



Participation, Representation and Protection of Women in Electoral Processes in the Great Lakes Region

By

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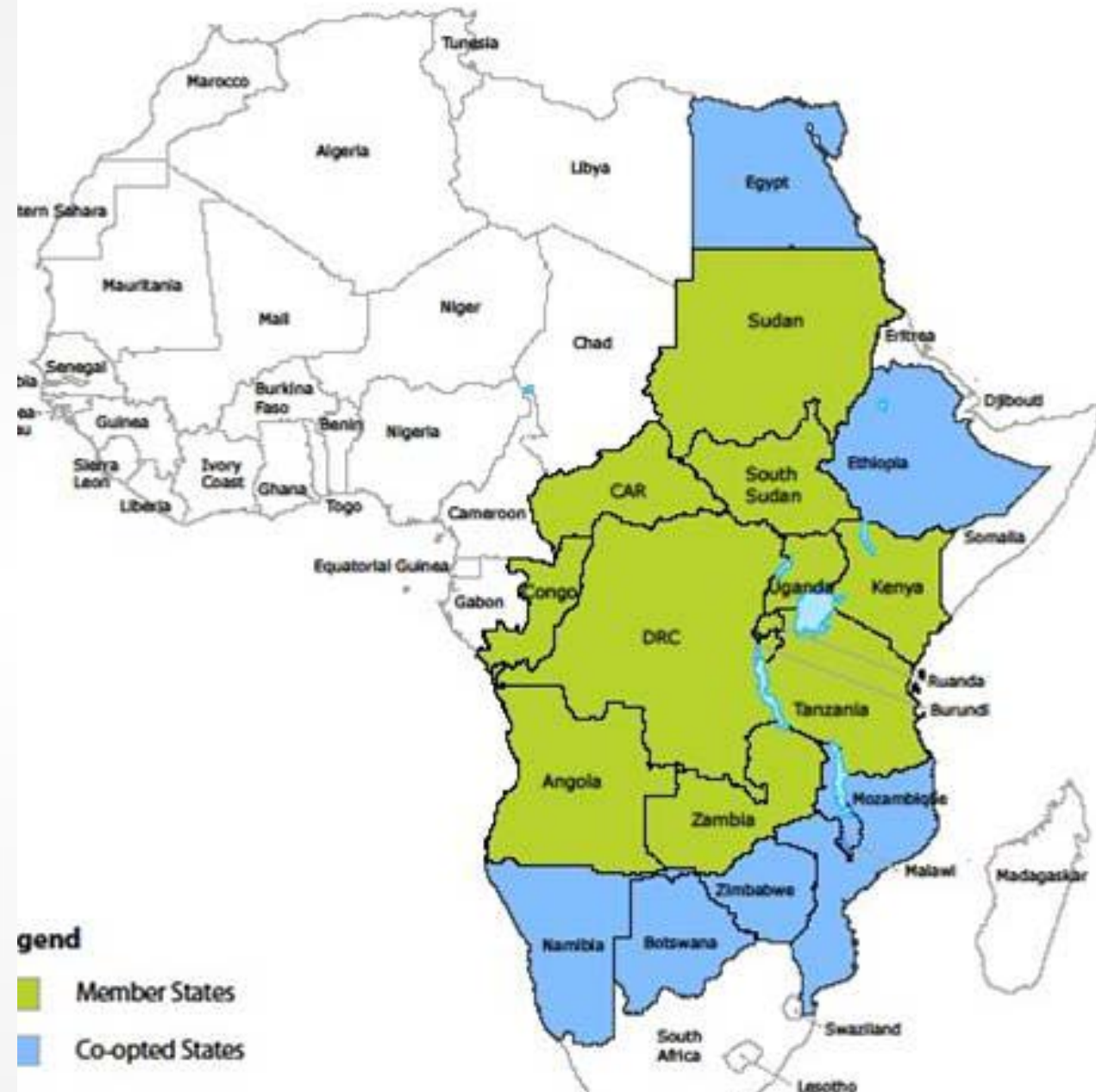
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Background Information

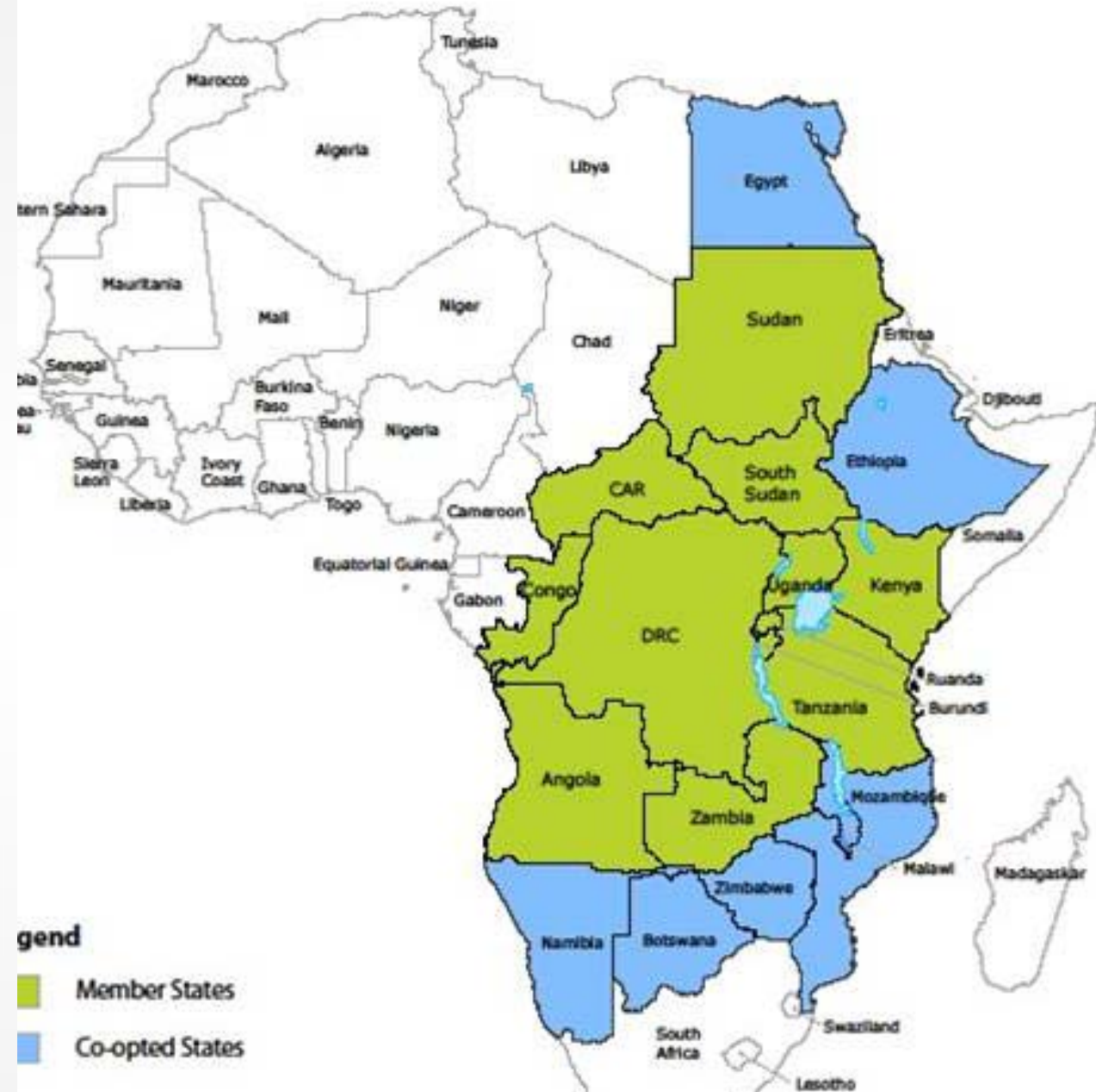
- International Conference on the Great Lakes region (ICGLR) is a regional organization stretching over Central , Southern and Eastern part of Africa.
- The ICGLR was established through UNSC Resolution 1291 of 24th February 2000 and UNSC Resolution 1304 of 16th June 2000.
- It comprises of 12 Member States (Angola, Burundi, Central African Republic, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Rwanda, Uganda, Zambia).
- The region comprises over 143 million people and 2.6 million square kilometres of land



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Background Information

- **Dar-es-Salaam Declaration**the member states undertake to “promote in our states and in the region, policies and strategies based on respect of values, principles and norms of democracy and good governance as well as observance of human rights” (ICGLR, 2004).
- **The Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region** serves as a legal framework and an agenda of the ICGLR with the aim of creating the conditions for security, stability and development between the member states.



Protocols

- The Pact includes 10 Protocols and 4 programmes of action
 1. Protocol on Non Aggression and Mutual Defence in the Great Lakes Region;
 - 2. Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance;**
 3. Protocol on Judiciary Cooperation;
 4. Protocol on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity and all forms of discrimination;
 5. Protocol on the fight against the illegal exploitation of natural resources;
 6. Protocol on specific zone for Reconstruction and Development (SZRD);
 7. Protocol on protection and assistance to internally displaced persons within their own country;
 8. Protocol on the property rights of returnees;
 - 9. Protocol on the Prevention and Punishment of Sexual Violence against women and children;**
 10. Protocol on Information Management and Communication



Thematic Areas

- Peace and Security;
- Democracy and Good Governance;
- Economic Development and Regional Integration;
- Humanitarian, Environment and Social Issues
- Gender, Women & Children;
- Cross –Cutting Issues (Human Rights, Human Settlement, HIV/AIDs).



Enabling Legal Framework for Women

Legal Instrument	Section(s)	Provisions
The Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region	Preamble & Article 6	"Determined to ensure the strict observance of the Standards and principles of international humanitarian law, notably those relating to the protection and assistance of women children, refugees"
Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance	Chap3 (Elections) Article 6 (Women's Vote)	Member States shall take appropriate steps to guarantee that women are accorded the equal right to vote and be elected, to participate in formulation and implementation of government policies and hold public office and carry out public functions at all levels of decision-making
	Chapter 8 (Women, Children and Youth) Article 44 -46	Protection of women's rights, children's rights and the youth



Enabling Legal Framework

Legal Instrument	Section(s)	Provisions
Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance	Article 32 (Affirmative Action)	Member States shall put in place policies that will take into account affirmative action with a view to addressing the social, political, economic, cultural, historic and other prejudices which have deprived women equal treatment and opportunities with men in education sector



Barriers to Women Participation

1. GOVERNMENTAL: LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY BARRIERS

- Legal and institutional frameworks, whether within the country's constitution or through election administration laws, can serve as barriers to political participation and spur the gender gap in political representation;
- As voters, legal provisions are necessary to ensure women's right to vote as well as facilitate the exercise of this right;
- As candidates, legal provisions can include affirmative action provisions that ensure women's inclusion during the organization of party lists during elections, or in the actual composition of the parliament.



Barriers to Women Participation..Cont'd

2. SOCIETAL: BARRIERS INHERENT TO CONTEXTUAL/ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

- Include cultural attitudes, gender norms and the prevalence of violence (physical and sexual), impact women's participation in public and private life;
- Social, cultural, and religious beliefs often shape gender norms regarding the roles and activities that society considers appropriate for men and women;
- These attitudes affect public perceptions of women as candidates, elected officials, leaders, and decision-makers;
- Threats and the commission of violence against women, both physical and sexual, deters women from exercising their right to vote as well as participate in electoral politics and public life;
- An additional social barrier to women's participation is conflict. Volatile security situations in which it is unsafe for women to move freely can deter women from voting and from running as candidates



Barriers to Women Participation..Cont'd

3. INDIVIDUAL: BARRIERS TO SELF-EFFICACY AND EMPOWERMENT

- Women are often deterred from political participation because they believe they lack the skills and information, or have been denied access to same, necessary for political action;
- Individual barriers can manifest themselves in civic and voter education levels, political party behavior, and other areas;
- High levels of corruption and the presence of “pay to play” politics negatively impact women candidates;
- Often, women do not have the financial means to pay for entrée onto party lists or to finance their campaigns;



Regional Programme of Action for the Promotion of Democracy and Good Governance

The programme aims to:

- Establish regional mechanisms to promote the rule of law, human rights, and combat impunity;
- Consolidate a democratisation process by enhancing institutional capacity, **promoting political participation of all segments of society**; and
- Harmonise and coordinate policies on the protection and rational exploitation and management of resources.



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Regional Programme of Action for the Promotion of Democracy and Good Governance..Cont'd

The programme consists of sub-programmes:

- Regional Centre on Good Governance, Democracy, Human Rights, and Civic Education in Lusaka, Zambia;
- Regional forums for **women**, parliamentarians, civil society and youth;
- Economic governance and rational management of resources deals



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National Legal Frameworks (Women Quota)

Country	Electoral Quota for Women
Angola	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The charter of political parties must include 'rules which encourage the promotion of equal opportunities and equity between men and women, as well as a gender representation of not less than 30% in their governing bodies at all levels' • Article 20 (2-m) of Law 22/10 on Political Parties.
Burundi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Article 108 (1) of the 2014 Electoral Code stipulates that at least 30% of the members of the National Assembly must be women. •Article 127 (4) of the Electoral Code states that lists must take gender balance into account and that one in 4 candidates must be a woman.
Central African Republic	Yes
Congo	Yes



National Legal Frameworks (Women Quota)

Country	Electoral Quota for Women
Democratic Republic of the Congo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Each party list is established taking into account the representation of men and women. (Article 13 of the 2006 Electoral Law as amended in 2017)
Kenya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Article 97(1)(a) of the Constitution provides for forty-seven women, each elected by registered voters of each county constituting a single member constituency; •Article 97(1)(a) of the Constitution provides for twelve members nominated by parliamentary political parties according to their proportion of members of The National Assembly to represent special interests, including youth, persons with disabilities and workers; •Article 100 of the Constitution provides that Parliament shall enact legislation to promote the representation in Parliament of women; persons with disabilities; youth; ethnic and other minorities; and marginalized communities; •Article 27(8) of the Constitution provides that the State shall take legislative and other measures to implement the principle that not more than two-thirds of the members of elective or appointive bodies shall be of the same gender.



National Legal Frameworks (Women Quota)

Country	Electoral Quota for Women
Rwanda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Chambre des Députés (Chamber of Deputies);- Twenty four (24) female Deputies shall be elected by specific organs in accordance with national administrative entities. A Presidential Order shall determine a national administrative entity and the number of women Deputies to be elected at each entity. •Constitution, Title IV, Chapter II, art. 76; Article 109 of Organic Law 03/2010/OL of 18 June 2010 governing presidential and legislative elections
South Sudan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women to represent at least 25% of in legislative and executive bodies •Constitution, art. 16 §4
Sudan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Yes



National Legal Frameworks (Women Quota)

Country	Electoral Quota for Women
Tanzania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Women members must not make up less than 30% in the National Assembly. The special seats for women are distributed among the political parties in proportion to the number of seats awarded to them in parliament. 'Every Political Party which contests Parliamentary elections may propose and submit the Commission names of eligible women candidates for nomination of Members of Parliament for Women Special Seats •Constitution, article 66, 78; Elections Regulations 2010, 86A
Uganda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Reserved seats, with special ballot in each district for women candidates only • Article 78 of the Constitution and Parliamentary Elections Act
Zambia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Yes



Women Representation

- Overall figure of 27%, compared to the global average of 24.3%.

Country	% of Women Parliamentarians
Rwanda	61.3%
Tanzania	36.9%
Burundi	36.4%
Uganda	34.9%
Angola	30%
South Sudan	28.5%
Sudan	27.7%
Kenya	21.8%
Zambia	18%
Republic of Congo	11.3%
Democratic Republic of the Congo	10.3%
Central African Republic	8.6%



Challenges

- The adoption of a quotas system in the 12 Member States has been not accompanied by a transformation of the political and institutional systems, which remain heavily masculine and hamper the promotion of gender equality;
- Societal: barriers inherent to contextual/environmental factors-**This seems the main constraint**
- Rigid electoral system and biases in the composition of political party lists;
- Insufficient financial means;
- Election Related Violence (Physical, Psychological, Social);
- Wrong Branding of Politics (Elections) as “a dirty Game”;



Way Forward

- A political commitment and adequate legal and policy frameworks put in place to provide a level playing field for both women and men (party backing, candidate lists, and other electoral reforms);
- Put in Place a mechanism to encourage Gender-sensitive Parliaments;
- Encouraged experience sharing and peer learning within the region.



Thank you for listening



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