
WOMEN EMPOWERED FOR LEADERSHIP (WE4L)

LINKING AND LEARNING EVENT:

WORKING WITH POLITICAL PARTIES TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY

6-7 OCTOBER 2017

MEIKLES HOTEL, HARARE



FINAL NARRATIVE REPORT

*Funded from the Funding Leadership and Opportunities for Women
(FLOW) fund of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs*



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the
Netherlands

FRONT MATTER

Hivos staged the “linking and learning: women empowered for leadership conference” at the Meikles Hotel in Harare, Zimbabwe on the 6th and 7th of October 2017([VIDEO HERE](#)). The conference was held under the auspices of Hivos’ Women Empowered for Leadership (WE4L) program, a 5 year program which Hivos implements with local partners in Jordan, Lebanon, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe aimed at promoting activists cooperation and collaboration towards equal participation of women in politics, public administration and civil society.

The Linking and Learning conference was attended by at least 56 participants drawn from Hivos and its partners from the 5 countries in the program. The objectives of the conference were:

1. To create a platform for building linkages and networks amongst WE4L program countries and participants.
 2. To provide a platform for critical reflection on the state of effective women’s participation in the MENA and Southern Africa regions.
 3. To promote the sharing of best practice on programing aimed at effective women’s participation in all sectors of society amongst participants.
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WELCOME AND OBJECTIVE OF THE MEETING

TANJA LUBBERS (Hivos Regional Director for Southern Africa), **NICOLA NDOVI** (Hivos Program Development Manager), AND **FORTUNE GWAZE** (Royal Netherlands Embassy Representative)

In her remarks, **Tanja Lubbers** located the conference and WE4L program in Hivos’ work on effective women’s participation in all key sectors of society and decision making spanning 14 years, with women in politics as key pillar. She noted that the journey to women’s effective participation and the political contexts within which this was anticipated to take place have been changing over time, and expressed that Hivos has had to reinvent itself in response to these contextual dynamics and shifts in the funding landscape. Tanja Lubbers briefly outlined how the WE4L programing had been running in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and Southern Africa (SA). She expressed her hope that the Linking and Learning: WE4L Conference would be a veritable platform for learning and sharing between Hivos partners and programmes.

Nicola Ndovi focused her remarks on how the “Linking and learning” conference is an opportunity for critical reflection and dialogue on women’s participation and about producing ideas building on implementer’s extant knowledge across the five countries in the WE4L program. She challenged delegates to take the conference as an opportunity to improve existing programming through the reflexive process of reflection and dialogue on women in politics and public administration. Nicola Ndovi outlined the five-year WE4L program and its aim of moving forward and promoting women leadership in political parties, public administration and in civic organization’s at sub-national level as a strategic middle-level entry point at which women’s leadership could be supported, and their skills and confidence enhanced to facilitate their rise to the top. She noted that there were common threads between the two regions characterised by similar challenges to meaningful women’s representation and participation. Nicola Ndovi noted that challenges faced by women are deeply embedded in societal structures, making it necessary to challenge and change

societal attitudes (that women belong in the kitchen, while man fended for the family) through creating and popularizing positive stories of successful women in leadership. She expressed her hope that the preceding challenges would be tackled by the conference and WE4L program through fostering coalition building, and sharing capacities on lobbying, campaigning, researching, and positive media profiling of women leaders. She concluded her remarks by noting that the successful attainment of effective women's participation would be incumbent on the women's movement ability to draw allies, supporters, and partners. This, she stated, could be achieved through greater community involvement in the participation agenda and commitment towards transformation.

Fortune Gwaze reiterated the Dutch Government's prioritization of girls and women's empowerment as central to societal transformation, which he argued could be best achieved when there is full women participation including their presence in leadership. He stated how the Dutch government continues to fund women programmes at a rate of 5million euro annually to enhance participation in local and national level political processes. Fortune Gwaze ended his remarks by encouraging the conference to involve political parties as agents of change in promoting gender equality on the strength of their being both part of the problem as well as part of the solution. He noted that political parties acted as gatekeepers aggregating interests and views of society, which could be problematic, but were also enablers and potential promoters of women participation, which how they could be part of the solution.

KEY NOTE: SNAPSHOT: WHAT IS HAPPENING WITH WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION?¹

EMMA KALIYA

Emma Kaliya, Chairperson of the NGO Gender Coordination Network, SADC Gender Protocol Alliance and FEMNET, presented the keynote address to the conference. She started by paying tribute to the late Marren-Akatsa-Bukachi who passed away on the 1st October 2017 in Nairobi. Emma Kaliya saluted the late Executive Director of the Eastern African Sub Regional Support Initiative (EASSI) as an acclaimed Feminist, Gender, Women's Rights and Empowerment Specialist, who would be a loss to the continent and women's movement.

Emma Kaliya located her key note in a long historical roadmap which included the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the 1997 SADC Declaration on Gender and Development where SADC Heads of States and Government committed to 30% representation of Women in Politics and Decision Making positions. She celebrated the progress that the region had made as seen through the 2008 SADC Protocol on Gender and Development which included the 50/50 target, as one of 28 specific targets, and its review in 2016 and subsequent alignment to the SDGs, Beijing +20 and Agenda 2063. She noted that SADC had been the first region to bring together all regional and international instruments on gender into one legally binding protocol. Emma Kaliya however noted that despite this progress, there were no countries that had achieved gender equality in SA region, and women representation remains below parity in most countries, signaling a need for special measures in electoral processes for women representation to increase at local and national level. She painted the situation of women's representation in the SADC region by the numbers, as shown in the table below:

Issue	Indicative Statistic
Average representation of women in parliament	27%
Women in local government	24%
SADC's comparative position on women's political representation- after Nordic and the Americas	3 rd
SADC countries which have constitutionalised and legislated quotas to advance gender parity.	7
Percentage of women against men in Rwanda's parliament – the highest worldwide, with more female than male cabinet ministers.	65%
The average representation of women in countries with quota	38%,
The average representation of women in countries with no quota.	17%
Number of countries in Africa with less than 10% women in their parliaments	17
Number of African countries that have met the 30% international minimum target of women in parliaments or national assemblies.	9
Average representation of women in SADC countries with Proportional Representation (PR) or mixed system and quotas.	36% - local 42% - national
Average representation of women in countries with in the FPTP system with no quota	9% - local 17% - national
Percentage points higher than the global average	4%
Average global representation of women in parliaments	23%
SADC Regional average women's representation in cabinet in the	23%.
SADC regional average women's representation in local government	24%
SADC Country with the highest women's representation in parliament - South Africa	42%
SADC country with the Highest women's representation in Local Government - Lesotho.	49%
SADC country with lowest level of women's representation - DRC	8% - Parly 6%-Local Gov.

Emma Kaliya noted the variation in women's representation incumbent on electoral systems, geography and level of government. She expressed her hope that SADC would continue leading the quest for gender

¹ <https://southern-africa.hivos.org/blog/snapshot-what-happening-womens-participation-and-public-administration>

equality, and urged the conference to be proactive in designing measures that mitigate women's continued exclusion from strategic leadership positions. She noted that despite being freer, more educated, and more exposed in general, women remain a minority in the corridors of power, with the majority of women still shackled to patriarchal oppression. Emma Kaliya encouraged delegates to work harder to involve the majority of women, as well as increase young women's participation to ensure generational continuity and intergenerational leadership in the struggle for women's emancipation and participation. She urged delegates to involve women as candidates in political and political party leadership contests instead of relegating women to only dancing for men.

Emma Kaliya argued that strong and viable democracies are possible when all levels of government include representation of all sectors of society. She noted how women had proved to be great agents of change, and stated that their participation is essential for development and prosperity. She noted that while some of the statistics she had shared were impressive and denotative of progress, States and the women's movement needed to look beyond averages to monitor the experiences of girls who face various rights violations. She argued that national progress required the contribution of all, making leaving women behind, suicidal because of the crucial and pivotal roles in various development processes that women play. She echoed Nelson Mandela on the urgency of using time wisely, and noting, *"...the time is always ripe to do right"*.

Emma Kaliya concluded her remarks by quoting Thomas Sankara, who stated that: *"There is no true social revolution without the liberation of women..."* She noted that the Linking and Learning: Women Empowered For Leadership Conference was crucial in as far as it provided delegates with a platform to look back, think forward, strategize and reprioritise their planning. She argued that this was the time for results and action beyond rhetoric. She urged delegates to adopt the UN Women slogan which has changed from *"Yes we must"* to *"Planet 50/50 by 2030: Step up for Gender Equality as time is not on our side"*.

SESSION 1: UNDERSTANDING WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN SA AND MENA

JULIET CHIBUTA, RUTH ASHA MANDA, SAKHILE SIFELANI NGOMA

This first panel of the conference focused on sharing experience on the state of play regarding women's political participation in three countries, Zambia, Malawi and Zimbabwe. Three presenters shared trends and developments, challenges, and potential opportunities for women's empowerment in their countries, as follows.

JULIET CHIBUTA *Zambia National Women's Lobby (ZNWL)* ZAMBIA

Juliet Chibuta, the Executive Director of the Zambia National Women's Lobby (ZNWL), presented the lay of the land regarding women's political participation in Zambia. She highlighted the following socio-cultural factors as inimical to effective women's participation:

- That patriarchy is so entrenched in Zambia, and spawns beliefs and practices that subordinate women as followers and not leaders of men.
- Distribution of labour based on social constructs hinders female participation, as women have to deal with household and community roles which men do not, leaving them with more time to engage in political activity.
- Some religions discourage women from participating in politics and public life by entrenching beliefs that women should be led and not lead.

Juliet Chibuta stated that there were also political factors that hindered effective women's participation, which manifested through the lack of appointments of women to key decision-making position. She exemplified this by stating that in Zambia's 2016 Election, there were 545 parliamentary candidates but 106 (less than 20%) of these were women. Amongst the key features of political factors, she mentioned a violent political culture as part of the impediments to effective women's participation. She added that this violence was both physical and psychological, often manifesting through emotional abuse targeted at women. She stated that women political figures are often scandalized and slandered, noting the demeaning of the DSG of the ruling party as an example. Juliet argued that this is heightened by the negative portrayal of women politicians in the media, which sometimes uses unpalatable gender stereotypes.

The ZNWL Executive Director also highlighted that beyond socio-cultural and political factors, the electoral system in Zambia, first past the post (FPTP), was not conducive to effective women's participation. Allied to the electoral system, she pointed to other legal deficiencies, primary amongst which is the absence of affirmative action policies and legislation aimed at increasing the number of women in politics through quotas. Juliet Chibuta concluded her presentation by laying out a three-tier strategy around Reforms (Constitutional, legislative, policy and practice); Public Advocacy (Media and Community); and Capacity building, to aid effective women participation, which the women's movement was now engaged in as follows:

Constitutional, legislative, Policy and Practice Reforms

1. Lobbying for legislated gender quotas and policy guides on appointments in state institutions and government.
2. Advocacy on the quota is also being extended to political parties to adopt more women in their membership and decision making structures, and parliament where the movement is lobbying for the ratification and domestication of international gender protocols and covenants.

3. Advocacy on the adoption of an electoral system that is more conducive to effective women's participation, and engagements with the Electoral Commission of Zambia, the police and political parties on electoral malpractices that disadvantage women including mudslinging and violence against women politicians

Public Advocacy, Community Engagement & sensitization

1. Public advocacy through increased media engagement to lobby for better and more positive coverage of women.
2. Increasing community sensitization efforts aimed at promoting better community acceptance of women's participation and leadership in politics.

Capacity Building

1. Capacity development of women electoral candidates in various facets including resource mobilisation,
2. **Capacity building of female leaders already in local and national leadership positions.**

RUTH ASHA MANDA *Gender Governance Justice Development Center (GGJDC) MALAWI*

GGJDC's Ruth Manda started by buttressing the importance of dealing with political leadership. She explained that Malawi's 1994 constitution established three arms of government with political offices, thus necessitating the need for the women's movement to find solutions and have women joining the political leadership. She shared that only 32 of the 196 parliamentarians (16%) in Malawi are female, while some districts do not have female councilors at all, leaving all decisions to be made by men.

Ruth argued that equality must not be seen as a favor but an entitlement, and lamented that while local, regional and international policies were clear on non-discrimination; current form demonstrated that these policies are disregarded.

Ruth Manda reported that one of the challenges in Malawi, is that the environment is, at times, unfriendly to discussions on under-representation of women in positions of power from local to national level. She advocated for the development of a pool of women leaders to provide role models to inspire other women to take up leadership positions. She stated that the preceding is often made difficult by the fact that most women who dare to step in the political arena are denigrated, making it difficult for other women to have the courage to take up political positions.

Ruth Manda also highlighted that in most instances, women's involvement in political leadership is through designated women's desks, and not general secretaries or campaign managers. She highlighted that the FPTP electoral system in use in Malawi was also unfriendly to women's participation. A situation that is worsened, according to Ruth Manda, by a hostile media, which is unrelenting when a woman makes a mistake, often overplaying the story, but is kinder and more understanding to male intransigency.

She ended by sharing that Malawi had some opportunities for women's participation through its adoption of international and regional instruments. She also stated that other opportunities stem from the Bill of rights, which advances gender equality including specific laws that promotes gender equality. She shared how the Women's caucus in parliament had been able to work across party lines to lead the promulgation of a Gender Act.

SAKHILE SIFELANI NGOMA *Women In Politics Support Unit (WIPSU) ZIMBABWE*

Sakhile Ngoma, the Executive Director of WIPSU, shared that while Zimbabwe had benefited from the gendered quota leading 34% of parliamentarians being women, there was more to politics and women's participation than counting the number of parliamentary seats that woman get. She advocated for a more qualitative approach that prioritizes the quality of engagement with political role players. Sakhile Sifelani Ngoma argued that to make change matter, it was critical to influence the regulation of political parties and other appointing authorities regarding equal representation. This she stated had to be allied with calling them out when they violate the 50/50 principle during appointments.

She pointed out the reemergence of cultural and religious conservatism as an impediment to women's participation in politics. The WIPSU director pointed out that in Zimbabwe women's participation in politics was no longer a fringe issue, but was encumbered by the absence of fully friendly rules for female participation, and the non-adherence to rules that were already in place. She argued that this presented challenges where the movement was fighting for good behavior for one rule yet there were several others being violated. She stated that the solution was for the women's movement to be holistic in their approach through fighting for good governance more broadly.

Sakhile Sifelani Ngoma, shared how in 1979 men had written the Lancaster House constitution, which was used to govern Zimbabwe until 2013, with limited to no participation of nor accommodation of women's voices. She noted that for a long time there had been a deliberate strategy to confuse women through piece meal reforms. She exemplified this by stating how at Independence racial segregation rules were reversed immediately, but gender segregation was not. The WIPSU Director noted that the women's movement was not paying enough attention to what governments were doing to violate women, and other women perpetrators of violence in public processes. She concluded by sharing context, actions and opportunities that the women's movement in Zimbabwe was considering.

Five Challenges
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fractures, Fissures, and factions within major political parties 2. Challenges around Candidates selection in era of internal and external coalition building 3. Responding to the emergence of socio-cultural and religious conservatism and changes in the social base. 4. Increasingly repressive electoral and media law 5. Increasing political violence
Five Opportunities
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New emerging players & processes – connecting agendas and unexpected champions. 2. Law, policy and changing socio-economic base, entailing new entry points and modes of organizing 3. The presence of a sound State Gender Machinery and Increased presence of Women in political administration 4. Politicization and relocation of gender work within a broader Governance framework. 5. New relations between key institutions, e.g. the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) and Parliamentary Gender Committee, who recently had a historic, unprecedented encounter
Six Actions
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Creating new dynamic platforms to suit current context, challenges and opportunities 2. Respecting and Supporting actors and actions beyond "women" issues. 3. Tracking hate speech, Sexual Harassment, and Power brokers as new focus areas. 4. Investing in sound gendered political economy analysis on the state and impact of the economy, institutions, shrinking CSO operating space, and politics, on women's participation. 5. Investing in learning from countries with increasingly strong gender machinery and movements that focus on inter-sectionalism of women rather than essentialising women

SESSION 1 PLENARY DISCUSSION

The 5 presentations on understanding women's participation in the MENA and SA regions led to plenary conversations which yielded the following key talking points.

1. The need for clarity on what is tracked as meaningful change. This was allied to the need for radical politicization of Arab women, whose society still confines them to the home. Stemming from this context and an understanding of the political nature of "outside" home engagements, the plenary discussion on this point suggested the need for new modes of political leadership that can scale the challenges inherent in socialisation within systems that are patently patriarchal producing toxic masculinities that also reflect in women who take part in political violence. The plenary discussion also resonated with some of the presentations understanding around the qualitative nature of change and meaningfulness of participation.

2. The need for public interest litigation to ensure that those with the responsibility to protect women do so, and that authorities are held accountable for the laws they create, especially around prioritization of women.
3. Delegates from Jordan shared how they were also adversely affected by money laundering legislation which is used to frustrate their activities as they have to wait three months to get approval to receive funding (e.g. from Hivos). In addition they also shared how they had to seek approval for trainings and meetings, forcing them to resort to other ways of continuing with their work through crowdsourcing resources from communities. They also shared how they were encouraging women to teach their daughters at a young age that they are equal to boys as part of their leadership training, and dealing with patriarchy from a tender age.
4. Kinds of narratives: The plenary also discussed the need to examine the kind of narratives that the women's movement puts out and whether these are attractive to the ordinary women.
5. Delegates from Zambia shared how they had opened their membership to progressive men, whom they work with in communities, as change agents. These include traditional leaders due to their influence over their subjects and communities. They shared that this move had begun to yield positive results as some traditional leaders were beginning to encourage their subjects to vote for female candidates.
6. The plenary discussed the need for balance between tip-toing around fragile masculinities, and the requirement for careful language to ensure men involvement to support the women's participation agenda.
7. The plenary also discussed the double standards inherent in requirements for women to have global exposure and years of experience before they can bid for public office, yet the same is seldom asked of men.

SESSION 2: FOCUS ON INTERNAL CHALLENGES IN PARTIES FOR WOMEN LEADERS

AMEENEH YAQOOB, SALLY NCUBE, AYAT ASAAD, PRISCILLA MISHAIRAMBWI

The second session of the Linking and Learning: WE4L conference focused on the internal challenges that women leader's face and the factors that impact their participation in political parties. Four presenters made interventions as summarized below.

AMEENEH YAQOOB *Jordan River Foundation (JRF)* JORDAN

Ameeneh Yaqoob shared with conference the impact of social conditions, issues, status and challenges on women leaders' participation in political parties. She noted how tribes play an integral role in shaping the participation of women. Allied to this, Ameeneh also noted the role of family dynamics in shaping this participation, especially in contexts like Jordan, where a husband can bar his wife from participating in politics, and also instruct them on how and even who to vote for.

Ameeneh Yaqoob recounted how religious factors in Jordan often manifest in women being barred from community processes, working, and having a political life. She appreciated the opportunities to share that the conference presented, and declared that with such strong women, it is possible to change the way women participate in political life. She appealed for mutual support through continued engagements, conferences, and meetings like Linking and Learning where women from different regions share contexts, competences, and experiences.

SALLY NCUBE *Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe (WCZ)* ZIMBABWE

Sally Ncube shared that in Zimbabwe challenges that affect women's participation in party politics are grounded in different shades of patriarchy, which are sophisticated and continuously recruit even other women to thwart the effective participation and aspirations of other women. She gave an overview of the state of political party institutionalisation in Zimbabwe, highlighting that the ruling party, Zimbabwe African National Unity –Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) enjoyed an overwhelming majority in parliament, which has two other parties, the Movement for Democratic Change-Tsvangirai (MDC-T), and Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). She however stated that there were more than 52 Opposition parties in the country, with some of them organised under 4 emerging opposition alliances, which are male dominated. These political parties, Sally Ncube shared, operated with a 3-wing party system (Main wing, Women's wing (which often marginalise young women) and the Youth wing which is -male led and dominated, with all wings level of organising being at national, provincial, district, ward, and branch/cell level with some diaspora structures . She lamented that although women in Zimbabwe constituted more than 52% of the population, they were often relegated to the roles of event ushers, entertainers (hosts, sex, etc.), fashionistas, fixers, singers, dancers, and caregivers of survivors of political violence. She however, acknowledged that some women had transcended these marginal roles to assume more technocratic roles like counselors, strategists, speechwriters, trainers, resource mobilisers, and consummate soft diplomats. Sally Ncube outlined seven categories of challenges that she argued, affected women's participation in Zimbabwe's political parties.

AYAT ASAAD *Independent activist* JORDAN

Ayat Shared that in Jordan there were Institutional challenges to women participation – the law hinders female participation. Reinforces tribalism and it supports men over female candidates regardless of qualifications.

- Financial capabilities candidates – rising costs of participating as candidates. Women have lesser financial resources and they are less able to finance their campaign.
- Lack of political expertise – historical exclusion has reduced their expertise and electoral experience.
- Men have better networks to access and serve voters and to convince them compared to women.

PRISCILLA MISIHAIRAMBWI *Member of Parliament* ZIMBABWE

Priscilla said she got her parliamentary seat through First-Past-The-Post in 2000 and now has gone in through Proportional Representation. She highlighted that the story hasn't changed since 1995 – women remain underrepresented and marginalised. *"Why have we not had substantive changes? We missed the boat somewhere"*, she asked.

She added that the challenge society faces is not patriarchy but misogyny. The former presupposes innocence and the later shows deliberate action on the part of man i.e. they hate women. Why is it that we have a group of men who dislike women? Sexualization of women in media is a result of misogyny. No need to genderize the women's struggle.

Priscilla challenged the hijacking/capture of the women's movement saying engagement of state institutions has watered down the tone and language of women's movement. What has changed over the years from the radical women's narrative? The issue of the omnibus strategy – putting women together to train as candidates using a one size fits all method, without meeting specific needs through a tailor-made program needs to stop. There is need to think outside the box and challenge the way we have been doing business.

Political context, structure & culture Women are disadvantage as they are usually, less educated than men who can easily enhance themselves intellectually while women tend to familial and social roles; reproductive roles; the continued salience of spousal consent in Zimbabwe's patriarchal society, the absence of role models, and the prevalence of gender based violence.	
Political infrastructure (structural barriers) The will to power overshadows the will to transform society in political parties, who relegate gender equality as something that doesn't lead them to electoral victory. Several structural barriers and structure would need to be targeted to correct this anomaly, including: Political party Regulation & Administration frameworks, Organograms/titles, Ways of working, infrastructure (roles& responsibilities), Terms of office , Candidate selection, intraparty accountability, as well as Factions & fissures.	
Political Culture routed in religious, cultural & traditional excuses Women are generally dissuaded from engagement due to a Picture of Politics that is: Individualistic, Male dominated, Violent, Materialistic, Dirty, Tribal, Manipulative, Black, Local (not diaspora) and Classist. Politics is also discriminatory based on an exaggerated valuing of the past and so called struggle credentials or experience in the 'Trenches' (Liberation struggle, stone thrower, faced some arrests/victim of struggle). It is also Corrupt and anchored on Intergenerational patronage, as well as male dominated cliques and cabals.	
Political Violence Political violence targeting women as political actors, women relating with political actors. This violence may be Physical; Emotional & Psychological; Economic (resources); Sexual including (Rape) and Verbal (through labelling)	
Political literacy Women generally have limited access to information, knowledge and understanding of Party Politics. There is a general lack of clarity amongst them on: What Politics is; Why they should participate and How (entry point & roadmap); when – (calendar, seasons, routines etc); where (location & level); With Who (alone or with others? Who else is there and how do we co-exist) and with what (resources & tools)	
Cost of participation	Politics is a costly enterprise, and women seldom have enough economic power to support the patronage machine. In addition some women in political parties have been conscripted into the repressive and women unfriendly extant political setup.
Backlash from existing women political leaders	

PANEL DISCUSSION

We need to link the dots – supporting younger female candidates, we tell them how not to do politics because we made the same mistakes. But we cannot continue doing the same things the same way if we are not getting results – i.e. at a programming level.

- It cannot be a coincidence that strong women are always pushed out of political parties or public offices.
- Resources beyond money – that which makes fellow women say I will stand with her regardless of what has been said about her in the media.
- Lack of awareness amongst women also hinders their meaningful participation, especially with younger generation. Targeting students in schools. The need to use new technologies to reach these younger generations.
- Our current realities/challenges are historical
- Political party finances for existing political parties – at times the funding doesn't help women participation.
- There is need for a conversation on the disconnect between old guard and new guard within the women's movement. The "us" and "them" should not divide us. Intergenerational interactions within the women's movement. Inheritance of spaces in women's sector.

SETTING THE TONE: WORKING WITH POLITICAL PARTIES

NKANYISO MAQUEDA, EVANS SIKUNDA, ALI SEEM

NKANYISO MAQUEDA *Zimbabwe Institute (ZI)* ZIMBABWE

Nkanyiso Maqueda shared experiences on the Zimbabwe Political Parties Dialogue, which the Zimbabwe Institute (ZI) convened. His presentation provided useful lessons on how to work with political parties to be gender inclusive and create spaces where women are effective leaders in society. He shared how ZI facilitates dialogue outside the framework of government and parliamentary platforms, and away from the media and the public gaze, in order to capitalize on limited grandstanding and tricks from politicians to boost their egos at the expense of agreeing on pertinent national issues. Using this model, politicians from across the political spectrum could negotiate and agree on political and developmental issues without being entangled in their differences.

He stated that this model created ownership of the dialogue initiative such that by the time the issues that were discussed in private came into the public domain the political actors were ready to mobilize public support towards the issues and defend them. In addition, ZI took an approach where political parties were treated as equal stakeholders regardless of the sizes of their parliamentary representation. Nkanyiso Maqueda shared that they sustained the approach through consensus rather than voting as a decision making tool. The principle behind consensus-based decision-making was that although it could take long to reach consensus, it was better than having a vote which could be divisive. He shared how the approach took into consideration the high levels of polarization in the country, and built trust amongst political parties. Issues that were discussed during the dialogue sessions were taken to parliament when consensus had already been reached at leadership level behind closed doors. He shared an of how three representatives of the three major political parties during the time of the Inclusive Government, i.e. Oppah

Muchingura (Zanu PF), Theresa Makone (MDC-T) and Priscilla Misihairambwi Mushonga (MDC-N) agreed amongst themselves through the dialogue platform to have stronger women representation in the Joint Monitoring and Implementation Committee (JOMIC).[1] The three senior political leaders took their agreement to their political parties and this resulted in 90% of the staff recruited at JOMIC being women, countering the fact that politicians seconded to JOMIC by political parties were mostly men. Another example where dialogue resulted in greater women involvement is that women organisations and women representatives across political parties worked together to compile advocacy issues related to women in Zimbabwe and they successfully lobbied for the inclusion of these issues into the Constitution of Zimbabwe that was enacted in 2013. Nkanyiso recounted that the constitutional reform process which began in 2009 and concluded in 2013, was highly contested but women managed to sustain their advocacy through their own dialogue processes, hence their issues were not derailed by the frequent political disputes that characterized the constitutional reform process. He elaborated this point by pointing to the women's parliamentary quota system, which was a result of collective lobbying by women regardless of their political party affiliation.

Nkanyiso Maqueda concluded by sharing that dialogue is often threatened by mistrust in political parties, pursuit of personal interests and power broking which often results in those who are not part of the dialogue process critiquing it and sometimes trying to derail it. He also added turnover in political parties as having an adverse impact dialogue.

EVANS SIKUNDA *Zambian National Women's Lobby (ZNWL)* **ZAMBIA**

Evans shared that the Zambian National Women's Lobby (ZNWL) conducted a research around the 2016 national elections. Its findings were that, in general, women remain underrepresented in parliamentary bodies, in cabinet and in local government, though the figures are better at local government level. He shared that the numbers were more impressive for young women who mostly competed in local government elections, with some of them winning council seats. He shared that based on the findings of the research study conducted by ZNWL, female aspiring political leaders:

- i. Lack of capacity to understand the governance process within the country e.g. operations of the local government system. They face challenges working in wards when they enter politics.
- ii. Lack of local female role models to look up to. Women get lost when they enter politics at a local level as they do not get female mentors who can help them to address and mitigate some of the challenges they face.
- iii. They do not fully understand internal political party policies – they do not get a chance to study and understand party manifestos, policies and positions.
- iv. Some of them do not have clearly defined roles in the political parties, and they are mostly confined to women's league and their roles are limited to mobilising support for male politicians, and sometimes to welcome prominent politicians visiting their local areas.
- v. They find it difficult to mobilise financial resources for their campaigns unlike their male counterparts who have campaigns that are funded by various donors.
- vi. Female politicians/candidates find it difficult to work with female colleagues from other political parties, compared to their male counterparts who can publicly interact with their political rivals and in some cases, they can easily cross political parties without being labelled as 'political prostitutes' or without their morals being questioned publicly. The Women in Politics Forum supported by ZNWL thus provides female candidates with a safe space for them to collaborate across political parties.
- vii. Candidate selection (adoption) remains discriminatory, and in most cases women who are adopted as candidates are made to contest in constituencies that are not necessarily strongholds of their political parties and such areas prove to be a challenge for them to successfully campaign and win.
- viii. There is also lack of activism among women politicians – they are not able to come out and speak against practices and structures that hinder their meaningful participation in political parties. The

challenge is that the internal systems of the political parties are male dominated from the local to national levels. In most cases, women are given less powerful positions such as secretary, treasurer or committee members, and such positions have little influence in making decisions in the main body politic.

- ix. Political parties have women's league structures but when it comes to decision making the women's league has little to no influence.

ALI SEEM – Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections (LADE) LEBANON

Ali reported that electoral politics in Lebanon is sectarian, with 18 seats in a population of 6 million, with some sects more privileged than others, and resultantly dominating politics. Given the foregoing, Ali explained that the possibility of women winning parliamentary seats was very slim, although women are not the only ones discriminated against, as even men from lowly sects also find it difficult to meaningfully participate in electoral politics.

He stated that if a woman gets a parliamentary seat, she does so 'wearing black' either because her father or husband is dead or she adopted the seat from him. In most cases women do not have independence to vote for whomever they want to choose – they vote for the candidate preferred by the father, husband or family, which is male dominated. He shared that in Lebanon, the sectarian laws and practices give more opportunities and chances to man more than women, with women given petty roles like gift-wrapping.

Ali shared that the Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections (LADE) advocates and lobbies for secret ballot voting because it lessens the intimidation and manipulation of female voters – i.e. their voting choices will not be influenced by the preferences of their male family members. LADE is also advocating for a female quota system so that the number of women representatives can be increased as the attitudes towards women electoral participation can take time to be transformed – this is also significant step towards catalyzing the change in attitudes amongst Lebanese voters whose electoral choices and political participation is shaped by sectarian practices and gender stereotypes. LADE also uses a bottom up approach to electoral reform advocacy – i.e. they target and engage political party supporters to drum up support for progressive reforms rather than high level political actors. Supporters are targeted so that they can put pressure on their political parties to transform sectarian political system. The organization also carries out voter education that seeks to empower women and to transform their mindsets so that they can claim a stake in electoral politics

PLENARY DISCUSSION

Plenary discussed

- i. How to make women's work visible as women are made invisible in the first place
- ii. How political parties recruit their members and how they punish and discipline their members shapes the extent to which females of participating in politics.
- iii. How people talk about women in politics but forget to look at the everyday personal lives of women e.g. man have more social and entertainment events where they network and build stronger bonds that are transferred into politics – women do not have similar opportunities as they are expected to be at home and society does not expect them in certain social and entertainment spaces.
- iv. How in Zimbabwe women have successfully done cross party collaboration and they have made gains e.g. duty free sanitary pads.
- v. Lebanon – Wife, daughter or sister of a prominent person – that is when she can take up a political position.
- vi. The burden of understanding two worlds living side by side and constituting each other.
- vii. How everyone wants the women's vote but no one wants to listen to the women's voice.

LINKING & LEARNING: WE4L CONFERENCE DAY 2

RECAP OF DAY 1

The second day of the Women Empowered for Leadership conference began with a recap of the key points from day 1. The session facilitator Samar Jubran, Hivos' Country Coordinator for Jordan, divided participants into four groups, with the first three reflecting on key takeaways from day 1, while the fourth focused on possible actions and solutions to challenges identified during day 1. The table below captures the outputs from the groups.

	Group 1: Understanding Women's Political Participation	Group 2: Internal Challenges for women in political parties	Group 3: Setting the tone – working with political parties
Day 1's Critical Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Obstacles to effective women's participation are similar across the MENA and Southern Africa. - General representation of women in key decision-making structures is low in all the MENA and SA countries. And participation is often cosmetic - Politics and participation thereof is highly commercialized - Cultural norms, religion and emotional abuse targeted at women hinder their participation in politics. - Effective women's participation has to be located within the full gamut civic participation issues. - The kinds of narratives that are attractive to ordinary women need to be discerned, articulated and used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Negative portrayal of women by the media. - Political parties have policies to encourage women participation but are poor on implementation. - There is gendered stereotyping of women in political parties, restricting them to traditional gender roles. - Need to share knowledge in the movement. - Structures of power in parties are largely made by men for men, and need to be changed for full women's participation - Multi-tasking- multiple roles and Social dynamics hinder women's effective participation in political life - . Family dynamics also shape women's participation, e.g. husband can bar wife from participating in politics and families can sometimes tell female members who to vote for, baring individual women agency on the matter. - Candidate selection processes in political parties are often dramatic, undemocratic and violent, sometimes hindering women participation. - The law can also at times hinder female participation, and may reinforce tribalism and support men over female 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interesting insights on capacity building opportunities. - Lessons on successful facilitation of dialogues between political parties in Zimbabwe through the Zimbabwe Institute. - Effectiveness of women's wings and responsibilities and mandates. - Revelations about parties incorporating the quarter system. - Cautionary notes on the need to consider the everyday personal lives of women, and understand that men have more social and entertainment events where they network and build stronger bonds that are transferred into politics. - Women are not always able to come out and speak against practices and structures that hinder their participation in political parties. - Political party systems are male dominated from the local to national structures with women often relegated to

	to persuade participation.	candidates regardless of qualifications.	positions of limited influence in decision-making.
Possible Actions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tailor strategies according to the needs of women in politics 2. More sharing and networking and theories of change amongst orgs 3. Engagement with political parties to increase women's participation, allied with 4. Strong media strategies aimed at public influence. 		

SHARING BEST PRACTICE

The second session of day two, facilitated by Lucy Mung'ala, aimed at sharing best practice in media related advocacy; gender, media and elections, as well as civic society coordination and cooperation. First, participants were grouped into pre-arranged "market places" based on their organizational foci, where they shared experiences and practices along the three thematic focuses, taking the form of mini workshops which allowed participants to identify like-minded organizations and initiatives, and created opportunities for follow on conversations. Second, the session allowed for sharing in plenary of best practice from some organization's along the three thematic foci. For Southern Africa, the Gender and Media Connect (GMC) from Zimbabwe and Zambia National Women's Lobby from Zambia shared practices, while 7iber from Jordan, The Maharat Foundation and Lebanon Support, both from Lebanon, shared practices from the MENA region. Below are briefs on some of the key practices shared.

Media Related Advocacy and Work

7iber – My Story

Two representatives from 7iber shared how the Jordanian magazine had an ambitious vision to lead progressive conversation in Jordan and the Middle East, focusing on effective women's participation. They shared how, in pursuit of this vision, to date 7iber had scored some tremendous successes, including leading the advocacy on Rape law repeal, as well as leading the conversation on discrimination of women through sexist depictions in textbooks. They reported that both issues were difficult to pursue as rape and women's sexuality are relatively taboo subjects in Jordan, which made reforms on both fronts veritable success stories for 7iber. 7iber shared how some of their practices and actions, with support from Hivos had led to more exposure for potential women leaders, increased public awareness on women and leadership, as well as increasing the capacity of women and potential leaders to engage with and manage Media engagement. 7iber outlined how their work revolved around public discussions, media exposure, capacity building for women and women leaders. Their best practice case highlight was a project called "My Story", which is part of their Gender and community activism program.

My Story
<p>The "My Story" project brought together potential leaders from Jordan and Palestine, in space where they could share stories and develop campaigns around their issues of concern. The process included developing the community leader's abilities to tell stories, present and share them as a tool. The intent was to enhance the capacity of these activists to use stories in two forms:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. First, as an outlet, for activists to share their stories in ways that allowed them relief but also showcased the similarities between experiences and lived realities amongst them. In this respect, stories had a therapeutic function, acting as a release but also a basis for shared identity. 2. Second, as a mobilisation tool, centered on the notion that effective mobilisers have to be good story tellers/narrators of circumstances in ways that move others to action. <p>The stories were not published, but were used as a trust building measure to increase comfort levels amongst activists, which allowed them to work better together in the development of</p>

campaigns post the exercise. The “My Story” space assisted to increasing confidence, especially amongst female community activists who are usually shy to share their private stories. The space provided for shared pain and empathy, which was therapeutic, and allowed for group or peer comfort to be shared by the participants. Based on these new comfort levels with each other, participation in the “My Story” exercise culminated in the development of campaigns, one of which was a hunger strike in Palestinian prisons.

Essence of the Initiative

The underlying intent of the “My Story” project was to use Story Telling as tool for women to connect without having to publish their stories. The stories were individual, unique and often located in hurtful encounters, but the roots of the negative narratives were shared across participants and across borders. Story telling was thus a methodology and approach to allow for connections amongst women through deep and complex issues as expressed in the stories with the intent of allowing the process foster understanding of the commonality of the roots, while developing participant’s skills to one day go out and tell the story as a mobilisation technic. The later would be buttressed through intended follow up activities like a writers and gender retreat.

Gender and Media Connect (GMC) - Women and Media Skills and Coaching Program

GMC described their organisation as a Media advocacy organisation working towards gender safety in the media industry in Zimbabwe. They shared how the context was characterised by a distinct lack of diversity in a media industry that is owned and controlled by men and continues to portray women unfavorably. The GMC reported that employment patterns in the media industry showed that only 33% of employees were females, a skewed employment pattern that also reflected in low coverage of women, their issues, and their takes on broader national concerns in the in the media. GMC reported that their interventions were based on statistics and Intel from Media Monitors, as well as GMC led studies on the situation of women and the media. GMC then shared some findings from their studies on the reasons behind the inadequate representation of women’s voices in the media, amongst which were the following:

- **Media Houses:** Generally argued that there were no women to interview, and that when some were found they were often “empty”, not confident, and demonstrated a lack of understanding of how the media operates.
- **The women:** Generally argued that journalists were selective, and preferred to interview males. When they did interview women, they often misquoted them, or sought payment for coverage. Women leaders also admitted that they generally do not know journalists, and were unaware of recourse mechanisms in the event of challenges arising from encounters with journalists or media houses. Additionally, female politicians preferred to give stories to male not female journalists.
- GMC’s Media Skills Audit also revealed Language as an issue for women, with English’s adoption as the lingua franca often being an impediment effective participation of women.

Women and Media: Skills and Coaching Program

This multifaceted media skills and coaching program is a holistic approach to women leaders’ effective engagement with the media, which targets both the demand and supply sides of media engagement, based on evidence from GMC studies and Media Monitors female leaders coverage statistics. The program has included:

- Media skills, Media coaching for women leaders in politics and business, as well as civic society, because women leaders, especially in politics cannot always defend or support themselves, and often need leaders in other sectors of society be their buffers and stand up for them, and vice versa.
- Development of a news sources directory for journalists,
- Compilation of a reporter’s directory/data base, based on key journalists working on various issues.
- Newsroom clinics, which are platforms where the press meets the female newsmakers to allow for relationships to develop.

- Ongoing mentorship for women leaders on media issues, especially social media, establishing good partnerships with media, and maintaining a good public profile.
- Ongoing engagement with the media to focus on women as sources of news and promoting media houses respect for policies around ensuring women's voices.

Essence of the Initiative

The essence of the initiative is to deal with the multifaceted challenges affecting effective women's engagement with the media through holistic interventions that deals with the multifaceted challenges. Its intent is to foster higher women's comfort level in dealing with the media, while making sure that media houses turn more and more to women as credible sources of news and able commentators on key national issues. At the center of the initiative is collaboration amongst different media organization's and women's governance and leadership organization's, mutual cooperation between civil society and the media, as well as mutual valuing of each other between women leaders and women in the media.

Key Learning Points from plenary

The media related advocacy and work presentations attracted lively conversations seeking clarifications, adding experiences and requesting tools. They included the following additions

1. **Targeting news editors** for training, and developing networks around them as they usually have final say on what gets published. NGOCC from Zambia shared that through this approach, they had seen an increase in coverage on their activities and issues from 9-10 stories a month to an average of 52 stories per month.
2. **The media as target channel and tool.** The conference discussed the need to develop an understanding of the media as not just a target and critical player in the advocacy, but also an effective tool, which needs to be understood in its various forms and modes of delivery. This includes understanding how young women and people in general consume media as well as how the information is used. This entails disaggregate information in ways that allow women in leadership to target their messages appropriately, as well as how to integrate communications across channels and platforms. An example was given of how a lot of young candidates are using social media but their reach is not as wide as they think it is due to lack of integration of channels and approaches to mobilisation. As part of this conversation, women leaders were encouraged to thought leaders, engaging in the publication of thought pieces, but also being developed as thinkers on both the hard and soft issues.
3. **Empathy and sensitivity as key to communication:** The plenary discussed how effective media engagement, especially using own tools/media, needed to be based not just on understanding the issues scientifically but also on empathy. The encouragement was to integrate empirical findings with personal stories. An example was given from Lebanon on how Harassment and Data collection. Under this initiative, youths were trained from communities to collect data sensitively, based on knowledge and empathy. A documentary was then made on women's harassment, which incorporated personal narratives with global empirical research findings on harassment. This allowed community voices to be heard and stories to be told with a solid scientific backing.

Gender and Media And Election Monitoring

Maharat Foundation: Gendered Media Monitoring of the 2016 Lebanese Municipal Elections

Maharat Foundation, a Lebanese organisation presented their work on Media Monitoring of Municipal Elections from a gender perspective. Maharat shared that women's representation in Lebanese political structures is generally low, but that their monitoring initiative sought to highlight the crucial role that media has in influencing elections and the women's participation in politics. This initiative, which Maharat carried out for the 2016 Municipal elections, had as background a study from 2015 which indicated that only 2% of participants at political talk shows were women, that only 7 out of 100 news reports covered women, but predominantly as victims, mostly in domestic violence issues. The initiative was the first time that Maharat, which had done media monitoring in previous elections, was doing so from a gender perspective,

focusing on space and female representations in the media. The monitoring effort covered electronic and print media, and was conducted with the aid of a gender expert (who assisted to develop a methodology that captured the multi-dimensional gender angles), monitors, academics and researchers, as well as graphic designers and animators.

The monitoring process reviewed that women constituted 11% of panelists in TV talk shows, but were largely absent from newspaper front pages. Sources of electoral discourse were predominantly men (80%), with only 20% being women, 95% of cited experts were men, although there was a bit of balance on experts from civil society, who included 23 women and 26 men. In the elections, the poor representation of women in media spaces was reflected in the electoral outcomes, which had only 1519 women competing out of 21935 candidates, and only 663 women winning their electoral races. The monitoring initiative yielded the following lessons, which Maharat Foundation shared with the conference:

Gendered Media Monitoring of 2016 Lebanese Municipal Elections: lessons learnt

1. It is important for women to understand the media, especially in terms of who reaches out to whom between media practitioners and women leaders. For the participation of women in media and political processes to be enhanced, it is paramount to build networks across platforms and sectors, especially between women in politics and media practitioners.
2. It is important for women to understand that the Media operates on fast news cycles and small news windows, as well as that journalists often have multiple assignments all requiring quick turn over. Given this, journalists will seldom wait for comment, if when they call, the targeted commentator is not ready, choosing instead to move on to the next target.
3. Women should participate more in public life.
4. Greater effort must be invested into making the media play a more prominent role in supporting women's participation rather than just focus on them as victims. Outcomes of monitoring processes and/results can be used to convince editors to have better portrayal of women in the news.
5. Women's organisation must reaching out to prominent women influencers and either encourage to be media interlocutors or interview them using their own media which can then be shared.
6. A new model of constructive and positive media should be presented based on women's success stories in order to reverse the victim narrative.

Additional Lessons learnt from Plenary

Discussion in plenary, post presentation included the following issues:

1. The assumptions of journalists around women, where the dearth of interlocutors often leads to media practitioners assuming that a woman can speak on all issues related to women or from a women's perspective. Maharat explained that part of the networking element of their work revolves around introducing experts in different areas to appropriate journalists.
2. Challenges around data gathering: This included challenges related to accessing gender disaggregated data from the ministry of the interior and other government bodies, which do not store data in a disaggregated fashion. Maharat explained that in instances where data was hard to access, they often relied on method triangulation and interviews with key informants, and also using the data from multilateral institutions. They mentioned how for the monitoring initiative they had relied on data from the UNDP.
3. The province of issues, and nature of coverage given to women: Maharat explained that during the talk shows where women were present, they were often given questions that were social in nature while their male counterparts were allocated the more "political" questions. They also highlighted that their report breaks down women's coverage across the positive and negative spectrum.

4. **Methodology:** Maharat shared that the methodology was new and had to be implemented in an iterative manner as the project went on.
5. **Sharing and Reception of Findings:** Maharat explained that since this was not the first time they were monitoring the media, they were able to share their findings with editorial teams, and premised their inputs on the challenges of not having enough women in the media. The approach was non-aggressive, and benefitted from relations built over time.

Zambia National Women's Lobby (ZNWL) - Gender and Media Election Monitoring

Zambia National Women's Lobby reported that they had been monitoring elections from a gender perspective since 1996, based on a gender election-monitoring questioner. They shared that for the 2016 Presidential elections they had trained 300 monitors to monitor elections from a gender perspective in 59 districts where women are contesting. The ZNWL shared that their monitoring focused on:

1. Monitor pre nomination process and political campaigns
2. Opening, counting, and closing and polling stations.
3. Post-election processes.

In the aftermath of the monitoring exercise, ZNWL shared that they produced a booklet, which documents the whole process as a gender analysis report of the elections capturing all electoral processes. They explained that the importance of the exercise was to facilitate the analysis and explanation of the situation of men and women from different vantage points. ZNWL highlighted the importance of gender monitoring to the credibility of elections in Zambia where 51% of the population are women, making them key and their involvement in the electoral process, cardinal. Their participation or lack thereof, in Zambia, can affect the outcome and credibility of the electoral process. The ZNWL highlighted the following as the main achievements of their monitoring process in 2016:

Gender and Media Election Monitoring Achievements

1. Engendered the processes of the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ), which now considers the needs of women, and allows for preferential treatment of pregnant women, lactating mothers, and old women at polling stations. These provisions allowed for increased women's participation and have been cited as an impediment to women's participation in previous elections.
2. The ECZ now produces gender-disaggregated data for voter registration and other election data including results.
3. The ECZ has started employing women more, in 2016 there were more women employed as presiding officers than men and more than in previous elections.
4. Women are increasingly being recognized as equal partners in Zambia's electoral processes.

Additions From Plenary Discussions

1. **Tracing and complaints mechanisms:** ZNWL explained that while their process did not include tracing and complaints mechanisms they partnered with actors who had jurisdiction especially on complaints who included the police, ECZ and other NGOs, who would then take on tracing and complaints regarding election. ZNWL also stated that various actors used court processes as a recourse mechanism where disputes and complaints arose.
2. **Lessons Learnt and Future initiatives:** It was explained that the gender monitoring that the ZNWL conducted was part of a civil society Situation Room where other organization's and observers were resident, which allowed the ZNWL to benefit from specialists and expertise from the rest of civil society. The situation room, given its diverse make up also allowed relevant groups to take up and complaints and channel them to appropriate authorities where action could be taken.
3. Both the gender monitoring and the situation room in general were afflicted by technological challenges as well as information verification challenges, but allowed for the scaling up and sharing of experiences and models developed over time.

4. The electoral process and environment in Zambia is ever changing, calling for adaptation of tools and initiatives like the gender monitoring process. ZNWL shared that two media and gender monitoring reports from the 2016 process have been consolidated and are informing program design for 2017 and beyond.

Working with Civic Institutions

Lebanon Support – CSO Knowledge Centre

Lebanon Support, an independent, non-religious, non-political, information and research center from Lebanon shared their initiative, the CSO Knowledge Center, which aims to use research as an advocacy tool, and develop tools for CSOs to enhance their strategies for social change. They shared that they had a multi-disciplinary team of Social scientist, ICT experts and researchers with both qualitative and quantitative research skills competences. Lebanon Support explained that their data is freely accessible online through their CSO knowledge center portal.

Lebanon Support explained that their work focused on producing rigorous research, which academics could use to reflect on civil society. It explained that in this respect, it created localized knowledge on Lebanon (since a lot of information in the market is usually Eurocentric or US developed), while also creating space for synergy between different actors (civil society, academics and policy makers).

The CSO Knowledge Center

The CSO Knowledge center was envisaged as network of civic society and academics. It has several features as a virtual space, including:

1. Research and Analysis page, where young women scholars are encouraged to produce and publish research, in as scientific a manner as is possible with other academics and civil society actors as peer reviewers.
2. Interactive maps, which are used for multiple purposes including media briefings, general information sharing, proposal development, and debates.
3. Interactive timelines on key developments and issues in Lebanon.
4. Info graphics, which data analysts and designers develop as an easy sharable and accessible information format.
5. The portal also has a function that allows organization's and entities to collaborate, with the information gathered and displayed sourced from multiple organization's and partners with which Lebanon support has Memoranda of Understanding with on data sharing.

The underlying approach that Lebanon Support uses is participatory, and it ensures adherence to this approach at all stages of research and project development.

Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe (WCOZ): Non-state Actors Alliance

The Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe shared an initiative they lead and participate in under the curatorship of the National Association of Non-Governmental Organization's (NANGO), the Non-State Actors Alliance, a coordination platform that brings together organised Labour, Civil society and the private sector through their apex organizations. The Coalition reported that the initiative aims to stem duplication of efforts, as well as community frustrations of similar engagements from diverse actors, in an unaccountable fashion to the communities. The initiative, the Women's Coalition explained, thus fosters both horizontal/lateral (between the apex bodies) and vertical accountability (between the non-state actors, communities, and donors). In the process, the Women's Coalition shared that gender is mainstreamed through their involvement.

Non-state Actors Alliance: Genesis and Interim Results

The Women's Coalition outlined the three steps that had taken place in the development of the Non-State Actors Alliance, as follows:

1. Initiating Dialogue and building Consensus: The different non-state actors had been operating in disparate fashion, necessitating the need for a dialogue process around collaboration, coordination and developing consensus on the need to at best coordinate, and at least share information.
2. Crafting a working model: Given the novelty of the initiative there was hardly any precedence that could be followed so the apex organisation had craft a working model which they conceptualised as project housed by the NANGO.
3. Reorganization into clusters – Following the first two stages, the parties to the alliance reorganized into three clusters:
 - 3.1. Capacity audit and assessment – This cluster responded to the extant funding framework, which focused on projects and not institutional support. It also acknowledged that internal institutional governance outside the state was not being paid attention to, together with allied issues around sustainability, leadership, and Inclusivity.
 - 3.2. Coordination- this cluster aimed at facilitating heads of all organizations in the alliance to meet quarterly to discuss what the Alliance's secretariat as well as secretariats of constituent bodies would have developed. It also facilitated internal consultation processes of the different groups in the alliance to ensure that they get mandates and input on alliance issues from their constituencies.
 - 3.3. Operating Environment: This cluster focused on facilitating informed conversation on barriers and vulnerabilities of non-state actors in a bid to anticipate threats and plan mitigation measures.

The Women's coalition reported that the Alliance had so far been successful in removing operating silos amongst the three sectors represented, assisting to ensure shared knowledge, competencies and constituencies. The multiple competences stemming from diversity were reported as having allowed for mutual benefit of each other's skills and competences. The Coalition ended by reporting that they had invested in a baseline study to establish the position of women in the non-state sector, and emphasized that the alliance was focusing on investing in learning platforms, and observing processes that allow for effective women's participation.

Issues from Plenary

1. Business Sector Cooperation and Incorporation? The Women's Coalition explained that rather than individual businesses, the alliance operated with private sector representative groups. It however also explained that given the hierarchical nature of business, the church and labour, the alliance had to seek their involvement through patient engagement with their representative structures. It also explained how it leveraged its "Women empowered for leadership" program to seek effective women's participation in the alliance from other alliance partners.
2. Accountability of non-state actors for accountability with citizens: The initiatives trainings are based on where the people are – i.e. as demanded by context and need. Tools are therefore bespoke – people are not projects – but communities need to be involved in all phases of project development - feedback meetings, sharing project outputs, collective reflections and debriefs.
3. Are businesswomen not part of the established political system: How did we deal with it? There is different positioning across sectors – but part of the process is also to facilitate unlearning bad behaviors and the challenges of sustaining the status quo. Part of the process is for the Civics to begin to leverage their access to show business the advantages of a sound good governance framework, human rights respects and so on – i.e. making a business case for the respect of rights.

Quota Systems: What can we learn from the quota systems debate and country specific experiences – Interview/Panel

	Zambia ZNWL	Lebanon LADE	Malawi WOLREC	Jordan SIGI	Zimbabwe WILD
Presence of/Type of Quota System & Electoral System	No Quota System First Past The Post (FPTP)	No Quota System PR system	No Quota System First Past The Post (FPTP)	Yes: Three kinds of quotas between 10% (local governing council,, 10 and half% for parliament) and 25% (Municipal elections)	Yes: 60 Reserved seats for women in House of Assembly, distributed proportionally based on political party performance at provincial level. Mixed – predominantly Presidential system (FPTP & PR)
Path/Struggles to the Quota	Engaging political parties' national executive committees, asking them to submit draft gender equality policies. The process is aimed at allowing parties to own the quota process. In case the preceding fails; there is also ongoing engagement with government officials to have quota systems in the constitution.	No quota systems, but Lebanon has had a long struggle for the inclusion of quotas and women's effective participation in governance. In 1952 Lebanese women got the right to vote and run for office, but the civil war between 1975 and 1990 eroded some of the gains of women's suffrage. The war was also ended in part due to valiant efforts by women, who appealed across belligerents and society to have the war stopped.	Lobbying political parties to have quarters or reserve 20 seats. Demanding at least 40% representation of women in key structures.		Emanated from the women's movement lobbying of various constituencies during the constitutional reform process that culminated in a new constitution in 2013. – Section 124 of the constitution has a time framed 60 seats reservation for women in parliament until 2023
Opportunities & Challenges	Three proximate legislative and constitutional reform opportunities for inclusion of the quota system in Zambia:	Some opportunities stemming from: Lebanon's 1996 signing of CEDAW (although with reservations on article 9 and 16)	Several opportunities that can be taken advantage of Gender equality act of 2013 which stipulates that any	Build on current gains to push for full equal participation.	Building on current reserved seats to empower women to contest the free seats. Lobby for constitutional reforms that cascade the quota beyond just the

	<p>Zambia signed the 2017 SADC Gender protocol barometer – presenting opportunity to hold them to the 50/50 gender representation opportunity</p> <p>Political Parties bill – CSOs making submissions to revise the political party’s bill- could lobby for quota systems to be ingrained in parties.</p> <p>Constitutional amendments – post 2016 general elections there were submissions on clauses that were ambiguous- could be another opportunity for quota systems</p>	<p>Lebanese political parties have stated intentions to have women on their lists and having a gendered quota in electoral law – although recent amendments (June 2017) did not include quota.</p> <p>The prime minister had stated an intention to have women on political party lists but this is not legislated</p>	<p>organisation’s structures should be no less than 40% of one sex or more than 60% of the other sex</p> <p>Electoral reforms – new political party’s bill where movements are pushing for 50 plus 1 and PR (mixed electoral system).</p> <p>Implementation on acceded to commitments remains the main challenge to quota implementation in Malawi, mostly based on cultural issues rather than systematic exclusion of women.</p>	<p>house of assembly to local government and senate.</p> <p>Building the capacity of PR representatives to perform, while dealing with perceptions of quotas creating silos and limitations of participation of PR MP’s in other spheres.</p> <p>Challenge the capacity myth around women leaders on terms that are not applied to their male counterparts.</p> <p>Focus on removing other barriers to effective women’s participation – patriarchal, cultural, social, structural and economic, not just largely imagined capacity issues.</p>	
Are the quotas or process towards them working?	<p>5/8 parties have submitted draft plans that will be imbedded in their constitutions.</p> <p>In the 2016 general elections one party announced that they would reserve 40% of seats for women – but they did not action their commitment.</p>	<p>There have been some signs of political will which have not been backed up by action and institutionalization.</p> <p>Lebanon got the Proportional Representation electoral system, but not the gendered quota.</p>	<p>Some political parties have yielded to the 40% demand</p> <p>The leading opposition party had instituted a 35% quota but has now changed to the 40% demanded.</p>	<p>People in general beyond women are beginning to accept the quota system –and women are beginning to believe that they can achieve a lot through the quota system</p> <p>Actual women’s participation and yields from quotas are higher: in 2017 at Municipal election there is 41%, for local governing council it is 13.8% and parliament just over 5%.</p>	<p>There has been an improvement in the composition of women as a proportion of Zimbabwe’s 8th parliament. Up to 33% of MPs. However, there remains a need to change the narrative to focus on systems of power, which assume that women are incapable when they</p>

				<p>Conservative Christian Political Party – has 30% of women in the decision-making positions.</p> <p>Disability Quotas have also had a positive effect aiding esteem and belief of disabled people in their ability to tackle responsibility at the highest level.</p> <p>However increased participation of women in political parties, has not led to significant and progressive policy shifts and advocates of the quota stand accused by men of brain washing women</p>	<p>never had any real opportunity to lead.</p> <p>Honest reflection aimed at disrupting what is not working, dealing with structural barriers and environmental factors that impede effective women's participation.</p>
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Plenary: 10 Recommendations and points to ponder moving forward on Quotas.

1. The women's movement needs to develop an evidence-based strategy to convince intransigent political parties on quotas and mobilise their members while instituting strong follow-up mechanisms on political party quota commitments.
2. The women's movement must accept that Quotas are a means to an end, not the end itself, Equal participation should remain the goal, with quotas as part of a holistic framework or program of electoral and political reforms.
 - a. The gender quota is part of the electoral law, and other legal requirements that may be unfair and discriminatory should be taken in to consideration together with other impediments to the effective women's participation like patriarchy, economic and financial impediments.
 - b. Proportional Representation can also be part of the roadmap to full effective women's participation, as seen from gains from this electoral system in places where it has been implemented like Namibia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe.
3. Following 2 above, the women's movement needs to build alliances with other civic society organisations demanding electoral and democratic reforms.
4. Women's organizations must strive for shared consciousness on quotas to deal with contradictions and harmonize varying perceptions on quotas. These contradictions include:
 - a. The quota as a temporary measure versus the quota as permanent;
 - b. The quotas as entailing that women should vote for women versus free choice;
 - c. The quota versus 50/50 representation;
 - d. Affirmative action versus competence/merit based selection etc.
5. Women's participation in political parties and systems needs to be a key focal point as part of the founding opportunities for enhancing women's participation and leadership in political processes.
6. Discussions on quotas must be contextually grounded, taking into consideration socio-cultural impediments to women's effective participation in particular locations.
7. The women's movement must deal with the challenge of unfair judgment of women leaders and double standards, which often force women to meet higher standards of leadership and accountability than their male counterparts.
 - a. For instance, in Malawi, Former President Joice Banda was unfairly criticized and held to a higher standard of accountability, as well as blamed for the cash-gate scandal, which had started under male administrations over ten years before her administration.
8. The women's movement must be strategic and realistic in the continued march towards 50/50 representation, noting that this is a long march and high threshold for success, which even advanced democracies, are yet to achieve.
9. The quota system creates a basis for further progress, which is likely to be evolutionary rather than revolutionary. Ergo, women who land in parliament on the basis of quotas need to be supported and strengthened to contest for seats outside of the quota allocations.
10. There is a need to be weary of perpetuating intra-gender gaps based on finance and income so that not only women who can afford to be, are in politics but also those deserving despite their financial or income status.



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