

**WOMEN'S VOTER MOBILIZATION CAMPAIGN IN  
GUATEMALA:  
A FIELD EXPERIMENT**

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## **Abstract**

To test the effectiveness of a public awareness campaign on women's political participation in a developing country, we conducted a randomized field experiment across 40 municipalities in Guatemala. The goal of the campaign was to raise awareness about the importance of women's civic and political participation within the context of the 2011 general elections in Guatemala. We found no measurable impact, but provide lessons learned that can be helpful to other teams undertaking similar initiatives. We also fill a void in the literature given that this is one of the few studies that integrates an experimental design to explore the impact of a public campaign on women's political participation in a developing country.

## Motivation

Democracies are stronger and more resilient when their citizens are empowered to have a voice in the decisions that affect their communities. However, socioeconomic, cultural and informational barriers prevent the traditionally excluded population, including women, the poor, indigenous peoples and Afro-descendants, from actively participating in electoral processes and exerting influence in decision making arenas. As a result, it is less likely that their preferences are given adequate weight and that their perspectives generate sufficient influence. A common policy recommendation, therefore, is to raise the voice of excluded groups through the ballot box and increase their influence in public policy decision-making processes (World Bank 2003; Fujiwara 2010).

A mounting body of evidence points to the importance of increasing citizen engagement in public life. First, greater citizen participation strengthens representational links between the elected and the electorate. More specifically, women's political participation in elected positions is expected to lead to greater representation of women's interests, as women have different preferences than men over the allocation of public resources and legislative priorities (Chattopadhyay and Duflo 2004; Beaman et al. 2007; Barnes 2012; Schwindt-Bayer 2003; Jones 1997; Taylor-Robinson and Heath 2003). Secondly, increased citizen representation can influence public policy and lead to improved government services (Fujiwara 2010; Brollo and Troiano 2012; Miller 2008; World Bank 2003). Thirdly, minority representation and political participation foster more positive attitudes towards government (Banducci et al. 2004; High-Pippert and Comer 1998), while women's participation, in particular, weakens negative biases and stereotypes about women's efficacy in leadership roles (Beaman et al. 2009; Bhavnani 2009). Finally, increased political participation and access to information can lead to greater empowerment of women, particularly in highly traditional societies (Beath, Christia and Enikolopov 2013; Gine and Mansuri 2010).

Voter awareness campaigns are a common tool for increasing citizen engagement in public life. Such campaigns with experimental designs have been carried out extensively in developed countries,<sup>1</sup> particularly in the United States; however, few have focused on encouraging women's electoral participation in developing nations (see Gine and Mansuri 2010 as an exception). Moreover, most voter mobilization field experiments target people individually through door-to-door canvassing, leafleting, direct mailings, and live and robotic phone calls. With the exception of one grassroots, women's mobilization campaign in India<sup>2</sup>, we were

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<sup>1</sup> Studies in the development field have applied experimental designs to explore the role of information in influencing voter choices (see Ferraz and Finan 2008; Chong et al. 2010; Banerjee et al. 2010). Pande (2011) provides an excellent summary of this literature.

<sup>2</sup> See "Mobilizing Women to Vote in Traditional Societies: A randomized field experiment on grassroots mobilization in rural India" Green, Jennifer. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association 67th Annual National Conference, The Palmer House Hilton, Chicago, IL, 2011-06-06. Despite several efforts to locate the author, we were unable to find the final publication of this paper. Nevertheless, preliminary results from the field experiment indicate that the grassroots women's mobilization campaign during the 2007 elections only weakly changed strong gender norms about participation and did not affect voting behavior.

unable to find voter empowerment field experiments targeting women in public spaces through mass campaigns.<sup>3</sup>

To test the effectiveness of a public awareness campaign on women's political participation in a developing country, we conducted a field experiment in Guatemala aimed at raising awareness about the importance of women's civic and political participation within the context of the country's 2011 general elections. The experiment also sought to increase voter turnout rates among women. The intervention was based on the hypothesis that a public campaign could enhance women's awareness about the importance of being politically active as well as encourage them to vote. Given that not much evidence exists on the actual results of this type of intervention, the campaign was designed to be carried out in such a way that causal relations between its efforts and the potential results (enhancement of women's awareness about the importance of being politically active and changes in female voter turnout) could be explored.

Guatemala was selected for this experiment because it has some of the lowest rates of female political participation in Latin America. In 2011, no woman held a cabinet position. At the legislative level, women held only 12 percent of seats in Congress, significantly less than the regional Latin American average of 21 percent. Women also headed only 18 percent of congressional committees. At the local level, women held a mere 1.8 percent of mayoral positions and 6.2 percent of positions in municipal corporations.

In addition to being underrepresented in elected positions, women's levels of citizen participation were lower than those of men. In the 2007 general elections, women represented 47 percent of registered voters and 47 percent of women voted. In some municipalities, however, women's electoral participation was even lower, with rates as low as 33.8 percent in Chisec and 38 percent in Chichicastenango.

Moreover, women in Guatemala have different views than men about their freedom to participate in the political system. Surveys show that women are more hesitant about engaging in politics than their male counterparts when it comes to participating in groups to solve community problems, engaging in peaceful demonstrations, and running for office (Azpuru 2013). At the same time, traditional attitudes towards women continue to pose barriers to greater female participation. In a 2009 public opinion poll carried out by Latinobarometro, 40 percent of respondents believed that men make better leaders than women. Fifty-one percent also consider a woman's place to be the home and the man's to be at work.

As mentioned previously, the main objective of this intervention was to raise awareness about the importance of women's civic and political participation as well as to encourage women to vote. After conducting several tests to determine the impact of the intervention, we could not find any evidence of measurable changes in attitudes or behavior. Nonetheless, we believe that we make an important contribution to the extant literature since this is one of the few studies that explore the impact of public campaigns on women's political participation in a developing country. This paper aims, therefore, to present the results of the field experiment conducted in

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<sup>3</sup> Another field experiment carried out in the United States measured the impact of a street sign campaign on voter mobilization (Panagopoulos 2009). The intervention produced higher turnout rates, but was not focused on women.

Guatemala in 2011, and to provide motivation for further research and interventions on this relatively unexplored topic.

The rest of the paper is structured as follows. The next section describes the experiment design and the public awareness campaign implemented in Guatemala as well as some of the challenges encountered during implementation. The third section provides a description of the data, and the fourth section presents the results of the experiment. The final section concludes with a discussion of lessons learned.

## **Description of the Experiment Design and Intervention**

The public awareness campaign was designed to be carried out one month prior to the 2011 general elections in 268 urban communities located in 20 randomly selected municipalities throughout Guatemala.<sup>4</sup> In order to measure what would have happened in the treated communities in the absence of the campaign, a counterfactual was constructed using 20 additional, randomly-selected municipalities as a control group.

A steering committee composed of a team of specialists from the IDB<sup>5</sup> and the Guatemalan women's network, *Agenda Política: Mujeres en la Diversidad*,<sup>6</sup> guided the design of the campaign so that it would be culturally and gender sensitive. The Guatemalan office of Leo Burnett, an advertising company with experience implementing social campaigns at the local level and outside the capital city, designed and implemented the awareness campaign.

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<sup>4</sup> The sample was comprised of 40 municipalities which were randomly selected from 292 municipalities. Although Guatemala has 333 municipalities, 41 were eliminated because of security issues or high natural disaster rates. To select the sample, we performed a block randomization in which we first stratified municipalities according to six variables: 1) percentage of females who registered to vote in 2007 (as a ratio of males who registered); 2) the difference in the female registration between 2003 and 2007; 3) the proportion of the population living in urban areas; 4) the proportion of the population that speaks a Mayan language as their native tongue; 5) the proportion of population that is female; and 6) the municipality's population size. Once the stratification was completed, we proceeded to match the 292 municipalities in groups of 10 from which we finally selected 20 municipalities for the treatment group and 20 for the control group. Within the 20 municipalities in the treatment group, we worked in 268 urban communities.

<sup>5</sup> The IDB team was composed of three specialists in women's political participation, one communication specialist and one evaluation expert located at headquarters, as well as an indigenous peoples' specialist in Guatemala.

<sup>6</sup> The *Agenda Política: Mujeres en la Diversidad* (Political Agenda: Women in Diversity) is a network of 16 organizations from across the country. The following organizations are part of the network: Colectiva Para La Defensa De Los Derechos De La Mujer (CODEFEM); Red De Mujeres Por La Construcción De La Paz (REMUPAZ); Grupo Guatemalteco De Mujeres (GGM); Red De La No Violencia Contra La Mujer (REDNOVI); Coordinadora De Grupos De Mujeres De Base Nuestra Voz; Movimiento De Mujeres Indígenas Tz'ununija'; Organización De Mujeres Tierra Viva; Unión Nacional De Mujeres Guatemaltecas (UNAMG); Instituto Internacional De Estudios De La Mujer (INTERDEM); Sector de Mujeres; Fundación para el Desarrollo Sostenible de las Mujeres; Centro de Servicio de Noticias (CERIGUA); Asociación Guatemalteca de Mujeres Médicas (AGMM); Asociación de Mujeres en Solidaridad (AMES); Red de Mujeres Municipalistas; and Incide Joven.

To gain access to the communities, Leo Burnett sent its canvassing team to the communities one month prior to the launch of the campaign. During this initial visit, the team had the task of identifying and talking to local leaders to explain the objective of the campaign, establishing goodwill and collecting relevant information about the community (i.e. gathering points in the community, dates of local holidays, possible barriers for the campaign, etc.).

In addition, during the design phase, focus groups validated the campaign slogan, messages, photographs and colors. The slogan that best resonated among the focus groups was: “Mujer: Participa, Vota y Transforma” (“Woman: Participate, Vote and Transform”). Focus group participants also selected two specific messages: “Participa en las decisiones de tu comunidad” (“Participate in the decisions of your community”) and “Votar es tu derecho, participar es tu decisión” (“Voting is your right, participating is your choice”). The goal of the slogan and both messages was to get the attention of community members, particularly that of women, and motivate them to vote and participate in their communities’ decision-making and electoral processes. All the messages were translated into several Mayan languages.<sup>7</sup>

The public campaign was designed to reach as many inhabitants of the treated communities as possible, while simultaneously limiting the risk of contamination. To that end, the campaign utilized several communication channels designed to influence a specific geographic location, including the use of vans, street performances and promotional materials.<sup>8</sup> One member of the canvassing team visited each community twice in a van outfitted with speakers which were used to broadcast the campaign messages and draw a crowd for a participatory street theater performance. The street theater performance was narrated by the canvassing team member while community members acted out their parts. The script emphasized women’s right to participate in decision-making processes in their home and community, and encouraged men to support and foster women’s participation in these processes. To ensure that the campaign was easily recognizable, the vans were covered with the campaign slogan, photographs and colors (see Annex I). During each visit, team members hung an average of 260 posters, carried out approximately five street performances, and gave away an average of 24 balloons and 12 bags to people who participated in the street performance.

In addition, short audio ads were broadcast in local markets using closed circuit radios in order to avoid contamination. The audio script stated: “Mujer, para que podamos tener una mejor mañana es importante que participes en las decisiones de tu comunidad y que votes en las elecciones de septiembre. Votar es tu derecho, participar tu decisión. Mujer: Participa, vota y transforma! (Woman, it is important that you participate in the decisions of your community and vote in the September elections so that we may have a better tomorrow. Voting is your right, participating is your choice. Woman: participate, vote and transform!). Approximately 12 audio ads were broadcast daily in each community during a period of 28 days. Overall, over 1,600

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<sup>7</sup> Six languages were used during the campaign: Spanish, Kiche, Q’eqchi, Mam, Kaqchiquel and Kanjobal. According to the 2011 Census, over 40 percent of the population is indigenous and more than 23 Mayan languages are spoken across the country, making Guatemala a very diverse country.

<sup>8</sup> Promotional material included posters, balloons and bags.



activities<sup>9</sup> were carried out and more than 47,000 promotional materials were distributed in the 20 treated municipalities (see Annex 1 for more details about the campaign).

Launched on August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2011, the campaign was originally planned to last 30 days. However, on August 31<sup>st</sup>, 19 days into the campaign, all activities that required the physical presence of the canvassing team were canceled as a result of security threats the team encountered during community visits.<sup>10</sup> As the safety of the canvassing team was the IDB's top priority, only the audio ads in the local markets continued, and intensified, until September 9<sup>th</sup>, two days prior to the elections. The sudden, unexpected cancellation of the campaign meant that 40.3 percent of the communities (108 out of 268) went untreated.

In addition, the campaign encountered several obstacles that prevented a homogeneous implementation of the intervention. First, the canvassing team could not reach all the communities because of difficult road conditions, restricted access to gated communities, or the disappearance of certain communities initially identified with data from the 2001 census. Second, in some communities, the canvassing team was unable to interest pedestrians in participating in the street performances. Finally, audio ads were erroneously broadcast in local markets located in two control municipalities. The problems related to attrition and contamination posed serious challenges for the analysis of the results, which will be discussed in further detail in the results section. First, we turn to a description of the data.

## **Description of the Data**

To measure the impact of the campaign, baseline and exit surveys were administered to collect data on socio-economic characteristics and political attitudes of the treatment and control groups. The survey collected information on household demographics; recall of the campaign messages; interest and participation in politics and elections; attitudes towards gender equality and women's political participation; and knowledge of electoral processes and political candidates, among other issues. The surveys were administered in June and October 2011 to over 16,000 men and women 18 years of age and older.

Since no statistically significant differences by sex were identified for the vast majority of questions, Table 1 presents some baseline results for relevant variables calculated as averages for all respondents (male and female).

When a municipal-based randomization is properly done, individuals in both treated and non-treated municipalities will have, on average, similar observed and unobserved characteristics. This implies that before the intervention values for the relevant variables are expected to be similar across treatment and control groups. As a result, the difference in municipality means is

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<sup>9</sup> A street performance and a tour of the community count as one activity.

<sup>10</sup> The security issues encountered included verbal threats against the team members for working in the communities without the consent of a particular local group or for taking pictures, and attempted robberies, among others.

expected to be zero prior to the implementation, and any subsequent changes in the difference of means may be attributable to the program. In our sample, a small percentage of the dummy variables constructed from the abovementioned questions present unbalanced results across the two types of groups, although these represent a small number of cases given the total number of responses.

Table 1. Baseline results.

Question	Treatment	Control	t-value
I am very interested in politics	0.19	0.15	1.05
I talk about women's participation	0.49	0.51	-0.28
I would be interested in holding a public office	0.44	0.45	-0.20
Voting is my responsibility as a citizen	0.08	0.14	-1.18
It's very important that women vote	0.67	0.67	-0.07
It's very important that women participate in community decisions	0.62	0.60	0.61
It's very important that women self-organize to defend their interests	0.64	0.59	0.94
It's very important that women run for public office	0.60	0.56	0.79
Voting is a right for both men and women	1.00	0.99	1.05
I would agree to my daughter running for municipal office	0.66	0.69	-0.46
I would agree to my son running for municipal office	0.69	0.72	-0.49
Men and women have the same opportunities to hold public office	0.76	0.82	-1.58
I know women that hold public office	0.48	0.53	-0.78
The country would be better run with more women in government	0.32	0.35	-0.78
Women make good decisions	0.91	0.91	-0.17
Men are better leaders than women	0.42	0.34	2.15
Politics is not for women	0.26	0.24	0.32
Women are not interested in politics	0.31	0.29	0.38
Women in office better represent the interests of women	0.85	0.87	-0.53
Women stress out more easily when faced with difficulties at work	0.69	0.75	-1.65
If half the congress were female, there would be better representation	0.77	0.76	0.04
Voting is a right and a duty	0.59	0.46	2.61
I voted in the 2007 elections	0.68	0.75	-1.45
I belong to a political party	0.12	0.11	0.23

Amongst the most relevant differences, we found that the treatment group presented a more discriminatory view of women than the control group. (For example, respondents in the treatment group [0.42] were more likely to believe that men make better leaders than those in the control group [0.34]). In other cases, however, the treatment group presented more favorable views towards women than the control group. (For example, more members of the treatment

group believed that men and women have equal opportunities for accessing public office [0.83] as compared to members of the control group [0.74]). As a result of such differences, the baseline questions related to politics and gender do not reveal the consistent patterns we would expect as a result of the randomization of the municipalities.<sup>11</sup> This could present problems in the analysis of the results of the evaluation.

In addition, a test of baseline homogeneity yields differences in selected social and demographic variables (see Annex II). Among the variables that present balancing problems, the proportion of literate respondents is probably among the most important. The data indicate that control municipalities present higher ratios of respondents who know how to read (0.95) and write (0.94) compared to those in the treatment group (0.89 and 0.89, respectively). Ladinos are the predominant ethnic group in the control communities (0.82 vs. 0.58) and Mayas predominate in the treated ones (0.42 vs. 0.18). In terms of the language spoken at home, Spanish is predominant in the sample, but more so in the control communities (0.94 vs 0.73). Some of the variables aimed at measuring wealth seem to indicate that control communities may be slightly more affluent, but the differences are small in magnitude and the variables that provide direct information about income and quality of life are balanced across treatment and control, suggesting that this may not be a significant problem for the analysis.

## Results

Several tests were conducted to test the impact of the intervention<sup>12</sup>. The results are robust across methodologies and suggest negligible effects of the treatment. There is, therefore, no credible evidence suggesting a change in attitudes, perceptions and voting behavior following the campaign. The results do not tell us, however, why no impact was found. Absence of measurable impact should not be taken to mean that a shift has definitely not occurred, but that the experiment failed to capture any (most likely very small) changes.

Some of the most relevant indicators used to assess impact include: voted in the 2011 elections; importance of women participating in community decisions; importance of women voting; and discussion of women's participation issues. Table 2 includes additional variables used to assess levels of participation and attitudes towards gender equality. As no statistically significant

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<sup>11</sup> We refer to “intent to treat” effects because we did not account for whether a particular individual was a direct recipient of the intervention, but whether the intervention took place in his community. This means we cannot guarantee a particular person was actually exposed to the treatment, but that it was available in his community. Although the second survey asks respondents whether they were directly exposed, a positive answer does not guarantee the person was indeed directly exposed. Similarly, a negative response does not necessarily translate into full absence of treatment. This methodology is conservative in nature and often tends to underestimate effects, as it includes as treated individuals those who may not have been directly exposed to the intervention, but it is less likely to suffer from recall and selection biases.

<sup>12</sup> Tests include: single-equation instrumental-variables regression, probit models with continuous endogenous regressors, multinomial analysis, intention-to-treat with period interactions, community averages, and intention-to-treat.

differences were identified by sex, the table below presents the aggregated results for men and women.

Several circumstances coincide to suggest that small statistical results should not be an entirely surprising result. First, the intervention aimed at changing perceptions and attitudes by increasing awareness, which is a crucial first step in changing behaviors, but one that is often difficult to measure and slow to occur. Secondly, some implementation issues that arose from difficult and unexpected circumstances surrounding the intervention created difficulties that compromised the results. These unforeseeable complications severely limited the reach and scope of the campaign. In some cases, this meant that the campaign did not take place at all; in others that it was suspended before its completion. As noted above, these difficulties included serious safety concerns which led to the interruption of activities at different stages in the implementation process in several communities. Other communities were not reached because of inaccessible roads, impeded access to gated settlements or the disappearance of certain communities. It is impossible to predict what might have happened if the campaign had been fully implemented, and whether a threshold in attitude shift may have been reached.

Table 2. Sample pre and post-treatment means for selected questions. Total (men and women).

	Pre-treatment (a)		t- value	Post treatment (b)		t- value	Difference (b- a)	
	Treat- ment	Contr ol		Treat- ment	Contr ol		Treat- ment	Contr ol
I plan to vote in 2011 / I voted in the 2011 elections	0.79	0.85	-2.12*	0.83	0.81	0.23	0.04	-0.04
It's very important that women participate in community decisions	0.62	0.6	0.61	0.46	0.52	-1.22	-0.16	-0.08
It's very important that women vote	0.67	0.67	-0.07	0.61	0.62	-0.32	-0.06	-0.05
I talk about women's participation issues	0.49	0.51	-0.28	0.55	0.41	1.86	0.06	-0.09
I am very interested in politics	0.19	0.15	1.05	0.18	0.13	1.38	-0.02	-0.02
I would hold public office	0.44	0.45	-0.2	0.67	0.58	1.81	0.23	0.13
It's very important that women organize to defend their interests	0.64	0.59	0.94	0.58	0.63	-1.15	-0.05	0.04
It's very important that women run for public office	0.6	0.56	0.79	0.61	0.58	0.57	0	0.02
Politics is not for women	0.26	0.24	0.32	0.22	0.16	1.61	-0.04	-0.08

## Conclusions

In this article, we analyze the impact of an experimental public campaign aimed at raising awareness about the importance of women's civic and political participation and increasing women's voter turnout rates. Given that the experiment did not yield any measurable impact,

the question arises as to the desirability of including an impact evaluation in this type of intervention. Is it worth the investment of resources and further study?

Admittedly, an impact evaluation comes with its own set of issues, such as the additional costs of implementation. For example, randomization is often difficult to implement, because of its monetary and non-monetary costs. While the experimental design increased the costs of the evaluation (particularly the implementation costs of two surveys), monetary costs of the interventions itself were relatively low. Excluding the design of the campaign, the implementation costs totaled US\$81,500 (includes the community visits in a van, street theater performances, radio ads and promotional materials). This comes out to US\$304 per community or US\$0.37 per person.

An experimental design also limits the range of communication tools that are available for a mass campaign. Because of the potential for contamination, television and radio ads, as well as ads on internet media, must be replaced with potentially less effective tools such as radio ads aired in local markets and messages broadcast through speakers on a van. These limitations placed by the experimental design may have hindered the effectiveness of the campaign and thus contributed to the lack of measurable results. On the other hand, the communication tools that were utilized allowed for more direct control of the treatment and resulted in monetary savings.

Furthermore, the question remains as to whether mass media campaigns are the most effective strategy for promoting women's voter turnout rates. Field experiments have established the effectiveness of certain strategies for mobilizing voters, such as door-to-door canvassing efforts and live phone calls (Green and Gerber 2008; Gerber and Green 2005; Gerber and Green 2000; Ramirez 2005). Our experiment is the first experimental campaign that we know of targeting women in public spaces through a mass campaign. Unfortunately, the experiment did not enable us to decipher whether we failed to detect changes because of the type of public campaign that was implemented or because of implementation problems. Further experiments are needed to establish what works. For example, distinguishing between the effects of door-to-door campaigns vs. mass campaigns in public spaces is an important issue that will need to be addressed in future work.<sup>13</sup> The findings can help focus resources and increase impact.

Despite the absence of significant results, the study has important features that are likely to be of use for subsequent research. First, it pioneered the introduction of an evaluation based on randomized allocation of treatment to mass public campaigns aimed at promoting women's participation. Second, the intention of this approach, which undoubtedly presents certain limitations and difficulties, is to generate knowledge to support further interventions and decision making in this matter. The design and implementation process have indeed resulted in the generation of know-how that can be of use for future research and policy.

Four lessons merit our attention. First, implementing an awareness campaign during an electoral period carries both foreseeable and unforeseeable risks. The campaign, which was implemented one month prior to the elections in Guatemala, competed for the attention of the electorate with

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<sup>13</sup> See forthcoming article: IDB. Measuring the Effectiveness and Spillovers of a Voting and Registration Campaign for Women in Rural Paraguay: A Field Experiment. Washington, DC: Inter-American Development Bank.

candidates who dominated the airwaves and public spaces with their materials and messages. Canvassing team members hung posters and distributed promotional products in public spaces that were already brimming with electoral materials. Carrying out the campaign during an electoral period also increased the risk that community members would confuse our campaign with a political campaign. Elections by their nature produce highly politicized environments, and while measures were taken to avoid any misunderstanding regarding the objective of the campaign, it contributed in a small number of cases to the verbal threats received by a few canvassing team members. Moreover, while every effort was made to select municipalities that did not pose security threats and to obtain the goodwill of local community leaders beforehand, the bullying of the canvassing team and the subsequent cancellation of the campaign were, in many respects, unforeseeable.

Second, maintaining scrupulous records aided our analysis of the results. During implementation, canvassing team members recorded the number of community visits and street theater performances as well as the quantity of posters, bags and balloons that were distributed in each community. This enabled us not only to keep track of expenses, but also presented a starting point for comparisons across intervention methods. Gathering this detailed information opens up the possibility of using expenses as a metric to compare different means of interventions (TV spots, radio campaigns, etc), although such comparisons were not possible in this case because of the sudden interruption of some of the activities.

Third, given the complexities of working during an electoral period and in multi-cultural, urban settings with large indigenous populations, selection of the appropriate executing agency or agencies is paramount. Such an agency should have the capacity to design and execute the campaign in a timely manner and hire personnel with the proper expertise. Advertising companies have extensive and established networks and access to media resources to quickly penetrate areas outside of the capital city, while NGOs are flexible in adapting to local situations and tend to have a positive rapport with local communities. In this regard, a more appropriate executing team would have included an advertising company in collaboration with an NGO.

Finally, it's important to note that the political context that led us to conceive of the intervention in Guatemala improved dramatically during the design and implementation of the campaign. In fact, the September 2011 elections represent a milestone for women's political participation. For the first time in its democratic history, women turned out to vote in greater numbers than men. The number of women who voted increased from 47.2 percent in 2007 to 53.6 percent in 2011. Similarly, women outnumbered men as registered voters. The proportion of women registered to vote increased from 46.9 percent in 2007 to 50.9 percent in 2011, making women's votes vitally important during the election (TSJE).<sup>14</sup>

Women also increased their presence as candidates. The percentage of female presidential, vice-presidential, congressional and mayoral candidates increased from 12.6 percent in 2007 to 15.4 percent in 2011. In fact, the ten presidential tickets included three female presidential and three

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<sup>14</sup> The Electoral Tribunal launched a massive voter registration campaign prior to the 2011 elections, which led to a significant increase in the number of registered voters, specifically among women, indigenous peoples and young sectors of the population.

female vice-presidential candidates. In contrast, in 2003 there was only one female vice-presidential candidate.

The increase in female candidates and voters contributed to a greater coverage of gender issues by the media during the electoral period (Rodríguez-Tejedo forthcoming; Llanos 2012). In addition, the polemic candidacy of Sandra Torres also contributed to greater coverage of gender issues during the electoral period. Sandra Torres, the ex-wife of social democratic President Álvaro Colom, divorced in April 2011 so she could stand as a presidential candidate in the elections. However, the Supreme Court banned her candidacy on the grounds that the divorce was an arrangement to evade the constitutional ban which forbids family members of a sitting president from running for presidential office.

Women's increased participation in the 2011 elections did not, however, translate into significant gains at the ballot box. While it was the first time in the country's history that a female was elected vice-president, women made little headway in other elected positions. In 2011, women held 13 percent of congressional seats compared to 12 percent in 2007. At the local level, women represented 2.1 percent of mayors in 2011 as compared to 1.8 percent in 2007.

While women's political participation is increasing, significant challenges remain for women to fully participate in decision-making processes. The surveys carried out as part of this project suggest that traditional views continue to predominate. While 50 percent of respondents deem it very important for women to participate in decision-making arenas in their communities, 26 percent consider that women are not interested in politics and 17 percent believe that politics is not a woman's issue. Moreover, gender stereotypes abound with 65 percent of respondents believing that women get more frustrated when they encounter difficult issues at work. Such stereotypes affect beliefs about the competencies of women leaders.

In conclusion, the study found no significant impact of the public awareness campaign on women's political participation. The main contribution of this paper is to share lessons learned from the experiment and to contribute to the nascent literature on mass public campaigns that seek to foster women's political participation. Future studies should assess the effectiveness of mass public campaigns versus door-to-door campaigns, in an effort to build the evidence base of which activities are more successful in increasing women's political and civic participation.

## Annex I

### **CAMPAIGN DESCRIPTION** **Campaign Activities**

<b>NUMBER OF COMMUNITIES</b>	<b>NUMBER OF VISITS</b>	<b>NUMBER OF STREET PERFORMANCES</b>	<b>NUMBER OF RADIO ADS AIRED</b>
160	808	837	6,480

### **Summary of Campaign Materials**

	<b>DISTRIBUTED MATERIALS</b>
<b>POSTERS</b>	41,516
<b>BALLOONS</b>	3,900
<b>BAGS</b>	1,873
<b><i>TOTAL</i></b>	<b><i>47,289</i></b>



## Vans

The vans were not only used as a means of transportation for team members, but also as a way to transmit the campaign messages. Each van was covered with the colors, slogan and messages of the campaign (see images below) and were equipped with speakers to broadcast information about the activities carried out in the community (such as the street performances) and raise interest among locals.



## Posters

Two posters were designed to reflect the two messages of the campaign (see picture below). The first poster included the message, “Participate in the decisions of your community” (in Spanish “Participa en las decisiones de tu comunidad”) and the second one included the message, “Voting is your right, participating is your choice” (in Spanish “Votar es tu derecho, participar es tu decisión”). Both messages included the slogan of the campaign at the bottom, “Woman: Participate, Vote and Transform” (in Spanish “Mujer: Participa, Vota y Transforma”). Leo Burnett hung 41,516 posters in the communities.



## Street Theater Performances

The street theater performances took place in busy areas of communities, such as markets or outside churches. Each team member received a number of props to set up a small stage and was in charge of getting the attention of pedestrians and encouraging them to participate in the role playing.

The idea behind the role playing was to show community members that women have the capacity and the right to participate in the decision-making processes of their communities. To this end, the script included a man who, encouraged by a very conservative friend, did not allow his wife to be part of the decision-making processes in their community. However, thanks to his oldest son, the father realizes everything that his wife does for the family’s well-being, such as taking on the main responsibility of caring for their children and ensuring the economic stability of the family. The son also stresses that participation is her basic right. Once the father realizes this, he understands that if she can do those great things for the family, she can also do it for the community by participating in the elections and getting involved in community associations.

## Balloons and Bags

The balloons and bags were used as gifts for the women and children who participated in the street performances. Both bore the slogan of the campaign (see image below). Leo Burnett gave away 3,900 balloons and 1,873 bags.



## Annex II

Sample averages for selected social and demographic variables are presented in the table below.

Men and women			
SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC	TREATMENT	CONTROL	t- VALUE
Registered to vote	0.83	0.90	-2.96
Knows how to read	0.89	0.95	-1.97
Knows how to write	0.89	0.94	-1.86
Education: none	0.11	0.06	1.63
Education: Elementary School	0.37	0.33	1.00
Education: Middle School	0.17	0.18	-0.30
Education: High School	0.27	0.34	-1.19
Education: University degree or higher	0.07	0.09	-0.70
Employment status: Currently working	0.60	0.58	0.71
Employment status: Seeking employment	0.04	0.05	-0.53
Employment status: Student	0.09	0.08	0.45
Employment status: Homemaker	0.23	0.25	-0.60
Employment status: Not active	0.03	0.03	-0.27
Employment status: Of independent means	0.01	0.01	-1.24
Marital status: Single	0.31	0.32	-0.21
Marital status: Married	0.62	0.60	0.79
Marital status: Separated	0.02	0.03	-2.73
Marital status: Widow	0.05	0.05	0.18
Ethnicity: Ladino	0.65	0.79	-1.16
Ethnicity: Mayan	0.35	0.21	1.16
# of dependents	1.59	1.53	0.47
# of children	2.17	2.04	0.90
# of children under 18	1.85	1.69	1.58
# of children over 18	1.35	1.26	1.64
Monthly income Q0 to Q500	0.05	0.04	0.48
Monthly income Q501 to Q750	0.10	0.06	1.55
Monthly income Q751 to Q1,600	0.23	0.19	1.25
Monthly income Q1,601 to Q 2,000	0.19	0.17	0.98
Monthly income Q2,001 to Q2,500	0.09	0.09	0.03
Monthly income Q2,501 to Q3,000	0.09	0.08	0.11
Monthly income Q3,001 to Q5,000	0.10	0.17	-1.47
Monthly income Q5,001 to Q10,000	0.01	0.05	-1.90
Monthly income Q10,001 to Q15,000	0.00	0.00	-0.93

Monthly income Q15,001 to Q20,000	0.00	0.00	-0.71
Monthly income Q20,001 or more	0.00	0.00	0.97
Household head: gender	0.10	0.12	-0.82
Type of home: formal	0.90	0.89	0.29
Type of home: apartment	0.03	0.07	-1.31
Type of home: ranch	0.06	0.04	0.94
Type of home: room in a home	0.01	0.01	-0.22
Owner	0.75	0.71	0.81
Renter	0.20	0.26	-1.20
Borrowed	0.05	0.03	2.56
Construction material: Brick	0.02	0.05	-2.57
Construction material: Block	0.74	0.78	-0.87
Construction material: Concrete	0.01	0.03	-1.46
Construction material: Sun dried blocks	0.12	0.07	1.02
Construction material: Wood	0.07	0.05	0.63
Construction material: Metal sheeting	0.03	0.01	1.15
Shack	0.00	0.00	0.21
Roof: Wood, sticks or cane	0.00	0.00	0.56
Roof: Concrete	0.23	0.36	-2.53
Roof: Metal sheeting	0.69	0.58	1.76
Roof: Asbestos cement	0.00	0.00	1.18
Roof: Brick (Teja)	0.07	0.05	0.57
Roof: Straw, palm leaves or similar	0.00	0.00	1.04
Floor: Ceramic brick	0.19	0.31	-2.30
Floor: Cement brick	0.20	0.24	-1.12
Floor: Clay brick	0.01	0.02	-0.54
Floor: Cement	0.50	0.36	2.82
Floor: Parquet	0.00	0.00	-0.84
Floor: Wood	0.00	0.00	0.14
Floor: Dirt	0.10	0.06	1.41
Water source: Exclusive use of tap water	0.87	0.86	0.09
Water source: Tap water for several homes	0.02	0.06	-1.54
Water source: Public tap water	0.04	0.03	0.68
Water source: Perforated public or private well	0.05	0.03	0.92
Water source: Cistern Truck	0.00	0.00	0.06
Water source: River, lake or spring	0.01	0.01	-0.79
Water source: Rain Water	0.00	0.00	1.87
# of rooms in home	2.81	2.88	-0.45
# of times ate meat in past seven days	2.86	3.06	-0.92
# of times drank milk in past seven days	3.53	3.67	-0.46

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