

## PRESS RELEASE

*For immediate publication*

Ottawa, September 15, 2021

**Young participants in the *Impacto Legislativo Joven* program submitted a citizens' initiative for Ecotourism development from a gender-responsive and inclusive perspective to the National Assembly of Panama**

The *Impacto Legislativo Joven* program was developed by ParlAmericas, in cooperation with the National Forum of Women in Political Parties of Panama (FONAMUPP) and in coordination with the National Directorate for the Promotion of Citizen Participation. The project was carried out from June to August 2021, with the participation of young former members of the Youth Assembly of Panama.

The program was aimed at promoting the political participation of young Panamanians and included two phases. The first phase consisted of a series of workshops and seminars, in which a significant number of future leaders learned more about political leadership, intersectionality and how to incorporate gender-responsive and inclusive perspectives in public policy analysis. During these meetings, the young people were also able to have discussions with important national and regional parliamentarians and hear about their experiences.

During the second phase of the program, the young people worked to co-create a citizens' initiative focused on ecotourism development in Panama, incorporating a gender-responsive and inclusive perspective at all stages.

During extensive and productive work sessions, the young people had the opportunity to interact with specialists on issues that are relevant to the proposal, allowing them to develop innovative concepts for the initiative, such as the importance of education and training in environmental conservation, the inclusion of communities and community-based organizations and the prominent role played by women entrepreneurs in regions where tourism activities are carried out in Panama.

This initiative is part of the Women's Political Leadership Project, supported by the Government of Canada through Global Affairs Canada. The *Impacto Legislativo Joven* program culminated in the submission of the citizens' initiative by the young participants to the National Directorate for the Promotion of Citizen Participation of the National Assembly of Panama on Wednesday, September 15, in the context of the International Day of Democracy.

-30-