Women MPs of the World: Strengthening visibility, driving change

Report from the historic House of Commons summit, 8 November 2018
Women MPs of the World

Voices for Change

NEVER bash anyone!!

We are the Energy!
I want to be a politician

Inspire others

Look after your constituency

Empowering Women Leaders

Get the Structures in place...

Get men on board, we need her!

Help people with their ordinary lives
Solid on the ground

...so when elections come, you are ready

Vote

Incentives for Parties

Get more women into Parliament

“Incentives for Parties

Include women

We must support women as leaders & decision makers in public life, business and as female entrepreneurs”

Get more women into Parliament

Get more women into Parliament

Cultural Change

“it is not enough to have women in Parliament... but to work together to face and overcome the challenges and barriers that we face together”

Graphic recordings by Julia Hayes and Juli Dosad
Report
Women MPs of the world: strengthening visibility, driving change

House of Commons, 8 November 2018
“A parliament where women are a rare sight is a parliament working with one hand tied behind its back; a more representative parliament leads to better decision making, better politics and ultimately better government.”

Theresa May, Prime Minister, United Kingdom
Women in parliament are leaders and pioneers. They are blazing new trails in politics and governance and pushing legislative bodies to more effectively represent citizens and respond to their needs. But as yet, they are not on equal terms, operating in a minority in legislatures which are male-dominated. As relatively new arrivals at their male colleagues.

Women MPs agreed that the central reason to have more women in politics is not for its own sake, but because it improves the political life of a society, giving elected bodies more credibility, ensuring that decision-makers have a stronger understanding of the people they represent, and delivering better policy, legislation and services to citizens.

The conversations flowed between the common problems facing women in most societies and the specific challenges that women in politics encounter. Suggested solutions were accordingly a mixture of targeted interventions to support politically-active women, as well as efforts requiring a more substantive sea change in societal attitudes towards women and girls.

MPs recognised that bringing more women into politics will not happen on its own, but that this must be part of a concerted effort to shift attitudes on women’s role in society. Addressing this includes bringing more women into leadership positions across business and civil society as well as in politics and public life.

Women MPs also addressed the specific demands of being a woman in parliament, and agreed that changes to working practices in parliamentary bodies are necessary to ensure that women MPs have equal opportunities to perform their duties as legislators and leaders, and that they are able to work in professional environments free from harassment, discrimination and undue hostility. Reforms in how parliaments operate lead not just to better working conditions for MPs, but also to a better quality of government for citizens.

MPs expressed concern about harassment and abuse that are particularly directed towards politically-active women, but also recognised these are part of a culture of violence and abuse against women in general and must be tackled in this context. Women MPs across countries and continents were united by a common struggle to end violence against women and girls and renewed a call for societal change driven by a combination of awareness raising, education and judicial protection.

Education for girls was seen to be a crucial equaliser and driver for more equitable, healthy and safer societies, as well as giving women and girls the conviction and aspiration to offer leadership that can make a real difference in their communities. Whilst women MPs approached the issue of family planning from a variety of different standpoints, MPs felt that it was a crucial and under-discussed issue, which has enormous impact not only for women and families, but entire communities and economies, and it should be prioritised by governments accordingly.

It was clear from the discussions that there is no silver bullet or single answer to improve the representation and impact of women MPs, but that a number of linked interventions are needed both at a variety of levels, from parliament, to political parties, right down to businesses, schools and civil society.

There was a recurrent theme of the additional responsibility that women MPs feel they have, not only to work for their constituents and their countries, but also to champion the voices of women and girls and to act as role models for them. Women MPs are proud of being ‘firsts’ in their field, but they are not proud of being alone.

This report offers an account of the discussions and dialogue that took place among MPs at the conference, both in plenary and in working groups. The event was designed to support an honest and textured exploration of challenging topics, rather than to build a singular policy platform, and the inputs that form this report come from a variety of recordings and sources. The perspective and voice used throughout this document shift to accommodate different points of view and forms of discussion and reflect the dynamic nature of the event itself.
Getting more women elected: a democratic imperative

The latest data from the Inter-Parliamentary Union indicates that women make up 24% of representatives globally in elected bodies. Whilst women are elected at levels well below their population numbers, representation is increasing and, globally, there are now more politically active women than ever, although progress is uneven across different countries, regions and local contexts.

The 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was a significant turning point in the debate about women’s representation, with a focus on “discriminatory attitudes and practices” and “unequal power relations”. This shifted the focus towards the institutional and cultural mechanisms that exclude women and away from a focus on the responsibility of individual women. One of the first steps to women exercising political leadership is getting elected.

Political parties have an important role to play by strengthening women’s roles in internal decision-making, supporting networking and political skills development for women members, and actively recruiting women as candidates and positioning them in winnable seats. Likewise, civil society organisations and the women’s movement are effective advocates in pressing for change and supporting women to consider political roles and develop strategic political skills.

"Unless women and girls thrive, our nations won’t. Peace, prosperity and security depend upon our task. And we should depend on each other.”
Rt Hon Penny Mordaunt, Minister for Women and Equalities and Secretary of State for International Development

“Our country’s first gender-balanced Cabinet in 2015 changed the conversation, and the quality of our legislation is better for it.”
Bardish Chagger, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Canada
1. Women MPs agreed that pushing for greater numbers of women in parliament was not an optional extra, but a democratic imperative critical to ensure that legislatures properly represent the people within their societies.

2. Strengthening the role of women in parliament not only makes politics more representative, but also improves the quality of government that citizens experience by increasing trust and credibility in political systems and ensuring that issues concerning women and girls, who make up the majority of the population in most countries, are not neglected, misunderstood or poorly accommodated in government services.

3. MPs felt that aiming for 30% minimum of women in parliament was not enough, and that the aim should be for parity.

4. When working towards equality, it is important to consider all levels of government decision-making – not just parliament or the national legislature.

5. There are significant financial barriers to women’s political leadership. At a broad social level, women are frequently among the poorest members of society. In the political arena, the costs of politics can be prohibitive for women, particularly in systems where large sums are needed to secure selection as a candidate or where voters expect material resources in return for their support. When financial sponsorship is offered to women candidates, it usually comes at the price of dependence.

6. A top-down approach that focuses only on getting women elected to national parliaments is not sufficient. Political parties must engage in deliberative efforts to increase the pool of women candidates from the grassroots by reaching out to women in civil society or who are active at the local level, but also by recruiting women as party members and supporting them as party leaders.

"I ask you to have pride in being the first in your communities, but never to have pride in being the only one."
Tabata Claudia Amaral de Pontes, Deputy, Federal Congress, Brazil

"Only we can empower ourselves. We have been electing these men for so long, and they have failed us. Only we understand our power, and only we can empower ourselves."
Ya Kumba Jaiteh, Member, National Assembly, Gambia
9. The internal culture and practices inside a political party have a profound impact on the advancement of women. Common barriers include personality-based parties that revolve around their leader to the exclusion of other members or internal democratic processes; the absence of any meaningful policy or strategy for recruiting and advancing women as candidates and leaders; and, the use of women as place-holders to get through quota requirements and then removing them from their seats after the election.

10. Political party dynamics can also result in competition among women inside a parliament, e.g., for committee or other leadership positions, which reduces the overall representation and collective impact of women.

7. A number of women MPs described the importance of candidate colleges for women in their countries. While there are cross-party or non-partisan models, the party-specific initiatives were deemed to be more successful and more effective as they allowed potential candidates to have more strategic conversations about how to win elections, and also forced the parties to themselves to consciously invest in women as candidates.

8. Women MPs felt that development of more structured leadership programmes for girls, which parliament could lead, are needed.

11. More formalised structures are required to advocate for, support and network among women within political parties. These should go beyond ‘women’s wings’ to create effective advocacy organisations that can take the lead on policy issues and set the terms of the public debate on important societal decisions.

12. Women MPs should explore and make full use of the strengths of cross-party women’s caucuses and networks, drawing lessons from those that already exist and are having an impact. The Irish Women’s Parliamentary Caucus was offered as an example.

13. Women MPs also raised the critical importance of fighting for the inclusion of women who face additional obstacles and discrimination towards their political activism, including women who are disabled, those living with HIV/AIDS, transgender women, those from rural areas or who have had less access to education, as well as those from ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities.

14. Women MPs advised that collective efforts to advance legislative protections for women’s political participation should continue, particularly in situations where political will for greater equality is unlikely to emerge organically or without the requirements of legislation. Several MPs suggested that women’s right to equal political participation should be embedded in a state’s constitution, but that activists should also plan to pursue secondary legislation so that these rights can be enforced in practice.

"I never travel with a male colleague- because I will be mistaken for his secretary".

Woman MP
15. Legislated quotas have been successful in increasing the number of women in elected office, but they have a downside as well. Quotas and reserved seats often come with a stigma, so that women who enter office through these mechanisms may be treated differently by other parliamentarians—including those from their own parties—or may not be taken seriously as legislators or as candidates. They are also used as an excuse by parties not to field women in competitive seats. This can make it more difficult for women to get re-elected because they have weaker links to a geographic constituency or to a specific set of voters.

16. There are other means beyond quotas that political parties can elect to use to ensure greater gender parity among their elected candidates. Having these conversations and making these choices are an important part of parties growing as political organisations.

17. A range of long-standing practices within legislatures present obstacles to combining the responsibilities of parliamentarians and families. Such practices include the length and unpredictability of parliamentary sessions, the failure to match recess dates with school holidays, the lack of provision for maternity leave or on-site care facilities, and the tendency to use informal social forums that exclude women as de facto platforms for decision-making and networking. Some of these barriers can affect all parliamentarians regardless of gender but in reality the impact is most often greatest on women.

18. Many women begin their parliamentary careers with little or no support from colleagues, having had limited opportunities to develop the range of skills needed to succeed as a parliamentarian. Mentorship, when offered, often comes at the price of dependence.

19. Parliamentarians suggested that every women MP should commit to mentoring another woman in order to build a culture of support and growth amongst women MPs.

20. The discrimination women already face can be further increased by other factors, such as coming from a minority ethnic background, having a disability or being HIV/AIDS positive. An emerging stigma is one towards women who have been elected to parliament through quotas or reserved seats. This can be used to discriminate against them in parliamentary proceedings. Women MPs should challenge discrimination wherever it occurs, even where it does not directly affect them.

“Women parliamentarians need to work closely, not just with each other, but with members of civil society groups on the issues that affect women.”

Catherine Martin, Chair of Ireland’s Women’s Parliamentary Caucus, Teachta Dála, Ireland
21. Women MPs should not be afraid to lobby for better child care provision inside parliament and while undertaking parliamentary duties externally, and more family-friendly working practices including shared parental leave.

22. MPs should build alliances with civil society and women’s rights organisation that can support the work of women MPs and help engage the media on the challenges that women MPs with caring responsibilities face.

23. Empowerment or equality units within government, which have the capacity and responsibility to collect and interpret data, can provide valuable research and information for lawmakers seeking to make a difference in the quality of legislation and policy meant to address societal inequalities, including gendered inequalities. Being able to measure a problem or an issue is an important first step in being able to create change.

24. Data from equality or similar research departments can both clarify the realities of a situation and compel action. The work of these units can also offer important information to political actors who may not fully understand the impact of inequalities on the health of a society.

25. MPs should also lobby for flexible working arrangements including making greater use of technology to work or vote remotely where needed.

26. Women MPs should challenge the separation between ‘men’s’ and ‘women’s’ issues wherever possible- Women MPs should speak out about finance, defence or foreign policy, and encourage their male colleagues to discuss childcare provisions and women’s healthcare.

27. Women MPs should always engage with the media, calling out sexist practices, trying to avoid getting offended and setting the record straight.

28. A disciplined approach to managing the workload is key, as women MPs are always under more scrutiny than their male colleagues.

29. Don’t discount men as potential allies, or equally assume that other women will be automatic supporters. Some women can also be reluctant to press for change and some men just need to be asked.

30. Bring men to the table to discuss gender equality and societal inequalities, and how these affect them. MPs suggested using ‘barbershop’ meetings or other formats that mimic environments where men naturally communicate with one another.

“Our country’s first gender-balanced Cabinet in 2015 changed the conversation, and the quality of our legislation is better for it.”

Bardish Chagger, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Canada
Tips for politically-active women, from women MPs

- Don’t expect this to be easy. In fact, plan for life in politics to be challenging. No matter how difficult it is, know that it is worth it.

- Realise that, because you’re a woman, you will be held to higher standards and your mistakes will get more attention. Put systems in place to anticipate this and deal with it when it happens.

- From the outset of your political career, identify how and where you can ‘prove’ yourself and increase your profile.

- Be unafraid. Build the personal support you need to make this easier.

- Use your position to amplify the work and achievements of other women.

- Support a culture in which women can be themselves. Be honest about the struggles you have faced along the way – personal stories can be powerful.

- It is very important to have a geographic base of support and serve it well. Good constituent services and constituent relations are vital for women. You can also use these services to help empower women at a local level.

- Take a lead on changing what qualifies as political debate. There is a lot that can be done here:
  - explore ways to shift mentalities so that women are not always being asked about their children and the effects of their political activism on their children
  - personally commit to no ‘bashing’ or name calling
  - stick to the issues
  - make the environment more interesting for women as voters and candidates by highlighting issues that concern them most

- Get involved in transitioning gender norms, especially for men, making the argument that redefining masculinity benefits men as well as women.

- There are gains to international partners supporting women’s caucuses, particularly when they offer guidance on specific approaches such as gender budgeting, but these efforts must equip women representatives to use these practices themselves.

“...We are the voice of the voiceless. We are challenging the prejudices that prevent women, as well as people with disabilities, people who live with HIV and LGBTI people, from having equal rights.”

Tamara Adrian, Member, National Assembly, Venezuela
Women MPs of the World

"Women MPs face discrimination and harassment, even when they become Prime Ministers."
Nafisa Shah, Member, National Assembly, Pakistan

Countering backlash

Whilst the increasing numbers of women who are elected to public office is a cause for celebration, these women often endure increasing levels of violence, harassment and abuse, much of it specifically designed to undermine and threaten women MPs because of their gender.

Many of the parliamentarians at the event had experienced this personally. A recent Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) study indicated that 81.8% of women parliamentarians surveyed had experienced some form of psychological violence from members of the public and fellow parliamentarians. Verbal abuse and harassment now also take place in online spaces, often anonymously, which are harder to regulate. Harassment and abuse undermine democratic cultures, threaten freedom of expression, and may deter women from entering politics. The cost for many women is simply too high.
36. Women from ethnic minorities experience more attacks. MPs and their allies need to recognise this and step up their advocacy accordingly. Women working across party lines to address violence against women in politics and during elections appears to have yielded more results in raising awareness than single-party efforts.

37. Abuse against women MPs can often be written off, with women simply regarded as weak and not ‘tough enough’ to deal with it. However, if groups of women MPs from various parties work collectively to tell the media the realities of what they face, there is more likely to be recognition that this is a real phenomenon.

38. Social media is significantly used to target women and anonymity is a real problem. Twitter and Facebook are not doing their part to protect women.

39. Legislation could be one way to address violence targeting politically-active women, including sexual and sexualised violence and online abuse and harassment, but there must be reliable mechanisms for reporting and action taken.

40. Some women MPs suggested that there be a global call to action for social media companies to play a better role in taking action to deal with abuse and harassment. Women at the conference, led by UK MP Vicky Ford, put together an open letter to social media companies to compel them to take deliberate and meaningful action on the issue of online violence against women.

41. Another suggestion was that the UN could engage in this, and that in order to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 5 there should be a push for an internationally agreed code for reporting instances of abuse and harassment in each parliament.

“We Afghans cannot even think about equal rights; we just think about security, and our young generation that are being killed, day by day and every day.”
Elay Ershad Member of Parliament, Lower House, Afghanistan
Ending violence against women and girls

One in three women worldwide will experience violence in their lifetime - be it intimate partner violence, sexual violence, female genital mutilation; child, early and forced marriage; or one of many other forms of violence. This makes violence against women and girls one of the most systemic and widespread human rights violations of our time.

It affects women and girls everywhere. And the costs are far reaching: it limits the potential of individuals, families, communities and economies. Girls and women who experience violence are less likely to complete their education, 1.5 times more likely to acquire HIV, and are at increased risk of maternal mortality. For children exposed to violence, the long-term health and social impacts are similar to those of child abuse and neglect. For economies, the costs are estimated at between 1.2% and 3.7% of GDP.

“Men, listen to us carefully: we are not going to accept any more violence in our lives.”

Marisa Glave, Congresswoman, Peru
42. Violence against women and girls (VAWG) is a human rights issue but framing it as such sometimes fails to generate the political will to tackle it. Women MPs should not be afraid to frame the issue in terms that will resonate effectively— for example by highlighting the cost to communities, the economy, or society as a whole.

43. There is a need to ensure that there are adequate support services for women and children who are experiencing domestic abuse or violence. One example put forward from Bangladesh was of a ‘One Stop Crisis Centre’ to provide a range of services and holistic treatment to survivors and offers a joined-up response.

44. Sexual harassment on public transport is extremely prevalent. Addressing this is linked to challenging more subtle forms of harassment that can create a culture where violence against women and girls is accepted as normal. Suggestions to create change in these areas including ensuring that harassment is legally defined as a crime, and supporting harassment mapping efforts to measure the problem and mobilise action.

45. Political leaders must build greater understanding and awareness that economic downturns often result in an uptick in domestic violence and plan accordingly so that mitigation plans are in place and resources are available to prevent this.

46. Germany was discussed as a case study on how risk assessment and mitigation can be used to address VAWG. In parts of Germany, domestic violence is the biggest risk to women’s lives. A high-risk management policy is implemented to prevent VAWG when violent partners are identified. Critically, the policies implemented mean that it is men who are told to leave, not women, preventing women from becoming even more vulnerable by leaving a violent relationship.

47. Child marriage is a problem in many countries and there must be stringent laws to prevent this. In Trinidad and Tobago, opposition to implementing a law against it was effectively dealt with by organising sessions with just male MPs to create understanding of the impact of child marriage and support for the bill.

“The sisterhood of women tends to rise when it is under assault, and in the face of hostile challenges the women’s movement can only become stronger.”
Senator Risa Hontiveros, Chair of the Committee on Women, Children, Family Relations and Gender Equality, Philippines

“There is no way to ignore the fact that there is a backlash. When human rights and democracy are deteriorating in any country, women are the first to feel it.”
Aida Tauma Sliman, Member of Parliament, Head of the Knesset Committee on the Status of Women and Gender Equality, Israel
Family planning

Voluntary family planning is transformational: it helps empower women to shape their own lives, make families healthier, and can help lift entire countries out of poverty. Collectively, huge progress has been made since the London Summit on Family Planning with nearly 39 million more women using modern contraception in 2017 than in 2012, in 69 focus countries. However, there are still 214 million women across all developing countries who want to delay or prevent pregnancy, but who aren’t, for a range of reasons, using modern methods of contraception.

This session examined how progress can be made towards SDG target 5.6, universal access to reproductive rights and health, and how governments can be held to account for commitments they have made to family planning, including those made at the 2017 Family Planning Summit in London.

“Family planning does not have to be a contradiction to family values; it is the opposite. Family planning gives us the best opportunity to care for ourselves and our families.”

Heidi Nordby Lunde, Member of Parliament, Norway
48. Women representatives need to create spaces to discuss voluntary family planning (VFP) issues and build coalitions to take them forward. Women’s caucuses are important fora for women representatives to share their thoughts and experiences and can also be vehicles for action. Caucuses enable women politicians to work beyond party lines, though this is not always easy.

49. VFP issues are oftentimes deprioritised and fall down the policy and legislative agenda. There is a need to find ways to keep them on the government’s radar and defend these issues as priorities for action.

50. VFP issues may need to be reprofiled in order to garner support from male counterparts and others who may be disinterested in or reluctant to engage on VFP, perhaps because they see such issues as the purview of women politicians. One way to do this is to set VFP issues in context and articulate benefits in broader terms, such as for communities or the economy.

51. Using innovative approaches to oversight, such as legislative or budget scrutiny and evaluation through a gender lens, can help identify the impacts of certain policies (e.g. education) on VFP and strengthen policy and legal frameworks.

52. Even when commitments on VFP are made, it is important to track the implementation of these and scrutinise the quality and impact of the steps that are being taken through policy and budget evaluation. Be inclusive and consult regularly.

53. More progress is made in this area when political leaders dedicate time to consult on and discuss VFP issues at different levels and across stakeholder groups. This can include party caucuses and grassroots organisations in constituencies.
Women’s economic empowerment

Women’s economic empowerment means women having: (i) the ability to succeed and advance economically; and, (ii) the power to make and act on economic and related decisions. If girls and women were operating at their full potential and playing an identical role in labour markets to men’s, then an estimated $28 trillion could be added to global GDP by 2025. However, all women are facing structural inequalities around their labour market participation at every stage of their lives. The global gender pay gap could take over 200 years to close. Women bear disproportionate responsibility for unpaid care work, are much more likely to work part-time and in lower-paid sectors.

Supporting women and girls to be economically empowered is fundamental to gender equality, poverty reduction, and inclusive economic growth. There is no silver bullet - girls and women face multiple barriers to contributing equally to the economy and achieving their potential. We have come some way but structural inequalities persist.

“...women actually do visible jobs and invisible jobs. The invisible jobs are everything that we do in our homes, with our children, with our mothers, with our daughters and with our neighbours and things like that.”

Ms Lana Prlić, Member, Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina
“If what we do does not help the poorest women and does not improve and increase the life chances of poor women who perhaps do not have some of our advantages, then what we do does not necessarily have value.”

Diane Abbott, Member of Parliament, United Kingdom
Girls’ education

Globally, 130.9 million girls remain out of school. Even those who are in school often are not mastering basic literacy and numeracy skills by the end of primary and do not progress on to secondary school. Globally, 387 million children (56%) are not on track to learn to read by the end of primary school. The most marginalised girls face many barriers, exacerbating learning inequalities:

- Poverty and geography matter. Fewer than 1 in 20 poor, rural girls in Sub-Saharan Africa are on track to complete secondary school.
- School-related gender-based violence, affecting 246 million girls and boys every year, remains a significant problem in most countries.
- Girls with disabilities face double discrimination. Whilst the overall literacy rate for persons with disabilities is 3%, it is just 1% for women and girls.
- Conflict makes it even tougher for girls at the time they most need support. Girls are 2.5 times more likely to be out of school in conflict zones.

“Problems are country-specific and policy solutions can have the aspect of Greece or the aspect of Afghanistan... but on the other hand, we share common problems and there are common policy solutions.”
Evy Christofilopoulou, Member of Parliament, Greece
61. Girls have huge potential, energy and ambition to change their lives and lead in their communities, societies and economies. This can only happen when they are equipped with a quality education helping them learn and succeed in jobs of the future.

62. Too many families are not letting girls continue their education. A major step forward would be legislation mandating that girls and boys must finish their education at a specific age.

63. Women MPs should use their visibility to lobby for the importance of education for girls, drawing from their own stories to create a powerful narrative and act as role models.

64. Early marriage practices and fear of abduction and rape of girls post-puberty affect parents’ decision to pull girls out of school.

65. There is a big divide between access to education and post-graduate education in rural vs urban areas, and a need to focus efforts accordingly.

66. Education of daughters is an attitude and much work needs to be done to incentivise parents to keep girls in high school. Feeding programmes work to provide some of this incentive to families struggling with poverty.

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Inspiring a new generation of women leaders

71. There is a crisis of confidence among young women about seeking leadership roles when they see the evidence of how tough it is to succeed.

72. Culture change is the key point: we need more women in all leadership positions, not just parliament. Programmes about getting more women on boards, for example, are really important.

73. What a difference it would make if every woman in leadership today would make a commitment right now to mentor one girl or one woman for the next year, and to take personal responsibility for the election of one woman every cycle.

"Any woman who can stand up for her rights and make her voice heard in a crowd, and who can break the glass ceiling, is an agent of change."

Shrin Sharmin Chaudhary Speaker, Bangladesh Parliament
Other observations

- In some countries, peace and security is needed before even being able to tackle challenges of inequality. But there are challenges that are universal and common to all countries. These can be addressed with similar solutions and through learning from one another.

- Increasing the number and impact of women in parliament will not happen in a vacuum. There needs to be a concerted effort by women MPs, utilising all available networks, to challenge stereotypes of women in power across all sectors, as well as working to build pathways for young women and girls.

- For this to happen, more work needs to be done on girls’ education, women’s economic empowerment and preventing violence and harassment to promote a wholesale shift in cultural attitudes and social norms.

- Women MPs often bear the brunt of the growing backlash against women’s empowerment. Calling this out where it happens and building support to oppose this wherever it happens – even outside of politics – will make a real difference.

- Commitment to mentoring other women and girls will help to build the next generation of leaders and to promote a positive example of women in leadership.

- A number of women MPs highlighted that this event should be the first of many regular events for women MPs, which should move around the world. There were several offers to host the next international conference of women MPs in different countries.

Additional resources

- Women, power and politics: What’s changed in 100 years? British Council, 2018
- Gender equality in elected office: A six step action plan, OSCE, 2010
- Facts and figures: Leadership and political participation | UN Women
- 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
- The Fawcett Society, Strategies for Success: Women’s Experiences of Selection and Election in UK Parliament
- UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women: Report on Violence against Women in Politics
- Westminster Foundation for Democracy: Stop Violence Against Women in Politics, Conference Report and Submission to the UN Special Rapporteur
- National Democratic Institute (NDI), #NotTheCost campaign has reports, such as No Party to Violence and an incident reporting tool.
- International Parliamentary Union, Sexism, Harassment and Violence Against Women Parliamentarians
- What Works to Prevent Violence is a UK Aid-funded innovative global programme working in 13 countries across the world producing ground breaking finding on effective intervention in low-middle income settings.
- UK Strategy to end violence against women and girls: 2016 to 2020. This strategy provides an overview of the wide range of actions the government will be taking towards its strategy of ending violence against women and girls between 2016 and 2020. It was launched on 8 March 2016.
- FP2020 Commitment Making Countries: http://www.familyplanning2020.org/entities
- Outcome Statement of the Commonwealth Women’s Forum 2018
- Charlevoix Declaration on Quality Education for Girls, Adolescent Girls and Women in Developing Countries
- UNGA 2018: Joint Statement-12-years-to-break-barriers-and-leave-no-girl-behind

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130 million girls are out of school in rural areas. Child labour and poverty affect girls. Women MPs of the World work across party lines to change laws. Women being united is a humanitarian issue. Women are celebrating 100 years of votes for women. Women are being united.
