parliament of Sweden*

Co-presentation by:

Ann Futrell, *Budget Analysis Division, CBO*

Julie Topoleski, *Labor, Income Security, and Long-Term Analysis Division, CBO*

Moderator:

Sandra Pepera, *Senior Associate and Director for Gender, Women, and Democracy Programs, NDI*

10:00 AM -
11:00 AM EST

Breakout Rooms: Exchanging Experiences on Mainstreaming Gender in Parliaments

Delegates will be broken up into two smaller groups to discuss their experiences implementing gender-responsive policies within their own parliaments. Each break out room will engage in facilitated discussions by gender experts to provide a more in-depth review of the topics engaged over the course of the program. Some of the topics that will be discussed, are:

- What are some gender-sensitive policies that have been adopted in your parliament to ensure that congressional infrastructure and rules are inclusive and do not discriminate nor exclude based on gender?
- What positive experiences can you highlight regarding the role of women MPs in promoting cross-party cooperation and conflict resolution regarding contentious topics in parliament?
- What strategies, best practices or recommendations can you share regarding gender-responsive budgeting in your country and/or parliament?
- What are the challenges you face in implementing gender sensitive practices in your parliament?
- What would it take for you to implement these practices in your own country? Are these topics already in your parliament's agenda?

Facilitators:

Caroline Hubbard, *Senior Gender Advisor, NDI (Breakout room #1)*

Pari Farmani, Senior Program Officer, NDI (Breakout room #2)

**11:00 AM -
11:30 AM EST**

Breakout Room read-out and session close

Participants will share the collective findings from their breakout room discussions. The session's facilitators will then provide an overview of key takeaways from the day, and close out the session.

Facilitators:

Frieda Arenos, Program Director, NDI

Friday, February 26, 2021

**8:45 AM -
9:00 AM EST**

Discussion of Previous Sessions and Upcoming Priorities

This time will be reserved for delegates to share any points that were especially impactful from the previous week's discussions, as well as identify priorities for discussion in the upcoming day's session.

Facilitator:

Frieda Arenos, Program Director, NDI

**9:00 AM -
10:00 AM EST**

Ensuring Space for Womens' Participation in Crisis Management

During times of crisis, recent events have proven that political systems risk moving from good practices in democratic governance to executive "command and control." In many countries, this shift can result in political decisions being made overwhelmingly by men. During the COVID-19 crisis in particular, women have faced additional challenges, including heightened economic vulnerabilities, augmented caregiving responsibilities, and increased gender-based violence. Given this context, this discussion will focus on the ways in which women MPs can continue to ensure political decision-making space for women in this and future crises.

Speakers:

Stephenie Foster, Partner, Smash Strategies

Prof. Sarah Childs, former Special Advisor to the UK parliament

Moderator:

Susan Markham, Partner, Smash Strategies

**10:00 AM -
11:00 AM EST**

Breakout Rooms: Engaging Men to Advance Gender Equality in Parliaments

In order to fully achieve transformative change and achieve gender equality, men's attitudes towards gender must shift. For gender mainstreaming efforts in legislatures to be effective and long-lasting, men in parliaments -- MPs and institutional staff, security, and others -- must develop gender awareness and sensitivity and be equally committed to achieving gender equality. During this breakout session, participants will be split among two smaller groups to analyze and discuss, among others:

- How would you describe the level of commitment that your male counterparts in your parliament have regarding gender equality?
- Can you share some experiences regarding bringing men to the discussion of empowering women and addressing long-standing inequalities, both inside and outside parliament? Have they been relevant successful experiences or challenges you would like to share?
- In your opinion, what would be some successful strategies for engaging men in gender-related discussions and allowing them to become champions of gender equality?

Facilitators:

Caroline Hubbard, Senior Gender Advisor, NDI (Breakout #1)

Molly Middlehurst, Senior Program Officer, GWD, NDI (Breakout #2)

**11:00 AM EST -
11:30 AM EST**

Closing Session and Next Steps

During this final plenary discussion, participants will return to the main room to share their takeaways from the program and discuss next steps for mainstreaming gender women's inclusion in parliament.

Moderator:

Frieda Arenos, Program Director, NDI