



REPORT FOR ACTIVITY 2 OF THE YOUNG WOMEN IN POLITICS PROJECT

PROFILING OF RELEVANT KEY ACTORS

PREPARED BY THE SOCIAL JUSTICE LEAGUE

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“Pathways to Collaboration”

Stakeholder Mapping and Engagement

The Young Women in Politics: 50/50 Campaign

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FOREWORD

Stakeholder mapping and profiling is a cornerstone of the Young Women in Politics Project, designed to ensure engagement with those who influence women’s journey in politics. This exercise aligns with our broader objectives of fostering inclusive governance and creating environments where young women can thrive in political spaces.

The identification and engagement of key actors in Bomet, Samburu, Kiambu, and Homabay counties reflect the commitment to collaboration that underscores this initiative. From government representatives and civil society organizations to cultural and religious leaders, each stakeholder plays a critical role in dismantling barriers to women’s political participation. By understanding their perspectives and contributions, we lay the groundwork for impactful partnerships and sustainable progress.

This report highlights the essence of these interactions, providing insights into the opportunities and challenges young women face as they step into leadership. It is a call to action for continued dialogue, shared responsibility, and unwavering support for gender equality in Kenya’s politics.

Thank you

Elizabeth Odondi

Chairperson, SJL

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INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY

As part of the Young Women in Politics: 50/50 Campaign, the Social Justice League conducted project entry meetings with the respective gender departments in the counties of Bomet, Samburu, Kiambu, and Homabay and engaged mobilizers in each of the four counties. These meetings aimed to identify and profile key actors critical to the success of the initiative. The profiling exercise was essential for understanding the roles, interests, and potential contributions of various stakeholders in fostering young women's participation in politics.

The objectives of this exercise was: *to establish a clear stakeholder matrix, to identify and document the specific roles and contributions of stakeholders and to assess gaps in stakeholder representation and influence.*

The profiling exercise involved structured discussions with stakeholders during project entry meetings. The gender departments facilitated introductions and provided context on each actor's influence and engagement in gender and governance issues. The profiling covered representatives from county government offices, civil society, and community-based organizations. Criteria used for identifying and prioritizing stakeholders majorly comprised of *identifying their level of commitment to promoting increased participation of women in politics.* During these project entry meeting with the county gender department, the roles of these actors were articulated in relation to various project phases, such as facilitating dialogue sessions, identifying young and experienced women in politics for one-on-one interviews, supporting social media campaigns, and participating

in the launch and dissemination of the Young Women in Politics video documentary. Additionally, their engagement in media advocacy through television and radio stations highlighted their critical contributions to shaping public discourse on women's participation in politics.

The profiling exercise underscored the importance of understanding stakeholders' perspectives and leveraging their unique roles to build a collaborative framework. To ensure sustained alignment with project goals, the project monitoring officer incorporated feedback letters to maintain active communication on progress and to encourage stakeholders' continued involvement.



KEY STAKEHOLDERS IDENTIFIED

A. Counties' respective Gender Departments

The Counties' respective Gender Departments contribute to the buy-in and endorsement of the project and assist in undertaking activities in the county including implementation of further action during or after conclusion of the first phase of the Project. After release of the video documentary, county gender departments will assist in the validation exercise through the respective Gender Departments in the 4 regions and practical implementation of the recommendations by aligning their programs and activities to address the policy issues/gaps identified in the Documentary.

B. Young and Experienced Female Aspirants

Female Elected and nominated politicians including those interested in politics are the main beneficiaries to the project. It should be noted that a majority of experienced Women in Politics are older than young women in terms of age and experience. Their role is critical in the mentorship of young women in politics. Experienced female aspirants, particularly elected and nominated MCAs, are the direct connection to electoral wards and have a deeper understanding of grassroots political dynamics. Their mentorship empowers young women with practical strategies, helps build confidence, and prepares them to engage effectively with voters ensuring sustained political participation and leadership.

Female aspirants will take an active role in sharing their journey in politics, participating in dialogue sessions and social media campaigns including promoting the documentary to increase public engagement and drive conversations concerning women in politics in their specific counties

and thus support the broader campaign for gender equality in politics. They also advocate for initiatives aimed at increasing women's representation and addressing EGBV in politics resulting in public awareness. By using the insights from the documentary, female aspirants in politics will identify young women who are interested in politics and provide them with the necessary support and mentorship to pursue their political aspirations.

C. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

Involving CSOs that have done prior advocacy work on participation of women in politics in Kenya ensures SJL is well acquainted with young female aspirants' challenges and CSO recommendations and milestones in addressing those challenges. This will help in developing partnerships with CSOs towards the end of phase 1 of the project for practical action in another phase of the current YWIP.

D. Youth, Men, and Women in the 4 regions of Homabay, Kiambu, Bomet and Samburu

They play a crucial role in promoting gender-sensitive attitudes. Inclusion in dialogues can lead to positive changes in community perceptions towards women in leadership roles.

E. Persons with Disabilities (PWDs)

PWDs advocate for inclusive policies, emphasizing accessibility and representation in political spaces. Involving PWDs in training and advocacy activities ensures their voices are heard in the political landscape.

F. Market Association Representatives

Leaders from county market associations in the 4 project regions are critical in supporting women leaders. Collaborating with them can mobilize grassroots support for aspiring female leaders.

G. Religious Leaders:

Moral authorities influencing community values and can advocate for women's participation in politics within the religious institution. Their support is crucial in promoting women's empowerment to participate in political leadership.

H. Cultural Leaders:

In Kenya, cultural leaders are viewed as custodians of cultural norms. Thus, engaging with them can help challenge patriarchal traditions and promote inclusivity in leadership roles for women within the community. They are key in Dialogue Sessions Activity in the Project and other practical stages of the project. They are critical in endorsing a woman to the community as a trusted and issue-based politician.

I. Media Representatives:

SJL views mainstream and local media as important in amplifying the lived experiences of women in politics, to the general public. SJL will use media to highlight EGBV experiences and its impact on women's interest in politics and to use media in promoting positive narratives of women leaders, shaping public perceptions positively.

J. Police

Police are enforcers of law and order during electoral processes. Engaging them in dialogue sessions can bring to light their training and strategies for gender-sensitive policing practices to address electoral violence and harassment against female aspirants, ensuring a safe and inclusive political environment.

Kenya's National Government deploys County Commissioner's Offices in Kenya's 47 devolved county governments as overseers of government security operations. Collaborating with them in driving conversations in dialogue sessions can enhance policy implementation and provide security assurance for women leaders in their respective counties.



County	# of Stakeholders Identified & engaged (Average per county)	Stakeholder alignment with the project goals	Contributions of the stakeholders to the 50/50 Campaign	Stakeholders who actively participated in the project activities
Homabay	10	County recently passed an SGBV Policy but is yet to have specific programs on SGBV affecting women in politics	-Dialogue Session Participation -Dialogue Session stakeholders' mobilization -Profiling of young and experienced female aspirants from Homabay	-HB County Gender Department -Cultural Leaders -Religious Leaders -Female Aspirants -CSOs -Women, men, youth & PWDs -Police (Gender Desk & County Commissioner's Office -Market Association Representatives -Ward Administrators -Sub-County Municipality -Chiefs
Bomet	10	The County has an SGBV Policy and in July 2024, launched a Generation Equality Forum (GEF), which will act as a roadmap for advancing gender equality and ending all forms of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in the County	-Media Engagement -Popularization of the Project through Bomet County Gender Department social media pages -Dialogue Session Participation	-County Gender Department -Cultural Leaders -Religious Leaders -Female Aspirants -CSOs -Women, men, youth & PWDs

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Dialogue Session stakeholders' mobilization -Profiling of young and experienced female aspirants from Bomet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Police (Gender Desk & County Commissioner's Office -Media Representatives Market Association Representatives -Ward Administrators
Kiambu	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -CEC Gender for Kiambu informed SJL that the Governor has implemented a policy for 50/50 representation in his appointive posts in Kiambu -Kiambu Directorate for Gender and Affirmative Action developed a SGBV cases data collection tool for documenting all SGBV cases in the county including in electoral violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Profiling of young and experienced female aspirants from Kiambu 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -County Gender Department -Cultural Leaders -Religious Leaders -Female Aspirants -CSOs -Women, men, youth & PWDs -Police (Gender Desk & County Commissioner's Office
Samburu	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> County still in the process of passing an SGBV Policy to initiate SGBV programs benefiting women in all sectors including political participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dialogue Session Participation -Dialogue Session stakeholders' mobilization Profiling of young and experienced female aspirants from Samburu 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -County Gender Department -Cultural Leaders -Religious Leaders -Female Aspirants -CSOs -Women, men, youth & PWDs -Police (Gender Desk & County Commissioner's Office



CHALLENGES & LESSONS LEARNT

Some intervening national events like nationwide youth protests and limited availability of key actors hindered comprehensive participation which led to interference with key activity timelines thus leading to lack of participation or last-minute cancellation by some key stakeholders. In addition, deeply ingrained cultural beliefs made it uncomfortable for some stakeholders to accept invitation and any engagement in the project.

Lessons Learnt

1. Importance of Building Trust

- Early and consistent communication, including personalized follow-ups and clear explanations of the project's goals, helped build trust among hesitant stakeholders.
- Leveraging introductions through trusted partners, such as county gender departments, was effective in overcoming initial skepticism.

2. Effectiveness of Tailored Engagement Strategies

- Tailoring engagement strategies to each stakeholder group (e.g., using dialogue sessions with cultural leaders yielded better results.
- Prioritizing inclusivity ensured that even marginalized groups, like PWDs and grassroots women, felt represented and heard.

3. Adaptability in Approach

- Adjusting timelines and project activities based on stakeholder availability and regional differences allowed for smoother implementation and broader buy-in.



IMPACT

Increased Visibility and Support for Young Women in Politics

- ❖ Stakeholder involvement, especially through media campaigns and dialogue sessions, amplified the voices of young female aspirants, increasing public awareness of the challenges they face. Mobilization efforts in the counties led to a noticeable increase in community support for the project and support in dialogue sessions for young women pursuing political roles.

Enhanced Collaboration Among Civil Society Organizations

- ❖ Partnerships between civil society organizations like the Women Empowerment Link in Bomet County led to joint initiatives such as media engagement through joint public statements on the objectives of the Project and a call to counties and the national government to increase women's participation in politics.

Creation of a Stakeholder Forum

- ❖ At the end of round 2 of Dialogue Sessions in Kiambu & Samburu, SJL formed a Whatsapp Stakeholders' Forum which we will use in building a Young Women in Politics' Coalition and promote a unified approach to supporting women in politics. The forum is serving as a platform for networking, sharing best practices, and coordinating future activities.

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