



**GENDER LINKS ZAMBIA 50/50 CAMPAIGN CONCEPT NOTE**  
*Special measures – the time is now!*  
**CONCEPT NOTE**

**Synopsis**

This concept paper concerns urgent actions needed to mobilise women's political representation and increase their capacity to take up leadership positions, in the upcoming tripartite elections set to take place in Zambia in September 2016.



Zambia, Botswana, Malawi, Madagascar and DRC are the only countries in SADC that have not taken any special measures to increase women's political participation, with the result that they lag behind on every indicator. With women constituting less than 15% of the total at national and local level, and in cabinet, Zambia is not even half way to the original 2005 SADC target of 30% women in decision-making, let alone the 50% by 2015 set by the 2008 SADC Protocol on Gender and Development.

All the evidence from the region shows that the only way to increase women's political representation, especially in First Past the Post electoral systems, is through special measures. In less than a year to the elections, GL Zambia seeks to partner with like-minded organisations in Zambia, **to press home the case for a constitutional or legislated quota**. Even if this is not achieved in 2016, it is critical to put the matter on the agenda now, especially as Zambia is involved in a Constitutional Review. This strategic focus on the Fifty Fifty campaign has been sadly lacking in past efforts. It is time to stop beating about the bush and advocate for measures that will really bring about change!

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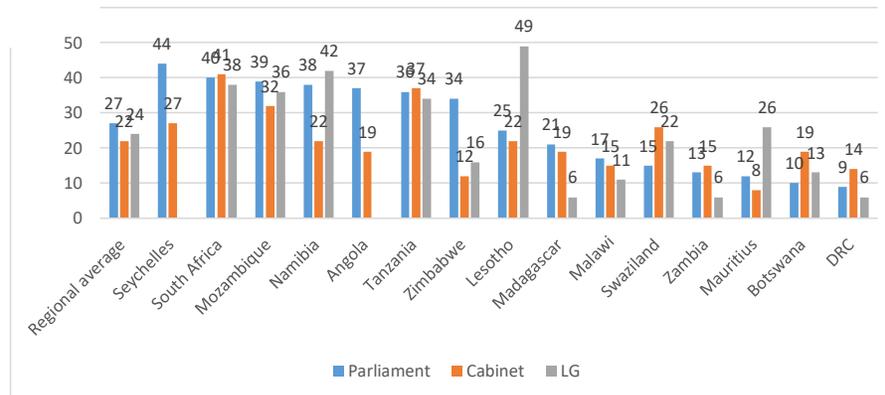
Guided by the theme *Empowering Women in Politics for 2016 Tripartite Elections*, Gender Links (GL) Zambia has a particular interest **in ensuring that local government is squarely centred in the 50/50 agenda**. In Zambia, GL is working with xxx no of councils, or half the total councils in Zambia on gender responsive governance. GL is concerned both to increase the level of women's representation in the coming elections, as well as ensure gender aware service delivery.

### Objectives of the project

- Lobby and advocate for legislated quotas at local and national government levels and an electoral system that increases the probability of women’s representation in politics.
- Mobilise women to actively contest as councillors, parliamentarians and the presidency ahead of the imminent September 2016 tripartite elections in Zambia.
- Conduct leadership seminars for prospective and current women councillors to strengthen their capacity to contest for elections and lead in decision making.

### Overview of context

Currently, women’s representation in parliament is 13%, cabinet is 15% and local government is among the lowest in the region at 6%. These figures are receding from 16% women in parliament and 7% in local government in 2009.



Source: Southern Africa Gender Barometer 2015

As illustrated in the graph from the 2015 SADC Gender Protocol Barometer, Zambia is at the lowest end of the SADC league when it comes to women’s political participation. Zambia ranks with the DRC as the country in which women’s political participation is low across the board.

### Electoral systems and quotas

The fact that Zambia clings to a First Past The Post (FPTP) or “winner-takes-all” electoral system with no quotas at local or national government makes the probability of women ascending to political leadership very slow. There is no quota or scheme that reserves seats for women. Women and men compete on the same platform but “from different vantage points.” Promoting gender equality is crucial especially in Zambia’s highly patriarchal society where women’s second class citizenship is acclaimed by societal norms and cultural belief systems.

Zambians have been engaged in limited national debate or discussion about altering the country's current electoral system since a new system was proposed by the Electoral Reforms Technical Committee in 2005. The Committee recommended a version of the Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) system used in Lesotho. A dual ballot system, MMP, allows voters to cast two ballots: a constituency vote and a party vote. Constituency representation in the National Assembly is thus determined by the former while the latter compensates parties that have won fewer constituency seats. Candidates are then selected from a party list depending on the results of this party vote. However, this process has remained undecided for a decade now.

While Zambia celebrates having a female vice president, Inonge Winga, women's representation is still far short of achieving 30% let alone 50%. During the 2011 local elections, women won just 6% of local government seats, regressing by 1%. Parliamentary results were equally disappointing with the percentage of women dropping from 16% to 13%, far from the SADC Protocol target of 50/50. This is especially disappointing as it was Zambia's last election before the 2015 deadline. Zambia has not had any significant changes with women continually occupying the periphery of the political space and less women in local government as compared to national government. Zambia is set to remain below 30% unless they adopt quotas and or amend their electoral systems.

## Comparative experience

### Zimbabwe

### Lesotho

### Mauritius

#### Activities

- Mobilise women to contest in the upcoming local and national elections;
- Build women's capacity to take up leadership positions in the 2016 tripartite elections;
- Hold 10 women in leadership seminars in the 10 provinces in Zambia in partnership with the Zambia Local Government Association, local authorities and councils;
- Hold meetings with council officials aimed at reviewing their gender equality and mainstreaming actions and strategies on ways of improving decision making and actions going forward.
- Develop multi-media products on the current state of women in politics; including lobbying and advocacy through television, radio and print media.

**Commented [CLM2]:** Pls give brief summaries, all are relevant esp Zimbabwe because of the Constitutional review

**Commented [CLM3]:** This section needs a much sharper focus – how for example can we facilitate learning from other SADC countries?

**Commented [CLM4]:** Too vague, how can we get to women who are actually contesting

**Commented [CLM5]:** What exactly will this achieve???

### Partners

Partner	What partner brings	How GL will complement

### Outputs

- 10 Comprehensive seminar reports derived from meetings held in the 10 provinces in Zambia;
- Percentage increase in women candidates contesting elections at party levels, and at local and national level;
- Changes in attitudes towards women's representation and participation in political decision making.

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### Outcomes

- Legislated quotas at local and or national levels and a review of the electoral system in Zambia leading to a legislated revised electoral system that increases the probability for women's representation and participation in governance;
- Increased women's representation in political decision making in local and national government;
- Strengthened councils that drive and own actions towards gender equality and mainstreaming;
- Improved changes in attitudes of men and women who are willing to ensure equality, justice and foster women's leadership;
- Shared learning of experiences in promoting gender equality and mainstreaming.

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