



POLICY BRIEF 8

កម្ពុជា
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LEADERS

WOMEN IN PUBLIC DECISION-MAKING AND POLITICS
CAMBODIA GENDER ASSESSMENT

2014

Cover photo:

Tep Prummony, Commune Chief (55): Leading her commune since January 2014, Prummony has a well established reputation in her community. She has been working in local government since 1986.



8. LEADERSHIP

WOMEN IN PUBLIC DECISION-MAKING AND POLITICS

POLICY CONTEXT

The Royal Government of Cambodia's commitment to increasing the role of women in public decision-making is reflected in the following policies:

- Rectangular Strategy for Growth, Employment, Equity and Efficiency II and III.
- National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) (Update 2009-2013) and (2014-2018).
- Neary Rattanak III (2009-2013) and IV (2014-2018).
- Cambodian National Council for Women Five-Year Strategic Plan 2010-2014 (CNCW Plan)
- National Program for Sub-National Democratic Development 2010-2019 (NP-SNDD).

Cambodia's Gender Inequality Measure

- With a value of 0.473, Cambodia ranks 96th out of 148 countries on the Gender Inequality Index (2012).
- On the Global Gender Gap Index (GGG) Cambodia is ranked 108 of 142 countries, with a score of 0.652 (World Economic Forum, 2014).
- On the GGG political empowerment sub-index, Cambodia is ranked 110, with a score of 0.214, significantly lower than the regional average. (WEF, 2014).



FINDINGS

Gender Disparities in Public Decision-Making and Politics

Increasing women's participation in public life is considered one of the key elements in the process of development and democratization.

- Women in Cambodia remain under-represented in decision-making positions in politics, the public sector and the Judiciary.
- Although women have *de jure* equal status with men, *de facto* they face both direct and indirect discrimination, often due to gender stereotypes that are deeply rooted in society.
- Men continue to hold the vast majority of decision-making positions in the Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches.
- While the responsibility for achieving gender parity in decision-making largely remains with women, men are also responsible.

▲ Women's representation in decision making has increased.

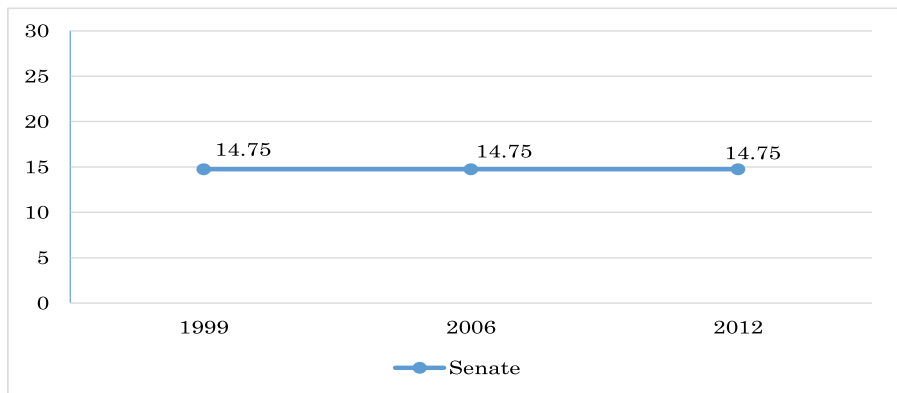
Women's representation in decision-making has increased

- The Government has taken several concrete steps to increase gender equality and advance women in decision-making, in policies, laws and programs.
- Special measures have been implemented, resulting in positive increases in the proportion of women at national and sub-national levels.
- Obstacles to women's inclusion in public decision-making are well documented and common solutions have been proposed by stakeholders. However, lobbying for the implementation of these strategies remains fragmented.
- A critical mass and a multi-stakeholder common strategy is needed to achieve targets, and should include government, civil society, political parties, academia, the public and the media.

While the number of women in public decision-making positions has increased, overall men continue to occupy decision-making positions at all levels. Progress in increasing women's representation is slow. Female representation in the Senate remains unchanged since its inception in 1999 and has remained under 15 percent.

- In 2012, women held 14.75 percent of seats in the Senate, with nine women of a total 61 seats. This is the same figure as in the first mandate in 1999¹.

Figure 1: Women Representation in Senate 1999-2012 (%)

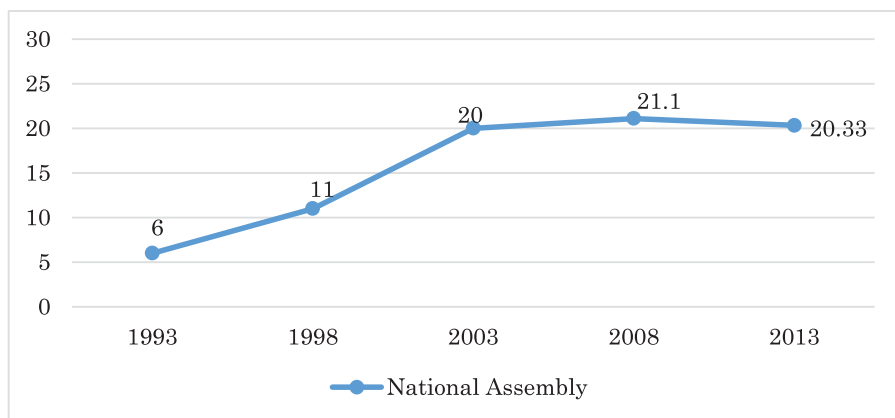


¹ List of Senators in the 3rd mandate, http://www.senate.gov.kh/home/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1718&Itemid=12&lang=km Senate of The Kingdom of Cambodia.

In the National Assembly, female representation has more than tripled in two decades²

- Female representation in the National Assembly has more than tripled in two decades, from 6 percent in 1993 to 20.33 percent in 2013.
- Female candidates in the 2013 National Assembly election comprised 18.96 percent of all candidates with 168 women of a total 886 candidates. This represents a 4.16 percentage point increase in women candidates, from 14.80 percent in 2008 elections or 172 women of a total 1,162 candidates.
- The number of National Assembly seats held by women decreased 0.81 percentage points, from 21 percent or 26 seats of a total 123 seats in 2008, to 20.33 percent, or 25 seats of a total 123 seats in 2013.

Figure 2: Women Representation in National Assembly 1993-2013 (%)



The number of women in Deputy Prime Minister, Minister, Secretary of State and Under Secretary of State positions increased in 2013³

- Of nine Deputy Prime Ministers, one is female. There are no female Senior Ministers.

² List of Members of National Assembly for 5th Mandate, No. 420.NA, The National Assembly of The Kingdom of Cambodia.

³ Royal Decree No. NS/RKT/0913/903 dated 24 September 2013 on the Nomination of the Royal Government of Cambodia.

- In 2013, women held 10.7 percent of ministerial positions, with three women of a total 28 positions. This increased from 7.4 percent in 2008, with two women of a total 28 positions.
- The proportion of female Secretary of State appointees has increased from 8.08 percent in 2008, with 16 women of a total 198, to 20.54 percent in 2013, with 38 women of a total 189, a 12.5 percentage point increase. The proportion of female Under Secretary of State positions has increased almost 2 percentage points, from 16 percent in 2008, or 33 women of a total 205 positions, to 17.60 percent in 2013, or 48 women of a total 273 positions.

Table 1: Women’s Representation by Positions 2008-2013 (%)

Position	2008	2013
Minister	7.4	10.7
Secretary of State	8.08	20.54
Under Secretary of State	16	17.60

The proportion of women in the Judiciary has increased since 2008, however women continue to be under-represented at all levels of the Judiciary⁴

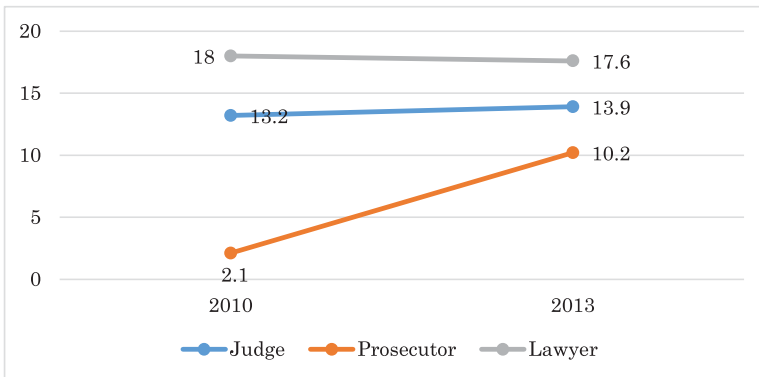
- Progress has been made in the past five years, however men continue to hold the vast majority of positions in the Judiciary.
- In 2013, female judges comprised 13.9 percent, a slight increase from 13.2 percent in 2010. Cambodia came very close to achieving the Neary Rattanak III target of 15 percent female judges by 2013.
- 10.2 percent of prosecutors are women, with 15 women of a total 147 prosecutors. This represents an increase of 8 percentage points since 2010. There is no female representation among Presidents of the courts.
- There are only four women, or 14.8 percent, of a total 27 members of the Bar Council (7th mandate 2012-2015).

⁴ Statistics Table of Civil Servants in Line Ministries, Ministry of Civil Service, 31, January 2014.



- In three years the proportion of female lawyers slightly decreased, from 18 percent or 98 women of a total 551 in 2010, to 17.6 percent or 126 women of a total 716 in 2013. ▲ In the National Assembly female representation has more than tripled.

Figure 3: Women’s Representation in Judiciary 2010-2013(%)



Men continue to hold the majority of decision-making positions at Provincial/Capital, Municipal and District levels⁵

- Currently, there are no women Governors at provincial/capital level.
- Progress has been made at the deputy level, where women comprise 20 percent of Deputy Governors, with 24 women of a total 119 positions at provincial/capital level, which is above the 2015 CMDG 3 target of 15 percent.
- Women hold only 1.02 percent of Governor positions in municipalities, districts and khans, with just two women of a total 197 positions.
- In 2013, 29 percent of Deputy Governors of municipalities, districts and khans were women, with 186 women of a total 635 positions.

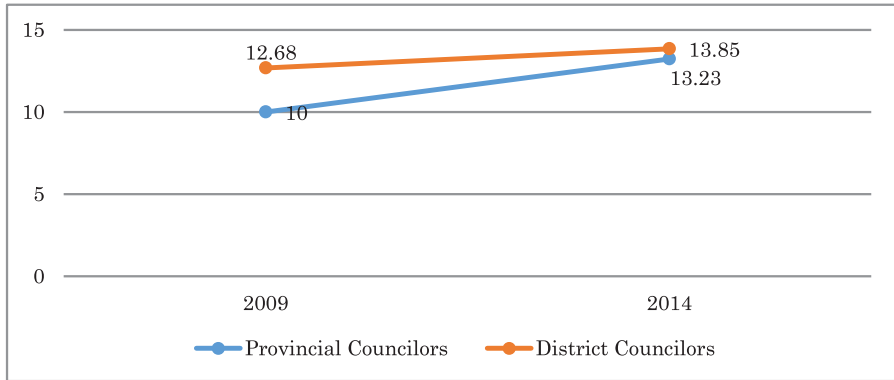
Table 2: Representation of Men and Women at Province and District level 2014

Position	2014	
	Female	Male
Provincial Governor	0%	100%
Provincial Deputy Governor	20%	80%
District Governor	1.02%	98.98%
District Deputy Governor	29%	71%

- The proportion of female councillors in capital and provincial councils has increased from 10 percent, or 38 women of a total 374 in 2009, to 13.23 percent, or 52 women of a total 393 in 2014. In district and khan councils, female seats have increased from 12.68 percent, or 363 women of a total 2,861 seats, to 13.85 percent, or 406 women of a total 2,931 in 2014.

⁵ Ibid.

Figure 4: Female Councillors at Province and District level 2009-2014 (%)



The percentage of female Commune Councillors increased from 15.1 percent in 2007 to 17.78 percent in 2012, however, men hold the majority of decision-making positions at the commune level⁶

- In the June 2012 Commune/Sangkat Council elections, 25.65 percent of candidates were women, representing a 4.29 percentage point increase from the previous elections in 2007.
- The number of female commune councillors has increased from 9.4 percent in 2002 to 15.1 percent in 2007, and to 17.78 percent in 2012.
- In 2012, women remained under-represented in key decision-making positions including as Commune Chiefs, with 4.22 percent or 69 women, First Deputy with 11.57 percent or 189 women, and Second Deputy with 9.24 percent or 151 women.

Table 3: Representation of Men and Women at Commune level 2012

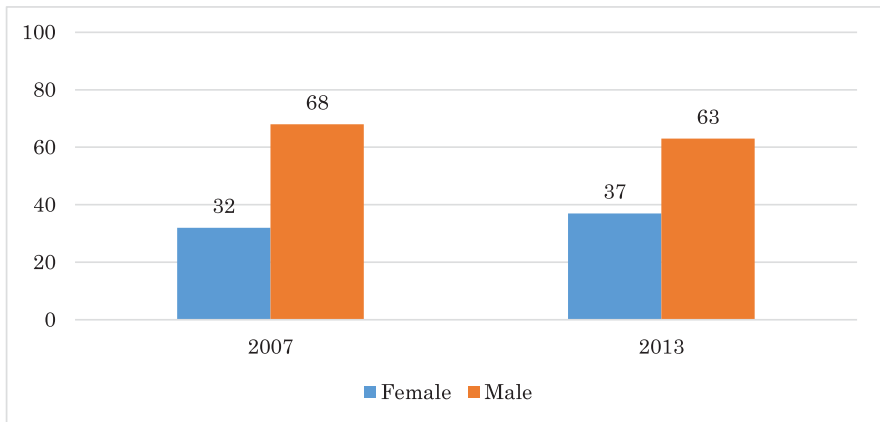
Position	2012	
	Female	Male
Commune Chief	4.22%	95.78%
First Deputy	11.57%	88.43%
Second Deputy	9.24%	90.76%

⁶ Official Results of the Commune/Sangkat Election for the 3rd Mandate, National Election Committee, 24 June 2012, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

74 percent of line ministries report an increase in female personnel since 2008⁷

- The proportion of women in the civil service has increased from 32 percent in 2007 to 37 percent in 2013.
- Of 27 ministries, 20 reported an increase in the percentage of female personnel, with increases in women's representation ranging from 0.27 percent (2008) to 7.9 percent (2013).

Figure 5: Civil Servants in Cambodia 2007-2013 (%)



Women remain under-represented in managerial positions within the civil service⁸

- Within the civil service, women are concentrated in lower-level positions. Women in management are more likely to hold deputy positions.
- Women represent 11 percent in General Director positions, 12 percent in Deputy General Director positions, 10 percent in Director of Department, 18 percent in Deputy Director of Department, 20 percent in Chief of Office, and 27 percent in Vice Chief of Office positions (2013 figures).

⁷ *Statistics Table of Civil Servants in Line Ministries*, Ministry of Civil Service, 31, January 2014.

⁸ *Ibid.*



Table 4: Representation of Men and Women in Leadership at National Level 2013 ▲ Affirmative action measures will increase the number of women in decision-making roles.

Position	2013	
	Female	Male
General Director	11%	89%
Deputy General Director	12%	88%
Director of Department	10%	90%
Deputy Director of Department	18%	82%
Chief of Office	20%	80%
Vice Chief of Office	27%	73%

- At sub-national levels, women hold 8.7 percent of the positions of Director of Provincial Departments, with 45 women of a total 518 positions, 14.5 percent of the Deputy Director of Provincial Departments, with 219 women of a total 1,510 positions, and 19 percent of Chief of Office, with 466 women of a total 2,459

positions. Women account for 14.52 percent of the Directors of District Offices, with 330 women of a total 2,272 positions.

Table 5: Representation of Men and Women in Leadership at Sub-National Level 2013

Position	2013	
	Female	Male
Director of Provincial Department	8.69%	91.31%
Deputy Director of Provincial Department	14.5%	85.5%
Chief of Office	19%	81%
Director of District Office	14.52%	85.48%

Female enrolment in the Royal School of Administration (RSA) is increasing, especially in pre-service training⁹

- In pre-service training, the percentage of female students increased from 24 percent in 2010 to 33 percent in 2014, while at the mid-level, the rate increased from 21 percent in 2010 to 38 percent in 2013.
- In post-graduate programs for high-ranking officials, the rate of female students increased from 10 percent in 2011 to 11.5 percent in 2014, while for the mid-level, the rate decreased from 23 percent in 2011 to 22 percent in 2014.


CHALLENGES: BARRIERS TO WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC DECISION MAKING

Socio-cultural Factors

Deeply entrenched gender roles and negative gender stereotyping limit women's participation.

- Traditional cultural attitudes and values are serious constraints to achieving gender equality.
- Strong and different values on gender-roles create barriers, discriminate against women and impede the achievement of equality between men and women in Cambodian society. The Convention on the Elimination of all

⁹ Lists of Trainees by Year 2010-2014, Royal School of Administration, 2014, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.




Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) Committee concluding observations (October 2013) called for the implementation of Committee recommendations.

- The dual burden of domestic and professional obligations and economic resource constraints restrict opportunities for women to participate in political and public life.
- Hierarchical social structures and a patriarchal political culture create an environment that impedes women's ability to be equal partners in public decision-making. Stereotypes continue to consider women as subordinates who cannot participate in politics and hold senior decision-making positions.
- In the political sphere, there are many requirements to become a political candidate: contacts, experience related to social affairs, knowledge, popularity, financial resources, and especially, internal political party support. These requirements are very important for a candidate to be elected, to become a politician, and to be promoted. Compared to men, women lack these advantages, which is a key barrier for them to participate in politics.

Institutional Factors

Despite a robust gender equality perspective reflected in national gender equality policy initiatives and legal frameworks, challenges remain.

- Discrimination impacts the ability of women to be promoted. Gender-specific gaps in national laws, including the absence of a comprehensive definition of 'gender-based discrimination' contribute to the challenge of addressing discrimination against women, including in appointed and elected positions. The 2013 CEDAW Committee concluding comments called for the adoption of comprehensive legislation governing gender equality.
- Decision-making processes and structures form additional barriers for women to participate in public and political life. Women are concentrated in sectors traditionally associated with women and at the lower levels of government. Opportunities for women to participate in decision-making processes in sectors such as economics, industry and energy, mines, urban management and transport are further constrained.

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- At sub-national level, women face a number of challenges to participating in public and political spheres, especially workplace discrimination. Social perceptions of women as weak and less-educated, a lack of family support in carrying out political work, and low salaries, exacerbate discriminatory attitudes of men towards women.

Political Factors

The absence of temporary measures to ‘fast track’ the participation of women in public decision-making, such as quotas, slows progress.

- Temporary special measures already in place in Cambodia include: a) one out of three members of a village committee should be a woman; b) there should be at least one woman among provincial and district deputy governors; c) women should comprise between 20 and 50 percent of new recruits in the civil service; and d) the retirement age for female civil servants has been extended to 60.
- Formal modes of political participation include the right to choose political leadership; the right to participate in political leadership; the right to stand for election; and the ability to influence the political process once elected.
- In the political arena, men formulate the rules of the political party and define the standards for evaluation.

Political parties play a key role in advancing female representation in decision-making at national and sub-national levels.

- The CEDAW Committee concluding observations (October 2013) urged Cambodia to ensure the development and implementation of effective strategies, including temporary special measures to increase the representation of women in decision-making positions, particularly in politics, the judiciary, and the foreign and diplomatic services.
- The electoral system impacts opportunities for women in decision-making in several ways: through candidate selection, the low placement of women on party lists and the absence of quotas for women.
- The placement of women on candidate lists has a strong bearing on their ability to gain votes. Improving the rank order of women on party lists is decided on exclusively by the parties, which is the main factor for increasing women’s representation in the senate, national assembly, and the municipal, provincial, district, commune/khan councils.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

An effective strategy to engage all stakeholders in the promotion of women in public decision-making positions at all levels should be formulated.

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

Develop and sustain an effective lobbying campaign to engage national legislators in setting gender-responsive laws and policies and increase female representation in the Legislative branch.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Strengthen the enabling environment for women in political and public decision-making at all levels and branches of government, building on CGA 2008 recommendations. Develop a Cambodia-specific approach to affirmative action and other specific approaches to accelerate gender equality in public and political spheres. | MoWA, MoCS, LMs, political parties, DPs, CSOs |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Lobby the National Assembly and political parties for an increase in the number of female candidates potentially elected at both national and sub-national levels. | CNCW, MoWA, NEC, LMs, CSOs, political parties, Parliamentarians |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Encourage political parties to develop and implement policies and procedures to promote gender equality, especially the increased representation of women in decision-making structures and on political party lists. Leadership structures in political parties are mostly led by men, who are therefore essential partners for effectively implementing this task, as well as advocacy for increased representation of women in decision-making. | CNCW, MoWA, LMs, political parties, DPs, CSOs |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Establish and support a parliamentary women's caucus to work across party lines by developing a common gender-equality agenda. | Parliament, political parties, CNCW, MoWA, DPs, CSOs |

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

Build a more supportive environment for women in the Executive branch.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lobby/advocate for the adoption of comprehensive legislation governing gender equality which includes a definition of discrimination against women, that encompasses both direct and indirect discrimination, in line with Article 1 of the CEDAW Convention and the 2013 CEDAW Committee recommendations. | MoJ, CNCW,
MoWA, LMs,
CSOs |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Include a national campaign to address gender stereotypes in Neary Rattanak IV. It should be an effective and comprehensive strategy aimed at addressing gender stereotypes and attitudes that discriminate against women in political and public life, in line with 2013 CEDAW committee recommendation 18 (b). | MoWA, LMs,
CSOs, media |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Operational mechanisms for affirmative action should be established, promoted and disseminated to political parties. A specific action plan should be created, specifying clear gender equality performance targets and time-bound goals for achieving gender parity, including developing a code of conduct that includes requirements for women's participation and principles of gender equality within the party. | MoWA, CNCW,
political parties |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to promote and encourage the placement of women on party lists through advocacy programs with political parties, using the zipper system for ranking women on candidate lists. | CNCW, MoWA,
NEC, political
parties, CSOs |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare, compile and disseminate names of strong women leaders, and showcase them as role models, especially among youth, through interactive social media. | MoWA, MoEYS,
MoIn, LMs,
media, CSOs |

- Advocate with political parties to provide funding to support female candidates' campaigns. Establish targeted funds to assist female candidates in raising funds for election campaigns, and to provide concrete support for female candidates in the form of training and forums at national and sub-national levels.

MoWA, DPs, LMs, CSOs, political parties

JUDICIARY

Continue support for increased representation of women in the Judiciary.

- Develop and implement an effective lobbying and awareness-raising campaign to appoint more women in the Judiciary and encourage female judges, prosecutors and lawyers to enter the Judicial branch.

MoJ, MoWA, DPs, SCM

SUB-NATIONAL LEVEL

- Continue to lobby and raise awareness among line ministries and relevant partners for increases in the number of women in leadership positions in different sectors at municipal, provincial and district/khan levels, and implement mechanisms to monitor effectiveness over the medium and long term, such as statistical monitoring and gender audits.

MoI, MoWA, MoCS, NIS, CSOs, GMAGs

- Promote women's leadership networks: continue to facilitate, establish and strengthen the strategic network for female leaders at sub-national level, including through the use of communication technology and social media.

MoWA, MoI, MoCS, LMs, CSOs

- Coordinate and develop a strategic capacity development program for female leaders, both elected and appointed, at sub-national level in line with strategic priorities. This should include a program for leadership, advocacy, public speaking and media capacity development.

MoI, MoWA, MoCS, DPs, CSOs, political parties

Public Administration Reform (PAR)

The Civil Service requires a mix of special measures, both temporary and permanent, to address gender imbalance and accelerate women's participation in public office.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A program to analyze gender disparities in public administration should be conducted to identify gaps and understand gender disparities in the civil service at national and sub-national levels, including a reflection on existing policy implementation, programs and plans from gender perspectives. | MoWA, MoCS, GMAGs, and DPs |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advocate for a program to increase women in the civil service to be implemented and monitored in all line ministries, with a specific focus on advancing women in high-level positions. | MoCS, MoWA, CNCW, GMAGs |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support the Ministry of Civil Service (MoCS) in developing regular monitoring mechanisms to track recruitment and promotion of women and men in the civil service at national and sub-national levels. | MoCS, MoWA, NIS, GMAGs |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In collaboration with MoCS and RSA, develop and implement affirmative action measures to increase the proportion of female applicants and students accepted into RSA programs. Develop gender-responsive selection criteria and recruitment protocols. | MoWA, MoCS, RSA |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facilitate a training-and-mentoring program for female civil servants, in collaboration with the RSA and line ministries. Include educational and mentoring opportunities for female graduates. | RSA, MoCS, MoWA, LMs |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure equitable access in capacity building programs for women in public and political sectors by giving special attention to women in all capacity development activities. | MoCS, MoWA, LMs, CSOs |



MULTI-STAKEHOLDER APPROACHES

Effective advocacy with legislators and decision-makers in setting policy agendas to increase support for women in decision-making requires a multi-stakeholder approach, including the involvement of men and youth.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strengthen multi-stakeholder networks including women’s machinery at national and sub-national level, political parties, civil society, youth movements, academia and the media. Expand the common platform to advocate for and promote increased participation by women in public and political life and expand regular networking opportunities to exchange information and disseminate and share lessons learned, including through the engagement of new communication technologies. | MoWA, CNCW, political parties, CSOs, academia, media |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engage social media and technology as an integral part of an overall strategy to promote women in decision-making. Integrate social media training into MoWA’s Capacity Development Strategy and partner with NGOs specializing in social media. | MoWA, MoIn, LMs, CSOs, media |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish and expand partnerships with youth networks to promote women’s participation in public decision-making and to promote youth as potential future leaders. | MoWA, MoEYS, DPs, CSOs, youth networks |



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