



Representatives from Women Coalition speaking during the press conference

Women's Coalition Pushes For Electoral Bills to Include Gender Equality

The Women, Constitution, Election, and Leadership (WCEL) Coalition, has called for the inclusion of gender equality issues in the three electoral bills presented to Parliament in November 2023.

The Coalition made the call in a press, calling upon the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Administration, Constitution, and Law to ensure that the issue of gender equality is included in the three bills which are the Bill for the Election of the President, Members of Parliament and Councillors (2023), the Amendment of the Law on Political Parties Bill (2023), and the National Election Commission Bill (2023).

They said that after analyzing all the three bills, they have discovered gender gaps which they demand the country to have laws specifying gender equality as well as aligning the principles of accountability for all those who are entrusted with leadership in translating these principles into policies and strategic implementation plans.

"Our demands are guided by principles of gender equality as stated in our Constitution 1977 article 12(1) which prohibits all forms of discrimination including gender discrimination" Said Mary Ndaro- Ag Coalition Chair

According to their statement, some of their suggestions focused on; the selection of the president and vice president, election of MPs and Councillors, the role of political parties in building gender equality, and the National Election Commission leaders.

The Coalition's statement stimulated public discussions on various platforms, especially social media regarding the participation of women in democratic processes, hence increasing awareness among stakeholders.

For detailed information about the coalition statement click the link below:
<https://wfttrust.or.tz/media-and-publication/>





Some of WCEL coalition members in one of the of strategic meeting organised at WFT-T office.

Strategic Organising for Strengthening Women's Voices in Democratic Processes.

The Coalition on Women, Constitution, Election, and Leadership (WCEL) through its strategic committee has been making efforts to amplify women's voices and increase their participation in the democratic processes, especially during this period leading to local government and general elections.

Some of the strategies include providing strategic leadership in the processes of joint agendas, setting strategies for raising women's voices collectively, enhancing clarity for the strategic agenda, conducting feminist analysis/review on the specific agenda, and leading implementation of the agreed strategies through meetings/workshops, etc.

Similarly, the Coalition has been preparing and coordinating a series of stakeholder (coalition members) meetings to propose and discuss strategies and work on them at various levels of implementation, as well as using the meetings to build a common understanding of the relevant agenda.

Following the government's submission of three bills related to the elections in the Parliament in November 2023 and calling for stakeholders' opinions, before being passed by Parliament, the Women's Coalition called for an urgent meeting of coalition members.

The meeting was aimed at getting feedback from the process of submitting opinions which took place in Dodoma including the successes, challenges, and opportunities available for the participation of the coalition in the ongoing process.

It was noted that following the professional analysis that was done by some members, all the laws did not take into account the opinions of the stakeholders, especially (the National Election Commission Act). In all its articles this law did not consider gender issues.

Members who took part in the process in Dodoma, said that one of the biggest challenge regarding the feedback process is that of inadequate time, that did not allow stakeholders to fully organize themselves to participate in the process.

They also suggested some strategies to continue raising the voice of women participation in democracy, including using the media, organizing national convenings on women's participation in democracy which will involve women from all settings.

Similarly, participants discussed various ways to continue strengthening the coalition to achieve its goal of uniting women's voices and having one voice and a common agenda.

As a way forward members agreed to use the media (Press Conference) to express their opinions regarding the bills and also to continue raising awareness in the community about women participation in democratic processes.

Since last year WFTT has been supporting the coalition to reflect, discuss strategies of engagement and organising groups/coalition to raise their voices for the purpose of promoting women participation in democratic processes.



Some members from Women Directors Platform during one of the session

Efforts to Strengthen Women, Constitution, Election and Leadership (WCEL) Coalition

Strengthening Women's and Children's is one of WFT-T strategic areas. Therefore The Women's Constitution, Election, and Leadership Coalition (WCEL) Technical Committee with support from (WFT-T) recently held a meeting with leaders and representatives from the Women Directors platform, aimed at strengthening the coalition.

The main goal of the meeting was to reflect upon the coalition's journey, where it came from, its current status, and the power and importance of collective voice, among others.

Opening the meeting, the coalition chairperson Prof. Ruth Meena said that currently the collective power and voice of the coalition has diminished, hence it is important to revive it.

She highlighted how the collective power achieved positive results during the constitutional review process and succeeded in including 12 women's issues in the constitution.

"The coalition does not belong to an individual and does not have a copyright. But, it is important to agree on one agenda and one voice. Also, every organization can use the agreed agendas in the continuation of advocacy aimed at bringing about real changes we need to see," insisted Prof. Ruth

Expressing their views during the meeting, some directors admitted that the collective power of the coalition is decreasing. They pointed out some of the challenges as lack of common understanding of the coalition and how it works.

They highlighted the importance of having one agenda that every organization or anyone can carry.

"The important thing is to agree on where we are together, so that we stand together, and even when there are differences we remain united. We should not be divided by a person or institution. It is also important for members to find time to educate themselves and understand ongoing common agendas, the importance of communication when there is a gap, and to work as an activist (to keep up with the pace of events/be alert)." advised one participant

The meeting agreed that in implementing coalition strategic plans in advocating for the agenda of women's participation in the democratic process, there is need to bring back the collective power and unity of the coalition, since every person or organization's contribution is important in bringing about real and sincere change.

Other suggestions were; creating time and spaces to reflect and celebrate each other in recognizing each other's contribution in the movement, and also the importance of investing in the wellness and selfcare.

The Women, Constitution, Elections and Leadership Network includes more than 60 civil organizations in the country and was established in 2011. At the beginning this Network was known as the Women and Constitution Network. The goal of its establishment is to build collective strength and have a single agenda throughout the process of preparing a new Constitution. The network continued to grow and expand and also took the election and leadership agenda and now has more than 200 organizations across the country.



WFT-T Board of Trustees New Chairperson

The Board of Trustees of Women Fund Tanzania Trust (WFT-T) is pleased to announce that **Prof. Penina Mlama** has been elected as the new Chairperson of the Board of Trustees during a meeting held on 11th August 2023 for a term of three years. Prof. Mlama succeeds Prof. Ruth Meena, who served as the Board's first chair.

A distinguished academic and playwright, Prof. Mlama has a strong commitment to gender issues, performing arts, development, and education.

Prof. Penina is also a leadership expert, and she has served on various boards including; The Mwalimu Nyerere University, the Tanzania Commission for Universities, the Uongozi Institute and St John's University of Tanzania

Before her election, Prof. Penina was a member of WFT-T Board of Trustees since 2022. She officially assumed office on 13th December 2023 after the end of the transitional leadership period

The Board takes this opportunity to express its sincere appreciation to Prof. Penina Mlama for accepting the great responsibility of leading the Board of Trustees of the Women's Fund Tanzania (WFT - Trust).

Also, The Board of Trustees extends its sincere gratitude to Prof. Ruth Meena for her strategic leadership, which has propelled the Fund to reach enviable heights in its short life.

Congratulations and all the best Professor Penina Mlama.

Welcome aboard!

Pictorial



Internal learning session!



grantees from Shinyanga in a group photo after a learning sessions at WFT-T offices



Project exit meeting with Msichana Initiative team



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