



*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*

Ready for Success

**TRAINING MANUAL FOR
POTENTIAL WOMEN CANDIDATES
IN THE 2016 ELECTION**



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FOREWORD ■

Increasing the number of women in elected positions is a set goal of the Vietnamese government. Through active and consistent leadership, this objective can be achieved. ***Ready for Success: Training Manual for Potential Women Candidates in the 2016 Election*** comes at an opportune time as government agencies and civil society organizations prepare early for the upcoming elections. Based on needs expressed by government stakeholders and national partners, this training manual includes all relevant information required by women candidates to be successfully elected.

The Viet Nam national elections in 2011 and 2007 saw a decrease in the number of women elected to the National Assembly. This trend needs to be reversed if the government is to meet its target of at least 35-40 percent women's representation of elected delegates set forth in Resolution 11-NQ/TW of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of Viet Nam, and the National Strategy on Gender Equality.

Today, only one-quarter of elected officials across the country are women. To increase that number, more female candidates need to be nominated, and the number of nominees must increase as well. A review of past elections found that only 31 percent of total candidates were women, while only 12 percent of the centrally nominated candidates were women.

With this training manual, we hope to increase the number of women who are ready and confident to participate in elections. Viet Nam's civil service and workforce today is abundant with qualified women who could stand for election if encouraged. This manual will provide women a roadmap for more effectively engagement as a candidate in the nomination and election process. If women are on the ballot, they can be elected.

Greater participation of women in political and public leadership makes key institutions more representative of the people at large. It also affirms women's equal rights, increases the diversity of perspectives in decision making, and – as studies from many countries have shown – female participation in policy making positions strengthens the overall quality of those institutions.

Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the current leadership to ensure that gender equality targets are met. With this manual, UNDP is pleased to support government agencies in their efforts to achieve equal representation in elected offices in line with the national target.

Louise Chamberlain



UNDP Country Director

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This manual was developed for all partners to use in their training of potential women candidates. The purpose is to bring together all the necessary information potential candidates will need to navigate the candidate nomination and election process.

Many people have been involved in contributing, reviewing and providing comments on the manual. Special appreciation goes to Hoang Thu Ha of Viet Nam Women's Union for her concerted effort to ensure all information is up-to-date and clear. Nguyen Thi Ky, former Director of Training Center for Elected Representatives, attention to detail and accuracy added greatly to the manual.

Thank you to all who provided their comments to improve the manual including Shoko Ishikawa, Nguyen Thi Thuy and Leika Aruga of UNWomen, Tran Hong Diep, Hoang Lan Huong, Vuong Nga, and Vu Thi Quynh Hoa of Oxfam, Suzette Mitchell and Nguyen Thu Hang of Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Australian Embassy Viet Nam, Tran My Hanh, Doina Ghimici and Bui Phuong Tra of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Pham Thu Huong of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front, and Nguyen Thi Hang Nga former National Assembly delegate of Ho Chi Minh city. Also thank you to Do Thi Kim Linh and members of Da Nang Women's Union and Nguyen Thi Hong Xinh of Ho Chi Minh City for their comments on the original manual.

The manual was developed under the auspices of the Project Women's Leadership: Empowerment of women in the period of international integration – a collaborative initiative between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Jean Munro, Technical Advisor to the Women's Leadership initiative is the primary author with research and technical support from Women's Leadership staff Pham Phuong Thao and Do Viet Ha.

The views expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent those of the United Nations, including UNDP, or the UN Member States.

ACRONYMS

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CGFED	Research Centre for Gender, Family, and Environment in Development
CPV	Communist Party of Viet Nam
iSEE	Institute for Studies of Society, Economy, and Environment
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NA	Viet Nam National Assembly
NCFAW	National Committee for the Advancement of Women
NPGE	National Programme on Gender Equality
NSGE	National Strategy on Gender Equality
PAPI	Viet Nam Provincial Governance and Public Administration Performance Index
PC	People's Council
PyD	Peace and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VFF	Viet Nam Fatherland Front
WU	Viet Nam Women's Union

GLOSSARY

Gender: The social relations between men and women. It refers to the relationship between men and women, boys and girls, and how this is socially constructed. Gender roles are dynamic and change over time.

Gender Equality: The result of the absence of discrimination on the basis of a person's sex in opportunities and the equal allocation of resources or benefits or in access to services.

Political Participation: Political participation derives from the freedom to speak out, assemble and associate; the ability to take part in the conduct of public affairs; and the opportunity to register as a candidate, to campaign, to be elected and to hold office at all levels of government. Under international standards, men and women have an equal right to participate fully in all aspects of the political process.

Discrimination: The unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people or things, especially on the grounds of race, age, or sex.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this manual is to provide potential women candidates the necessary background knowledge and skills to become a successful candidate and elected deputies. The manual builds on three separate political participation manuals that were prepared for the 2011 elections.

The main audience for this manual are women who want to be candidates in the election in 2016 at the national, provincial, district or commune level.

Trainers are welcome to use the manual as well as the accompanying training agenda and slide presentations that compliment the manual. It would be useful if the participants read the different modules before each training session. The manual strives to provide three equally important foundations for potential women candidates:

Knowledge

This manual provides you key information about different aspects of the candidate selection and election process, roles and responsibilities of elected deputies, how to develop an election action plan and how to work with media. Importantly, it also demonstrates key information about women's representation in elected positions, the institutional and attitudinal factors that limit women's advancement in the political sphere and the supporting factors in place to increase women's representation. This knowledge will give you power and confidence.

Skills

Public speaking, responding to media's questions, analytical skills to identify priority areas to address in your action plan, developing a media strategy – these are all important skills to have to navigate the electoral process and to be a successful deputy.

Confidence

The intention of this manual is to ensure you understand that it is your right to be a candidate, your voice and your opinion is important and valued. Most importantly, the manual conveys that ensuring equal women's voice in political discourse brings about better policies, laws and processes for the benefit of entire community.

We strongly support you to better understand the election process and to fully participate politically. In this way, you will create a brighter Viet Nam in the future. Through more inclusive governance, particularly with increased participation of women in the political sphere, Viet Nam will prosper and bring about equality for all.

1

WHY DO WOMEN MAKE GOOD ELECTED LEADERS?

> 35²⁰¹⁶ ♀ / ♂



In this module, you will build your knowledge, skills and confidence in the following areas:

Knowledge:

- Women deputy's ability to be critical of administrative government and their knowledge of a wide range of issues is equal to that of male deputies.
- Women deputies represent women's perspectives and uphold women's rights more than male deputies.

Skills:

- How to respond when people question whether women should be leaders.
- How to talk about running as a woman candidate.

Confidence:

- It is important that you represent your own interests and needs directly in the political setting.

Women bring to the table a phenomenal degree of knowledge, experience, attitude, passion and beliefs. Having their views shape public policies, programmes will bring about a model of governance that serves all citizens. In many cultures, women are known to be strong negotiators and are able to resolve issues effectively. Women can be strong advocates, often promoting the views of those marginalized.

What to do as a woman candidate

As a potential candidate, you are recommended to focus your discussions on the key issues in your community and electoral district. Explain what you can bring as an elected leader to the parliament. You have a lot to give and your perspective and views are valuable. Emphasize that you have much to draw on from your various roles – your roles as a professional woman, as a party member, as an educated person, as an experienced leader, as a strong community member as a mother and as a wife. Demonstrate to your constituents and voters that you are a confident leader who is able to move your community forward in a positive direction.



What not to do

Although you can represent the voice of women, you are not only running as a candidate for women. As a candidate, you are a representative of your entire community. Do not run just as a candidate for women. Similarly, do not fall into a trap of depending being a woman candidate. Shift the conversation and dialogue to focus on issues that you will address. Do not answer questions related to clothing, hair or make-up, husbands and relationships. Ensure that all conversations, interviews and speeches are kept at a professional level. Male candidates are not requested to speak about these issues and you should not be either.

How to talk about running as a woman candidate

If you are questioned about your ability or your right to run as a candidate, there are a number of responses you can give:

- The Party and government have demonstrated their support to increasing the number of women in political office through a number of key laws, policies and resolutions.
- The government identifies the right to political participation in the constitution, the National Strategy on Gender Equality as well as the Gender Equality Law.
- Viet Nam can benefit from the approaches, perspectives, ideas and perseverance of the women of Viet Nam.

- Vietnamese women have proven their ability through their continually increased roles in starting and leading successful companies, and their ability in leading communities and organizations.
- Having more women in political positions is a reasonable step and is not a radical idea.
- By increasing the number of women in elected positions, there will be a better reflection and representation of society in parliament, which will help ensure there is greater diversity of perspectives and priorities incorporated in policy decisions.
- International research illustrates that increased women's representation leads to higher profits in businesses and greater work satisfaction among workers.
- As has been continuously shown, women who hold elected positions are still able to be good professionals, neighbors, friends, wives and mothers.
- Women can be great leaders!

Women's Voice in the Viet Nam National Assembly

Although there are currently less than 30 percent women in the National Assembly, their presence, their voice, their arguments make a positive difference. A recent research found that women National Assembly members represent women's issues more than men National Assembly members. On issues such as domestic violence law, land rights, and retirement age, a higher number of women than men defended and spoke up for the rights of women. The same report found that women deputies were equally critical of laws and ministers. These findings go against some of the stereotypes that women are not knowledgeable of a wide range of issues, that they cannot be critical of ministers or performance of ministries and they do not argue or present their opinion. These findings emphasize the point that by increasing women's representation in elected positions, governance improves (UNDP, 2014).

2

WOMEN AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN VIET NAM

> 35%
2016 ♀/♂



In this module, you will build your knowledge and understanding of following areas:

Knowledge:

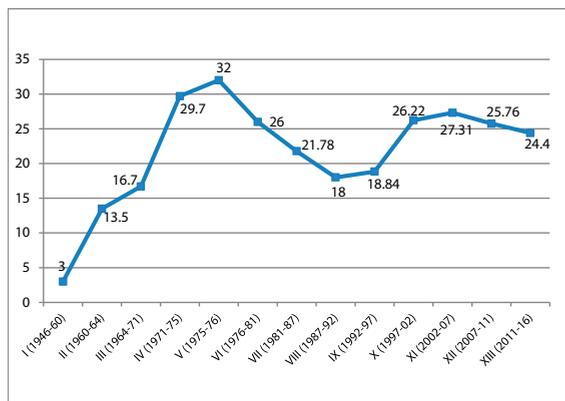
- How well are women represented in elected political offices at all levels
- What the barriers are to women’s political participation
- What supportive factors are in place to advance women’s political participation

What is the current situation with women’s representation in Viet Nam?

National Level

Across the public sector and political field, the representation of women and particularly women in senior positions vary. At the highest level, over the last two decades there has always been a woman Vice President. In the Politburo, there has been a recent increase in 2013 from one to two members.

In the National Assembly, representation has fluctuated greatly since 1946. In the term 1975-1976 it reached its highest point of 32 percent and has decreased to currently 24.4 percent in 2011. Over the previous three terms, the percentage has decreased however the actual numbers have fluctuated (see Annex A).



Viet Nam ranks within the top five countries in the region behind Timor Leste (15), Philippines (41), Singapore (46) and Lao People’s Democratic Republic (48).

Internationally, Viet Nam ranks 49th according to the Inter-parliamentary Union (IPU, May 2015).

Sub-national level

At the sub-national level, women’s representation in People’s Councils varies from 24 percent to 27 percent and has increased in the last three terms. There has been a significant rise at the commune level from 16.1 percent in 1994 to 27.7 percent in 2011. The range is depicted in the table below. The percentage of women holding Chair of People’s Council positions is extremely low, ranging from 1.56 percent at the provincial level to 4.09 percent at the commune level. We observe that women hold more Vice Chair positions and there has been a significant increase from the previous terms, as shown in the table below.

Percentage of Women in Provincial, District and Commune People’s Councils during Terms 1994-1999, 1999-2004, 2004-2011 and 2011-2016

	1994-1999	1999-2004	2004-2011	2011-2016
Provincial level	20.40	22.33	23.80	25.70
District level	18.00	20.12	22.94	24.62
Commune level	14.30	16.10	19.53	27.71

Source: Office of the National Assembly, 2011

Percentage of Women as Chairs and Vice Chairs in Provincial, District and Commune People’s Councils during 1999-2004, 2004-2011 and 2011-2016

Positions	Provincial level			District level			Commune level		
	1999-2004	2004-2011	2011-2016	1999-2004	2004-2011	2011-2016	1999-2004	2004-2011	2011-2016
Chair	1.64	1.56	6.35	5.46	3.92	5.5	3.46	4.09	5.69
Vice Chair	8.19	28.13	20.31	11.42	20.26	20.86	5.60	10.61	13.67

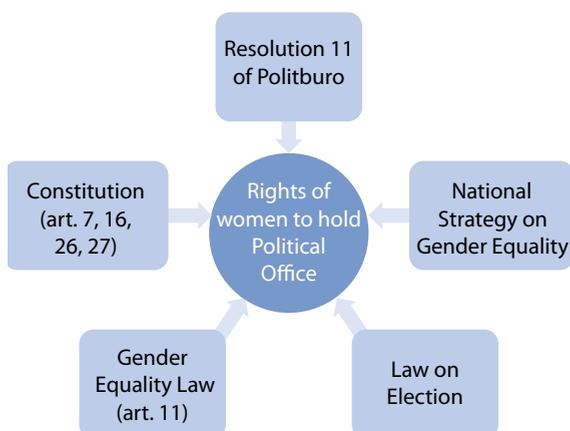
Source: Viet Nam Women’s Union, 2011 and 2014

The representation of women and men in ministries and equivalent agencies of the Government is included in Annex B.

What is the legal framework that supports increased women’s representation?

The rights of women to political participation and the government’s strategy to increase the number of women in political office is laid out in numerous legal government and Party documents. These are listed in the table in the Annex C and the key articles are highlighted.

The rights of women to hold political office is laid out in the 2013 Constitution (article 7, 16, 27 and 27), article 11 of the Gender Equality Law and Resolution 11-NQ/TW of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of Viet Nam dated 27/4/2007 on the Work for Women in the Period of Accelerating Industrialization and Modernization and the Law on Elections of delegates to the National Assembly and delegates to the People’s Council.



The government has recognized the limited representation and the barriers faced by women in leadership positions and has put in place a number of policies and strategies to explicitly address the barriers and increase women’s representation. Specifically the National Strategy on Gender Equality (NSGE) has an explicit objective to strengthen women’s representation in leadership and management positions in order to gradually reduce a gender gap in politics. Within the NSGE is a set target of a minimum of 25 percent women’s representation in the Party’s committees at different levels for the term of office between 2016 and 2020; a minimum of 35 percent women’s representation in the National Assembly and People’s Councils at different levels for the term of office between 2016 and 2020.

What are the barriers for women's participation in leadership?

Women face numerous barriers in the political sphere limiting their ability to achieve senior government and elected positions. These barriers can be divided into two types – institutional and attitudinal. These barriers impact on women differently and not all women face the same types of barriers.



Institutional Barriers

Retirement Age

The unequal retirement age of women and men, as stated in Viet Nam's labour code, has a direct impact on limited representation of women in senior positions. Viet Nam's labour code states that women are required to retire at the age of 55 while men retire at 60. The difference in 5 years has an impact on the woman's career from when she is first hired. Due to this law:

- Women experience a shorter working life as well as a shorter period for advancing in their careers compared to their male colleagues.
- As a result, their chance of promotion, training, planning, rotation is limited.
- To be promoted, one must have worked for a certain period of time. As many women take maternity leave, they already have less working time than colleagues who do not take maternity leave.

- Women have a smaller overall income over the course of their career.
- Additionally, their different maximum age of retirement makes them uncompetitive for leadership positions as they will hold the positions for a shorter period than male leaders.
- What is of most concern for the public sector is that women are forced to retire when they are at a point in their career when they are most effective.

According to Guidance No15-HD/BTCTW (5/11/2012) of the Organization Department of the Central Executive Committee of the Party, to be eligible to be on the human resource plan, the employee must be able to work an additional 2 terms (10 years) or at least one term (5 years) before being required to retire. For women, this means they need to be on the human resource plan by the age of 45 or at the latest by the age of 50. You are required to be on the human resource plan in order to be promoted. To be promoted, you must be able to work an additional 5 years. Therefore, women lose their chance to be put on the human resource plan at the age of 46 or promoted at the age of 51. This is a loss for the Vietnamese government as well as for Vietnamese women civil servants as it is at this point in a woman's career that she is most effective.

Examples of gender differences in eligibility for human resource plan

Ms. Thuy is a staff at the Ministry of Trade. She meets all the criteria regarding education level, capability, and past performance to be put on the human resource plan. However, she is now 46 years old and is no longer eligible to be put on the human resource plan. Her colleague, Mr. Trung, however is 46 years old, has the same education level, years of work experience and capability and he is put on the human resource plan.

This phenomenon is particularly seen in the National Assembly. An analysis of the deputies from the 13th term shows that approximately equal percentages of women and men delegates will be forced to retire at the end 2015 thus disallowing for them to run in the election of the 14th term. As shown in the table below, 30 of the 122 women delegates (25 percent) will be forced to retire compared with 98 of the 378 male delegates (26 percent) (UNDP 2014). When analyzing forced retirement of full-time members, we see that a higher percentage of women delegates will need to retire than men delegates (31 percent compared to 22 percent).

Examples of gender differences in eligibility for promotion

Ms. Hang is a deputy director at the Ministry of Finance. She is currently on the human resource plan and is an exceptional manager. She is very capable to be a director of her department. However, she has just turned 51 and, because she does not have a full 5 years left in her career, she is not eligible for promotion to director position. Mr. Thang is also a deputy director in the same ministry. He has the same credentials and work experience as Ms. Hang. At the age of 55 he is promoted to be director of the department.

Table: Gender-Based Age Differences in NA (13th Session)

	All Delegates				Fulltime			
	Average Age in 2015	Total Number	Forced to Retire		Average Age in 2015	Total Number	Forced to Retire	
			Total	Percent			Total	Percent
Women	47.7	122	30	25%	53.1	26	8	31%
Men	56.4	378	98	26%	55.4	121	27	22%

Source: UNDP, 2014

Limited women’s representation in the Communist Party of Viet Nam

According to figures from 2010, the membership of women in the Communist Party reached 32.8 percent. Women’s representation in leadership positions in the Communist Party is much lower than the general membership rate. At the central level, representation of women in decision-making positions of the Secretariat, the Central Committee and the Politburo range from 9 to 20 percent. At the sub-national level women’s representation in the Executive Committee at Provincial level is 11 percent while at District level it is 15 percent and Commune level it is 18 percent. However the Communist Party has a roadmap to increase women’s membership by 2020. There is also a goal for 2015 that the membership of the Party Committees must reach at least 15 percent (Directive 36-CT/TW by Politburo dated 30/5/2014).

The majority of NA delegates are members of the Party. For example, in the 13th term, Party members accounted for 84 percent of elected delegates. Therefore, to become a candidate and to be successful through the negotiation process, one of the significant factors is to be a member of the Party.

Targets in selecting electoral candidates

The second institutional barrier for women's political participation is the system used in candidate selection. To ensure a diverse political representation, Viet Nam has in place a target system for ethnic minority, youth, non-party members or independents and women. This system is called a "structure" or in Vietnamese "cơ cấu". In practice, often times the targets are tripled up and can result in a candidate becoming less competitive. For example, a candidate may fulfill more than two or three criteria such as ethnic minority, youth and female. This can lead to her not being elected if she runs against another candidate that fulfills only one criteria. There is discussion in parliament to implement a new policy whereby a candidate cannot fill more than two targets thus ensuring they are competitive.

Membership of Electoral Councils and Committees

The National Election Council and the Election Committees at the sub-national level play a key role in selecting candidates to run in the elections. There are few women however who were members of the Election Councils and Committees. At the Central level in the election in 2011, only 3 out of 21 members (14 percent) were women. At provincial level Election Committee, women's membership was 3 percent in Nam Dinh, 12 percent in Hoa Binh and 19 percent in Tuyen Quang (UNDP-CEPEW, 2014). Such a strong gender imbalance in the decision making institutions has a impact on who is selected as candidates.

Winnable Seats

In discussions with former candidates and Deputies, some have commented that many times women are placed in electoral ridings where the prospect of the woman winning is low because of who they are placed on the ballot with. Due to the unequal retirement age, women often have been given less opportunities (both for advancement as well as training) and have less experience or hold a lower civil servant position than men. Often times women are placed against a more senior official (often a man) however there is little intention or support for her to win the election.



Attitudinal Barriers

Underscoring the institutional barriers is a much larger challenge – attitudes towards men and women. Gender stereotypes is a primary barrier that influences women's participation and promotion. This mindset results in limited attention and direction for women affairs in government. Moreover, many supportive policies are not fully implemented and institutionalised in human resource management processes. There is a common view among people that women's primary domain is in the household and that she is the main caregiver of the elderly, the ill and children. Similarly, citizens believe that a man's domain is outside the home, and that men are natural leaders. Of particular significance is the finding that Vietnamese youth share these views. In a 2013 study conducted by The Asia Foundation in collaboration with two Vietnamese NGOs, the Institute for Studies of Society, Economy, and Environment (iSEE) and the Research Centre for Gender, Family, and Environment in Development (CGFED) found that traditional gender roles remain deeply embedded in Vietnamese society and institutions, permeating work, home, and the public arena (Asia Foundation, 2013). Of the 2400 on-line respondents who participated in the study, only 50 percent stated women should pursue careers as government leaders, economic experts, or entrepreneurs. Of these respondents, there were equal numbers of both women and men who believed these careers were not suitable for women. According to the study, young men expect women to be skillful (66 percent), hardworking (63 percent), and self-sacrificing/long-suffering (33 percent) (Asia Foundation, 2013).

Similar results on perceptions of gender roles were found in a recent study conducted by Peace and Development (PyD) on attitudes of secondary and high school students toward masculinity and violence against women with 2448 students (1596 males and 852 females) from 16 schools in Viet Nam. The perceived personality traits and characteristics of an ideal masculine man were 'tough,' 'tall'

and “economically successful’. Femininity was associated with ‘sacrificing for the family and children’ and ‘putting children as more important than themselves’. Approximately equal percentage of male (80 percent) and female (79 percent) students felt that for women, family and children are more important than their career (PyD, 2012).

A report by Viet Nam’s Women’s Academy found that some women are reticent to engage in political life due to limited self-confidence. Some women as well do not wish to change their career or be promoted as they are satisfied with what they have achieved (Research Institute of the Viet Nam Women’s Academy, 2012).

The perception of gender roles and expectations by both young women and men of each other suggest very strong barriers to overcome if the Government is to meet its target of increased women in leadership positions. According to the Government of Viet Nam’s report on Beijing plus 20, the “...perception of a population group in the society of the importance of gender equality and women’s human rights is still limited ... male preference mindset is still deeply rooted in the community” (Government of Viet Nam, 2014). Everyone has a part to play in changing these limited views of who a leader can be and should be.

Support for increasing women’s representation in elected positions

Many institutions, agencies and associations are working to eliminate the barriers discussed above. For example, there is discussion in the National Assembly to introduce a legislated gender quota within the election law as a step to increase women’s representation in the elections. The National Committee for the Advancement of Women (NCFAW) is conducting an awareness raising campaign to inform citizens of the importance of women leaders and to build the confidence of women to be candidates. Numerous agencies are providing mentoring and training to potential women candidates. Women’s Union in collaboration with other agencies is developing a list of potential women candidates. There is significant support in place to create equal opportunities for women to be successful candidates in the upcoming elections.

Right to be a candidate

Both women and men are recognizing it is their right to be a candidate. Women understand that their voice is needed and required to have a strong elected body. Women make up half of the population and have a very strong voice. A woman’s right to be politically active, to stand for election and be elected, is demonstrated in a number of international agreements (see Annex C) that Viet Nam is signatory to as well as national policies and laws.

Gender Equality Champions

As with many issues, little can move forward if there is no sufficient political will or there are no individuals to champion the idea, message or cause. In the area of women's political participation, there is an increasingly growing number of influential individuals who understand how limited women's representation is hindering Viet Nam's growth. We are witnessing both women and men in senior positions advocating for changes in policies and laws that will remove the discriminatory policies or processes as well as providing convincing arguments for why women's leadership matters.

Budget

In addition to the legal framework and women's leadership champions, the Government has allocated a budget directly to its work on increasing women's representation in public and political office. NCFAW has an allocated budget to carry out its activities of approximately VND 90 million/year (Government of Viet Nam, 2014). The National Programme on Gender Equality 2011-2015 (NPGE) includes one component out of five specifically on advancing women in senior leadership positions. The NPGE has an implementation budget of VND 955 billion (approximately USD 44 million). In the first 3 years of implementation, the Government has allocated approximately 10.5 percent of the budget to implement projects under this Programme (Government of Viet Nam, 2014). The government has stated their commitment to increasing women's representation and has acknowledged the need to back up the commitment with financial resources. Government agencies, mass mobilization organizations and line ministries have access to the NPGE fund to conduct different activities to change perceptions and attitudes on gender roles, developing evidence based policies and laws and building the capacity of potential women leaders.

Final Note

This module demonstrates that there are some women leaders who have gone through the candidate selection and election to become elected officials and who have gone on to hold leadership positions in People's Councils or National Assembly. You, as a potential woman candidate, need to know that there is space for you to hold political office, there are many policies and laws that support you to hold office and to use your voice and position to better your community and country.

3

POLITICAL SYSTEM OF VIET NAM, NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND PEOPLE'S COUNCIL

> 35%
2016 ♀ / ♂



In this module, you will gain knowledge and understanding in the following areas:

Knowledge

- Political System in Viet Nam
 - Communist Party of Viet Nam
 - State system
 - Fatherland Front and its member organizations
- National Assembly
 - National Assembly and Structure of National Assembly
 - Duties of National Assembly Deputies
 - Rights of National Assembly Deputies
- People's Council
 - People's Council and Structure of People's Council
 - Duties of People's Council Deputies
 - Rights of People's Council Deputies

This module is divided into three main parts; the political system in Viet Nam, the National Assembly objectives and roles of the NA deputies, and the People's Council objectives and roles of PC deputies.

Introduction to Political System in Viet Nam

The political system in Viet Nam is composed of three parts: the Communist Party of Viet Nam (CPV); the State system; and Father Land Front and its members.

Communist Party of Viet Nam (CPV)

The Communist Party of Viet Nam is the political party that leads the state and society. It is "closely connected to the people, serves the people, submits to the supervision of the people, and is answerable to the people for its decisions" (Article 4, Constitution 2013). The Party leads the political system and is a member of that system. The Party leads, respects and promotes the role of the State, the Viet Nam Fatherland Front (VFF) and other socio-political organizations.

Organization and Structure of the CPV

The Party organizational system is established in line with the State administrative apparatus from Central level to provincial, city, district, and communal levels as well as in administrative bodies, schools, enterprises, political/social/professional organizations, army units and police forces.

The Party directs the State system and socio-political organizations through:

- Deciding on political programs, strategies, policies, directions through ideological work, personnel management, and supervision over the implementation;
- Consistently directing the personnel work and managing the contingent of cadres, at the same time promoting the responsibilities of organizations in the political system and their leaders in charge of personnel work;
- Introducing competent cadres for posts in State agencies and in socio-political organizations;
- All Party cells and members working in the State agencies as well as socio-political organizations must strictly observe the Party's resolutions and directions; the Party cells direct the concretization of these documents into the State's laws and organizations' regulations as well as their implementation.

State system

The State system consists of the National Assembly, the State President, the Government, the Supreme People's Court, Supreme People's Procuracy and local authorities.

The National Assembly

The National Assembly is the highest representative organ of the people and the highest organ of State power of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam. National Assembly exercises the constitutional, legislative power, decides on the country's significant issues and exercises supreme control over the activities of the State (Article 69, Constitution 2013).

The State President

The country's President is the Head of State and represents the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam internally and externally (Article 86, Constitution 2013).

The Government

The Government is the highest administration organ of Viet Nam, performing executive power and the executive organ of the National Assembly. The Government is accountable to the National Assembly and shall make its reports to the National Assembly, its Standing Committee, and the Country's President (Article 94, Constitution 2013).

The Supreme People's Court

The Supreme People's Court is the highest judicial organ of Viet Nam, performing the judicial power (Article 102, Constitution 2013).

The Supreme People's Procuracy

The Supreme People's Procuracy shall exercise prosecutor's right and supervise and control judicial activities. The people's procuracies are responsible for the protection of law, human rights, citizen's rights, socialist regime, interests of the State, and legal rights and interests of organizations and individuals (Article 107, Constitution 2013).

Local authorities (People's Councils and People's Committees)

People's Councils

The People's Council is the local organ of State power; it represents the will, aspirations, and is responsible to the people; it is elected by the local people and is accountable to them and to the upper State organs (Article 113, Constitution 2013).

People's Committee

The People's Committee is elected by the People's Council and is the latter's executive organ, the organ of local State administration. It is its responsibility to implement the Constitution, the law, the formal written orders of superior State organs and the resolutions of the People's Council (Article 114, Constitution 2013).

The local People's Courts are the judicial organs; the local Offices of Supervision and Control supervise and control obedience to the law and exercise the right to initiate public prosecution within the bounds of their responsibilities as prescribed by law.

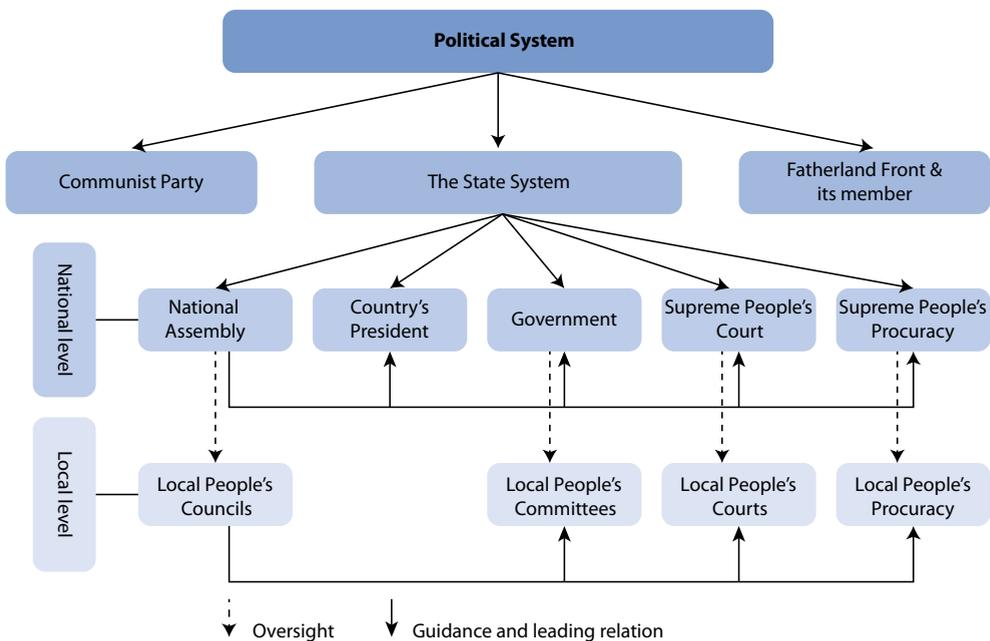
The Viet Nam Fatherland Front and its members

The Viet Nam Fatherland Front (VFF) is a voluntary political coalition of political organizations, socio-political organizations, social organizations and individuals from across social classes, ethnicities, religions and overseas Vietnamese.

The VFF's objectives are to unify the people, to strengthen the people's political consensus, and to implement the CPV's guidelines and policies and abide by the Constitution and laws.

The Viet Nam Fatherland Front and its member organizations constitute the political base of people's power, represent and protect the legal and legitimate rights and interests of People, promote national unity, strengthen the social consensus; participate in building the Party, State and people's activities contributing to the national development and defense.

In Viet Nam, there are five socio-political organizations: the Viet Nam Trade Union, Viet Nam Farmers Union, Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union, Viet Nam Women's Union, Viet Nam Veteran's organization. These are founded on a voluntary basis, representing and protecting the legal and legitimate rights, and interests of its members. The actions of these organizations are coordinated and unified among members of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front. They play a role in the implementation of the Party's guidelines and the Government's policies.



National Assembly

The National Assembly is the highest representative body of the people and the supreme state power organ of the Viet Nam. The term of legislation is five years and there are two National Assembly sessions annually. The National Assembly members vote for the seats of the President, Government, Supreme Court and Supreme Procuracy, State Auditor General.

Described below are the structure of the NA, the objectives of the NA and the duties of the NA deputies.

Responsibility of the National Assembly

The primary responsibilities of the NA include (the full list is found in the Law on Organization of National Assembly):

- Writing and amending the constitution
- Making and amending laws
- Supervision of state and NA activities
- Deciding on socio-economic issues and state budget
- Electing, appointing and dismissing key officials in the NA and state structure
- Promulgating resolutions of the NA
- Deciding on national major projects
- Casting votes of confidence

Structure of the National Assembly

The roles of the different bodies of the NA and the organizational chart of the NA is depicted in the diagram below.

National Assembly Standing Committee

The powers of the Standing Committee of the National Assembly include the powers to: announce, convene and chair the National Assembly sessions, to interpret the constitution, laws and ordinances, and to issue ordinances on matters assigned by the National Assembly. The Committee is in charge of the nomination process of the candidates to the National Assembly. It is responsible to supervise and guide the activities of the People's Councils and directs, regulates and coordinates the activities of the Ethnic Council and all Committees of the National Assembly; guide and ensure the working condition for delegates of the National Assembly.

National Assembly Committees and Council

There are currently nine Committees and one Council. The Committees are responsible to review bills and legislative initiatives, legal documents and reports assigned to the National Assembly. They make recommendations within their field to the National Assembly and the Standing Committee. Committee chairs are elected by members of the National Assembly (VNA, 2014).

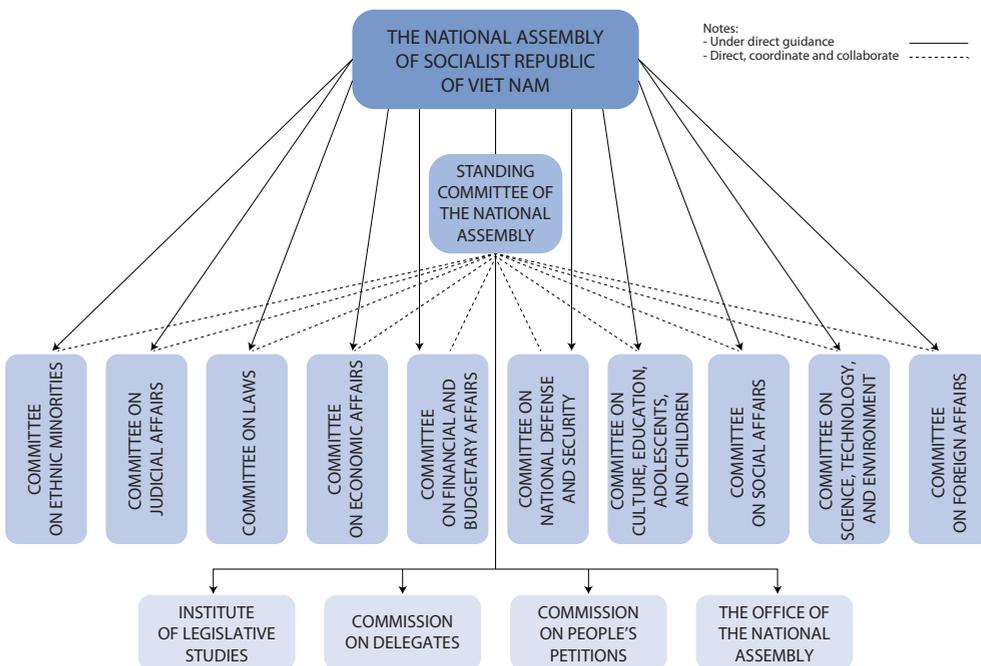
Secretary General

The position of Secretary General is elected by the National Assembly and is responsible for the National Assembly, Standing Committee and deputies. The Secretary General is also the Chair of the NA and is responsible for the operation and activities of the office.

Office of the National Assembly

The Office of the National Assembly is responsible for National Assembly, Standing Committee, Council and Committees and deputies. It is the administrative agency that serves the NA, Standing Committee, Ethnic Council and all Committees of the NA and its delegates.

Organizational Chart of the National Assembly



National Assembly Deputies

According to the Law on Organization of the National Assembly, the roles of the deputy include:

1. To represent the will and aspiration of the people in their respective constituencies and throughout the country. The National Assembly deputies shall exercise, for and on behalf of the people, the State power in the National Assembly.
2. To be accountable to voters and to the National Assembly for the performance of their duties and powers as deputies.
3. National Assembly deputies are equal during the discussion and decision on the matters falling within the scope of functions, duties and powers of the National Assembly.

Responsibility and Rights of National Assembly deputies

Described below are first the responsibilities of deputies followed by their rights.

Throughout the term, deputies must maintain close contacts with voters and seek

the opinions of their constituents and report the situation and sentiments to the NA or the concerned agencies and organizations. It is required that at least once a year, the deputies report to their constituents on the performance of their duties as deputies. Voters may request directly or through the Fatherland Front deputies to report on their work and may give remarks on the performance of the National Assembly deputies' duties.

The Delegation of the National Assembly is the organization of deputies elected in certain cities/provinces. The Delegation of the National Assembly deputies normally will develop a programme for the deputies to meet with constituents. The delegation may do this with the support of the Committee of the Fatherland front and local authorities. During these meetings, the deputies are responsible to report to their constituents their performance as a deputy and to listen to the concerns of the constituents.

Deputies are responsible to receive citizens and address their petitions, complaints and denunciations. They attend the full sessions and plenary meetings of the National Assembly, meetings of the groups or delegations of the National Assembly deputies to discuss and vote on the issues.

NA deputies can become a member of the Council for Ethnic Affairs or a Committee of the National Assembly. If a deputy is a council or committee member, the deputy must attend all meetings, discuss and vote on issues and participate in any other activities which fall within the duties of council or committee members.

Full-time NA deputies are responsible to attend the conference of full-time National Assembly deputies and other conferences convened by the National Assembly Standing Committee.

The full-time NA deputies at the local level are invited to attend regular meetings of the People's Council, people's committee and standing committee of the Fatherland Front of provinces and cities under central authority and to participate in the activities of the supervision teams and working groups of the National Assembly Standing Committee, the Council for Ethnic Affairs or a Committee of the National Assembly at the local level.

Deputies have the right to submit proposed laws, and ordinances and recommendations on laws and ordinances.

As part of their supervisory role, deputies have the right to question the State President, the Chair of the National Assembly, the Prime Minister and other members of the Government, the Chief Justice of the Supreme People's Court, the General Procurator of the Supreme People's Procuracy and the General Auditor of the State Audit. The deputies sends their questions to the National Assembly

Standing Committee which has the responsibility to collect all the questions from the National Assembly deputies and propose the National Assembly to consider and decide to allow the questioned person to either answer at the plenary meeting of the National Assembly/meeting of the National Assembly Standing Committee or directly send the answer in writing to the National Assembly deputies that raised the question. If the National Assembly deputies disagree with the answer to their question, they have the right to continue questioning at the meeting of the National Assembly or its Standing Committee or send the questions to the relevant questioned person.

Standards of the National Assembly deputies (Law on Organization of the National Assembly)

1. To be loyal to the Fatherland and the Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, to strive for the cause of reform, modernization and industrialization of the country and for the targets of wealthy people, strong nation, democratic, equal and civilized society.
2. To have good characters and morality, to be industrious and impartial, to serve as example in observance of law; to be determined to fight all forms of manifestations of bureaucracy, arrogance, authoritarianism, corruption and acts of violations of law.
3. To have qualifications and competence, and to be healthy to implement the duties of a National Assembly deputy, to take part in making decisions on the matters falling within the duties and powers of the National Assembly.
4. To keep close contact with people, listen to their thoughts and gain the trust among people.
5. To be in a good position to participate in all activities of the National Assembly.

Number of the National Assembly deputies

According to the Law on Organization of the National Assembly, the total number of the National Assembly deputies shall not exceed five hundred people including full-time and part-time deputies. At least 35 percent of the deputies are full-time.

Full-time and Part-time National Assembly deputies

Within the NA, there are full-time and part-time members. From each province, a

portion of the delegation will be full-time and a larger portion will be part-time. The full-time delegate will work throughout the term at a body of the National Assembly or at the Delegation of the National Assembly deputies at the local level. Those full-time NA delegates at the local level are usually the head of a delegation of the NA deputies and is responsible for those duties.

Part-time National Assembly deputies maintain their employment with the state during their term as a National Assembly deputy. They are obliged to attend the two annual NA sessions during each year. Overall, they are required to work one-third of their time to perform their duties as a NA deputy.

Term of the National Assembly deputies

Deputies serve for one term of the NA which is five years. The 14th term will run from July 2016 till April 2021. A small portion of deputies successfully run in two or more terms but the majority only serve one term.

People's Council

This section will describe the role and structure of the People's Council (PC) at different level, the duties and the rights of PC Deputies.

What is a People's Council?

A PC is the local organ of the state power. It represents the will and aspirations of its people. PC members are voted by local citizens and have a legislative term of five years.

Who is the People's Council accountable to?

The PC is accountable to both its local citizens as well as its superior state institutions. For example, a provincial PC is accountable to the citizens of that province and as well as the National Assembly.

The Council deputies elect the members of the People Committee at the same level and a Council deputy is the President of the People Committee.

At the local level, there are PC and People Committees at the provincial, district, commune and level. Courts and the Procuracy Offices are set up at the provincial and district level.

Responsibility of People's Council

The PC represents the will, needs and rights of people.

There are two primary roles of the PC which include:

1. Decision making on how to improve the local economic situation, socio-economic development, security through the military, and improve the socio-economic situation for the local people.
2. Supervision of the activities of the Standing Committee of PC, People Committee, Court, Procuracy as the same level; supervision of the implementation of resolution by the PC; supervision of compliance of legislation by the State agencies, economic unit, social organizations, army unit, and by its local People (Law on People's Council and People Committee, 2003).

The responsibilities of PC covers six main areas including: economics; health, education, environment, society; national security; ethnic minority and religious policy; law; and development of local administrative government.

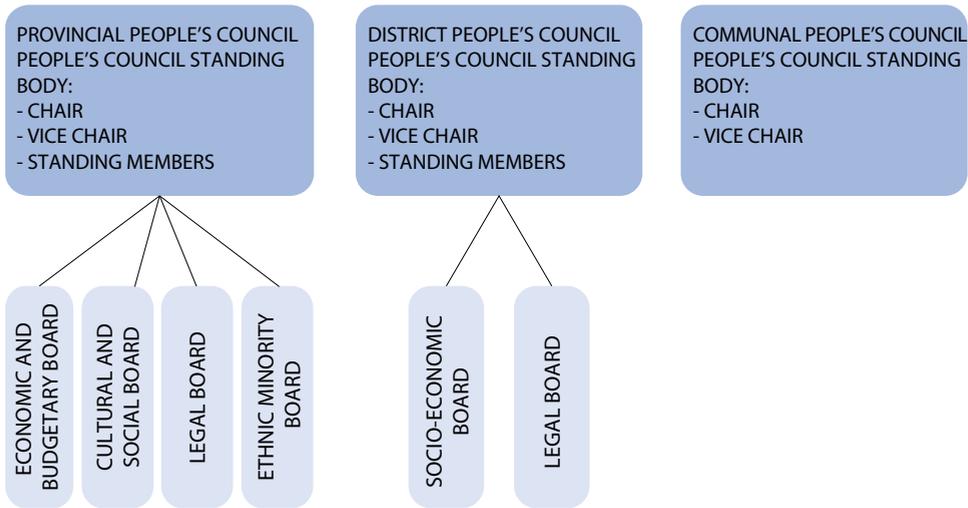
Structure of People's Councils at sub-national level

The PC at the provincial level has a Chair, Vice Chair, Standing Member and 50-85 members. Ho Chi Minh and Ha Noi cannot have more than 95 members. The PC has three committees including a budget and finance committee, cultural and social affairs committee and a legal committee. In areas where there are high percentage of ethnic minority, the PC can establish an ethnic minority committee.

The positions of Chair, Vice Chair, Standing Committee and Committee Members are elected in the first session of the People's Council by delegates.

At the district level, the PC has a Chair, Vice Chair and Standing Members as well as 30–40 members. There are two committees including the economic-social committee and the legal committee.

The PC at the commune level has a Chair, Vice Chair and 25-35 members. There are no committees at the commune level.



People's Council deputy

Who is a People's Council deputy?

A PC deputy is the representative for the needs and representation for the local people. They follow all the policies and laws of the state and mobilize the people to follow the law and policies and participate in the state management.

Duties of the People's Council deputy

The primary duties of PC deputies include to:

- Fully attend all the PC meetings and be involved in the discussion session and voting session that are within the rights and responsibility of the PC
- Work closely with the local citizens in local elected area
- Collect and honestly reflect the ideas and recommendations of citizens
- Protect the rights of the benefits of the citizens
- Regularly report to citizens in meetings on their activities and the PC activities and answer any questions or requests from the citizens
- Disseminate the decisions of the PC meetings and advocate for citizens to implement the decisions
- Urge citizens to abide by the law, State policies and resolutions of the People's Councils

Rights of the People's Council deputy

The PC deputy has the right to question the Chair of the PC, the Chair and other members of the People's Committee, the President of the People's Court, the Head of the People's Office of Supervision and Control, and the heads of organs under the People's Committee. The officials must answer this query within the time determined by law.

The deputy has the right to make proposals to local State organs. The officials in charge of these organs have the responsibility to receive the deputy, and to examine and settle the issues raised in their proposals.

If illegal activities are identified, the PC deputy has the right to request the implicated state organ to stop the illegal activity. They have the right to request the state organ on the implementation of laws or policies and the relevant issues. Related stakeholders have the responsibility to answer the PC deputy request.

The deputy has the right to request a vote of confidence within their own PC. The deputy has the right to vote, nominate other PC deputies and self-nominate for the positions of PC or People Committees. Members have the right to stop working from the PC due to health or other reasons. The PC at the same level, will consider and decide whether to approve the resignation request.

Final Note

This module illustrates the key components of the political system in Viet Nam and the specific roles of the National Assembly and People's Council within the system. As a potential candidate, it is important you fully understand the objective of each institution and responsibilities of the deputy within the institution. You need to demonstrate your understanding of the political system and all institutions through the candidate selection and electoral process.

4

CANDIDATE NOMINATION PROCESS

> 35%
2016 ♀ / ♂



In this module, you will gain the following knowledge:

Knowledge:

- Common criteria for candidate selection
- Difference between centrally nominated and locally nominated candidates
- Candidate selection and nomination process at National and Sub-National level
- Election process
- Self-nomination process
- Tips for navigating the process

How are candidates identified, selected and nominated?

Process of candidate selection and nomination in Viet Nam

The nomination process is different for most candidates however there are some patterns that indicate the general steps. In some cases, certain steps are pro forma only or missing entirely, but those appear to be exceptions. Below are the general steps followed by a more in-depth description of the written process as outlined in the law and formal policies.

Please note that the nomination and self-nomination process may change based on the approval of the Law on Election of NA delegates and PC delegates. The Law on Elections will be voted on in June 2015.



Detailed Steps of the Nomination Process

1. Standing Committee of NA decides and announces the date of election and establishes the National Electoral Council; estimates the “structure”, components and number of deputies at central and sub-national level.

The term “structure” refers to the specific criteria required for each eligible seat. This can be general (ie: 30 percent women) or very specific (ie: someone working for a particular public enterprise or university; self-nominees). The structure must balance all national interests, such as farmers, regions, youth, business, scientists, ethnicities and women. To guarantee national representation of all societal sectors, this structure leaves little flexibility at the provincial level.

2. Provincial People Committee, after agreement with the Standing Committee of Fatherland Front and Standing Committee of People’s Council establishes a Provincial Electoral Committee for National Assembly election and Provincial People’s Council elections.
3. Based on the estimation of the Standing Committee of NA, the first negotiation meeting is held at the central level to negotiate the structure and number of deputies of central agencies, government bodies or organizations organized by the Presidium of Fatherland Front. The first negotiation meeting is held at the provincial level to negotiate the structure and the number of deputies of provincial agencies, government bodies or organizations. This meeting is organized by the Provincial Standing Committee of Fatherland Front.
4. The Standing Committee of NA makes the first adjustment of structure and number of deputies of agencies at central and sub-national levels; decides and announces the list of electoral units and number of deputies to be elected for each unit based on the number of citizens of provinces/cities.
5. The nominating organization at both the central and sub-national level proposes its own nominees and holds a voters’ meeting in the organization to decide on a candidate to propose. Sometimes this is only a formality since there may only be one candidate who meets all the criteria and has sufficient seniority. Other times there may be more candidates than there are spots and candidates will be asked questions to determine the most suitable one. Based on the meeting results, the leaders of the agencies/governments bodies/organizations decides to nominate its candidate.

The minutes of the voters’ and leaders’ meeting and form of nominated candidates will be sent to the Standing Committee of Fatherland Front.

Self-nominated candidates are not proposed by an organization but fill out a form which they can get from the local Fatherland Front and submit to the Fatherland Front.

6. The second negotiation meeting is held at central level to make the preliminary list of candidates and the list is sent to the residential places to seek opinions. This meeting is organized by the Presidium of the Fatherland Front.

The second negotiation meeting at provincial level is held to develop the preliminary list of candidates and sent to the residential places for seeking opinions shall be organized by the provincial Standing Committee of the Fatherland Front

7. A meeting is held at the residential place of the candidates to seek opinions of the voters organized by the local Fatherland Front. At this step, the self-nominated candidates not getting the opinions from the voters of her/his working agency (if any) shall organize a meeting to seek opinions of voters at working as well as residential places.
8. The Standing Committee of NA, based on the second negotiation meeting shall make a second adjustment on structure, component and number of deputies, during which time some candidates are eliminated.
9. The VFF completes the investigation and review of any negative issues raised about the candidates.
10. The Standing Committees of VFF organises the third negotiation meetings both at central and sub-national level to decide the final official candidates.
11. The local Fatherland Front arranges local meetings for candidates to present their action plans. VFF monitors and supervises these meetings.
12. The candidate must obtain a double majority - more votes than the losing candidates, as well as a minimum of 50 percent of the total votes cast, to be elected.

National Assembly Candidate Selection Process

Step	Activity	Level	Organizer	Participant
1	First negotiation meeting, seek agreement on structure, components and number of NA candidates	Central	SC of VFF	Presidium of VFF, leaders of its member organizations; Inviting representatives from National Electoral Council, SC of NA and Government
		Local	Provincial SC of VFF	Leaders of its member organizations, district SC of VFF; representatives from Sub-National Electoral Council, SC of PC and People's Committee
	First adjustment on structure, components and number of NA candidates after receiving the minutes of the meetings		SC of NA	
	Instructing the content and process of nomination; guidance provided to fill in the candidate's form		SC of VFF	Representative of nomination agencies/ organizations
2	Proposal of NA nominee		Leaders of nomination organizations	Leader of the Executive Committee of the Trade Union
	Meeting to seek the opinion of voters where the nominee is working			
	Nominating the NA candidates		Leaders of nomination agencies	
	Fill in the candidate's form and send to Electoral Council		Nominees, Leaders of nomination agencies	
3	Second negotiation to seek the preliminary list of NA candidates	Central and local	SC of VFF for central nominees and Provincial SC of VFF for local nominees	Same as the first negotiation

Step	Activity	Level	Organizer	Participant
4	To conduct the local meeting to get feedback from voters in the location where the nominee or self-nominee is living Self-nominee will be asked to get the feedback from his/her voters where she/ he is working (if any)	Commune	SC of FF and People's Committee	Representative of nomination organization, candidate, Chair, Vice Chair of PC. Voters (In village/ urban group with 50 voters are invited all the voters and at least 50 percent of voters must attend. In location with over 50 voters, representatives of voters are invited, but not less than 40 voters). Village leader and leader of VFF decide who is invited
	Second adjustment on structure, components and number of NA candidates after receiving the minutes of the meetings		SC of NA	
5	Third negotiation to make final official list of NA candidates		SC of VFF for central nominees and Provincial SC of VFF for local nominees	Same as the first negotiation
6	Election campaign: - Face to face meeting with voters (at least 10 times) - Working with media		VFF at the electoral areas	
7	Election			

Centrally nominated candidates and locally nominated candidates in the NA elections

Central agencies can identify and nominate candidates from their central agency to run in the NA elections. These central nominees are identified to run in electoral areas at provincial level against local nominees.

Women's Union List of Potential Women candidates

Based on the Article 8, item 3 of the draft Law on Election of NA delegates, the number of women deputies is estimated by the Standing Committee of the National Assembly on the basis of the proposal of the Presidium of the Central

Executive Committee of the Viet Nam Women's Union to ensure an appropriate number of women deputies.

Based on article 8, item 4, Law on National Assembly Elections, Resolution 11-NQ/TW and the National Strategy on Gender Equality and the Directive of the Party on Election of National Assembly and People's Council, the Women's Union develops a list of potential women candidates. The criteria used to determine eligibility for the list are:

- Criteria set in Law of Elections
- Contribution to the professional field and in the field of gender equality and women advancement

To develop the list, the Central Women's Union requests provincial Women's Union to introduce outstanding women at their localities. Additionally, WU requests central level ministries to provide the list of women leaders at department level and above to WU. The list is developed based on these sources.

Once this list is established, the WU shares it and advocates for the inclusion of women on the ballot to the following at the central level: Politburo, Secretary Committee, Standing Committee of the National Assembly, Standing Committee of the Fatherland Front, Government and other related agencies such as the Ministry of Home Affairs, Organization Department of the Central Party Executive Committee and the National Electoral Council. At the provincial level the list is shared with the Standing Committee of the provincial Party Executive Committee, Standing Committee of the provincial Fatherland Front, Standing Committee of the People's Councils, the Provincial Department of Home Affairs, Organization Department of the provincial Party Executive Committee and Provincial Electoral Councils.

People's Council Candidate Selection Process

Step	Activity	Organizer	Participant
1	First negotiation meeting, seek agreement on structure, components and number of PC candidates	SC of VFF	SC of VFF, leaders of its member organizations; inviting representatives from Sub-National Electoral Council, SC of PC and People's Committee
	First adjustment on structure, components and number of PC candidates after receiving the minutes of the meetings	SC of PC	
	Instruction on nomination process; Guidance to complete the candidate's form	SC of FF	Representative of nomination agencies/organizations
2	Proposal of PC nominee		Leader of the Executive Committee of the Trade Union
	Meeting to seek the opinion of voters where the nominee is working	Leaders of nomination organizations	
	Nominating the PC candidates	Leaders of nomination agencies	
	Fill in the candidate nomination form and send to Electoral Committee	Nominees, Leaders of nomination agencies	
3	Second negotiation to seek the preliminary list of PC candidates	SC of VFF	As the first negotiation
4	Conduct local meeting to get feedback from voters in the location where the nominee is living	SC of FF and People's Committee	Representative of nomination organization, candidate, Chair, Vice Chair of PC. Voters (In village/ urban group with 50 voters are invited all the voters and at least 50 percent of voters must attend. In location with over 50 voters, representatives of voters are invited, but not less than 40 voters). Village leader and leader of VFF decide who is invited
	Self-nominee will be asked to get the feedback from voters where she/he is working (if any)		
	Second adjustment on structure, components and number of PC candidates after receiving the minutes of the meetings	SC of PC	

5	Third negotiation to make final official list of PC candidates	As the first negotiation	As the first negotiation
6	Election campaign		
7	Election		

Number of candidates on the ballot

For the NA and PC elections, the number of people in the list of National Assembly’s or PC candidates at each election unit must be more than the number of elected people of that unit. If the election unit is allowed to elect three deputies, the number of people in the list of candidates must be at least two people more than the number of elected people.

Self-nomination or Independent Candidates

According to the draft law on elections, the independent candidates must submit their dossiers to the Election Council for deputies of the National Assembly and PC at the provincial level of the place where they permanently reside or work. If the dossier is valid in accordance with the Election Law, the National Election Council shall transfer the brief biographies, statements of property and incomes and lists of such candidates to the Standing Board of the Vietnam Fatherland Front Committee at the same level.

Tips on how to navigate through the nomination process

Everyone will experience the nomination process differently as we come from various agencies. However, there are a number of tips to consider when navigating the steps.

Know who is the nominating candidates

Analyze your situation and your agency and identify the key people involved in nominating candidates. If you belong to a ministry or department as well as a mass mobilization organization, you can approach both to state your interest in being a candidate.

State your interest

Inform your supervisors early on that you want to be a candidate and why you would make a good candidate.

Get support

Identify those in your network who agree with your candidacy, feel that you will make a difference and want to see you succeed. These people may be colleagues, family members, former colleagues, fellow CPV members, current or former PC delegates and NA delegates. The type of support you can seek from these individuals include – conducting research for the action plan, advocating for your candidacy, brainstorming with you on the action plan, and practicing public speaking with. It is not necessary to go through the candidacy selection process alone.

Studies showed that often times women were reluctant to share with their husband or in-laws that they had been identified as a potential candidate for fear of their reaction. This is very unfortunate and puts the potential woman candidate in a difficult position. It is recommended to share early on with family members your wish to be a candidate and to be successfully elected. It is important to convince them that their moral support is needed to help you through the process.

Make yourself known and visible

Take opportunities to be known in the community, in different agencies, and well known within your own agency. Attend the community meetings regularly and get to know the other members in your area. Have business/visitor cards made with your photo on them and distribute to new acquaintances.

Review your electronic footprint

Do you have a Facebook page or Twitter account? Are these pages open to the public? Take the time to review how the public views your electronic footprint. In this day, your electronic footprint is just as important as your public speaking skills or how you present yourself at meetings. Your footprint can be very positive to support your candidacy. However, if you reveal too many personal messages or photos on your Facebook page, it could be harmful to your candidacy.

Final Note

This module demonstrates the steps taken to be identified and selected as a candidate for the election as well as the election process. It is noteworthy that the actual process takes place over a very short period of time – approximately three months for the whole process and only one month once the list of candidates is finalized. Understanding the steps in the process, who is involved in the different stages and who makes the decisions regarding the negotiations for the candidates is an important process in being able to navigate the process.

5

STEPS TO DEVELOP AN ACTION PLAN



In this module, you will gain knowledge and skills in the following areas:

Knowledge:

- The key components of a Candidate Action Plan
- Required information to develop a Candidate Action Plan
- Information sources

Skills:

- Information collection and research skills
- Analytical skills
- Priority setting skills
- Identifying solutions

What is a Candidate Action Plan?

A Candidate Action Plan demonstrates what the candidate plans to do and achieve if elected as a deputy.

Importance of the Action Plan

The Action Plan and its presentation at a Voter Contacting Conference is one of the criteria that the citizens have to evaluate the knowledge and the capacity of the candidate. The Action Plan will have an impact on how the citizens see the candidate and whether they will vote for the candidate. The details in the Action Plan are the commitments of the candidate about the activities that they will do if elected to satisfy the needs and recommendations of the citizens. It is an effective tool to help the candidate to achieve their target of persuading citizens to vote for them and to become an elected deputy.

Types of Information required to develop an Action Plan

- Information on the demographic make-up of the electoral area including population, ethnicity, age, gender, employment sectors (civil service, farming, business, state-run enterprise etc...)
- General information of the electoral area of the current situation in the areas of economic development, education, health, land, administration,

employment, investment, environment, security

- General information on the current government of the electoral area including annual budget and expenditures, income sources, types of expenditures
- Understanding of the legal framework that guides the work of the National Assembly and the People’s Council, including national laws, policies and decrees as well as local policies or decrees
- Information on the key current issues that the citizens face in the area, their varying perceptions and demands made to government
- Information on perceptions of citizens on local government administration
- Information on strategies, key projects and ideas that current government is considering or implementing to address citizen’s issues
- Information on the issues that the area is facing in the areas of employment, security, health, education of all citizens by the different sectors of society (male, female, children, elderly, employed, unemployed, geographical location)



Information Sources

To have the necessary information, the candidate must know who to meet, which source to get the information from.

Required Information	Sources
Demographic make-up of electoral area	<p>Annual Statistical Census and Surveys http://www.gso.gov.vn</p> <p>Annual reports of the local People's Councils, People's Committees Website of the local authorities</p>
Current situation in economics, business development, health, education, social relations	<p>Websites of the government and of the ministries such as: http://www.chinhphu.vn http://www.moh.gov.vn</p> <p>Provincial Competitive Index (PCI) Reports or/and PCI data is designed to assess the ease of doing business, economic governance, and administrative reform efforts by local governments of 63 provinces and cities in Viet Nam. PCI reports - http://pcivietnam.org/ PCI data - http://pcivietnam.org/du-lieu-pci-c16.html</p> <p>Social, Education and Health GSO Gender Development Index http://vietnaminfo.gso.gov.vn/vietnaminfo/libraries/asp/home.aspx Database system endorsed by the United Nations Development Group that enables you to browse, up-load, visualize and share socio-economic information.</p>
Financial situation of the electoral area including annual budget and expenditures, income sources, types of expenditures	<p>Annual reports of the local People's Councils, People's Committees Website of the local authorities Meetings with leaders of the local Party, governments and socio-economic organizations (Viet Nam Women's Union)</p>
Legal framework	<p>Viet Nam Laws on-line in Vietnamese http://thuvienphapluat.vn/</p>

Required Information	Sources
Information on the issues that the area is facing in the areas of employment, security, health, education of all citizens by the different sectors of society (male, female, children, elderly, employed, unemployed, geographical location)	Annual reports of the People's Councils, People's Committees Website of the local authorities Local TV, newspaper and radio reports Available researches, studies Meetings with local interest groups (factory workers, farmers, business people, retired, educators, civil servants, military etc) Meetings with leaders of the local Party, governments and socio-organizations (Viet Nam Women's Union) Meeting with other candidates
Current high priority issues faced by citizens	Local TV, newspaper and radio reports Meetings with local interest groups (factory workers, farmers, business people, retired, educators, civil servants, military etc) Annual reports of the People's Councils, People's Committees Website of the local authorities
Perceptions of local citizens on public administration and local governance	Viet Nam Provincial Governance and Public Administration Performance Index (PAPI) is an index which measures citizen's experience of public administration. PAPI assesses three mutually reinforcing processes: policy making, policy implementation and the monitoring of public service delivery. The dataset providing an objective evaluation of governance from the perspective of citizens. Based on this citizen input, PAPI provides a set of objective indicators that help assess the performance in governance and public administration, while at the same time providing an incentive for provinces to improve their performance over the long term. Access the data for each province or the reports at http://papi.vn/en/documents-and-data-download.html
Government's response to high priority issues faced by citizens	Meetings with local interest groups (factory workers, farmers, business people, retired, educators, civil servants, military etc) Meetings with current People's Council members or People Committee members, Fatherland Front, Mass Mobilization organizations Newspaper or TV reports Websites of the government and of the ministries such as: http://www.chinhphu.vn http://www.moh.gov.vn

How to collect the information

On-line

Much of the information sources described above can be accessed on-line. Take

the time to review these information sources before meeting with stakeholders.

Hard copy reports

To access hard copy reports, go to the local PC office and make a request. The documents can include legal regulations, current legal documents from Central to grass root level, and related documents on elected bodies and delegates.

Analysis of information

Throughout this process, you will collect a wide range of information. Some of the information is important, others less so. Some of the information may be contradictory or false. You will need to go through a reflective process to analyze the information, prioritize it and develop an opinion or response to it.

Listed below are suggested steps to go through to help you in this analytical phase. As well, provided below are some tables to use to support the collection and analysis process.

Step 1 – Identify the different stakeholders in the electoral area.

- Identify different groups of citizens which make up the electoral area (ex. male and female military officers, business people, students, farmers, soldiers, factory workers, retired, veterans etc)
- Make a list of all the relationships (including the group, organization, individual) which will affect you as a candidate
- Find out the concern or the needs and desire of the group, organization or individuals in the electoral area

Step 2 – Identify the key issues and concerns for each group

- List what the general concerns and needs of each group are
- Identify the details of the problem/issue
- Identify the causes of the problem
- Identify what each group expects their elected officials to do for them
- Prioritize these concerns based on how many people it effects and what the concern is and what can be done to address it

Step 3 – Identify possible responses

- Identify if the government, PC or NA is responsible to resolve the issue

- Review what the government (administrative and elected officials) has done to date to respond to the issue
- Analyze the effectiveness of the response and what else can be done or identify other options for a response
- Develop your own opinion on how you think it is best to respond to the issues identified

Use the tables below to help collect and manage the information and to help determine the key issue for the citizen and to prioritize its importance and your response.

Identifying concerning issues and prioritization

To prioritize the issues of concern in the electoral area, complete this table. Prioritize the issues, based on the impact of the issue, the influence of the group, its impacts and whether it is under the jurisdiction of the NA or PC to respond. Based on the first analysis, reconsider the list of issues and choose the important issues based on these criteria:

1. The issue that most of the citizens in the election area are concerned about
2. The issue falls under the responsibility of the PC or NA to resolve

Concerning issues	Affected groups	Scale of influence of the group	Ability of NA or PC to respond	Priority
Example: Few work opportunities for youth. High youth unemployment rate.	Youth (both women and men), all citizens affected by crime	Youth make up a large portion of the local citizens. As the older and younger generation is dependent on the youth for security, this issue affects many citizens	PC can identify and create environment for new sources of employment	1
				2
				3

Identifying responses and solutions

It is important to have an opinion or response on all issues of concern to constituents. However, what you will include in the Action Plan should be the issues you have identified as the highest priority for the electoral area. You will need also to consider future issues that will affect your electoral area. These could be issues such as impact of climate change, new trade relations, installation of a military base, opening of a free trade zone, increase in business taxes,

removal of hospitals or schools, or the closing or opening of factories. Ensure that your identified solutions are gender sensitive and take into consideration of those most marginalized. Complete the table below based on the identified concerning issues, include the governments (both administrative and PC or NA) to date. Based on your analysis of the situation, identify how you feel it is best to respond.

High Priority Issues	Government's response or preparation to date	Candidates proposed response or preparations
Current Issues		
Example: Too few teachers per classroom. Students receiving limited instruction during class time	Government has not addressed this as a priority issue. The class room sizes have actually increased by 5 percent over the last 10 years.	Use local tax money to hire more teachers and build more classrooms. Plan to reduce the teacher/student ratio by 5 percent in 3 years and 7 percent in 5 years.
Future Issues		
Example: Installation of dam on the local river in 2019	Little has been said to local citizens of the installation to date	Hold consultations with citizens to keep them informed of the construction Will ensure that environmental standards are met Ensure locals are hired for construction, maintenance and management Ensure income generated from selling of energy will be used to build a new school within 4 years of dam being built

Preparing the Action Plan

The purpose is to develop an influential Action Plan to build the trust of the citizens and to gain their vote. Through the presentation of the Action Plan, the candidate must demonstrate who they are, what they are capable of, that the candidate understands the needs of the citizens, that the candidate is trustworthy and hardworking.

Structure

There are three main parts to an Action Plan; the opening, the main content and the conclusion.

Opening

In the opening statement, describe:

- Yourself and your family
- Current and past work positions, job titles, years of experience
- Past education
- Volunteer and community work
- Your character and personality strengths
- Knowledge about the responsibility of the PC or NA deputy
- Desire to become a PC or NA deputy
- Demonstrate your close relationship between yourself as a candidate and the citizens of the election area

Content

In the main body of the Action Plan, share the following information based on the research and analysis you have done on issues in the electoral area.

- State the priority issues of concern for the local citizens as well as the upcoming issues which will impact on the local area
- Demonstrate your knowledge about the issues, the different perspectives on the issue, and the needs and recommendation of the citizens
- Share how you would respond to this issue if you are successful in your candidacy
- Demonstrate your capacity to solve these issues

Conclusion

In the conclusion:

- Prove why citizens should vote for you
 - Your strength of character
 - Evidence of your commitment to the citizens of the electoral area
 - Your ability to negotiate and lobby
 - Your commitment to make a positive change in the electoral area
- Show your desire to have the citizen support
- Express appreciation and acknowledgement for the organizers and for the participants

Hints

Described above is the normal structure of the Action Plan. As a candidate however you want to stand out and be recognized as an outstanding candidate. Therefore, although you can follow this format, you are strongly advised to create a unique and memorable Action Plan. Spend time discussing your strong character, give evidence that you have the skills to be an effective negotiator, share stories of your understanding of the issues of the constituents. Ensure your finishing statements are very strong and memorable.

Example of key elements of the Action Plan (this is a fictitious plan)¹

Name: Ly Nguyen Mai

Date of birth: 25/6/1973

Ethnicity: Sán Chay

Born: Vân Sơn commune, Sơn Dương district, Tuyên Quang province

Current Position: Deputy Director, Department of Personnel, Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (2011-present)

Officer, Department of Personnel, Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (2001 – 2011)

Education: Bachelors degree, Ha Noi Open University, Public Administration, Masters degree, Ho Chi Minh Academy, Political Science. Research on how Doi Moi was designed and implemented

Volunteer experience: Raise funds for local orphanage (2009-2013)

Organize with local school environmental clean up day (2013-present)

¹ Other Action Plans developed in preparation for the 2011 elections can be found on the web. Examples of plans are at <http://www.baocantho.com.vn/?mod=detnews&catid=71&id=79659>

I feel greatly honoured to be nominated as a parliamentary candidate for the National Assembly (NA) in term 14. This is a great responsibility which I am able to fulfill. I have demonstrated my capacity to be a strong representative of people through my current work as deputy director with the Department of Labour, Invalids, and Social Affairs. I have represented the department at both national and international meetings. I am a strong public speaker and am able to negotiate well. I have demonstrated my commitment to the people of this electoral area through my 6 years of volunteer work, first with the Thuy Khue Orphanage and most recently with the local public school. Through my volunteer work, my work with DOLISA as well as my active participation in the local pagoda, I have had the honour to meet with and collaborate with many citizens. Through this experience, I have a good understanding of the situation and needs of the youth, the civil servants, the retirees.

If you vote for me in the upcoming election, I will focus on the following activities:

1. I will keep in regular contact with you the local constituents to understand your situation and needs. I will represent these needs in the NA as well as to the relevant government agencies. I will be active in NA debates. I will be close to voters before and after every NA conference, to ask for comments and provide feedback and information.
2. I am greatly concerned about the construction of the dam and the impact it will have on our community. This dam can be a great opportunity for us. It will bring in greater revenue for our area – revenue that can be used to build a new school and hire more teachers. The dam can also be a source of employment for our youth in the area of construction, maintenance and management. Although the dam can bring about many great aspects, if it is not developed in a thoughtful manner with the needs of the local citizens at hand, it can be detrimental to our local area. I will work to ensure that the construction is done in a way to limit the environmental impact on the area. I will ensure that local citizens are hired to build and maintain the dam as well as the new roads to the dam. Most importantly, I will negotiate to ensure that the revenues from the sale of electricity are channelled to local development – specifically the building of two additional schools.
3. I have heard repeatedly from many different groups, the concern about the poor quality of education in the area, that the local children are not receiving basic education because there are not enough teachers and not

enough space for children to sit. With the revenue from the dam, I will work closely with the local department of education to channel the revenue to the department to hire more highly qualified teachers and to build more schools and increase the size of the current schools. Children are our future and without a high quality education, we will not see growth and development in our area.

4. As an ethnic minority, who was born in a poor, rural area, I can use my work experience to cooperate with the provincial NA group to propose investment policies for the ethnic minorities in rural areas to improve their living standards, particularly with a greater focus on rural infrastructure such as transport, irrigation, electricity, school, and health care.

I am dedicated to serve the people of Sơn Dương district. I have the background, the understanding of the people, the trust of the local citizens and the energy and will to improve our community. I have the strong character to be a responsible and active representative. If you elect me as your representative, I will work tirelessly to ensure our area continues to develop and we together will build a community where the people will thrive.

Final Note

It is important to start collecting information, identifying the defining issues of the citizens and the needs of constituents early – possibly before the actual candidacies are announced. Only make promises that you will be able to keep. Enjoy the process of getting to understand important issues, the impact they have on local citizens and developing innovative and responsible solutions to the issues. Now that you have developed an Action Plan and key messages to share with voters, the next module will help you in preparing for contacting voters.

6

PREPARING FOR VOTER CONTACTING CONFERENCE AND ACTION PLAN PRESENTATION SKILLS

> 35²⁰¹⁶ ♀ / ♂

In this module, you will develop knowledge and skills in the following areas:

Knowledge

- Purpose and process of the Voter Contacting Conference
- Steps in preparing for an Action Plan presentation

Skills:

- Public speaking and presenting
- Responding in a question and answer session

Confidence:

- Confidence to speak in public
- Confidence to introduce oneself

The importance of the Action Plan presentation

Once a candidate is selected to run in the election, the local Standing Committee of the Fatherland Front will organize a meeting for all the candidates to present to a selected group of people. Those normally invited are representatives from agencies, organizations, units and voters in the locality. It is organized after the three stages of negotiation before the elections. This is one of the most important parts of the election process as this is an opportunity to present directly to specific constituents and to demonstrate that you are the best candidate to vote for. At the meetings, there will be a vote of confidence about your candidacy. It is therefore extremely important that your message is clear, your presence is positive and memorable and you leave a very favourable impression of what you can do as a deputy. Whether the citizens fully understand your message, depends on your presentation skill.

Preparations before the Voter Contacting Conference

It is necessary to take time to fully prepare for your presentation. Proper preparation will enhance your confidence and will ensure that your message gets across clearly and that you leave a positive impression. Listed below are some ways to prepare for the contacting conference.



Find out about the conference

To prepare for the meeting, find out the following information about the conference:

- Schedule of the conference
- Time and duration of the conferences
- Time limit for the presentation
- Time limit for question and answer
- The order of the presentations and where you are in the order
- Which candidates (and how many) will be at the same conference
- The location
- How far the conference is from your office or home
- Determine the best way to get there
- Size of the room
- If there will be a microphone
- Will the candidates stand or sit for the presentation
- Will there be a podium or not
- Which media will be present at the conference
- Are the candidates expected to give a speech or to deliver a power point presentation of the action plan

In the past, normally the Fatherland Front will organize at least 10 Voter Contact Conferences for NA elections, at least 5 Voter Contact Conferences for provincial level PC elections, and at least 3 for district and commune level elections.

The participants at these conferences are normally representatives of the Fatherland Front, People Committee, PC, Electoral Committee, nomination organizations, other candidates, and the voters. Media is also invited including those responsible for the election websites at various levels, local newspapers and television.

According to the draft Law on Elections, the voter contacting conference follows the following format:

- a) Opening remarks;
- b) Representatives of the Standing board of Fatherland Front Committees shall take the lead and introduce and read biography of each candidate;
- c) Each candidate shall report to voters about their action plan if being elected to the National Assembly or People's Council's;
- d) Voters shall express ideas and wishes to candidates. Candidates and voters share ideas in a democratic, straightforward and open manner about matters of same interest;
- e) Conference chair closes the conference.

Understand the citizens in your election area who will attend the VFF conference

It is important to identify who will attend the meeting. This can be done by discussing with the organizers of the Fatherland Front and by asking directly who will be (or has been) invited. Also, speak with candidates from previous elections to find out who attended their conference. The types of citizens to expect include current PC deputies, current People Committee members, representatives of mass mobilization organizations, and representatives of different government departments. There may also be representatives of different interest groups such as business, farmers, and youth.

Investigate what the issues are that these audience members will be specifically concerned about. These issues may or may not be the same as the general issues of concern for the larger community. Often, the audience members will be most concerned about recent or topical issues. Know the current issues that the PC is concerned about and the different perspectives on this issue.

Adjust your presentation so it fits this audience. The audience will want to be able to identify with you and relate to you so you should try to speak to their needs however also showing that you understand and consider the needs and perspectives of all the citizens. To adjust your presentation, you should consider how best this group will want to be engaged and communicated with.

Prepare for possible questions from the citizens during the Question and Answer

Based on your research and action plan, identify the possible questions that the audience may ask. These questions may be relevant to the concerns of the citizens, or it could be questions to challenge you as the candidate on who you are, how you solve problems in the community and in your working area, and questions about your family.

Prepare business cards

It is necessary to have business cards prepared before the candidate nomination and election process. The card should have your full name, current work title, contact details, and your photo. You may also want to include “electoral candidate for X district”.

Prepare biography

The conference organizers will read out a biography of all the candidates at the beginning of the conference. To ensure that the information is accurate, write the biography and submit to the conference organizers before the meeting. Ensure the biography includes your education level, your years of experience in your current job and the type of position that you hold. Include any voluntary work you have done and your interests and concerns.

Prepare written Action Plans

Although it has not been common in the past, you may want to develop a one-two page written action plan that you can distribute or at least have available for those interested at the meeting. Ensure the plan is factually correct, has no grammar or spelling errors, includes your photo and contact details, and is short and concise.

Invite supporters to the meeting

Having some friendly faces and supportive people in the audience is one way to help boost your confidence. If allowed, ask supportive colleagues to attend the

meeting so you do not feel alone and that you are supported.

Practice to increase your confidence

You should practice presenting your **action plan** so that you can present it confidently. The more you practice, the more fluent you are, and can remember the content, and important points in your presentation. You can practice in the following ways:

- Present your whole presentation in front of friends and family and receive their comments to improve the presentation style, content and clarity
- Present in front of the mirror to see your style, facial expression, hand gestures, and body stance
- Use a video recorder to present and then review to improve on your voice, speed, rhythm, and where you put emphasis

Practice **responding to questions**. Receiving questions from the audience or media is an art and can make a big difference in how you are seen by the audience. The question and answer period is a time when you will be observed for how well you think on your feet, if you are aware and understand details of a wide range of factors, and your mannerisms with citizens. You can practice in the following ways:

- Write down a number of questions that you can anticipate in the social, economic, health, education, fiscal management, public sector management, security sectors at all levels (commune, district, national). Put these questions in a bowl, pull one out, read aloud and then respond to it.
- Ask colleagues to pretend they are audience members and to ask you a wide range of questions.
- Write down the key points you want to make on the different issues. Then, practice saying all the important points when responding to those questions.

Practice **introducing yourself**. Focus on practicing your action plan however if you are not comfortable with introducing yourself to strangers, you may also want to practice your introduction of yourself. The VFF meeting is a good opportunity for you to meet face-to-face and to make a good impression on a range of people from different sectors. To practice introducing yourself, you can do the following:

- Write down an introduction of yourself and decide what you want to share about your current and past work, why you are a candidate in the

election and what your primary issue to address is if you are elected. Identify questions that you would ask people from different sectors including – farming, business, trade, education, health, military, public administration. The question should be formed in a way to elicit discussion on substantive issues and also demonstrate that you are aware of the key issues in their area. For example, you could say to someone from the People’s Committee, “I understand that there is an unemployment rate of 10 percent among youth in the area and that the People’s Committee has implemented a new job creation initiative for youth. I would be interested to hear how the initiative is moving. Can you tell me about it?”. This demonstrates your understanding of the issue, expresses your concern for the issue, and acknowledges the work of the People’s Committee.

- Ask colleagues and friends to help by pretending to be strangers and you going up to them and introducing yourself.
- Prepare for “hard” introductions by writing down what you will say or imagining in your head the exchange. A “hard” introduction is with someone who you are intimidated by in some form. Often times we will shy away from having an exchange with an intimidating person. Or, if we do have the opportunity to engage with the person, we do not use it wisely or effectively.
- Prepare for introductions or exchanges that get off track. The purpose of the exchange at this meeting is to leave the impression with people that you will be a capable deputy able to contribute effectively to the governance of your area. If the conversation turns away from this purpose, then you need to turn it back on track. For example, if the conversation turns towards your personal life, what you are wearing, or your personal activities, diplomatically turn it back to the substantive issues that you want to address as a deputy or to your abilities as a deputy. Practice with a friend to test how well you can turn conversations in a diplomatic way that does not offend.

Experience in the voter contacting conference

“That day was very hot. The conference hall was full and crowded making the air even hotter. All the constituents and candidates had been sitting inside the hall for four continuous hours and everyone was tired. Despite the difficult atmosphere, I presented my action plan successfully. At the end of the meeting while I was preparing to leave, an old farmer with his bicycle came to me and said: I will vote for you because, despite such hot weather, you could still keep your smiling face and did not show your fatigue. Such a simple comment made me happy. It also showed me the importance of demonstrating a positive attitude during the voter contacting conference. The constituents will assess you not only by the presentation of your action plan but your attitude during the meeting.”

Ms. Nguyen Thi Hang Nga, member of NA term 11, Former Chief Editor of Labor Newspaper

Believe in yourself

Although it may feel very daunting putting yourself in front of a group of people, stating your opinion, speaking to a large audience, you have the ability to do it. You need to believe in yourself, trust your instinct, and recognize that all your life experiences till now have helped prepare you for the election campaign and to be a delegate. Many of the skills you already have. Now it is a matter of practicing and building your confidence. You need to believe in yourself and your abilities. Know your values and do not let others undermine your confidence.

During the Voter Contacting Conference

You will be viewed and judged from the moment you enter the conference room. Therefore enter the room confidently. Introduce yourself to the VFF organizers, to the other candidates, to the audience members. Present your business or visitors card to ensure people have your name and contacts. Introduce yourself to media including the TV and newspaper reporters. Say that you are available for interviews after the session.

Listen attentively to the other candidates as they speak. Shake their hands when they complete their presentation. Present your own action plan confidently. End your presentation strongly and uniquely ensuring that the meeting participants will remember you.

Presentation Skills

First impressions count

- The first image of the candidate is very important to the citizen. You need to create a positive impression throughout the meeting but especially when you are on stage. Women are judged more harshly than men on their appearance. Identify a suit and accessories that will not be distracting. Be relaxed and confident. Demonstrate this by looking at the audience, breathing slowly, holding hands together or keeping them at your side.

Presentation technique

- Do not read your speech or action plan. You may have index cards with key words on it to jog your memory of what you would like to say
- Memorize some of the first sentences you will make so you do not need to look at your index cards at the beginning
- Speak loudly and confidently, slowly and clearly
- Use an energetic voice throughout the presentation
- Keep eye contact with the audience
- Smile
- Move naturally
- Use your hands to emphasize certain points but do not use excessively
- Avoid the distracting actions such as pulling your shirt, covering mouth, playing with your hair
- When you forget a point, keep calm, have a quick look at your paper and continue
- Use your time. The organizers will inform you of the time limit for speaking. Ensure you keep to the limit but also that you use all the time allotted to you
- Turn off your cell phone

Distributing Action Plan

If the organizers allow, have hard copies of your action plan ready for distribution before or after your presentation.

Listening and Answering Skills

Listening skills

Presenting the action plan is difficult but answering the questions of the citizens can be more difficult because you do not know what the citizens will ask. For most candidates, the Q and A session is the most stressful. That is why you must maintain your calm and do not show that you are nervous. When asked questions, take notes of the details of the questions. Group the questions into similar subject areas that will make it easier for you to prepare for the answers.

Answering skills

Start by thanking the individual for their question. Answer briefly, clearly and focus on the questions. Choose the issues that you know well and are confident to answer. Answer the easier question first and the harder question last. Answer the questions in similar subject areas.

If there are questions that you do not fully understand or are sensitive, you can ask the individual to repeat or clarify the question. If you cannot respond to the question, say that you also care about this issue and want to know more about this issue. Respond that you can look into the issue and get in touch later with the person. Do not promise something that you cannot deliver on – both in your action plan as well as in the question and answer period.

After the Voter Contacting Conference

Continue to introduce yourself and engage with those attending the meeting. Make yourself available to reporters and share with the reporters your written action plan. Approach those in the audience who asked questions and speak to them individually about the substantive issue raised.

Final Note

The voter contacting conference is one of the most important moments in the election campaign. Preparations in terms of substance as well as skills and confidence will ensure you have a successful event. Recognize and accept that you may make some mistakes, which may or may not be noticed, and that all other candidates will also make mistakes. Enjoy this exciting month filled with voter conferences, meetings with constituents, learning about your political and electoral process, and, most importantly, learning in-depth about your electoral area and your constituents.

7

ENGAGING WITH MEDIA



In this module, the potential candidate will gain knowledge, skills and confidence in the following areas:

Knowledge

- Official regulations regarding candidates; media and electoral campaigns
- Why engaging with media is important for a candidate

Skills

- How to prepare for interviews
- How to respond to interview questions
- How to support the reporter in conducting an un-biased interview

Confidence

- The confidence to contact media reporters
- The confidence to participate in different types of media interviews

Candidates and the Media

Why is it important for you to engage with the media?

The purpose of a campaign is to promote yourself as a candidate, and to convince voters that you would make the best deputy in your area. One of the effective ways to campaign is to use mass media to share your message.

How can you engage with the media?

According to Chapter VI of the draft law on elections, the central press agencies are responsible to deliver news on elections and the local mass media agencies are responsible to deliver news on voter contacting conferences and to hold interviews with candidates.

The National Election Council will direct the information, communication and election propaganda at National level; provincial level election committees will direct the information, communication and election propaganda at the sub-national level.

The National Election Council will have an election website. The Council is

responsible to direct the management of the website, to conduct interviews with the candidates and to post on the website. In some cases, the local election committee will also have a website where interviews with local candidates will be posted.

The People's Committees of provinces and cities shall be responsible to direct the Information and Communication Agencies at provincial level to interview and post the interview of candidates.

Communication related to elections is managed by the Ministry of Information and Communication which develops an election information and communication plan for all forms of media. The media will report on the events around the election, specifics about the Law of Elections, information on where to vote, and profiles of the candidates. The Ministry will produce a press release on the progress and results of the election.

Based on the review of the draft law, the candidate does not have the right to directly request a newspaper or TV station for an interview. In contrast, the news agency will contact you as a candidate to arrange an interview.

Policies related to media engagement during the election campaign?

The Standing Committee of the Fatherland Front in the city and central level is responsible to organize a meeting for candidates to meet with voters. People's Council at all levels is responsible to collaborate with the Standing Committee of the Fatherland Front at the same level to organise voter contact conference for candidates of NA and PC. Moreover, the Standing Committee is responsible to organize the electoral campaign and meetings with media for both nominated and self-nominated candidates. During the short campaign period, these regulations must be followed (Article 61 of draft Law on elections of NA and PC delegate elections).

The National Election Council has the responsibility to ensure the regulations regarding media and electoral campaigns are being followed. As a candidate you are allowed to campaign from when the final candidate list is established to 24 hours before the election.

Chapter VI of the draft Law on Elections of NA and PC includes all pertinent articles related to campaigning and candidates engagement with media. For a full understanding of the Campaign and Propagation regulations, review chapter VI of the Law on Election.

What are the prohibited behaviours in campaigning?

- Members of the Election Council canvassing for a candidate
- To campaign contrary to the Constitution and the legislation or to harm the honor, reputation and rights, legitimate interests of other organizations and individuals;
- To abuse the reputation, position and authority to use the mass media during election campaign;
- To use the election campaign to raise funds, donations inside and outside the country for one's organizations and for individuals;
- Bribing voters to vote for you.

Some trends about media's engagement with women candidates

It has been shown in various reports that there is a bias towards male candidates and there is a belief that male candidates are 'natural leaders' and women are not leaders. Because of these beliefs, reporters will tend to ask different questions to the male and female candidates and may design their media reports differently, often portraying the women candidate as a 'lesser candidate', only knowledgeable of 'women' issues, not able to argue or advocate effectively as a man. Its important you understand these biased views and are prepared to address these biases directly with reporters.

During the election campaign, some reporters will focus only on the fact you are a woman and can raise negative gender stereotypes in their reporting. For example, a reporter may ask you, as a female candidate, what you feel about breast feeding, maternity leave, or abortion. They may ask you questions about your husband, your husband's family, and what your husband feels about you being a representative. They may ask you or report on your dress, hair or make-up. If the reporter starts to direct questions in these areas, turn the interview around to focus on the issues that you feel are important in your area and your solutions. Raise with the reporter your years of experience, your strong character and your ability and skills to be an effective representative.



Television and Newspaper Interviews

Preparations for interviews for both television and newspaper follow similar steps. Described below are the common steps. Where there are contrary or additional steps, it is noted.

Steps to take to prepare for an interview

Step 1 – Collect background information

- Name and style of the reporter
- Review past articles written or interviews conducted by reporter
- Identify the issues the reporter has covered in the past
- Time and location of interview
- Duration of the interview
- Questions that will be asked
- Is the interview in a studio, at an office, on the street, at an event
- Is the interview one-on-one or is it a panel or group discussion
- Will the interview be part of a longer show. If so, what are the different parts to the show or who else will be interviewed. Will other candidates be interviewed.
- Who is the main audience of the TV show or newspaper?
- Will there be a photographer and a photo taken of the candidate

Step 2 – Prepare responses

- The question and your responses will likely focus on your action plan and what you are proposing to accomplish and address as a deputy. However, you need to be prepared for many types of questions. Read the local papers, watch the local news, speak with local government officials to have a good understanding of the current issues of concern.
- Write down your responses to questions in short form. Ensure that your response is factually correct, that it is an innovative response, that it demonstrates your knowledge of the issue and your concern of the issue.
- The response should be succinct and with a clear message that the listeners can understand. If it is a long response, you can break it down into 2 to 3 areas. For example, you could say “there are 3 main steps to tackle this issue; first and most importantly, second and third”. Providing the breakdown, helps the listener remember your response.

Step 3 – Prepare background support material

- Before the interview, prepare business cards that you can provide to the reporter. This will ensure they have accurate information of your current work title, address, and contact details.
- Prepare a written action plan. This plan can be delivered to the reporter to provide them more information about you. It can either be given to the reporter a few days before the interview so they have accurate background information which could also help shape their questions. It can also be provided to the reporter after your interview to help the reporter write the article.
- Prepare responses specifically on three areas:
 - Your characteristics and traits that are necessary for a high performing delegate
 - Issues that you identify of high importance to address
 - Your desire to make a positive change and how you will do it

Step 4 – Practice

- With a friend or in front of a video camera, practice responding to different questions

Step 5 – Prepare appearance

- You do not want your clothing, make-up, accessories or hair to be distracting. Wear a simple dress or suit.

- Plan what you will wear a few days beforehand and ensure it is clean and ready when needed.
- Bring a small mirror and comb with you to the interview for a final check before filming.

Words of advice for a successful interview from Ms Hang, former NA member:

- *Prepare your action plan well. The action plan must focus on the issues that are of most concern to the constituents.*
- *Guess the questions that you could be asked. The questions will likely be based on your action plan.*
- *Understand the challenges and difficulties faced in local constituency as well as key issues in the region and country.*
- *Demonstrate your knowledge about the issues and your proposed solutions to address the issues.*
- *Show your strength as a female candidate.*
- *Keep an open and honest attitude.*
- *Demonstrate confidence.*

Ms. Nguyen Thi Hang Nga, member of NA term 11, Former Chief Editor of Labor Newspaper

TV Interview – tips

- Just before the interview, do a final check of your appearance in the mirror
- Greet the interviewer and the other panellists warmly
- Smile
- Sit straight but also relaxed
- Adjust your chair so you are sitting high and your feet can touch the ground
- Do not cross your legs
- When being asked the question, listen intently and respond with your facial expression and body that you are listening
- Remain calm to help find the best way to express your ideas in a concise and clear way

- Live interview
 - After a candidate meeting or a meeting with voters, a reporter may ask you some questions about your candidacy. Be relaxed and smile. Ensure you speak directly into the microphone and look directly at the reporter.
- Taped interview
 - Taped interviews are usually held in a studio or office. If you are not fully pleased with your response, you may ask to redo a question. However, remember that the reporters can share any part that is being filmed so try to ensure all recordings are professionally conducted.
- Panel interview
 - Ensure you speak the same amount or more than the other panellists. Do not allow other panellists to dominate the conversation. Do not let other panellists interrupt while you are speaking. If they start to speak over you, continue to speak and finish your response. If they continue to do so, say to the moderator/reporter that you would like to finish your response and direct the response to the reporter or facilitator.
 - Build on what other panellists are saying, agree or disagree with their comments.

Newspaper interview – tips

- Ensure the reporter has all accurate background information about you (name, education, position and title, which electoral district you are contesting).
- Keep the interview focused on what you will bring to the People’s Council or National Assembly as a deputy.
- If the reporter starts to ask more personal questions, steer the conversation back to key issues of concern for citizens.
- Sometimes reporters may see you as a woman and not as a electoral candidate. They may focus on non-important areas such as your appearance, your family life, how you will be able to manage your role in your family and your role in parliament. These types of questions are only asked of women and not of men. Reporters never ask men how they can balance their family life with their work life or what they will wear at events. If you get in this unfortunate situation, smile and say that you would like to remain on the topic of your candidacy and how you will be the best representative of all the citizens of the area.
- Do not share stories that will not support a positive image of you.

- Keep your responses brief to ensure that the reporter captures them well.

After interview

- If it is a filmed interview in a studio, you may ask to review the footage.
- Watch your interview when it is aired or read the published article and reflect on what you did well and what you would do differently in future interviews.
- Ask for a copy of your interview or for the link if it is posted on internet.
- Upload the link to the interview to your Facebook page.
- Send a thank you email or letter to the reporter thanking them for taking the opportunity to interview you. State that you would be available for other interviews if the opportunity arises.

Possible Interview Questions*

- *How effective was the work of the People's Council in the last term?*
- *What was the most significant concern of the People's Council in the last term?*
- *If you are elected, what will your action plan be?*
- *What is the most important role of a People's Council delegate?*
- *What are the primary problems in this area and what are the reasons for these problems?*
- *One of the problems of education today is that many schools are only interested in education and knowledge that overlook moral education. What do you think about this issue?*
- *What is the main message you want to send to voters?*

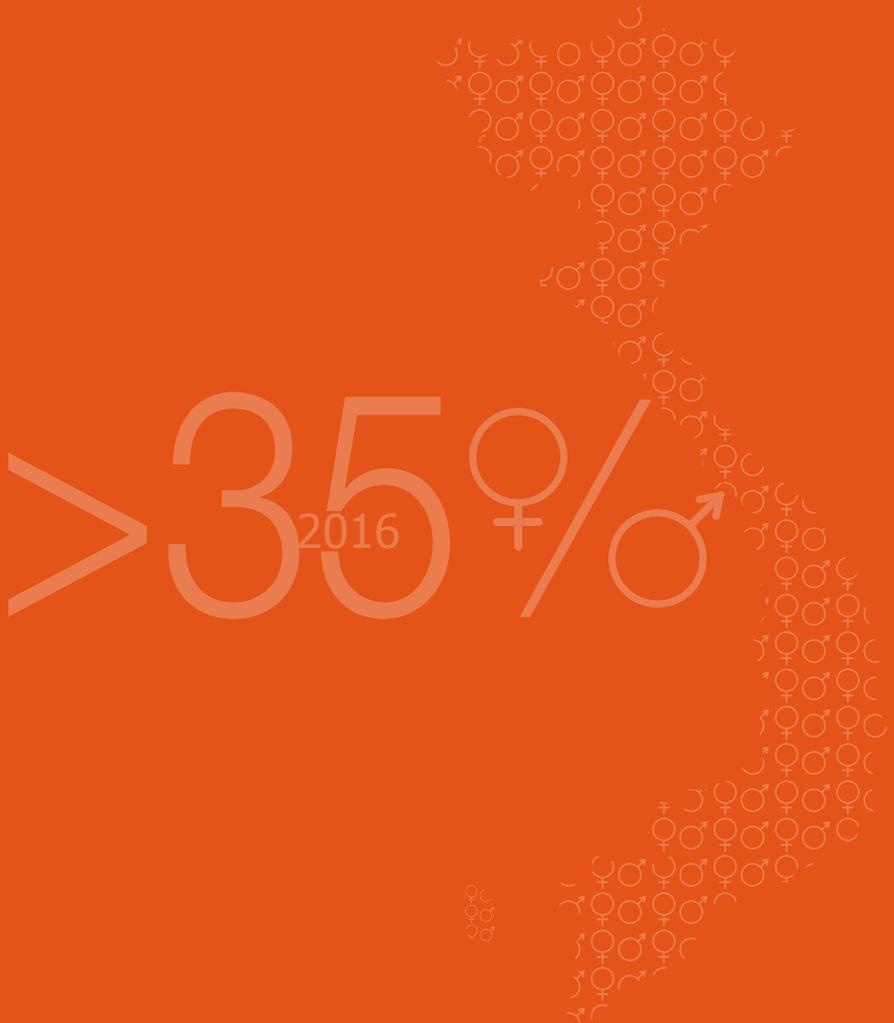
** this is a list of questions that were asked of candidates by reporters during the election campaign in 2011*

Final Note

How you are portrayed in the media will affect your campaign. Be sure to leave a strong impression with reporters on your abilities as a deputy, your dedication and commitment to your constituents, your understanding of the current and future issues of concern and your ability to develop concrete plans to address the issues.

8

ADVOCACY AND POLITICAL NEGOTIATION SKILLS



In this module, you will develop skills and knowledge and build confidence in the following areas:

Knowledge

- How negotiating and advocacy is essential in the role of deputies
- How to build strategies to create and build community networks and coalitions
- Understanding of conflict and how to resolve conflict

Skills

- Conflict resolution
- Advocacy skills
- Political negotiation

Confidence:

- To identify and build allies to strengthen coalitions

Note – this module is largely from the National Democratic Institute’s Manual “Trainer’s Manual on Increasing Opportunities for Women within Politics and Political Parties”. Thank you to NDI for their agreement to reproduce parts of their manual.

Introduction

Politics is about solving problems. To solve problems in a democratic manner, you must have the majority behind you. To achieve good solutions you need allies. This module is about how to get people in the system “on your side”. If you are to succeed, you must do a lot of groundwork. You must know your issue well and the others must feel that your solutions to the problem are right for them.

Conflict resolution skills

Conflict is a form of friction or disagreement between an individual or group when the beliefs or actions of the individual or group are either resisted by or unacceptable to the other party. Understanding sources of conflict, how they evolve are important steps in understanding how they can be resolved.

Sources of conflict

Conflicts have various sources, such as: material goods, principles, territory, communication, policies, process and/or personalities. We can categorize them as instrumental conflicts, conflicts of interest, and personal/relational conflicts. Instrumental conflicts concern goals, means, procedures and structures. Conflicts of interest concern the distribution of means such as money, time, staff, and space, or concern factors that are important for the distribution of these means, such as importance, ownership, competence and expertise.

Personal conflicts are about questions of identity and self-image, and important aspects in relationships. Relational conflicts may center on loyalty, breach of confidence, lack of respect, or betrayal of friendship. It is important to define the source of the conflict before deciding how to resolve it. Resolving is not always easy. Parties can sabotage efforts and cause conflict to escalate. Analyzing conflict is an important step before deciding on the strategy for resolving the conflict.

Exercise: Sources of Conflict

Take a few minutes to identify common causes or sources of conflict in your agency/community. Check any of the following common examples that are relevant, in addition to listing others:

- Short-term pressures versus long-term goals
- Differing perceptions, values, cultural norms
- Ambiguous jurisdictions; lack of clarity; competition for limited resources
- Needs such as power, status, ego, recognition, self-worth
- Parochial and regional attitudes
- Change - some not wanting to let go of the old; others moving too quickly.
- Other sources _____

Share the sources of conflict with others to determine what are perceived as the most common causes of conflict in your organization. Discuss whom the conflict is between, i.e., are there groups which commonly have conflict with one another?

Methods of Resolving Conflict

Described below are the five most commonly used methods for resolving conflict and when each method is appropriate, or inappropriate to use.

Different situations require different methods. The usefulness of each method

depends on the context, the issue, the goals trying to achieve, and the relationship between parties. However, collaboration is preferred, if possible, because this results in a win for both or all parties.

Basic method for resolving conflict

Methods	What happens when used	Appropriate to use when	Inappropriate to use when
Power or Compete (FIGHT)	One's power, position or strength settles the conflict. I'm ok, you're not ok	When power comes with position of authority and this method has been agreed upon	Losers are powerless to express themselves, their concerns
Collaboration (FACE)	Mutual respect and agreement to work together to resolve results in I'm ok, You're not ok	Time is available parties committed to working together as we versus the problem, not we versus they	Time, commitment and ability are not present
Compromise or Negotiation	Each party gives up something in order to meet midway, often leaving both parties dissatisfied we're both sort of OK	Both parties are better off with a compromise than attempting a win-lose stance	Solution becomes so watered down that commitment by both parties is doubtful
Denial, Avoidance (FLIGHT)	People just avoid a conflict by denying its existence I'm not OK; You're not OK	Conflict is relatively unimportant, timing is wrong, a cooling off period is needed	Conflict is important and will not disappear, but will continue to build
Accommodating, Smoothing Over (FREEZE)	Differences are played down and surface harmony is maintained. You're OK, I'm not OK	When preservation of the relationship is more important at the moment	If smoothing over leads to evading the issue when others are ready to deal with it

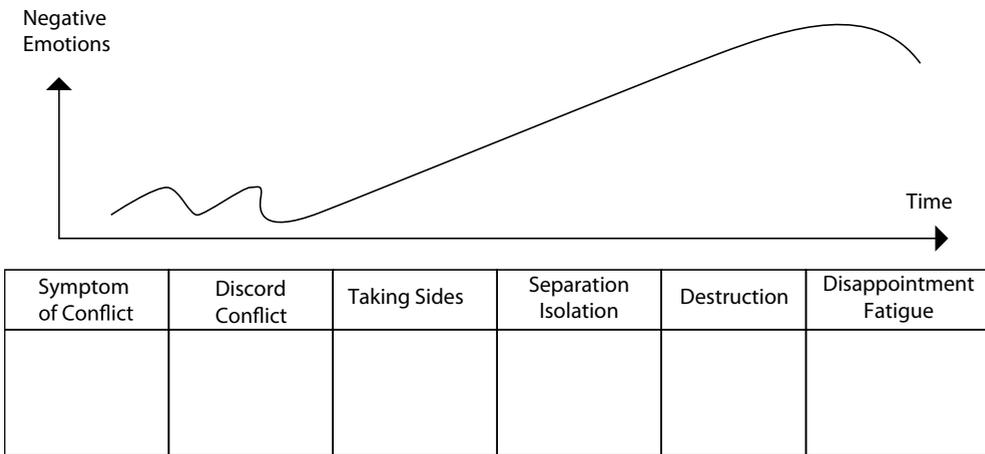
Exercise: Which methods to use to solve conflict

Have you used any of these methods in working through conflict in your agency/ community? Review conflicts you have experienced and decide if any of these methods would assist you in resolving the conflict.

Exercise: Describing a sample conflict

- What is the conflict?
- What is the cause of the conflict?
- What have you done to date to resolve the conflict?
- What is the result or outcome of what has been done to date?

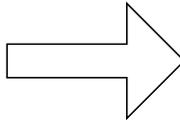
Evolution of a conflict and conflict resolution continuum



Understanding the conflict resolution continuum can assist individuals in appreciating how important it is to address a conflict early – rather than letting it escalate. The evolution of a conflict usually starts with a difference of opinion. Open expression and discussion of differing opinions at that time can often diffuse the conflict. If the conflict is left unattended, the conflict builds, factions may be formed, positions may become entrenched, and it becomes very difficult for the parties to resolve the conflict without external help. See the description below of the conflict resolution continuum.

Conflict resolution continuum

Individuals involved
in the conflict have
more control over outcome



Individuals involved
in the conflict have
less control

Negotiation	Mediation	Arbitration	Adjudication
Discussion between two parties, working toward reaching agreement, without assistance	A voluntary process with an impartial third party helping disputing parties to reach a mutually beneficial agreement	Using an independent third party to settle a dispute; third party determines a binding settlement	Conflict is resolved using the justice system with judge and/or jury

Addressing conflict early allows the individuals involved in the conflict to control the outcome. **Negotiation** offers most control over the conflict and the outcome because the parties work together to resolve the conflict. If the parties cannot work together to resolve the conflict, they may use **mediation**, i.e., a neutral third party who helps the conflicting parties. The mediator does not resolve the conflict but guides the parties to develop their own solution(s). If mediation does not work, **arbitration** becomes the next option, i.e., an arbitrator is appointed to decide the outcome, thus taking the decision out of the hands of the conflicting parties. If arbitration does not work, the final process for resolving the conflict is **adjudication**, or the justice system, in which a judge or jury decides the outcome.

The importance of addressing a conflict early cannot be overemphasized. Early action ensures more control and involvement by the parties affected by the conflict.

Negotiation

Negotiation consists of discussions between two or more parties around specific issues for the purpose of reaching a mutually satisfactory agreement. Everyone is a negotiator. It is an everyday occurrence. Life is an endless series of interactions that require negotiation. You are confronted daily with countless situations in which you are called upon to negotiate, to reach an agreement, or to resolve a conflict or difference of opinion (e.g., negotiate bedtime with children; holiday or vacation destination with family and/or friends). The issue is not whether you negotiate, but rather how effective you are. Negotiation is a skill that can be improved with practice. Traditionally, negotiation has been seen as adversarial or

confrontational, e.g., talk tough and see how much you can get. This negative attitude to negotiation is deeply embedded in many cultures. Most books and courses on negotiation focus on the adversarial relationship modeled after corporate takeover and hostile mergers of companies.

As a deputy of the NA or PC, however one needs to reconsider how negotiation is portrayed. Successful negotiators do not try to 'win at all costs'. Win-win negotiation is an approach to negotiating that stresses common interests and goals. By working together parties can seek creative solutions and reach decisions in which all parties can win.

There are three important concepts to understand in negotiation; process, ethics and negotiation.

Process – the series of steps or actions used in doing something or bringing about a desired result. When you examine 'process' you look at how something was done.

Ethics – good/bad conduct, moral/immoral behaviour, right and wrong, acceptable/unacceptable, legitimate and not – within the culture and outside the culture.

Negotiation – a negotiation is any communication in which you are attempting to achieve the approval, agreement or action of someone else.

Negotiation Skills

Outlined below are four basic skills for becoming an effective negotiator, including:

1. Understanding Yourself;
2. Defining Outcomes;
3. Understanding and Defining Positions; and
4. Framing and Reframing.

1. Understanding yourself

Exercise: Understanding yourself

Probably the most important skill for an effective negotiator is a clear understanding of oneself. With a particular conflict in mind, answer the following questions about yourself as honestly as you can and prepare a brief paragraph describing yourself in a negotiation.

Select a partner and tell them.

- What are my strengths? Limitations?
- Am I a good listener?
- Where am I psychologically vulnerable? Emotionally vulnerable?
- What are my prejudices and biases?
- What kind of climate do I create in negotiations?
- How do I define “fair”?
- What are my needs during negotiation?

2. Defining outcomes

Another key skill for effective negotiating is understanding your own ‘bottom line’, i.e., least acceptable outcome for you.

Exercise: Defining outcomes

Using your sample conflict (or another example, if appropriate), determine your best outcome and your least acceptable outcome. You may wish to speculate on the same questions from the other party’s point of view.

My Best Outcome	My Least Acceptable Outcome
Other Parties Best Outcome	Other Parties Least Acceptable Outcome

3. Understanding and defining positions

A key technique in negotiation is understanding the difference between positions and interests, thus going beyond position to determine the underlying interests. A position is an option that one party is committed to as a solution to the conflict. An interest is the concerns, needs, and/or desires underlying the conflict, i.e., why the conflict is being raised. For example, one of the Committees of the National Assembly has made a decision not to circulate minutes of meetings to deputies. This has resulted in anger and feelings of secrecy and lack of trust.

	COMMMITEE	DEPUTIES
POSITION	No circulation of minutes to deputies	Committees must circulate minutes or the committee appears to be hiding something
INTEREST	Retain confidentiality on certain issues	To know what is happening in all areas of the National Assembly including committees

Exercise: Position and Interest

Using your sample conflict, identify the positions and interests of both parties of the conflict.

	MINE	THEIRS
POSITION		
INTEREST		

Explore the following questions:

- Why are these positions different?
- Is there common ground around interests?
- Are there potential win-win solutions?

Exercise: Discussion or brainstorm on moving from positions to interests

Follow up the activity with a discussion of how to move from positions to interests.

Unfortunately most people tend to form their positions early. The longer a conflict goes unresolved, the more entrenched are the positions. In order to change peoples’ focus from the position they support to their underlying interests there are many suggested techniques.

In the discussion, the group may wish to brainstorm how best to make the shift from position to interest, including those outline below:

- Be vocal about your desire to find a solution that benefits all parties.

- Be clear about your own needs and interests, rather than your position.
- Discuss how important the solution is to the party. Use this discussion to identify problems and interests hidden behind stated positions.
- Do not answer stated positions by giving your own position. This will often result in two intractable positions that cannot be discussed.
- Reframe the problem so that you can emphasize compatibility of interests or a possibility of reaching some gain.
- Offer several different positions to consider than may respond to the interests of all parties.
- Emphasize that all options deserve further examination in order to see how they satisfy the interests of parties.

4. Framing and Reframing

Many conflicts result from lack of clarity around the issue. An important skill is being able to frame or state issues so all can understand and agree to work together to find a common solution. Framing is a skill that needs practice. Often when trying to frame an issue with accuracy as people see it and without bias, several attempts are made until parties agree with the description. Listed below are some guidelines for effective framing:

1. Always frame using neutral language. Use objective and blame free language. For example, "We are here discussing the failure of party A to pay their membership" (blaming). "Let us begin our discussions about nonpayment of membership dues" (neutral and factual).
2. Move participants from positions to interests
3. Defuse hostilities
4. Try to clarify the issue from a neutral, third party perspective
5. Deal with one issue at a time
6. Get agreement that both parties want to resolve the issue
7. Be short and concise
8. Frame, don't solve

Once the issue has been framed to the satisfaction of both parties, in a clear and neutral manner, resolution becomes much easier. As discussion progresses and opinions and positions change, it is appropriate to reframe the issue in order to ensure everyone continues to focus on the same points.

Exercise: Framing and Reframing Issues

Using your sample conflict, ask participants to identify the key points they think should be included in a framing of the issue. Discuss in pairs.

Negotiation Process

There are three key steps to consider in negotiation; the first is whether to negotiate, if you decide to move ahead with negotiation you need to collect information and prepare and the final step is to conduct the negotiation. These steps are described below in detail includes issues to consider at each step.

Before Negotiation

1. *Decide whether to negotiate*

Examine your options:

- Is it best to negotiate, or not?
- What do you have to give up? What you are willing to give up?
- What do you have that others want?
- What rules will be needed?
- Purpose and objectives of negotiations.
- Who are your supporters and opponents? Remember enemies of your enemies can be your friends and you can negotiate with them.
- Who has a stake in the outcome of the negotiation?
- Do you have any other options aside from negotiation?
- Do a SWOT+T analysis: list strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats and factor in time for each element. Strengths and weaknesses usually refer to the internal environment and opportunities and threats to the external environment.
- What is the cost of negotiating, of not negotiating? That is, if we do not come to an agreement, what is our best alternative?
- What kind of negotiation will it be? 'One-time' or 'ongoing', 'win/win' or 'win/lose'?

2. *Prepare for negotiations*

1. Assemble a negotiation team.
2. The team should be representative but able to agree amongst itself.

3. Make sure you know what you can agree to and say on behalf of the team.
4. Put mechanisms in place to keep members and others informed.
5. Do a SWOT+T analysis for the other team to assess their strengths and weaknesses.
 - Use the 'traffic lights' technique for listing issues, and noting both teams' and the other sides' positions on each issue (red = totally in disagreement; yellow = close; green = totally in agreement).
 - Allows you to have a sense of what the other side is thinking, and where the other side is likely to go.
 - Allows you to know ahead of time what you are willing to give up and what you can ask for in exchange.
 - Practice by doing role-play sessions to prepare for what might happen.

3. Set up monitoring, evaluating and follow-up arrangements

Someone or a small, independent group should monitor and evaluate the negotiation process on an on-going basis.

- Are all the elements for negotiation in place?
- Are the goals and objectives being met?
- Are both parties sticking to the plan and the rules of engagement?
- Are negotiations succeeding, failing or deadlocked?
- If the negotiation is breaking down, should it be continued or ended?

4. Negotiate the negotiations – how is the negotiation going to be structured

1. Assign one of the team to make contact with the other side to find out whether
2. Negotiations are possible.
3. Decide/propose the agenda.
4. Propose the order in which things are to be discussed. Don't leave the hardest things for the end. Make sure the most important issues for your team are early on the agenda.
5. Propose timing and venue(s) (my place, your place, rotation between the two or neutral space).
6. Propose guarantees that ensure that whatever is agreed to will be honoured.

7. Decide whether there will be a mediator or facilitator, who it should be, and what powers the mediator should have.
8. Decide what happens if things go wrong.
9. Finalize team leadership and team composition.
10. Make arrangements for the recording and verification of agreements reached during negotiations.
 - Take careful notes of every meeting using 5W (where, what, when, why, who) and 1H (how) method:
 - Where and When (date, starting and ending times) the meeting is held
 - Who was present
 - Why the meeting was held (purpose)
 - What was to be discussed or decided (agenda)
 - What was the outcome (decisions, including when and where the next meeting will take place, and what that agenda will be)
 - How the meeting was conducted (process and decision-making mechanisms)
11. Develop a plan of action in case negotiations fail.

During negotiation

1. Discuss problems, not people
 - People can be a problem, but in some cases, people are removed and the problem remains; focus on changing behaviours, not changing people.
 - Build relationships with members of the other negotiating team(s), where feasible.
2. Negotiate interests, not positions
 - Interests are the reasons behind why we take certain positions.
 - Try to determine the interest behind why the other part(ies) are taking that position. Ask “why”?
3. Use objective criteria
 - This element means making arguments rational in order that they appear objective. It is not enough just to be right. It is important to convince. In order to convince, arguments must appear ‘objective.’
 - Are there established criteria beyond your own beliefs that can justify your argument: legal, moral, past precedent, external facts, etc?

4. Look for alternatives, be creative
 - Sometimes the solution to a negotiation is easier to achieve than expected if we don't rely only on the way this issue has been resolved in the past. There are always new approaches to old problems.

Three common negotiation situations

1. Negotiation between one group of people inside of a larger group, party, organization or institution and another group of people in the same group, party, organization or institution.

Example: council members negotiating with one another about a community issue

2. Negotiation between people from a particular group, party, organization or institution and people from another group, party, organization or institution.

Example: One NA deputy representative negotiating with a PC deputy over proposed legislation in Parliament.

3. Negotiation between a group, party, organization or institution, within the legal system and a group outside the legal system (e.g. armed groups, terrorists, drug lords, gangs) or a group from outside the country (e.g., non-nationals engaged in arms smuggling).

Example: The government negotiating with hostage takers.

Recommendations for negotiation

If a negotiation is a test, this is the one-page cheat sheet you're allowed to bring with you. Thorough preparation and practice are the real keys to success. But a little memory jog when you're under pressure never hurt either. Below are some of the most powerful pointers we've discovered. Put them in your pocket.

1. **Your power lies in your walk-away alternatives.** Make sure that you have real, viable options that don't require an agreement:
 - You'll be empowered to support your interests.
 - Your confident attitude will compel others to listen to and meet your interests. They'll realize that they have to if they intend to obtain agreement.
2. **Do not disclose your walk-away alternatives.** When you remind others of the options you have should they not acceptably satisfy your needs, your commitment to negotiation falls into question, and the environment

becomes hostile. This draws the attention away from underlying needs, and the climate becomes less conducive to the development of creative options.

3. **Figure out the walk-away alternatives of the other parties.** Knowing what options they have if no agreement is reached will help you construct options that are favorable relative to their specific negotiation. In other words, you'll be able to construct an agreement that improves on their alternatives and fair agreement without giving away too much.
4. **No offer is too high.** Any offer is valid provided you can present objective criteria that prove each term of the offer fills to some extent the underlying needs of all parties.
5. **Don't react emotionally.** When you encounter tactics intended to intimidate, rush, draw out discussions, or otherwise derail the focus from underlying needs and mutual gain, patiently react to the problem at hand: The discussion needs to be refocused. Draw attention back to substantive interests and options that fairly address those interests. Use personal attacks as a signal that it's time to reestablish everyone's commitment to a mutually beneficial outcome.
6. **Remember that all the needs presented are not of equal importance.** Focus time on building an understanding of which needs are most likely to influence the outcome. Strive to create options that satisfy those interests.
7. **Listen more than you talk.** As a listener, you are gathering information that can help you figure out which of the other side's needs must be met for an agreement to be considered acceptable, and to what degree those needs will have to be met. Listening gives you the advantage. The better your understanding, the more flexibility and creativity you'll have as you create options. Talking gives this advantage to the other side.
8. **Know the authority of each person in the room.** Make sure you know whether or not you are negotiating with someone empowered to make the final decision. If you aren't, make sure you present options in such a way that they meet the perceived needs of the negotiator and the other members of their organization.
9. **Analyze concessions.** Look for patterns in the types of concessions made by the other parties, and be attentive to the messages sent by your concessions:
 - Small concessions give the impression that the bottom line is not far off.
 - Large concessions indicate that a lot more can still be conceded before the bottom line is reached.
 - Rapid or large concessions undermine the credibility of the initial offer.
 - All concessions teach the lesson that more concessions will be made.

Never make concessions expecting that the other side will meet your terms on the next issue. On the contrary, they will expect more concessions. Remember: When the other side makes a concession on the terms of a specific issue, it is statistically certain that a second concession on the same issue can be secured.

10. Never be forced into splitting the difference. When an apparent impasse has been reached, splitting the difference is widely regarded as the ultimate fair solution. But the suggestion to split the difference is often used to induce guilt. Guilt is likely to lead to concessions on your part and maybe even concessions that lead to an outcome worse for you than splitting the difference. Additionally, splitting the difference rarely results in an outcome that surpasses anyone's expectations, and it does not ensure that the interests of all parties are satisfied.

Advocacy

Advocating for the interests of your constituents is a key role in the position of a deputy. To do this effectively, you can prepare by evaluating your levels of support and developing strategies to persuade others. Outlines below are some steps and tools to prepare for advocacy measures.

Networking and Resource Mobilization

Network: a group of people who exchange information, contacts and experience for professional or social purposes.

Networking: establishing a network; communicating with other people to exchange information, establish new links, etc.

Resource Mobilization: organize all your resources (human, financial, community and other) for service or action.

Note that networking is about building alliance and relationships. It involves giving first. Networking is building an alliance of personal relationships for the purpose of helping each other professionally, personally or politically.

Exercise – Network

List all the groups that you belong to or have a connections with – in and out of your community. Examples: Women's Union, Trade Union, local pagoda, NCFAW, volunteer organization.

Once the list is completed, consider the following questions:

- What resources does each of these groups have or have access to?
- What can you do to maintain this network of contacts?
- What can you get out of this network?
- What can you offer to people in your network?
- How do religious organizations (with low income members) mobilize resources?
- What are the connections between networking and leadership?

Exercise: Asset Mapping

Everyone of us has assets and these assets are found in our networks. Complete the question below to determine your different assets.

Personal assets:

Examples:

- Partner or spouse
- Children (teen or adult)
- Extended family to assist with childcare
- Influential friends
- Mentors

Assets women have in the community:

Examples:

- Women's groups
- Libraries and resource centres
- Community elders and leaders
- NGOs concerned with women's and community issues
- Religious groups and organizations
- Constitutional provisions on women's equality
- Ministry responsible for women's affairs
- Women who are elected to public service

Developing strategies to persuade others

To help develop a strategy to advocate or persuade a group of people, organize your thoughts and develop a strategy. Below is an example of the key aspects one needs to consider in developing an advocacy strategy.

Advocacy Strategy

We want to persuade

to _____

by _____

2. They would be persuaded or affected by the following actions/incidents (prioritize):

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

e. _____

3. We could use our strengths and resources to persuade them in following ways:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

e. _____

4. The following would be the easiest and most effective approaches that our group could use:

Easy to do	Effective	
_____	_____	Television interviews/news
_____	_____	Radio news/Public Service Announcements
_____	_____	Radio talk show
_____	_____	Newspaper advertising
_____	_____	Newspaper article
_____	_____	Testimonial by _____ saying _____
_____	_____	Endorsement by _____ saying _____
_____	_____	Brochure (what must it say?)
_____	_____	Bargaining (what do we have to offer?)

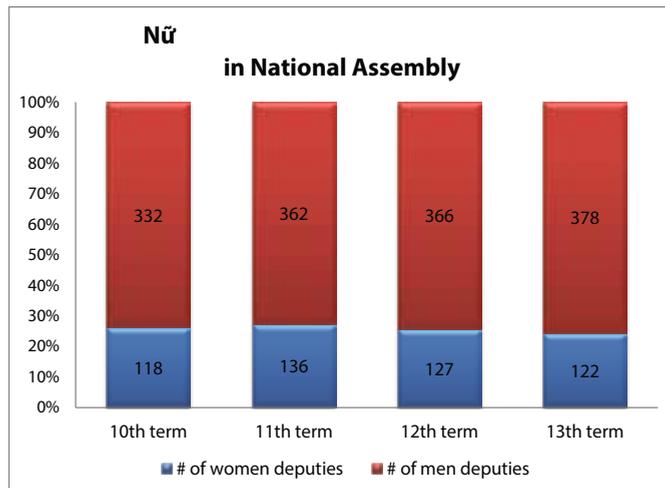
Once you have reflected and developed responses to these questions, share with other like-minded individuals to ascertain their thoughts and opinions. The responses can make the basis for your advocacy strategy.

Final Note

As you think about taking a leadership role in your community and within your party, it is important to recognize that most of your efforts will involve negotiations at some level. Learning negotiation skills will be very useful to you in any role you choose to take whether it is, for example, as an active member of your community who wants to get involved in local issues, as a member of your local council or the party's central committee. Conflict resolution, negotiation and advocacy skills are necessary in our normal every day life but these are also essential skills for effective deputies. Described in this module are steps and tips to use; however to hone these important skills, one must practice and reflect on your use of the skills.

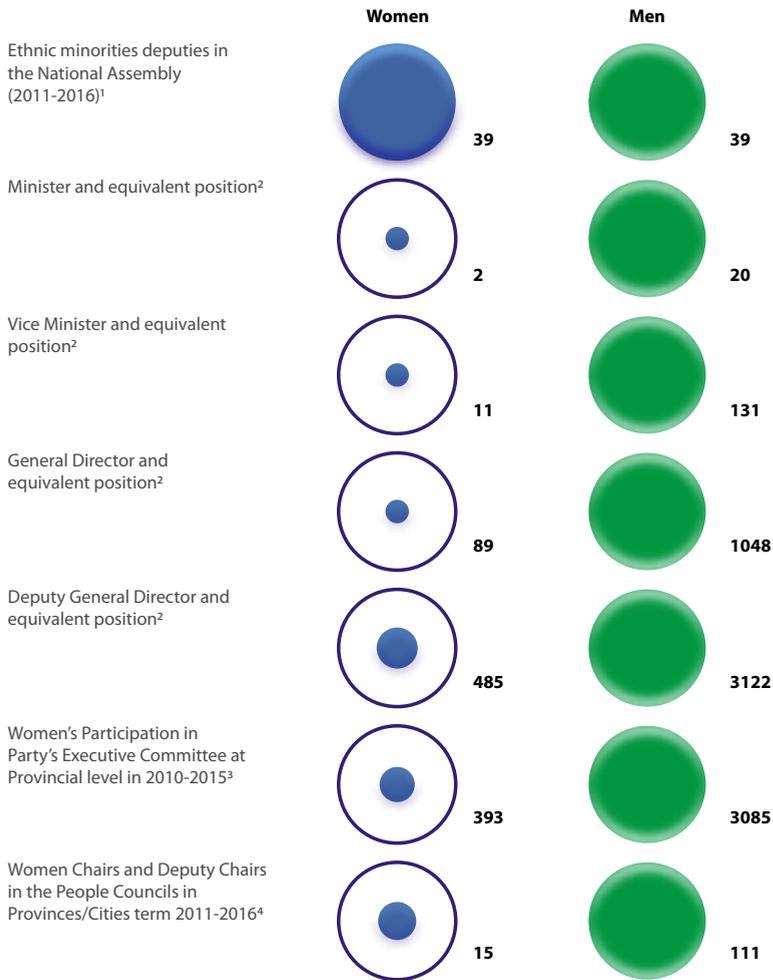
Annex A: Representation of Women Delegates in National Assembly

Over the previous three terms, the percentage of women's representation has decreased however the actual numbers have fluctuated.



In the 13th term, of the total number of deputies, women deputies accounted for over 50 percent of all delegates in 2 provinces, over 40 percent in 3 provinces; 30-39.9 percent in 18 provinces, 20-29.9 percent in 16 provinces, under 20 percent in 21 provinces, and 0 percent in 3 provinces (Government of Viet Nam, 2013).

Annex B: Gender Equality in Representation at a glance



1 Annex III of the Report on Implementation of the National Targets on Gender Equality in 2011 submitted by the Ministry of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs to the Primer Minister for approval in the Report No. 61/BC-CP dated 06/4/2012; and Deputies of the National Assembly term XIII available on "Đại biểu Quốc hội các khóa" at <http://dbqh.na.gov.vn/XIII/Daibieu.aspx> (accessed on 2nd December 2013)

2 Women Union updated as of August 2014: Number of Ministers and Vice ministers are from 22 ministries and equivalent meanwhile there are only 19 ministries and equivalent respond on the number of General Director and Deputy General Director and equivalent.

3 Annex I of the Report on Implementation of the National Targets on Gender Equality in 2011 submitted by the Ministry of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs to the Primer Minister for approval in the Report No. 61/BC-CP dated 06/4/2012.

4 A Profile of People's Council of Provinces/Cities 2011 - 2016 published by Committee of Deputies Affairs, under the Standing Committee of the National Assembly in 2011.

Source: Women's Leadership Project, October 2014

Annex C: Viet Nam’s Legal Framework for promoting women’s political participation

Framework	Goals/targets related to women and leadership
International Conventions and Plans	
Universal Declaration of Human Rights	Everyone has the right to take part in the Government of his/her country.
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) (ratified 1982)	“The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to ensure the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of all civil and political rights set forth in the present Covenant.” (Article 3)
Beijing Platform for Action (1995)	Strategic objective G.1. Take measures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making. Strategic objective G.2. Increase women's capacity to participate in decision-making and leadership.
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (ratified 1982)	Articles 7a, 7b, 7c, 5a, 16, recommendation 23 States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country and, in particular, shall ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right: (a) To vote in all elections and public referenda and to be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies; (b) To participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof and to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government.
Millennium Development Goals	MDG 3 - Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament (IPU).
ILO Convention on Discrimination in Employment (111)	Each member of the convention is to enforce non-discriminatory practices in the hiring and promotion of workers.

Framework	Goals/targets related to women and leadership
National Commitments, Targets, Strategies	
Constitution (2013)	<p>Important articles relevant for gender equality and the elections to NA and PC</p> <p>Article 7. 1. Elections of representatives of the National Assembly and representatives of the People's Councils are held in accordance with the principles of universal, equal, direct, and secret suffrage.</p> <p>Article 16. 1. All citizens are equal before the law. 2. No one shall be discriminated in his or her political, civic, economic, cultural, and social life.</p> <p>Article 26. 1. Male and female citizens have equal rights in all fields. The State has a policy to guarantee equal gender rights and opportunities. 2. The State, the society, and the family create conditions for women's comprehensive developments and promotion of their role in the society. 3. Sex discrimination is strictly prohibited.</p> <p>Article 27. The citizen, shall, upon reaching the age of eighteen, have the right to vote, and, upon reaching the age of twenty-one, have the right to stand for election to the National Assembly and the People's Councils. The practice of these rights is provided by the statute.</p>
Gender Equality Law (approved in 2006)	<p>To eliminate gender discrimination, to create equal opportunities for man and woman in socio-economic development and human resources development in order to reach substantial equality between man and woman.</p>
Law No.73/2006/QH11	<p>Article 11. Gender equality in the field of politics</p> <p>1. Man and woman are equal in participating in the state management and social activities.</p> <p>2. Man and woman are equal in participating in the formulation and implementation of village codes, community regulations, agencies and organizations regulations.</p> <p>3. Man and woman are equal in self-nominating as candidates or in nominating candidates to the National Assembly, people's councils; and are equal in self-nominating as candidates and in nominating candidates to leading agencies of political organizations, socio-political organizations, socio-political and professional organizations, social organizations, socio-professional organizations.</p> <p>4. Man and woman are equal in term of professional qualifications and age when they are promoted or appointed to the same posts of management and leadership in agencies and organizations.</p>

Framework	Goals/targets related to women and leadership
	<p>5. Measures to promote gender equality in the field of politics include:</p> <p>a) To ensure the appropriate proportion of the National Assembly female members and people's committees female members in accordance with the national gender equality goals.</p> <p>b) To ensure the appropriate proportion of women in appointing officials to hold titles in the professions in state agencies in accordance with the national gender equality goals.</p>
<p>Resolution 11-NQ/TW of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of Viet Nam dated 27/4/2007 on the Work for Women in the Period of Accelerating Industrialization and Modernization</p>	<p>Build up a team of highly-skilled female scientists, leaders, managers to meet the demands from pushing up the industrialization and modernization.</p> <p>By 2020, the percentage of female participants in the party committees will reach 25% or over; female members in the National Assembly and the People's Councils at different levels will reach 35% to 40%. Agencies and organizations having 30% or more women must have women among their leaders.</p> <p>Percentage of female participants in the training courses at the political training schools, public administration courses of over 30%.</p>
<p>Government Programme of Action for the period to 2020 on implementation of the Resolution No. 11-Q/TW dated 27th April 2007 of the Political Bureau</p>	<p>"Setting up and ensuring mechanism to promote further participation of women in decision making processes and increasing rates of women nominated as candidates to the National Assembly, People's councils at all levels."</p>
<p>Decree Providing for Measures to Assure Gender Equality in the Government, No. 48/2009/ND-CP Decree 48 (19/5/2009)</p>	<p>Formulating, submitting to the Government for submitting to the National Assembly a proportion of female candidates for members of the National Assembly, People's Council in accordance with the targets of gender equality in the succeeded term, ensuring gender equality in the negotiating process.</p> <p>Regulating an adequate proportion of men and women, setting up provisions on right-to-choose of woman and preferential provisions for woman in recruiting, planning, training, retraining and appointing</p>

Framework	Goals/targets related to women and leadership
<p>National Strategy on Gender Equality (2011-2020)</p> <p>Prime Minister decision - decision 2351/QĐ-TTg</p>	<p>Objective 1: Strengthen women's representation in leadership and management positions in order to gradually reduce a gender gap in politics.</p> <p>- Target 1: Efforts to be made so that the rate of women represented in the Party's committees at different levels will reach 25% and above for the term of office between 2016 and 2020; the rates of female members of the National Assembly and People's Councils at different levels will reach 30% and above for the term of office between 2011 and 2015 and more than 35% for the term of office between 2016 and 2020.</p> <p>- Target 2: Efforts to be made so that by 2015, 80% of Ministries, the ministerial-level agencies, the agencies attached to the Government, the People's Committees at different levels must have women among their leaders and by 2020, 95%.</p> <p>- Target 3: Efforts to be made so that by 2015, 70% of the Party's and State agencies and socio – political organizations with women making up 30 per cent and above of their labour force must have women among their leaders and by 2020, 100%.</p>
<p>National Programme on Gender Equality (2011-2015)</p> <p>Prime Minister decision - decision 1241/QĐ-TTg</p>	<p>Activities will be conducted to build the capacity of management and leadership position holders and those who are planned for holding such positions in government agencies and civil service agencies; and to create a supply of personnel for leading positions of the Party, elective bodies, and political-social organizations.</p> <p>Activities will be conducted to enhance the capacity of female members of the 13th National Assembly and 2011-2016 People's Councils in promoting gender equality.</p>
<p>Decree No. 34/2011/ND-CP, Decree No. 66/2011/ND-CP, Decree No. 112/2011/ND-CP, Decree No. 27/2012/ND-CP</p>	<p>Disciplinary sanctions imposed on civil servants who violate legal provisions of gender equality.</p> <p>Disciplinary sanctions include reprimand, caution or warning, wage reduction, demotion and removal from office.</p>

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