

# Incorporating a Gender Perspective into Electoral Observation: Helping the women of the hemisphere fully exercise their political rights.

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## Presentation Outline

- I. Basis for Electoral Observation With a Gender Perspective
- II. Broadening the Electoral Observation Field of View
- III. Conclusions
- IV. Contributions of the Methodology



# I. Basis for Electoral Observation With a Gender Perspective:

- Convention on the Nationality of Women (1933)
- Inter-American Convention on the Granting of Political Rights to Women (1948)
- American Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Man (1948)
- Inter-American Convention on the Granting of Civil Rights to Women (1948)
- American Convention on Human Rights (1969) (Art. 23)
- Additional Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights (1988)
- Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women (1994) (Art. 4)
- ***\*Inter-American Democratic Charter (2001) (Art. 28).***



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## **Inter-American Democratic Charter (2001): ART. 28**

States shall promote the full and equal participation of women in the political structures of their countries

As a fundamental element in the promotion and exercise of a democratic culture.



## International legal instruments:

- Proclaim that women and men are **equal**;
- The need to **create the conditions** for the **full and equitable exercise of political rights**;
- Link such exercise to the quality of a democracy.

**However...**

# Formal equality = Real equality?



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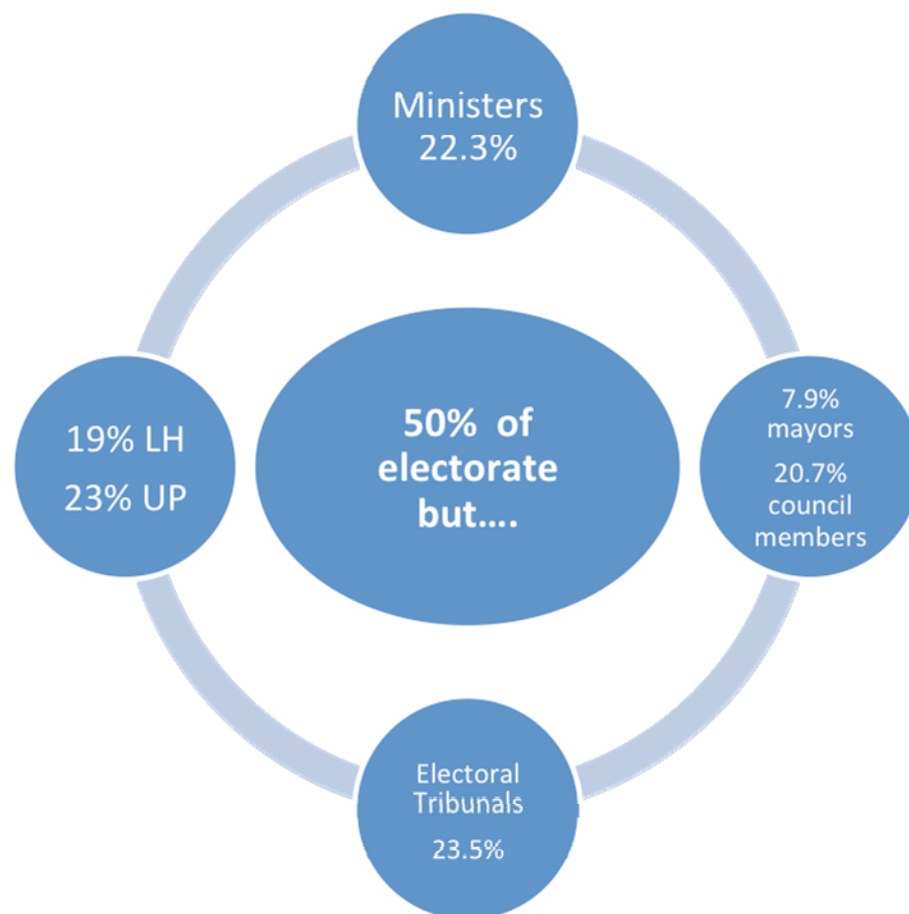
VI Summit of the Americas - 2012

# 48 years after the vote in all countries of the Americas...



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## Inequality prevails in public office





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## II. Broadening the Electoral Observation Field of Vision

**Verify, examine, and analyze**  
conditions of equity in the  
exercise of political rights



**Voters**  
**Candidates**  
**Members of electoral**  
**entities**

**And thus be  
able to:**

- 1. Identify and highlight obstacles** that may impede access to full political citizenship.
- 2. Develop recommendations** that help the member states surmount the democratic deficit.



# EQUITY

## Substantive Characteristic Principle



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**Inclusive**



**Men and women as  
voters**

**Competitive**



**Men and women as  
candidates**

**Clean**



**Men and women in  
electoral roles**

**Elected office**



**Men and women  
effectively discharging the  
duties of elected office**

# INCLUSIVE Elections: Men and Women as Voters



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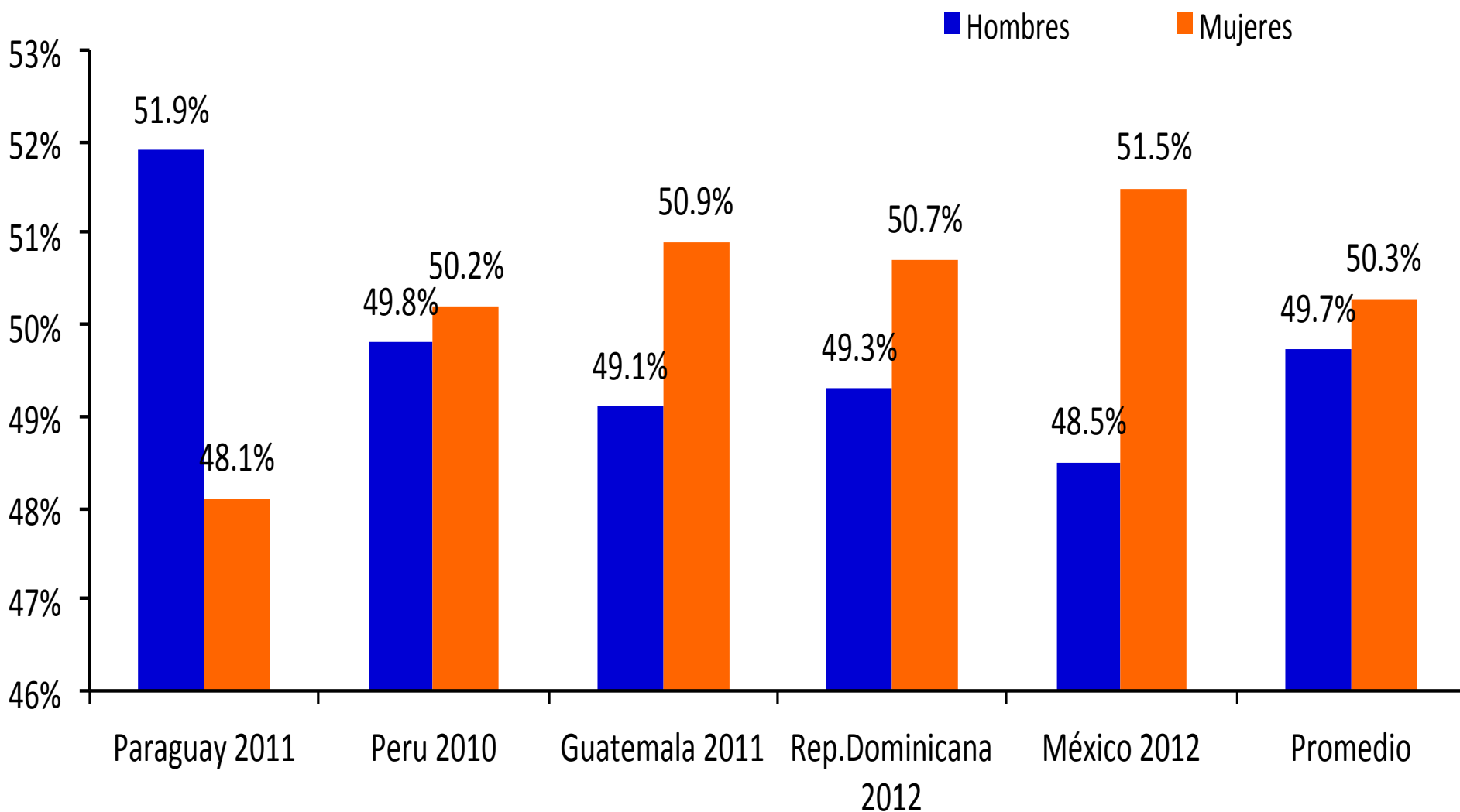
Indicator	Variables
Registration process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identification document</li><li>• Registration in the voter rolls</li></ul>
Access to polling centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conditions of accessibility</li><li>• Conditions of accessibility for pregnant women and/or women with children</li></ul>
Voting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Disaggregated participation</li><li>• Abstention (causes)</li><li>• Cases of intimidation, proxy vote, or family vote</li></ul>
Public policies or programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Public policies or programs to promote the right to vote</li></ul>

# Men and Women in the Voter Rolls



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**On average, women account for more than 50% of voter rolls**



# COMPETITIVE Elections

## Men and Women as Candidates



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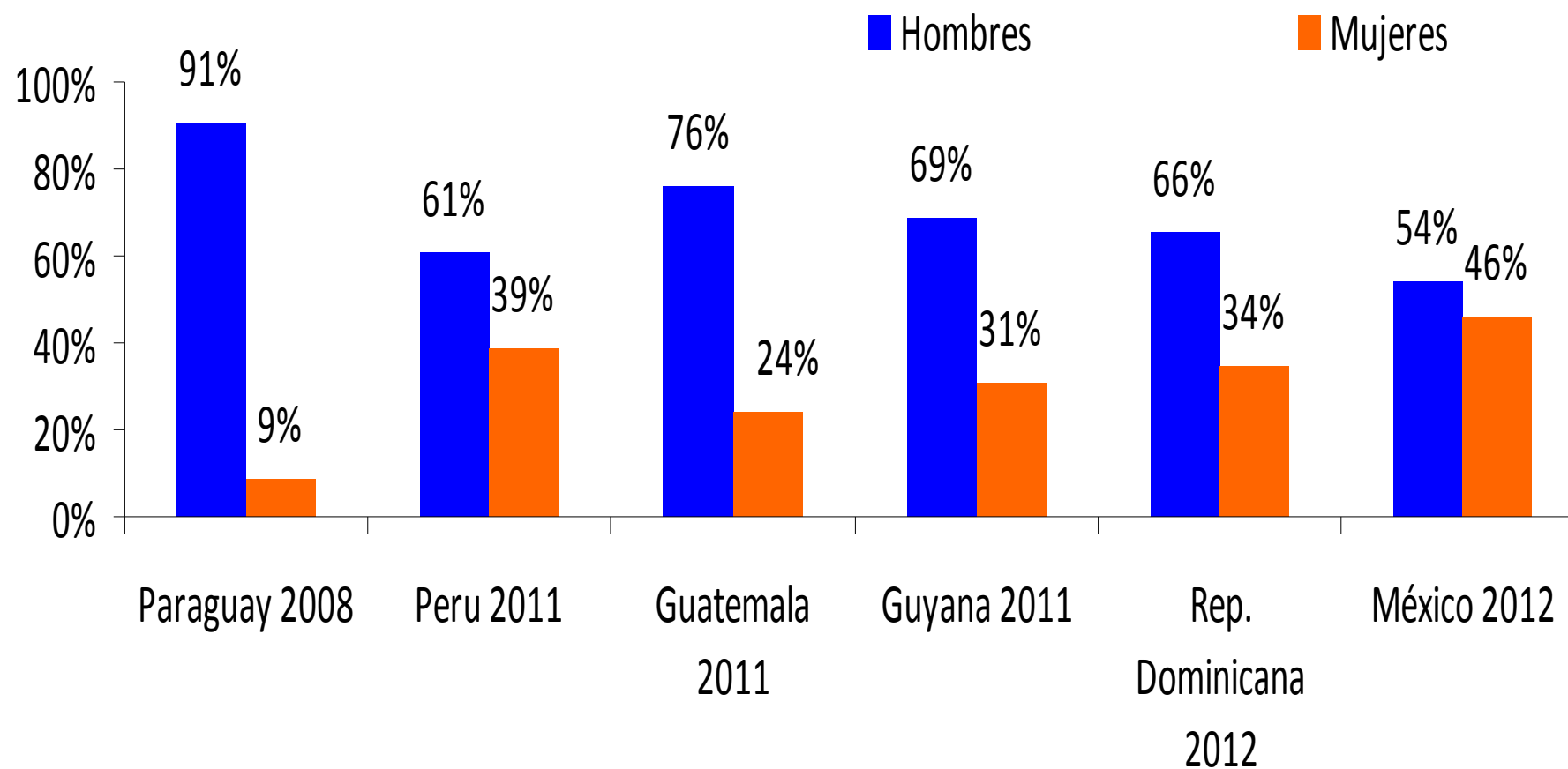
Indicator	Variables
Within the political parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Internal rules</li><li>• Composition (militancy and leadership)</li></ul>
In the electoral system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Type (PR - RM), district magnitude, type of list (rules and practices)</li></ul>
Within candidacy mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Quotas</li><li>• Affirmative action measures</li><li>• Position or alternation mandates</li></ul>
Within the financing system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Direct and indirect managed public financing</li></ul>
Access to the media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Access for the campaigns</li><li>• Coverage of gender-related matters</li><li>• Presence of stereotypes</li></ul>

# Men and Women as Legislative Candidates



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## Participation of candidates by gender:





Indicator	Variables
Integrity of women's preferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limits to the exercise of free and secret suffrage</li> <li>• External pressures caused by any type of violence</li> </ul>
Gender equity in electoral bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Composition of the electoral body</li> <li>• Internal policies or offices</li> </ul>
Gender equity on electoral boards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Composition of electoral boards</li> </ul>
Gender equity in election monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Composition of party representatives</li> <li>• Composition of national observation missions</li> </ul>

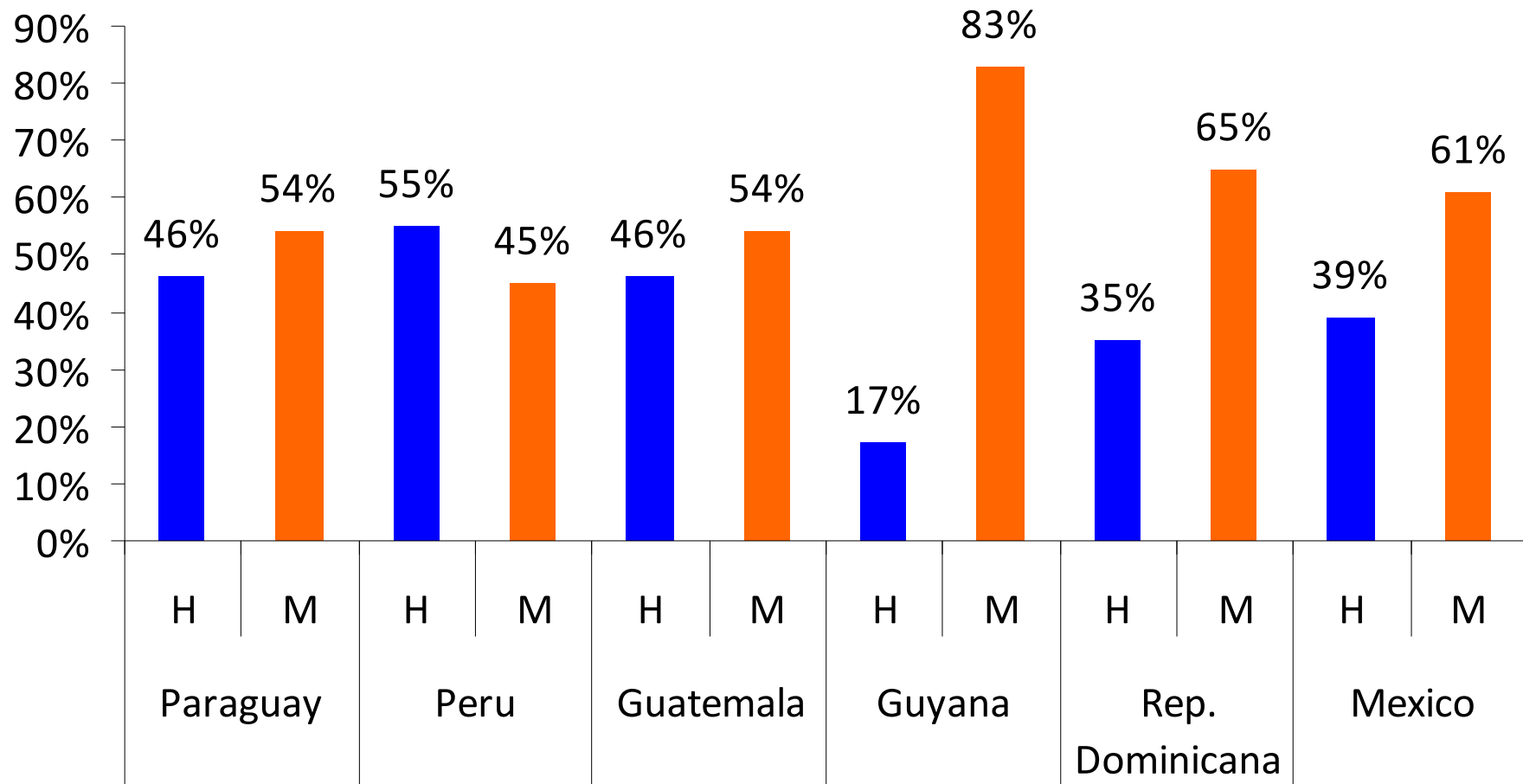
# CLEAN Elections

## Men and Women in Electoral Roles



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### Electoral poll workers (distribution by gender):



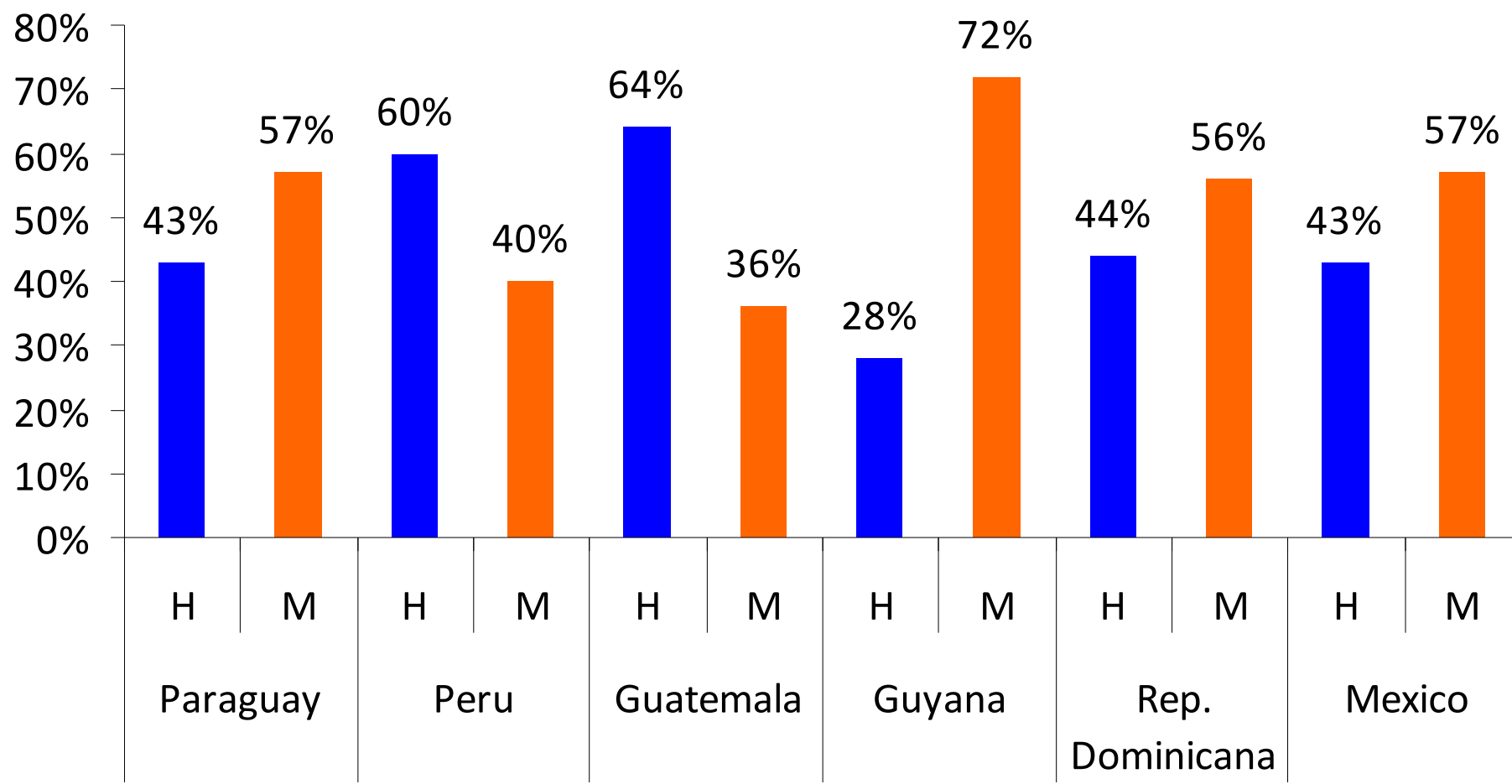
# CLEAN

## Men and Women in Electoral Roles



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### As chairpersons of electoral boards (distribution by gender):





# ELECTED OFFICE



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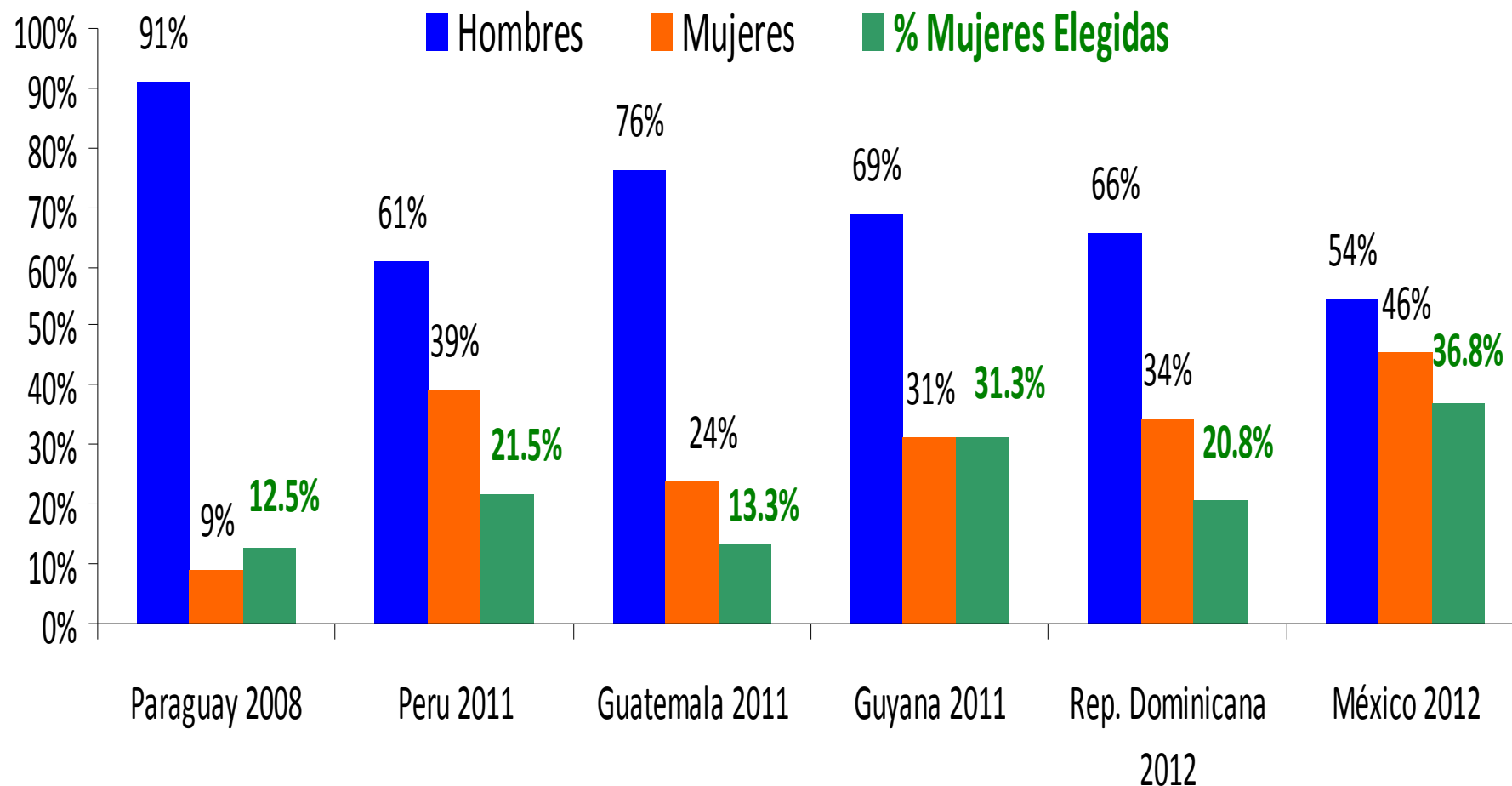
## Men and Women Effectively Discharging the Duties in Elected Office

Indicator	Variables
Gender equity in elected public office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reserved seats</li><li>• Composition of elected offices</li></ul>
In the irreversibility of election results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Post-electoral fraud</li><li>• Political harassment against elected women</li></ul>

# Men and Women Effectively Discharging the Duties of Elected Office



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Source: DECO-OAS and Inter-Parliamentary Union: <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm> .



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### III. Conclusions





# Conclusions

- Conditions of equality are better for women in exercising their right to vote than in exercising their right to be elected
- In countries where there are currently regulations governing quotas, such regulations contribute significantly to increasing women's participation in politics
- The lack of clear regulations on how political parties should adapt their internal decision-making mechanisms to integrate established quotas threatens the spirit of affirmative action
- Gender equity in public financing systems and in access to the media remains a challenge, but is now a visible one
- In different countries in the region novel strategies to mainstream the gender perspective are being implemented and may be shared and used as a point of reference for each country in its own context
- Deepening women's political participation brings new challenges but also proves that the efforts have been fruitful



## **Contributions of the Methodology:**

- It helps to identify differences between regulations and practice in the exercise of political rights.
- It places the subject of equality in men's and women's participation in elections on the agenda of political actors.
- The methodology's findings help local actors make an impact.
- Recommendations may become technical-cooperation projects.





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***Fostering gender equality is essential for democracies:  
“Democracy without women is only half democracy.”***

José Miguel Insulza, Secretary General of the OAS