



COLLABORATIVE WOMEN LEADERS FORUM

Collaborative Women Leadership, Leading Through Conflict

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3rd September 2011

1. COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP IMPACT INITIATIVES

1.1. Name Of Initiative:

- Wanawake Wanaweza

1.2. Conveners

- Susan Muita VIPA
- Erick Matsanza Labour Party of Kenya (LPK)

1.3. Purpose

To empower women politically, socially and economically with the aim of creating an informed women population that is in a position to prevent and deal with conflict.

1.4. Scope

The project aims to cover all the 47 counties

1.5. Submitted to

UNDP, nirina.kiplagat@undp.org

1.6. Initial Structural Collaboration

Since majority of the pioneer members are based in Nairobi, this needs to be expanded to the grassroots so as to empower more women in the villages who will rise up to leadership challenges. Susan Muita of VIPA is to be the Convener General. County Committees will be established to provide a link to the secretariat. It is also great to note that Wanawake Wanaweza will also work with open minded men who believe that women can also rise up to the leadership challenge. The management team identified Erick Matsanza of Labour Party of Kenya as such a man, having gone through the same Collaborative Leadership Training in Naivasha, he was invited to be one of the conveners given his ability to avidly handle leadership issues at the grassroots and can add value to the organization as it kicks off.



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2. Background

The Wanawake Wanaweza concept was generated during the collaborative leadership seminar held at the Great Rift Valley Lodge in Naivasha. Kenya

It is widely believed that the role of the educator and peace-builder in African societies is mainly allocated to women. This role is achieved through activities that the children and society participate in. Unfortunately, the woman is challenged in times of political conflict due to lack of information and political and economic power. Wanawake Wanaweza will also work with open minded men who believe that women can also rise up to the leadership challenge.

The Wanawake Wanaweza concept seeks to provide solutions to the above challenges.

3. Expected Activities

The project aims to implement the following activities

- Empower and encourage women to take up elective positions at county and national levels
- Educate the grassroots woman in national policies/constitution
- Exchange programs among different communities to promote peace

4. Strategy

- Barazas
- Workshops
- Seminars
- Cultural festivals

5. Expected Results.

- An enhanced woman understanding of their Constitutional rights and the exercise thereof.
- Economic growth and development amongst women at the community level.
- Increased participation and representation of women in county and national political processes.
- Positive influence on women's perception on exercising their rights.



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6. Proposed Activities /Request For Support

6.1. Strategy planning meeting for the Wanawake Wanaweza management team in Nairobi

There is need for the management team to meet and plan the role out of the project and come up with a comprehensive strategy on the way forward including the timelines. The management team through its conveners therefore requests that UNDP facilitates for the said meeting in Nairobi.

7. Organization Background and Future Scope.

7.1. About the Organization

Wanawake wanaweza is to be registered as a trust in Kenya that seeks to coalesce energies around women's empowerment at the community (county) level towards their development, advancement and active participation in national and developmental issues.

The thrust towards its formation was informed by the era of women's discrimination and marginalization that has seen their issues take a back-seat even in national legislation. In Kenya more specifically, the women agenda has not been clearly defined since it has been lumped up into an activism agenda without clearly defining the real agenda.

Wanawake Wanaweza came about to define the women agenda around economic empowerment, social and cultural advancement and active political participation and representation in all levels of governance.

With the coming into effect of the new Constitution in August 2010, there came a need to shape the women agenda in consonance with the Constitutional provisions as there has been largely a deficiency in terms of legal provisions in support of the same. The expansive Bill of Rights that puts a lot of emphasis on non-discrimination on among others gender and the need for participatory governance further supports this call. The Constitution has received a lot of praise for its deliberate effort to safeguard the rights of the discriminated lot, among them women.

Wanawake Wanaweza, being a trust that brings under one umbrella a number of women groups at the county level, has membership drawn from individual women leagues of various registered political parties in Kenya who are grassroots based. Its focus is on women's economic, socio-cultural and political advanced defined by clear policies that support such advancement.

7.2. Problem Statement And Relevance.

Women of Kenya comprise more than 50.3% (from the 2009 National Census) but their participation in national issues is minimal owing to more than one reason. Since independence, women have failed to participate fully in national issues owing to some of the retrogressive cultural and social practices that justify their discrimination; lack of economic power due to lack of property rights, lack of affordable certified seeds and farm inputs, unproductive means of production, lack of productive markets, lack of agricultural education to improve productivity, lack of credit facilities to subsistence farmers who are mostly women and unfair trade practices in local and national markets and inexistence of a saving culture; and political discrimination



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owing to lack of laws and policies that would provide for a leveled playing field for both men and women.

Women at the community level are at a greater disadvantage as most of them are illiterate and semi-illiterate and information that would sensitize them to stimulate change is hard to come by. The elite women have all shifted to the urban areas only to return during the electioneering period with promises to deliver women from their predicament once elected into positions of power - which remains just but a promise never to be fulfilled . It was evident during the civic education period of the draft Constitution that women need a lot of education on their rights especially as envisaged in the new Constitution if at all the said provisions are to benefit them in the long-run.

Women are mainly subsistence farmers tilling viable pieces of lands but using unproductive means and uncertified seeds hence reaping very little that is barely enough to feed their families let alone have surplus to sell. In quite a number of families in the rural areas, women are the sole breadwinners meaning that they have to put in extra energy to meet their families' basic needs. This has not been made possible by the poor farming practices they employ in their farms which gives them very little produce if any. These women too have not instilled the culture of saving due to lack of SACCOs to support that and some are ignorant of the benefits of joining forces in form of savings groups.

It is also a fact that women have been socialized in a culture of "wait-to-be-given" which is not helping in the journey towards their advancement since most of them believe that they can only get if they are given by the men. This has only helped in giving men an opportunity to decide what is right for women and deny them the enjoyment of their basic rights.

These insurmountable problems have been viewed by Wanawake wanaweza as the greatest impediment to any effort to advance women's status especially under the new Constitutional dispensation. The emergence of new governance structures by the name of counties has brought with it an opportunity for women to participate more effectively in governance of their communities, but there is also a challenge of how well these women are prepared for this.

It is not enough to have Constitutional provisions on Devolution and the Bill of Rights, but it is more beneficial to have the women clearly understand how these are meant to work and also be prepared to participate more effectively. As envisaged in the Constitution, everyone has a right to participate in national matters without discrimination, which is the entry point for Wanawake wanaweza project, to have an agenda-based politics concerning service delivery at the county level.



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8. Project Description And Its Effectiveness.

8.1. Project Objective.

Towards instilling agenda-based development and politics on service delivery steered by women at the county level.

From the problem statement above, it is clear that there is a dire need for women to be mobilized around discussions on development and governance informally, away from the classroom set-up, within the shortest time possible and in an intensive manner to help handle the matters stated here-in.

Wanawake wanaweza intends to roll out the project in form of informal community discussions (open forums) on women in selected counties in Coast, Western, Nyanza and North Eastern provinces for a period of 5 years during its first phase. Since this is intended to be radical as time is not on women's side, the project will be rolled-out simultaneously in all the said counties and different facilitators will be identified to sensitize women on political, social and economic forums. The initial meetings will be for all women, after which they will be divided into interest groups around political, social and economic themes. This is important since different women have different interests and hence lumping them up in one group may not be so productive after all. It is in these thematic groups that trainings, exposure, modeling, mentorship and networking will be carried out with a view to bring out the true potential of sensitized women.

There will be annual project review, be gauging results on the set objectives vis-à-vis the activities in place to ensure that the project does not deviate from its course. After the first five years, the project will be reviewed to meet the then circumstances along addressing emerging chances and adopting emerging societal trends.

Important issues under the planned activities include:

8.1.1. Political Empowerment.

The discussions will put into sharp focus the need to coalesce women to demand for service delivery especially from the county government and enacting laws and policies that are gender-based and women conducting social audits on the implementation of these laws and policies. This will ensure that women across the constituency are mobilized, sensitized, trained and prepared for active participation in development and governance matters.

These women will also be urged to identify one of their own who will champion their agenda at the county governments (county assembly and executive) to ensure that the county legislations so enacted shall have gender concerns addressed.

These women will be educated on the Constitution, national and local legislations to ensure that they have their voice heard at all levels and can audit how these laws and policies are being implemented and that their basic Constitutional principles among them **at least** 1/3 representation are upheld.



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These steps are important to dispel the misconstrued explanation already circulating in common discussions especially by male politicians that women have their reserve seats under the 47 seats for women at the national government which they must limit their fight for and not bother about the rest of the national seats. Women are also being lied to that they should wait for nominations to get the gender balance, further explaining the “wait-to-be-given” syndrome. Lack of economic power is also locking women from fighting the political battle which is expensive, especially fighting against wealthy male politicians who have accumulated wealth over years.

Immediate target under this theme will be to achieve at least 75% of women at the county level registered for 2012 General elections and participating in elections at all levels, that is both national and county. It is also targeted that at least in all the counties that Wanawake wanaweza will be implementing their projects, at least one woman under their mentorship will find her way into the county government armed with the women agenda and having grassroots support from the women at the county level.

8.1.2. Economic Empowerment.

Appreciating the problem faced by women at the county level in subsistence farming, women will be taken through training on the modern methods of farming and modes of sourcing for quality certified seeds and farming inputs. Further, it will be essential to organize local and regional markets for their produce to ensure that they fetch quality prices for their produce and that they are not exploited by middlemen.

There is also a problem of lack of legislation in the current legal system that allows provision of subsidized farming inputs for farmers and secure availability of the same. The project will be lobbying for the woman sitting at the county government to push for such legislation that goes along way in uplifting women’s subsistence farming that boots production. This will ensure that they have enough produce to feed their families, satisfy the local market and venture into the national market through the National Cereals and Produce Board district branches.

The project will also train women on SACCO formation and management to instill the culture of saving in them through these savings groups. These are also key for economic empowerment as they provide a platform for exposure and training on the members to the SACCO.



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8.1.3. Desocialization Of Women From “The Wait-To-Be-Given” Mentality”

The project will also look into desocializing women from sitting back and waiting to be given tokens and handouts but go ahead and fight for their rights. This is very much possible if they understand their rights under the law and the numerous platforms they can use to exercise their rights.

Throughout the project, Wanawake wanaweza will ensure that they avail copies of the Constitution, Political Parties Act and other relevant legislations and policies as teaching guides for the community members. It is important that they are up-to-date as far as the law is concerned and that they can utilize the provisions therein to their benefit.

8.1.4. Expected Results.

- a) Enhanced women’s understanding of their Constitutional rights and the exercise thereof.
- b) Revamped economic productivity, growth and development amongst women at the community level.
- c) Increased participation and representation of women in county and national political processes.
- d) Increased number of women members in local SACCOs.
- e) Positive influence on women’s perception on exercising their rights.

9. Proposed Activities.

- a) **Awareness creation session for Wanawake Wanaweza Management Team and staff at the secretariat:** Our policy-making division will be taken through a debriefing session that will enhance their awareness the project objectives and the target results. This will ensure program ownership and each understanding their role especially when it comes to mobilization at the ground when the project is rolled out.
- b) **Program roll-out at the constituency level.** This will involve local community members, leaders and opinion leaders in a pace-setting forum in each of the constituencies to introduce the project and have them psychologically prepared for the next phases of the project.
- c) **Training of Trainers.** Identified community mobilizers from within the counties will be taken through a two-days training workshop in the topics under governance, economic empowerment among others to ensure that they be the trainers of other community members during the project period to collaborate with contracted facilitators in all the activities. They will also be serving as the interpreters in local languages of the discussions/community dialogue forums. These are the same agents who will be holding the informal meetings at the community level with the women.



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- d) **Community-based Dialogue Forums** (focus group discussions, local *barazas* and leaders *barazas*). These will be in form of forums not modeled in workshop form to give women a chance to be sensitized on the topics herein. They will be steered by identified facilitators in collaboration with the trained facilitators and customized to fit the local needs as per the county in question. During the same sessions, evaluation forms will be issued with key questions that the community members will be required to answer to gauge their understanding of the project and the level that this will have changed at the end of the project.
- e) **Training of women under the economic, political and social themes:** From the community-based dialogue forums, women will be divided into political, social and economic interests to enhance their understanding on the same. A criteria for identifying women in the various classes will be developed afore to ensure that women reap maximum benefits from the mentorship and trainings.
- f) **Formation and management of SACCOs:** savings and credits groups will be formed for and by the women for instill the savings culture in them. Women from the locations will be encouraged to become members of the project to be able to access cheap credit facilities that will be useful to boost their farming. In the same SACCOs, women will receive relevant training in farming and be exposed to a lot of useful knowledge in agriculture and economic development.
- g) **Quarterly monitoring and evaluation.** This will be done by an identified Monitoring and Evaluation officer in collaboration with the in-house project officer to monitor the implementation of the project, come up with an M&E report on the progress to ensure that the project is kept in line with its objectives and target results.

10. Proposed Partnerships.

Wanawake Wanaweza Trust will be forming a network of many women groups and organizations in each of the identified counties to ensure that it has wider coverage. It is intended that in each of the counties, identified CBOs and women groups will be targeted for collaboration those that have similar goals to create synergy. These organized are based at the community level hence they have a very clear feel of what the community needs are and have a touch with virtually all the community members. They will ensure that the project gains are spread across the constituency and in a very simplified manner over a period of time. It is also ensure for sustainability purposes.

We will also be seeking partnerships with the local provincial administration and other local community leaders to ensure their support. It is critical since they are the very basic source of authority at the community level, hence their support gives a lot of confidence among the community members. Further, it is essential that they understand the new governance structures as they will affect how they govern and they ought to appreciate change first hand which can only be done if they understand it. They will also be able to serve as agents of information in all the forums they attend to.

10.1. Risk Assessment.

- a) The vastness of the constituencies that Wanawake Wanaweza will be working in.
- b) Existing perceptions and culture about women and the enjoyment of their rights.
- c) Limited resources to have a wide variety of activities.
- d) Slow pace of constitution implementation at the national level.
- e) Language barriers and high illiteracy levels in the rural constituencies.
- f) Slow pace of county government formation and the politics that come with it.

10.2. Mitigation.

- a) Economies of scale.
- b) Use of local CBOs and women and youth groups to reach more community members with limited resources.
- c) Clear focus of project objectiveness and a deliberate effort to steer clear of politics.

10.3. Assumptions.

- a) Women are eager to know and exercise their rights.
- b) The Constitution implementation process will stay right on course.
- c) Like-minded CBOs and women & youth groups will be willing to collaborate and go an extra mile for common benefit.
- d) There will be adequate resources to do all proposed activities and disbursed by UNDP in time.
- e) All stakeholders will participate and cooperate.
- f) The county government in place will put in place the necessary legislation in support of women's advancement.

10.4. Exit Strategy.

- a) The mentored women leaders will continue mentoring other women into leadership and amassing support and cooperation amongst each other to run for seats and increase their representation as a result of increased awareness on their rights.
- b) Collaboration with local CBOs and women & youth groups will provide a chance through which the locals can own the project and have continuous discussions on human rights and responsibilities. These groups hold regular informal meetings amongst themselves which are less consuming in terms of resources.
- c) Wanawake Wanaweza will be developing a pool of donors from whom she will seek more funding to carry on the project and have more phases basing on the lessons learnt to the end of the project.
- d) SACCOs running and managed by women will continue providing a platform for saving and training on the women.



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11. Pioneer Members

1. Susan Muita	VIPA (Convener)	9. Elizabeth Kimkung	ODM
2. Loise Nakhumicha	Sisi Kwa Sisi	10. Ruth Gichohi	AGANO
3. Margaret Nyoike	NAPK	11. Mercy Ngii	FORD PEOPLE
4. Alice Gathoni	AGANO	12. Muhubo Omar	KSC
5. Lucy Ndinda	TIP TIP	13. Rahab Gathoni	SABA SABA
6. Jasper Nyaboga		14. Levina Mkala	NEW FORD KENYA
7. Wambui Maathai	CCU	15. Erick Matsanza	LPK (Convener)
8. Linnah Buni	SHIRIKISHO	16. Daniel Opande	

12. Contact Details

The Convener

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