

ACCOUNTABILITY FOR GENDER EQUALITY

How can PARLIAMENT ensure policies improve equality?

In the public sector accountability system, we all have a role to play in advancing gender equality. Here's what **PARLIAMENTARIANS** can do.



As a parliamentarian, you can strive to understand the needs of women constituents and use your position to question the gender responsiveness of policies.

Why should gender equality matter to you as a politician?

- ▶ “Leaving No One Behind”, including women and girls, is central to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, which have been committed to by all United Nations Member States. Gender equality is both a stand-alone goal and a crosscutting theme reflected in many of the other SDGs.
- ▶ While there have been advances on many aspects of SDG 5—Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls— the U.N. estimates that at the current rate it will take nearly 300 years to meet all targets.¹
- ▶ GDP per capita would be an estimated 20% higher if gender employment gaps were closed.²
- ▶ Gender equality is correlated with a longer life expectancy for both men and women.³
- ▶ Gender equality leads to better disaster preparedness and better resilience after disasters.⁴

REFERENCES

- 1 www.brookings.edu/research/caring-about-care-an-sdg-5-priority
- 2 www.worldbank.org/en/topic/gender/overview#1
- 3 journals.plos.org/globalpublichealth/article?id=10.1371/journal.pgph.0001214
- 4 openknowledge.worldbank.org/entities/publication/88d46d58-c4ca-53bf-82ea-4f3cc423b67e



Remember: Culture, political will, technical capacity, and accountability for integrating gender equality into programs and institutional structures strongly impact gender equality outcomes.

What should be considered in policies?

Ask yourself questions such as:

- ▶ Is government implementing effective deterrents to prevent gender-based violence?
- ▶ Are there policies for affirmative action or quotas, if necessary?
- ▶ Is government involving diverse stakeholders, of all genders, as advocates and considering their unique needs?

What questions can you ask ministries and departments about gender equality?

- ▶ Can our stated commitments to gender equality be improved?
- ▶ Is there a robust legislative framework to support gender equality?
 - ▶ Are there adequate laws, tools and structures to support our stated commitments?
 - ▶ Are gender responsive budgets developed?
- ▶ Is gender-based analysis being conducted by key ministries and departments?
- ▶ Is all data collected gender-disaggregated?
- ▶ Do we consider gender when monitoring and evaluating the results of our policies and programs?



How can you know if gender equality policies are working?

Request that the legislative auditor (Auditor General or equivalent) conduct an audit to determine the impact of gender equality policies.

After an audit, encourage the Public Accounts Committee or another parliamentary oversight committee to hold a hearing on the audit report and ensure its recommendations are implemented.

What steps can you take within Parliament?

- ▶ Ensure parliamentary committee staff have the training and support they need to consider gender equality in their work.
- ▶ Establish a women's caucus with capacity for gender-based oversight. Look to the Kenya Women Parliamentary Association as an example.
- ▶ Talk to civil society organizations, your legislative auditor, and other partners. You can't do this alone!



[Kenya Women Parliamentary Association](http://www.kwpa.org)

