

REPORT ON
National Women Forum, Organised by ActionAid
Tanzania and Tanzania Gender Networking Program
(TGNP)

14th -15th June 2015



Background:

ActionAid Tanzania (AATZ) in collaboration with TGNP conducted a National Women Forum from 14th-15th June 2015. The forum which brought together women from across the country both national and local level, aimed at providing a platform for women to share their experience, concerns and challenges with women aspiring for different cadre of leadership at different levels. The dialogue further provided a space to women to reflect on the women participation in the 2014 local elections and deliberate for 2015 general elections and commit vote for credible leaders especially women who will contest for political leadership positions.

The theme of the event was ***Mwanamke na Uongozi; Tekeleza Wakati ni sasa (Women and leadership; make it happen ”)***

Targeted Participants: The event was held at Imagi Hotel in Dodoma, where a total of 120 participants including women, youth and disabled aspirants on political leadership attended. Participants from local included councillors, local government leaders and representatives from women groups from the selected districts of Tandahimba, Newala, Bagamoyo, Mafia, Unguja, Kilwa, Pemba, Singida, Kishapu Mwanza Geita, Muleba, Rungwe, Mbeya, Gairo, Arumeru, Kinondoni, Mvomero, Shinyanga, Morogoro and Kyela. National level participants included media and the Members of Parliament and representative from the Government.

Apart from all the participants, 3 key note speakers were featured in this event: Retired Ambassador and the Chair for the Beijing Women Platform Hon Gertrude Mongela, Mr James Marenga (Advocate-Legal and Human Rights Centre) and Mr Deogratius Temba an Activist from-TGNP.

The forum was well moderated by Happiness Maruchu from TGNP and graced by Chamwino District Commissioner Hon. Farida Mgomi who also represented Dodoma Regional Commissioner. The forum was made live by the presence of the famous Gogo traditional dance which performed a special song with message aligned to the theme.

The Forum Proceedings

1. Welcoming and objectives of the forum:

Ms Scholastica Haule; Women Rights Manager; AATZ:

In her welcoming note, she appreciated all participants for their commitment to attend the forum. She explained that Tanzania is looking forward to conduct a general election on October this year hence building to the work that both AATZ and TGNP do on empowering women on leadership, they have decided to organise for a National Women forum and provide a platform for sharing experience, success, challenges and lessons in the struggles of women leadership in Tanzania as a way of motivating more women to participate in leadership at all levels. The objective is to motivate, inspire, build women confidence and learn how to overcome challenges and have meaningful participation in leadership. She emphasized that its an opportunity for women now to engage in leadership contest for different position without fear.



She added that political parties need to show in practice the commitment on promoting more women into leadership positions and demonstrate competitive democracy that reinforce the rule of law.



2. Opening:

Hon Farida Mgomi, Chamwino District Commissioner: She welcomed participants in Dodoma Region and commended ActionAid and TGNP for organising such a forum and talk about women leadership. She commented to the forum as a strong solidarity bringing together women from different areas, different political ideologies and religious but with a unified agenda of women leadership.

"A Successful Nation is the one which embraces gender equality in all aspects of leadership. If you educate a Woman you have educated the society".....



In her speech, she pointed out that, claiming for gender equality does not mean that women have to compete with men...but it means to create a room for women participation and contribution in decision making processes.

She advised participants to stand firm, avoid and condemn corruption and use of unnecessary huge amount of costs during election processes and urged them to join forces to demand political parties to propose women and disabled candidates for leadership positions.

Addressing to the media, she emphasised the important role played by media during political campaigns and she called for media to provide more support to women contestants for their voices to be heard. She called off the use of abusive languages towards women and people with disabilities as most of people, who do not wish women well, always use media to spoil women good image with abusive language.

In her concluding remark she informed participants how lucky they are to have Hon Getrude Mongella as a speaker to the event due to her long term experience in leadership but also as a role model to most of the women in Tanzania and across the world.



Presentations

1. Women Struggle in leadership; history, challenges and achievements

Hon Getrude Mongella: Before starting her session she requested all participants to leave aside their religions, tribes, status and political parties' differences and unite as Tanzanians.

Speaking about leadership, she informed participants that all women are leaders or have experienced leadership in one way or another at different levels. For instance, family, school or social groups. At the household level women have become leaders to a greater extent. She was surprised why women are not using those skills and abilities in other leadership positions?



“There is nothing embarrassing like having ability to lead, being educated but you miss the opportunity just because you are woman or disabled”..

“A good teacher is the one with ability to reach the minds of the students” you all need to consider this in your campaigns, make sure you deliver the message to the audience in general”

She pointed out that, women with disabilities as the most oppressed and disadvantaged group on leadership. She encouraged them not to feel inferior instead they have to raise their voice showing that they are able to lead.

Youth were advised to have good thinking and reasoning capacity to avoid mob psychology.

Talking about understanding equality on leadership opportunities and how women need to have critical thinking and be able to articulate their needs, she shared a personal experience when she was chairing the a Berlin International Women conference, that at some point women claiming for equal rights were challenged to be specific as to what kind of equality they are claiming, they did not know. This means they were not organised and lacked a clear agenda from their demands. She insisted to women on the need to have clear agenda that is well articulated that is not easy to be twisted and that you can stand for.

She admitted that the path for women to political leadership has a lot of obstacles especially at the party level. She also told women to be careful with those parties they are tied to, as they can mislead them from their original agenda to become leaders as most women are used by men as stepping stones during campaigns and elections for men to take positions. She urged women to critically think for those few women in political parties who have made it higher positions are they fully participating in decision making or just formalities.

Take away tips on women leadership and techniques during election campaigns shared by Hon. Mongella

- ✓ Understand electoral processes and timetable
- ✓ Understand the National Agendas. Not religion, tribalism or your political party agenda and align with your agenda
- ✓ Do not indicate your challenges/threats. Use your strength as building blocks
- ✓ Be smart, time management
- ✓ Understand basic statistics of your area/ national eg population, poverty level, budget status of public services
- ✓ Have your own agenda. Maximum of 5 agenda Your agenda will define your quote/identity
- ✓ Understand/ wider knowledge on what you want to speak/ address
- ✓ Your physical appearance matters (dressing, people should be able to identify you even if seen once)
- ✓ Engage yourself in social activities within your locality
- ✓ Use available platforms to present your agendas. eg social groups, women groups, vikoba (credit and serving groups)
- ✓
- ✓ Love and respect your husbands, children and family or close friends to win their support
- ✓ In leadership struggles you will come across something called P.H.D (Pull Her Down) but do not give up. I also faced the same challenge but I managed and became what I wanted to be – stand for your agenda in time you will gain peoples trust
- ✓ Do not provoke your competitor. Focus on your agendas.
- ✓ Do not engage in sexual or money corruption even if you will not get enough support because even if you win at that particular time you will lose your reputation and your leadership will not be sustainable
- ✓
- ✓ Wise selection of the best team for campaign
- ✓ Do not ignore elders by the notion that they are old fashioned.....leadership is community rather than individual

2. Legal Perspective on Women Empowerment in leadership participation:

James Marenga (Advocate): Presented that the Legal rights in Tanzania and almost everywhere puts equality between men and women in economic, social and cultural aspects.

- Historically the liberal democratic system did not allow women to participate in leadership until 1918-1920 when women in U.K and America were given right to vote but not to be voted which means they were not involved in leadership.

- Most of the big conferences on women conducted in the world aimed at strengthening women participation in economic, legal and cultural aspects. These include First World Conference on Women (FWCW) (1979)-Mexico, SWCW – Copenhagen (1980), TWCW- Nairobi (1985) and FWCW- Beijing (1995).
- Despite of all these conferences and putting strategies the world has not yet succeeded in fully promoting women participation in leadership and economic possession.
- Tanzania as a member of United Nations has signed different conventions which protects women rights including; The Convention on Elimination of all forms of discrimination Against Women Agreement on ending Women Segregation (1979), The African Agreement on Human Rights (2001), African Charter on Human Right and Peoples (2001), The African Peer Review Mechanism (2003) and the protocol on Gender and Development (2008).



International conventions

- *World Declaration on Human Rights. (1948) section 20 provides for the right to participate in political parties without discrimination. In 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Actions, Critical area 12 insist on women power in decision making processes*

Regional Conventions:

- *In the SADC Protocol article 13, declared that up to 2015 there should be 50% of women representation in the decision making levels.*
- *Africa Union Gender Policy*
- *Africa Charter on Human Rights, peoples and women Rights (2003)*

In Tanzania

- *Article 66 of the Tanzania constitution (1977) states that the number of women in the parliament must reach 30% of the representatives.*
- *Article 12 provides for equality of people before the law*

- National elections Act (1985) and Local Authorities (Election) Act no.192 which commands political parties to send women candidate's names for special seats on counsellors and MPs position.
- Election Expenses Act (2010) prohibits un-formalised expenses or unrecognised use of resources during campaigns

The presentation was concluded with a remark on the on-going constitution reform process as an avenue for women to influence policy changes that will guarantee promotion of women rights. It was pointed out that the draft proposed constitution has adequately considered women.

3. Situation of women in leadership.

Deogratius Temba (TGNP): Started his presentation with reference to human report (2012), where data indicates a population of 44.9 million people, in which women are 51.3 while men 48.7%. Statistics shows that women participation in local authorities and general election is still low.



- Tanzania is a signatory to different International Laws and Conventions promoting women rights, however, studies shows only 5% of women own land, 39% get poor education, 40.3% are in unrecognised employment sectors, women professors are below 10%, unpaid care work constitute 66% and 44% undergone sexual brutality.
- 33% of all households are led by women and no changes for the past 10yrs now. The size of household led by women was (7.3) and those lead by men (3.5)
- In the parliament, the total number of MPs are 357, Special seats are 102(28.6%) divided among political parties. Out of 239 constituency seats only 21(8.8%) are run by elected women. For councillor's 4%, Village chairpersons 2%, Street chairpersons 12% and hamlet chairpersons 3%.
- In 2005 all 19 political parties appointed candidates 7,120 men and 441(5.8) to contest for ward counsellors position. In 2010 appointed 7375 men and 559(7.1) women.
- Article 66 of the Tanzania constitution, 1977 provides for women representation in parliament must exceed 30% of all Members.
- According to a study conducted by TGNP/Legal and Human Rights Centre in 2014 on peoples perspective on women leadership, shows that 394 (57%) said women can perform leadership while 119 (28%) people said women are not able to lead.
- Rwanda and Sweden are leading in having larger number of women with authorities in political parties.

Motivational Speeches by Members of Parliament

Hon. Esther Bulaya; Youth Member of Parliament, ruling party

In her speech, she congratulated AATZ and TGNP for bringing together the women, youth and disabled from across the country and that, very rare you will have opportunity to address such kind of a forum. She is inspired by honourable Mongella for the struggles she has gone through and how ambitious she has been throughout her life that has enabled to build the profile in leadership.

Hon. Esther inspirations for being a political leader began since her childhood. She grew up in poor family and studied in difficult environment which motivated her to think on how to change the situation so that the coming generation would not experience the same.



Due to her ambition of becoming a politician, as a student at the University of Dar es Salaam, she decided to practice her internship with Uhuru and Mzalendo newspaper and started to build her professional carrier.

As a result of hard working and integrity she was being recruited by Uhuru and Mzalendo newspaper as a permanent employee. She was very passionate with her work as a result; she was honoured as best worker of the company and in the department.

Through her leadership journey she contested and won different positions with the party including Member of youth forum- representing Dar es Salaam Region and later she was convinced to contest for Mara Region youth party secretary where she also won. During her journey she also got an opportunity to work with ActionAid where she conducted a study in Liwale and it was among the best study on girl child rights to education presented at national level during the International Women day.

She worked at the Party youth association while her ambition was preparing youth to become good leaders for the future. As one of the top leaders in the party she got opportunity to learn about leadership and she has put the learning into practice that shaped her towards a strong young female politician.

Take away tips for participants

- ✓ *when you get an opportunity use it properly so that you pave the way for others to use it too, don't be selfish*
- ✓ *Make sure you do not get satisfied with little achievement, if you won to be a ward counsellor strive to become a member of parliament and so on.*
- ✓ *Avoid sexual corruption that its dangerous, will kill your leadership ambitions and if you say no, no one will force you. Nobody can end your dreams just because of your gender, your tribe, your disability, follow your dream*
- ✓ *Women have to support each other and get connected*
- ✓ *A woman's friend is a woman and a woman's enemy is a woman too.*
- ✓ *Women have the task of protecting, preserving and maintaining the legacy that has been established by iconic female leaders like Honourable Mongela.*
- ✓ *Start using the tolerance and humbleness you have in grooming your children and other young people into leadership struggles.*
- ✓ *If you are brave, competent, respectful and faithful you will win.*
- ✓ *"Leadership is a journey not an event".*

Finally she confidently informed participants that she is expecting to contest to become Bunda representative and she will win.



Hon. Esther Matiko Youth Member of Parliament- Opposition Party

Sharing her personal experience, Esther Matiko told participants that she comes from the region that patriarchal system is very dominant. It is the system that does not recognise equal rights between men and women. It is a system where violence against women and child marriage is normalised, she said she has witnessed her own mother being victim of violence including brutally beating. Like her counterpart Member, Hon Esther also grew up from an ordinary poor family where it was a challenge even to meet basic school needs. However, apart from the challenges

related to gender inequality, she was lucky her father was ambitious and promised to ensure that she fulfil her dream on accessing education. In her speech, insisted that the right to education for girl child is essential for them to realise their ambitions in life. However the challenge is how to reach girls from the poor family and generate competent and talented women leaders. She believes no one was born a leader but leaders are created.

In her concluding remarks, she urged women and leaders that, learning is a continuous process, leaders needs to reflect and learn frequently in order to improve their leadership.

Sharing Experiences from previous elections

Elizabeth David Masanja-(CDM) Shinyanga.

I contested for the ward councillor position through Chadema party.

Challenges faced: I was strongly criticised due to my decision to contest through an opposition party. In my area most people were not a member to this party and where not aware of their political agenda.

However, I did my best to convince people during the campaign and stood firm with my agenda finally they understood and convinced and, voted for me and I won the election. After the election I established entrepreneurship groups to bring together people and remove our deference and discuss on development agenda. By doing so we have managed to address the

problem of unemployment which is a common challenge to most people in my area.



Amina Swedi (ruling party CCM)

I contested for the position of ward councillor (Bujula) through CCM. Some of the challenges I faced were those who were against me during the election became an obstacle in development activities in my area. They did not want to participate in development plans including implementation of activities planned by the local government. I took initiative to call for a meeting and challenge them by referring rules and laws and finally they agreed to engage and set aside the differences.

Salama Chaurembo: Chairwoman Makumbusho Street- ruling party

I encountered a challenge during campaign as my competitor had money and used it to bribe voters. However I had an agenda of improving infrastructure including construction of the street office. I also managed to recruit a good campaign team which helped to spread my campaign agenda. After winning the election what I did was to put into implementation my agenda. I built the office building and a road is under construction. Currently, I am still looking for donors to support more development plans within my area.

Wayforward:

At the end of the forum participants recommended the following:-

- ✚ The forum should be conducted earlier to help candidates to get more time for preparations and a practice what they have learnt
- ✚ After elections there should be another seminar to make the candidates more competent by learning new tactics on leadership
- ✚ There should be continuous assessment to participants to see if what they have learnt is helpful, improve communication and feedback mechanism.
- ✚ The disabled group should be involved to large extent so that they can gain confidence and support. Provision of braids to blind people.
- ✚ This kind of forums should also be conducted at the district level so that more women, youths and disabled can be reached.
- ✚ During election there should be special machine for blind people to vote.
- ✚ At the end of the seminar participants should be provided with a certificate of participation to add value to their learning.

Closing Word:

Scholastica Haule did a closing remark by thanking all participants and speakers for vibrant discussions. She insisted women to continue supporting those who have shown interest to contest for 2015 election and after the election to set side political deference and focus on development agenda.



Participants with guest of honor and key speakers in a group photo