

Violence Against  
Women In Politics  
VAWIP

Defining  
Terminologies  
and  
Concepts





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Women in Politics (VAWIP)  
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**TERMINOLOGIES**  
and  
**CONCEPTS**







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# Preface

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The participation of women in political governance is very low in the South Asian region. There are several factors responsible for the marginalization of women in politics. The gender insensitive political culture of the region has made it difficult for women politicians to firmly establish themselves in decision-making positions. The intensely competitive world of male dominated politics, patriarchal mindset and masculine culture are major obstacles to women's participation in politics. The issue of Violence Against Women in Politics (VAWIP) remains invisible and reported inadequately. At the same time, it has not been defined and addressed explicitly. The insensitive and violent masculine political culture of the region has raised an urgent need to understand the issue deeply through practical actions to end violence against women in politics and addressed effectively at a national as well as regional level.

There are three elements woven around the issues of VAWIP – Women, Violence and Politics. VAWIP inter-relates with Violence against Women, Women in Politics and Political Violence. The existence of the prevailing hierarchical structure and patriarchal mindset within the society and political parties has resulted in a culture of silence.

SAP-International in collaboration with national SAPs and partner civil society organization, has been working on the issue of VAWIP since 2006. Since the terminology and concepts used in VAWIP are not clearly defined therefore, SAP International tried to compile the definitions and scope of terms and concepts related to VAWIP. This is an entirely new compilation from different sources. This handbook will be useful to many readers but the readers we have had most in mind are those who are working in the issue of Violence against Women, Women in Politics and Political Violence.

**Rohit Kumar Nepali, Ph.D**  
Executive Director  
SAP International



# Acknowledgement

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Being one of the pioneers in the area of VAWIP, this handbook could not have been possible without the collective efforts of many individuals. We are grateful to the VAWIP Advisory Group who deserves thanks for their significant contributions in preparing this handbook.

In this endeavor towards compiling and defining the concepts, Ms. Rachana Shrestha deserves special thanks for her hard work, without whose untiring efforts the handbook would not have been made possible.

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Thanks are due to the SAP International staffs who have contributed directly or indirectly to the success of this handbook.

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# Introduction

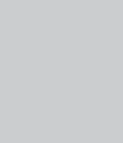
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In this day of women's liberation and recognition of women's political rights as basic human rights, it is unfortunate that the representatives of women's rights at the national and international level are suffering from gross violation of human rights. Although South Asia has been boasting about eminent women leaders, yet women from the grassroots have not successfully reached decision making positions. Women's involvement and participation in politics has been sidelined from the national political system.

Effective democratic governance continues to be one of the greatest challenges of the South Asia as countries cope with demands of the global economy and pressures from citizens for increased participation and representation. The countries in the region are at different stages of democratic governance ranging between highest 33.2 % in Nepal to 5.8% in Sri Lanka; despite being conventional in terms of women's right, Afghanistan comes second in rank with 27.7% women representation in national politics. Representation of women in Pakistan, Bangladesh and India is 22.5%, 18.6% and 10.9% respectively. In Bhutan and Maldives, women members of parliament constitute only 8.5% and 6.6% of the total number of representatives respectively.

South Asia given its unique culture has readily accepted the increasing trend of violence in politics as an inherent part of the game. The impact of such a practice and culture on women's political participation is yet to be fully understood and taken into account as a major reason behind the inability to increase women's participation at national and local political governance. Moreover, policy formulation has always been a male domain in South Asia. Although few countries have in recent years been able to increase women's representation, their active participation in the state decision making, bureaucracy and





judiciary processes are still negligible in the region. There are very few gender sensitive policies like reservations and quotas for women, targeted to political empowerment of women. There is not even a single legal policy in any country of the region to minimize incidents of violence against women in politics.

Violence against women in politics is a socially accepted norm in South Asia. Voices of women politicians have been silenced and women have to silently suffer the violence meted out on them by the society, political parties, state and individuals. Violence has been identified as one of the root causes of women's lower participation in political governance. The prevalence of a culture of silence among women is primarily responsible for unreported cases of violence. Until this silence is broken, women's effective participation at all levels of politics in South Asia will continue to be a distant dream.

# DEFINITIONS AND SCOPE OF TERMS AND CONCEPTS RELATED TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN POLITICS (VAWIP)

## 1. Affirmative Actions

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A policy designed to favour some deprived region or minority and to redress, at least in part, uneven development. Policies and practices which favors groups (mainly ethnics groups and women) who are historically disadvantaged by a political system to participate in public life. Affirmative actions imply applying different criteria for selection to representatives of different groups as a way of addressing the existing social inequalities. It can be distinguished from affirmative or positive action which implies taking proactive steps to encourage certain groups to participate in the social, economic, and political life of a country.

## 2. Blame Game

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The blame game is common in politics, a field in which people tend to take credit for success while minimizing failure. Any persons attempt to pass the blame especially politicians, for a catastrophic failure to a rival may be defined as “blame game”. The blame game distracts people by shifting the focus on who made the mistake which led to the problem, from why the problem occurred in the first place. In context to women in politics, the blame game applies to a condition imposed by the society to shatter her confidence by attacking her on the character based on the sexual moral code of conducts. Women politicians are often blamed to be morally corrupt when they mix up with men during the campaigning and other political activities. This happens especially around the election time to harass, humiliate and finally woman candidate lose the election.

### **3. Candidate Selection**

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In democratic political systems the selection of candidates is critically important as political parties and the party preferences of voters have come to dominate electoral politics. Party selection of candidates thus effectively determines the public's choice of who will represent them. In electoral areas which are dominated by a single party, that party's choice of candidate also effectively determines who is elected.

### **4. CEDAW**

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The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is a human rights instrument adopted by the UN General Assembly in Resolution 34/180 of 18 December 1979, which came into force on 3 September 1981. The goal of the Convention is to eliminate all attitudes, practices, distinctions, exclusions or preferences on the basis of sex which put women in an unfavorable position with respect to men. CEDAW is a landmark international agreement that affirms principles of fundamental human rights and equality for women around the world. It also establishes an agenda of action for putting an end to sex-based discrimination: States ratifying the Convention are required to enshrine gender equality into their domestic legislation, repeal all discriminatory provisions in their laws, and enact new provisions to guard against discrimination against women. It is a practical blueprint for each country to achieve progress for women and girls. In ratifying this Convention, the States Parties not only agree to apply the Convention nationwide, but they also agree to submit reports on measures taken to attain this objective, especially to remove obstacles and constraints encountered.

### **5. Character Assassination**

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Character assassination may involve double speak, spreading of rumors or deliberate misinformation on topics relating to the subject's morals, integrity and reputation. The technically true information is presented in a misleading manner or is presented without the necessary context. In politics, perhaps the most common form of character assassination is the spread of allegations that a candidate is a liar. Other common themes may include allegations that the candidate is a bad or unpopular member of his/her family, has a bad relationship with his/her spouse or children, is disrespected by his/her former co-workers, or routinely engages in disturbing, socially unacceptable behavior, such as sexual deviancy. Charging an opponent with character assassination may have political benefits.

## **6. Codes of Conduct for Political Parties**

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Codes of conduct are general guidelines setting out standards of behavior, normally agreed on a voluntary basis. The Code of Conduct for Political Parties is guidance to political parties and candidates to set norms which have been evolved with the consensus of political parties who have consented to abide by the principles embodied in the said code and also binds them to respect and observe it in its letter and spirit. The definition of ‘codes of conduct for political parties’ adopted by the International IDEA is: “a set of rules of behavior for political parties and their supporters relating to their participation in an election process, to which parties ideally will voluntarily agree; and which may, subsequent to that agreement, be incorporated in law.” The fact that codes of conduct are not normally incorporated in law means that they can proclaim standards that are difficult to embody in a statute, or which parties do not want in legal form. For instance, codes of conduct for political parties have included obligations on them to act with ‘self-restraint.’ It would be hard to incorporate a definition of self-restraint into the law in such a way that breaches could be defined, proved, and made subject to penalties. Despite their general, didactic nature, codes have nevertheless been incorporated occasionally into electoral law, sometimes in a special schedule. In a number of African countries, they are embodied in electoral legislation.

## **7. Coping Mechanisms**

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Coping mechanisms can be described as the sum total of ways to deal with minor to major stress and trauma. Some of these processes are unconscious ones, others are learned behavior, and still others are skills we consciously master in order to reduce stress, or other intense emotions like depression.

## **8. Culture of Silence**

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The culture in South Asia hitherto ascribes higher value to one gender over another thus, creating relations of power and powerlessness. Women tend to suffer and in some cases, accommodate the various forms of violence that they are subjected to due to various reasons, some keep tight-lipped as they do not want to be the victim of a greater degree of violence than they are already subjected to, others are silent due to the acceptance of the unchangeable dominance of South Asian culture, others are so for fear of losing their positions and ‘embarrassing’ themselves and their families. The deep-rooted cultural barrier and the inability to break this silence have for a long time hampered women’s political participation.

## 9. Democracy

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Britannica concise Encyclopedia define “Democracy is a form of government in which supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation usually involving periodic free elections”. Democracy is the union between “freedom” and “rights”; it is not only an electoral process, but a process that makes possible to reach agreements. Democracy also may be defined as “popular control over decision making, and decision makers and equality of citizens exercising their rights”. It is the system of governance that asserts that all citizens are able to participate freely, and have a say, at and between elections, in the political process and use of power in society.

## 10. Democratic Governance

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Governance is a broad concept, encompassing the capacity of the state, the commitment to the public good, the rule of law, the degree of transparency and accountability, the level of popular participation, and the stock of social capital. Without good governance, it is impossible to foster development. No amount of resources transferred or infrastructure built can compensate for-or survive-bad governance. The culture of democratic governance moves beyond the mere procedures of democracy and the establishment of democratic institutions. It involves promoting the sustainability of democracy which includes an enduring capacity for: the separation of powers and independence of the branches of government; the exercise of power in accordance with the rule of law; the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; and, the transparency and accountability of a responsible civil service, functioning at both the national and local levels. A state which identifies with the culture of democratic governance is one which welcomes a wide scope of political participation embracing a pluralistic system of political parties, a vibrant civil society and media. Further, strong democratic institutions promote and integrate women and minorities at all levels of the government and society as a whole. Also, a state which embodies the culture of democratic governance is one which protects the rights and dignity of children. Therefore, the promotion of the culture of democratic governance involves an integrated approach to sustainable governance for and by all the people.

## **11. Democratic Practices in Political Party**

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Political parties are an essential component of democracy. They organize voters, aggregate and articulate interests, craft policy alternatives, recruit and socialize new candidates for office, set policy-making agendas, integrate disparate groups and individuals into the democratic process, and provide the basis for coordinated electoral and legislative activity. Well-functioning political parties are therefore central to the process of democratic development. Democratization in real sense is possible only when women politicians are also encouraged for equal and effective participation in each and every level of governance.

## **12. Domestic Violence**

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The U. S. Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) defines domestic violence as a “pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner”. The definition adds that domestic violence “can happen to anyone regardless of race, age, sexual orientation, religion, or gender”, and that it can take many forms, including physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional, economic, and psychological abuse. Domestic violence includes physical, psychological, or economic abuse by a partner or ex-partner or by another person within the home or family. Women, children and almost any female living in the household are potential victims of domestic violence. Domestic violence against women is most common in worldwide. One of the reasons for it being so prevalent is the orthodox and patriarchal mindset of the society that women are physically and emotionally weaker than the males.

## **13. Discrimination Against Women**

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Article 1 of CEDAW defines discrimination against women as “any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect on purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social cultural, civil or any other field.” Discrimination may have different forms viz. (1) Direct, (2) Indirect and (3) Systemic. Direct discrimination is a policy or law which on its face discriminates on the basis of sex. Indirect discrimination is little difficult to identify because a policy or law may be neutral and seem demonstrably consequences. Systemic discrimination is such behavior persisting under the law or policy, or is deeply rooted in the mind of the decision-makers in the form of myths about the general characteristic of a particular group about their stereotype.

## **14. Election**

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Election means the national/central election of house of representative of the respective country. This can also mean the act of choosing a person to fill a position or political office, or to membership in a society, as by ballot, uplifted hands, or viva voce; as, the election of a president or a mayor. The scope of election can also encompass the choice, made by a party, of two alternatives, by taking one of which, the chooser is excluded from the other. An election is a formal decision-making process by which a population chooses an individual to hold public office. Elections have been the usual mechanism by which modern representative democracy operates since the 17th century. A process of choosing a new leader for a country where all eligible people cast a ballot to choose a leader or decide an issue. The majority rules and the new leader is the one who has the most votes.

## **15. Election Act**

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“Election Act” means the National Election Law of the respective country. Elections Act has been defined as an Act that provides a procedure for the candidates to the House of Representatives or the Parliament to contest the general election, repealing other Acts relating to elections and making consequential amendments to other Acts. The Election Act may limit spending on election advertising by interest groups, which was upheld by the Supreme Court. The law may delegates all matters involving contested elections.

## **16. Election Code of Conduct**

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Some electoral systems use a code of conduct to regulate the conduct of political parties, candidates and their supporters during an election. These can be voluntary, non-binding agreements that result from a consensus among the parties, or they can be part of the legislative and regulative framework that is binding and enforceable in nature. Codes of conducts are adapted to the special circumstances of each electoral system. In the older democracies, where campaign financing is an issue, ethical codes include detailed instructions on what is, and what is not, allowed in campaign financing. In countries undergoing a transition, the focus of a code of conduct is usually aimed at renouncing the use of violence and agreeing to accept the election results.

## **17. Electoral System**

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An electoral or voting system is how votes are translated into seats and positions in the state's governing bodies. It determines how many votes and what kinds of votes are necessary to award seats to candidates and parties in an election. Electoral systems define and structure the rules of the political game; they help determine who is elected, how a campaign is fought, the role of political parties, and most importantly, who governs. Furthermore, the choice of an electoral system can help to “engineer” specific outcomes, such as to encourage cooperation and accommodation in a divided society. Historically, however, it has been rare that electoral systems are deliberately chosen or carefully designed for the particular historical and social conditions of a country. In some cases, the choice has reflected the impact of colonialism; in others, the influence of neighboring systems. Types of electoral systems include, for instance, “first past the post”, full proportional representation, and varying forms of proportional representation.

## **18. Electoral Politics**

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It is the lifeblood for democracy because it allows people to freely choose their representatives in the legislature through competitive party system and to make policy choices and form a government that is accountable to the citizens. Many attempts to understand whether women aspire to enter the world of electoral politics suggest that women do aspire for a career in politics and feel the need to contribute to the political process and politics directly. However, women's participation and representation in the electoral politics have been marginal, because politics is one of the highest arenas of power and only usually men get greater opportunities to make an advance, exercise power and command respect. Moreover, the rights to economic wealth are also normally entitled to men. These privileged entitlements of men have created a class of powerful and powerless. Such power, prestige and wealth give men a strong leverage in creating their exclusive and strong networks and maintain their own interests.

## **19. Electoral Violence**

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In general terms, all forms of violence that emanate, at any stage, from differences in views, opinions and practices during the process of elections, could be regarded as electoral violence. Electoral violence is the employment of force by political parties or their supporters to intimidate opponents and threats to a democratic regime, and has often accounted for seizures of political power by the use of undemocratic means, such as “force”. In some instances, violence is used to intimidate opponents in order to force them to select certain candidates; whilst in others, violence was in reaction to rigging of elections. It can be categorised with its nature of violence as follows:



- a) Violence beyond elections
  - character assassination and defamation/slander
  - abuse and rape
  - suspicion and torture
  - discourage and harassment
  - murder and attempt to murder
  - hurdle at the entry into politics (non support (e.g. financial), discourage by family members, colleagues and society)
  - feudalistic character of political system
  - monopolized political system
  - dependency syndrome
- b) Violence during election campaigns and polling
  - threatening of lives and physical attacks
  - murder and attempt to murder
  - abuse, rape and rape attempts
  - blockades and turbulence in election campaigning
  - power politics for getting nominations
  - harassment and discourage by family members and society during contesting the elections
  - less financial support by parties than to the male politicians
  - character assassination and defamation/slander
  - disruption in mobility by opponent party sympathizers
- c) Violence after election
  - overthrown from the positions
  - threatening of lives and physical attacks
  - character assassination and defamation/slander
  - anti campaigning against women in position

## **20. Gender Based Violence**

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CEDAW General Recommendation no 19 define “Gender-based violence is a form of discrimination that seriously inhibits women’s ability to enjoy rights and freedoms on a basis of equality with men.” Gender-based violence not exclusive to women and girls, but principally it affects across all cultures. Violence may be physical, sexual, psychological, economic, or socio-cultural. Men and women, boys and girls, may all be subjected to gender-based violence. However, women and girls are by far the most affected group and will therefore be the principal focus of this field guide. Gender-based violence occurs in both the public and private spheres. Many cultures have beliefs, norms, and social institutions that legitimize and, therefore, perpetuate gender- based violence. There are various forms of gender based violence - domestic violence, sexual violence, sexual harassment and physical and psychological violence.

## **21. Gender Sensitive Laws**

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Being gender sensitive means being aware plus taking action against existing gender discrimination and inequalities. It means looking at the world through women’s eyes and doing everything with a gender perspective in order to transform gender relations and make them more equal. It also means making the legal-judicial system more responsive and sensitive to women’s needs and eliminate all gender-based discriminatory laws. Gender sensitive laws ensure that justice is quick and the punishment meted out to the culprits is commensurate with the severity of the offense.

## **22. Gender Sensitive Politics**

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Gender-sensitive politics can ensure the objectives of participatory politics, security based on minimization of violence, equitable economic systems and sustainable ecology.

## **23. Harassment**

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Harassment covers a wide range of offensive behavior. It is commonly understood as behavior intended to disturb or upset. In the legal sense, it is behavior which is found threatening or disturbing. Harassment is behavior, verbal or physical, that unreasonably interferes with work or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. It can take many different forms, including intimidation or sexual harassment.

## **24. Impunity**

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In the context of human rights, impunity refers to the lack of accountability (in the form of punishment) for human rights violations committed. This lack of punishment sends a very clear message to the perpetrators of such crimes that they can violate the rights of people without fear of being brought to justice. Impunity can be either de jure or de facto, legitimized by amnesty laws or enshrined by corrupted or incompetent judicial systems. In the absence of such laws, prosecutors are often reluctant to prosecute and national courts are reluctant to punish, human rights violators. Impunity is itself a violation of human rights, as well as a direct threat to the rule of law. States have the obligation to both respect and promote human rights; impunity encourages human rights violations and thus it is a violation of these state obligations. In addition, impunity violates the rights of victims to justice that is established in many Human Rights Covenants and also violates their right to find the truth. International bodies, for example, have found that when a mother is kept in the dark about the fate of her disappeared child, it can be considered as torture. Truth is essential for democratic life; if people do not know what happened, and who did what, they cannot make well-informed choices when they exercise their voting rights. The struggle against impunity is an essential part of the struggle for human rights - only when all human rights violators are held accountable for their actions, can we hope that human rights violations will cease and justice prevail.

## **25. Intimidation**

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Intimidation (also called cowing) is intentional behavior “which would cause a person of ordinary sensibilities” fear of injury or harm. It’s not necessary to prove that the behavior was so violent so as to cause terror or that the victim was actually frightened. “To use a ‘threat of force’ or to ‘intimidate’ or ‘interfere with’ means to say or do something which, under the same circumstances, would cause another person of ordinary sensibilities to be fearful of bodily harm if he or she did not comply” (USLaw.com). Intimidation includes physical or verbal abuse; behavior directed at isolating or humiliating an individual or a group, or at preventing them from engaging in normal activities.

## **26. International Human Rights Instruments**

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International Human Rights Instruments can be classified into two categories: declarations, adopted by bodies such as the United Nations General Assembly, which are not legally binding although they may be politically so; and conventions, which are legally binding instruments concluded under international law. International treaties can, over time, obtain the status of customary international law. International

human rights instruments can be divided further into global instruments, to which any state in the world can be a party, and regional instruments, which are restricted to states in a particular region of the world. The UN human rights treaties are at the core of the international system for the promotion and protection of human rights. It is a universal human rights legal system which applies to virtually every child, woman or man in the world.

## **27. Legislative Code of Conduct**

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Legislative Code of Conduct is a set of guidelines mostly endorsed and implemented by the Election Commission of respective countries to administer the conduct of political parties, party sympathizers, candidates and voters to run-up the election. These codes are part of the legislative or regulative framework and are enforced through the use of administrative and legal sanctions. These conducts are mandatory in nature to the political parties and election candidates. They must abide by the code of conduct if they are competing in the elections. A candidate could be disqualified from the race for breaking the code of conduct, as well as be the subject of legal action. For integrity purposes, legislative codes must be clearly written, with the obligations of the parties unambiguous, and the sanctions for breaking the code reasonable and detailed within the code.

## **28. Masculine Culture in Politics**

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Men largely dominate the political arena; largely formulate the rules of the political game; and often define the standards for evaluation. The differences between men and women appear in content and priorities of decision making, which are determined by the interests, backgrounds and working patterns of both sexes. The male-dominated working pattern is reflected in the parliamentary work schedule, often characterized by lack of supportive structure for working mothers in general, and for women MPs in particular and there is no consideration for the dual burden of responsibility that women carry. Politics ensures status and is a lucrative source of income and power over which men desire to control. The masculine model of politics makes it invariably difficult for women to continue in the political field. The system does not make room for accommodating the differences that exists between men and women. Women thus lag far behind men in their struggle for political participation and to bring in policy changes that can make differences in their lives.

## **29. Politics**

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Politics consists of “social relations involving authority or power” and refers to the regulations of a political unit and to the methods and tactics used to formulate and apply policy. It is a process by which groups of people make decisions. Similarly, power can be defined as the ability or official capacity to exercise control. Politics refers to government and the policy making process. It is the regulation and government of a nation-state or other political unit. Therefore it involves activism, exercise of authority or power or any maneuvering in order to enhance one’s power or status within group. Politics in its most basic form consists of social relations involving authority or power.

## **30. Physical Violence**

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Physical violence includes any violent act such as murder, rape, physical mutilation or disfiguring, abduction, etc, resulting in bodily harm. Physical violence is also described as the intentional use of physical force with the potential for causing death, disability, injury, or harm. Physical violence includes, but is not limited to, scratching; pushing; shoving; throwing; grabbing; biting; choking; shaking; slapping; punching; burning; use of a weapon; and use of restraints or one’s body, size, or strength against another person. Physical violence could also lead to sexual, psychological harm or suffering and vice versa.

## **31. Political Movements**

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A political movement is a movement in the area of politics. A political movement may be organized around a single issue or set of issues, or around a set of shared concerns of a social group. In contrast with a political party, a political movement is not organized to elect members of the movement to government office; instead, a political movement aims to convince citizens and/or government officers to take action on the issues and concerns which are the focus of the movement. Political movements are an expression of the struggle of a social group for the political space and benefits.

## **32. Political Participation**

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Political Participation refers to any voluntary act to influence elections or public policy. It can take many forms, the most notable of which is voting in elections, but also including joining a political party, standing as a candidate in an election, joining a non-governmental advocacy group, or participating in a demonstration. The individuals engaged in such participation are likely to expect—or at least hope—that

these actions will have some impact on the content of government policies. Political participation is one of the major ways to ensure women's empowerment, to increase decision-making power and greater ability and to influence matters that affect their lives in the community and the larger society.

### **33. Political Parties**

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A political party is defined as an organized group of people with at least roughly similar political aims and opinions, that seeks to influence public policy by getting its candidates elected to public office. Parties tend to be deeply and durably entrenched in specific substructures of the specific society in a sustainable and well functioning democracy. They can link the governmental institutions to the elements of the civil society in a free and fair society and are regarded as necessary for any modern democratic system. Political parties perform key tasks in a democratic society, such as

- aggregating and articulating needs and problems as identified by members and supporters
- socializing and educating voters and citizens in the functioning of the political and electoral system and the generation of general political values
- balancing opposing demands and converting them into general policies
- Activating and mobilizing citizens into participating in political decisions and transforming their opinions into viable policy options
- Channeling public opinion from citizens to government
- Recruiting and training candidates for public office

Political parties are often described as institutionalized mediators between civil society and those who decide and implement decisions. By this, they enable their members' and supporters' demands to be represented in parliament and in government. Even though parties fulfill many vital roles and perform several functions in a democratic society, the nomination and presentation of candidates in the electoral campaign is the most visible function to the electorate.

To perform the above mentioned tasks and functions, political parties and citizens need some rights and obligations guaranteed or ruled by constitution or law. These include:

- Freedom of organization
- Freedom to stand for election
- Freedom of speech and assembly

- Provision of a fair and peaceful competition
- Mechanisms of plurality
- Inclusion in the electoral process and contacts with the EMB
- A level playing field and freedom from discrimination
- Media access and fair reporting
- Transparent and accountable political finance

The internal functioning of individual political parties is to some extent determined by forces that are external to political parties, such as the electoral system, political culture, legal regulations, etc. However, internal processes of political parties, such as the personality of leaders and staff, the ideological foundations, party history, and internal political culture are considered to be even more influential on the internal functioning. If a political party would like the democratic principles of electoral politics to be applied within the party, they may consider practices like internal information and consultation processes, internal (formal or informal) rules and structures for the organization and decision-making within the party, and transparency in the party's functioning at all levels. Party members may also take on more formal roles in decision-making like participating in internal elections for leadership positions or in selecting the party's candidate(s) in the upcoming elections. Many parties also work actively to enhance the role of traditionally under-represented groups in their parties.

## **34. Political Violence**

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Violence and power are intrinsically connected in a relation that involves “an uninvited but intentional or half-intentional act of physically violating the body of a person” who is an adversary.. Historically, violence has been expressed through different means such as physical attack, which involves a direct aggression against an individual or a group. This means is used in order to weaken in a more rapid manner the power of the other. Moser and Clark (2001) define political violence, as “the commission of violent acts motivated by a desire, conscious or unconscious, to obtain or maintain political power”. Political violence is about the acquisition of power through violent acts. It is driven by desires for power that lead people to transgress others' private domains. This phenomenon can be seen among guerrillas, paramilitary groups, tyrannical regimes, extremist religious and ethnic groups and others, aiming to undermine the other in order to achieve hegemony over a region, state or a group. Political violence is also used by some political parties, overtly or covertly, to intimidate other parties and their candidates.

### **35. Psychological Violence**

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Psychological violence may be defined as any form of violence, pressure or discrimination that leads to mental pressure/stress on the person being violated. It can take many forms like trauma, mental torture, blaming, threats, mental harassment, mental pressure, passing lurid/derogatory comments, verbal abuse, creating guilt in the person for something the person is not responsible for, mentally weakening a person, distorting a person's normal point of view, making a person feel incapable of something, boycotting and creating a feeling of helplessness. Physical violence is in part a psychological violence, as the consequence of physical violence is often fear, self loathing for letting the violence take place, feeling of helplessness, loss of self-confidence and inability to separate the incidence of violence from the person's other daily activities.

### **36. Quota System**

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Quotas in politics involve setting up a percentage or number for the representation of a certain group, e.g. women, youth, marginalized groups most often in the form of a minimum percentage, for instance 20, 30 or 40 percent. Quota systems have significantly increased particular groups excluded or under-represented groups in politics e.g. women, youth, marginalized group's participation and representation in both elective and appointive political decision-making positions. Quotas have been viewed as one of the most effective affirmative actions in increasing political participation. Quota "entails that women, youth, marginalized group must constitute a certain number of percentage of the member of the body whether it is a candidate list, committee, parliamentary assembly or government. Quota places the burden of the candidacy recruitment not on the individual but on those who control the direct recruitment process." Examples of the most common electoral quota are the candidate quota and reserved seats. Candidate quota specifies minimum percentage of candidates for election. Quotas may be legally introduced or voluntarily adopted. Voluntary party candidate quotas for women are set by political parties to ensure the inclusion of a certain percentage of women as candidates in election. Given that voluntary party quotas are not mandated by law, they are not legally binding, and there is no sanction system in place. However, since these quotas stem from an internal decision within the party, they are often just as respected as legislated quotas and thereby can in some circumstances also be effective.



The two types of quotas are:

1. Legal quotas: Quotas which are mandated in a country's constitution or by law, usually in the electoral law. Legal quotas regulate the proceedings of all political parties in a country and may also prescribe sanctions in case of non-compliance.
2. Voluntary party quotas: Quotas which are voluntarily decided by one or more political parties in a country. In such cases some political parties may have quotas, while other parties reject them.

Different types of quotas target different levels in the nomination process. Quotas usually target one of three levels in the nomination process:

1. the pool of potential candidates (aspirants)
2. the candidates that stand for election (candidates)
3. the elected (MPs or equivalent)

At a type of quota system targeting the first level, the aim of quotas is to enlarge the pool of aspirants willing to pursue a political career. These quotas are thus decided upon by the political parties themselves. Thus, women's short lists could be seen as an example of voluntary party quotas, where political parties adopt a quotas for the number of women it will send forward as party nominees to contest the election.

Candidate quotas for party lists are an example of a type of quota system targeting the second level. Candidate quotas apply to the nomination of candidates, e.g. where a political party must ensure that 30 percent of the candidates it nominates for election are women. These may be mandated either by the parties themselves (party quotas) or by the constitution or law (legal quotas). The crucial issue is whether there are any rules concerning the rank order on the list of the party. A requirement of say 40 percent may not result in any women elected, if all women candidates are placed at the bottom of the list. Thus, candidate quotas can be seen as an example of either legal quotas or voluntary party quotas, pending on where they are mandated.

Reserved seats are an example of a quota system targeting the third level. At this level, the aim of quotas is to guarantee that a certain number or percentage of seats in parliament is set aside to women. Women are guaranteed to have these seats. These quotas are usually mandated by the constitution and/or law, and can thus be seen as an example of legal quotas.

### **37. Sexual Harassment**

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According to the UN Secretary General’s Definition of Sexual Harassment ‘Sexual harassment is any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favour, verbal or physical conduct or gesture of a sexual nature, or any other behavior of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another, when such conduct interferes with work, is made a condition of employment or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. While typically involving a pattern of behavior, it can take the form of a single incident. Sexual harassment may occur between persons of the opposite or same sex. Both males and females can be either the victims or the offenders. Sexual harassment includes such unwelcome sexually determined behavior as physical contact and advances, sexually colored remarks, showing pornography and sexual demand, whether by words or actions.

### **38. Sexual Violence**

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Sexual violence is any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed, against a person’s sexuality using coercion, by any person or persons regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work. Coercion can cover a whole spectrum of degrees of physical force, psychological intimidation, blackmail or threats of physical harm, of being dismissed from a job or of not obtaining a job that is sought. It may also occur when the person aggressed is unable to give consent, for instance, while drunk, drugged, asleep or mentally incapable of understanding the situation. Rape and other sexual violence as a ‘weapon of war’ are especially aimed at terrorizing and subjugating entire communities, thereby affecting the social fabric of families and communities.

### **39. Torture**

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Article 1 of the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading treatment or punishment (UN CAT), the term “torture” means any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind, when such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity. It does not include pain or suffering arising only from, inherent in or incidental to lawful sanctions.

## 40. Victim/Survivor

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A victim is a person, suffering physically or psychologically from an act of violence (crime). In politics, the perpetrator generally aims to demoralize the women and discourage their involvement in politics. The victim of a crime (or crime victim) is a person who has been harmed directly by the perpetrator or defendant. Emotional distress as the result of crime is a recurring theme for all victims of crime. The most common problems were psychological problems, including: fear, anxiety, nervousness, self-blame, anger, shame, and difficulty sleeping. These problems often result in the development of chronic PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder). In every act of violence against women in politics, the victim suffers from the following:

- Increase in the belief of vulnerability in future
- Keeping silent about the violence
- Politics is a man's domain and it is useless to take part in politics
- Being passive against discrimination and disparity within party politics
- Refraining from politics
- Destruction of physical power
- End of corporeal existence

## 41. Violence Against Women(VAW)

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According to the Article 1 of the International Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (DEVAW, 48/104), "Violence against women" means any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life. VAW is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women; it is complex and diverse in its manifestations, with far-reaching and long-lasting consequences and costs that impoverish women, their families, communities and nations. It is a violation of the essential basic human right to safety, security and physical integrity. The main cause of VAW is the unequal power relations between women and men based on definitions of 'feminine' as inferior and 'masculine' as superior.

## **42. Violence Against Women In Politics (VAWIP)**

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Violence Against Women in Politics, includes any act/s of violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women politicians, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life; within family, inter or intra-political party level, at societal and at state level during their political career. It also includes any act of violence against any family member of a woman politician, which can affect her mental well being or deterring her political participation. Women in politics are trapped in bribery and cases of corruption and sometimes they are even manipulated and blackmailed. It is link to power, money and mafia in politics, and its impact on women's political participation is crucial. Acts of violence committed by an establishment, organization, institution, individuals which breach, obstruct, or curtail democratic processes of electing a female candidate running for political office, are violations against her political rights.

## **43. Violence at Work Place**

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Workplace violence can be any act of physical violence, threats of physical violence, harassment, intimidation, or other threatening, disruptive behavior that occurs at the work site. Workplace violence can affect or involve employees, visitors, contractors, and other non-Federal employees. A number of different actions in the work environment can trigger or cause workplace violence. It may even be the result of non-work-related situations such as domestic violence or "road rage." Workplace violence can be inflicted by an abusive employee, a manager, supervisor, co-worker, customer, family member, or even a stranger. Whatever the cause or whoever the perpetrator, workplace violence is not to be accepted or tolerated.

## **44. Voluntary Code of Conduct**

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The voluntary code of conduct is generally based on negotiations between the parties. These negotiations establish the ground rules for campaign ethics, professional working relationship and help build confidence in the conducts of the party cadres, women leaders before, during and after elections and within and outside the political parties.

## **45. Women In Politics**

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The definition of the word “women in politics” denotes all women, who are participating in politics or who have been initiating or developing or have developed their career in politics at local or national level. Women’s political participation refers to their ability to participate equally with men in all aspects of public and political life. Women’s participation in politics takes place at many levels and is not limited to the electoral politics alone. But active political participation entails coming to power positions through election.

## **46. Women’s Qualitative Participation**

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It is not enough that women are in key positions in decision-making groups, they should also be “mainstreaming” social and other national issues. Women give voices and ability to influence outcomes of decision-making spaces in the public sphere, from national to local levels; electoral politics to small community organizations to sectoral organizations; from assuming key positions in decision-making processes/bodies to mobilizations demanding gender responsive governance.

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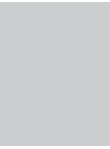
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