TRAINING OF WOMEN MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT IN DODOMA

Dodoma

1st -3rd Feb 2020

Background

The University of Dar Es Salaam organized a training for sitting women members of parliament, from 1st -3rd Feb 2020 in Dodoma. The training brought together a total of 115 participants from different political parties in Tanzania. The training focused specifically on helping to increase the pool of women who are willing to run a campaign, win and serve in elective office from the local to regional and national levels.

Specifically, the training aimed at building **Knowledge,** on key information about the parts of a campaign election plan and how to work with the media. Importantly, the training methodologies demonstrated key information about women's representation in elected positions, the institutional and attitudinal factors that limit women's advancement in the political sphere and the enabling factors in place to increase women's representation.

Secondly, the training focused on strengthening **Skills** on creating a campaign strategy including a campaign message, targeting voters, raising funds and managing a campaign. Lastly, the training aimed at increasing **Confidence,** by ensuring that participants understand that they are transformational leaders, it is their right to be a candidate, and their voice and their opinion are important and valued. Most importantly, the training sought to ensure that increasing women's voice in political discourse brings about better policies, laws and processes for the benefit of an entire community.

Participants

The training brought together a total of 115 female members of parliament from all represented political parties. Of those participated in the pre and post training evaluation during the training 79.1% of were special seat members of parliament while 20.9% are elected through constituencies. Among the attendees, 4.6 percent have primary level education, 18.5 percent have form four level of education, 1.5 percent have form six and certificate level of education respectively, 13.8 percent have Diploma, 20% have first degree and 40% have post graduate level of education. In terms of phase of leadership, more than 60% of trainees have only 1 phase of leadership while 21.5%, 5.6% and 1.5% have 2, 3 and 4 phases of leadership respectively. Also, Table 1 shows, most of trainees (50.8%) are aged above 50 years old while 46.2% are aged between 31 and 50 years old and 3.1% are aged below 30 years old.

Reflections and Discussion

Transformational Leadership and Women Leaders Self-Assessment

This Session covered number of topics which served as a ground and reference of the following topics. Topics covered basic women in leadership statistics, transformative leadership, the decision to run and your story. Participants were introduced on how to use the workbook and fill in the required information. During the discussion, several issues emerged including the space for women leaders to represent women agenda, violence against women in the politics and women representation in leadership positions

While leading the session, Professor Bernadeta Killian from University of Dar es Salaam centered her presentation on the need for building women's leaders' confidence to run the office. The content of the session focused on the political, legal and social legitimacy for women to run for the office at both national and local level and the women power to influence change. The presentation emphasized on the need for gender equality, driven by a vision of social justice, transformational change, inclusion and power. It also emphasized on the need for dismantling power structures and practices both formal and informal that discriminate against women.

During the discussion, women MP said that this is form of leadership which they are aspiring to see, although currently, a number of women and power structures which sets quota system hinders women voice in working towards this. They are hoping that with the coming 2020

"I have ranked myself in the highest points on some areas because I know myself that I have the power to make decision, because I am capable of doing this. For those areas that I ranked five or less, it is not because I do not have power to do so, it is because i need to negotiate with either my partner, friends, my fellow MPs or my community. This understanding itself is the step towards achieving a greater number of women in leadership position, and thanks to this opportunity because it gave me a moment to pause and reflect as an individual and the position I serve and as a part of women leaders' collective voice- MP

election, there will be some initiative to work towards more equality and bring the desired transformational change. As part

of the facilitation strategy, Prof Killian asked participant to do self-assessment on the areas they either have power or and the level of empowerment. Most participants shared that they are fully empowered in the areas which they have total control, such as number of children, decisions at the household and for some extent decision at the community level.

Women in Public Offices- Navigating through Political Parties Structures, Values and Systems

The aim of this session was to increase knowledge and confidence among women leaders on how political parties can be a vehicles for women participation in the politics and how women candidates can leverage support from their political parties. The session covered key areas such as key statistics on women participation in the politics, political parties as vehicle for women participation, political parties agenda, dealing with resistance within the parties,

During the discussion, number of issues

were raised which hinder women participation. For example, one participant shared that there are groups within the parties, which one has to

navigate to get support and elected in the highest positions

"*Political parties are just the vehicles, but there are systems and groups within the parties which one should navigate to get support within the party*"- Participants

It was noted that, there are several strategies used by political parties to reduce number of women in leadership position. These includes positioning women as servers and second class members of political parties instead of thought leaders who bring in practical experience and realities of women throughout the process.

Furthermore, in this session, participants had an opportunity to take a closer look at their political parties and how they support women. Although most of them shared that they understand their parties' values and strategies mention the need to support women, still, during campaign, most of them fundraise from different sources, including from own sources, families, businesses etc.

Communication

Communication is a key aspect of leadership because, apart from generating innovative ideas, a transformational leader must create a common understanding of the issues, share her ideas, and convince voters to join her campaign efforts. In this topic facilitators covered key aspects of communication namely creating message and creating communication plan. While there were other topics in this module such as public speaking, Promoting the interests of your political party and Talking about gender equality and women's empowerment these were not covered due to the time, and relevancy especially with the already sitting members of parliament

Creating Messages

This session aimed at facilitating participants understanding of their weaknesses and strength, learn what constitutes good messages and create the first sample campaign message. During the presentation, facilitator shared that Communication is a key aspect of leadership because, apart from generating innovative ideas, a transformational leader must create a common understanding of the issues, share her ideas, and convince voters to join her campaign efforts They further shared key aspects of creating good communication messages and invited participants to work on the activity provided in the workbook.

In this exercise, facilitator asked participants to reflect on the pressing issue which is happening in their localities, how they are connected with the issue and how they will solve them. One of the common agenda that were raised during plenary was an access to essential services such as water, health and electricity. For example, one participant shared that this is her second term in leadership. During the first term, she had promised to make water and hospital accessible for women in her constituent. In the course of four years, she has worked with the government and partners to deliver the promised services and now she is no longer sure as to what her message should be. While exploring this question participant emphasized that in order to create message, it is critical to conduct research on their constituency on what are the pressing issue.

Also one of the key question raised was the role of government in providing services versus members of parliament. Account from one of the participant said that *"Currently, citizens do not know the role of their political representative and that of government. At times, I use my own hard earned money to respond to some of the challenges raised by individuals. Sometime it is a woman seeking school fees for her child, or a spouse asking the medical help for their seek partners. And these are really pressing issues that need to be addressed. If you do not cater for these individual needs, you risk loose election in the coming term, because one person is enough to tarnish your image to the extent that no message will ever be able to clean it. It does not matter how good your message is, maintaining your image which also comes with a lot of expenses is important.. MP Dodoma*

Finally, participants had an opportunity compare two sample messages from the US election. Discussion from this particular session focused on what how the messages contributed in to the win and/or lose of particular candidate.

Creating Communication Plan

Dr Hadija Mwenda facilitated a topic on creating a communication plan. Participants were asked to work on activity in their provided workbook which elaborated on key people and aspects to be taken into account while developing a communication plan. During the plenary discussion, participants identified example of people who would be key in handling communication, before, during and after election, budgets and key principles which are to be adhered to while preparing communication plan.

Goal Setting and Targeting.

The aim of this session was to facilitate a candidate's understanding of voter targeting, understand the concept of a "win number", targeting using demographics or polling and create a targeting strategy for the campaign. The facilitator started by explaining that the session was aimed at helping women who are thinking about running for office (or would like to help other women run for office) figure out who may vote for her and the best ways to engage with voters. She emphasized that the session one of the most important parts of the electoral process as this is an opportunity for the campaign to present its message directly to voters and to hear from voters about their concerns.

During the plenary session, participants shared that this as one of the new concepts they have worked with "*This is my third term in the office, I normally just go through the process without knowing the actual number of votes I need to get to win the election. In my next term, I will do this more professionally*"- **MP-Dodoma**

Conclusion

This training covered most of the basic topics fundamental in increasing the number of women running for office. Given the short period of time in which it was delivered, there is a need to follow up with participants including provide handouts related to electoral laws and regulation, distribute Swahili version of the workbook and provide continuous virtual support to participant