PNG Women Candidates Training Strategy

Planning Workshop -

22 & 23 March 2011 | Lae

Rationale
Currently there is only one elected female Member of Parliament in Papua New Guinea’s National Parliament. With less than 1% female representation in its parliament, PNG is far behind the world’s average of 18%.

It has long been argued that increasing women’s participation in politics can bring new perspectives into decision-making processes, resulting in more balanced development. Persistent gender inequality in national politics, as has been the case in PNG, does ‘not reflect well on a state that claims to be democratic. As long as women are denied access to the corridors of power, the quality of leadership that is essential for effective and meaningful democracy, as well as for national welfare, is being stifled.’

In recent years, gender inequality in political representation has attracted legislative attention in PNG. The Organic Law on the Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates (OLIPPAC), was enacted in 2003 with provisions designed to encourage political parties to nominate women candidates and in 2009 the National Executive Council endorsed the drafting of a Bill to enable the creation of 22 reserved seats women in the National Parliament. The OLIPPAC provisions have not had an appreciable impact and, although the Reserved Seats Bill has been drafted, it has not clear whether it will be enacted before the next elections in July 2012.

CDI is committed to helping support increased political representation of women and we have developed training programs to encourage the emergence of women leaders in our focus countries. In 2009 and 2010 CDI, in collaboration with local partners, designed and delivered targeted training for women candidates and their campaign workers in ARB and the Solomon Islands.

PNG’s Office for the Development of Women (ODW), which has been at the forefront in preparing the reserved seats proposal, has also invited the UNDP’s PNG Women in Leadership Project and CDI to work together to develop a strategy for women candidates’ training in the lead-up to the 2012 national elections.

Activity
The first activity in this collaboration was a strategy planning workshop held in Lae, PNG on 22 and 23 March 2011.

The workshop was convened ODW, with assistance from CDI and UNDP. The design and facilitation team for the workshop was Brian Nakrakundi from ODW, Margaret Lokoloko from UNDP, and Grant Harrision and Dr Orovu Sepoe from CDI.

More than 40 representatives from national, regional and provincial women’s organisations; from a number of political parties; from the National Research Institute; and from donor agencies participated in the workshop. A list of participants is attached.

The workshop was opened by Mr Nakrakundi on behalf of the Secretary of the Department for Community Development (Mr Joseph Klapat) and featured a welcome address from Mr David McLachlan-Karr (the Resident Coordinator of the UN System in PNG).

During the workshop participants heard presentations from:

- Dr Sepoe, who analysed the results of the 2007 national elections;
- Dr Norm Kelly, CDI Associate, who analysed the results of the 2009 elections in the ARB and the 2010 Solomon Islands’ elections; and
- Luke Hambly, CDI Program Manager, who outlined the candidate training programs offered by CDI in other jurisdictions.

The workshop was highly participatory to take advantage of the immense practical experience of participants. Throughout the workshop small discussion groups were convened to allow participants to share their own observations on topics including:

- reflections on the 2007 election experience, in particular:
  - what challenges did women candidates face in 2007?
  - were there regional characteristics to these challenges?
  - what strategies/approaches/tactics worked well?
  - what strategies/approaches/tactics did not work well?
- lessons for the 2012 elections, in particular:
  - what knowledge and skills should women candidates have?
  - what approaches/strategies/tactics should women candidates consider for the 2012 elections?
  - what assistance could be provided to women candidates for the 2012 elections?
- elements of a training strategy for women candidates, in particular:
  - are the proposed training and advisory services relevant to the needs of candidates and campaign workers in your Region?
  - are the proposed event timing appropriate?
  - are there any changes (big or small) that should be made?
- how could such a strategy be implemented, in particular:
  - which regional organisations or networks in your region could be involved in Strategy implementation?
is there one particular organisation or network which could be a lead partner (ie; contributing to activity design, organisation and facilitation)?

- what are the implementation risks that will need to be managed?

A copy of the workshop program is attached.

UNDP’s PNG Women in Leadership Project sponsored the participation of the PNG national participants, while CDI met its own staff and associate costs.

Outcome

At the beginning of the workshop, the design and facilitation team expressed the hope that the workshop might:

- mobilise commitment amongst a coalition of local partners (at national, regional and provincial levels) to the provision of training for women candidates at the 2012 election;
- develop ideas about training and advisory activities which could be included in a draft Strategy; and
- develop consensus about a mechanism for implementing the Strategy.

Each of these objectives was achieved: a draft Strategy describing particular activities was developed; various local partners agreed to support the delivery of Strategy activities; and consensus emerged about the role that each stakeholder could play in Strategy coordination.

As well as developing and endorsing a draft Strategy, workshop participants agreed to a resolution which called on:

‘... the PNG Government and its donor partners to take urgent, concerted action to:

1. increase the participation of women in politics in PNG; and
2. increase the representation of women in the National Parliament of PNG.

In particular, the Workshop urges the Government and its donor partners to commit resources to enable the immediate implementation of the draft Women Candidates Training Strategy agreed at this workshop, to maximise the chances of women being elected to Parliament at the 2012 elections.’

In the week following the workshop, ODW (with assistance from UNDP and CDI) prepared a final version of the Women Candidate Training Strategy, the main elements of which are to provide the following training advisory services:

- one (1) train-the-trainer workshop for facilitators to rehearse and refine content for the candidate and campaign manager training events. The workshop will be in Port Moresby and will:
  - be of three-days duration;
  - be conducted 12 months before the election;
  - provide participants with the knowledge and materials necessary to co-facilitate subsequent Strategy events;
  - have 16 participants (4 facilitators from each region in PNG, nominated by civil society partners);
three (3) training workshops for women candidates and their campaign managers, one in Papua region, one in Highlands region and one combined event for Momase and New Guinea Islands regions. These workshops will:
- be of five-days duration;
- be conducted no later than six months before the election;
- focus on understanding political leadership and its responsibilities, the personal skills and attributes required of candidates; and the practical aspects of running an election campaign. Parallel sessions will be run for candidates (on developing strategy, media relations and public speaking) and for campaign managers (on campaign planning and budgeting);
- in the Papua and Highlands region workshops, involve a maximum of 40 participants (20 candidates and 20 campaign managers);
- in the combined Momase/New Guinea Islands region workshop, involve a maximum of 50 participants (15 candidates and 15 campaign managers from Momase and 10 candidates and 10 campaign managers from New Guinea Islands);

three (3) candidate and preparation progress checks, one in Papua region, one in Highlands region and one combined event for Momase and New Guinea Islands regions. These progress checks will:
- be of two-days duration;
- be conducted three months before the election;
- involve the same participants and numbers as above;
- focus on consolidating understandings from the initial workshops and, through small group reviews, identify campaign preparation issues which require further attention. The progress checks will allow candidates and their campaign managers to exchange experiences and ideas;

campaign plan feedback sessions in each region. This advisory service will be provided at one or two locations in each region for a two-day period immediately after writs are issued for the election. It will:
- be provided on a drop-in basis, at a time when a candidates' opponents are known;
- allow candidates and campaign managers to ‘workshop’ the mechanics of their campaign plan;
- provide an independent, non-partisan ‘sounding-board’ advice at a critical point in the election campaign.

a diagnostic workshop to be conducted after the election to reflect on the performance of women candidates and to evaluate implementation of the Strategy.

A copy of the Strategy is attached.

In early April 2011, ODW presented the Strategy to the Joint Technical Working Group on Women in Leadership, which is chaired by the Minister for Community Development, Dame Carol Kidu. The Working Group has endorsed the Strategy and added its weight to the call from the workshop for Government and donor resources to be committed to immediate implementation of the Strategy.
In response, UNDP’s PNG Women in Leadership Project has agreed to provide financial support for the early phases of Strategy implementation and is in discussions with other development partners, through the Development Partners Roundtable and the GoPNG-Development Partners’ Forum on Gender Equality, about support for later phases of the Strategy.

To take advantage of the 15-months lead-time that currently exists before the July 2012 election, ODW, with continuing technical support from UNDP and CDI, has commenced work on the first series of Strategy events.

Centre for Democratic Institutions
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