

GQUAL STRATEGIC VISION

2024-2028

About GQUAL

GQUAL is a global campaign dedicated to achieving and consolidating gender parity in international institutions, including tribunals, monitoring bodies, and various other international spaces critical to the advancement of international justice, politics, and law. Our mission is to advocate for the integration of gender parity as a crucial criterion in both national and international selection processes for these influential spaces, to ensure shared power in the exercise of leadership, and to expand diversity among women occupying these spaces. To achieve this, we promote the development of data, research, and discussions, and advocate for the implementation of possible solutions to ensure equal and inclusive leadership in international decision making.

International bodies play a pivotal role in shaping decisions that impact the lives of individuals, nations, and institutions worldwide. These bodies' decisions on crucial issues, including international law and human rights, climate change, peace and security, trade, development, and economics, shape local, national, and international politics and governance.

Given the intricate nature of the problems these bodies address, it is essential to have a diverse composition that brings a wide array of perspectives to the table, facilitating more nuanced and effective problem-solving.

Moreover, considering that over half of the world's population is comprised by women, it is logical and imperative for them to be equally represented in decision-making spaces. Achieving gender parity promotes the protection of women's right to equality, and strengthens the legitimacy and impact of international fora. It also helps ensure that the decisions made in these forums accurately reflect the diverse needs and experiences of the global population, contributing to more inclusive and comprehensive outcomes.

The Problem We Address

The data that supported the launch of GQUAL in 2015, showed that - at 32.5% - women were underrepresented across almost all international and regional tribunals, bodies, and mechanisms responsible for imparting international justice and developing international law. Some key international bodies have an alarming historical and current record, such as the International Court of Justice with only 6 women out of a total of 115 judges since its creation, with only 4 of them serving today, or the UN International Law Commission, with only 11 women out of 248 commissioners appointed since its creation, 6 of them serving today¹.




Through consistent data gathering and tracking, network building, research and advocacy, GQUAL has had a tremendous impact in substantially changing this picture, increasing women's participation to

¹ Data as of May, 2024, available at www.gqualcampaign.org

44% today. Since GQUAL’s launch, the total rate of women’s representation at UN Special Procedures has risen from 39.4%² to 60% in March 2024³, and the number of Special Rapporterships never held by women went from 19 to 10 in March 2024⁴. At the regional level, the Inter-American Court and the Inter-American Commission of Human Right achieved gender parity for the first time in history in 2022 and has sustained it ever since.⁵

However, much still needs to be done to achieve gender parity in all justice spaces, consolidate and sustain the achievements through institutionalized practices and rules, and expand it to other international decision-making bodies and spaces where progress has been more elusive. Women remain more represented in bodies associated with women’s and children’s rights and in non-tribunal bodies or that don't require States' involvement in the nomination and appointment of candidates.

■ **ROOT CAUSES OF THIS PROBLEM ARE:**

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OPAQUE SELECTION PROCESSES ▶ Lack of transparent, participative and gender parity-oriented national and international selection processes.
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INTERSECTIONAL DISCRIMINATION ▶ Different groups of women experience different barriers and forms of discrimination. Many women in the Global South do not have the same social, political, and economic capital as women in the Global North.
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GENDER STEREOTYPES ▶ Embedded gender stereotypes.
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INTERNATIONAL LEGAL FRAMEWORK ▶ Lack of legal standards, policies and guidelines at the international level to ensure gender parity.
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POOR ENFORCEMENT ▶ Insufficient oversight and accountability.
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LACK OF SUPPORT ▶ Lack of support for female candidates and access to information.
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INSUFFICIENT DATA ▶ Poor institutional data collection by States and international organizations.
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MALE NETWORK DYNAMICS ▶ Male-dominated network dynamics that prevent women from entering these positions and networks.
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SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS ▶ Some positions require certain qualifications, such as language skills, that disproportionately limits access to potential candidates from the Global South.

2 See: <https://gqualcampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/ENGLISH-2016-01-07-GQUAL-Concept-Note.pdf> p. 19

3 See: <https://gqualcampaign.org/data/current-composition/>

4 4 out of those 19 with only one mandate held as of March 2024. See: <https://gqualcampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/ENGLISH-2016-01-07-GQUAL-Concept-Note.pdf> p. 2; <https://gqualcampaign.org/data/current-composition/>

5 See: <https://www.corteidh.or.cr/composicion.cfm?lang=en> ; <https://www.oas.org/en/IACHR/jsForm/?File=/en/iachr/mandate/composition.asp>

Our Impact

The GQUAL campaign has addressed many of these causes. As a direct result of our work:

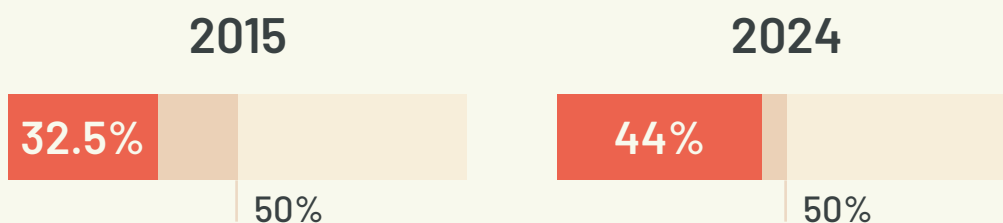
- ▶ The landscape of women’s representation in international spaces, particularly international justice, has substantially changed:

	When GQUAL started 2015	The picture today 2024
Total International Bodies	32.5%	44%
International Tribunals	17%	33%
UN Treaty Bodies	40%	52%
UN Special Procedures	39.4% 19 out of 52 SPs have not been held by a woman	60% 10 out of 59 SPs have not been held by a woman
Inter American Court of Human Rights	0%	43% Represents parity in a bench of 7
Inter American Commission on Human Rights	42.8% Represents parity in a bench of 7	42.8% Sustaining gender parity through consecutive memberships for the first time
Female candidates to the UN Special Procedures Data from 2018 to 2022	34.7% (2018)	48.8% (2022)
Women nominated to the UN Treaty Bodies Data from 2018 to 2022	50.8% (2018)	62.7% (2022)

- ▶ There is a clearer legal framework on women's rights to participate equally in decision making spaces, including through the adoption of General Comment 40 by the CEDAW Committee specifically addressing gender parity in international decision-making as a human right.
- ▶ There are clearer roadmaps to achieve gender parity, including through a number of resolutions and reports with recommendations promoted by GQUAL and adopted by the UN Human Rights Council and the Organization of American State’s General Assembly.

- ▶ Several States in the Americas have implemented national procedures to select candidates to international positions. One of them - Argentina - has regulated the procedure, applying the mechanisms on several nominations.
- ▶ Several States in the Americas, including Argentina, Chile, and Colombia, which initially had track record of nominating women when the campaign started have taken measures to improve it by nominating women to key positions in the last years.
- ▶ There are specific key stakeholders in institutions and in key places that are now more aware and sensitized with these issues.

The Gap



GQUAL's work has contributed to reducing the gender gap in international justice by **11.5%**

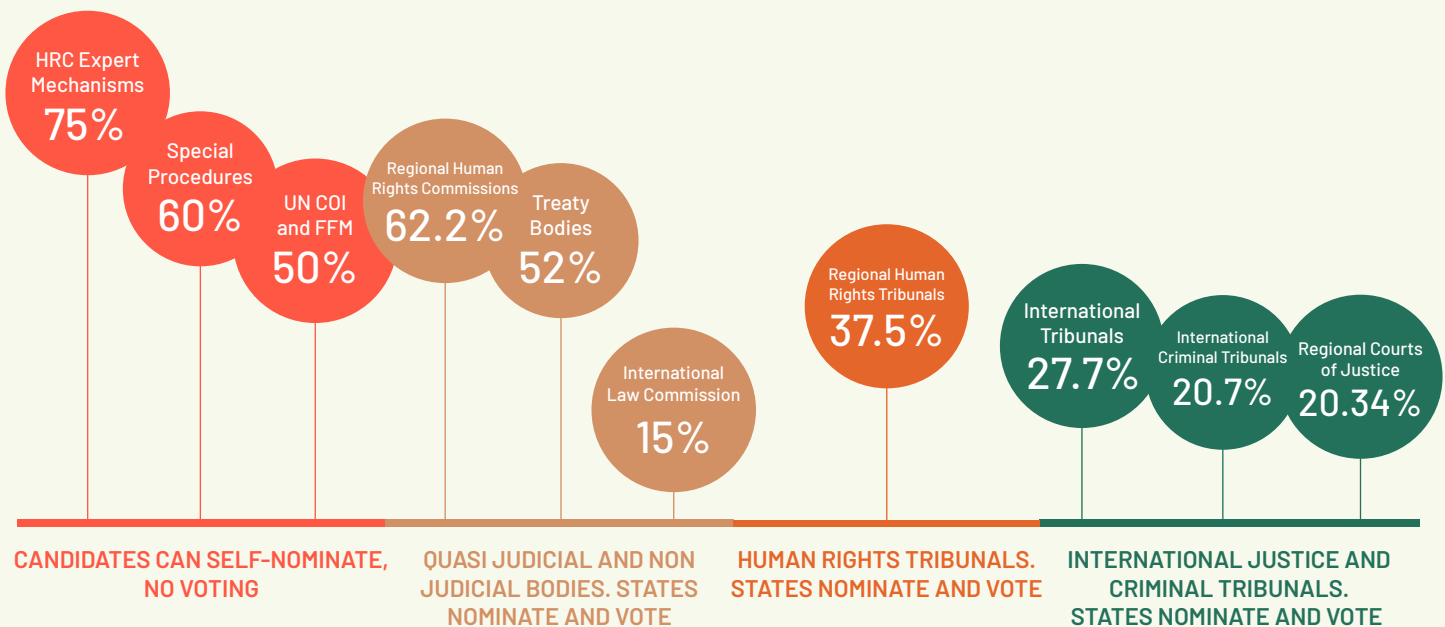
Despite all our progress, important gaps remain.

The challenge of achieving parity and representation in international bodies related to international law and justice persists. While women represent 44% of international positions monitored by GQUAL, many spaces have still never been occupied by women and their participation is often concentrated in bodies with mandates associated with women's or children's rights. When eliminating these bodies from the data input, women's participation drops to 40%. Additionally, the data show that in the many spaces where State's nomination and voting is required women's participation is more restricted. For instance, since the campaign started, women's participation in the UN Special Procedures and other Expert Mechanisms – where State nomination and voting is not required – has increased 20%, reaching parity. However, participation in all other bodies where State's nomination and voting is a necessary step in the appointment has increased at a much slower rate. In fact, the participation of women in judicial international bodies - which constitute key influential positions - remains a challenge, with women accounting for 37% of positions in international tribunals and 29% in regional ones⁶. Bodies like the World Trade Organization Appellate Body, has had 25 members since its inception in 1995, only 4 of which were women (16%) as of March 2024. At the same time, much more is needed to achieve a broader diversity among the women participating in international bodies.

⁶ CURRENT COMPOSITION – GQUAL. See: <https://gqualcampaign.org/data/current-composition/>

Moreover, the progress achieved is not guaranteed, especially in the context of so much pushback against women's rights. As one of our allies noted, "...the force of regression is a powerful inertia for groups that want to maintain their privileges." This challenge is increased by the fact that many of the frameworks and roadmaps developed to better distribute power and guarantee an equal gender participation have not yet been institutionalized at the national or international level, leaving space for recurrent setbacks.

Women's participation in international justice spaces



Lastly, international decision making systems go well beyond international justice spaces, and women are severely underrepresented in them. Examples include diplomatic posts, with women, being only 39 % of heads and deputy heads of mission as of July 2023⁷, as well as international peacekeeping missions, with women representing only 6.5 percent of military contingents as of April 2023⁸. Women are also generally underrepresented in international delegations - women represented barely 34% in delegations during COP28⁹- and in multilateral decision-making systems, particularly as high-level representatives before international organizations. Only 13% of the elected leaders in 54 international organizations since 1945 have been women, and 21 of these organizations have still never been led by a woman¹⁰, including the UN and the Organization of American States. More and more, organizations and institutions in those fields connect with GQUAL and our strategies to promote discussions on women's participation.

7 See Facts and figures: Women, peace, and security, at <https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/peace-and-security/facts-and-figures>

8 Id.

9 See: <https://wedo.org/release-new-data-shows-34-womens-participation-on-party-delegations-at-cop28-the-same-percentage-as-10-years-ago/#:~:text=New%20analysis%20from%20the%20Women's,were%20women%2C%20and%20less%20than>

10 GWL, Women in Multilateralism 2024, An analysis of the gender composition of governing bodies and management teams in the world's leading multilateral organizations, at <https://gwlvoices.com/download/women-in-multilateralism-2024-in-english/?wpdmml=9619&refresh=664200518a3131715601489>

GQUAL's Relevance

The progress achieved since 2015 regarding women's participation in international justice has required a campaign installing and pushing the agenda through concerted and constant advocacy actions, both to obtain gains and to sustain them.

GQUAL has been the force behind it and continues to be well positioned to address the remaining challenges within international justice spaces, given its unique approach founded on five distinctive features: a data-driven approach, a solid legal foundation and simple message, the incorporation of transparency and equality in the nomination and election processes, the promotion of a global south leadership and an open and inclusive dialogue with a diverse set of stakeholders.

GQUAL's system change methodology, and its experience advocating for gender parity in international fora can also help make a difference in other international spaces as well. Looking ahead, within the next five years, GQUAL aims to delve deeper into these spaces, seeking a nuanced understanding of the status of under-representation and the implementation of concrete strategies to help address it.

Our End Game

GQUAL's end game is for women in all their diversity to enjoy their right to equal and inclusive participation in international decision-making spaces. We strongly believe that this makes international institutions more legitimate and more impactful, since it leads to better decisions that include women's perspectives. We also expect that the women elected will become role models for other women interested in entering different international spaces, and that the consolidation of gender parity in international justice will have ripple effects in other key decision making spaces, both at the international and the national level.

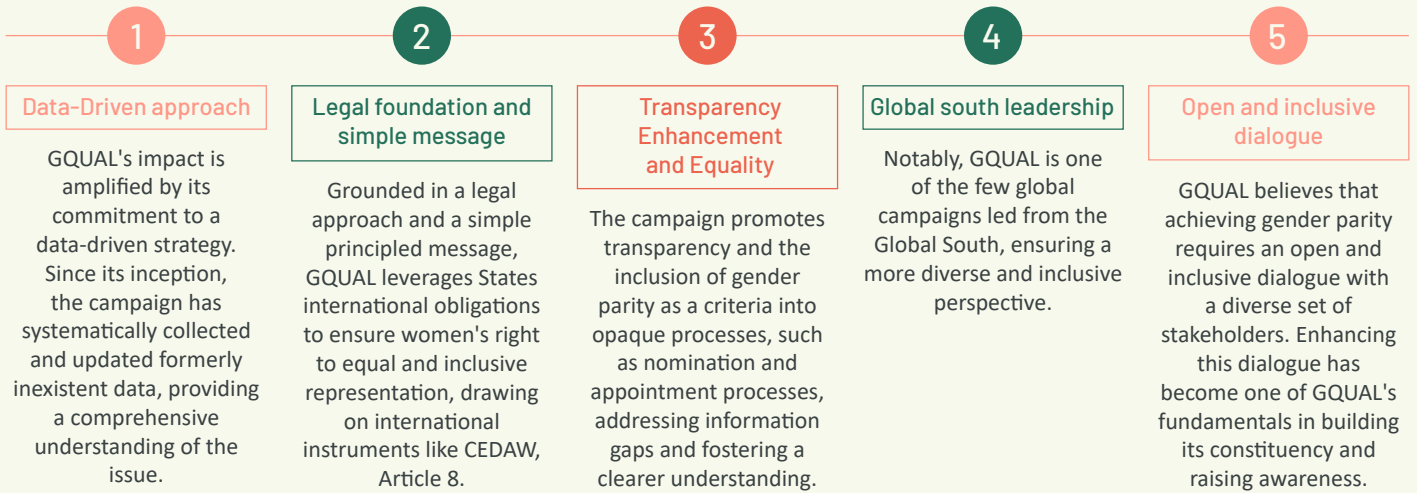
■ **TO THIS END, GQUAL IMPLEMENTS A SERIES OF STRATEGIES THAT ACT IN A COMBINED WAY TO:**

- ▶ Raise awareness and support for women candidates, specially from the global south, and generate a global academic and political debate about the obstacles, consequences and solutions for equal representation,
- ▶ Change practices and rules within the selection and nomination processes nationally and internationally to include gender parity as a criterion, and
- ▶ Develop the scope of women's right to equal and inclusive representation in international decision making spaces, and promote its compliance.
- ▶ Guarantee GQUAL's sustainability to enhance its impact and advocate for gender parity.

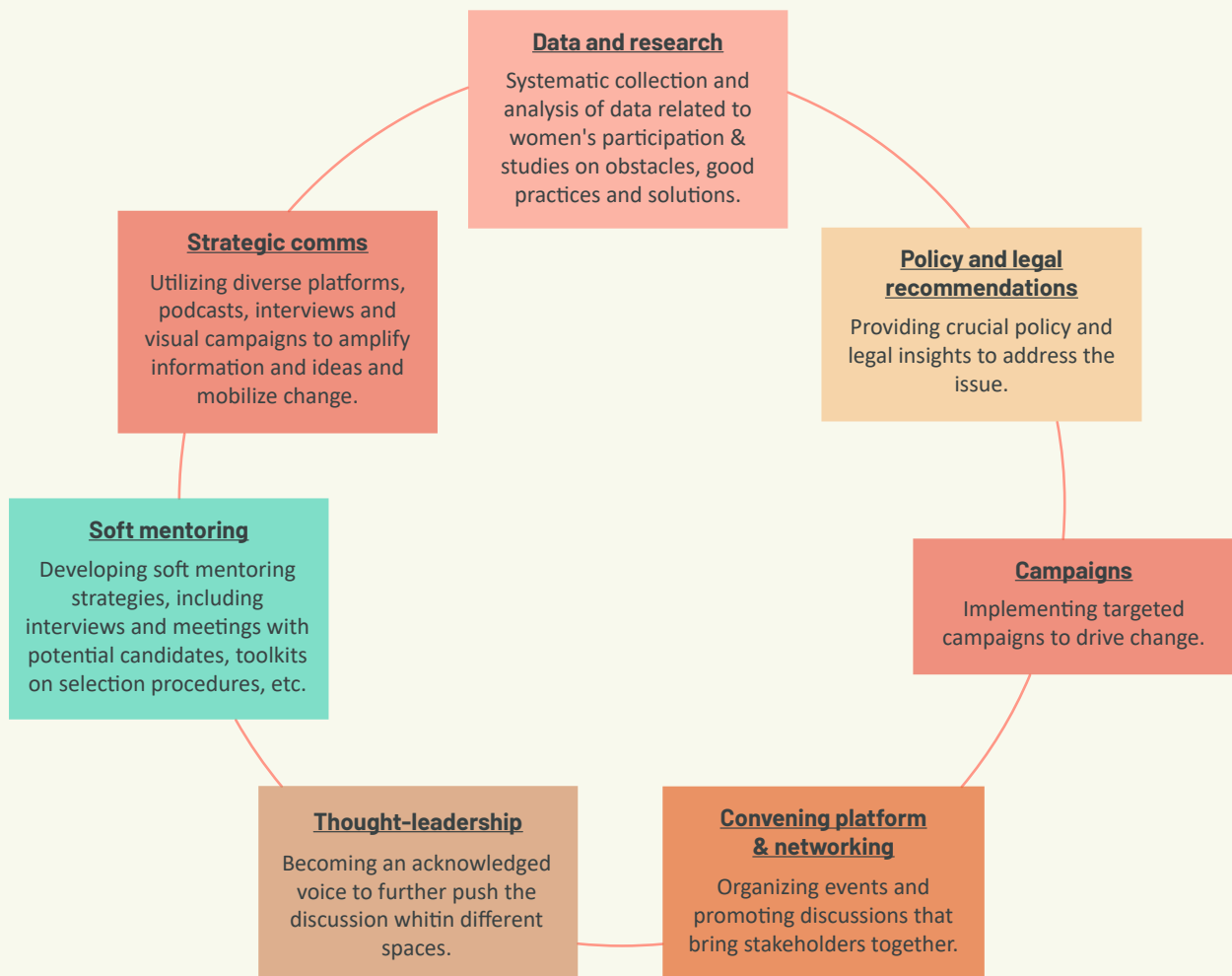
GQUAL's Niche and Added Value

The GQUAL campaign stands out as a true game-changer in addressing women's underrepresentation

in international decision-making spaces. It has developed a system change methodology that combines several distinctive tenets:



These tenets are applied through the following strategies:



Our Vision for the Next Five Years

We have outlined a set of ambitious milestones that aim to propel the campaign forward, reshaping the current landscape of representation. To reach them, GQUAL will implement its system change methodology. These milestones envision a future where women's equal representation is not only achieved but sustained and expanded globally.

INSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL FRAMEWORKS

- ▶ There is a clear development of the scope of women's right to equal and inclusive participation in international decision making and accountability mechanisms
- ▶ In Latin America, four national nomination procedures have been established, marking progress within the region.
- ▶ GQUAL has built strong partnerships in Africa, scaling the campaign's efforts and activities in the region utilizing the dissemination of data, standards and good practices as a gateway for greater impact.
- ▶ New treaties incorporate gender parity as a default criteria for membership in oversight bodies.
- ▶ An impactful debate has emerged connecting the participation of women in various spaces, including the election of the first woman UN and OAS Secretary-General, international arbitration, international justice, peace and security, climate, and trade.

ROADMAPS WITHIN INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE SPACES

- ▶ Specific institutional measures ensuring gender parity are established within entities like the Human Rights Council, UN Special Procedures, Treaty Bodies, Inter American Commission and Court of Human Rights.
- ▶ GQUAL's initiatives create a butterfly effect, facilitating faster changes as successful strategies in some spaces are replicated in others.
- ▶ Increased transparency is achieved, with a greater amount of institutionally published and available data.
- ▶ GQUAL's network of allies play a crucial role in holding mechanisms accountable.
- ▶ The next UN and OAS Secretary-General prioritizes the issue of equal and inclusive representation, recognizing its importance.

WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION

- ▶ Legal frameworks and practices contribute to an increase in women's participation. A clearer path supported by constituencies, male allies, and necessary resources is established.
- ▶ GQUAL's work, narrative, and methodologies emphasize the importance of diversity, considering various geographies and dimensions.
- ▶ Decision-making spaces become more diverse, by becoming more open to intersectional approaches and accessible to women from underrepresented groups.

- ▶ The vision of the next UN and OAS Secretary-General being a woman committed to human and women's rights becomes a reality.
- ▶ The establishment of a mentoring program fosters alliances between women to support each other.



ALLYSHIPS

- ▶ GQUAL's key stakeholder groups diversify, with a more varied and collective level of support from institutions, entities, and groups.
- ▶ Notable institutions actively support and endorse the campaign's objectives.
- ▶ GQUAL introduces an award for champions, recognizing and celebrating exemplary contributions.



EXPANSION

- ▶ GQUAL contributed to improving women's participation in key international spaces beyond international justice, contributing to a more inclusive representation.
- ▶ Increased awareness about the necessity of including affected individuals in decision-making solutions, with women recognized as integral to this process.
- ▶ Greater awareness of women's underrepresentation leads to increased participation in spaces related to peace and security, foreign affairs ministries, national justice, environment, arbitration, trade, and other areas with global economic impacts.
- ▶ This awareness is backed by an accountability mechanism, setting a threshold of 40% with a standard ultimately reaching 50%.



GQUAL'S INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY IS STRENGTHENED

- ▶ GQUAL's funding needs for the next five years are identified and partially or fully obtained.
- ▶ GQUAL's structure is strengthened.

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#ChangeThePicture

