



United Nations Entity for Gender Equality
and the Empowerment of Women

Integrating Gender Equality into Electoral Processes

Julie Ballington



International Framework

- ▶ There is a developed **normative international framework** and over 3 decades of mobilization
- ▶ In particular, Article 7 of the **CEDAW** stipulates that:
 - **State Parties shall take appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life**
 - **And ensure women have the equal right to vote in all elections and participate in all publicly elected bodies and public functions at all levels of government.**

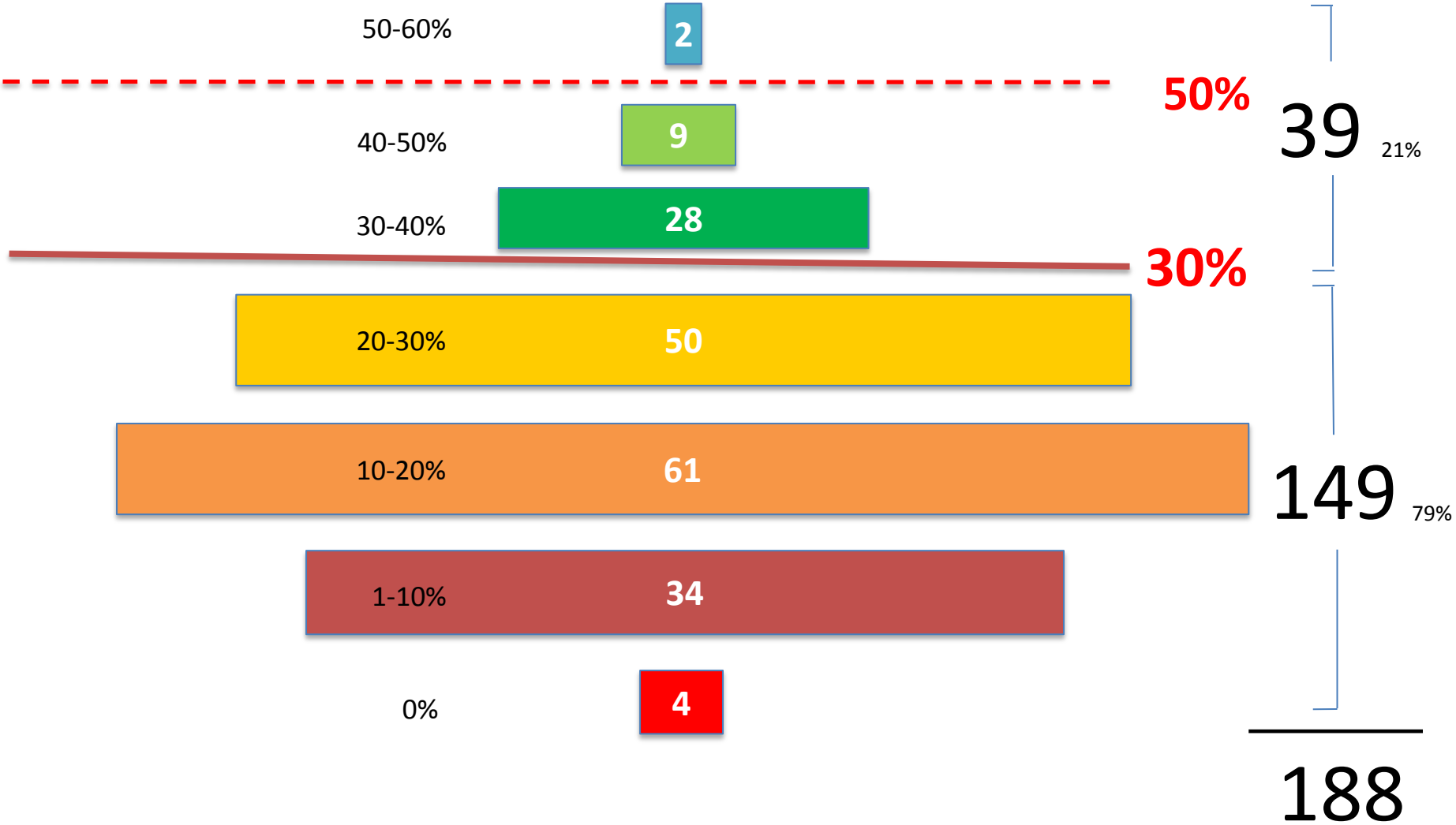
ECOSOC resolution 1990 called on MS to achieve a target of at least 30% by 1995, with a view to achieving equal representation between women and men by the year 2000.

Status of women 2014



- ▶ **22%** women members of parliament
- ▶ **9** elected Heads of State & **15** Heads of Government
- ▶ No baseline on women elected in **local government**
- ▶ No global baseline data on **women candidates**

Women in National Parliaments



Source: IPU, *Women in National Parliaments*, single and lower houses, as at 1 January 2014

From political participation to electoral administration

- Women's involvement in electoral processes is **broader than simply voting and holding office**
- The international framework also applies to participation in **decision making on electoral processes and in the administration of elections.**
- 2011: **GA Resolution 66/130**: urges MS to implement measures like TSMs to increase the number of women in elective and appointive public offices and functions at all levels, to achieve equal representation in all government and public administration positions

What is the status of women's electoral participation and in EMBs?

Globally, we do not know

- ▶ No global baseline on **voter registration**
- ▶ No global baseline on **voter turnout**
- ▶ No global data on **leadership of EMBs** (commissioners) or senior staff

As a result...

- Limited focus on **gender sensitive electoral administration in EMBs** and by assistance providers
 - There is little best practice or **guidance** on how to mainstream gender equality in the electoral process within EMBs
 - UNDP responded with global initiative to promote gender inclusive electoral administration
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Mission statement and strategic plan

- Just **23%** of EMBs reported ‘gender specific objectives and targets in strategic/operational plan
- Integrating gender into EMBs starts at the highest planning level
- **Pakistan:** the ECP will strive to establish a fair gender balance in its ranks by creating conditions for women to be able to work in the organization” and ...“to formulate laws and strictly implement them to ensure that marginalized groups . . . are able to participate in the political and electoral processes”.

Quotas on EMB Boards

- Historical dominance of men in boards, several with no women members
- Just **6 EMBs** reported the introduction of quotas to ensure women on the Board
- EMB compliance with international targets would necessitate at least 30% women members in board or leadership
- **Timor Leste:** The law mandates a minimum of 4 women out of a total of 15 commissioners
- **Bosnia and Herzegovina:** The Election Law requires that the “composition of an election commission shall in general reflect the equal representation of both genders.”

Targets or Quotas within EMB

- Could also include targets or quotas for staffing at different levels – polling staff
- Lesotho: political parties were asked to send equal numbers of men and women to consultative meetings and to training activities
- International meetings



Gender Focal Point, Unit or Committee

- **30% of EMBs** reported that they had 'appointed a gender focal point' or department to advance gender equality

Training

- Only **11% of EMBs** reported mandatory gender training for all management and staff
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Sex-disaggregated data

- **50% of EMBs** surveyed report voter registration data by sex
- **30% of EMBs** surveyed stated that they disaggregate voter turnout by sex
- Until this is reported by EMBs there will be no global baselines or idea of trends over time. For this a dedicated monitoring body needed

UNDP lessons learned on gender mainstreaming in electoral assistance:

- ▶ One-third to one-half of UNDP electoral assistance projects include a gender component
- ▶ Every election is an opportunity to increase the number of women voters and candidates, but most work happens between elections
- ▶ Include gender considerations from the very beginning of the project and assign budget
- ▶ Do not assume that all staff understand gender mainstreaming.
- ▶ Provide relevant training
- ▶ Use gender experts

How to integrate gender into EMBs?

- Assessments and gender audit frameworks of EMBs are becoming more common
 - The Election Commission of Nepal 'Gender Mapping in the Field of Elections' identified gender and social inclusion initiatives and gaps institutionally within the Commission and in specific electoral processes
 - Similar processes in Moldova and Libya
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Stakeholder cooperation is essential:

- ▶ EMBs

- ▶ Political parties

- ▶ Civil society

- ▶ Observers



Thank you
for your
attention