

## Women MPs of the world conference: strengthening visibility, driving change

Thursday 8 November 2018, House of Commons, Westminster

**Working groups A and C: Empowering women leaders:** how can women MPs be as effective and powerful as possible in their parliaments? How to represent their constituents most effectively? How to balance being an MP with personal responsibilities and family?

**Committee Rooms 14 and 10**

**This session will explore how women MPs can maximise their influence and impact in parliament.**

### Objectives

- Identify strategies, techniques and ways of working that help maximise the influence and impact of women members of parliament
- Explore practices and systems that help women MPs deal effectively with the competing demands for their time and attention

### Key questions for discussion

- What are some of the key determinants of status and power in parliaments? What are the barriers to women MPs in accessing or being active in these?
- What can women MPs do to change exclusive or toxic power dynamics, rather than reinforce them?
- What strategies are most effective when trying to advance a legislative, policy or political agenda?
- What practices, systems or structures work best to maximise the voices and influence of women in parliaments?
- How can women MPs represent their constituents most effectively?
- What change is needed for MPs to be able to balance the demands of political life with the needs of family and other personal responsibilities?

**Please bring examples from your country, highlighting the successes as well as the learning that can be shared.**

Globally, women's share of parliamentary membership has more than doubled since the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995. More women than ever are currently involved in politics at every level, from organising local action to running for national or federal office.

Greater physical presence in the halls of parliament, however, has not always translated into equal amounts of influence, authority and access to key decision-making roles. More women are in elected office now, but in many societies they are still not in power.

Parliaments can be challenging or even hostile work environments for women. Additionally, managing the excessive demands of parliamentary work with family or personal commitments, or with unpaid workloads and care responsibilities outside of parliament, can make political life onerous at times.

Recognising these challenges, as well as the measurable gains to societies when women are fully included in political decision-making, this session seeks to explore how women MPs can be as effective and influential as possible in their parliaments, both to support their own success and to ensure their societies benefit from what they bring to political life.

### Additional reading

National Democratic Institute, [WHY Women in Politics](#)  
Women Leaders Global Forum, [The Female Political Career](#)  
Inter-Parliamentary Union, [Women in Parliament: 20 Years in Review](#)  
iKNOW Politics, [Parliaments and Representatives](#)