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WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP AND POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT: OVERVIEW AND LESSONS

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Desktop Study

- 56 programs (=98 projects) in 55 countries, 2008-2014
- Defining 'political empowerment'
- Design and impact of activities
- Notable interventions and lessons

Data on Programs

- 5 regions: Africa (17/12), Asia (11/10), E. Europe (11/6), Latin America (6/6), Middle East/North Africa (6/5)
- 55 countries:
 - Majority “partly free” (“not free”)
 - Varied electoral democracy ratings
 - Lower and middle income
 - Lower levels of gender equality

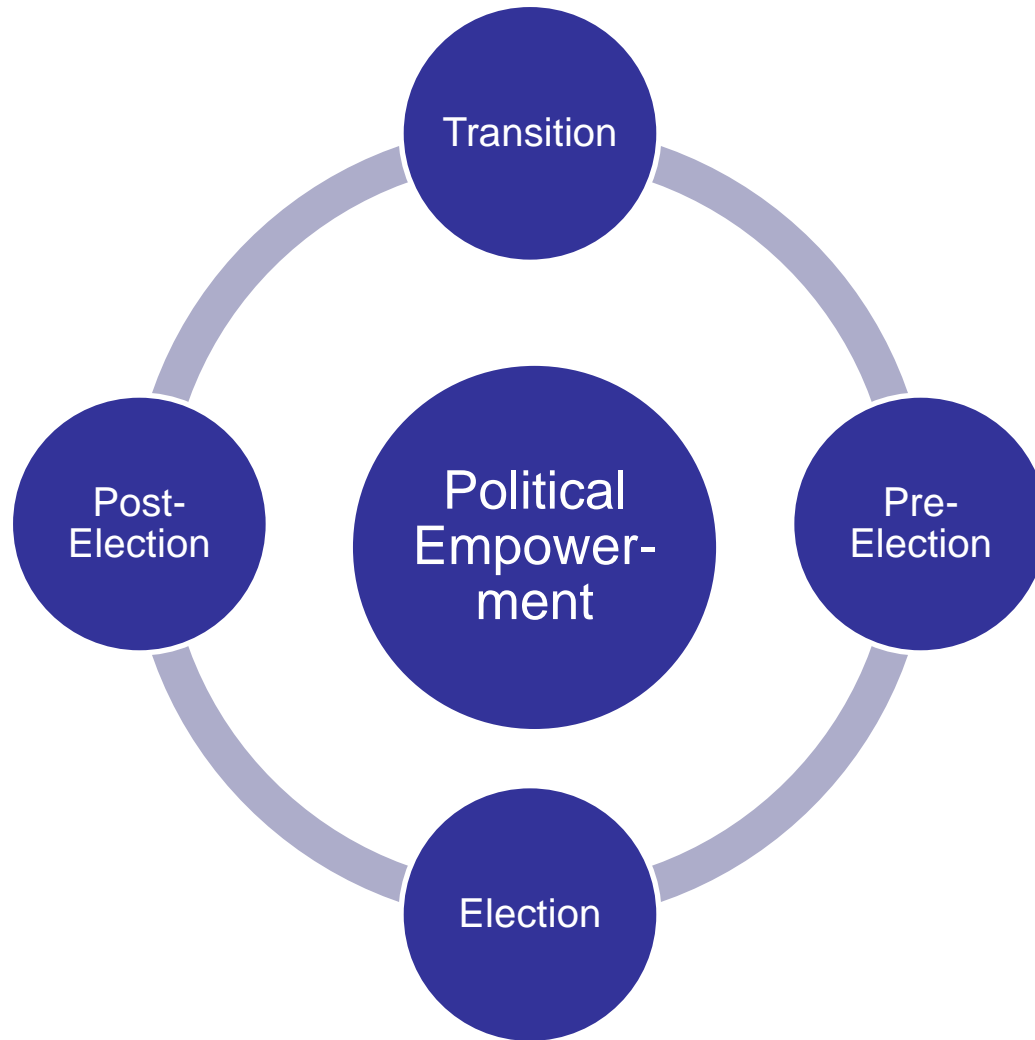
Data on Programs

- Less than 20%: primary objective
- Majority: \$1.8 million and \$10 million
- Smaller funding to women-focused programs (4/5: less than \$50,000)
- Majority: 1-3 years in duration

“Women’s Political Empowerment”

- No single working definition
- Holistic approach: women as voters, activists, candidates, elected officials
- Target 1: individuals, women as group
- Target 2: political parties, civil society, electoral authorities, observers, media
- Programs: often one slice of picture

Electoral Life Cycle



Transition Phase

- Setting the stage re: institutions
- Women as decision-makers
- Women as civil society activists
- Goals:
 - Inclusion of women in discussions
 - Legal and institutional frameworks for descriptive/substantive representation

Transition Activities

- Training in leadership, advocacy and peace-building
- Efforts to establish gender quotas
- Support women's inclusion in peace-making and peace-building
- Promote gender equitable laws
- Develop gender-sensitive constitutions (incl. women's national dialogues)

Pre-Election Phase

- Register voters, nominate candidates
- Women as voters, potential candidates, party activists
- Parties, media, public at large
- Goals:
 - Supply and demand
 - Descriptive representation

Pre-Election Activities

- Voter registration, civic education
- Talent-spotting, training, mentoring pre-candidates
- Women's wings, database, mentoring
- Gender quota requirements
- Party commitments to gender balance
- PSAs, television programs, call-in radio shows

Election Phase

- Contesting and monitoring elections
- Female candidates
- Election officials, media
- Goals:
 - Demand for women
 - Descriptive representation

Election Activities

- Training, fundraising, networking
- Gender training, recruiting women as election observers/poll watchers
- Gender training, quota monitoring of electoral management boards
- Media as unofficial election monitors
- Gender bias in coverage, recruit female journalists

Post-Election/Governance Phase

- Legislators arrive in office, policy-making and implementation
- Elected officials, civil society activists
- Gender dimension in governance
- Goals:
 - Link descriptive and substantive
 - Empower women via substantive rep.

Post-Election/Gov. Activities

- Training for female MPs
- Women's caucuses, equality comm's
- Networking: elected and civil society
- Policy advocacy and oversight
- Election debriefing sessions
- Technical/gender training assistance for male and female MPs
- Gender quota adoption

Impact of Program Activities

- Candidacy and election of women
- Parties institutionalize inclusion
- Initiate/strengthen women's networks
- Legal reforms for gender equality
- Media coverage, rising awareness
- Increased voter participation

Program Results and Performance

- 4.15 million received voter education
- 4,600 received political training, for candidates or elected officials
- 3,372 trained, 359 or more won
- 366 parties with policies to enhance number or viability of candidates

Case Studies: Shared Lessons

‘Added Value’ of Donor Involvement

- Serving as a neutral convener

Cases: Georgia, Mexico

- Providing an impetus for action

Cases: Cambodia, Georgia, Jordan

Case Studies: Shared Lessons

Training and Mentoring

- Working with local partners
- Sub-points: Single- vs. multi-party training; women trainers and trainees; programs moved to subnational level

Cases: Cambodia, Georgia, Jordan, Mexico

Case Studies: Shared Lessons

- Continuous training or training across the electoral cycle
- Sub-points: Tailored to local context, as well as participants' ability levels

Cases: Cambodia, Georgia, Jordan, Kenya, Mexico

Case Studies: Shared Lessons

- Fostering a reservoir of talent in the political 'pipeline'
- Sub-points: Pairing university students with female MPs through internship and fellowship opportunities

Cases: Cambodia, Georgia, Jordan, Kenya, Mexico

Case Studies: Shared Lessons

- Potential of mentoring programs
- Sub-points: Election period, but also longer-term perspective

Cases: Cambodia, Georgia, Jordan, Kenya

Case Studies: Shared Lessons

Media Strategies and Outreach

- Development of media programs
- Sub-points: Messages tailored to different age and ethnic groups

Cases: Cambodia, Georgia

- Gender training for journalists

Cases: Georgia, Jordan, Kenya

Case Studies: Shared Lessons

- More direct channels for participation

Case: Jordan

- Identify male allies and champions

Cases: Georgia, Jordan, Kenya, Mexico

- Involve women in election activities

Cases: Cambodia, Jordan

- Gender training for public officials

Cases: Georgia, Mexico

Case Studies: Shared Lessons

Ongoing Obstacles

- Financial resources and campaigns
- Sub-points: Lobby for reduced fees

Cases: Cambodia, Georgia, Jordan, Mexico

- Violence against women in politics
- Sub-points: Train police to respond

Cases: Georgia, Kenya, Mexico

Case Studies: Shared Lessons

Data Collection Imperatives

- Monitoring quota implementation

Cases: Kenya, Mexico

- Data reporting in donor reports

Case: Jordan

Conclusions

- Impressive array of activities overall
- ‘Political empowerment’
 - At all stages of electoral cycle
 - In a wide variety of roles
- Need for holistic approach by program
- Information sharing for innovation



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For more information: MSI reports,
Desktop and Case Studies

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