Acronyms

APW : Association of Progressive Women
CCJP : Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace
CEDAW : Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CONGOMA : Council for Non-Governmental Organizations in Malawi
CSO : Civil Society Organization
DC : District Commissioner
EISA : Electoral Institute of Southern Africa
FPTP : First Past the Post
GESP-CIDA : Gender Equality Support Network of the Canadian International Development Agency
MASAF : Malawi Social Action Fund
MBC : Malawi Broadcasting Corporation
MCP : Malawi Congress Party
MEC : Malawi Electoral Commission
MGPDD-GTZ : Malawi- German Programme for Democracy and Decentralization of the German Technical Cooperation
MP : Member of Parliament
MMP : Mixed Member Proportional system
NAMISA : National Media Institute of Southern Africa
NDA : National Democratic Alliance
NEPAD : New Partnership for Africa’s Development
NGO : Non-Governmental Organization
NICE : National Initiative for Civic Education
PACENET : Pan African Civic Educators Network
PETRA : People’s Transformation Party
PR : Proportional Representation system
SADC : Southern African Development Community
TVM : Television of Malawi
Foreword

The Training Manual for women aspiring for leadership positions in Local and National Assemblies in Malawi, has been developed to facilitate effective implementation of the National Gender Policy, as well as other programmes on increasing women participation in decision-making positions, especially politics. The manual has been developed to guide stakeholders on issues of gender and governance.

It is hoped that the manual will help Malawi realize gender equality results regarding the participation of women in politics. Further, the manual will act as an implementing tool for the various international and regional instruments that Malawi is a signatory to. Some of which are the UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW, 1987), the Beijing Declarations (1995) and the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development (1997) as well as the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (2005). These instruments, among others, emphasize the right of women to participate in decision-making positions and politics.

The development of this Manual is therefore, a demonstration of continued government commitment in ensuring that women participate in decision-making positions and politics. The Malawi Government acknowledges that women's active participation in politics is a social justice and human rights issue that needs coordinated efforts. This will ensure that democracy in the country is fully realized as both men and women will equally be represented in political powers.

Additionally, it is envisaged that increasing women representation in parliament is critical for the country to achieve sound governance, equitable and sustainable development and will contribute to poverty reduction. The Ministry, therefore, calls upon all stakeholders to use the manual as they work with aspiring women candidates for both National Assembly (Parliament) and Local Council seats.

Hon. Anna Kachikho, MP

Minister of Women and Child Development
Preface by Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development

The Malawi - German Programme for Democratic Decentralisation (MGPDD) is a joint programme of the Government of Malawi and the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany whose agreement was signed in 1999. The Malawi Government is represented by the Ministry of Local Government and Rural development. The German Government has mandated the Deutsche Gesellschaft für International Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) to implement the programme on her behalf.

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) like PACENET have progressively become important players in the decentralisation process. Some of the services offered by civil society in general are advocacy and direct service provision to the people on the ground. It has been agreed that if local governments are to adequately meet the demands of the communities, they must be built on experiences of both men and women. It must recognise the role of women within the communities and the need to provide for equitable representation at all levels and in all fields of decision making.

The Ministry is pleased to be associated with this document that gives aspiring candidates an understanding of the role of the councillor/member of parliament, overview of women’s participation in Malawian politics, gender and the need for women’s participation in politics. The document also exposes the challenges that women face in elections, understanding democracy, decentralization and local government system, leadership for effective local and national governance, electoral systems, advocacy for support and resource mobilization, conflict management, and provides detailed steps on how to go about planning and organising the campaign programme.

This manual is therefore a non-partisan document that seeks to assist Malawi in finally fulfilling its obligations under the Beijing Platform for Action, SADC Declaration on Gender and Millennium Development Goal Three which aims to promote gender equality and empower women by 2015. The manual is an important step in empowering women as it recognizes the important contribution that women can make throughout society and advancement of Malawi.

Hon. Dr. George Chaponda, MP,
Minister of Local Government and Rural Development
Editorial

Despite efforts to increase the participation of women in politics, representation of female candidates in national and local politics in Malawi is still fairly low.

In furtherance of the mandate of the Malawi-German Programme for Democratic Decentralization (MGPDD), a training manual for prospective female members of local assemblies and members of parliament was developed in partnership with Pan African Civic Educators Network (PACENET), in 2004.

Intended as a guide for trainers facilitating the training process of aspirant women and for aspirant women candidates, the manual remains the only one available of its kind. In this regard the manual seeks to assist women to assume new roles, and actively increase the representation of women in decision making positions within the political arena of Malawi.

This, the second edition of the manual, aims to address changes in the political, social and economic landscape of Malawi, which have emerged since the production of the first edition.

It is our sincere hope that the application of this manual will encourage the participation of more women within the political life of Malawi. Women all over the world - Malawi is no exception to this - traditionally have many different and important roles to play in their daily lives at home and in their work spaces, as well as within their communities. By increasing the engagement of women in political processes, it is possible for them to influence decisions and ensure that their voices are heard and respected, and consequently improve their status in society. The valuable experiences of women will thus be utilized in shaping the future development of Malawi.

Our gratitude is expressed to all the contributors which have made the production of this edition possible.

Dr. Silvio Decurtins
GIZ - Programme Coordinator MGPDD
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreword</td>
<td>Politics and the Role of Women in Political Parties</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitators’ Information</td>
<td>Overview of women’s participation in Malawian politics</td>
<td>viii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 1</td>
<td>Gender and the need for women’s participation in politics</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 2</td>
<td>Challenges that women face in elections</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 3</td>
<td>Understanding Democracy</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 4</td>
<td>Decentralisation and local government system</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 5</td>
<td>Leadership for effective local and national governance</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 6</td>
<td>Electoral Systems</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 7</td>
<td>Advocacy for Support and Resource Mobilization</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 8</td>
<td>Election Campaigning</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 9</td>
<td>Conflict Management</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 10</td>
<td>Contemporary development issues</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 11</td>
<td>Glossary</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 12</td>
<td>Evaluation Form</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>References</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex</td>
<td>References</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>References</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex</td>
<td>References</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Facilitator’s Information

The manual has been designed for use in groups for the training of aspiring women candidates for elected political positions in Malawi. It is intended to assist the women candidates to overcome the numerous challenges and impediments that they face in their quest for Parliamentary Assembly and Local Council seats. It helps them to design effective campaign strategies through training, knowledge and experience sharing.

Content for Local Government Elections and National Assembly Elections

This Manual includes content for Local Government Elections (LGE) and National Assembly Elections. The trainer should therefore use the manual judiciously. For example, if the training is meant for candidates for Local Government Elections, the focus should be on those modules or aspects of the module that are LGE focused. In the same vein, if the training is meant for candidates vying for National Assembly positions then the focus should be on modules or aspects of the module concerning National Assembly Elections.

Successful use of the manual

The successful use of the manual depends largely on the extent to which you as a trainer are able to actively involve each member of your group. The programme has been designed to encourage participation by each individual through the use of role-play, case studies and extensive discussion and debate. The guidelines below explain how the trainer can help everyone in the group to participate fully. The trainer is free, however, to use other training methods when using this manual.

This manual is designed for women aspiring for parliamentary and local government positions. It is, therefore, critical that appropriate techniques for their training are used. In determining the techniques, two key assumptions have been made, ie, that:

- most of these candidates will have achieved some level of education up to secondary school level to engage in English;
- the candidates can generally be classified as adults hence the need to employ adult learning techniques to ensure that they fully understand the issues and apply the same in their own environment.

The manual is, therefore, designed to use role-plays, case studies, small group discussions and plenary discussions as the main learning tools. Some additional information from literature review is provided in each module. Since the target audience is exclusively adult, it is important to underline what motivates adult learners. Training techniques will then be based on that understanding.

Adult learning

Adults are often interested in learning when they have a problem that needs to be addressed.
Facilitator’s Information

Learning tends to help them bridge the gap between what they know and what they do not know. In some cases, adult learners tend to know more than what the facilitator knows. It is, therefore, wise for the facilitator to draw on the learners’ knowledge and experience to stimulate further learning. To sum up, adults learn best when:

- their learning environment is informal;
- they are given tasks that are challenging;
- they are made to feel comfortable physically and psychologically;
- they are learning something that is of value to them;
- they have opportunity to learn by doing;
- they are able to connect the new learning with what they already know; and,
- they are taught in a variety of ways.

The last point is especially important because studies have shown that adults typically remember:

- 10% of what they read;
- 20% of what they hear;
- 30% of what they see;
- 50% of what they hear and see;
- 70% of what they say and write; and,
- 90% of what they say as they do something.

In order to get the most out of the Training Manual during training, some basic principles need to be borne in mind, as follows:

(a) **Planning and preparing for the training programme**

The following factors should be taken into consideration when planning the sessions in order to influence the amount and quality of learners’ participation:

- adequate preparation on the part of the facilitator (content wise, materials, preparation of additional materials that deliver content);
- the size of the group;
- the age, education level, language, political affiliation etc, of the learners;
- the effective use of facilitation skills to encourage participation;
- the time available and how efficiently it is used;
- the equipment available; and,
- the appropriateness of the venue.
(b) **Composition of the group**

Since the learners will be drawn from various educational, political and socioeconomic backgrounds it is important that the facilitator is inclusive in his/her approach. An inclusive approach will take care of various characteristics of the participants, knowing that some will be overtalkative, disinterested, boastful, cheerful, self-conceited, too quick or too slow, obstinate and so on and so forth. Thus, for effective learning to take place in a large and diverse group, the facilitator needs to use techniques that are relevant and sensitive to the different views and experiences.

(c) **Climate setting for effective learning**

To enable participants to express their views freely, it is important that the trainer creates a climate conducive to adult learning and participation. The following are some of the principles to follow:

- provide an opportunity for participants to get to know each other. Suggestions for achieving this are described below: hear their expectations and concerns;
- check their expectations against the objectives of the programme; and,
- facilitate the generation of rules or norms for the group to follow throughout the training session.
- help the group to create a climate of trust and respect for all participants through a participatory process.

(d) **Getting learners to know each other**

You can help members of the group to know each other by doing the following activities or any other relevant exercise:

1. **Name cards**
   - Give each participant a piece of paper.
   - Ask the participants to write their name clearly on the paper.
   - Let them fold the paper in two and let it stand in front of them so that everyone is able to see it.

2. **What I want to know about you**
   - Ask the participants what they would like to know about the other people in the group.
   - Ask the participants to give their ideas about what they would like to know.
• List these on a flipchart.
• Choose five or six items from the list.
• Ask the participants to interview the person sitting next to them to obtain the information.

(e) **Sharing expectations and objectives**
• Ask the participants to write down what they would like to learn during the workshop.
• Ask them to present their expectations in plenary.
• As the participants speak, list their points on a flipchart.
• Tell the group to listen to these without commenting on them (allow questions for clarification only).
• Once all the participants have spoken, look at the list of expectations.
• If a participant expects to discuss something that is not on your agenda, make it clear that this particular expectation is unlikely to be met. (If possible, suggest an alternative).
• Keep the list of expectations on a flip chart.
• At the end of the programme, review the list with the group to see the extent to which the expectations were met.

(f) **Participatory training techniques**
The following techniques are used throughout the manual to encourage learners’ active participation in the learning process:

1. **Individual work** (3-5 Minutes)
   • Ask participants to work alone.
   • Let them make notes about what they think and feel.

2. **Group work** (10 Minutes)
   • Ask participants to get into small groups (5-6 people).
   • Ask them to focus on a particular topic or concept.
   • Let them share their thoughts and feelings with others in the group.

3. **Plenary**
   • After small group discussions, get the participants back into the larger group.
   • Ask each group to report to the main group about what they discussed and agreed.
   • To save time, ask the person reporting not to repeat the points that have already been made by another group.

4. **Role-play**
   • Ask volunteers to read “parts” of a topic from the Training Manual (Do not pressurise anyone to participate in this process).
   • Let them play the role they have chosen.
• Ask the participants to discuss the issues underlying the role play.
• Ask the role players to comment on the role they were playing.

5. **Case Studies**
The use of case studies:
• helps participants to consider hypothetical situations and how they would react or respond to them.
• Offers them an opportunity to share problem-solving techniques.

6. **Summaries and evaluations**
At the end of each module:
• Summarize issues that have been dealt with.
• Link them to the overall objectives of the session.
• Check with participants if these have been met.

**(g) Tips for writing on flipcharts**
• Write in big letters and always print (cursive script is not easy to read from any distance).
• Use thick felt-tipped pens of different colours for different categories of information.
• Avoid using orange, yellow and pale-coloured pens as these are not easy to see.
• Flipcharts recording the contributions of participants should hung where everyone can see them.

**(h) Qualities of a good facilitator**
To ensure maximum participation of all in the training session, the facilitator must:
• be gender sensitive;
• be non partisan politically; and,
• refrain from acts or statements that portray negatively the leadership or any aspect particular of any particular party.
• be innovative in the facilitation (methodology, instruments and materials)
• always know about the learning progress of the participants.
Note: Most of the participants for the training will be women as this is a training manual for female aspirants for leadership in politics. Nevertheless, the facilitator should stress throughout the training, that it will be important for the women to deal with the resistance they might face if running as candidate especially by men, trying to explain and build consensus based on the content they will learn. Even the integration of male participants in the training might be helpful at some points in order to establish a real dialogue on different roles and views on the topic. Prepare the female participants for a process that might not be easy but encourage them not to give up just because of outside pressure. If possible refer to (e.g. regional) female role models in the fight for leadership for their encouragement throughout.
Module 1
Politics and the Role of Women in Political Parties

In Malawi, politics is translated as *ndale* in Chinyanja. In its original form the word *ndale* does not connote politics. Rather, *ndale* connotes two situations, namely 1) a crack in the foundation or wall of a building, and 2) a kind of wrestling whereby people grip each other and in the process of struggling one trips the opponent to the ground. Chichewa words that go together with the latter meaning are *kupinga* or *kutchera* or *kutchera ndale*, which mean throwing an obstacle in an opponent’s path so that they stumble and fall. In ball games, tripping an opponent is also called *kutchera ndale*, and is considered a foul. Clearly, both meanings have a negative connotation.

But what actually is politics? And what are the roles of women in political parties in a democracy? These are some of the questions that this module aims to address, so that women who aspire for leadership positions in politics are knowledgeable and well equipped for political participation.

**Objectives**

By the end of the module, participants should be able to:

- Define the term politics
- Explain key features in politics
- Describe the role of women in political parties
- State what women need in order to participate in political leadership.
Module 1: Politics and the Role of Women in Political Parties

Resources needed

- Flip chart stand
- Flip charts
- Flip chart markers
- Masking tape
- Participants’ previous knowledge

Activity 1

1. Ask participants, in plenary, to brainstorm their understanding of the term *politics*.
2. Write down each idea mentioned on the flip chart/chalkboard.
3. Consolidate their ideas using the information below.

What is politics?

Rules are necessary wherever human beings live together, be it in a family, workplace, or nation to ensure harmony in the relationship; which means that all social relationships and dynamics, from the home to the corridors of government, are political. Politics is concerned with the reasons why the rules are formulated and how they are enforced. Therefore, politics is about the making and enforcement of rules which regulate human behaviour. It involves decision-making, managing and planning the use of joint and public resources (taxes, fees, development assistance). It is a continuous process of negotiation between people or groups of people with different interests and needs. This definition, therefore, is different from the Malawian conception of politics as *ndale*.

Activity 2

1. Divide participants into groups.
2. Let them discuss the dangers of understanding politics as *ndale*.
3. Let the groups present their findings in plenary.
4. Consolidate their findings using the information below.
Politics as *ndale*

To see politics as *ndale* is very unfortunate for the Malawian society. Those that practice politics in the sense of *ndale* are always bent on outdoing, pinning down or "destroying" their opponent, whatever the cost. Unfortunately, people in Malawi and in other African countries are of this opinion. Due to this understanding:

- Many politicians expend their energies and resources slandering their opponents at the expense of focusing on issues that are beneficial to the people in their ward or constituency or nation.
- Many politicians are not accountable to their electorate once elected and just pursue their own particular interests.
- Many aspiring candidates become fearful of the possibility of participating in elections for Local Government or National Assembly Leadership positions.
- Many people perceive politics negatively.
- Many people feel nervous about getting involved in politics.
- Many people associate politics with those who govern (whether they be in government or in the opposition), while those that are governed are considered not to be involved in politics.

The ultimate consequence of this is that people do not participate as much as they should in making and enforcing rules which govern human behaviour in their own nation. Time and money is wasted in performing activities that appear to be political, yet they are not.

**Key features of politics**

**Activity 3**

1. Get participants in pairs.
2. Let them discuss some of the key features they would like to see in politics.
3. Ask each pair to share their findings with another pair.
4. Ask the two pairs to consolidate their findings so that they have one list of features.
5. Ask the group (of 4) to present its findings in plenary.
6. Consolidate their findings using the information below.
The following are key features of politics in a political party or any social grouping:

- Transparency in decision-making;
- Broad-based participation;
- Equitable distribution of resources;
- Willingness to negotiate;
- Openness to change;
- Power sharing; and,
- Productive economy.

**Why a party should include women in its leadership ranks**

*Activity 4*

1. Divide participants into groups.
2. Ask them to discuss reasons why a political party should include women in its leadership ranks.
3. Let them present their findings in plenary.
4. Consolidate their findings by using the information below.

The following are reasons why a political party should include women in its leadership ranks:

1. *To utilize their contributions*
   - Equally to men, women can substantially contribute to the development of a party and even lead a party. They can even lead a country if we refer to female presidents or chancellors in Argentina, Liberia, Brazil, Chile, Germany etc.

   Women can strategize, plan, be public speakers, organize and hold local meetings, recruit and organize volunteers etc, just like men. Therefore only issues that specifically improve with women’s participation are outlined here:

   - Women bring a different perspective and different important themes to discussions and into a party.
   - They can build consensus amongst rivals in the party or even in communities.
Module 1: Politics and the Role of Women in Political Parties

• Women can help in targeting the party’s message.
• Women can successfully manage a campaign;
• They know effective ways of addressing women and other groups of people in the community;
• They can form a women’s wing which may be used as a means of mobilizing support for the party and for improved equal participation.

2. To solidify democracy
   • A democracy should ensure that all its citizens/members (men, women, youth, etc.) can participate equally in decision-making, planning and utilization of resources.
   • Women might be able to change the way politics are being conducted andndale, bringing it back to the important issues and themes of the populations’ interest to be discussed and decided upon.
   • As women participate in politics they get to know their rights and promote both their rights and those of others.
   • Over half of the nation’s population comprises of women, therefore women should be proportionally represented in politics.

3. To abide by Malawi and International Laws
   • Malawi is a signatory to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1987, which is the international bill of rights for women adopted in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly. It states that women should be able to vote, run for election, formulate government policy, hold government office, etc. Therefore, a political party that operates in Malawi is expected to abide by the requirements of this Convention.
   • Malawi also signed the 2000 Beijing Conference (Beijing + 5), which states that political parties should: Remove party structures’ barriers that hinder participation of women;
Allow women to participate fully in all internal policy making structures and nominating processes;
Incorporate gender issues in their political agenda, and ensure that women can participate equally in the leadership of political parties.

4. *To ensure a competitive advantage for the party*

- A party with women’s participation will take on more relevant issues for women voters into their programme, therefore the number of voters for the party will increase.
- The party can claim to fulfill national and international standards on women’s participation (if doing so).
- The party that makes best use of its members including women will be successful, and if the party does not make the best use of women other parties will.

What women need in order to participate in political leadership

*Activity 5*

1. Ask the participants to brainstorm what women need in order to participate effectively in political leadership in plenary.
2. Write down their ideas on the flip chart or chalkboard.
3. Consolidate their ideas using the information below.

For a woman to participate effectively in politics, she needs to have:
- self confidence, information and skills for political influence.
- political consciousness to be able to understand issues and solutions in society;
- human-resources, material and financial;
- negotiating skills;
- a vision for a better future of the ward, constituency or nation.
Conclusion

The time has come for Malawians to change their perception of politics as a dreadful and vengeful phenomenon. People, including leaders of political parties, need to perceive politics as a great opportunity for allowing people from all walks of life to participate in decision-making, planning and accountable utilization of resources at party and national levels. Women need to be allowed to participate in political leadership, mainly at the political party level since their contributions are essential to the improvement of standards of life in the community. In the same vein, the women need to see themselves as important participants in a functional democracy. It can not be overstressed, that women bring other important issues to the political agenda that differ than those bought by men, since there are aspects in life that are only handled by women. In this regard they know best what changes are needed in order to reduce poverty and improve basic services by the state especially as these apply to women.
Module 2
Overview of Women’s Participation in Malawian Politics

Introduction
Historically women have played important roles in social, economic and religious circles of human existence. They have been central to reproduction, nurturing of humankind, and key to the preservation of customary values. Unfortunately, their role in politics and other key decision-making areas has been marginal or hardly recognized. This module aims to provide an overview of women’s participation in Malawian politics to women aspiring for positions of leadership in the Local and National Assemblies. The overview will give them a picture of the trend of women’s participation in politics in Malawi. That picture should give them a drive to break the trend.

Objectives
By the end of the session participants should be able to:
- understand the current level of women’s participation in politics in Malawi;
- analyse women’s participation levels in previous elections; and,
- discuss reasons why women need to participate in politics.

Resources needed
- Flip chart stand
- Flip charts
Module 2: Overview of Women’s Participation in Malawian Politics

- Flip chart markers
- Masking tape
- Participants’ previous knowledge

**Activity 1**

1. Divide the participants into small groups.
2. Ask them to discuss the extent to which women participated in the previous parliamentary and local government elections. You may ask them the following questions to guide them:
   
   (a) How many women (that you knew) participated in the elections at the local government elections?
   
   (b) How many of these made it into the ward councillor positions?
   
   (c) How many women participated in the parliamentary and presidential elections?
   
   (d) How many of these made it into the parliamentary or presidential positions?
3. Let them present their findings in plenary.
4. Consolidate their findings by using the information below.

**Historical background**

Malawi was a British Colony from 1891 – 1963. Political Governance at that time was dominated by the Colonial Masters and gave no room to indigenous people. This led to the struggle for freedom. Men led the struggle. Political activities at that time gave women no room to take part in the struggle. From 1958, when the struggle for Self Government had reached its peak, women, though few, began to be involved in the political life in order to give moral support and meaning to the struggle. A summary of some historical landmarks is made below:

- 1961, women were given the right to vote under Nyasaland Laws.
- 1963, Malawi attained Self Government.
- 1964, Malawi became independent.
- 1964, first woman got elected as a parliamentarian.
- 1966, Malawi attained a Republic status.

**Self Government-Independence Period**

After attaining self-government in 1963 from the colonial government, the culture of sidelining women in politics continued. For example:

- The political leadership did not see the necessity for women to be engaged in politics, rather it reinforced traditional roles of women.
- Few men supported women to leadership positions.
There were no women models to inspire others to take politics as a career.
Generally, women’s representation in politics and positions of decision-making was low.

**Independence-Multiparty Democracy Period**

After 31 years of one party rule, which was characterized by torture, human rights abuses and political intolerance, Malawi changed to a multiparty democracy in 1994. Democracy was to transform the political order and serve as the new system of governance providing freedom of speech, free and fair elections and participation. It brought about a Multi-Party System of Government. In this period:

- many organizations were introduced to support the new political order. NGO’s were formed to promote democracy and some of them took up the challenge to fight, lobby and advocate for women’s rights, including the promotion of women in politics and decision-making positions;
- nonetheless, to date the participation of women in Malawian politics continues to be marginal. More men than women take up high political and decision-making positions; and,
- political violence, intimidation and character assassination threaten and further reduce the chances of women to get into key leadership and political positions.

**Women’s participation levels in the previous elections**

(a) **2000 Local Government Elections**

- Local Government Elections were held in 861 wards across Malawi.
- Women won the elections in 70 wards representing 8% of women in Local Government, distributed regionally as follows: North 10, Centre 30, and South 30.
- Lilongwe City Council had the highest number of women councillors who won the elections: Lilongwe had 7; Blantyre City, Chiradzulu and Mchinji District Councils had 5 each.
- Ten Councils of Dowa, Chitipa, Mangochi, Balaka, Liwonde, Mwanza, Luchenza, Chikwawa and Nsanje had no women councillors.

(b) **2004 Presidential and Parliamentary Elections**

- A total of 1,268 candidates contested in 193 constituencies. Of these, 154 candidates were women, representing 12% of women contestants in the race.
- One woman contested as a running mate to the Presidential candidate of the NDA Party.
• 27 women won the parliamentary elections, representing 14% of female members in the National Assembly.

Based on the above information, it can be concluded that there is still minimal representation of women in political decision-making positions in Malawi.

**Activity 2**

1. Ask the participants to get into small groups.
2. Let them discuss reasons why women should be encouraged to participate in politics.
3. Consolidate their findings.

**Summary**

Currently men still dominate key leadership and political positions in the country. This is reflected in the number of female representatives in both the Local Council and Parliamentary Assembly. This situation is brought about by unfair competition between men and women and unequal distribution of power. The political structures and society in Malawi still almost always mistakenly favour men as the more powerful and competent. This is made worse by poor party policies which do not encourage women to participate in politics. In addition, lack of resources, such as finances, promotional materials, and negative traditional beliefs act as a barrier to women’s participation in politics. There is, therefore, need for political parties, government and all stakeholders to support and encourage women to take part in politics. On the other hand there is need as well to lobby the traditional beliefs that see men as more powerful and suitable for politics than women. A dialogue with traditional leaders might be a very useful tool as well.
Module 3
Gender and the Need for Women’s Participation in Politics

90 Minutes

Introduction
Women play a number of important roles in society. They are central to social, economic and political development of any country. Therefore, women, just like men, should take part in key political and decision-making processes and actually have the right to do so. This module discusses the need for women’s participation in politics, in the context of gender equity and human rights considerations. Women aspiring for decision-making positions in Local Council and National Assembly need to know about these concepts so that their participation is well informed and produces results.

Objectives
By the end of the session, participants should be able to:

• describe gender concepts and gender roles in relation to women’s participation in politics;
• explain the need for women’s participation in politics; and,
• explain human rights and international instruments that promote the participation of women in politics.
Module 3: Gender and the Need for Women’s Participation in Politics

Resources needed
- Flip chart stand
- Flip charts
- Flip chart markers
- Masking tape
- Participants’ previous knowledge

The gender concept

Activity 1
1. Ask participants to, individually, write their own understanding of the concepts gender and sex.
2. In plenary, generate common definitions of gender and sex using individual definitions.
3. Ask participants to brainstorm the definitions of gender equality, gender equity, gender stereotype, gender and discrimination and gender-roles.
4. Consolidate their findings by relating these concepts to women’s participation in politics.

Key gender concepts

(a) Gender
Gender is an interactive term, which describes the behaviours, responsibilities and roles played by males and females as a result of expectations of the society in which they live. Gender as a concept includes the hierarchical power relations between women and men constructed by society. Gender changes from one culture to another, within cultures and from one social group to another.

(b) Sex
Sex refers to biological differences between females and males. Such aspects do not vary from culture to culture. Therefore sex does for the vast majority does change.

(c) Gender equality
Refer to the same opportunities for women and men (irrespective of their sex). This includes the ability to participate in the public sphere.

(d) Gender equity
Gender equity includes more than just equal opportunities for women and men and additionally recognizes that women and men have different needs and preferences that require transformative changes.
E.g. for development policies or policies in general this means not only that both men and women are included and addressed but that the policy is scrutinized as to how the different needs and realities would be covered by the policy.

(e) **Gender stereotype**

Stereotypes relate to the construction of roles for men and women by society which are learned by the individual, they have no basis in a person’s real capabilities. They refer to the way people “feel” others should behave.

(f) **Gender discrimination**

This refers to a treatment where one is preferred merely on the basis of his or her sex and it leads to one sex being at a disadvantage compared with the other.

(g) **Gender empowerment**

This refers to the provision of an enabling environment for one to participate fully and effectively on equal terms with others in all aspects of development. Since women are still underrepresented gender empowerment in reality often refers to empowerment of women until equal levels and opportunities are reached.

(i) **Gender roles**

These are a set of expected behaviours and values associated with men and women. The roles are attained through the different socialisation experiences and the socially determined assumptions and viewpoints. People learn the cultural definitions of who does what in life when they progress from childhood to adolescence.

**Categories of gender roles**

There are three broad categories: reproductive, productive and community-linked roles.

(a) **Reproductive roles**

These refer to those activities and tasks carried out by women and men to reproduce and care for the household and the community. These include food preparation, child care and domestic activities that increase household resources.

(b) **Productive roles**

These refer to those activities and tasks carried out by women and men to provide for their households and the communities economically.
These include small business, cash crop and livestock production activities.

(c) **Community Management roles**

These refer to those activities and tasks, which involve collective organization of social events, and services at community level. These include ceremonies, celebrations, community improvements, self help activities, local politics, church and funerals.

The challenge for women in general is to balance the demands of these different roles. Additionally, these roles might in the beginning seem to be conflicting with an interest in leadership in politics to both the woman and the surrounding community. Nevertheless it is possible and important to combine the traditional gender roles with increased women's participation and presence in politics. It might require patience, courage and a lot of explaining as to why it is important.

In the activity 2 of this module the participants should discuss the opposing views on women's participation in order to find their own arguments for the topic.

**Activity 2**

1. Divide the participants into two groups.
2. Get one group to speak in support of women’s participation in politics while the other speaks against women’s participation in politics.
3. Get one person to moderate the debate as “the Speaker”, and another participant to record the views of the two sides as “the Clerk”.
4. In plenary, let the Clerk present a summary of the views from either camp.
5. Consolidate the views and emphasise the need for promoting women’s participation in politics.
6. The introduction of international instruments and knowledge about them will emphasize the need for increased women’s participation in politics.
International and domestic human rights instruments

Activity 3
1. In plenary, ask participants to mention international and domestic human rights instruments that promote women’s participation in politics.
2. Consolidate their list.

Activity 4
1. Ask participants to get into groups;
2. Assign each group one or two of the international instruments described below, that promote gender and women’s participation in public life;
3. Let them discuss the significance of Malawi Government’s signing and ratifying of these conventions.
4. Let them present their findings in plenary.
5. Consolidate the findings using the information below.

International instruments

This is a United Nations human rights instrument that deters any form of discrimination against women internationally. CEDAW ensures that women:
• have the same right to vote as men in all elections and public referenda;
• participate in the formulation and implementation of government policies;
• perform public functions at any level of government machinery;
• participate in Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and associations concerned with public and political life.

(b) The Convention on the Political Rights of Women (1952)
This convention stated that women are:
• entitled to vote on an equal footing as men in all elections;
• eligible for election to any elected position and hold public office without any discrimination.

(c) The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1985)
This forum stressed:
• the importance of promoting gender equality in all countries;
• that each member state should commit itself to implement a specific plan of action to mainstream gender in all public sectors.

(d) **SADC declaration on Gender and Development and its Addendum (1997)**

This declaration required all member states to achieve a 30% representation of women in all decision-making bodies, including the National Assembly, Cabinet, Local Assembly, and Statutory Corporation boards. The figure has now been adjusted to 50%.

**Domestic instruments**

(a) **The Constitution of the Republic of Malawi**

The Malawi Constitution provides a strong backing for women to participate equally with men in politics and other public offices. Given that women constitute 52% of the Malawian population, it is only proper that women be adequately represented in key decision-making structures and politics. This is consistent with Section 13 of the constitution which states that: *The state shall actively promote the welfare and development of the people of Malawi by progressively adopting and implementing policies and legislation aimed at achieving the following goals...*
(b) The National Gender Policy

This policy aims at achieving gender equality through:

- women’s full participation in all spheres of Malawian society on the basis of equality with men.
- the implementation of principles of non-discrimination and other relevant measures.

The other section that prohibits any form of discrimination is section 24 of the Constitution which states that:

- women have the right to full and equal protection by the law;
- women have the right not to be discriminated against on the basis of their gender or marital status;
- any law that discriminates against women on the basis of gender or marital status shall be invalid;
- legislation shall be passed to eliminate customs and practices that discriminate against women, particularly practices such as discrimination in work, business and public affairs.

Summary

The Malawian Government made a deliberate effort to ensure that women are taking part in political and decision-making processes by ratifying the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development and its addendum which requires member states to achieve a 50% representation of women in all decision-making bodies. However, what is even more important is to ensure that efforts are being made to achieve the set targets by promoting women’s participation in key decision making positions such as Local Government and Parliamentary positions.
Module 4
Challenges that Women Face in Elections

Introduction
In module 2 participants discussed gender concepts and gender roles in relation to women's participation in politics. Specifically, they appreciated the need for women's participation in politics. However, despite the fact that the importance of women's participation in politics is clear, women often face a lot of challenges when they aspire for positions of leadership in the Local Council and National Assembly, let alone the top position of State President. In this module, participants will discuss the challenges that women face before and during elections. At the same time, they will discuss strategies on how to overcome the challenges.

Objectives
By the end of the session, participants should be able to:
• identify the challenges that women face as they pursue positions of leadership at the Local Council and National Assembly levels;
• discuss the causes and effects of the challenges;
• discuss strategies on how to overcome the challenges.
Module 4: Challenges that Women Face in Elections

Resources needed

- Flip chart stand
- Flip charts
- Flip chart markers
- Masking tape
- Participants’ previous knowledge
- Handout of Mrs Nthawiyakwana’s case study
- Flip chart showing cause and effect tree

Challenges

Women who aspire for positions of leadership at the Local Council and National Assembly level face a lot of challenges and constraints. Most of these challenges have their origin in gender biases, which arise from negative cultural practices, religious constraints, political impediments and educational constraints.

Activity 1

1. Ask participants, in plenary, to brainstorm the challenges that women face when they express interest to participate in politics.
2. Consolidate the information using the information below.

Negative cultural practices

Some of the cultural practices and beliefs that negatively affect women’s participation in political leadership views such as:

- the place of the woman is the kitchen. As such women are not allowed to take part in public life and contribute to national development;
- women cannot do what is believed to be a man’s job;
- women should be at the receiving end of economic activities;
- the man is superior to a woman;
- public positions and power are for men;
- a woman’s specific tasks are child bearing, kitchen keeping and other domestic work.

To worsen the matter, women play multiple roles, i.e., reproductive, productive and community-linked roles which tend to constrain their full participation in political leadership.
Religious constraints

Religious beliefs may also act as a constraint for women who wish to stand for elected political positions/offices. For instance, some religions teach that:

- since the man is the head of the family, a woman cannot make decisions on his behalf and he does not need to consult her.

- it was a man (not a woman) who was created in the image of God; yet this is a misconception of doctrine.

All these have led to women’s limited participation in politics and other leadership positions.

Political impediments

Malawi’s current political environment is not very conducive to women’s participation in the public sphere. The following are some of the factors that challenge women politically:

- Choosing a party in which to contest for leadership position, in light of competition within the party, the popularity of the party, and ideological principles.

- Violence, intimidation, hatred, character assassination which many women cannot deal with. This is done by those contestants who are insecure or those that want to scare the women off the playing field;

- Discouragement by those within the party or society around them due to deeply entrenched cultural beliefs;

- Lack of political will on the part of party leadership to introduce and implement policies that promote the participation of women in political leadership.

- Dirty political tactics that some men play, ie, corrupting prospective voters, which many women are not used to or do not want to abide to.

Educational constraints

Although women constitute over 50% of the population in Malawi, a considerable proportion of these women are not well enough educated. For example the literacy is much lower amongst women than amongst men (49% vs 72%). As such:

- they are not able to fulfil the minimum education requirements for key positions in political leadership;

- they lack confidence or self esteem;

- they fail to access information on opportunities available to them and how they can utilize such opportunities;

- they are not empowered economically.
Activity 2

1. Divide the participants into groups. Thereafter let them read the case study below individually.
2. Ask them to discuss the questions that follow the case study.
3. Let them present their findings in plenary.
4. Consolidate their findings using the information below.

Case study

Mrs Nthawiyakwana’s dilemma

Mrs Nthawiyakwana decided to vie for the position of Councillor in Mwayiulipo ward. In her quest for the position, she had a dilemma regarding which party to join between the Umunthu Party and the Tithandizane Party which exist in the constituency. She belongs to the Umunthu Party which she chose because of its ideological principles and values, which appealed to her. The party believes in the rule of law, democracy and uplifting the standards of living for people through expansion of employment opportunities, tax cuts and improved health care. The Tithandizane Party, on the other hand, does not appeal to her conscience because it does not have a clear policy on rule of law, democracy and uplifting of people’s living standards. However, the Tithandizane Party is more popular than the Umunthu Party in this ward because of its ethnic roots. Mrs Nthawiyakwana is concerned that if she contests on the Umunthu Party ticket she may not win the election. She has, therefore, turned to you for advice.

Questions

1. Explain Mrs Nthawiyakwana’s dilemma.
2. How common is this dilemma in your ward?
3. What would be your advice to Mrs Nthawiyakwana? Give reasons for your advice.

Choosing a party

Making a decision about which party to join is a challenge every aspirant faces, no matter the sex. Although winning an election is the ultimate goal of an aspiring woman / candidate, it must be noted that ideological principles and values do matter, if the aspirant is going to be effective in the elected position. Therefore, the aspirants should be encouraged to join a party that appeals to their own ideological principles and values rather than its popularity. Ultimately it is the example and the leadership the woman aspirant wants to provide to its society.
Activity 3

1. Divide the participants into groups.
2. Ask them to draw a cause and effect tree depicting the challenges that women face in their pursuit of political leadership.
3. Let each group post its findings on the wall.
4. Ask groups to do a gallery walk of the room and study or critique the group outcomes.
5. In plenary, ask participants to comment on the group outcomes.
6. Consolidate the work using some of the information below.

Cause and effect tree

There are many factors that can be presented in a cause-effect tree. For example:

- Negative attitude towards girls’ education causes low education levels of women with the effect of low participation of women in political leadership.
- Negative perception of women’s abilities causes political leaders not to be keen on promoting women in leadership, which causes the low participation of women in politics.

How to do the cause and effect tree exercise

- Draw a tree on a flip chart with a wide trunk/stem, wide roots, wide branches and wide leaves.
- Write the key problem in the trunk/stem
- Write all the causes in the roots
- Write all the first level effects in the branches
- Write the all the second level effects on the leaves

Strategies to overcome the challenges women face

Activity 4

1. Get participants into groups.
2. Ask them to discuss strategies that can be developed or adopted to overcome the challenges identified above.
3. Let them present their findings in plenary.
4. Consolidate their findings using the information below.

Strategies to overcome the challenges

There are many strategies that could be put in place to overcome the challenges that women face as they aspire to take up positions of leadership in politics.
The following are some of them:

- As a long term strategy Government and NGOs need to step up efforts to educate parents and guardians on the critical importance of educating girls/women;
- Government and NGOs need to sensitize both women and the wider public on the critical importance of putting women in positions of leadership in local and general elections;
- All stakeholders, at both the leadership and electorate levels, need to be educated on the bad effects of violence and intimidation on elections, as well as the socio-economic development of the country, in general;
- Government and NGOs need to provide women with adequate information or knowledge and skills on leadership opportunities that exist for them;
- NGOs need to educate the masses (electorate) on the superiority of one’s character over gifts, handouts and bribes, in order to counter the tendency of using gifts, handouts and bribes to win elections.
- The individual can raise awareness in its own surrounding engaging in dialogue and by serving as example.

Summary

The importance of women’s participation in leadership positions at the Local Council, National Assembly or state leadership levels cannot be overstressed. Yet women face all kinds of challenges when they aspire to participate in these key positions. The challenges are culturally, socially, religiously and politically entrenched. However, these challenges may be minimized or overcome if all traditional, religious and political leaders, as well as the general electorate, are sensitized on the need to support the women aspirants. Formal and civic education and political will are, clearly, factors that are central to overcoming these challenges. It is, however, important to stress, that societal changes must come from within so changes should start at the individual level. If individuals can undertake a dialogue on these issues and challenges and built consensus over the time that things could as well be done differently much could already be achieved.
Introduction
Democracy is one of the systems of Government that citizens of a particular nation, including Malawi have adopted. The majority of states in the world have adopted democracy as their political system of governance. Yet many people do not really understand what the concept stands for. With the words of Abraham Lincoln democracy is "of the people, by the people and for the people". This refers to the fact that an important feature of democracy is participation, either direct participation or through an elected representative. Therefore free and fair elections are a central mechanism of democracy. Democracy through the principle of respect for human rights and access to power for all is meant to built freedom. No one individual, group of individuals, family, organization, ethnic group or community holds absolute power in a democracy. This module discusses the term democracy, principles of democracy and governance levels so that women, who aspire for positions in the Local and National Assemblies, are conversant with these concepts as they prepare for the elected political positions.
Objectives

By the end of the session, participants should be able to:

• define the term democracy;
• explain the important principles and values of democracy; and,
• describe governance levels in the society.

Resources needed

• Flip chart stand
• Flip charts
• Flip chart markers
• Masking tape
• Participants’ previous knowledge
• Handout of case study: "Who should make the rules?"

Activity 1

1. Ask participants, in plenary, to define the term “democracy”.
2. Write the different definitions on a flip chart or chalkboard.
3. Consolidate the ideas using the information below.

Definition of democracy

Democracy is a way of governing based on people’s will. It is about the rule by the majority. However, in a democracy the rights of minorities are also protected and preserved. People express their will through the method of choosing their government. This is done through periodic free and fair elections. In Malawi elections are held every five years.

Democracy stands for the welfare and common good of all. In this regard, democracy is a political practice. On the one hand, democracy is a system of organising and distributing power between and among people, while on the other hand, it is a way of organizing and distributing power between people and the state. The citizens take part and share in the work and responsibilities of Government and the State with their own right. Citizens though also have responsibilities in a democracy. E.g., if they do not directly govern as part of the political leadership in the country, they must exercise their right as voter to determine their representative at the different political levels in elections.
Activity 2

Let participants read the case study below, individually.

1. Ask each participant to jot down answers to the questions that follow.
2. Ask each person to pair with another and share their responses.
3. In plenary, select three pairs and let them present their joint responses.
4. Let the rest of the participants comment on the answers.
5. Consolidate the responses.

Case Study: Who should make the rules?

A group of 300 women, men and children are stranded in an ocean after their ship is sunk in a storm. For many days they go with the flow of the current until they reach a deserted island. Here they find most of their needs including food and water. They all agree to settle at the island because rescue is not in sight. Everyone agrees that there should be rules so that they can get on with each other and live peaceful lives. But who is to make the rules?

Mr. Mkulundiine is the first to speak. He orders everyone to listen to him because he is the oldest and strongest, and so, better positioned to protect them. He declares himself the group’s leader. Mrs. Ndiimanawo, strongly argues that everyone is equally important and that Mr Mkulundiine has no right to impose himself on them as leader. She further argues that even kids have a say and should participate in the choosing of the leader. This argument goes on and on, and a possible disruption of peace is eminent.
**Module 5: Understanding Democracy**

**Questions**

1. Who will govern the stranded people on the island?
2. Whose suggestion do you agree with most? Give reasons.
3. Which suggestion do you think results for the given scenario in a Government which can be called democratic? Give reasons.
4. What could women do to make sure they take part in leadership and decision-making on the island?

**Note:** Malawi’s democracy is facing several challenges, one of which is the lack of active participation of women in politics and other decision-making bodies. As in the case study above, Malawi’s women are marginalized in politics and decision-making. Women’s contributions were ignored at the island and continue to be ignored in today’s situation. There is need to create a better understanding in society to that with democracy equal opportunities and rights apply to all men and women and that this is not a threat to the society. Participation of women in politics and decision-making is on the contrary important for the better development of everybody and for poverty reduction. This because marginalized issues that especially women are knowledgeable of will find their way on the political agenda.

**Democratic values and principles**

**Activity 3**

1. Ask participants to brainstorm the democratic values and principles that they know.
2. Ask them to explain each value or principle mentioned.
3. Consolidate the activity by using relevant examples and information below.

**Principles of democracy**

Democracy can only take root in a country if some basic principles on which it is built are followed. The principles include:

(a) **Public participation**

This is the commitment from the citizens who need to do or make sure certain things are done. Every citizen shares the responsibility for civic awareness, democratic vigilance and working together for the better of the nation.
(b) **Tolerance**
- All societies are composed of people having different views and beliefs.
- Those who are in the majority must allow the minority to express themselves.
- The minority includes all disadvantaged people and persons with disabilities.

(c) **Accountability and transparency**
- Public officials need to be held responsible for their actions, because people put them in power on the basis of trust and in their representation.
- Leaders are expected to make decisions and perform their duties according to the will and wishes of the people who put them in power, and not for themselves.
- For leaders to be held accountable, people must be aware of what is happening. Leaders need to be open and have a duty to disclose information on policies and decisions taken by the government.
- People and the press must have access to this information and the ability to disseminate it and discuss publicly.

(d) **Regular, free, fair and accessible elections**
- One way citizens express their will is when they choose who will represent them in government.
- People should be able to make their choices in a free and fair manner. They should not be intimidated, threatened, bribed or forced to vote for a candidate during elections.
- Elections need to be held on a regular basis, according to the periods set in the constitution. This gives citizens the opportunity to periodically review the performance of their leaders and make changes if they are dissatisfied with them.

(e) **Human rights**
- All people have basic rights, and a democratic society tries to respect and protect those rights for all.
- Human rights reflect values that promote respect for human life and dignity, and these values are important for genuine democracy.

- Many countries, including Malawi, have a “bill of rights” which lists the rights and freedoms that are guaranteed to all people.
- However, there are duties that go along with these rights. Most important of these is the duty to respect the rights of other people.

(f) **Rule of law**
- In a democratic society, the law is the basis for governing. Therefore, no person is above the law.
• If laws are adopted properly all citizens should obey them and be held accountable if they violate them.
• The law must be equally, fairly and consistently enforced.
• The rule of law promotes the fundamental principle of equality of all people in the society.
• No one must be discriminated against based on his or her race, ethnic group, religion, gender, language or political opinions.
• Equal opportunities should be provided to all citizens.

**Activity 4**

1. Divide the participants into small groups.
2. Give each group one of the above principles and let the group answer the following questions:

   
   (a) is the principle being practiced today in Malawi? Yes……No……
   
   (b) if yes, how well is it being practiced?
   
   (c) if not well practiced, what could be done to improve the situation?

3. Ask groups to report back in plenary.
4. Consolidate their responses.

**Governance**

Governance refers to the management and moderation of public affairs. It is centrally linked to decision-making and accountability. It is about the process of managing relationships at various levels that direct collective efforts.

**Governance levels**

Governance occurs at different levels, from family to the Government and the State.

(a) **Family level**

In a family, family members share duties and responsibilities. For them to reach a decision on what is important for the family’s welfare, they discuss and share thoughts and ideas. In this way, every family member feels part of the decision-making process, and respects the decision taken.

(b) **Community level**

In a village or community, members need to dialogue on many things that affect them for purposes of order, harmony and prosperity. However, as the number of people involved in the decision-making process increases, the process becomes more complicated. In such a case, the members of the community may express their views through elected representatives. For this to be effective, it requires the provision of communication channels and frequent dialogue between the chosen representatives and those that chose them.
(c) **National and international level**

In a nation, there are many groups of people and with different interests. All of them want to be heard. The State or Government has to listen to all of them. It can listen to the diverse voices only by opening up multiple channels of communication and dialogue. At the international level, there are bodies that contribute to the management of public affairs. These could be State, international organizations, development agencies and agreements between states that do not necessarily constitute political or economic bodies such as United Nations, World Bank, International Monetary Fund and the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

**Summary**

Democracy promotes good leadership and multi-sectoral participation in different levels. In Malawi these are at ward, constituency, district and national level. Lack of democratic participation by all stakeholders hinders sustainable social and economic development.

As representatives of people on the ground, women aspiring for leadership positions at the Local Council and National Assembly levels are required to understand and practice democratic principles. This will make them better representatives and implementers of development activities.
Module 6
Decentralisation and Local Government System

Introduction
Most countries in the world including Malawi provide services to their citizens at two levels: national level and local level. Services at the national level are provided by the Central Government, while services at the local level are provided by the Local Government. Local Governments get funding from the Central Government to run affairs of specific areas such as districts, towns, municipalities and cities. This partial transfer of power, responsibilities and finances from Central to Local Governments is called decentralisation. This module discusses the concept of decentralisation as it relates to Local Government, its forms, impact and the roles of councillors, among other issues. The goal of the module is to equip the women aspiring for positions in the local assembly with knowledge and skills on the importance of decentralisation and local governance.

Objectives
By the end of this session participants should be able to:

- define the concept of decentralisation in relation to local government system;
- outline various forms of decentralisation;
Module 6: Decentralization and Local Government System

• explain the historical background to decentralisation in Malawi;
• discuss the impact of the decentralisation policy on the new local government system;
• explain various functions, responsibilities and powers of the Local Council;
• explain the rights, duties and responsibilities of citizens in the local Council; and,
• describe the roles and responsibilities of Ward Councillors.

Resources needed
• Flip chart stand
• Flip charts
• Flip chart markers
• Masking tape
• Participants’ previous knowledge

Activity 1
1. Ask participants, in plenary, to brainstorm the term decentralisation.
2. Consolidate the responses put forward using the information below.

Decentralisation
Decentralisation is the sharing and transferring of power, responsibilities, resources and authority from the top to the lower levels of decision-making positions. In effect, administrative and political power and authority are transferred from Central government to the regional and district offices and departments. The local units or bodies are given authority to plan development programs, to raise revenue fees, rates and (taxes), to make by-laws, and manage public affairs in the areas under their control.

Types of Decentralisation
Decentralisation comes in four types: Privatisation, Delegation, Deconcentration, and Devolution.

(a) Privatisation

This is the transfer of government functions to a business organization, or more than one business organization (the private sector). The business organization takes over the responsibilities of government to provide public services.
(b) **Delegation**

This is the transfer of some Government functions (very specific functions) to an independent body that is not part of the regular Government department or Ministry. These are commonly known as Parastatal bodies because they operate outside the Government structures. In Malawi the examples include: ADMARC, ESCOM and the Malawi Housing Corporation.

(c) **Deconcentration**

This is the transfer of administrative authority to local units or departments of Government Ministries. In this case, the local units or departments carry out the functions of their parent Ministries.

(c) **Devolution**

It is the transfer of political functions, power, authority and administrative responsibilities from the Government headquarters (Central Government) to the local units or local authorities such as District and City Councils. The local authorities can implement decisions, plans, and projects without direct control of the government headquarters. The local authorities have powers to raise revenues, make by-laws and manage public affairs in the areas under their control.

Note: Malawi uses the devolution type of decentralisation. This is why there are district and city assemblies. Government ministries work through the district and city assemblies at the local levels. As an element of governance, is a way of restructuring government, by providing government structures and services closer to the ordinary people. It is a way of making government institutions and services more accessible.

**The Decentralisation Policy**

When Malawi became a democratic state in 1994, as part of the process of consolidation of democracy, and in a bid to realize the country’s goal of poverty alleviation, the government expressed the desire to decentralise political and administrative authority to district level. It was important then to review the already existing initiatives, which led to the formulation of the current Policy.

The policy therefore:

- devolves administration and political authority to the district level to give power to the elected bodies;
- merges Governmental agencies at the district and local levels into one administrative unit;
- restricts the Central Government to administration only;
- assigns functions and responsibilities to the local authorities; and,
- promotes popular participation in the government and development of the district.
Objectives of the policy

The Policy has the following objectives:

- To create democratic environment and institutions in Malawi for governance and development at the local level which will facilitate the participation of the grassroots in decision-making;
- To make public service more efficient, more economical and cost effective;
- To promote accountability and good governance at the local level in order to help government reduce poverty; and,
- To mobilize the masses for socio-economic development at the local level.

Impact of decentralization

Activity 2

1. Divide the participants in to groups.
2. Ask them to share development projects in their area.
3. Ask them to address the following questions as they share:
   
   (a) How the project came into being.
   
   (b) Who was involved in the decision-making, initiation and implementation of the project? Think of men versus women.
   
   (c) What role did they play?
4. Let them report in plenary on one or two projects discussed.
5. Consolidate their reports using some of the points below.

Impact of decentralisation: Key issues

- Decentralisation takes the decision-making process more closely to the people.
- People have the knowledge of the problems affecting their areas and since their involvement in decision-making is vital, they concentrate on development in a more focused manner.
- Through community participation in planning, implementation and control of local programs, decentralisation creates a spirit of ownership and self-help in the people.

The Local Government system

Decentralisation is exercised in practice through Local Governments. Local Government in Malawi are District, Town, and City Councils.
Activity 3

1. Ask the participants to get into small groups.
2. Let them discuss the composition of their District / Town or City Councils.
3. Let them present their findings in plenary.
4. Consolidate the answers.

Composition of the Local Council

The Assembly shall consist of:

- One member elected from each ward within the local government area known as “Councillor”. These will be voting members.
- Non-voting members who will be:
  - Traditional Authorities and Sub-traditional Authorities from the local government area;
  - Members of Parliament that fall within the local government areas; and,
  - Five persons appointed by the elected members to cater for the interests of such special groups within the local government area.

Powers and functions of the Local Councils

Activity 4

1. Ask participants, in plenary, to brainstorm the powers and functions of the Local Council.
2. Consolidate the responses using some of the information below.

Powers of Local Council include the following:

1. To create service committees through which it carries out its functions such as financing education and other works.
2. To create committees at lower levels like the area, ward or village level in order to facilitate participation of the people in decision-making.
3. To raise funds.
4. To acquire/dispose of any property or rights deemed necessary for the discharge of its functions.
5. To appoint and employ such persons as are necessary for proper discharging of its functions.
6. To make regulations determining conditions of services for its officers.
7. To license business and trades.

The District Council has the following functions:

1. To promote infrastructure and economic development at various levels.
2. To mobilize resources within and outside the district.
3. To maintain peace and security in the district in conjunction with the National Police Service.
4. To make by-laws which facilitate its functions.
5. To co-operate with other District Councils and learn from their experiences and exchange ideas.
6. To perform other functions including the registration of births and deaths.
7. To participate in the delivery of essential local services as may be prescribed in the Act of Parliament.

Services at Local Council level

Some of the services that the Local Councils are responsible for are:

(a) **Educational services**
These include nursery schools, Primary and Community Day Secondary Schools.

(b) **Medical services**
Health Centres, Dispensary, Maternity Clinics and Health Posts, and other environmental health facilities.

(c) **Water**
These include provision and maintenance of water supplies including boreholes, piped water projects and protected wells, distribution of water and gravity fed pipe water scheme.

(d) **Community development**
Include Gender programmes, community development, street children and orphans programmes, youth and cultural affairs, district information services and welfare.

(e) **Forestry**
These include establishment of wood lots and forests, forestry surveys, inventory of forests, forestry extension, and forest management.

(f) **Roads and street services**
They include the district, township, city and estate roads. Other services include street naming, issuing of road permits, etc.

**Note:** The Councils are also responsible for emergencies, building and business services, public amenities, sports stadiums, community halls, recreation parks, playgrounds and public conveniences.
Roles of key stakeholders in Local Government

(a) Councillors

The following are some of the roles of councillors:

- to represent people of their wards in the Local Council;
- to bring to the local forum the local concerns that require Council solutions;
- to bring to the attention of MPs matters that require national solutions and Central Government attention where such matters cannot be contained within the District Development Plans (DDP);
- to initiate and contribute to debate in the Council on local government matters and management of Council resources; and,
- to ensure that there is transparency and accountability in the operations of the Local Government Authority secretariat headed by the District Commissioner/Chief Executive Officer;
- to lobby MPs so that people in their wards receive adequate and quality national services such as security, electricity and relief services in major disasters, or to ensure that the DC and his secretariat attend adequately to local development needs;
- to provide a systematic check on the District Executive Committee (the DCs Secretariat and Local Government) and expenditure and service delivery within their respective wards and district as a whole;
- to receive at the Council all proposals for the District Development Plan and scrutinize the proposals and pass a budget for the District Assembly Development Plan;
- to make plans for development covering all wards in a district and deliver services to all wards, and ensure a fair distribution of resources and development in all wards;
- to provide a system for equitable distribution of resources amongst all the wards and ensure an even spread of development amongst the wards through debate and reason;
- to facilitate implementation of local development; and,
- to inform people about decisions made at the Council.
(b) **Members of Parliament (MPs)**

The following are roles of Members of Parliament:

- to legislate and provide for the funding of government business through passing of the National Budget in Parliament;
- to provide for the resources and environment with which and in which all government programmes are executed and controlled;
- to ensure that the Executive keeps within the parameters prescribed by the national law makers;
- to represent constituencies and so have the interest of their constituencies at heart when they perform their representative roles in the National Assembly;
- to represent the people of the constituencies in Parliament and bring to the national forum the local concerns that require national solutions;
- to mobilise national support for local development on behalf of local leaders such as, Council members, traditional leaders and civil society captains where such matters may be beyond the capacity of Local Government;
- to initiate and contribute to debate in Parliament on national issues such as: making national laws; passing of the National Budget, authorization of Bills enabling national borrowing, e.g. MASAF financing; advocacy for human rights; relations between Malawi and other nations; management of major disasters, etc.
- to ensure that people in their constituencies receive adequate and quality national services such as security, electricity and relief in major disasters;
- to ensure that the formula for allocation of local financial resources is working and the Central Government matches commitment with action by transferring the resources needed to the Local Governments;
- to advise, lobby and advocate for local government; and,
- to work hand in hand with traditional leaders and councillors in mobilizing people to participate in development activities.

(c) **Chiefs**

The following are the roles of Chiefs:

- to carry out the traditional functions of his/her office under customary law in so far as the discharge of such functions is not contrary to the constitution or any written law and is not contrary to natural justice;
- to preserve public peace;
• to assist in general administration of the district in which his area of jurisdiction is situated and for such purpose to carry out such functions as the DC may require; and,
• assist in mobilizing the rural masses for socio-economic development of his/her area.

(d) District Commissioners
The following are the roles of District Commissioners:
• to implement resolutions of the Council;
• to monitor the day-to-day performance of the Executive and administrative function of the Council;
• to supervise the departments of the Council;
• to manage and discipline the staff of the Council;
• to act as Secretary for the Council; and,
• to provide policy direction to debate in the Council.

Activity 5
1. Divide the participants into small groups.
2. Let them discuss the relationship between MPs and Councillors in their areas.
3. Let them report their findings in plenary.
4. Summarize the issues raised, using the information discussed above.

Rights, duties and responsibilities of citizens in the Local Council
Activity 6
1. Ask the participants to brainstorm some of the rights, duties and responsibilities they have in their local government area.
2. List down all the answers on a flip chart/chalkboard.
3. Relate the responses to the notes provided below.

Duties of citizens in the local government area
Duties of citizens of the local government area include the following:
• to pay the required fees, rates and taxes to the Council;
• to monitor and evaluate the way resources of the Council are being used;
• to ensure that property of the Council is well looked after, e.g. avoiding and discouraging vandalism;
• to report to relevant authorities on matters relating to mismanagement of resources in the Council;
• to ensure that their elected representatives are performing according to the wishes and expectations of the citizens;
• to actively participate in identifying and implementing developmental projects in their communities and local government area;
• to ensure that rights of women, youths, children, people with disabilities and other marginalized groups are protected in the Council.

The citizens have other responsibilities in the affairs of the Council in order to get good representatives during the elections such as:
• encouraging political parties to hold open nomination processes for candidates;
• encouraging people who want to run independently;
• encouraging people with good qualities to contest in elections;
• attending campaign meetings to understand the ideas of candidates so as to make independent judgment;
• finding out information about the candidates, their qualifications, qualities and past achievements in the community; and,
• ensuring that they cast their vote on Election Day.

**Why should one vote in Local Government Elections?**

Everyone needs to vote in Local Government Elections because:
• it is everyone’s right to vote;
• choosing one’s representative in the Local Council is a way of participating in the affairs of Local Government;
• it is one’s duty;
• by voting one shows that he/she supports the democratic society;
• leaders will know that they have people who elected them into power and are watching their decisions and actions;
• voting helps to bring change to one’s community;
• one can elect a leader who will bring development to one’s area;
• voting gives one a chance to shape one’s future;
• by voting, one can review the past and make appropriate changes for the future;
• if one is not satisfied with the performance or policies of the elected leaders, one can get rid of them by electing new leaders;
• if some leaders are performing well one can vote them back into office; and,
• voting is a peaceful way of determining who will wield political power.

Note: “Bad leaders are chosen by good people who do not vote”.

Financing Council

Activity 7
1. Divide participants into groups.
2. Ask them to discuss the following questions:
   (a) What are some of the ways an Council can raise funds?
   (b) What problems do you think the Council would face in trying to raise funds?
   (c) Suggest ways the Council could minimise or eliminate the problems?
3. Let them report their responses in plenary.
4. Summarize the activity using the information below.

Revenue for Council

It is very important for the Council to have money and resources in-order to function well. The Council has two main sources of revenue namely: revenue collected from within the Local Government Area and revenue provided by the Central Government. Apart from the locally generated revenue and government transfers, assemblies can also source revenue from other agencies such as non-governmental organizations and donor agencies.

Activity 8
1. Ask 6 participants to volunteer and come up with a role-play that would depict the citizen’s role in assisting the Council to provide services adequately.
2. Let participants discuss the role play.
3. Consolidate the role play by stressing the citizen’s roles described below, in assisting the Council to provide services.

Roles of citizens in the Council
Citizens can support Council in mobilization of resources through:
• payment of required fees, rates and taxes;
• active participation in fundraising for development activities within their communities;
• reporting to relevant authorities anybody who chooses not to pay required fees, or anyone who engages in any corrupt practices;
• inspection of financial reports of their Councils to enhance accountability; and,
• attendance at budget sessions of their Councils.

Summary

The process of decentralisation in Malawi has led to local empowerment whereby the local masses have become more active, self-reliant and conscious of development in their respective areas. Prospective Ward Councillors and Members of Parliament need to understand the concept of decentralisation so that they can effectively steer development programmes at grassroots level. They also need to appreciate how the Local Councils operates, and know about the responsibilities of all stakeholders in the development process to ensure that assemblies deliver services to the people effectively.
Introduction

Leadership is an important concept in all spheres of human interaction. It determines the extent to which any human grouping can be effective or productive whether at family, community, or national levels. Getting good leaders is the first step towards having an effective Local Council or National Assembly.

There are a number of universal leadership principles that leaders at the local and national levels of governance need to espouse in order to be effective. These are based on constitutional and human rights values. This module discusses styles of leadership and leadership challenges existing at the local and national levels of governance, among others. Women aspiring for positions of leadership in Local Council and National Assembly need to be knowledgeable about what constitutes effective leadership.

Objectives

By the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- explain the concept of leadership;
- identify leadership styles required to enhance local governance at community level; and,
• discuss leadership challenges existing at the local and national levels of governance.

Resources needed
• Flip chart stand
• Flip charts
• Flip chart markers
• Masking tape
• Participants’ previous knowledge

Leadership

Activity 1
1. In plenary, ask participants to shortly brainstorm their understanding of the concept of leadership.
2. Consolidate the responses by highlighting key issues that underline leadership.

Activity 2
1. Divide the participants into small groups.
2. Let them discuss and reflect on issues relating to leadership in local governance.

Note: Keep time so that the participants in short time exchange their ideas.

The following questions should guide their discussion:

(a) What is leadership?
(b) Describe the difference between a leader and a boss?
(c) Who can become a leader?
(d) Are leaders born or made?

3. Let each group present their findings in plenary.
4. Consolidate their responses using some of the information below.

The concept of leadership

• Leadership includes one’s capacity to influence, inspire, rally, direct, encourage, motivate, induce, move, mobilize, and activate others to pursue a common goal or purpose while maintaining commitment, momentum, confidence and courage (Myles Munroe, 1993).

• Leadership is not a function of titles but rather a function of relationships.
This means that one can be appointed a leader but that person cannot be a leader until his/her personality and character, knowledge and skill begin to perform the functions of leadership that are recognised and accepted by the community. This is because a title and position do not guarantee performance and productivity.

- Leadership is the organizing and coordinating of resources, energies and relationships in a productive context for an intended result.
  Leadership is impossible without a guiding vision and purpose that generates passion for accomplishments.
- An important ingredient of leadership function is the ability to draw the best out of the other people and inspire them to maximize their potential and that of the resource they manage.
- For one to lead, they have to show that they are willing to live at the same level with the people.
- The purest form of leadership is influence through inspiration.
- Leaders are a natural and important part of any community. The person or persons who hold leadership positions can offer direction and guidance to the community on how to carry out its work (Gwira Mpini Kwacha, 1996).
- Real qualities of a leader are found in those who are willing to suffer for the sake of objectives great enough to demand their wholehearted obedience.
- Regardless of title, one cannot be a leader without followers.
- Leaders are not born, but made. Everyone has the capacity and potential to become a leader.

**Leadership styles**

*Activity 3*

1. In plenary, ask participants to describe the leadership styles that they know and have experienced in their community.
2. Let the participants discuss who is a good example of a leader (or the opposite, especially women) nationally and/or internationally, giving reasons why yes or why not.
3. Consolidate their observations by commenting or asking further questions on their observations.
The following are some of the leadership styles that participants need to know so that they are aware of their advantages and disadvantages:

\( (d) \) **Authoritarian leadership**  
This is a type of leadership where:
- the leader makes a decision without consultation and announces it;
- there is no initiative, creativity and responsibility from those he/she leads;
- the leader considers others as objects and not subjects;
- decisions made are final and cannot be questioned;
- people are herded like animals into new directions; and,
- the leader considers himself/herself as more knowledgeable than others.

\( (b) \) **Consultative leadership**  
This is a type of leadership where:
- the leader presents a tentative decision which is subject to change after consultations;
- the leader presents a situation and gets input from others and makes a decision;
- the leader calls on members to make a decision but holds veto power; and,
- the leader might hide his/her weakness in order to get shielded under the guise of “collective decision”. But this is a wrong way to exercise consultative leadership.

\( (c) \) **Enabling leadership**  
This is a type of leadership where:
- the leader defines limits and calls on members to make a decision;
- group members develop maturity and responsibility;
- members are engaged in discussion and active participation in decision-making; and,
- members explore their own situation and make decisions after careful examination.

\( (d) \) **Laissez-faire**  
In this type of leadership:
- the leader is negligent;
- the leader always believes that things will sort themselves out on their own; and,
- the leader deliberately allows people to benefit from the system even if they do not deserve the benefit.
Note: Effective leadership that promotes community empowerment should endeavour to swing between consultative and enabling leadership styles.

Qualities of leadership for enhanced local governance

Activity 4

1. Divide the participants into small groups
2. Let them discuss the following questions:

(a) Describe qualities of a good leader, eg, Councillor, MP, Chief, District Commissioner, etc

(b) Describe factors that hinder good leadership in Councillors, Chiefs and other leaders at Council and ward levels in your area.

(c) Suggest solutions that can promote good leadership in your area.

3. Let each group present their findings in plenary.
4. Consolidate their responses using the information below.

Qualities of a good leader

A good leader:

- is responsible to and supportive of others;
- is patient and determined;
- has desire to see positive change in the system;
- is exemplary and acts as a role model;
- avoids joining an interest group;
- has perseverance and is committed to work;
- follows the law in every aspect;
- promotes unity;
- stimulates thinking and has a vision;
- is not prescriptive in approach to leadership;
- promotes collective decision-making and planning;
- is transparent and accountable in his/her dealings;
- has loyalty primarily directed to the electorate and not his/her superiors;
- suggests alternatives to wrong decisions;
- promotes independence and self reliance;
- facilitates open discussion on matters affecting the community;
- is honest, fair and credible;
- is a good listener and sensitive to people’s needs;
- does not run away from problems or ignore group conflict but tries to find a solution to each problem or conflict;
- has a learning attitude;
• is willing to share responsibilities with others; and,
• accepts criticism.

**Community Development Programmes**

**Activity 5**

1. Get participants into small groups.
2. Let them discuss the following questions:

   (a) What community development programmes in your local areas target women and the youth?

   (b) For how long has each programme been in existence?

   (c) How effective is the programme?

   (d) If the programmes are not available, suggest ways of establishing and implementing programmes that will take care of society needs, in terms of women empowerment, food security, HIV and AIDS, youth development, etc.

   (e) Where the programmes exist, suggest ways of making them more effective in encouraging women and other minority groups to participate and take a leadership role in such programmes.

3. Let the groups present their findings in plenary.
4. Consolidate their findings using the information below.

**Importance of community development programmes**

Malawi used to have community programmes targeting women at grassroots level. The programmes aimed at providing a forum for women to discuss issues affecting their lives and learn various skills to improve the welfare of their families. Women used to do a lot of things including knitting, cooking, sewing and embroidery in their groups. Such programmes have disappeared, over time, in various communities such that women can hardly socialise and learn skills from each other. Leaders should, therefore, make deliberate efforts to ensure that these programmes are revived. This will:

• give a chance to women to be more productive in their day-to-day lives;
• go a long way in developing their communities in this era of the HIV and AIDS pandemic and food shortages;
• provide an opportunity to women to know each other and be able to identify those who can represent them in various political leadership positions.
Taking into consideration the current status of our youths and the HIV and AIDS pandemic, it is necessary that such programmes should focus on youth activities as well. Our youths need to be engaged in various activities so that:

- they are kept busy all the time;
- they are preserved from contracting HIV and AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections; and,
- the girl child is protected from unwanted pregnancies.

**Summary**

Leadership is a combination of a number of qualities. Successful leaders are those that put forth the interest of others/their followers first. They always influence others through inspiration. To ensure a successful community, people should be able to identify people with good leadership qualities and encourage them to represent them in various leadership roles. This, therefore, requires the participation of all citizens in the process of electing their leaders. At the same time, it ensures that people who are responsive to people’s needs are put in office for a responsible and effective local government.
Module 8
Election Systems

Introduction

Elections are essential to every democratic system. In fact, free, fair and regular elections are the taproot of democracy because consequently they provide legitimate representatives for Government, elected by the people. This module discusses the term elections, types of elections, electoral systems, and processes and characteristics of free and fair elections, among other issues. It is important for women aspiring for positions of leadership in the local and national assemblies to be conversant with these issues so that they prepare adequately for, and succeed in, an election.

Objectives

By the end of this session participants should be able to:

• define the term elections;
• understand the types of elections that exists;
• describe the electoral systems in Malawi and some SADC countries;
• describe key players and their roles in an election;
• describe the Electoral Process; and,
• describe the characteristics of free and fair elections.
Resources needed
- Flip chart stand
- Flip charts
- Flip chart markers
- Masking tape
- Participants’ previous knowledge

Defining elections

Activity 1
1. Ask the participants, in plenary, to brainstorm the term *elections*.
2. Ask them to discuss the importance of elections in a democratic society.
3. Consolidate their findings using the information below.

Elections

Elections is a method of choosing representatives in Government. It is a way of ensuring that holders of public office are acceptable to the majority of the people. Elections are important in a democratic society because they provide an opportunity for people to express their will from time to time in the choice of their leaders.

Electoral systems

Activity 2
1. Get participants into pairs.
2. Let them describe electoral systems.
3. Consolidate their responses using the information below.

Electoral system

An electoral system is a method through which votes are translated into legislative seats or other offices, like the presidency. Choosing an electoral system is, therefore, one of the most important constitutional decisions for any democracy. The choice of a system determines the nature of representation and the format by which seats are allocated. An electoral system can help encourage cooperation and accommodation in a divided society. At the same time, an electoral system can foster a link between citizens and their leaders through political accountability, representation and responsiveness. An electoral system has three main tasks, as follows:

- To translate the votes cast into seats won in a legislative chamber.
- To act as a mechanism through which the people can hold their elected representatives accountable.
• To give incentives to competing parties to frame their appeals to the electorate in distinct ways.

**Types of electoral systems**

(a) **First Past The Post (FPTP)**

In this type of election:

- The country is divided into electoral constituencies.
- Each constituency in elections chooses a representative for Parliament.
- The winner in each constituency is the candidate who receives a minimum of one more vote than each of the other competitors.
- The winner does not necessarily have to obtain more votes than all other competitors combined.

This system may mean that a party with a minority of votes countrywide can become the ruling party. It is also known for putting small parties at a disadvantage. However, it is reputed for holding MPs accountable to their constituencies. Some of the countries that use this system are Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Botswana.

(b) **Proportional Representation system (PR)**

In most PR systems the whole country constitutes a single constituency. Therefore, there are no demarcations of electoral constituencies.

The advantages of this system are two-fold:

- All parties contesting an election have representation in parliament in proportion to the total valid votes cast in their favour.
- It ensures better representation and gender equality.

However, it has the disadvantage of linking MPs to their respective parties rather than to the electorate. South Africa, Namibia, Angola and Mozambique are some of the countries that use the system.

(c) **Mixed Member Proportional system (MMP)**

The Mixed Member Proportional System:

- combines the key elements of the FPTP and the PR systems.
- allows for some MPs to be elected through FPTP system while others occupy legislature seats through PR.

Although this is seen to be complicated by the voters especially in countries with high illiteracy rates, it tends to maximize the positive aspects of both the FPTP and PR systems, namely, broad representation and accountability.
However, it also embodies the negative aspect of both PR and FPTP. Lesotho and Mauritius use the MMP system.

**Activity 3**

1. Divide participants into small groups.
2. Let each group discuss the following questions:
   
   (a) Which system do you like best and why?
   
   (b) Which system would allow more women representation in elected political positions?
   
   (c) Which of the three electoral systems promotes unity?
3. Let them present their responses in plenary.
4. Consolidate their responses.

**Note:** Each country chooses its own electoral system based on population distribution, geographical set up, cultural, political beliefs and values of that particular country. However, there is a need for the Government to look into the systems and adopt the one that promotes and accommodates the minority groups.

**Key players in an election and their roles**

**Activity 4**

1. Divide participants into groups.
2. Let them list the key players in an election.
3. Ask them to describe the role of each key player.
4. Consolidate the answers using some of the information below.

**Key players and their roles**

There are a number of key players in an electoral process. They include political parties, candidates, the Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), international observers, the media, Civil Society monitors, political party and candidate monitors, the Government, development partners, and the electorate. The following is a brief description of their roles:

**Political parties**

Political parties:

- give support and credibility to a free and fair electoral process;
- provide a check and balance on each other;
- share information with monitoring organizations regarding any complaints or legal challenges, which the parties have filed directly with the Electoral Commission or the courts;
- provide candidates for the elections;
• provide monitors for the elections;
• conduct civic and voter education;
• mobilize resources for their candidates;
• train their monitors on the electoral process.

Candidates
Candidates are the people around which the elections revolve. Therefore, they have to ensure that they themselves and their supporters behave according to the code of conduct and electoral laws.

Their roles include the following:
• assisting in civic and voter education during campaign;
• encouraging voters to go and vote;
• wooing voters through a peaceful campaign;
• ensuring free and fair elections through participation in various trainings and meetings;
• recruiting and training monitors.

The Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC)
This body plays a very important role in elections. The roles include:
• demarcating and revising constituency and ward boundaries;
• conducting registration of voters;
• procuring the electoral materials such as ballot papers, registration forms, cameras, ballot boxes, etc;
• establishing and operating polling centres;
• ensuring that elections are free and fair through setting up of security;
• receiving and deciding on complaints related to the conduct of elections;
• announcing official results;
• conducting civic and voter education.

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)
Civil Society Organizations:
• provide Election Monitors;
• assist in conducting civic and voter education;
• share electoral information with other civil society organizations;
• cooperate with other players in the electoral process;
• manage conflicts in tense and violent situations or areas;
• maximize the use of scarce resources and promote the sharing of resources (financial and material) where possible;
• coordinate with each other to achieve full coverage of election activity;
• compile reports on elections.
International observers

The roles of international observers include the following:

- verifying and monitoring the impartiality and the functioning of the Electoral Commission and its officers in conformity with the electoral laws;
- verifying and monitoring the impartiality and legality of the decisions taken by the Commission and its officers in settling disputes;
- verifying and monitoring the registration of voters;
- observing the course of campaign for elections;
- verifying and monitoring the voting process;
- verifying and monitoring the determination of the results of the elections at all stages;
- observing access to and the use of the media.

The media

The media is critical in:

- keeping the public well informed about election matters;
- being involved in general civic and voter education;
- providing balanced and non-partisan reporting on electoral issues;
- reporting electoral malpractices;
- providing a forum for debate on electoral issues.

Civil society monitors

The roles of civil society monitors include the following:

- agreeing to be impartial observers of the entire election process with the objective of ensuring that all relevant electoral legislation, regulations, and codes of conduct are obeyed, thus creating the conditions for a free and fair election;
- agreeing to adhere to the electoral code of conduct and to the code of conduct for civil society monitors;
- having some knowledge of the community;
- having demonstrated an interest in issues of democracy and governance;
- having an understanding of the electoral law and regulations;
- working in association with an organization, which has been accredited by the electoral authorities to monitor the elections.

Political party and candidate monitors

Monitors drawn from political parties or independent candidates also have important roles to play in an election. The roles include:

- monitoring the electoral process honestly and objectively;
- reporting any irregularities observed to MEC for purposes of rectifying them;
• cooperating with polling officers and security personnel to ensure smooth operation of the registration/polling centre.

**Government**

The roles of Government during elections include the following:
• providing funding for the elections;
• providing security during elections.

**Development partners**

The roles of development partners include:
• assisting Government in providing funds and technical assistance for the elections;
• monitoring the elections;
• ensuring that elections are credible, ie, free and fair.

**The electorate (voters)**

The voters are so critical that without their participation there can be no elections. That is why they need to be persuaded to take part in the elections. Hence, the roles of the electorate are:
• to take part in the voting process; and,
• to ensure that elections are free from violence.
• to give their vote free from influence and pressure

**The Police and other security institutions**

To ensure free and fair elections, it is important that elections are held under conditions where everyone feels safe and secure. Therefore, the Police and other security services have roles to play which include:
• provision of equal security to all people;
• fulfilling their specified security roles as stipulated in the Republican Constitution;
• desisting from intimidating voters.

**Eligibility of candidates**

Contesting candidates have to meet criteria, which is consistent with the electoral law. The criteria include the fact that the candidate should:
• have attained the age of 21 by the time they register as a candidate;
• be able to speak and read the English language and actively communicate in the language in the the Assembly;
• be a registered voter;
• not owe allegiance to a foreign country;
• not be mentally ill;
• not have been convicted of any crime involving dishonesty within the last seven years;
• not have been declared bankrupt by any court in Malawi;
• not hold public office or appointment;
• not belong or serve in the Defence Force or Malawi Police Service;
• not have been convicted of any crime relating to elections within the last seven years.

Eligibility of a voter
In order for one to vote, first and foremost she/he must be registered on the voters’ roll. However, one can be a registered voter if she/he:
• is a citizen of Malawi;
• is not a citizen but has been ordinarily resident in Malawi for the past seven years;
• has attained the age of 18 years at the date of application for registration;
• is ordinarily resident in that constituency or ward, or was born there, or is employed in that area, or runs a business there.

A citizen cannot be allowed to exercise the right to vote if he or she:
• has been proven to be mentally disturbed (unsound mind);
• has been sentenced to death;
• has been convicted before for breaking a law relating to elections, but such disqualification shall be valid only with respect to the election in question.

The need for regular, free and fair elections
Elections are a means for ensuring that there are checks and balances in the democratic system. Regular, free and fair elections:
• help to remind leaders that if they do not perform well, people will remove them;
• allow people to freely choose leaders from time to time;
• allow for change of leaders in a peaceful way;
• ensure that leaders and the government are acceptable to the majority of the people;
• allow for transparency and accountability on the part of the leaders towards the people;
• give people a chance to find out if the powers and resources given to the leaders, were used to help the people or not.

Characteristics of free and fair elections
The following are some of the characteristics of free and fair elections:
• equal access to the media by all contesting parties and candidates;
• sufficient voting materials;
• impartiality of election officials;
• freedom of voters to attend campaign meetings;
• access to meeting venues by all candidates;
• access to electoral information by all stakeholders.

Summary

Elections are one way of building an effective democracy in a country. During a typical free and fair election, all citizens, regardless of political affiliation, economic status, religion, race and area of origin are given an opportunity to choose a candidate to represent them at the Local or National Assemblies or indeed the high office of State President. It is, therefore, important that efforts are made to ensure that all stakeholders participate in an election and also that elections are conducted in a free and fair manner. Free and fair elections ensure political and economic stability of a country.
Module 9

Advocacy for Support and Resource Mobilization

Introduction
Winning an election does not just happen. It takes time, financial resources and strategy to succeed. This is compounded by the fact that a lot of competition is involved in an election campaign for leadership positions in the local and national assemblies. One of the skills that a candidate needs to acquire in order to succeed in the elections is advocacy. Advocacy skills may help the candidate to win over support from people or institutions that matter, and raise funds needed for campaigning. Advocacy is, therefore, a powerful strategy for doing well in an election. The purpose of this module is to equip the woman aspiring to contest for a leadership position in the Local or National Assembly with necessary advocacy skills.

Objectives
By the end of this module, participants should be able to:
- discuss the meaning of the term advocacy;
- describe steps of the advocacy process;
- discuss advocacy skills for resource mobilization.
Activity 1

1. Ask participants to get into groups.
2. Ask them to discuss what they understand by the term advocacy.
3. Let them report their findings in plenary.
4. Consolidate their findings by using the information below.

Definitions of Advocacy

Advocacy is a continuous process of gathering, organizing and formulating information into an argument to be communicated through various interpersonal and media channels. Advocacy is used to:
- raise resources;
- gain acceptance of a political or social leadership;
- ensure commitment for a certain topic, e.g. a development programme.

Other definitions of advocacy include:
- A set of targeted actions directed at decision makers to support a specific policy issue or a cause in order to build support for that cause or issue, influence others to support it, and influence change of legislation that affects it;
- An action aimed at changing policies or positions;
- Speaking up, drawing a community's attention to an important issue, and directing decision makers towards a solution;
- Putting a problem on the agenda, providing a solution to that problem and building support for acting on both the problem and solution;
- The promotion of a cause or the influencing of a policy, funding streams or other politically determined activity.

Advocacy targets the following groups of people:
- Political leaders;
- Decision makers;
- Opinion leaders;

Activity 2

1. In plenary, ask participants to brainstorm activities that are involved in advocacy.
2. Write down their ideas on a flip chart or chalkboard.
3. Consolidate their findings by using the information below.
Advocacy activities include the following:
- Negotiating
- Joint planning /review
- Lobbying

**Activity 3**

1. Divide participants in groups.
2. Let them discuss the outcomes of advocacy.
3. Let them report their findings in plenary.
4. Consolidate their findings using the information below.

Outcomes of advocacy include the following:
- Those in political leadership may show political will over a certain cause or change program;
- Resources are allocated properly in different activities;
- Policies regarding certain causes may be changed;
- Laws may be changed in favor of the cause in question.

**Activity 4**

1. Divide participants in groups.
2. Let them discuss the steps that are involved in the advocacy process.
3. Let them report their findings in plenary.
4. Consolidate their findings using the information below.

**Steps in advocacy process**

**Step 1**: Define the issue that needs to be supported or requires policy action.

**Step 2**: Set advocacy objectives, ie, what is to be achieved by the end of the advocacy campaign. It is what you want to change, by how much and by when.

**Step 3**: Identify the target audience for your advocacy. Target audience can be primary or secondary. Primary audience are decision makers who have the authority to bring about the desired change. These include Parliamentarians, Local officials and Ministry officials. Secondary audience are persons who have access to, and are able to influence the primary audience.

**Step 4**: Build support, ie, build coalitions with other groups, organisations, or individuals who are committed to support your cause or issue.
Advantages of coalitions include the following:
• You can win together what you cannot win alone;
• Provide protection for advocacy effort
• Resources are pooled together
• Enhance credibility and influence of advocacy campaign
• Assist in individual and organisational networking.

**Step 5:** Develop the message, which are statements tailored to different audiences that define the issue, state solutions and describe the actions that need to be taken.

**Step 6:** Select channels of communication. These include:
• Press releases
• Press conferences
• Fact sheets
• Public debates
• Conference for policy makers

**Step 7:** Develop an implementation (action) plan to guide the advocacy process. The plan will outline a set of activities to achieve your advocacy objectives.

**Step 8:** Embark on fund raising to support the advocacy campaign. Advocacy requires travel, equipment, volunteers, which need money to accomplish.

**Step 9:** Implement the set of activities in your implementation plan.

**Step 10:** Monitor to measure progress towards your advocacy objectives and evaluate the program to determine if advocacy objectives have been met.

**Activity 5**

1. Divide participants in groups.
2. Let them discuss skills that may be involved in advocacy (in light of the steps that have been outlined below).
3. Let them present their findings in plenary.
4. Consolidate their findings using the information below.

**Advocacy Skills**
Advocacy skills include the following:
• Systematic planning skills with each step requiring specific skills.
• Articulation of issues in ways that inspire and motivate others to take action.
• Negotiating and consensus building
Module 9: Advocacy for Support and Resource Mobilization

- Looking for opportunities to win modest, but strategic policy gains while creating other opportunities for larger victories.
- Incorporation of creativity and humour into the advocacy events in order to draw public and media attention to the cause.
- Effective presentations during advocacy meetings
- Building relationships knowing that it is not what you know but who you know that matters.
- Persuasive presentation techniques which include establishing a 'point of entry', i.e., is there anything in common that would help you connect? This is then followed by inviting the persons in question to visit your project.
- Effective communication skills in presenting advocacy goals during meetings.

Conclusion
Advocacy is an important aspect of the process of winning elections. Advocacy skills are critical for defining one's target audience, building a network of support with others, raising funds for one's political campaign and being effective in communicating one's agenda to the electorate. For this reason, women aspiring for leadership positions in the local and national assemblies need to exercise the art of advocacy. They will become good at this by practicing it rather than through training. Constant reflection is required and the aspirants need to pose themselves the question of: who is in my supporting network (and why), as well as who else could or even should I win as support (morally, content wise, financially). The advocacy activities need then to be adjusted accordingly to these insights.
Introduction

In module 8 the participants discussed elections as one way of building an effective democracy in a country. They observed that all citizens, regardless of political affiliation, economic status, religion, race and area of origin need to be given an opportunity to choose a candidate to represent them at the local or national assemblies or the high office of State President. However, voters can not make informed decisions about who to choose, unless each candidate persuades them to appreciate his/her strengths. The candidate needs to make his/her political and ethical stand on the policy direction to be pursued by him/her in this process. His/her programme of action should furthermore make reference to contemporary issues of development and democracy (see also Module 12). This is where election campaigning comes into play. This module discusses various forms of campaigning and the necessary skills and knowledge that may enable women to mount successful campaigns, among other issues. This module therefore relates to a situation when the woman aspiring for a leadership position in the Local or National Assembly has found / built support for running an election campaign as candidate.

Objectives

By the end of the module participants should be able to:

- describe an election campaign;
Module 10: Election Campaigning

- explain the various possible forms of an election campaign;
- describe skills of campaigning;
- explain challenges that women candidates face during elections and their possible solutions;
- mount a successful campaign in an election.

Resources needed
- Flip chart stand
- Flip charts
- Flip chart markers
- Masking tape
- Participants’ previous knowledge

Activity 1
1. Ask the participants, in plenary, to brainstorm the term election campaign.
3. Write down their ideas on a flip chart/ chalkboard as they state them.
2. Consolidate their responses using the information below.

An election campaign is a specific type of campaign aimed at attracting voters. Its aim is to advertise the manifesto of a political party, its policies and the character of the candidate who is standing for the party. For independent candidates who do not run for a certain party this means developing their own profile as candidate in terms of policy and developmental issues and character. In Malawi, the Parliamentary and Presidential Elections Act governs the conduct of election campaigns. In section 56(1), the Act guarantees all political parties the right to campaign in an election. In both sections 56 and 66, the Act provides the rules and regulations to guide the exercise of political rights by all registered political parties and candidates. These include the right to campaign and the right to have their campaign materials on the national media, such as radio, television and newspapers.

Forms of campaigning
There are many acceptable ways of mounting an election campaign. These include:
- holding of public rallies;
- putting up adverts on radio, television and in newspapers;
- putting adverts or written speeches in people’s mailboxes;
- doing drama and songs that help to make the party or candidate known;
- moving from door to door to woo voters.
Election campaign skills

Candidates need to acquire necessary knowledge and skills for campaigning in order to mount a successful campaign. Some of the knowledge and skills necessary for campaigning are:

- effective organization of the campaign;
- building of the public image;
- public speaking skills;
- public relations;
- good use of the media - formulation of their own stand on political and pertinent issues for development in order to disseminate that information during the campaign;
- effective resource mobilization;
- familiarity with electoral laws;
- understanding of campaign techniques and practices;
- familiarity with the national budget;
- familiarity with the constituency/ward for which one is seeking a position;
- familiarity with the financial operations of the Local Council or National Assembly.

Above all, it is important for aspiring women candidates to form multi-disciplinary teams that can assist their campaign by identifying and analyzing issues that might capture the attention of the electorate during their campaigns.

Activity 2

1. Divide the participants into small groups.
2. Let them come up with some of the topical issues/problems in their constituencies/wards that would arouse the interest of voters.
3. Ask them to discuss ways of addressing the problems.
4. Let them report their findings in plenary.
5. Consolidate the findings additionally using some of the information from module 10. Prepare beforehand if necessary.

Holding public meetings

Public meetings are one of the effective ways of mounting an election campaign. But meetings are not held haphazardly. Certain guidelines need to be followed to ensure that the public meeting is successful.

The following are some of them:

- choose and book a convenient venue and date for the meeting;
- notify relevant authorities about the meeting, ie, the Police, District Commissioner (DC), Chief Executive, Chiefs, party officials, etc.;
• prepare the programme ahead of time, and it should include speakers at the meeting, the specific topic or issues they will focus on and approximate duration for each speaker;
• arrange for a public address system ahead of time, means of transport, and furniture.
• mobilize the masses for the meeting through posters, village criers, mobile public address system and others;
• confirm all arrangements and invitations in time; and,
• set the platform at the venue of the meeting.

Speech preparation and delivery
An effective and successful speech delivery will depend on a number of factors and more importantly on:
• preparation, and
• manner of delivery.

(a) Speech preparation
When preparing the speech for the rally:
• take into account the agenda of the meeting which are the reasons for the rally.
• ask yourself, what exactly do I want to share with the people? How should I present it? What would they like to know?
• having answered the above questions, arrange the facts in bullet form (notes) rather than writing the whole speech already in sentence or paragraph form. You would be tempted just to read it out. Read speeches are very difficult to deliver in a convincing manner.

(b) The Agenda
The list of issues to be presented should include:
• greetings, introductions and acknowledgements;
• brief introduction of the agenda;
• reasons why you want to stand, e.g. personal qualifications and attributes, legitimate representation, factors that have led you to take up the challenge. It will also be crucial to share with the people why it will be to their advantage to choose you as a woman candidate;
• state the manifesto (what you are going to do if elected). This should include what you will be fighting for in terms of policy direction and/or changes to be achieved;
• facts in the manifesto should be researched issues affecting people in the constituency.
These problems or issues can be obtained through observations, investigations and speeches that are made by others before you stand to speak; and,

- Remember to thank the audience in your closing remarks, for attending your meeting and for their contributions.

**Why women are better representatives or at least as good as men**

**Activity 3**

1. Divide the participants into small groups.
2. Ask them to discuss reasons why women would be better representatives for the electorate at the Local and National Assembly levels.
3. Let them report their findings in plenary.
4. Consolidate the findings using the information below.

The following are reasons why women would be better representatives than men at the Local Council and National Assembly level:

- A woman can better represent the views of a larger group of people at the ward and constituency levels because they tend to interact with people more than men;
- Women tend to expose more injustices than men.
- Women tend to promote unity, and they are good mediators.
- Women tend to be more loyal and value centred than men.
- With the present policy of decentralisation, most of the resources are being forwarded to the Local Council and if the right people are put in charge of these resources, everyone would rest assured that the resources will be properly utilized and benefit the people who deserve the assistance. Women tend to be less inclined to corruption than men.
- Women can also influence Central Government policy decisions in favor of women and children, if given more parliamentary positions.
- Women’s demeanor, which is less violent and more considerate, can help to generate meaningful debates in the National Assembly in the future if following their beliefs, their promised actions and following the mandate that was given to them by the electorate.

**(c) Delivery of the speech**

When delivering a speech it is important to:

- use the language that is acceptable and friendly and not offensive;
- face the audience one is addressing;
- keep eye contact with one’s audience throughout the speech;
- respect the audience;
Module 10: Election Campaigning

- involve the audience using slogans, song, etc.;
- be aware of the needs of the audience in the respective areas and relate to them (see also Module 12 on contemporary development issues);
- be confident and courageous;
- be flexible and at ease;
- be sensitive to the values of the audience in terms of dress, language and other cultural norms;
- be audible or loud enough to be heard by all.

Activity 4: Mock campaigning

1. Divide the participants into two groups.
2. Let each group choose an imaginary name for itself as a political party.
3. Let them choose a “candidate” for Local Council elections in the ward called papaya.
4. Let each group assist the candidate to prepare for an election campaign using the information above which was covered earlier.
5. In plenary give each candidate five minutes to “sell” herself to the electorate who in this case is the whole plenary.
6. Ask the participants to take notes on strengths and weaknesses of each candidate.
7. After each candidate has sold herself, ask the plenary to discuss each candidate noting down strengths and areas for improvement.
8. Consolidate the mock campaign by pointing out key aspects of campaigning.

Note: It is important to create a constructive and positive learning environment for this exercise. Important deficiencies need to be pointed out but it should be done in a constructive way. Brief the participants about feedback rules, for example don’t be personal, start with something positive, be constructive etc.
Community mobilization

Activity 5

1. Ask the participants to brainstorm attributes that may promote community support for a candidate during a campaign in plenary.

2. Consolidate the responses by using some of the information below.

Mobilizing the community is quite a challenging task for candidates as it has a direct bearing on voting. To ensure community support, candidates must make sure that their messages appeal to the electorate. Their intention to contest should be publicly declared. In their speeches, they must emphasize good ideas and principles, particularly those that involve direct community action and participation. To do that, the candidate must be conversant with the issues in the ward, constituency or the nation. They should also be willing to accommodate other people’s views and ideas.

The following attributes may boost community support for the candidate:

- good personality, i.e., friendliness and respect;
- regular contact with the electorate;
- participation in community development activities;
- sound programme of action that covers pertinent development issues (political and social) in the community for the electorate. This programme of action needs to be viable for implementation and not just promising what people want to hear;
- the candidate’s good relationship with all stakeholders.

Summary

The campaign period is the most important phase of the electoral process. This is the period in which candidates compete for the favour of the same voters. Candidates use this time to sell their development ideas to their prospective voters. Voters on their part get information in this process that helps them to choose between the candidates. It is, therefore, important for one to have a good campaign strategy that arouses the interest of voters. Therefore, the campaign strategy should at least identify the needs of the ward or the constituency and articulate strategies on how the candidate would address these needs if elected into office. Women candidates, however, need to do more during the campaign to overcome gender biases prevailing in Malawi society. They need to articulate clearly and concisely why they would be better leaders than their (male) counterparts, additionally they need to be clear on the issues they would fight for either at local or national level.
Module 11
Conflict Management

Introduction
It is normal for different people to have different opinions about different issues, such as values, beliefs and practices. And not all people have to always agree to opposing views. In general, different views can enrich discussions at national and local level in politics and generally enrich a society. However, this is dependent on how different and opposing views are being handled. This applies to the individual level as well as to the political sphere or the interaction of Civil Society with Government. Differences sometimes get out of hand and can lead to conflicts which threaten peace and tranquillity between individuals, groups, communities or within a nation. Electoral conflicts, in particular, may have far reaching consequences socially, economically and politically if not properly managed. This module discusses different kinds of electoral conflicts and ways of managing them peacefully so that women who aspire for positions of leadership at the Local Council and National Assembly, are equipped with appropriate knowledge and skills on how to manage conflicts.

Objectives
By the end of this session, participants will be able to:
• define the term conflict;
• identify different kinds of electoral conflicts;
• identify ways of managing electoral conflicts; and,
• assess the possible relationship between electoral systems and political stability.

Conflicts

Activity 1
1. Ask the participants to brainstorm the term conflicts, in plenary.
2. Write the responses on the flipchart or chalkboard as they give their responses.
3. Consolidate the responses using the information below.

Conflict
Conflict is a state of disorder based on the actual or perceived opposition of needs, values and interests. The term conflict includes disagreement, conflicts of interest and fights.

In political terms conflict refers to revolution, struggles, even wars, which are escalated conflicts, using force.

Competitive situations like election times, naturally arise conflicts since either party is trying to reach its goal.

However, often the term conflict is misused exchangeably with violence. This is not the fact. Conflicts can create win-win situations for the parties involved if handled appropriately trying to find solutions that both conflicting sides can agree with and adhere to in the future.

Activity 2
1. Divide the participants into small groups.
2. Let them define the term electoral conflicts.
3. Let them present their responses in plenary.
4. Consolidate their responses.

Electoral conflicts
Electoral conflicts are a form of conflict that occurs during the electoral process. They may occur between two political parties or candidates in a ward or constituency. Electoral conflicts are a major threat to democracy and the political stability in any country. Electoral courts have dealt with electoral conflicts since historical times. However, courts can be time-consuming and expensive for some candidates without a strong financial support base. Therefore, other faster and cheaper ways of managing conflicts need to be applied. These include mediation, arbitration and conciliation. Women aspiring for Local Council and National Assembly positions need to understand these alternatives in case they get involved in an electoral conflict and they do not have a strong financial base to engage the courts.
Sources of conflict

Activity 3

1. Ask the participants to form small groups.
2. Let them discuss the following questions:
   (a) List down examples of electoral conflicts you know.
   (b) Explain the major causes of electoral conflicts.
   (c) How were these electoral conflicts managed?
   (d) Which institutions played a vital role in managing these conflicts?
3. Let the groups present their responses in plenary.
4. Consolidate their responses using the information below.

The entire electoral process has a potential to cause conflict both at the intra and inter-party levels. Electoral conflicts are mainly defined at two levels: national and local.

At the national level, electoral conflicts emerge from the following areas:

(a) Voter Registration

The responsibility for compiling a national voters’ role and undertaking voter registration rests with the Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC). Often conflicts associated with the voter registration process include:
- registration of the under-aged;
- lack of registration materials;
- double registration;
- barring of eligible voters from registering;
- missing of registration materials in centres;
- a departure from the prescribed registration procedures.

(b) Preliminary candidate selection (Primary elections)

The following are some of the issues that cause intra-party conflicts at the primaries:
- undemocratic selection of candidates, ie, party leadership imposing candidates in certain constituencies or wards;
- a general absence of mechanisms to encourage diversity and equal representation especially for women;
- a general absence of primary elections in a party.

These problems make some candidates break away from their mother parties and opt to stand as independent candidates. Intra-party selection procedures should not undermine democratic values or impede the representation of women and other disadvantaged groups.
(c) The campaign process

The campaign phase of any election is often the center of conflict. Conflicts occur when the competing parties and candidates:

- ignore the code of conduct as stipulated by the MEC;
- resort to unlawful practices such as designating “no-go” zones,
- practise character assassination;
- buy and confiscate voter certificates;
- disrupt other candidates’ meetings;
- cause violence.

At the constituency or ward level, electoral conflicts are caused by lack of understanding of one another, intolerance, as well as hatred among supporters and candidates. Other causes include favoritism by the electoral staff, traditional leaders, civil servants and civil society organizations. Some conflicts occur due to lack of understanding of electoral laws by candidates and/or the general public.

(d) Access to media

While it is generally observed that most SADC countries have constitutions that guarantee freedom of the press, it is common practice in Malawi to see the ruling party dominating the public media. Unbalanced media coverage for contesting parties and candidates by the public media such as MBC and TVM has been a major source of conflict in the previous elections, this way contradicting the stipulations of the Communications Act of 1998.

(e) Use of public resources

The fact that most political parties have no equal access to public resources is another major cause of inter-party disputes. Public resources tend to be exclusively used by the ruling party for campaign purposes and are not equally distributed to all parties.

(f) The polling process, counting of votes and the determination of results

The process of polling, counting and announcing results of an election can be the most controversial of all stages of an electoral process. If the above are not done in a transparent manner, stakeholders lose faith in the process and tensions rise. This often results in violence and lawsuits.

Managing the electoral conflicts

Activity 4

1. Divide the participants in to groups.
2. Ask them to discuss different electoral conflicts observed in the past elections in Malawi and ways in which they were managed.
3. Let them present their findings in plenary.
4. Consolidate their findings using the information below.

**Ways of managing electoral conflicts**

The general methods of managing electoral conflicts at the constituency or ward levels are as follows:

(a) **Informal discussion**

This is where the parties involved in a conflict discuss issues and concerns informally. This could in itself resolve the disputes, or could lead to an agreement on what other methods to use in dealing with the conflict.

(b) **Negotiation**

Two or more parties discuss issues and concerns in a more structured environment. The parties agree to solve their problem by talking about their concerns face-to-face, and working together to find a solution that is mutually acceptable.

(c) **Mediation**

Unlike negotiation and informal discussion, mediation involves a third party (not involved in a dispute). The mediator should be acceptable to both parties. He/she assists the two parties to talk to each other about their conflict and helps them to decide what steps they will take in the future regarding the conflict.

(d) **Multi-party Liaison Committee**

The establishment of Multi-party Liaison Committees at district level has reduced tensions, which would have escalated into violence, among candidates and political parties.

(e) **Adjudication**

This is whereby the complainant seeks remedy from the court. The parties are represented by lawyers, and a third party (i.e. judge), who takes a decision within the structure of the court/legal system.

**Note:** For a more comprehensive understanding of key conflict management approaches, the trainer is advised to refer to the Malawi Electoral Commission participants guide on “Democracy, Elections and Conflict (EISA 2002)”. The guide summarizes the most common ways of managing conflicts and resolving dispute peacefully.

**Summary**

The run up to elections and election campaigns as such are hard-fought periods because everybody wants to position him/herself as the best candidate. It can though also be an interesting time that shows the diversity in a country.
However, competing for power is not easy, and conflicts can easily arise in these times, since not everybody always sticks to the rules and fair treatment of opponents. Electoral conflicts when they arise are the major source of disunity among the electoral players at both the grass root and national levels. If electoral conflicts are not contained and prevented before they escalate into full-scale violence, they can spoil the whole electoral process. The consequences of electoral conflicts are many fold: Some of them can even include loss of property, loss of life, and disqualification of the candidates. Sometimes electoral conflicts can prolong the electoral process or bring the country into a civil war with a long devastating impact.

It is, therefore, necessary that all candidates refrain from acts that could result in violence. It is the duty and responsibility of all electoral stakeholders to ensure that electoral conflicts are skillfully managed.

Note: It can be helpful for the facilitator to consult first and then to point out to the participants the existing publication "Building Capacity for Multiparty Liaison Committees. Operational Guidelines and Conflict Management Skills Handbook" published by the MEC in 2006.
Module 12
Contemporary Development Issues

Introduction

Elections are either won or lost based on how well or how poorly a candidate addresses issues that concern the electorate in contemporary society. Contemporary issues in Malawi today include HIV and AIDS, access to basic services (education, basic health care, sanitation etc.), corruption, gender-based violence, food security, and violation and abuse of human rights. It has been noted that quite often aspirants for Local Council and National Assembly or state leadership positions in Malawi tend to dwell on issues that do not really matter to the electorate. Many political candidates discuss issues that border on character assassination of their contenders instead of focusing on issues that matter to the electorate. This often happens due to a lack of understanding of the real social and economic issues that concern the electorate, and how to address them. This module addresses some of these key issues so that women who aspire for Local Council and National Assembly or state leadership positions are equipped with knowledge and skills on how to identify key contemporary issues and find ways of dealing with them.

Objectives

By the end of this module participants should be able to:
- identify different issues that exist in contemporary Malawi;
- explain causes and effects of the contemporary issues in society;
• discuss ways on how to deal with the issues;
• discuss how women aspiring for elected positions at the Local Council and National Assembly and state leadership levels may capitalize on these issues to mount a successful campaign.

**Activity 1**

1. Let the participants brainstorm the different issues that exist in contemporary society in Malawi in plenary.
2. Draw a 6 column table on a flip chart or chalkboard and let them classify the issues into the following categories, i.e., health, social, political, and economic, as shown below.
3. Consolidate their responses by using the information below.

**Contemporary issues in modern Malawi**

The following are some of the issues existing in contemporary society in Malawi. Some of them fit into more than one category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. HIV and AIDS</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Access to basic services</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Corruption</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Gender-based violence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Food insecurity</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Violation and abuse of human rights</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **HIV and AIDS pandemic**

**Activity 1**

1. Ask the participants to get into pairs.
2. Let them discuss the following questions:
   (a) When did you first hear about HIV and AIDS?
   (b) How did you feel?
   (c) What was your reaction?
   (d) How is HIV and AIDS affecting your personal life, work life or your community?
3. Ask each pair or a few pairs to share their experiences with the rest of the group in plenary.

4. Consolidate the activity by asking participants to draw out lessons from the issues raised.

**Activity 2**

1. Divide the participants into groups.
2. Ask them to discuss the impact of HIV and AIDS on Malawian society and strategies to deal with the impact.
3. Let them report their findings in plenary.
4. Consolidate their findings using information below.

**Impact of HIV and AIDS in Malawi**

The first AIDS case was reported in Malawi in 1985, about 23 years ago. However, the spread of the disease in the country since that time has been very alarming. The following are examples of the impact of AIDS in Malawi:

- Approximately 8% of transmission is believed to occur from mother to child, with annual HIV positive births totaling more than 20,000 or about 4.2% of the total births. With adequate information transmitted on mother to child transmissions this could easily be prevented.
• All types of socio-economic groups have felt the impact of HIV and AIDS in Malawi in all sectors of the economy. Social and psychological problems arise due to death of someone in a family or at the workplace. For the family, it has to learn with difficulty, how to live without someone they loved.

• Many children become orphans every year. Most of these lack adequate family support and social security.

• Economic problems arise at the family level most particularly if it is the breadwinner who dies.

To those that remain within the family, they have to seek alternative means of earning a living.

• AIDS affects the most active age group of the population (15 - 49 years). To date, an estimated 5.8% of the Malawian farm labour force has died due to AIDS, and a substantially higher number are challenged and impeded in their everyday lives to work on their farms on account of HIV and AIDS related complications.

• In the employment sector, and this applies to Government as well, the high infection rates, and the resultant cases of illnesses and sickness, cause increased absenteeism from work, and thus affect productivity in society, and the generation of national wealth. In the Government sector this leads to serious knowledge gaps and unfilled positions that result in policies not being implemented because of lack of capacity.

• Sickness and illness due to AIDS increase medical bills, funeral costs (in case of deaths), and payment of premature death benefits on the part of employers thereby affecting their production.

• Frequent and prolonged sickness of the AIDS victim and related extended hospitalisation or home based care, attendance of frequent funerals in the village and neighbouring villages are thought to contribute to household labour constraints. In nearly all communities in Malawi, it is a social obligation for people to attend funerals of relatives and neighbours (within the village and in neighbouring villages). In other words caring for the HIV and AIDS patients diverts labour from productive activities to care provision, thereby affecting the production of goods and services, increasing food insecurity, and threatens the survival of communities.
• In many cases those living with HIV and AIDS may be discriminated against and may not have equal access to resources.

Strategies to mitigate the impact of HIV and AIDS

One of the key strategies for mitigating the impact of HIV and AIDS in contemporary society is to mainstream HIV and AIDS programs in all local governance programs.

Activity 3

1. Ask the participants to get into groups.
2. Let them discuss the following questions:
   
   (a) What is HIV and AIDS mainstreaming?
   
   (b) What has been the social and economic impact of HIV and AIDS on development and local governance in your Local Council and community (in terms of education, health, food security, community participation, revenue generation, human resources, etc.?)
   
   (c) Why should HIV and AIDS programmes be included in development and local governance processes?
   
   (d) In what ways will HIV/AIDS mainstreaming help reduce the impact of the pandemic on development in your Local Council and community?
   
   (e) What are the challenges/hindering factors to the process of including HIV/AIDS issues on development and local governance processes in your Local Council and community?
   
   (f) What should be done to mainstream HIV and AIDS on development and local government processes in your local Council and community in general?

3. Let them report their findings in plenary.
4. Consolidate their findings using the information below.

Mainstreaming HIV and AIDS Programmes

Considering the socio-economic impact that HIV and AIDS has on the Malawi economy, Government made an initiative to design a strategy called Comprehensive National Strategic Framework to form a basis for formulating policies, operational programmes, projects and activities. The idea behind this is to reduce the incidence of HIV and AIDS, improve the quality of life of those infected, and to mitigate its economic and social impacts.

The Government effort needs to be complemented by all sectors of society by mainstreaming HIV and AIDS programmes/activities in local governance programmes.
HIV and AIDS mainstreaming means embedding HIV and AIDS responses in development and governance programmes, rather than making it a special programme. HIV and AIDS mainstreaming:

- seeks to address the impact of HIV and AIDS on people as they participate in development and local governance processes that lead to the attainment of capacity for self-determination
- ensures that HIV and AIDS impacts are addressed in the design, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development programmes for the benefit of all who are affected by the epidemic.

Recognizing that HIV and AIDS is a poverty related issue, development programmes have to be planned and implemented in such a way that they are sensitive to its social and economic impacts.

Local Councils, therefore, have a responsibility of making their policies HIV and AIDS responsive and that HIV and AIDS is incorporated in all development programmes with well developed HIV and AIDS objectives and indicators that are properly monitored for progress.

**The roles of members of the Local Council**

To ensure that HIV and AIDS activities are effectively incorporated in the development plans, members of the Local Council should ensure that:

- Council are assuming a key facilitative and coordinating role in HIV and AIDS programming and implementation at district level;
- funds for HIV and AIDS activities are allocated in the Council budget;
- indicators at village, ward and assembly level on HIV and AIDS have been developed to facilitate planning and monitoring of the initiatives;
- there is constant collection and analysis of issues to establish HIV and AIDS impact in development and governance processes at individual and community level;
- there is a strong link between national and district level stakeholders involved with HIV and AIDS programming and implementation for technical and financial support;
- all projects developed for implementation in the district contain an HIV and AIDS strategy;
- there is an HIV and AIDS workplace policy in place for Council staff;
- development plans should always contain elements of HIV and AIDS analysis, indicating how activities are affected or going to be affected by HIV and AIDS issues.
2. **Corruption**

Corruption is one of the vices that is undermining the virtues that underlie democracy in contemporary Malawi society. It is also an illegal act that has severe consequences if prosecuted. Corruption involves the giving of money or other undeserved rewards (bribes) to a person or group of persons in order to influence their decision to offer goods or services illegally. It may also involve the misuse of power by illegal tendering and service delivery processes, that benefit only those in power. In corruption, both the giver and the receiver of the bribe are considered corrupt. In addition, an attempt to give or ask for a bribe is considered corruption even if the bribe was not given or received.

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**Mr Chikhwaya and his money**

2009 is the year for the fourth parliamentary and presidential general elections in a Multiparty democracy in Malawi. Men and women are aspiring to become members of parliament. Others are even aspiring to become the next president. Mr Chikhwaya is one of the aspirants for the position of Member of Parliament. He is trying his best to influence the electorate to vote for him using money. He goes around with a bag of money which he dishes out to the prospective voters. It is not clear where he gets his money from. Unfortunately, the people seem to be interested more in his money than in the nature of his character.

**Activity 4**

1. Divide the participants into groups.
2. Let them read the case study below, individually, and answer the questions that follow.
3. Let them discuss their answers and come up with group responses.
4. Let them present their group work in plenary.
5. Consolidate the activity using information below.

**Questions**

1. Why do you think Mr Chikhwaya is using money to influence the electorate to vote for him?
2. Would you say use of money to influence voters is corruption? Give reasons.
3. Why is corruption a vice or an evil in a democracy?

**The evils of corruption**

People engage in corruption because they do not have the necessary qualifications or attributes to get goods or services through proper channels. Some politicians, for example, resort to attracting voters using money because they lack confidence in themselves to win the election fairly. Out of desperation they tend to buy voters.
Sometimes they may think it is the easier and more effective way of acquiring a broad support base.

What is evil about this practice in a democracy, is that it gives those people with money an unfair advantage over those who do not have it. It is therefore a power issue and an issue of unequal access. In addition, it puts people in leadership positions who are not fit to be leaders or people in leadership positions they are not qualified for.

The end result is that such people tend to be ineffective when they assume their leadership roles since their position is neither the result of a programme the candidate stands for and will pursue nor one the electorate chose in the elections. Other effects of corruption are:

- wastage of resources in Government and NGO offices;
- inefficient provision of goods and services by Government and NGOs;
- discouragement of international and domestic investment in the country;
- increased expenditure and loss of public revenue;
- decay of ethical values and public morality.

**Activity 5**

1. Divide the participants into groups.
2. Let them discuss ways in which corruption can be dealt with.
3. Let them present their findings in plenary.
4. Consolidate the activity by using the information below.

**Ways of dealing with corruption**

The following are some of the ways in which corruption can be overcome:

Civic education of all citizens on:

- what constitutes corruption;
- the evils of corruption in a democracy; and,
- the importance of reporting corrupt practices to institutions such as Anti Corruption Bureau, etc.

- Improving on accountability and transparency in Government and NGO offices in terms of procedures and practice.

3. **Gender-based violence**

Gender-based violence refers generally to all acts of violence and abuse meted out on women, men and children by people of the opposite sex. It can be physical, emotional, sexual and economic violence.
Activity 6

1. Ask the participants, in plenary, to describe each one of the following forms of gender-based violence:
   
   (a) Physical violence
   
   (b) Emotional violence
   
   (c) Sexual violence
   
   (d) Economic violence

2. Consolidate their responses using information below.

Forms of gender-based violence

Physical violence includes pushing, beating and cutting another person’s body parts.

Emotional violence includes degrading or humiliating the person of the opposite sex. It may be verbal or action-based.

Examples include criticizing, insulting, or ridiculing someone in public or private.

Sexual violence includes acts that humiliate, degrade or violate the sexual dignity of the person of the opposite sex. Examples include, indecent assault, ie, touching another person’s private parts without his/her consent, defilement, incest and rape.

Economic violence includes denying a member of the opposite sex, ie, spouse, access to economic resources or making a spouse too dependent on the other, deliberately, in order to control him or her. All the different forms of violence are based in unequal power relations and are linked to one individual wanting to exceed his/her power over the other sex. Most of the afore mentioned forms of violence happen at home, that is why often it is referred to domestic violence. In general, more women and girls are victims of gender-based violence than men.

Activity 7

1. Ask the participants to get in groups.

2. Ask them to discuss ways of overcoming gender-based violence.

3. Let them present their answers in plenary.

4. Consolidate their findings using information below.

Ways of overcoming gender based-violence

The following are some of the ways to overcome gender-based violence in contemporary society:

- Civic education by Government and Civil Society Organizations on the importance of observing and protecting other people’s right to life, peace, dignity, etc.;
• Reporting all acts of violence to the Victim Support Unit of the Police Service;
• Seeking arbitration and mediation in cases of disagreements rather than taking the law in one’s own hands.

Note: Cases of gender based violence, especially cases of domestic violence, are not once off occurrences. In most instances these cases tend to increase in occurrence and level of violence, and have led to deaths. People watching and not acting on such cases, by referring them to the relevant, might contribute to the severeness of such cases.

4. Food security

Food security is one of the basic human rights of an individual. Yet many Malawians tend to experience food shortages at the household level annually. They do not have enough food to last them the whole year, which makes them food insecure. Food insecurity is a threat to one’s right to life because these shortages create all kinds of problems including malnutrition, frequent sicknesses, and in some cases death. Causes of such food shortages are many, including drought, and lack of farm inputs.

Activity 8

1. Divide the participants in groups.
2. Ask them to:
   (a) list causes of food insecurity;
   (b) discuss effects of food insecurity; and,
   (c) discuss ways of overcoming causes of food insecurity.
3. Let them report their findings in plenary.
4. Consolidate their findings by using the information below.

**Effects of food insecurity**

Food insecurity may also have other devastating effects on people. During times of severe food shortages, for example, the media has been full of stories of citizens eating poisonous plants and other herbs. In many cases, these cases have resulted in death.

Food insecurity has also led to other human rights violations such as mob justice where people caught stealing food or other items have often been beaten; and, some "thieves" have died without being tried in a court of law. A responsible democratic Government makes sure that people have food security by ensuring that:

- there is equitable distribution of land to all citizens for growing of crops;
- all farmers access farm inputs at good prices;
- farmers are taught good crop husbandry methods to ensure that they realize maximum yield farmers have knowledge about irrigation schemes to ensure better harvests;
- farmers are taught proper ways of storing their yield so that they have sufficient food throughout the year;
- citizens are encouraged to work hard in their fields.

5. **Violation and abuse of human rights**

Examples of human rights violations and abuse include, amongst others, torture of prisoners, mob justice, religious intolerance, unjust dismissal of employees, unlawful confiscation of property, violence against women and rape.

**Activity 9**

1. Divide the participants into groups.

2. Ask them to discuss:

   (a) instances that happened to them or other people which they consider to be violation and abuse of human rights.

   (b) importance of observing or protecting human rights.

   (c) organizations that protect human rights in Malawi.

3. Let them report their findings in plenary.

4. Consolidate the activity using some of the information below.

**Importance of observing and protecting human rights**

Human rights need to be observed and protected by all people so that human dignity and equality of people are guaranteed. Protection of human rights are guaranteed by the Malawian constitution within the fundamental principals (chapter 3). Human rights observation and protection is also important for justice, fairness, peace, and the consolidation of democracy.
Apart from individual responsibility to observe and protect human rights, there are Organizations which were established to protect human rights in Malawi. These include, the Human Rights Commission, the Office of the Ombudsman, the Centre for Advice, Research and Education on Rights (CARER), Centre for Human Rights and Rehabilitation (CHRR), the Civil Liberties Committee and the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP).

Roles of the Human Rights Commission
The Human Rights Commission was created under Chapter XI of the Malawi Constitution. Its roles include:

- educating the public on, and increasing awareness of, respect for human rights;
- considering, investigating, deliberating on, and making recommendations regarding any human rights violations;
- promoting the human rights of vulnerable groups such as women, children, the illiterate, people with disabilities, the elderly and prisoners.

Summary
The contemporary Malawi society experiences many emerging issues, some of which have their beginning in people’s misunderstanding of democratic principles. The increase in corruption, gender-based violence, and violation and abuse of human rights are examples of this problem. Other contemporary problems are the HIV and AIDS pandemic and food insecurity. Women aspiring for leadership positions in the local and national assemblies need to understand these issues clearly, in terms of their causes, effects and ways to overcome them. Such knowledge will enable them to mount a successful election campaign that addresses issues that really matter to the electorate rather than focus on trivialities such as character assassination of political opponents.
Glossary

Ward: a small area which forms part of a local government area.

Councillor: an elected individual who represents his/her ward in the Local Council.

Constitution: a set of laws that determine how a country should be governed. It is the supreme law of the land, by which citizens give the state the powers and authority to govern.

An independent candidate: is a person who chooses to contest for a political position in the Local Council/ National Assembly on his/her own, without joining or attaching himself/herself to any political party.

Multiparty system: system that allows more political parties gain control of Government either separately or in a coalition.

Referendum: a direct vote of the electorate on a question of importance. Who calls a referendum and on what is usually determined by the constitution.

Government: The organization that is the governing authority of a political unit. It includes the authority to govern and is in the case of separation of powers (executive, judicative, legislative) classified accordingly. Democracy, dictatorship etc refer to a type of government.

State: A political association with effective sovereignty over a certain geographical area. These can be sub-national states or multinational stated etc. A state usually includes a set of institution that determine a set of rules to govern.
Evaluation Form

1. How do you think the workshop was organized in terms of (tick):
   - Venue ( ) Not good ( ) Fair ( ) Good
   - Meals ( ) Not good ( ) Fair ( ) Good
   - Accommodation ( ) Not good ( ) Fair ( ) Good

2. The objectives of the workshop were (circle one number):
   - (1) Irrelevant (2) Somewhat relevant (3) Relevant

3. The training accomplished its objective (circle one number).
   - (1) Not at all (2) Somewhat (3) Entirely
   Explain ..........................................................................................................................................
   ........................................................................................................................................................
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4. Indicate whether the modules were effective in terms of content and presentation (Rate each module).

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5. Which topic did you like most? ............................................................
   Explain why .................................................................................................

6. Activities done during the workshop were (circle one number):
7. Facilitation of the training was generally (circle one number):
   (1) Poor  (2) Fair  (3) Good

8. The visual aids and handouts were (circle one number):
   (1) Irrelevant  (2) Somewhat relevant  (3) Relevant

9. The time allocated to the workshop was (circle one number):
   (1) too short  (2) too long  (3) just right

10. The best thing about this training was:
    ...........................................................................................................
    ...........................................................................................................
    ...........................................................................................................

11. Any suggestions for improvement?
    ...........................................................................................................
    ...........................................................................................................
References


Towards effective political participation in decision making for women councillors in decentralized local governments and the role of NGOs in Uganda (January, 2002).


Woman’s empowerment in Malawi: a collection of speeches and papers from a conference on raising the status of woman.
Annexe

USEFUL TOOLS

Coalition Building

Many countries have a myriad of like-minded parties or movements that have emerged around personalities and that persists in attempting to establish their own identities. The concept of forming coalitions among like-minded groups or individuals to support a candidate is not widely practiced in most developing democracies. Political party leaders and activists don’t usually think in terms of dividing society into various interest groups or coalescing around a particular issue. As a result, many prodemocratic parties and candidates have not tapped into the potential strength of various voting blocs in elections.

Experts have approached coalition building in several ways. The first is to incorporate the concept and basic techniques of coalition building into initial party building and campaign seminars. The second is to actually work with the pro-democratic parties in a country to build a coalition in preparation for an upcoming election. Third, is to assist democratic political parties to coalesce in order to survive government repression.

Basic Coalition Seminars. These seminars cover the concept of coalition building and include: What is coalition building and what is the reason political parties build coalitions? What are the evolving roles of local government and political parties in a country and how do authorities and political parties respond to the needs of the country? How are coalitions formed and what are the ways in which coalitions act as agents for change? Specific to political parties, the trainer should focus on helping political parties understand that multiple candidates can lead to defeat and offer examples of alternatives. For example, in IRI’s Coalition Building seminars in Ukraine, the program was designed to bring local officials and political party activists together to promote a better understanding of each other’s role in the community and to foster a working relationship.

In addition to an initial discussion of coalition building, other topics include:

- **Conflict Management.** This session lays the groundwork for building successful coalitions and reaching common goals through compromise.

The trainer should discuss how majorities are reached by defining problematic issues in terms that minimize conflict and illustrate how the language of shared values can overcome opposition. The trainer should use examples in which conflicts may arise during negotiations, how conflicts affect the outcome, and how both sides can come to agreement.

- **Decision-making.** In the countries in which IRI works, political decision-making was previously done through authoritarian decrees. The need for building decision-making skills is crucial for political leaders in developing democracies. In this session, the trainer should outline steps to good decision-making, including creating a conducive atmosphere in which team-building can flourish, using the right tools, and thinking through consequences before setting policies and implementing them. The trainer should stress the need for using a constructive, inclusive decision-making process, rather than old methods of sticking to one set of ideas and stubbornly ruling out any new ones.

- **Identifying Community/Regional Problems and Issues.**

  The trainer addresses how parties identify local issues and how parties, local authorities and community groups work together to address problems. Particular attention is paid to the role the political party can play in this process. The trainer provides anecdotal information about issues that pertain to the particular country, such as housing, health care, education, environmental issues, etc. Also discussed is what processes are used to get issues to the forefront of public attention.

- **Creating Partnerships.** Building on the previous session on issue identification, the trainer discusses the methods of building relationships among local governments, community organizations. The trainer stresses to participants that an element of trust is necessary among the various groups and that transparency is a goal of participating organizations and governing bodies.
The trainer should offer suggestions of how local partnerships can be initiated, organized and maintained and how partnership objectives are set and realized.

- **Communicating.** Improving communications among political parties and with local authorities and community groups is essential to coalition building. The trainer offers suggestions for encouraging various groups in a coalition to cooperate with each other and to be open in discussions and actions to accomplish the coalition’s goals.

- **Coalition Projects.** In this session, the trainer offers examples of simple projects that will serve to build coalitions in the community. The trainer provides comparative and applicable information about how parties in the West work to provide community groups or local authorities, such as the adopt-a-highway program in the U.S

**Sample Exercises:**

**Political Negotiation Exercise** - In this exercise, participants are divided into groups and prioritize a given series of issues in the community and reach consensus on the order of addressing these priorities.

Following, the trainer discusses the process of reaching decisions, addressing the difficulties and the ways the groups overcame conflict.

**Issue Identification and Outreach Planning** – Participants divided into four groups, each of which is told to identify a current community issue, form partnerships to address the issue and formulate an outreach plan. Each group presents its plan, with full participant discussion.

**Roundtable Discussion** – Under the guidance of the trainer, participants discuss local issues and place them in the framework of coalition building.

**Working with Political Parties to Form a Coalition.**

Learning to build coalitions does not happen overnight. Though pro-democratic parties may seem to understand the concept of coalition-building, many personality-driven political parties tend to work against each other rather than together.

*Source: International Republican Institute 1999 Political Party Building Programs. Washington: IRI*