

CIVIC AND VOTER EDUCATIONAL FINAL REPORT

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1. INTRODUCTION

Civic and Voter education program has been implemented for about six months throughout the country in a collaborative initiative of different institutions including government and civil societies with support from various donors under coordination of UNDP. Women's economic groups coordinating council (WEGCC), is among the civil societies implementing the program in Arusha and Singida regions through an initiative namely "**Women's solidarity and network for civic agendas**" so as to achieve the following objectives:

- Raising level of knowledge about civic rights and responsibilities among women
- Promoting women's level of participation in the electoral process and other civic agendas
- Facilitating engagement of women in the process of addressing gender inequality and poverty as key factors affecting their participation in civic agendas.

A number of activities were planned to meet these objectives such as recruitment of project workers, procurement of equipment and educational materials, dissemination of civic knowledge to the target group (women) in small groups/meetings and networking. Project monitoring and reporting were also foreseen as continuous activities. WEGCC area of operation includes Arusha municipality, Singida urban and rural targeting women at the grassroots with a purpose to build capacity on their understanding and participation in civic matters. These women have gained some knowledge around civics and voting procedures.

There has been technical support from two UNVs, i.e Ms Sylvia Shekilango and Ms Gillian Tegissa who helped in clarifying some difficult issues pertaining CVE as well as in empowering the facilitators with courage/skills so that they accomplish their task easily. Government authorities at various levels have helped WEGCC in the project administration for instance, the municipal director wrote letters to the wards executive officers (WEOs) appealing them give the necessary support to the facilitators so that they work comfortably. The government local leaders at ward, village and sub village levels also cooperated in various ways to facilitate the project such as organization and supervision of the public meetings.

2. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The Implementation of the project was preceded by training of the facilitators an activity which took place between 22/04/2005 and 28/04/2005, April 2005 in both regions in which 21 and 7 identified CVE facilitators from Singida and Arusha respectively were trained and provided with identity cards so that they can provide CVE to the grassroots community at their respective areas. At the end of the training the facilitators prepared their action plan indicating what should be done when and where. After the training the project was introduced to the government officials from region to the ward/village level. This introduction aimed to facilitate conducive working environment as well as soliciting for the necessary support during the implementation of the project. The introduction was followed by mobilization of the community through public meetings where the entire community was introduced about CVE and the actual sessions started early in May 2005. In May, grassroots communicators were identified (one woman from every sub village) and assigned a task of mobilizing fellow women to the meetings and

provision of feedback to the project staff in form of their opinions about the education.

During the implementation of the project some problems were experienced. The major ones are such as:

- i) Demand for payment by government leaders.
This problem was serious at the beginning of the project where to organize a public meeting, some leaders of the village/street demanded for payments. In addition they resisted to allow facilitators to conduct CVE sessions in their areas despite fact that the formalities for introduction of the project to the key leaders authorities were followed, including a letter from the Municipal/town council director to WEOs directing them to provide support to the project. This situation affected the take – off of the project in some areas hence continuous efforts of WEGCC meetings with the leaders to clarify on the project design and their role.

- ii) Misconception about the project
At the beginning people perceived civic education as a strategy used by the ruling party/government to win in the forth coming elections. This forced WEGCC to use extra effort through coordinators and facilitators, clarifying the concept of neutrality. To ensure the concept of neutrality, facilitators were seriously reminded and emphasized to abide to their code of conduct particularly on nonpartisan.

- iii) Interference of civic education sessions with election campaigns
This affected the provision of CVE especially in August, September and October, 2005 where contestants from different political parties conducted campaign meetings. During this time the CVE was provided through religious institutions (Churches/Mosques), education institutions as well as open venues like market places, health centers to supplement the decrease in regular meetings.

Apart from these problems the planned activities for implementation of the project, were accomplished according to the schedule. As such there haven't been significant diversion from the original plans.

To accomplish the planned activities, a six months plan of action for each region was developed at the beginning of the project and then broken down to monthly periods. The action plan was a guide for all project actor on what is being done where, when, by who and the requirements. So long as the actors were familiar to their roles and responsibilities each acted accordingly, for instance the facilitators conducted the education sessions according to their calendar which was physically been monitored by the project coordinator who used to provide them with requirements and the technical support as well as liaising with local authorities for their support.

However there were some slight changes on the activity calendar but was normally communicated to the coordinator for adjustments. In some cases especially in urban areas the sessions were cancelled lately leading to some inconveniences but in Singida rural where grass roots communicators were identified as per the

project design, communication to and from the communities used to be very fast. In most cases where cancellation of the planned session occurred, the facilitators had to find the open public places like markets and bus stations and address the public on civic matters.

To reach the target group, the government local authorities was used following the introduction of the project and the key actors (facilitators and the grassroots communicators). The government leaders were requested to mobilize the target group to attend to the education sessions as per facilitators action plan. For Singida rural, the grass roots communicators (one woman from each sub village) played a commendable duty to mobilise women and communicate feedback in form of women's views/opinions about the sessions and education contents to the facilitators.

Following the turn up, a facilitator used to start with brief introductions (personal and of the project) and then to the specific topic. At the beginning as it is mentioned earlier, people misconceived the project whereby they considered facilitators as agents for a certain political party. As such the initial sessions dwelled so much on the clarification of this misconception which was successful hence public demand for more and continuous program.

In this meetings there had been interactive discussions on civic matters leading to understanding of **some citizens rights**. Due to time limit however, the target group is not yet clear with much more aspects of civics.

Public address at gatherings like market places and bus stations was a supplementary approach to reach the target group though not very effective as the organized meetings due to limited interaction.

Apart from the educational sessions with the target group, seminar for religious leaders was organized which involved majority of the leaders based in the areas of operation (14 wards of Singida urban and rural, 6 wards of Arusha municipality). The seminar aimed to solicit cooperation from religious leaders in disseminating civic and voter education to the communities. This activity was very successful as leaders communicated messages to their followers.

The project officer (WEGCC programs coordinator) followed up the project by enquiring for reports on the activity plan on weekly basis where she also provided support especially on the issues and challenges encountered. Field monitoring visits were also made by the project officer so as to get an insight of what is happening in the field. The overview performance shows an increase in the number of activities and people reached from time to time.

Besides the success in the implementation of the project in accordance with schedule, some special problems were encountered. Delay of funds posed a challenge to WEGCC leading to pre financing of activities from other projects. This was true for the three scheduled disbursement of funds to WEGCC as indicated below. (*next page*)

	1 st 30%	2 nd 30%	3 rd 30%
Schedule Date	10 th April, 2005	10 th June, 2005	5 th August, 2005
Actual Date	21 st April, 2005	13 th June, 2005	15 th Sept, 2005

Inadequate reading materials for the target group is another challenge encountered during the implementation. The target group demanded for some reading materials for reference at their own time. This is important to reinforce the verbal communication and would help in extending the message to the ones who could not attend in the sessions. Such materials should carry short, simple and clear messages. We acknowledge receipt of some booklets as reference but it came late. In addition to the contents of this booklet more materials are needed. Lack of the national constitution for the facilitators at least posed a big challenge as they are not familiar with its contents. WEGCC tried to access it but unfortunately it was in English.

Some topics in the syllabus especially ***“misingi ya katiba, haki za raia, utawala bora”*** were somehow hard. It was also very difficult for facilitators to explain and convince the target group on the legality of ***“Takrima”***

Need for facilitators re-training was necessary so as to enable them learn and gain more skills on how to address the issues and challenges experienced in the field. This would enhance their capacity in the provision of civic and voter education.

Interference of election campaigns and CVE sessions affected the program especially in the last 3 months (August, Sept and October) for people were involved in many campaign meetings.

Effective participation in the meetings including CVE meetings and campaign meetings proved the response of women as the target group. Before CVE was provided to the community, women attendance in the public meetings was not encouraging. In Singida rural, according to the experience given by the women themselves, it was not possible for majority of women to talk about politics and in particular in front of men during the meeting. It was revealed that even during elections, women decisions as to whom they vote for depended on their husbands' choices. After providing CVE women have gained courage for they ask questions, give out their views. According to them from this knowledge they have learnt that it is possible to vote for the candidate of their own choices as opposed to the situation before. Women have been participating in sessions (CVE) continuously with increase in numbers (**ref Annex 1,2,3, and 4**) and have shown interest in CVE by asking questions, contributed their views and also posed positive challenges towards the success of this year's general election and civic issues in general.

During the sessions it was encouraging to see youths participating effectively and had a lot to say on the importance of CVE to their daily lives and thus they requested responsible authorities to work on the matters affecting youths in schools and those out of school (issues like learning materials, low cost education, employment opportunities and financial /equipments or capital for self employments).

3. CONCLUSIONS

Through civic education women and other people have become aware of their rights to an extent of questioning about some leaders publicly following realization that they are irresponsible and liars. Defeat of some of councilors at the opinion poll for Chama cha Mapinduzi is also attributed to the civic education. In addition there are signs for defeat for undesired candidates at various positions in the coming election. This education has influenced women and youths to decide to contest for council and parliament seats in Arusha and Singida.

WEGCC outlined three objectives to be achieved by this project i.e

- Raising level of knowledge about civic rights and responsibilities among women
- Promoting women's level of participation in the electoral process and other civic agendas
- Facilitating engagement of women in the process of addressing gender inequality and poverty as key factors affecting their participation in civic agendas.

The general assessment on the outcome of civic education versus the objectives outlined in this project indicate a big success on the first two objectives. The third objective is a process that involves a milestone activities and hence more time. WEGCC will seek to device a different approach in order to meet this. This approach shall involve capacity building and advocacy for grassroots political aspirants. In addition review of the current monitoring tools should be done so as to ensure reliable information.

The past 6 months have laid down a foundation for a true democracy where people, especially women, know their rights and responsibilities as the citizens of Tanzania and it is the hope of WEGCC that CVE will bring about positive changes starting with mass involvement of the registered women in this year's national elections and civic awareness post election.

a) LESSONS LEARNT

Various lessons were learnt during the project implementation. The following were major.

i) Constitution/parliament.

People were anxious to learn about the national constitution and its contents. It was amazing that about 95% of the rural community including the local leaders do not even know the colour of the constitution (They have never seen it let alone know its contents). This just implies that they don't know the effect of the constitution to their daily lives and thus their rights might have been violated unknowingly.

The parliament issues and formation were another area found to be new to the community. They don't know the distribution of the parliament in terms of how many candidates are nominated by the president and why, how are the bills are debated and passed to become rules, how will they (people) track/ know their voices reaches the government etc.

ii) Isolation of Opposition parties in public meetings.

On conducting CVE we have learnt that in most cases public meetings called in the sub villages/street villages or ward level seldom involve members of the opposition parties. It was discovered that members of

the ruling party have access to information pertaining their daily lives as compared to their fellows of the opposition parties since the ten cell leaders used to communicate the messages to the grass roots belong to the ruling party. This makes it when organized even the government officials like WEOs, VEOs, Villages/sub and village/street chairpersons only introduces ruling party leaders in the public meetings.

In a meeting with political parties leaders in June it was said they hardly get involved in those meetings, only that they are informed on delicious like contributions to various projects its. At a certain village in Mtinko ward (Singida rural) facilitators were not allowed to conduct public meeting since there is only ruling party office/members. This will therefore affect democratic decision making in the area.

- iii) Influence of culture over political issues.
Due to the traditional beliefs women have no right to speak in front of men and it is worse for political matters, a shame is on a man with such a misbehaved wife. It was also discovered that these women have very fruitful ideas/views that could easily transform community's life standards. The civic education has exposed such communities to a different thinking and encouraged to change.
- iv) Lack of transparency accountability.
In some areas, CVE facilitators faced difficulties in conducting CVE sessions simply because of poor cooperation from some of the leaders at various levels. It was later discovered that this was due to the fear that the knowledge will empower people to question on the use of resources. Thus to be on safe side, these leaders didn't organize meetings pretending that people do not respond to public meetings. This problem was very serious in two wards of Singida at the beginning hence extra effort from the WEGCC district office which managed to put it under control.
- v) Relevancy and value of voters Ids.
It was learnt that the importance of voter's ids is not correctly known since people were only taking them as normal citizenship Ids. This has made some people to disvalue them and even give them away as a security upon failure to pay for local brew (Which is between 50/= to 200/=). This occurred at Mughanga ward (Singida) where one man gave away his Ids in exchange for local brew. Some sold the Ids in order to get money (2000/= to 5000/=). There has also been Ids business, where some people bought them from pupils (at the price of 500/= to 2000/= per Id) who stole their parents'/family members' Ids. This was reported at Mitunduruni, Mudida and Mtinko (Singida).
- vi) Multiparty vs. Peace and Unity.
It has been realized that in most of the rural areas, the ruling party is dominant as compared to other opposition parties. What can simply be said here is that apart from the district offices, opposition parties have not really reached the grassroot Tanzanians and this has made it simple for the ruling party to capture this large section of the population. It is

because of this absence that when one talks of choosing a leader from opposition party, people have only few leaders to make their options/choices since they only know few political parties and in some cases, they still believe that opposition parties are there to violate peace and unity of this country.

- vii) Attendance of youths in public meetings.
The attendance of youths in public meetings was poor. It was learnt however that youths do not participate in these meetings because their issues which are not discussed in these meetings and their views are normally not valued. This has made youths take public meetings as there only for the elders. Another lesson learnt out of their poor attendance was that youths have lost hope on their lives since they don't have employment or means to employ them. They have to use most of their time trying to earn their living performing those scarce manual works. Some of the youths are frustrated and thus use their time taking alcohol or drugs that ruin their health as a way to console themselves for the hardship they face.

- viii) "Takrima" as corruption
In all sessions we conducted, the concept that "Takrima" has a different meaning from corruption was highly challenged and it was one of the issues that people have expressed their disappointment on the parliament and the government in general. The word Takrima to the large part of the community has the definition of bribe/corruption legalized in a special way. One participant said "pork has different names to local Tanzanians – Kitimoto, Mkuu wa meza etc but all meaning pork!". Thus Takrima is nothing but corruption.

- ix) Poverty v/s. decision making.
Another issue which has been learnt especially in rural areas is that people are poor (in some areas very poor) and this has affected their power in decision making putting them at a risk of making wrong decisions simply because they have been given money/things they needed to manage their lives. This has created a class of few people who have the power to dominate the majority who are poor. This denies democratic decision making.

- x) Popularity of facilitators
Civic education facilitators have expressed how their work has been appreciated by the communities and praised for it. Some of them were encouraged by the informed people to aspire for council seats. We expect in the future some of the facilitators may contest for leadership. The facilitators can make good leaders as they are already informed citizens.

Generally the success of the project can also be measured by the attendance of the target group (women) in public CVE meetings. At the beginning the projections or goals of WEGCC was to reach 52,248 and 19118 women for Singida Rural and Urban District respectively.

In this report it can be seen that 47,889 and 9991 women equivalent to 92% and 52% of women for both Singida rural and urban districts respectively have been reached.

The over all project performance is 65% which mark the success of the project in the area.

b) RECOMANDATIONS

It has been an experience to talk about civics with grassroots Tanzanians, know what they know and believe in and discover the gap that needs to be filled by civic education. As for the lessons learnt/experience from the past 6 months field experience, the following are the views and recommendations.

i) To the government.

The government has the responsibility to make sure that it's people are well informed on the matters pertaining their daily lives which include people's rights and responsibilities, know their constitution, better life provision in terms of food, shelter, health services, education etc and democratic governance. Because of this key responsibility we recommend the government to make strategies which will enable each wards & village and sub village/street office have a copy of national constitution which will make it possible for people to read/understand the contents let alone see it. Also it could be better if those parts of the constitution which really touches the lives of people at the grassroots are in simplified as much as possible for easy comprehension and accessibility to large section of the community. Since each ward has/is on the way to have a secondary school and each village have primary school (s). WEGCC recommends that these schools are filled with not only the constitution but other government documents thus become resource centers especially for the rural Tanzanians who take up to 7 days or more to get a local newspaper.

The government should also promote civic education in school by reviewing the school syllabus to ensure adequate coverage of the contents.

Peoples' lives should be taken care of in terms of improvement of the economy with emphasis serious poverty eradication so that people's decision is not influenced by corruption.

it as a program to people out of school since it have been realized that people are ignorant in terms of knowledge of civic matters.

ii) To the Parliament

Because majority have seriously disagreed **Takrima** concept, it is high time that the rule is passed to remove it (declare it illegal) so that corrupt leaders/people do not use it to deny the right of others.

We also recommend that a bill is passed to enable people remove (**vote for no confidence**) on incapable leaders (president, MPs. counselors) when a need arises instead of waiting for the 5 years.

iii) PMU /UNDP.

The supports given to facilitate CVE to the community at the grassroots level have helped the community in many aspects. The only shortfall was that for the sake of effective participation in this years election, education was needed before the enrollment of the citizens in the permanent Register. This could have enabled majority to participate in the election since they have appreciated CVE. In addition since civics is a wide field which involve sensitive issues concerning decision making that determines who says what about local and international matters, it needs adequate time to be clear to the people whose majority know nothing/very little. We therefore recommend that this program is continued even in a different style so that all Tanzanians are reached by civic education and become really responsible citizens. In collaboration with other stakeholders this can be done so that effects will be seen in the 2010 elections than what is expected in this year's election.

iv) Political parties.

Because direct beneficiaries of CVE are the citizens at the grassroots level, it is better for the political parties to create grounds for free and fair elections by promoting the spirit of political tolerance so as to make their supporters come together on the discussion about issues of national interest. The opposition parties should penetrate to the grassroots level, establish themselves very well so as to promote democratic country and a sound multi party state.

WEGCC also request the political parties to participate in provision of CVE to their members as this will help in building citizens awareness and responsibilities on civic matters and issues of national interest.

c) WAY FORWARD

Field experience indicates a big demand for continuation of civic education by the general communities who have been expressing their ignorance about very important matters on civic aspects like freedom to question about their rights and concerns. WEGCC therefore has decided to extend provision of civic education for another six months (November 2005 – April 2006).

Other potential avenues to inform public on civic matters have been earmarked such as Tanzania teachers' association, vocational training institutions and other forums. For sustainability of this program, civic education clubs shall be formed at different centers for the purpose of organizing regular/occasional civic education activities.

4. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The success of this project is the result of a genuine support and cooperation of different stakeholders at various levels. Since the introduction of the project in April /May 2005, WEGCC has received assistance and advice from various people/ organizations.

WEGCC would like to express their sincere appreciations to PMU and UNDP in general for their technical and financial support throughout the project lifetime. Their financial support has enabled WEGCC to reach the targeted grassroots population easily and deliver CVE smoothly. The provision of reading and learning materials as well as various technical trainings had an impact on the provision of CVE in a simple and understandable way.

WEGCC also acknowledge the government officers at various levels (Region, District, Ward, Village, Sub- village and Streets) for assisting the project by organizing/ permitting public meetings so enabling facilitators provide CVE to the citizens. Appreciations also go for the cooperation given by political parties, religious and education institutions at all levels by accepting the facilitators to conduct CVE sessions.

Our appreciations should go to the UNVs, Ms Gillian Tegissa and Sylvia Shekilango who worked with us providing technical and moral support to the coordinator, facilitators and WEGCC office in general. They had a lot to contribute towards the success of the project.

We also acknowledge the civic education facilitators/grass roots communicators who devoted their whole time to provide education to the community and to all WEGCC members and staff lead by the regional coordinators Mr. Alpha Manota and Mr. Anderson Mirisho who really worked very hard on coordination of all project activities and materials.

Lastly WEGCC would like to express appreciations to the citizens in the program areas (Singida Rural and Urban and municipality of Arusha), who from time to time in these 6 months, participated in CVE sessions and contributed their views which have helped in improving people's attitude towards their country.

We can't thank everyone individually but may our acknowledgement reach all those who in one way or another have assisted WEGCC to accomplish the project successfully.