



STRATEGIZING FOR LEGISLATIVE ENGAGEMENT

**ON THE CONSTITUTIONAL ALTERATION BILL TO
PROVIDE FOR SEAT RESERVATION FOR WOMEN
IN THE NATIONAL AND STATE HOUSES OF
ASSEMBLY**

ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN GUIDE



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POLICY AND LEGAL ADVOCACY CENTRE

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Published by:



Plot 451 Gambo Jimeta Crescent, Guzape District, Abuja, Nigeria.

Website: www.placng.org

Email: info@placng.org

Phone: 0809 189 9999

 www.facebook.com/placng

 @placng

 @placng



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01

Background on Women's Underrepresentation in the National Assembly and State Houses of Assembly.

After seven general election cycles since 1999, Nigerian women continue to be underrepresented in a worsening trend in subsequent cycles. In the current 10th Assembly, women occupy 4 out of 109 seats in the Senate, 16 out of 360 in the House of Representatives, and 54 out of 991 legislative seats in the State Houses of Assembly. At the State level, fourteen State Houses of Assembly have a 100% male membership, having no female representation. Nigeria is 178th out of 182 countries in the Inter Parliamentary Union ranking of women in National Parliaments. This abysmal outcome is the result of a combination of several factors at the root of resistance to women representation including political, socio-economic, cultural, and religious obstacles to women being elected to political offices. Significant investments and efforts made for the increase of women participation in politics yielded very little result beyond aspiration due to the type of electoral system in Nigeria which further exacerbates pre-existing inequalities between candidates and parties i.e. First-Past-The-Post (FPTP). Attempts at advocating for quota systems have also not delivered any improvement in the number of women parliamentarians because of the FPTP system, party politics and keen competition against men who have had the advantage for much longer and significantly higher resources needed for campaigns than women. Despite the failed attempt at reserving seats for women within existing seats, there are still many qualified and experienced women who can contribute to national development. These women need the support and boost offered by affirmative action to enable them to compete and win seats in the legislature.

The Special Seats Bill seeks to directly address the low representation of women in Legislative Houses by providing for the creation of additional seats to be contested and filled by only women in the National Assembly and the State Houses of Assembly. This is a Temporary Special Measure (TSM) which will be subjected to review after four general election cycles (sixteen years). This is a type of "sunset clause" in the bill that will provide an opportunity for the Measure to

be either repealed or renewed. This approach is not new as some African countries such as Rwanda, Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania, have successfully implemented reserved seats, leading to increased female representation.

Female politicians struggle with negative cultural stereotypes about women in politics. For instance, women in the Nigerian legislature tend to receive harsh backlash for voicing differing or strong opinions compared to their male counterparts who do the same. Every perceived flaw is amplified and used as a justification for why women should not be given opportunities to lead. The Nigerian society which is already patriarchal tends to accept this narrative which then makes it even more difficult for women to break the glass ceiling. The normalisation of women in leadership will have a far-reaching impact by shifting perceptions and behaviours which can lead to the reduction of gender gaps and inequality.

Rationale to Pass the Special Seats Bill

The Special Seats Bill was first introduced in the 9th Assembly and has now been re-introduced in the 10th Assembly by the Deputy Speaker, Hon. Benjamin Okezie Kalu and twelve others. This bill has a few revisions worth mentioning – It seeks to create additional seats as follows: 37 in the Senate, 37 in the House of Representatives, and 108 (3 legislators per State) in State Houses of Assembly. The original version of the bill had proposed 74 seats in the House of Representatives, which has now been reduced due to cost of governance concerns.

Additional seats for Nigerian women will provide a necessary mechanism to correct gender imbalance in elective office whilst ensuring that their voices and perspectives are seen in lawmaking. Institutionalising additional seats for women is a strategy for promoting gender equity, strengthening democracy, and fostering inclusive governance. Justification for the Special Seats Bill include:

- a. Enhancing Women Representation in the National Assembly:** Women constitute at least half of the population, yet they remain significantly underrepresented in the legislature. Additional seats serve as an affirmative action measure to accelerate gender parity in decision-making institutions because the current system will not easily create opportunities for any improvements in female representation. States which have no female representation stand to miss out on the unique experiences and perspectives women bring to the table.

- b. Strengthening Democracy and Governance:** Inclusive representation enhances the legitimacy of democratic institutions. Women leadership has been linked to more responsive governance, especially in areas such as education, health, and social welfare. Countries with higher female representation in legislatures tend to support laws that promote social justice and economic development.
- c. Advancing Gender-Responsive Legislation:** Women legislators are more likely to champion laws addressing gender equality, child rights, and social protection. Issues such as gender-based violence, maternal health, and equal economic opportunities receive greater attention when more women are represented in the legislature.
- d. Challenging Systemic Barriers:** Drawing from patriarchy, traditional political structures favour male dominance, limiting women’s political participation. Electoral processes, including financing and party selection mechanisms, frequently put women candidates at a disadvantage. Additional seats will create a level playing field by ensuring a minimum threshold of women in legislative office.
- e. Global Best Practices and Commitments:** Countries like Rwanda, Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania, have successfully implemented reserved seats, leading to increased female representation. International frameworks such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA) advocate for temporary special measures to rapidly increase women’s participation in decision-making. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5 on Gender Equality underscores the importance of women’s full participation in leadership and decision-making.

02

The Special Seats Bill – Advocacy Campaign: To include women is not to exclude men.

To pass in the National Assembly, the Special Seats Bill needs broad support. The low level of awareness and understanding of the provisions need to be addressed to increase awareness, support, and minimise resistance. Details of the proposed advocacy strategy are as follows:

Goal

To ensure that the Special Seats Bill is passed in the National Assembly (i.e. the constitutional amendment that institutionalises the inclusion and representation of women through the creation of additional seats in Nigeria’s National and State Houses of Assembly).

Objectives

1. To provide a roadmap for legislative advocacy on the Special Seats Bill.
2. To mobilise support for the passage of the Special Seat Bill in the National Assembly (Senate, House of Representatives, and State Houses of Assembly).
3. To establish and strengthen partnerships with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), women groups, media, and the private sector to collectively advocate for the bill.
4. To increase public awareness and support for the Special Seats Bill for women through targeted media campaigns.

Expected Outcomes

1. Increased number of legislators committed to voting in favour of the bill, thereby reducing the risk of rejection.
2. Strong and coordinated collaboration/coalition for the Special Seats Bill.
3. Increased public awareness and demand for the passage of the bill.
4. A sustained media presence that encourages informed coverage which normalises the idea of additional seats, counters misinformed narratives, and keeps the Special Seats Bill on the public agenda.

Success Factors

The advocacy strategy for the Special Seats Bill is drawn from key evidences and insights. PLAC undertook a perception survey on the “Performance of the 9th National Assembly on Gender and Inclusiveness: Response to women and girl issues”; and organised a knowledge sharing session for key stakeholders who have hands-on experience advocating for the passage of different legislations and former members of the legislature to share insights. Consequently, the campaign is founded on the following success factors:

- a. Visible Sponsors and supporters:** For the advocacy efforts to successfully mobilise support, the legislators sponsoring the bill must show strong, public, and unwavering backing for it. Their visible, clear, and full commitment will reassure other stakeholders—such as fellow legislators, civil society, and the public—that the bill is a priority and has credible champions pushing for its passage. If the sponsors appear hesitant or inconsistent in their support, it could weaken the campaign and make it harder to rally others behind the cause.
- b. Targeted mobilisation of influencers and gatekeepers:** This campaign will actively seek endorsements and support from influential figures—such as political leaders, female legislators, religious leaders, traditional rulers, celebrities, business leaders and male allies—who have the power to shape public opinion and influence decision-makers. These individuals can use their platforms (e.g., media appearances, social media, public events,

or political networks) to promote the bill and counter opposition. Their involvement can help sway undecided stakeholders, neutralize resistance, and create a broader coalition of support for the bill's passage.

- c. Nuanced messaging:** The strategy is to use carefully crafted and context-sensitive messages to effectively raise awareness and gain support for a consistent goal – the passage of the Additional Seats Bill. Communication needs to consider the complexities of the issue, acknowledge different perspectives, and tailor messages to resonate with specific audiences. Instead of using one-size-fits-all slogans, the campaign should frame its messages in ways that address concerns, and appeal to various stakeholders—including lawmakers, the public, and political parties.

- d. Non-confrontational approach:** The campaign for additional seats for women is happening in a politically charged environment where gender-related issues or women's rights advocacy have come under scrutiny, causing divisions among politicians. Opinions appear to be split, with some supporting increased women's representation and others opposing it, mostly due to cultural stereotypes, ideological beliefs, party positions, or personal biases. This tension and confrontation suggest that the campaign will face resistance, thereby making strategic engagement, consensus-building, and effective messaging even more critical to navigating the political landscape and securing broad-based support.

03

Target Audience

Some stakeholders consulted in the development of this strategy conducted a stakeholder mapping to identify individuals and groups that need to be engaged and mobilised as follows:

- Primary audience (Serving legislators, politicians and gatekeepers)
- Secondary audience (women groups, civil society organisations, media, and the public)

Stakeholder mapping

Description	Groups
Legislators and Politicians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders of the Northern Caucus • Conference of Speakers of Houses of Assembly • Zonal Speakers' Forum
Traditional and Religious Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catholic Bishops Conference • Religious Groups • Traditional Rulers • Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) • Jama'atu Nasrul Islam (JNI)
Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nigerian Governors Forum

Description	Groups
Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional Media • News Media • Guild of Editors • Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ)/ Media
Private sector and Professional Membership Associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) • Women in Management, Business, and Public Service (WIMBIZ) • WIMBIZ Women in Politics Program (WIMPOL) • Women in Successful Careers (WISCAR) • Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) • Trade Union Congress (TUC)
CSOs and other pressure groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSO platforms • Nigerian Governors Wives Forum

04

Key Messages

Core Message 1: Women in Leadership Strengthens Democracy

Key Message for the Public:	Key Message for Decision-Makers:
<p>"A democracy that excludes women is incomplete. When women lead, they bring diverse perspectives, champion community-driven policies, and strengthen governance for all."</p>	<p>"Legislators who support women's political participation are strengthening democracy and building a government that truly represents the voices of all citizens."</p>
<p>Supporting Facts:</p> <p>Countries with higher women's representation in government tend to have lower corruption rates and stronger economic growth¹.</p> <p>Women's political participation promotes stability and enhances policy inclusivity across all sectors².</p>	

1 https://phys.org/news/2018-06-corruption-countries-women.html#google_vignette

2 <https://www.undp.org/blog/we-must-dismantle-barriers-womens-political-participation-heres-why?utm>

Core Message 2: Additional Seats for Women is equal to a Stronger Nigeria

Key Message for the Public:	Key Message for Decision-Makers:
<p>“Additional seats for women are not about favouring women— they are about correcting a historic imbalance and ensuring that Nigeria benefits from the leadership skills of all its citizens including the many qualified women with a lot to offer.”</p>	<p>“By supporting additional seats for women, you are helping to build a more inclusive and effective government that reflects the strength and diversity of Nigeria.”</p>
<p>Supporting Facts:</p> <p>Women make up nearly 50% of Nigeria’s population but hold less than 10% of elective offices.</p> <p>Several African countries that have introduced additional seats for women—like Rwanda and Ethiopia—have seen major gains in governance, stability, and development.</p>	

Core Message 3: Women in the National Assembly literally translate to better policies for families, communities & the economy

Key Message for the Public:	Key Message for Decision-Makers:
<p>“When women are at the decision-making table, laws and policies that improve education, healthcare, and economic opportunities for families become a priority.”</p>	<p>“Supporting women’s political participation is not just about fairness—it’s about making better policy choices that uplift families, communities, and the economy.”</p>
<p>Supporting Facts:</p> <p>Women legislators are more likely to advocate for laws that improve education, healthcare, and social welfare³.</p> <p>Economies with higher female political participation experience faster growth and greater stability⁴.</p>	

3 <https://www.mdpi.com/2076-0760/6/2/40>

4 <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0305750X22000122>

Core Message 4: Gender-Inclusive Governance = A More Competitive Nigeria

Key Message for the Public:	Key Message for Decision-Makers:
<p>“No country can favourably compete globally when half of its population is excluded from leadership.”</p>	<p>“Nigeria’s global reputation improves when we champion gender-inclusive governance. A country that empowers women in leadership becomes more attractive to investors and international partners.”</p>
<p>Supporting Facts:</p> <p>Countries with higher gender inclusivity in leadership attract more foreign investment and build stronger diplomatic ties⁵.</p> <p>Many international organizations, including the UN, AU, and ECOWAS, have set gender parity as a benchmark for good governance.</p>	

Core Message 5 : Additional Seats Are a Temporary Measure, But the Impact is Long-Term

Key Message for the Public:	Key Message for Decision-Makers:
<p>“Additional seats are not about giving women an unfair advantage; they are about removing barriers so that future generations of women can contest and win elections on a level playing field.”</p>	<p>“Temporary special measures like special seats fast-track progress towards gender equality, ensuring that future elections are truly competitive for both men and women.”</p>
<p>Supporting Facts:</p> <p>Additional seats are a proven strategy worldwide—countries that implemented them later phased them out once gender representation was achieved. The Special seats bill includes a “sunset clause” to review the special measure after four general election cycles (sixteen years to consider if it should be repealed or renewed).</p> <p>Women elected through additional seats often become role models, paving the way for more competitive female candidates in future elections.</p>	

⁵ <https://www.unescap.org/news/escap-and-fdi-center-launch-pledge-advance-gender-equality-foreign-direct-investment?utm>

How Advocates Can Use These Messages

- **Unified Messaging Across Stakeholders** – CSOs, media partners, and political allies should adopt and consistently use these messages in advocacy efforts.
- **Integrate Messages into Media & Public Engagements** – Use these messages in radio, TV, and newspaper interviews, as well as social media campaigns.
- **Engage Decision-Makers Strategically** – When meeting with legislators, traditional leaders, and political parties, emphasize facts, success stories from other countries, and the political benefits of supporting the bill.

By aligning advocacy messages, public perception can shift to secure the necessary political will for fast-tracking women’s political representation in Nigeria.

Advocacy Tactics and Strategies

This phase of the campaign is focused on securing legislative approval of the Special Seats bill by both the Senate and the House of Representatives at the national level. This will then create the need for the next phases of the advocacy which will be the passage of the bill in State Houses of Assembly. Broadly, the engagements will use system advocacy to reach relevant groups and institutions. However, on the individual level, SMART advocacy will be applied.

By combining coalition/consensus building, direct lobbying, stakeholder engagement, and strategic communication targeted at legislators and the public, the advocacy will create a strong foundation for success. PLAC has the convening power to mobilise the decision-makers, influencers and the public around the issue through a well-structured campaign. The advocacy will combine one-on-one engagements, complemented with external mobilization, making it a well-rounded advocacy plan. This aligns with best practices for legislative advocacy, where securing political support, engaging stakeholders, and mobilizing public pressure are key to success.

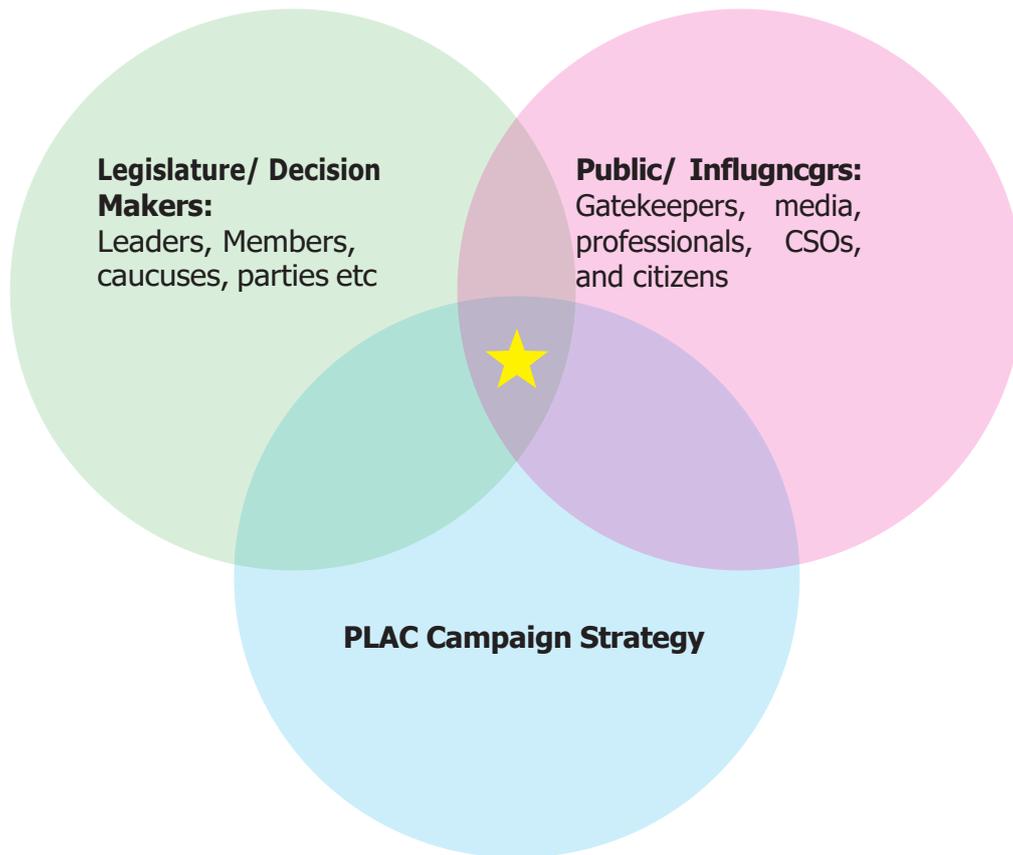


Diagram 1: Within the duration of this 3-month campaign, it is critical to engage different stakeholders – decision makers and influencers to align with the campaign.

Components of the Advocacy Strategy

Consensus Building: At the heart of this legislative advocacy is the goal of building consensus which is a shared understanding and commitment among all key actors that the proposed bill is both necessary and beneficial. Consensus building is not a one-off activity, but a sustained process that informs and shapes every aspect of the engagement. It underpins lobbying efforts by identifying common interests with policymakers; it guides stakeholder and community engagements by highlighting shared social and political priorities; it influences media strategies by ensuring messages appeal to broad audiences; and it drives online campaigns by fostering dialogue, transparency, and responsiveness. By positioning consensus as the centre of the advocacy, the engagement aims to promote collective ownership of the bill and increase the likelihood of its successful passage through the legislature.

Other components of the strategy that will also build consensus include:

1. Lobbying the Leadership of the Legislature: To gain the endorsement and support of key leaders in the National Assembly, who can influence the legislative process and rally votes.

» Approach:

- Direct engagement with the Senate President, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and members of the leadership including relevant committee chairpersons to secure their support.
- Leveraging the influence of the bill sponsors to open doors for advocacy discussions.
- Highlighting the political and social benefits of passing the bill, including how it aligns with national and international commitments on gender equality.

2. Meetings with Legislators for Consensus Building: To ensure that a significant number of legislators across party lines understand and support the bill before it is presented for a vote.

» Approach:

- One-on-one meetings and small group (caucus) engagements with legislators to address concerns, provide clarifications, and secure commitments.
- Equipping advocacy teams with talking points, and fact sheets to address misconceptions about the bill.
- Emphasizing the importance of every single vote, as success or failure will depend on reaching the required majority.

3. Key Stakeholder Engagement and Advocacy: To build broader support by engaging powerful stakeholders who can influence legislators and public perception.

» Approach:

- Closed-door meetings with senior political figures, traditional rulers, and religious leaders who can sway opinions.
- Town hall meetings with citizens and grassroots organizations to build community-level support and pressure on legislators.
- Roundtable discussions with executive government officials to align legislative advocacy with government priorities.

- Engagement with political party leadership, as party positions can significantly affect how lawmakers vote.

4. Strategic Media Engagements by the Sponsors of the Bill: To ensure that the sponsors of the bill remain visible and consistent in publicly articulating the need for additional seats for women.

» Approach:

- Regular TV, radio, and print media appearances by the bill sponsors to discuss the importance of women's representation.
- Placement of opinion pieces and editorials in widely read newspapers to shape public discourse.
- Use of press briefings to reinforce support from legislators and influential stakeholders.

5. Online Media Campaign: To engage and mobilise citizens, especially young people and women, to support the campaign through digital advocacy.

» Approach:

- Development of infographics, short videos, and testimonials explaining the benefits of the bill.
- Collaboration with social media influencers, activists, and bloggers to spread campaign messages widely.
- Use of hashtags, Twitter spaces, Facebook live discussions, and Instagram campaigns to drive digital conversations.

05

Timeline and Milestones

Month	Key Activities	Milestones
<p>Month 1 : Laying the Groundwork & Mobilization</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build and engage collaborative partners (CSOs, women’s groups, media, influencers). • Hold closed-door meetings with political leaders. • Secure high-level meetings with legislative leadership (Senate President, Speaker, key committee chairpersons). • Issue press releases and engage media houses. • Launch an online media campaign with branding, and influencer engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration established with clear advocacy roles. • Key stakeholders engaged privately. • Initial support assessed from legislative leadership. • Online campaign launched with early traction
<p>Month 2 : Advocacy Intensification & Consensus Building</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize one-on-one meetings with legislators and their party caucuses. • Conduct town hall meetings in key States to mobilise grassroots support • Hold press briefings and media interviews • Expand online campaign with infographics, videos, and live sessions • Encourage public engagement with legislators via social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50% of legislators engaged directly. • Increased media coverage with multiple features. • Town hall meetings completed to mobilise public support. • High online engagement achieved

Month	Key Activities	Milestones
<p>Month 3 : Legislative Push & Final Mobilization</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow-up meetings with undecided lawmakers. Conduct a national advocacy day and symbolic demonstrations. • Secure high-profile endorsements from celebrities and business leaders. • Run a final social media campaign blitz. • Ensure maximum attendance and support for the bill’s debate and vote. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Majority of legislators committed to supporting the bill. • Widespread public awareness and support generated • Bill successfully debated and voted on

06

Success Indicators and Monitoring

a. Legislative Engagement & Support Indicators

Success Indicators:

- Number of meetings held with key legislative leaders (Senate President, Speaker of the House, Committee Chairpersons).
- Number of one-on-one and caucus meetings with legislators.
- Number of legislators who publicly express support for the bill.
- Number of commitments secured from lawmakers across party lines.
- Passage of the bill in the Senate and House of Representatives.

Monitoring Mechanisms:

- Advocacy teams will track and document all legislators' meetings and commitments.
- A support tracker will be developed to monitor the stance of legislators. It is essentially a list which will give details of who needs to be engaged, how they were engaged, and their stance. An overview will give insight into progress being made, who needs more follow-up and engagement.
- Weekly check-ins with bill sponsors to assess progress and identify advocacy gaps.

b. Collaboration & Stakeholder Engagement Indicators

Success Indicators:

- Number of civil society organizations (CSOs), women groups, and influencers actively engaged.
- Number of stakeholder meetings held with traditional rulers, religious leaders, and party leadership.

- Number of joint advocacy statements, and press releases issued via collaborative efforts.
- Number of collaborative events (e.g., town hall meetings, rallies, press conferences).

Monitoring Mechanisms:

- Weekly engagement reports.
- A database to track active partners and their advocacy contributions.
- Regular debriefs will assess the effectiveness of stakeholder advocacy efforts.

c. Media & Public Awareness Indicators

Success Indicators:

- Number of TV, radio, and newspaper features covering the bill.
- Number of opinion pieces, editorials, and press releases published.
- Number of press briefings and media engagements by bill sponsors.
- Public sentiment analysis showing increased positive discourse on the bill.

Monitoring Mechanisms:

- Media monitoring tools will track mentions of the bill in TV, radio, and print media.
- Social listening tools will analyse public sentiment and engagement trends.
- A media engagement log will track all campaign-related media appearances.

d. Digital Advocacy & Online Mobilization Indicators

Success Indicators:

- Number of social media engagements (likes, shares, comments, retweets, views, etc.).
- Number of influencers and activists amplifying campaign messages.
- Number of participants in Twitter Spaces, Facebook Lives, and Instagram Q&A sessions.
- Reach and impressions of key campaign hashtags.

Monitoring Mechanisms:

- Use social media analytics tools (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram insights) to track engagement.
- Weekly reports on trending campaign hashtags and digital conversations.

e. Grassroots & Community Mobilization Indicators

Success Indicators:

- Number of town hall meetings and community dialogues held.
- Number of local advocacy events, rallies, and demonstrations organized.
- Number of grassroots supporters mobilised to contact legislators.

Monitoring Mechanisms:

Participants attendance and feedback forms at town hall meetings and rallies.

Monitoring of calls/emails/messages sent by citizens to legislators.

Community engagement reports from local CSO partners.

Final Impact Measurement:

At the end of the campaign, a comprehensive impact assessment will be conducted to evaluate:

- The extent of legislative support and political commitment.
- The shift in public perception towards women representation.
- The effectiveness of media and digital advocacy strategies.
- The strength and sustainability of collaborative networks formed.

If the bill passes, the next phase will focus on implementation and sustainability efforts. If it does not pass, lessons learned will guide a renewed advocacy strategy.

07

Risk Analysis and Mitigation

Risk	Risk Management Strategy
<p>Time and timing: Timing for the advocacy is not ideal due to the current tensions and divisions along gender lines in the Senate; or advocacy campaign is not activated on time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted Lobbying: To save time, its critical to prioritise who to target and how. • Positive engagement: It’s important to focus on the big picture and goal to navigate the tensions in the National Assembly.
<p>Political Resistance from Legislators: Some legislators may oppose the bill due to party politics, personal beliefs, or fear of losing political dominance. Others may see it as an attempt to favor women over men.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted Lobbying: Engage directly with key legislators, emphasizing how the bill benefits both men and women and aligns with national and international commitments. • Bipartisan Advocacy: Identify and work with champions across party lines to frame the bill as a national development issue rather than a partisan one. • Legislative Caucus Building: Establish a cross-party group of legislators committed to gender equality to push for internal discussions and negotiations.

Risk	Risk Management Strategy
<p>Lack of Public Support & Misconceptions: The public may misunderstand the bill as an attempt to impose gender quotas unfairly or undermine meritocracy. Some cultural and religious groups may oppose it on ideological grounds.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Awareness Campaigns: Use media, town hall meetings, and social influencers to clarify the bill’s purpose and correct misconceptions. • Engaging Religious & Traditional Leaders: Work with respected community leaders to reframe the conversation and highlight the importance of inclusive governance. • Showcasing Success Stories: Highlight examples from other African and global contexts where increased women representation led to positive outcomes.
<p>Weak Political Will from Executive Government: Even if the bill passes the legislature, executive inaction (e.g., refusal to sign it into law) could stall progress.</p>	<p>Risk Management Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage the Executive Early: Organize high-level advocacy meetings with the President, Vice President, and key ministers to align the bill with government priorities. • Link the Special Seats Bill to International Commitments: Highlight Nigeria’s commitments to SDG 5 (Gender Equality), AU Agenda 2063, and ECOWAS gender policies to show that passing the bill strengthens Nigeria’s global reputation. • Public & Media Pressure: Mobilise media campaigns to emphasize the government’s responsibility to advance gender equality.

Risk	Risk Management Strategy
<p>Misalignment and Internal Disunity Among Advocates & CSOs: Advocacy groups may have differing approaches, priorities, quest for individual attribution or funding constraints that cause disunity and weaken the campaign’s impact.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen Collaboration and Coordination: Develop a unified advocacy framework with clear roles, shared messaging, and regular coordination meetings, to the extent possible. • Consensus Building: Encourage dialogue among groups to ensure alignment on strategy and avoid fragmentation. • Capacity Strengthening: Offer training and resource-sharing mechanisms to ensure all groups are equipped to advocate effectively.
<p>Media Misinformation & Opposition from Conservative Groups: Opponents may spread misinformation or frame the bill as “anti-traditional values” or “Western feminism.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactive Media Engagement: Work with trusted journalists, editors, and social media influencers to ensure accurate information is disseminated. • Rapid Response Team: Set up a team to monitor and counter misinformation through fact-checking and strategic messaging. • Framing the Narrative: Emphasize the bill as a homegrown solution for Nigeria’s governance challenges, not an imposed foreign agenda.
<p>Low Engagement of Women & Youth in Advocacy Efforts: Women who stand to benefit the most from the bill, may not be actively engaged in advocacy due to apathy or lack of awareness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grassroot Mobilization: Use community meetings, women associations to engage women directly. • Social Media Activism: Leverage digital platforms (Twitter Spaces, Instagram Live, TikTok) to reach a younger audience. • Capacity Building: Train women and youth advocates to take leadership roles in the campaign.

Risk	Risk Management Strategy
<p>Changing Political Priorities: Lawmakers may de-prioritize women issues in the constitutional reform process and delay the bill’s passage by taking it off the agenda.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fast-Track Legislative Engagements: Prioritize early engagements while constitutional reform remains on the table. • Link the Bill to Electoral Success: Show lawmakers how supporting the bill can help them gain voters’ support, especially among women. • Engage Political Parties: Secure influential party leaders’ commitments to improved women representation as part of their campaign promises.
<p>Misconception of donor/development partners’ support: Advocacy being perceived by politicians as a foreign or donor driven intervention thus causing resistance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening ownership of the bill by the National Assembly and women politicians. • Highlight Domestic Advocacy Roots: Showcase local CSOs, women’s groups, and political champions that are advocating for the bill, emphasising the campaign’s domestic origins and broad local support. • Moderation of donor visibility on advocacy materials/communications where necessary. Use donor support as a background enabler of the campaign rather than the central focus, while ensuring that all materials emphasise local ownership and Nigerian leadership in the process.

Risk	Risk Management Strategy
<p>Expansion of Bill’s Scope and Potential Misalignment of Advocacy Efforts: The expansion of the bill’s scope by some stakeholders or advocacy groups could shift its focus beyond the original intent, potentially introducing additional elements that are not central to the bill’s primary objectives. This broadening of the proposal may lead to confusion among stakeholders, diluting the clarity of the message and affecting the campaign’s strategic alignment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage Stakeholders to Maintain Focus: Regularly engage with key stakeholders to clarify the scope of the bill and discourage any uncoordinated expansions. Encourage discussions to address any concerns without shifting the focus away from the core objectives. • Establish ground rules for collaboration: making it clear that competing messages or parallel campaigns are counterproductive to achieving the broader goal of advancing the Special Seats Bill. • Ongoing Monitoring and Adjustment: Continuously monitor the campaign’s direction and messaging to ensure it stays on track. Should scope changes arise, assess the impact on the bill’s clarity and make adjustments to maintain a consistent narrative.



ABOUT PLAC

Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre (PLAC) is a non-governmental organization committed to strengthening democratic governance and citizens' participation in Nigeria. PLAC works to enhance citizens' engagement with state institutions, and to promote transparency and accountability in policy and decision-making process.

The main focus of PLAC's intervention in the democratic governance process is on building the capacity of the legislature and reforming the electoral process. Since its establishment, PLAC has grown into a leading institution with capacity to deliver cutting-edge research, policy analysis and advocacy. PLAC receives funding support from donors and other philanthropic sources.

Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre (PLAC) Plot 451 Gambo
Jimeta Crescent, Guzape District,
Abuja, Nigeria.

Website: www.placng.org *Email: info@placng.org

*Phone: 08091899999