QUESTIONNAIRE
Establishing parliamentary caucuses for gender equality

This questionnaire can be used in strategic planning for parliamentary caucuses on gender equality. It addresses the current or anticipated mandate, structure, membership and activities of a caucus.

This resource was presented at ParlAmericas’ Parliamentary exchange: Multi-party caucuses for gender equality held in Ottawa, Canada, in October 2016, and organized in collaboration with UN Women’s Multi-Country Office for the Caribbean and the All-Party Women’s Caucus of the Canadian Parliament.

This questionnaire was adapted from the original developed by Dr. Sonia Palmieri and published in A Comparative Study of Structures for Women MPs in the OSCE Region.¹

1. Which of the following mechanisms to address gender equality, gender mainstreaming or the promotion of women’s interests exist in your Parliament? Please tick all that apply.

- Specialized committee on gender or women’s issues
- Multi-functional committee (e.g. committee on social affairs, human rights and gender issues)
- Temporary committee on gender or women’s issues
- Research body capable of analysing data from a gender perspective
- Mechanism for collecting and/or analysing sex-disaggregated data
- Platform involving civil society
- International network/group of women
- Women’s caucus internal to your political party
- Other (please specify):

2. Is there (or has there been) a cross-party gender or women’s caucus in your Parliament?

- Yes, there is an active caucus. (Please provide name and year created):
- Yes, there used to be one. (Please provide approximate time period active):
- No, but there are plans to create one.
- No, there is no such body.

3. If there used to be a caucus, why is it no longer functioning? Please tick all that apply.

- Lack of leadership among potential members
- Too few women MPs or too few interested women MPs
- Lack of support from political party
- Lack of support from Parliament
- Lack of resources
- Mandate not renewed
- Other mechanisms found to be more effective (please specify):
- Other reasons (please specify):

4. Does establishing a caucus require a resolution or formal decision by Parliament?

- ☐ No  ☐ Yes

If yes, does the resolution or decision require that the caucus be renewed on a regular basis?

- ☐ No  ☐ Yes  *(Please specify how often):*  

5. For the caucus to be recognised as a formal parliamentary body, are any of the following required for its establishment? *Please tick all that apply.*

- ☐ Undefined/unknown
- ☐ Membership list
- ☐ Organizational chart
- ☐ Statement of purpose
- ☐ Staff
- ☐ Internal rules
- ☐ Strategic plan
- ☐ Other *(please specify):*  

6. What are the objectives or mandates of the caucus? If it has not yet been formally established, please tick “undefined” and indicate what you anticipate its objectives / mandates to be. *Please tick all that apply.*

- ☐ Undefined
- ☐ To draft legislation
- ☐ To influence policy or the parliamentary agenda from a gender perspective
- ☐ To lobby for support on gender equality issues
- ☐ To create a space to foster solidarity around gender issues
- ☐ To hear from relevant stakeholders on gender issues
- ☐ To raise awareness both inside and outside Parliament on gender issues
- ☐ To ensure Parliament’s compliance with international obligations such as CEDAW commitments
- ☐ To monitor policy/legislative implementation
- ☐ To build capacity and empower women
- ☐ To conduct or commission research
- ☐ To implement and/or monitor gender budgeting
- ☐ To conduct advocacy with civil society organizations
- ☐ Others *(please specify):*  

7. How is the caucus structured? If it has not yet been formally established, please tick “undefined” and indicate what you anticipate its structure will be. *Please tick all that apply.*

*Please provide details as appropriate*

**Meetings**

- ☐ Undefined
- ☐ Regular meetings scheduled during each parliamentary session
- Meetings scheduled only as required
- Formal meeting minutes are kept

### Leadership and organization

- Undefined
- Leadership positions (Chair, Deputy Chair)
- Leadership positions rotated across different parties, different chambers, returning/newly elected parliamentarians
- Leadership positions are shared between parties (e.g. Co-Chairs)
- Fixed term for Chair (e.g. 1 year)
- Additional positions (e.g. Treasurer, Secretary etc.)
- Internal procedural rules
- Sub-committees can be established

### Agenda

- Undefined
- Agenda circulated before each meeting
- No agenda circulated

### Staffing

- Undefined
- Research staff provided by Parliament
- Administrative staff provided by Parliament
- Support staff provided by civil society/international organizations
- No permanent staff

### Resources

- Undefined
- Allocated funding by Parliament
- Allocated a meeting room by Parliament
- Support from civil society/international organizations
- Budget support from political parties
- Members pay a financial contribution

### Powers and functions in rules of procedure

- Undefined
- Inquire into policy and legislation, and call witnesses for submissions
- Report to Parliament
- Draft legislation

### Decision making procedures

- Undefined
- By vote
8. What is the membership of the caucus? If undefined, please also indicate who you expect the members to be. Please tick all that apply.

- Undefined
- Voluntary
- All women parliamentarians
- Women parliamentarians from a single chamber *(if bicameral)*
- Women parliamentarians of a single party
- Former parliamentarians
- Civil society representatives
- Representatives of international organizations
- Male parliamentarians
- Other *(please specify)*:

9. Is there a formal or written procedure for accepting members?

- Undefined
- Yes
- No

10. Which of the following activities does the caucus undertake? If the caucus has not yet been formally established, please tick “undefined,” and indicate the activities you anticipate it undertaking? Please tick all that apply.

  Please provide details as appropriate

- Undefined
- Influencing legislation
- Monitoring and evaluation of government policy
- Coalition building around an issue
- Raising awareness on gender issues among constituents
- Media outreach (e.g. press conferences)
- Commissioning research to inform parliamentary debates
- Holding discussions with civil society, business groups, academia, and government departments on gender issues
- Discussions with ministers on gender issues
- Mentoring of current and future parliamentarians
- Lobbying for women's promotion to positions of leadership in Parliament
- Fundraising
- Holding social events for members
- Raising awareness on gender issues among parliamentary staff
☐ Advocating for non-discriminatory, gender-sensitive parliamentary culture
☐ International networking
☐ Capacity building training sessions for caucus members and/or other parliamentarians
☐ Other *(please specify)*:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>11. Which of the following issues, if any, do you anticipate will be addressed by the caucus? Please tick all that apply.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ Non-discrimination/equal opportunities</td>
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<td>☐ Women’s political participation (special measures)</td>
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<td>☐ Violence against women</td>
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<td>☐ Sex work or trafficking</td>
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<td>☐ Labour/Employment/Benefits</td>
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<td>☐ Equal pay</td>
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<td>☐ Inheritance rights</td>
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<td>☐ Citizenship</td>
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<td>☐ Healthcare</td>
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<td>☐ Reproductive rights</td>
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<td>☐ Children’s rights</td>
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<td>☐ Reform of parliamentary rules of procedures</td>
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<td>☐ Others <em>(please specify)</em>:</td>
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<tr>
<th>12. Does the caucus interact with any of the following bodies? If the caucus has not yet been formally established, please tick “undefined,” and indicate the bodies you expect that it will interact with? Please tick all that apply.</th>
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<td>☐ Undefined</td>
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<td>☐ Other parliamentary bodies responsible for gender equality (e.g. committee)</td>
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<td>☐ Other parliamentary bodies at the sub-national level</td>
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<td>☐ Parliamentary women’s bodies in other countries</td>
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<td>☐ Other organs of Parliament (e.g. Executive body)</td>
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<td>☐ Political party(s) of Government</td>
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<td>☐ Political party(s) of the Opposition</td>
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<td>☐ Independents</td>
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<td>☐ The media</td>
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<td>☐ National women’s machinery</td>
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<td>☐ Local civil society organizations</td>
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<td>☐ Universities and research institutes</td>
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<td>☐ The Ombudsperson</td>
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<td>☐ International networks or organizations</td>
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*Please provide details (if applicable)*
13. In your opinion, do any of the following hinder the establishment or functioning of a gender caucus? Please tick all that apply.

- [ ] Political party structure/discipline does not support cross-party initiatives
- [ ] Advocacy on gender/women’s issues is more effective through parliamentary committees
- [ ] Advocacy on gender/women’s issues is more effective through other alliances/networks of parliamentarians, civil society or government mechanisms
- [ ] Gender caucuses are considered to marginalize women
- [ ] Cultural norms and stereotypes about women in society
- [ ] Discriminatory or sexist working culture in Parliament
- [ ] Lack of solidarity among women
- [ ] Lack of resources
- [ ] Lack of support staff
- [ ] Lack of reliable information/research on gender issues, including a lack of sex-disaggregated data
- [ ] Other reasons (please specify):

14. What is the most significant result you hope the caucus will achieve?

*Please describe:*