



NIGERIA*

From margins to mainstream: Empowering societies for increased women's political participation in Nigeria

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Despite making up over half of Nigeria's voters in the 2023 general elections, women remain underrepresented in political offices especially in parliament—ranking 179 out of 185 countries globally.¹ No state in Nigeria has achieved the 35% affirmative action target for women's political participation. Deep-rooted barriers such as patriarchal social norms, gender-based violence, limited access to financing, and lack of implementation of special measures restrict women's inclusion. Gender-based violence against women in politics continues to be widespread, with intimidation, harassment, and bullying. Additionally, the absence of strong national women-led political movements limits coordinated action. Urgent efforts are needed to ensure equal, safe, and meaningful participation of women in political life.

This project aims to accelerate a socio-cultural shift from restrictive gender norms that limit women's political participation toward inclusive, democratic values that empower women to lead. It will adopt a Comprehensive Advocacy Methodology to challenge systemic barriers and shift public attitudes, enabling increased engagement by women in politics and governance. Key strategies to implement this project are:



Raising awareness and challenging social norms pertaining to women's leadership and addressing gender-based violence against women in politics.



Building strong feminist coalitions and women-led civic movements.



Strengthening community and policy-level partnerships for sustained advocacy.



Promoting media counternarratives and digital campaigns to inspire change.



Engaging lawmakers to support and finance reforms in favor of women's political participation.

*States of Enugu, Kwara and Lagos.



KEY TARGETS INCLUDE

45

trained to lead coalitions and mobilization for women's active participation in next general elections in Nigeria

**CIVIL SOCIETY
ORGANIZATIONS**

120

strengthened their knowledge and financial abilities to campaign and run for the general elections

**WOMEN POLITICAL
ASPIRANTS**

10

engaged in a two-week advocacy campaign on women's political leadership

**RELIGIOUS
BODIES AND
CONGREGATIONS**

12

through jingles and announcements promoting women's political participation

**MONTHS OF
RADIO CAMPAIGN**



KEY ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Organize workshops and mobilize influential women leaders to form feminist coalitions in each state; to organize mentorship activities, advocacy campaigns and rallies.
- ▶ Engage male allies and religious leaders to promote women's participation through trainings and convenings.
- ▶ Support women with disabilities through targeted outreach and political rights education.
- ▶ Advocate for gender quotas and spending caps by engaging policymakers and media.
- ▶ Launch media campaigns, including radio shows and social media content, to shift public attitudes and social norms.
- ▶ Deploy social media influencers to increase public pressure for inclusive policies.



www.unwomen.org



www.woyodev.org