

WHITE PAPER

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS IN ORDER TO
**INCREASING THE
NUMBER OF WOMEN
IN POLITICS IN HAITI**

FÒK YO LA | FÉVRIER 2026





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About this white paper

This White Paper is part of the actions of **Fòk Yo La**, a citizen initiative aimed at creating spaces for dialogue, mobilization and co-construction around democratic issues and the place of women in public life in Haiti.

It originated from town halls or citizen forums (woumble) organized in January 2026 in the Great South of Haiti, bringing together local officials, civil society actors and citizens.

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The publication is provided by the **Déclic Foundation**, an organization committed to strengthening citizen participation, female leadership and local governance in Haiti.

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Introduction

In January 2026, four town hall-type forums (*woumble in Creole*) were organized by the Fòk Yo La initiative, with partners from state institutions and from civil society, in the four geographical departments constituting the Greater South of Haiti. Approximately 200 people took part, including local officials, teachers, merchants, students, university students and members of cooperatives.

Women support

Women vote



Women's participation in politics is extremely low in Haiti, despite the existence of legal frameworks, public discourse favorable to equality, and an active female presence in the country's economic, social, and community life. Invited to respond to this observation, participants were asked to propose solutions to increase the number of women in politics.

All of these proposals together constitute a White Paper, which could be transformed into an implementation plan aimed at reducing an underrepresentation that cannot be explained by a lack of interest or capacity of women, but by a combination of structural, social, economic and political factors continuing to restrict their effective access to decision-making spaces.

A constant observed throughout these *woumble* is the refusal, by women, of their exclusion, of their erasure and their invisibility in politics. The central narrative conveyed by the participating women is that they are not only capable of assuming positions of political power at all levels, but that they are also ready to do so, provided they receive support in training, funding, and the active solidarity of other women, expressed as a refrain: "Fanm kore fanm. Fanm vote fanm."

women

women

Shared observations

What the forums have highlighted

The discussions held in the various territories of the Greater South revealed a strong convergence of observations, despite the diversity of local contexts and participant profiles. The situations described and the obstacles mentioned largely overlapped from one *woumble* to another.

Women's political participation is described there as limited, not due to a lack of interest

or capacity, but due to concrete difficulties encountered in accessing and exercising political life. The participating women spoke of similar experiences of exclusion and marginalization as a result of secondary or logistical roles, verbal abuse, criticism, self-censorship, and a lack of economic resources.

Table 1 – Cross-cutting findings from the forums

Observations	Evidence cited during the forums
Persistent political underrepresentation	Low representation of women in elected and decision-making bodies
Political exclusion and erasure	Women relegated to secondary or logistical roles
Proven political capacity	Women who claim to be capable of assuming political responsibilities
Psychosocial obstacles	Fear, criticism, self-censorship
Violence in politics	Verbal abuse, sexist comments
Material constraints	Lack of economic resources
The centrality of female solidarity	Recurring calls: "Fi kore fi" and "Fi vote fi"

These observations focus less on the legitimacy of women to engage in politics than on the conditions under which this engagement becomes possible or impossible.

They reflect a shift in the debate from individual capabilities to the concrete organization of the political field.

Event:
Woumble FòkYo La

Region :
Grand Sud d'Haïti

Date :
January 13-19, 2026



Levers of



transformation

Based on their shared observations, the participants identified several key levers deemed essential for increasing the number of women in politics and supporting their engagement. These levers relate to aspects already present in the experiences described during the forums and appear recurrently across different regions.

economic empowerment, strengthening women's solidarity, transforming political practices, and protection against violence. Taken together, these levers reflect an approach that is not limited to the acquisition of individual skills, but also aims to act on the material, social, and organizational conditions in which women engage in politics.

They focus in particular on civic and political education,

Table 2 – Proposed levers for transformation

Lever of transformation	Challenges to which it responds
Strengthening civic and political education	Lack of political preparation and understanding of institutional issues;
Education of women and girls from an early age;	Low self-confidence, self-censorship, perpetuation of inequalities;
Women's economic empowerment and emancipation;	Economic dependence and precariousness limiting political engagement;
Strengthening solidarity and sisterhood among women;	Isolation, divisions and competition weakening collective action;
Transformation of exclusionary political practices;	Confinement of women to secondary or logistical roles;
Protection against violence, intimidation, and discrimination.	Fear, verbal abuse, sexist comments, discouragement;
Raising awareness of political and civil rights	Lack of awareness of rights and protection mechanisms

These levers structure the solutions presented in the following sections and constitute points of reference for thinking about concrete actions,

adapted to the realities expressed by the participating women.

Proposed solutions



Kerline Sj. G. - Jérémie



Islance C.- Plaisance du Sud

The solutions presented below are a direct continuation of the observations and levers identified during the forums. They reflect the transition from diagnosis to concrete action proposals, formulated by the participating women to address the obstacles encountered in their political engagement.

These solutions cover several areas of intervention and aim to act simultaneously on training, access to resources, electoral mobilization, the organization of political spaces, and protection against violence. They do not stem from a uniform approach, but rather result from lived experiences, existing practices, and proposals adapted to local realities.

Table 3 – Agreed summary of solutions

Domain	Proposed solutions
Training and education	Civic and political education; political training school; integration of young girls into training processes; behavioral change through family and community education
Economic resources,	Economic empowerment; funds dedicated to women candidates; financial independence; mobilization of funds;
Electoral mobilization,	Encouraging women to stand as candidates; women voting for women; active support for female candidates;
Political organization,	Political structures led by women or with a female majority; Transformation of roles assigned to women;
Inclusive governance,	Collaboration between men and women; consultation forums; mechanisms for reserving places for women;
Protection and vigilance,	Managing fear; combating verbal violence, intimidation and abuse of power vigilance against discrimination
Rights and citizenship,	Raising awareness of political and civil rights; protection mechanisms
Sustainability of commitment	Sustainable commitment; resocialization and remobilization; extension of actions to other areas

These proposals reflect a desire to act simultaneously on several dimensions of women's political engagement: training, access to economic resources, organization of political spaces, and protection against violence.

They show that political participation cannot be conceived solely in terms of individual encouragement. It requires financial resources, institutional transformations, a questioning of exclusionary practices, and a strengthening of solidarity among women.

The attention paid to girls' education, financial independence, support mechanisms, and the rules of the political game is proof of a

structural and sustainable approach to the representation of women in decision-making spaces.

They also reveal a link between immediate action and long-term transformation. Some measures aim to support current candidacies and engagement, while others seek to modify the institutional social and educational conditions that structure women's access to power.

This combination of concrete initiatives and structural changes provides a coherent foundation for sustainably strengthening the presence of women in political life.

Contributions from the territories

The forums also allowed for the emergence of proposals specific to certain territories, linked to specific local realities.

These contributions do not call into question the shared findings and solutions, but complement them by highlighting specific priorities, practices and constraints expressed by the participating women according to territorial contexts.



Jacmel, Grand Carnival Mask - 01/2026

Table 4 – Specific contributions by territory

Territory	Proposals formulated
Jeremie	Civic and political education for women; economic empowerment; encouragement to run for office; mobilization around voting and women's solidarity ("fi kore fi", "fi vote fi"); support in managing fear, criticism, and verbal abuse
Cayes	Education of women and girls from a young age; self-confidence and awareness of capabilities; civic education through community, media, and digital platforms; combating sexist comments and stereotypes; solidarity and sisterhood; self-knowledge; awareness of political and civic rights; advocacy with the government, political parties, and the electoral council for the 30% quota; protection of women victims of violence and respect for the time limits for sanctions
Plaisance du Sud	Political structures led by women or with a female majority; inclusive electoral alliances (two women/one man); questioning of logistical roles of women; access to decision-making spaces; recognition of the significant time commitment required; organization of political activities at times compatible with women's realities; refusal of meetings at nighttime hours.
Jacmel	Women's mobilization and solidarity; support and mentoring networks; dedicated funds; feminist resource bank; financial independence; political training school; integration of young girls; educational and financial investment in young women; gender collaboration; consultation tables; reserving seats for women in parliament; combating intimidation and abuse of power; vigilance against violence and discrimination; resocialization and remobilization; extension of actions to other areas

These territorial proposals illustrate the diversity of situations encountered and highlight the importance of adapting actions to local realities, while also being part of a common approach to strengthening women's political participation.



Sandia J., Plaisance du Sud

Reading it politically

Beyond concrete solutions, the forums reveal a deep gap between certain dominant discourses on women's political engagement and the reality expressed by them.

The exchanges show that, where some discourses insist on the need to raise women's awareness, strengthen their courage, or fill a skills gap, the participants describe themselves as already mobilized and aware of their role as citizens.

They place the obstacles to their engagement less in their individual abilities than in the concrete organization of the political field.

Table 5 – Discrepancy between dominant discourses and women's voices

Dominant narratives	Women reclaiming the narrative
We need to raise women's awareness of politics	Women say they are already mobilized and aware of their role.
Women lack the courage to commit themselves	Women are demanding a change in the conditions of engagement.
Education is enough to access politics	Education must be accompanied by resources, funding, and solidarity.
Political participation is a matter of individual choice	Political engagement is hampered by structural and organizational constraints.
Political rules are neutral.	Political practices exclude women (into logistical roles, night shifts).
Violence is marginal in politics	Women report criticism, verbal abuse, intimidation, and discrimination.
Underrepresentation is a question of capabilities	Women assert their ability but are prevented by the system.

The underrepresentation of women is not the result of a lack of will or skills, but the effect of structural and organizational constraints.

Conclusion

Solutions to activate

Women are mobilized and aware of their role as citizens.

The solutions proposed in this white book are rooted in local communities. They reflect a desire for political participation expressed collectively by the women involved.

Whereas the dominant discourse emphasizes awareness, courage or education as conditions for access to politics, women claim to already be engaged and aware of their capabilities.

They express the desire to strengthen their political education, to access the necessary resources, to assert themselves in decision-making spaces, to transform the model of education for young girls in order to ensure sustainability, and to support each other to take their full place in the political life of the country.



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LET'S STAY IN TOUCH!

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