



Parliamentary Centre
Le Centre parlementaire

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The Parliamentary Centre and Stephen Taylor of Rally Public Affairs are pleased to announce a successful first round of funding for a pilot project that seeks to use modern information technology to help women's opinions and priorities to be better reflected in political decision making in Indonesia, the country with the fourth largest population in the world.

The project will now be piloted in an Indonesian village in partnership with the Women and Youth Development Institute of Indonesia.

"In a geographically dispersed society of 250 million people, there are 280 million mobile subscribers. Yet, women's voices are under-represented, especially in remote villages. Mobile phones provide a cost-effective mechanism to make their voices heard." said Taylor. He developed an SMS polling platform that will be used by the project to transfer women's opinions back upon their governments, to media, and to locally engaged civil society organizations.

Competing against over 240 proposals, the team's pitch won the top prize at the Grand Challenge for Development, a global competition funded by the governments of Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

"In a world where people are clamoring to become stakeholders in their own governance, modern communication technologies can help to bridge the democracy gap." added Jean-Paul Ruszkowski, President and CEO of the Parliamentary Centre. "We're looking to implement creative approaches that can have a real, measurable effect to increase accountability and transparency in the way authorities address the needs of their citizens"

The SMS platform is cost-efficient, scalable and can easily reach millions across the country. In order to expand the scope of the project nationally, the team is looking for partnerships in the public and private sectors.

With 47 years of experience, the Parliamentary Centre is one of the leading and longest serving non-governmental organizations dedicated to the strengthening of parliamentary democracy in Canada and around the world – a feat few other organizations in this field have achieved. The organisation has worked in over 100 jurisdictions in every part of the world.

Rally Public Affairs is a digital public affairs firm that has over a decade of experience providing innovative technology-based solutions for clients in industry, in government, and in democratic development. The firm combines political strategy and bespoke technology to rally client stakeholders to make an impact on decision making processes.

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