



Tanzania Office

Promoting Gender Inclusive Intraparty Candidate Nominations in Tanzania

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Introduction

Political parties have become central organs of representative democracy. They identify, recruit and nominate candidates for political and leadership positions. Candidate nomination also points to the degree of institutionalization of internal party democracy. In performing their function of candidate nomination, political parties in Africa generally and Tanzania in particular underrepresent women. For instance, out of 11,933 candidates who contested for the 2015 presidential, parliamentary and council elections in Tanzania, only 904 (7.5 percent) were women.¹ Indeed, the percentage of women decreases as they move up the ladder of political leadership. While women constituted 53 percent of all registered voters in 2015, they only constituted 7.5 percent of all nominated candidates and 5.4 percent of all elected candidates.²

Recognising the centrality of political parties to the representation of women, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) Tanzania commissioned a study to undertake a gender analysis of intraparty candidate nomination procedures. The study analysed nomination procedures of Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM); Chama cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo (CHADEMA); Alliance for Change and Transparency (ACTWazalendo) and Civic United Front (CUF). Through content analysis of party and national laws as well as stakeholder interviews³, the study noted fundamental weaknesses in both party and national laws and procedures in ensuring gender responsive candidate nominations. Specifically, the study revealed a number of problem areas that limit the nomination of women candidates:

¹National Electoral Commission (NEC). 2016. Report of the National Electoral Commission on the 2015 Presidential, Parliamentary and Councilors' Elections. Dar es Salaam: Government Printer. pp. 4345.

²Ibid pp. 7275.

³Party leaders, officials and candidates; Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs); Tanzania Centre for Democracy (TCD), and civic groups.


POLICY BRIEF

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- Shortcomings in the national legal and institutional framework in compelling parties to be gender responsive in their internal processes;
 - Institutional weaknesses in the Office of the Registrar of Political Parties (ORPP) in ensuring gender responsive internal party processes;
 - Absence of specific and adequate strategies in the political parties to internalize and in practice the principles of human dignity, equality, justice, democracy, and transparency that are enshrined in their main documents;
 - Opaque and centralized nomination processes disfavoring women as an organizing principle and common practice in all the four studied parties;
 - An entrenched patriarchal belief system, unfriendly political environment, low levels of education, limited leadership experience, and lack of financial capacity are major setbacks to women visibility and representation in positions of power.

Recommendations

Gender equality and women participation in leadership and decision-making remains a global challenge. Although there is no a universal blue print that exists to deal with the challenge of women underrepresentation, internal party procedures and practices are central in advancing gender equality in politics and decision making. Indeed, strategies for achieving meaningful gender equality would require specific measures to be devised and implemented at both state and intra party levels. Below are strategies that political parties, the state and other relevant stakeholders may consider in the process of achieving gender equality in political processes. These strategies are by no means exhaustive and may not be a panacea to all obstacles highlighted above. Thus, political context, distribution of power and interest within a system and other considerations will ultimately dictate their effectiveness or ineffectiveness.

The government may adopt legislated candidate quotas (LCQ). Issued through a gender quota law, this would mandate parties to ensure at least 30 percent in the final party list of nominated candidates for both legislative and local council direct seats to be of either sex or else face sanctions. The sanctions could be designed in form of penalties and financial incentives such as a cut by a certain percent of state subsidies to parties that do not comply with the law, as well as granting

Review and reform national laws governing political parties and elections to specifically compel parties to be gender responsive and to encourage the election of women during national elections.

additional funding for parties that exceed the quota by including more women. These legal requirements and their related sanctions and incentives worked in Burkina Faso where a mandatory candidate quota law was adopted in 2009 and came into force in 2012. Section 5 and 6 of the law on gender quotas states “party lists of candidates must include at least 30 percent of either sex or else face sanctions”.⁴ Of the 7,036 primary candidates in the November 29th 2015 Burkina Faso legislative elections, 2,040 (29 percent) were women”.⁵ The representation of women increased from 17 out of 111 in 2007 to 24 women out of 127 in 2012; a shift in percentage from 15.30 percent to 18.89 percent.⁶ The marginal gain is associated with the weaknesses of the Burkina Faso quota law which is not anchored to the outcome of elections, but rather a neutral quota of at least 30% of either sex, on non-alternating electoral lists. In other words, the law does not impose a gender-based order of candidates upon parties. Thus, party lists could be created so that either sex is listed at the end of the list and thus may not end up being elected.⁷ An alternating candidate list is therefore ideal for gender representation purposes to make LQC more effective.

Review and reform electoral system.

Practice shows that women are more likely to be elected through Proportional Representation (PR) or a mixture of PR and plurality/majority systems. The mandatory quota law suggested would work more effectively in PR or mixed systems than in a plurality/winner takes all system such as Tanzania's. South Africa, for example, neither has a mandatory quota law nor reserved seats (RS) for women, but has a large share of women in the legislature who are elected through a PR party list system. The country had 42 percent female parliamentarians by 2013.

⁴See NDI (National Democratic Institute for International Affairs) & UNDP (United Nations Development Programme). 2012. Empowering Women for Stronger Political Parties: A Guidebook to Promote Women's Political Participation; IFES [International Foundation for Electoral Systems]. 2015. Elections in Burkina Faso: November 29 General Elections, Frequently Asked Questions. Arlington: IFES.

⁵United States Department of State. 2015. Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2015: Burkina Faso 2015 Human Rights Report. Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor.

⁶Gender Quota and Representation in Bukina Faso: Gender Quota Law, a small step forward. TransSaharan Election Project <https://tsep.africa.uff.edu/gender-quotas-and-representation/burkina-faso/>. Retrieved on 19 September 2020.

⁷Ibid.

Other countries with PR and mixed systems that have many women legislators include Rwanda⁸ (64%), the Seychelles (mixed) (44%); Mozambique (PR) (39%); and Senegal (mixed) (44%).⁹ South Africa's system is an alternating list between the two sexes. That way, neither sex will be placed at either the top or end of the list only. Article 76 of the Rwanda constitution plays an important role by establishing a quota system for women. The Rwanda case demonstrates an electoral system that compels political parties to field women in mainstream seats.¹⁰ In Senegal, the 2010 amendments to the electoral law mandate gender parity between men and women in the party lists.

Redesign the country's electoral constituencies from the current single member districts to multimember districts where each constituency is represented by a female and a male legislator.

This arrangement is feasible even in plurality/majority electoral systems such as Tanzania's 'winner-takes-all' system. Above all, it was recommended in the 2014 draft constitution submitted before the constituent assembly by the Constitutional Review Commission (famously known as the Warioba Commission) for deliberation and recommendations.¹¹ If this arrangement materializes, it is likely to bring fiftyfifty gender parity in legislative positions in the country.

Enact and adopt voluntary candidate quotas.

Political parties in Tanzania should review and reform rules, regulations and procedures to specifically provide for the translation of generic gender equality commitments and provisions into practice. Parties may enact and adopt a voluntary quota law that requires a certain percentage of gender representation in leadership and candidate selection. A specific legal pronouncement of gender equality rules and principles in the party constitutions and regulations would create an enabling environment and the requisite culture to promote gender equality. The best practice is a voluntary decision by the South African ruling party, the African

⁸Rwanda has a law requiring 30 percent of reserve seats and legislative candidate quotas with PR system. This combination is likely to have made Rwanda the leading country in the world for having women representation in political and administrative positions.

⁹International IDEA [Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance]. 2013. Political Parties in Africa through a Gender Lens. These percentages are as of 2013.

¹⁰Ahikire Josephine. 2009. Women's engagement with political parties in contemporary Africa: Reflections on Uganda's experience. Policy brief 65. Johannesburg: Centre for Policy Studies.

¹¹See "Article 113 (3) of the Warioba Commission Draft Constitution". 2014. Government Printer. Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

National Congress (ANC) to voluntarily allocate 50% of parliamentary seats to women.¹² The ANC “has pledged its own quota system, promoting a 50/50 split representation policy for women and men. This has had an impact on some of the opposition parties, which have also pledged to increase women’s representation in their structures, even though many of them have resisted setting explicit quotas to achieve this”.¹³ Similarly, Seychelles has no legislated quota, the major parties such as Seychelles National Party (SNP) have their own gender policy that sets a 33 percent quota for women’s representation in the National Executive Committee as well as the National Assembly.

Political parties should adopt leadership quotas and gender inclusive selectorates to ensure that gender equality and inclusion is maintained in the leadership positions in all party structures.

This way, party selectorates will have a representation of both sexes so much so that one sex does not dominate important party decisions including leadership and candidate selection. One way to realize this is to adopt a gender threshold policy that sets at least 40 percent gender quota in internal leadership positions. Such a policy would not only create a conducive environment for women aspirants and candidates in the parties, but would also promote more women in executive positions in their respective parties to influence nomination decisions that are likely to bring the necessary gender parity. In an effort to compete for female votes with the ruling Social Democratic Party in 1972, the Liberal Party in Sweden formally recommended that women should make up 40 percent of its internal leadership positions including its national executive committee.¹⁴ In February 2019, four of the eight parties represented in the Swedish parliament (The Riksdag) were led by women party leaders. Moreover, as of 1st February 2019, Sweden ranked fifth worldwide in terms of female representation in national parliaments by having 47.3 percent of its 349 parliamentary seats held by women. That makes Sweden the top-ranking country in Europe.

¹²African Women in politics: Miles to go before parity is achieved. African Renewal April/July 2019 <https://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/april-2019-july-2019/african-women-politics-miles-go-parity-achieved> Retrieved on 15 September 2020.

¹³Ibid

¹⁴International IDEA [Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance]. 2005. Women in Parliament: Beyond Numbers. A Revised Edition. Stockholm: International IDEA.

15 The Swedish example serves as a reminder that achieving equality between men and women in decision making organs is a long term project and requires continuous action. Swedish women success in terms of political representation in positions of power could be directly attributed to inclusion of more women in party executive positions which brought gender sensitivity and parity in intraparty candidate nomination.

Parties should revise their selection procedures by designing more democratic and participatory candidate and leadership selection procedures.

One problem identified about candidate selection procedures in the studied parties is that they are highly centralised and male leaders are mainly in control of the process. For a leadership that does not have the political willingness to promote gender equity, maledominated centralized selection is likely to favor one sex over the other. Therefore, a democratic and participatory candidate selection process requires the selectorates to be reflective of party composition to ensure a level playing field as well as gender and social inclusion. This can be done through enacting a gender threshold law within the party that mandates at least 30 percent women composition of party governing structures at all levels. This has worked in Rwanda, where there is a law that requires the composition of leadership structures at all levels of political parties to include a minimum of 30 percent women.¹⁶ A substantial representation of women in key party organs and governing boards including party central organs might increase the chances of more women being nominated to run in constituent seats.

Parties should strengthen the role and influence of women wings in making important.

Women wings in political parties should play a vital role to afford women leadership opportunities within the party, to increase their political experience and leadership capabilities that are of utmost consideration by party leaders during candidate selection. The wings should then expose potential women candidates to party leaders, convince and influence these gatekeepers to create space for these women to contribute to leadership and policy development within parties.

¹⁵Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). (2019). Women in national parliaments: situation as of 1st February 2019. Retrieved on 31st August 2020 from <http://archive.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>.

¹⁶International IDEA [Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance]. 2013. "The status of women's structures within the parties" Political Parties in Africa through a Gender Lens.

Political parties that qualify for government subvention may voluntarily or legally consider setting aside at least 30 percent of party subsidies as well as 10 percent of their annual budget to assist women party candidates financially.

The amount could be allocated directly to specific women candidates' election fund or it could be allocated to party women wing's special election fund. Such initiative would give women candidates' financial capacity once deciding to run for elective office.

The Office of the Registrar of Political Parties (ORPP) should be legally and technically enabled to compel political parties to be gender responsive.

Review and enforcement of a law to elevate the position of the ORPP as an effective regulator of political party internal processes is particularly important.

Encourage public awareness campaigns on gender equality in political parties and the Tanzanian society at large to reinforce strategic measures suggested above.

These campaigns are imperative in eliminating gender stereotypes and prejudices against women in political processes as well as other spheres of social life. Such initiatives would reduce women socioeconomic and political marginalization and promote effective participation in political processes among them.