



Editorial Foreword

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In 2024, a total of 74 national elections were held worldwide, with 17 of these elections having occurred on African soil. Given this frequency, 2024 is rightly dubbed the year of elections or what some have called the election super cycle. Within this setting, teeming with political choices and jostling for political power, women only constitute a quarter of Africa's 13,057 parliamentarians, spanning 26% and 21% of the lower and upper houses of parliament, respectively.¹

Women remain shockingly underrepresented in Africa's governance architecture. This 13-chapter volume brings together a diverse range of voices from across the African continent to explore the intersection between women and other pressing issues, including female representation in provincial and national legislatures, land rights, technological advancements, and social policy.

It is well understood that in order for interventions to have a positive impact, they must understand and respond to gendered needs and interests. Foregoing these needs and interests will be futile for the advancement of the political, economic, and social development needs of women and girls in Africa. In line with the reality, the editors of this collection have

1 Morna, C.L. and Tolmay, S. (Eds). 2024. *Women's Political Participation*. Report. 2nd edition. Stockholm: The International IDEA. Africa Barometer and the International IDEA. [16 November 2025]. <https://www.idea.int/sites/default/files/2024-07/womens-political-participation-africa-barometer-2024.pdf>



African Women in Governance

provided a series of contextual recommendations, including gender-responsive legislation, enhanced leadership capacity development for women, intensified collaboration between state and non-state actors, gender-balanced appointments, and the facilitation of more awareness campaigns. Alongside the urgent need for structural redress, closer collaboration and enhanced advocacy, co-exists the need for scholars and policymakers alike to help the discourse transition from gender-sensitiveness to gender-responsiveness. This volume provides an excellent foundation for facilitating such a transaction. On behalf of the Series Editors, I would like to congratulate the editors and contributors for making a timely contribution to the literature.