

## **Women's representation in Parliament, Strategies for Success**

**Background:** women are under-represented in politics globally, and in the UK women make up almost one third of MPs (208 or 32%). The UK government believes that political parties are responsible for increasing the number of women candidates selected and elected. But even with increasing numbers of women in the UK Parliament, particularly since the 1997 General Election, there are still more men in senior and decision-making positions both in parties and in government. There is much debate about the barriers that exclude women from election – structural and societal – and that dissuade women from standing and being selected. If more women learn from examples of successful strategies to overcome those barriers, and see politics as a viable career path as well as something they can legitimately aspire to achieve, we can develop a sustainable pipeline of women to fill political roles, and replace those who step down so that progress does not falter.

**Aim:** To draw out personal stories and share strategies for overcoming barriers to participation

### **Objectives-**

1. Understand the impacts of legislation, policies and voluntary action to improve access to political office
2. Identify strategies, tools and skills women can share or acquire to succeed in political roles
3. Identify the best ways for women to receive training, resources etc.
4. Understand how these experiences can help develop solutions to improve the pipeline of women candidates

**Format:** A panel discussion with Q&A.

The event will generate discussion on women's access to politics and share international examples. The event will open with the UK Minister for Women talking about the centenary of voting rights for UK women, and sharing her experiences of election in the UK.

We would like panellists to talk about their experience of getting elected, with a particular focus on:

- Who or what inspired or motivated them to be a politician
- Whether they encountered barriers to selection/election, and what they did to overcome them
- Any thoughts on the positive role women Parliamentarians can play in gender equality
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The panel will then open up for Q&A.