

JULY 2024

# THEORY OF CHANGE

## GQUAL CAMPAIGN

**GQUAL**

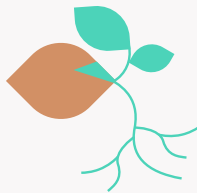


## ◆ *Our Theory of Change in a nutshell*



### ◆◆ Creating fertile soil

Preparing national and international legal institutions to incorporate and welcome gender parity in their selection processes, building a network of allies, and promoting research and information on the causes and obstacles for the underrepresentation of women.



### ◆◆ Gathering and planting the seeds

Actively producing and disseminating timely information on selection procedures and vacancies; empowering, inspiring, and mentoring diverse female aspirants to international legal positions.



### ◆◆ Helping the seeds grow

Before and during election cycles, actively advocating for gender parity before national institutions, promoting the adoption of guidelines and legal standards at the international level, and mentoring potential female nominees in their campaigns.



### ◆◆ A bountiful harvest (outcome)

Qualified female candidates are elected to international legal positions, achieving gender parity.



### ◆◆ A healthy community (impact)

International legal institutions make better decisions that include women's perspectives and increase their legitimacy, while the women elected become role models and mentors for other women interested in entering international law.

## ◆ Introduction

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

Decisions taken by diverse and representative bodies are based on more complex assessments of the problems and, therefore, have the possibility to better address them. Decisions taken by uniform tribunals are based on a simplified assessment of the problems and therefore overlook key layers and issues when addressing them.

Gqual Campaign's initiative aims to permanently change the rules that currently determine who is nominated and elected for these positions by incorporating gender parity as an objective and criteria. GQUAL will provide tools, build unity, and contribute to the broader feminist and human rights movements in fighting against the discrimination that still prevents women's access to key decision-making positions, and in working towards a more leveled field for women in some of the most consequential positions.

## ◆ Challenges

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 today.

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

### OPAQUE SELECTION PROCESSES

Lack of transparent, participative and gender parity-oriented national and international selection processes.

### **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.

### **GENDER STEREOTYPES**

Embedded gender stereotypes

### **INTERNATIONAL LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

Lack of legal standards, policies and guidelines at the international level to ensure gender parity.

### **POOR ENFORCEMENT**

Insufficient oversight and accountability.

### **LACK OF SUPPORT**

Lack of support for female candidates and access to information.

### **INSUFFICIENT DATA**

Poor institutional data collection by States and international organizations.

### **MALE NETWORK DYNAMICS**

Male-dominated network dynamics that prevent women from entering these positions and networks.

### **SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS**

Some positions require certain qualifications, such as language skills, that disproportionately limits access to potential candidates from the Global South.

## ◆ *Desired Impact*

International institutions make better decisions that include women's perspectives and increase their legitimacy, while the women elected to these institutions become role models for other women interested in entering international law.

Our general outcome is to ensure that qualified female candidates with different backgrounds are elected to positions within international decision-making bodies, achieving gender parity.

## ◆ Strategies

Gqual implements a series of strategies that act work together to: raise awareness and support for female candidates, specially from the Global South, generate a global academic and political debate about the implications of achieving (or lack thereof) gender parity, change practices within the selection and nomination processes nationally and internationally, and promote changes in the normative framework to increase gender parity with the aim of leaving a lasting footprint that will consolidate positive changes in practices and culture. These strategies are:

### → Strategy 1 - Awareness and Support

#### OBJECTIVE 1

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, (planting the seed).

#### LONG-TERM OUTCOME:

Discussions on equal participation in different international spaces have been solidified in one holistic narrative about the need for standards and accountability tools on parity and equal and inclusive representation as a women's right.

#### MEDIUM-TERM OUTCOME:

The overall levels of participation of women, from diverse backgrounds and regions, in the composition of international tribunals and bodies, is increased with a significant number of them achieving and sustaining gender parity.

#### MEDIUM-TERM OUTCOME:

A higher number of stakeholders, including international institutions, champion gender parity in international spaces.

### → Strategy 2 - Nomination and voting processes

#### OBJECTIVE 2

Change practices and rules within the selection and voting processes nationally and internationally to include gender parity as a criterion.

#### LONG-TERM OUTCOME:

States adopt permanent policies and mechanisms that consider gender parity and representation when nominating, selecting, and voting for international positions. This outcome is key to making changes sustainable.

#### MEDIUM-TERM OUTCOMES:

States adopt gender parity-promoting policies, mechanisms and practices into their selection processes for international positions and increase the transparency of their selection processes.

## → Strategy 3 - Normative Framework

### OBJECTIVE 3

To promote changes in the normative framework of national and international institutions to increase gender parity and allow women, particularly from the Global South, to be part of their composition (helping the seed grow).

#### LONG-TERM OUTCOME:

Legal developments at the national and international level clearly establish that achieving gender parity in international and national decision-making is part of States' obligations to eliminate gender discrimination. This outcome, particularly in the international organizations that have elections to a legal monitoring body, directly contributes to our overall outcome of increasing sustainable gender parity.

#### MEDIUM-TERM OUTCOMES:

UN, international, regional and national institutions and bodies develop standards on gender parity.

#### MEDIUM-TERM OUTCOME:

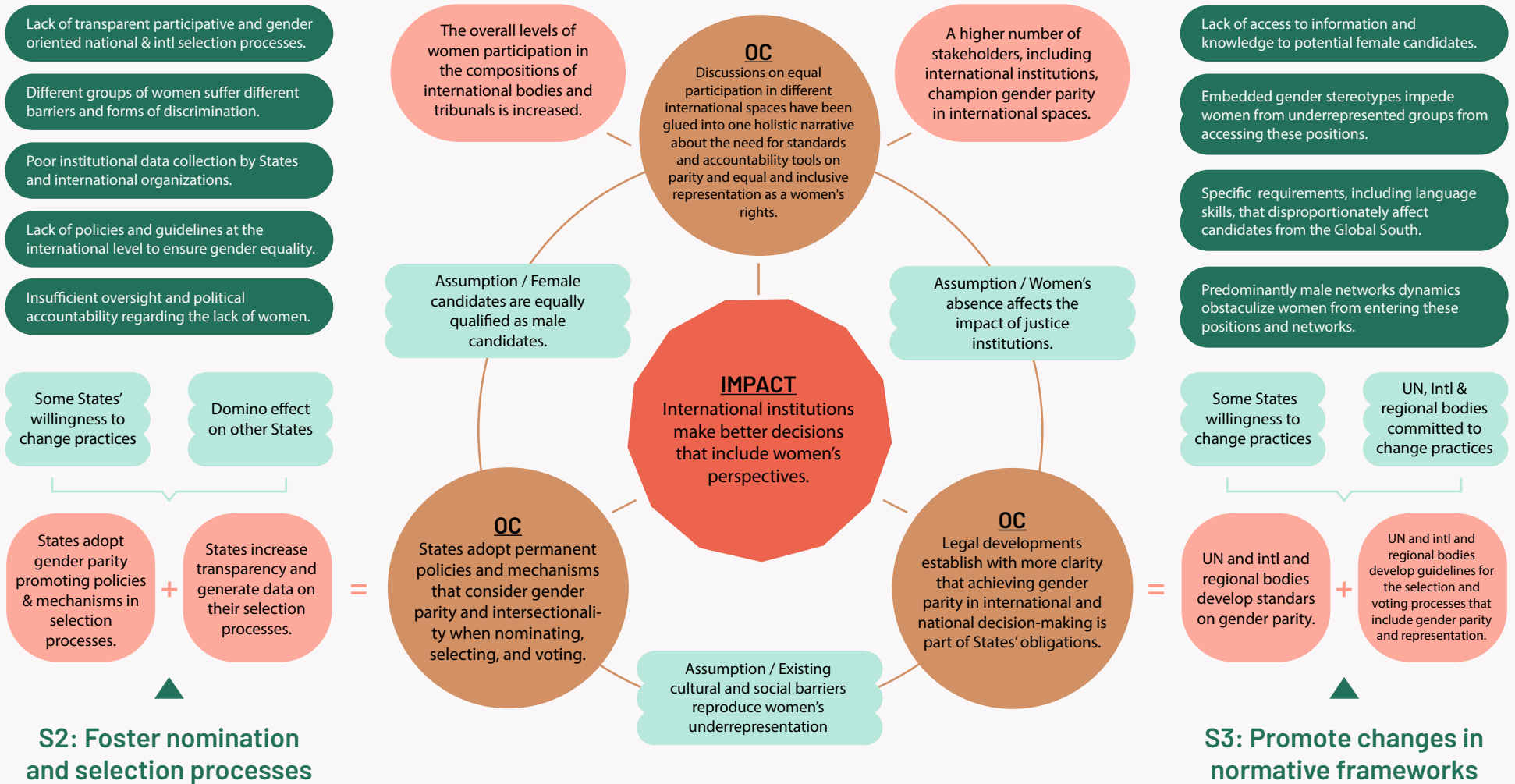
UN, international and regional institutions and bodies develop guidelines for the selection processes that include gender parity and representation as a criteria.

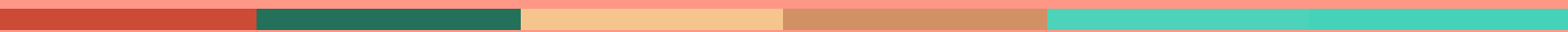
## 🔍 Assumptions

Assumptions are hypotheses that explain the rationale behind our objectives and desired outcome. They let us understand whether we are reaching our goals and why.

- 01 ■ Women's absence negatively affects the legitimacy, quality, and impact of international justice institutions.
- 02 ■ Female candidates are equally qualified as male candidates.
- 03 ■ There are several barriers that play a role in reproducing processes and decisions that result in women's underrepresentation within these bodies: unconscious biases of decision-makers, stereotypes, informal influence networks, domestic and international dynamics of policy-making, the lack of scrutiny of many of these choices, insufficient information.
- 04 ■ Some States are willing to change their practices related to nomination and selection of candidates, increasing their transparency, and incorporating gender parity standards.
- 05 ■ UN, regional and other international bodies and institutions are willing to change practices and behaviors.
- 06 ■ Changes in practices of these States generate a domino effect.

### S1: Raise awareness and support to candidate women, especially in the Global South





# €QUAL

#ChangeThePicture

