

*Parity in Decision Making: Women in the Heart of Europe*

## **Trainers Manual**

# **Communication Skills for Women in Politics**

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*Project coordinated by KETHI, Greece.  
In partnership with Arcidonna Italy,  
MONA – Hungary, the Northern Feminist University  
Norway, and Shevolution UK*

## **Dedication**

In recognition of all the women who have put themselves forward for elected office, and to all the women who have been elected, and all the women who will seek elected office this decade. And to all those women and men who support and give them active assistance in their endeavours.

## **Many thanks...**

This manual has been a cooperative effort. The author is sincerely grateful for the enthusiastic contribution made by women from Greece, Italy, Hungary, United Kingdom and Norway both as individuals and groups campaigning for more women in politics, in establishing the value of a manual on Communications skills for women seeking elected office.

## **Lesley Abdela particularly thanks:**

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## **‘Parity in Decision making: Women in the Heart of Europe’**

This manual is an outcome of the project ‘*Parity in Decision making: Women in the Heart of Europe*’. The project is coordinated and promoted by The Research Centre for Gender Equality, Greece (KETHI) in cooperation with NGOs Arcidonna, Italy, MONA Hungary.

KETHI, Arcidonna and MONA want a gender-balanced representation in their National Parliaments plus a gender-balanced representation from Greece, Hungary and Italy in the European Parliament.

Shevolution United Kingdom has acted as technical and training adviser.

The Northern Feminist University, Norway, is acting as the Evaluator.

The project has twin targets:

- to raise awareness among voters and politicians about the importance of electing more women, and in parallel with this,
- to enhance the communication and political skills of women candidates.

The long-term objective is to dismantle gender apartheid and build parity democracy, the equal representation of women and men on merit at all levels of decision-making - in village, national/federal and international politics and public life.

The project is not about the exclusion of men, it is about the inclusion of women: their talents, perspectives, energy, cultures, priorities and views. Over half the population of Europe are women. Currently this is not reflected in the number of women in the European Parliament.

## **Introduction to the manual**

This Manual has been designed as a practical tool-kit for trainers to use in workshops to train future women politicians and for workshops training activists who are campaigning collectively to increase women's participation in politics.

The manual is needed because traditionally in Greece, Italy and Hungary, as in most other societies, women's views and wishes in the political arena have mainly had to be expressed through men representatives.

Participating as a candidate in an election campaign for local, national or European Parliament is an exciting and amazing experience. It is a privilege to seek the chance to represent your community. It is a privilege of democracy to be able to put across your ideas to an audience. It is a privilege to have the opportunity to meet and listen to the hopes and dreams of other citizens.

It is true that women candidates face different challenges – and in particular ways harder challenges – from those faced by their male counterparts, but women candidates have advantages too. For one thing, there are fewer women than men in politics, therefore voters are more likely to recognise and remember a woman. Many women are natural, good communicators. The *Women in Politics Communication Skills* manual can help transport any woman's talent for communication from the private to the public arena.

Politicians who know how to communicate well have a better chance of getting chosen by a party to represent them as candidates in an election, and more chance of persuading voters to elect them.

In the course of talking about issues such as employment, economy, transport, social security, education, health, a woman is more likely to add dimensions which impact on women's lives. Plus she is more likely to speak and communicate in ways to which women (often the majority voters) can relate.

### **Does it matter whether there are 50% women or no women in a legislature?**

The answer is YES.

Experience shows that until women achieve numbers in legislatures far nearer parity, all advances in politics, public life and in introducing and passing legislation of especial importance to the majority gender should be viewed as extremely fragile and easily reversible. If women are not present at all levels of decision-making in politics, it means one thing above all - men will be setting the priorities for the allocation of finances, welfare services, education, trade, agriculture, international relations, health services, international policy etc.

In most countries, government after government has tended to ignore, even to disdain what women want and need. A long list of new policies need to be implemented. To give just a few examples:

Women are often paid less than men for work of similar value. In many countries domestic violence against women and sexual harassment is considered 'normal'. Millions of women are in low pay, low status work. Lack of affordable good quality child-care is often a major block for women needing to earn their living. In the switch from Communism to Privatisation, governments in Central and Eastern Europe closed down state subsidised child-care facilities. Poverty has been a root cause of Sex trafficking in women which has become an expanding lucrative trade. In the United Kingdom three quarters of pensioners living in poverty are female. In Italy women have difficulty in accessing financial credit in their own name and there is a high emphasis on stereotyping, for example in the role of women in the family.

**Reform and transform. The European Union is committed to promoting democracy.**

Even beyond the quest for justice and fairness for women, the purpose of increasing women's participation in politics is not simply to increase numbers. It is also to support the creation of a new democratic agenda in politics that changes the lives of all people for the better.

Europe faces daunting challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: poverty, climatic changes, shortage of water resources, the rapid growth of terrorism, a resurgence of racism and ethnic and religious hatreds, sex trafficking (now estimated to be the fourth-largest 'industry' in the world), unemployment, external wars and internal conflicts, damage to the environment, an increasing imbalance between rich and poor (much of this resulting in migration of millions of people), tough economic competition from emerging economies.

If EU Member States are going to overcome these challenges, their future leaders need to be chosen from the full pool of talent in Europe – namely several hundred million women as well as men.

## **How the to use this Manual**

**The Manual is divided into 2 sections:**

### **Section 1**

Section 1 contains useful information, context and arguments that candidates and activists can use as background briefings for their speeches and media interviews on women in politics. Trainers can photocopy Section 1 and distribute it to workshop participants.

### **Section 2 workshop modules**

Section 2 is divided into Communication Skills workshop modules on Public Speaking, TV and radio interviews, Meetings, Press releases and Advocacy. The training modules include guidelines to trainers: suggested programme content with scripts, power point slides, exercises and games.

## **SECTION 1**

### **Useful briefing information for candidates and activists**

This section contains information, context and arguments that candidates and activists can use as background briefings for their speeches and media interviews on women in politics. *Trainers can photocopy or e-mail Section 1 and distribute it to workshop participants for use as a briefing document.*

#### **Current situation. European Parliament and Commission.**

Since the start of *'Parity in Decision-making: Women in the Heart of Europe'* the percentage of women elected as Members of the European Parliament in two of the project partner countries increased in the 2004 European Elections.

Greek women MEPs increased from 25% to 29.1%.  
Italian women MEPs increased from 11.5% to 19.2%.

Hungary is a new member of the European Union. 2004 was the first time Hungary participated in European Elections. 33.3% of Hungarian MEPs are women.

**The European Parliament:** the proportion of MEPs who are women rose from 17.3% after the 1984 elections to 31% in 2003. At the 2004 European elections the proportion decreased slightly to 30.3% women MEPs.

**The European Commission:** until April 2004,<sup>i</sup> 25% of commissioners were women. (1999-2004 legislative period). For the 2004-2009 legislative period, 8 women out of 25 have been nominated in the Commission. This increases the participation of women to 32%, the highest rate ever reached. However, only one of the five Vice-Presidents is a woman and the EC President has never been a woman.

**Council of Ministers:** the Council of Ministers is composed of national ministers, the percentage of women therefore reflects the presence of women in national governments: around 23%.<sup>ii</sup>

#### **Women's Representation in national parliaments.**

185 states signed up for the UN Global Platform for Action at the Fourth United Nations Conference in Beijing in 1995. The Platform set a target of at least 30% women in all decision-making levels of politics by 2005.

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<sup>i</sup> Anna Diamantopoulou was replaced by Stavros Dimas in April 2004, decreasing the percentage of women Commissioners to 20%.

<sup>ii</sup> European database women in decision making:

[http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/women\\_men\\_stats/out/measures\\_out416\\_en.htm](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/women_men_stats/out/measures_out416_en.htm)

Ten years on since ‘Beijing’ 10 countries in the 25 EU states currently have over 30% women Members in their national Parliaments. Greece, Italy and Hungary have not yet reached the 30% target.

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### **Women’s representation in the European Parliament (EP)**

- The European Parliament is the only directly elected institution of the European Union.
- EP Elections take place every five years.
- In the 2004 European election 348,824,000 people had the right to vote, of which approximately 180 million were women.
- 30.5% of the Members of the European Parliament are women.
- 16 of the 25 member states have over 30% women MEPS.
- Sweden (57.9%) and Luxembourg (50%) have the highest percentage of women MEPs. (See full List of European Election results at the end of Section 1)
- Cyprus and Malta have no women representatives in the European Parliament.
- Women’s representation in EP governing bodies has dropped for some posts since the 2004 elections.
- Women represent 15% of chairpersons of Parliamentary committees.
- 6 of the 20 members of the European Parliament Bureau are women (30%).

### **Women’s representation in the European Commission**

- In the 20 committees inside the European Commission there are only 3 women chairs.
- Two political groups are co-chaired by women (20% of chairpersons).
- Women’s participation on the European Commission increased from 20% to 30%.

### **Countries globally with over 30% women in their legislatures**

Wales 50%, Rwanda 48.8%, Sweden 45.3%, Scotland 39.5%, Denmark 38%, Finland 37.5%, Netherlands 36.7%, Norway 36.4%, Cuba 36%, Spain 36%, Belgium 35.3%, Costa Rica 35.1%, Argentina 34.0%, Austria 33.9%, South Africa 32.8%, Germany 32.2%, Iceland 30.2%, Mozambique 30%<sup>iv</sup>

The good news is that in the past decade the number of legislatures with at least 30% women Members has steadily increased.

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<sup>iii</sup> Statistics Inter Parliamentary Union web-site 19 October 2004 [www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm](http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm)

<sup>iv</sup> Statistics from [www.ipu.org](http://www.ipu.org)



## **They did this and it succeeded – Lessons learned.**

Every country is different. No one country has the perfect solution for increasing

### **Women in National Parliaments in EU Member States**

Sweden 45.3%, Denmark 38%, Finland 37.5%, Netherlands 36.7%, Spain 36%, Belgium 35.3%, Austria 33.9%, Germany 32.2%, Latvia 21%, Poland 20.2%, Luxembourg 20%, Slovakia 19%.3%, Portugal 19.1%, Estonia 18.8%, United Kingdom 17.9%, Czech Republic 17%, **Greece 12.6%**, Ireland 13.3%, France 12.2%, Slovenia 12.2%, **Italy 11.5%**, Cyprus 10.7%, Lithuania 10.6%, **Hungary 9.8%**, Malta 9.2%.

women's participation in politics, but there are useful common lessons learned.

### **Countries with over 30% women in parliament share four things in common:**

1. All countries with over 30% women in parliament have introduced equalising strategies such as gender-balanced quotas as a 'break-through' (i.e. temporary) measure.
2. Women (often with supportive men) inside and outside political parties mobilised and campaigned for quotas. Women's groups also provided training for women in political participation.
3. The electoral system is some form of Proportional Representation.\*
4. There is a clear separation between the political processes and organised religion.

*\*the exceptions are Scotland and Wales – see section on quotas*

### **It's not a rich/poor divide**

Women's representation in politics is not linked to a rich/poor divide. Women in wealthy countries such as Italy, the United States and Japan have a lower share of parliamentary seats than women in 13 developing countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Rwanda, a financially poor country, and Sweden, a rich country, have among the highest representation of women in parliament in the world.

### **Political literacy does not depend on a high rate of educational literacy**

Many countries with a highly educated population have a low representation of women: Hungary 9.8%, France 12.2%, Ireland 13.3%, **Greece 12,66%**, Italy 11.5%, the United States 12% and Japan with 10%.

Compare this to countries with a low rate of literacy such as Rwanda (48.8%), South Africa (32.8%) and Mozambique (30%).

### **Major upheavals, including deadly conflict, can be a catalyst for reform.**

The first elections after a major upheaval by definition start with a clean sheet, with the opportunity to throw off the baggage of the past.

Five countries with over 30 % representation of women in their legislatures took the opportunity of major upheavals to introduce radical reforms that enabled far greater women's participation: Rwanda, Mozambique and Afghanistan after wars, South Africa

after the long struggle to dismantle the system of separation of the races, known as Apartheid.

In the United Kingdom, major constitutional reforms led to the setting up of the first Scottish Parliament in over 300 years. At the first election, 40% of elected members were women. The newly-created Welsh Assembly now has 50% women Members – 30 women and 30 men.

By contrast the British House of Commons, apparently weighed down by all its centuries of tradition, has under 19% women Members of Parliament. In practical terms this means four men's views to every woman's views in the House of Commons.

**Women's representation is highest with a clear separation between politics and religion.**

Women's political representation is highest in countries where there is a clear separation between political processes and religion. Some of the world's great religions keep to patriarchal – Abrahamic - traditions founded between 1000 and 2000 years ago. In a number of countries religious priesthoods form powerful male political networks, both in terms of political 'king-makers' and in the guise of 'interpreting' laws.

In some Mediterranean countries, for example, the priesthood retains political influence. Malta and Cyprus have no female Members of the European Parliament.

In a few predominantly Muslim countries, female representation in the legislatures has increased in the past few years, Pakistan has 21.6% female representation and Tunisia (October 1999 elections) 21% women.

Countries where religion and politics are more closely interwoven such as Yemen, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, have no female representatives in their legislatures. Kuwait is now the only country where women are not yet permitted to vote nor to stand for election, though the ruler has made strenuous efforts to change this situation.

**They did this and it succeeded. Sweden and Wales.**

**Swedish women used gentle blackmail.**

Within the European member states, Sweden currently has the highest level of representation of women in the European Parliament and in the national Parliament. 50% of Swedish Euro MPs are women. In the Swedish Lower House 45% are women: 157 out of 349 Members (Election year 2000).

Sweden's electoral system is a form of Proportional Representation called the List System. Voters are presented with lists of all the candidates sponsored by political parties. They can vote for any party and the parties receive seats in parliament proportional to the number of votes they get. If the voter does not like any political party or any candidates, she/he is able to cross out the names and nominate any Swedish citizen in their place. This way an independent can get elected.

Slightly over 50% of Swedish voters are women. Sweden made its big breakthrough and doubled its female representation in Parliament in the 1998 elections. A group of Swedish women who called themselves the Red Stockings used the gentle art of

democratic blackmail. The Red Stockings took exception to the under-representation of women on every Swedish party list of candidates. The Red Stockings let it be known to the party leaders that they would persuade voters to cross off the names of candidates nominated by the political parties considered guilty of gender discrimination and replace them with their family members' names or animals instead.

Fewer than a dozen women were ever identified as members of the Red Stocking group, nevertheless polls established that practically every Swede had heard of their plan. In a last-minute unspoken consensus, every Swedish party doubled, and in some cases tripled, the number of female candidates on its party lists.

The result was that Sweden got its high percentage of female legislators.

In Sweden quotas for women in elections are not stipulated in the Constitution or legislation. Political parties can choose to use targets or quotas. The zipping system (male/female/male/female) is used by 5 Swedish Parties to achieve gender balance among their elected representatives.

### **Welsh women got organised and they lobbied.**

In the new Welsh Assembly 50% of the Members are women (30 men, 30 women) and half the Ministers are women, but until the late 1990s only 1 in 20 Welsh local councillors had been a woman. Was it simply luck so many women got elected? Not by any means! Women activists in one of the major parties (the British Labour Party) seized the chance and lobbied hard for quotas to be introduced into the Party candidate selection system for the new legislature.

## **Challenges faced by women candidates**

In theory, a citizen whether male or female, should have an equal opportunity of getting elected to parliament or local government. However, the reality is that 85% of parliamentarians in the world are men.

When it comes to elections, women are not playing on a level playing field with men. Hundreds of open or covert discriminatory practices impact against women candidates. The obstacles are partly a consequence of *attitudes* and partly a consequence of *processes*.

It can be difficult for those who have not attempted to contest an election to fully appreciate the extent of the incredible extra obstacles which women in many countries have to overcome in addition to the usual challenges faced by any political candidate, or the courage women show in participating as political candidates in elections. The obstacles are partly a consequence of cultural attitudes and partly a consequence of institutional procedures.

Women are *less likely* than men to have money and resources, they may have *family responsibilities* that demand their attention. They may face *sexism* and ridicule from the media.

In many societies women's low status results in *low self-esteem* and this lack of self-confidence prevents them from stepping out into the political arena to speak up for what they believe in.

Women are not a homogenous category. Issues which impinge on women are cross-cut by other factors affecting their status: marital/widowhood status, parental background, religious grouping, ethnic minority/race, class and economic ranking, urban/rural.

Any organisation campaigning to increase women's participation should consider the extra challenges faced, for example, by women from ethnic and religious minorities. It is important to discuss strategies and actions to enable them to have full participation in politics.

Women in the new democracies such as Hungary may have certain specific issues to tackle which may not exist in longer established democracies such as Greece, and Italy.

There are, nevertheless, *common* challenges to overcome. The following are the main factors that, in practice, work against women's election to parliaments:

### **The Six 'Cs'**

1. *Cultural tradition and attitudes*: stereotyped attitudes and preconceptions have frequently been used as an excuse for not including women. Religious traditions are in reality often cultural practices rather than theological strictures. Women are perceived as caretakers of the home, nursers of the sick and bearers and rearers of children rather than as political leaders.
2. *Cronyism*: men's networks have created strong bonds of mutual help into power positions which by definition exclude women. Women find it difficult to break into inner circles of power created by men's networks, or to create a viable alternative.
3. *Cash*: a shortage of financing for women. Election campaigns and building a track record in politics can be expensive. In general women have less access to spare cash than men.
4. *Confidence*: women often lack the confidence to participate as candidates for election.
5. *Chronic lack of time*: women often have to juggle family responsibilities, paid work and political action should they become active, often referred to as the 'double-' or 'triple-burden'.
6. *Career impediment*: the influence of traditional leaders or religious leaders, discouragement even from family members, intimidation and the masculine nature of many political parties all act as career blocks to women in politics.

The obstacles break down broadly into two categories: institutional obstacles, and obstacles caused by cultural stereotypes and attitudes.

### **Cultural stereotypes and attitudes**

Women face preconceptions that are essentially cultural which have become accepted as 'the norm' and have become institutionalised. This results in both open discrimination and hidden discrimination against women. The hidden gender discrimination can be more pervasive than obvious discrimination. Stereotyped assumptions are often behind decisions not to include women as equal partners (indeed, to sideline women) and not to restructure the way things are done. Historically politics has been viewed as 'a man's game'.

### **In political parties**

Political parties may not be interested in proactively encouraging women to stand for parliament. In some political parties, party members at candidate selection meetings and in primary elections still view men ‘as a safer bet’ to win elections. Women entering the political arena have to overcome thousands of years of discrimination in politics and public life. With mostly men at the top, political culture is irradiated top-down by the outlook and attitudes of one gender. The culture changes needed are often invisible. Discrimination (possibly unconscious and indirect) is deeply rooted. This is especially evident during the political party selection processes.

### **Attitudes of ‘nearest and dearest’**

Spouses, partners and family can be a major block or they can form a valuable support system for women candidates. In some of our workshops, Shevolution asked aspiring women politicians to make a list of everything they viewed as an asset to their career in politics and everything they thought to be a liability. Approximately 50% of participants rated their husbands or partners a supportive asset. The other 50% described their husbands as unsupportive or even, in some cases, actively opposed to their participation in politics. They said husbands and other male relatives prevented them from attending political meetings or entering the political arena

### **Institutional obstacles**

#### **Lack of support systems and powerful networks for women**

Aspiring women candidates and politicians in a number of countries lack support mechanisms such as strong networks inside and outside political parties.

#### **Funding**

One aspect which hampers women is the financing of election campaigns and the influence of big money in electoral processes. At first sight it may look as though the funding challenges are the same for women and men. The reality is that women all over the world have far less access to funds than men for political participation and seeking office. Election campaigns and building a track record in politics can be expensive. Once a man or woman has won their party’s nomination as a candidate, political parties in some countries assist candidates with funding for the election campaign. But there is usually little or no financial assistance at the nomination stage of the process nor throughout the years of political activism in which a budding politician develops her/his career and experience.

In a study called the Canadian Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing, women said financial factors were the biggest obstacle to their electoral success, and suggested that the government should set limits on the amount of money spent during nomination contests (there is a limit on spending during the election campaign).<sup>v</sup>

Extra personal expenses incurred by being a political activist and prospective candidate can easily amount to several thousand Euros per year.

Costs include:

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<sup>v</sup> Ballington paper on party Funding for International IDEA

- travelling to meetings and conferences.
- the cost of participating in regular Party social and political events
- the cost of taking part in internal party nomination and competitions as part of the political party candidate selection process
- clothes to wear in public life
- child-care if needed when attending political meetings
- membership fees to political party and other political groups

### **Funding assistance for women candidates**

The Canada Elections Act makes provision for childcare expenses to be included in the personal expenses of a candidate for election contest but not for the expenses incurred in the initial campaigning to get the nomination by the party. The Royal Commission in Canada noted that the cost of childcare imposes an unequal burden on many women seeking elected office. It proposed that childcare is a necessary expense in seeking nomination by a candidate that should be considered a legitimate tax deduction.<sup>vi</sup>

In the United Kingdom, EMILY's List UK (based on the American EMILY's LIST) is a special fund which raises seed money for prospective Labour Party women candidates at the time they seek party nomination. This money can be put towards clothes, petrol, telephone bills, training courses, or any other items a woman feels will help her to win her seat.<sup>vii</sup>

#### **Summary of Options for Funding Reform**

1. Limit campaign spending in primary or nomination contests.
2. Provide early money to women contestants.
3. Limit campaign spending and impose campaigning time limits.
4. Establish networks for the financing of women's electoral and nomination campaigns. This is particularly important for women in systems where there is no access to public funding.
5. Provide incentives through the public funding: the amount of funding a party receives could be linked or dependent upon the number of women candidates it puts forward for election.
6. Include childcare costs in nomination and election expenses.
7. Conduct more research into the effects of campaign financing on women, and explore more avenues for reform.

### **They did this and it succeeded. Networks of women inside political parties.**

A group of well-organised women activists within a political party can make a difference. In the early 1990s, Women's networks inside the British Labour Party mobilised, lobbied, and used their voting strength within the party to get a quota introduced. The Labour women's networks analysed which seats their party expected to win at the following election and groomed individual women candidates to apply for each of those vacant winnable seats.

<sup>vi</sup> Ballington Paper on Party Funding for International IDEA

<sup>vii</sup> [www.emilyslist.org.uk](http://www.emilyslist.org.uk)

In Italy, the communication campaigns run by Arcidonna and its development partnership in the run-up to the European Parliament elections of June 2004 played a key role in getting more women elected by encouraging the political parties to put forward a greater number of women candidates.

### **Lack of training and education**

Politics has been a traditionally male domain. Because of this history, in some countries women lack an understanding of the political system. They may even perceive politics as 'nothing to do with us'.

There may be a need to mobilise and actively encourage women to step forward and participate in the political arena. This may include training women in the skills and understanding of democratic politics, their civic rights and responsibilities as voters, activists and representatives.

### **They did this and it succeeded. NGOs can make a difference.**

Preparation for women's participation at the next elections should start not much more than a week after the last election.

In the past twenty years a huge and valuable treasure trove of experience has been built up among women activists and some male supporters but also through NGOs, specialist consultants and international organisations which have focussed on women and politics. These elements should come together and work out a 5-10 year strategy together.

### **The all-party 300 GROUP UK**

The all-party 300 GROUP formed from a group of women from women's organizations plus the women's wings of political parties. They met to confront the fact that at that time, in the United Kingdom's parliament men outnumbered women by 97% to 3%. The campaign developed a twin-track strategy. In marketing terms, it created a **market demand** from the public (i.e. voters) for women candidates; at the same time it prepared and provided *good products* by training potential women candidates and helping them to raise their public profile in the media.

The 300 GROUP pioneered a full range of activities for its members, from debates in committee rooms of the House of Commons, to annual workshop-conferences, 'Town Hall meetings', Saturday skills training throughout Britain (sometimes sponsored by major women's magazines), and a quarterly newsletter which went to 5000 people.

Through this activity, the 300 Group laid the ground for several thousand women to participate fully in Britain's political life. It pressured the political Parties to encourage more and more women to seek candidacies rather than only play a traditional supportive role. It also encouraged women to lobby hard within their parties for a better gender balance. Women in the British Labour Party formed the Labour Women's Network. The pressure from outside the parties and inside the parties meant that within 4 elections the number of women in the House of Commons went from 19 to 122.

But that was still only 18% of the British House of Commons. The real break though came when a major party (Labour) introduced quotas for elections to the Welsh Assembly and Scottish Parliament. Subsequently the English Liberal Democrat Party introduced a zipper quota for their party lists in the 2000 elections to the European Parliament with the result that 5 women and 5 men were elected.

### **MONA Hungary, KETHI Greece and ARCIDONNA Italy – advocacy campaigns**

The three partner groups in the project ‘Parity in Decision-making: Women in the Heart of Europe’ ran successful advocacy campaigns to increase women’s participation in the 2004 European Elections. *(See descriptions of their campaigns in the training section modules on ‘Advocacy’)*

#### **Women’s NGOs and political parties can:**

- lobby for the introduction of gender-balanced parity quotas
- encourage more women to come forward and take an active role in decision-making at all levels in politics and public life
- train women candidates and their campaign teams
- create a market demand for women as a new fresh force politics and public life at all levels of society – village, province and national. At the same time, satisfy this new demand with well-prepared and trained women, equipped with the necessary skills for active leadership roles in political life
- help to change the culture in public life, politics and the media to become more inclusive and ‘woman-friendly’
- raise awareness among the nation’s women about their rights and responsibilities as citizens
- Raise funds for women candidates

### **Political party Candidate selection processes can be a block to women.**

Once a person is chosen by their political party as a candidate, she/he can compete in an election against candidates from other political parties in a constituency or on a party list. Few candidates succeed in getting elected to parliament without the support of a political party.

A person who wants to get elected by the voters first has to get past her/his ‘party gatekeepers’.

A British Member of Parliament described the candidate selection process as follows:

“Getting elected to Parliament is quite simple:

1. First you join the political party of your choice
2. Next you work hard in your party and become well-known in your party
3. Then you apply to stand as an election candidate
4. Get selected by your party to fight a winnable seat
5. Then obtain sufficient votes to win the election!”

Her description of the stages is pretty accurate. The reality is more complex. A great deal of wheeling-and-dealing takes place within political parties.

Rules and methods for selecting prospective candidates to contest elections vary from country to country and from party to party. Political parties are like tribes or clans with their own customs, traditions, values and procedures. During the candidate selection process the power of male networks - secular and/or religious - cannot be over-estimated. This is a tough nut for aspiring women to crack. Party candidate selection processes



often lack transparency or accountability. A small inner clique of party apparatchiks comes together behind closed doors and decides who they want as party candidates. The cliques include the Party leader, national faction leaders, or the national executive. They generally choose other men as candidates.

Political parties may pay lip-service to wanting more women in parliament but few actively reach out to encourage women to come forward as candidates or select women for winnable seats, or train and support them.

Even in political parties where the candidate selection processes are reasonably democratic and each party member is entitled to a vote for the candidate of their choice, women meet sex discrimination. There are Party members on candidate selection committees and at candidate selection meetings who still view men 'as a safer bet' to win elections. This perception is often disguised under other excuses. The following quotes for *not* selecting women as candidates for parliament in their local constituencies have come from members of a variety of British Political Party Candidate selection meetings in the 1980s, before the considerable leap forward of the 1990s was achieved:

"She's too pretty, voters won't take her seriously."

"She's too old." (The candidate was in her late forties or early fifties)

"She's too young, she might get pregnant."

"She should stay home and look after her children."

"The heels on her shoes are too high."

"She wears too many rings on her fingers."

(In an industrial area) "Factory workers won't vote for a woman."

"This is a fishing area. Fishermen won't vote for a woman."

"This is a farming area, farmers won't vote for a woman."

A successful business-woman in her forties was asked:

"Does your husband know you are here?"<sup>viii</sup>

### **They did this and it succeeded. Gender-Balanced Quotas/Equalising Action.**

A variety of different quota systems has been used around the world. Gender-balanced parity quotas with equal rules for women and men and in which everyone has to stand for election are a democratic type of quota system.

Without the introduction of Equalising Action into political life it is like waiting for fish to grow feet. Another generation or two of excellent women will come and go.

At least 122 political parties globally use some form of quota for women when selecting their candidates for elections. Quotas have been used for elections at all levels: regional, national, local, district, provincial, and municipal.

Women's organisations have had to lobby and campaign hard to persuade the 'powers-that-be' to accept the idea of quotas. In an ideal world Quotas/Equalising Action would not be needed, but people opposed to quotas in politics never seem to have any answers

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<sup>viii</sup> 'Women with 'X' Appeal' – women in British politics. By Lesley Abdela. Published by Macdonald and Co.

on how to change things for women, except the same old ‘slowly, slowly, patience, patience’ argument that has been used for centuries.

Measures such as training and support for potential women candidates are clearly helpful, but used on their own, without equalising action mechanisms, the clear evidence is they do not make a significant difference.

Quotas have usually been introduced as a result of strong lobbying campaigns by women inside and outside political parties. Governments and parties have often been reluctant to introduce quotas.

Debates about introducing Quotas can be contentious. Introduction of quotas can be attacked on theoretical ground, but practice demonstrates their true worth.

Often the fact that just one or two political parties introduce a quota influences other parties to introduce a quota at a future date. In Norway, five of the seven parties represented in parliament, with approximately 75 per cent of the seats combined, have officially adopted gender quotas.<sup>ix</sup>

### **Summary of options to reach gender-balanced representation**

1. Introduce a form of ‘parity quota’. A parity quota is the type of quota where the rules are the same for men as for women – for example ‘zipping’ or ‘twinning.’ A parity quota cuts down the risk of the ‘Quota Queens’ syndrome where women elected on a quota system are somehow perceived by colleagues and the media as a ‘second class’ representatives.
2. It is important even if there is a quota system for women candidates to receive good communication skills training, and training on how to research and understand the issues and their rights and responsibilities as elected representatives. It can help very considerably if women candidates and women legislators reach out to build good two-way contact with women’s NGO groups around the country.

### **Gender Balance Quotas/Equalising Action - Question and Answer Briefing** *The following ‘Q and A’ (Question and Answer) briefing can be photocopied and distributed to women for use in debates about quotas.*

#### **Q. Surely quotas are not democratic?**

A. Democracy is representation of the people by the people, and it cannot be real democracy when the largest proportion of the population – women - has little or no representation in the forum where laws are discussed and voted on. Unless hidden systemic barriers to women are removed, women do not, in reality, have equal opportunity. Women make up at least 50% of the population of most countries. And yet, under the current political systems, in which nominations are controlled by political parties which are largely dominated by men, it is unlikely that women will be nominated as candidates in sufficient numbers.

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<sup>ix</sup> IDEA

Quotas may be the only way to democratise political systems. Gender-balanced parity quotas with equal rules for women and men and in which everyone has to stand for election are a democratic type of quota system.

**Q. Surely women elected as part of a quota will be just Political Party puppets?**

**A.** It is true that in some countries the first wave of women to get into parliament or local councils as part of a quota were run as “fronts” for male interests in power. This problem can be overcome by training women candidates and training newly elected female local councillors and parliamentarians in skills and their rights and responsibilities as democratically elected representatives.

**Q. What do you mean by Gender Balanced or Equalising Action?**

**A.** The most successful systems are ‘Gender Balanced’ (sometimes called Equalising Action) in which the rules are the same for men as for women. For example, one system states that at least 40% candidates have to be men and at least 40% candidates have to be women. This means there can be no more than 60% representation by either sex. It avoids the trap of women appointed by a quota being perceived and treated as some sort of second class ‘quota queen’ representative.

Gender Balance also retains democratic credibility because once they have been chosen to be candidates by their political party, female and male candidates still have to get elected by the voters.

**Q. What examples are there of the use of Gender Balance?**

**A.** The Zipper is one example of a Gender Balance procedure. The zipper can be used with PR electoral systems in which each party puts up a slate of candidates. Political parties in Sweden, Germany and Norway have zipped candidate lists.

**Q. How does the Zipper work?**

**A.** Under the zipper system the names of women and men alternate equally in the critical top positions of the Party list of candidates in the election:

1. Woman
2. Man
3. Woman
4. Man etc

Or

1. Man
2. Woman
3. Man
4. Woman etc

If, for example, a Party gains sufficient percentage of the vote for the top 4 names on the list to get elected, 2 will be men and 2 will be women.

The precise operation of the system can vary. In the German Social Democratic Party (SPD), the executive of the State Party proposes a list to a meeting comprising delegates of local Parties. The 40% rule requires that the lists should be zipped, but with freedom to allocate every fifth place to someone of either gender.

In the Swedish Social Democrat Party, candidates are selected at a delegate conference for each of 26 electoral districts. In some districts members vote for a male list and a female list. The candidates who get most votes from each male and female list are merged to produce a female/male zipped list. If a woman is selected for top of the list, a man is placed second, followed by a woman, then a man etc.

The Swedish Green Party uses a similar system. The English Liberal Democrats used this system for the European Parliament Election in 2000. The result was Liberal Democrats had 5 women and 5 men elected to the European Parliament.

**Q. Are there any problems with zipping?**

A. After the November 2001 elections in Kosovo, some of the female candidates were ‘persuaded’ to stand down and were replaced by men in their Party. To safeguard against this unacceptable deceit, new electoral rules in Kosovo include procedures to be followed if a woman leaves office prematurely for any reason. She will be replaced by the next woman on the candidate list.

**Q. The zipper can be used with a PR ‘closed list’ electoral system in which candidates have a fixed and unmovable position on the party list. Is it possible to use a zipper with an ‘Open List’ PR electoral system in which candidates can be promoted up or demoted down their party list according to the number of votes they receive at the election?**

A. Finland uses an open list electoral system and it has not seemed to hinder women. Voters have ensured 36.5% of the seats in the Finnish Parliament are held by women. A 1991 poll indicated that 57% of women voters and 25% of male voters voted for women.<sup>x</sup>

**Q. What gender-balanced system can be used with a ‘First Past the Post’ election system where an individual candidate is elected to represent an individual constituency?**

A. ‘First-past-the-post’ is like a horse race, the one candidate who gets the most votes wins the seat, even if he/she has received well under 50% of the total vote. History shows this type of voting system presents difficulties for women trying to make a breakthrough in ‘traditional’ politics.

Twinning, which is another example of Gender Balance procedures, has been used in countries with a first-past-the-post electoral system to help balance women’s chances.

Twinning is extremely appropriate where a new legislature or new electoral system using first-past-the-post is being introduced or where there have been major boundary changes to create new constituencies and so there is no existing incumbent. Even so, negotiations between constituencies to agree on the twinning formulas can be robust!

Twinning was used by the British Labour Party for the first elections to the Scottish Parliament, the Welsh Assembly and the Greater London Assembly. As a result, 48% of

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<sup>x</sup> Kuusipalo, Jaana Katriina, *Report from Finland by* European Databank, August 2000.

Labour Party Members elected to the Scottish Parliament and 54% elected to the Welsh Assembly were women.

In total across the parties in 1999, 37% and 40% women Members were elected to the new Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly.

In the subsequent 2003 election in Wales 50% women (30 men and 30 women) were elected without the need to re-use the twinning quota. The parity quota mechanism used in the previous election had already successfully broken down the gender barriers and entrenched women as legitimate politicians.

**Q. How does Twinning work?**

**A.** In an electoral system in which one person is elected to represent one constituency, a party ‘twins’ two (usually nearby) constituencies to select their political candidates. The Party in one of these constituencies chooses a female candidate, the Party branch in the other constituency chooses a male candidate. However, it is really only feasible to use twinning in a situation where there are no previous incumbents.

In 1999, the elections held for a Scottish Parliament were the first since Scotland and England came under joint rule 300 years ago. The Labour Party twinned pairs of constituencies where there was a reasonably equal chance of winning. Party Members from each pair of constituencies came together to select the candidates. Members had two votes - one for a woman and one for a man. The man with the most votes became the candidate for one of the two constituencies, and the woman with the most votes became the candidate in the other constituency.

**Q. Surely quotas are demeaning to women? – women do not need quotas because women will get there on their merit.**

**A.** This argument is put forward by women as well as men but if this was true, why aren’t there many more women in the world’s legislatures? Does anyone deny the thousands of willing and capable women in every country? Merit just does not seem to be sufficient for women.

Clearly Quotas are needed. This is not because women are unable to succeed in politics on merit, but because, all too often, women are rarely given the opportunity to try. The system may not be selecting candidates ‘on merit’ at all. There are plenty of able women in all Parties who are not getting selected for winnable seats or winnable positions on Party Lists. It is not unknown for a woman applicant to be told ‘You were the best person for the candidacy but we felt we should choose a man’.

If women really were being offered the chance to succeed *on merit*, Equalising Action would not be needed.

Equalising action is designed to introduce a level playing field so women can compete fairly at the candidate selection stage. Women make up 50% of the population of most countries. And yet, under current political systems, in which nominations are controlled by political parties largely dominated by men (what in the UK is often called ‘the old-boys’ network’), it is unlikely that women will be nominated as candidates in sufficient numbers. Until hidden systemic barriers to women are removed. women do not, in

reality, have equal opportunity. Equalising action is therefore required to make the break-through.

**Q. Surely you should not counter discrimination with more discrimination against men?**

A. Equalising action is not designed to discriminate against men as some sort of revenge for the discrimination suffered by women. It is designed to introduce a level playing field so women can compete fairly for selection. It gives women the opportunity to compete on merit, which is not currently happening.

**Q. Surely with positive action we will end up with low-quality MPs?**

A. There is absolutely no evidence to suggest that women selected under positive action mechanisms are any better or any worse than the rest of their political colleagues, whether male or female.

**Q. Surely the law should not interfere with how political Parties operate?**

A. Laws can certainly be used to create a just and fair society. Legislation can be permissive (you can) or prescriptive (you must). Permissive legislation makes it legal for a political party to introduce quotas on a voluntary basis. Norway, Denmark Germany, and Sweden have permissive legislation. An increasing number of NE European political Parties have chosen voluntarily to introduce quotas. In 1988 the Danish Social Democratic Party introduced a 40% quota for local and regional elections. In 1983 the Norwegian Labour Party introduced a 40% quota.

In Germany the Green Party introduced parity quotas in 1980, the Social Democrats in 1988 and the Christian Democratic Party in 1996.

5 Swedish political parties have now made the choice to introduce a quota.(v)

(See Greek and French and other systems below)

**Q. Are there any disadvantages to a permissive system in which parties can choose whether or not to have a quota?**

A. The disadvantage is that unless every party introduces Equalising Action processes, there is no guarantee of the 'critical mass' of at least 30% women continuing if there is a change of government, if the in-coming party or parties did not use equalising action.

**Q. What other models are there for introducing quotas?**

A. In *Greece* the quota law which has been implemented (Law 2910/01, number 75), provides that at least one third of each sex must participate in the ballot lists of the candidates of each political party. The quota law made a great impact on the results of the Greek elections. In 2002 the percentage of the women's participation in the ballot lists of the political parties in the municipal elections increased from 14% in 1998 to 34% in 2002 and the percentage of elected women in the municipal elections rose from 11% in 1998 to 18%!! In the prefectural elections, the percentage of the elected women increased from 7% in 1998 to 12% by 2004.

In *Italy* the Law on the election of Members of the European Parliament specifies that on any political party constituency list there must be at least one third women and at least one third men and no more than two thirds of either sex. Any movement or party which

presents a list that does not respect this gender balance will be fined a portion of their state subsidised election funds. Italian women activists believe new laws are needed in order to achieve a system capable of ensuring parity in Italian politics. The percentage of women in the European Parliament increased from 11.5% to 19.2%.

<sup>xi</sup>

*France* has enshrined gender balanced parity quotas in the French Constitution. Since 2000, French electoral law states that in all elections using PR list systems (including local and regional elections, some elections to the Senate, and European elections) the parties must put forward lists which are gender balanced - at least 40% male candidates and at least 40% female candidates.

This was first applied in the municipal elections in March 2001. As a result, the number of women representatives in the cities increased from 22% to 47.5%. In other French elections, including those to the Lower House, parties are required to put forward a gender-balanced slate of candidates, or pay a financial penalty.

A number of other countries have passed legislation to make quotas mandatory.

These include:

Belgium, France, Argentina, Armenia, Brazil, Costa Rica, Bolivia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Costa Rica, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Indonesia, Jordan, Macedonia, Mexico, Morocco, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Sudan, Serbia and Montenegro, Tanzania, Uganda, Venezuela.

Some countries in addition to France have enshrined quota procedures at national or local level in their Constitutions. These include:

China, Eritrea, Guyana, Kenya, Nepal, Philippines, Taiwan, Tanzania and Uganda, Argentina, India.<sup>xii</sup>

**Q. What are the advantages of enshrining quotas in the Constitution or by introducing legislation?**

**A.** A basis in law provides a basis for enforcement. In France, if a party submits a list which is not gender-balanced, it is declared invalid. This rule was first applied during the municipal elections in March 2001.

In other French elections, including those to the Lower House, parties are required to put forward a gender-balanced slate of candidates or pay a financial penalty. The balance does not need to be mathematically exact - a party putting forward 49% of candidates of one sex and 51% of the other sex pays no penalty. If the discrepancy is any greater than this, the party's State funding will be cut by an amount equaling half the percentage difference. A party which puts forward 45% women and 55% men - a difference of 10% - will lose 5% of its state funding.

This system offers a strong incentive for Parties to comply

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<sup>xi</sup> (8 of April 2004, n.90)

<sup>xii</sup> International IDEA and Stockholm University Global Database of Quotas for Women.

**Q. Are quotas legal?**

**A.** European Member States belong to international bodies which have passed resolutions to support the use of affirmative actions.

**UN CEDAW supports the use of special measures.**

CEDAW states:

‘adoption by States Parties of temporary special measures (TSMs) aimed at accelerating the *de facto* equality between men and women shall not be considered discrimination.’  
(CEDAW Article 4.1)

**European Commission recommendation (84/635/EEC) urges Member States**

‘to take steps to ensure that positive action includes as far as possible actions having a bearing on the following aspects . . . encouraging women candidates and the recruitment and promotion of women in sectors and professions and at levels where they are under-represented, particularly as regards positions of responsibility . . . active participation by women in decision making bodies.’<sup>xiii</sup>

**The Inter-Parliamentary Council** (the plenary policy-making body of the Inter-Parliamentary Union) agreed a ‘break-through’ plan of action to correct imbalances in the participation of men and women in political life at its meeting in Paris in April 1994. Section III(4) stated that -

*‘On a strictly interim basis, affirmative action measures may be taken.’*

**The Council of Europe** agreed a Resolution at the European Ministerial Conference on Equality between women and men which stated ‘Special legislation should be passed to make it easier for women to get involved in politics and eventually create a gender balance (positive action).’ Skopje - 22-23 January 2003

**The Council of Europe**

The Council of Europe’s Parliamentary Assembly adopted a recommendation on Equal Representation in Political Life on 22 June 1999 (no. 1413).

Point 12 (ii) of this recommendation states “The Assembly invites its national delegations to urge their parliaments to introduce specific measures to correct the under-representation of women in political life, and in particular . . . to institute equal representation in political Parties and to make their funding conditional upon the achievement of this objective.”

45 countries belong to the Council of Europe including new democracies in SE Europe and other former Communist countries.

**Q. Surely the Parties will not be able to find enough suitable women candidates?**

**A.** This argument is a serious indictment of political parties which have remained entrenched in narrow and often undemocratic methods of working. By introducing quotas, political parties necessarily reach out into a wider pool of talent from the community than solely the previous ‘old boys networks’.

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<sup>xiii</sup> Ellis, E. (1998). *EC Sex Equality Law*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.



When a party decides to take a fresh look at the way it recruits and selects its candidates it can result in a more inclusive and thus more democratic – and *modern* - political party.

In France, during the first local elections held under the Parity Law in 2001, the need to find suitable women candidates forced Parties to rethink their recruitment strategies. It was reported that in Paris the Socialists went from department to department at the top universities. The Gaullist Rally for the Republican Party turned to the Internet.<sup>xiv</sup>

### **Arguments against Women’s political empowerment. Rebuttals briefing.**

Stereotyped assumptions often stand behind decisions not to include women and not to restructure the way things are done. In practically every country in the world arguments have been given as excuses to limit or exclude women’s participation in politics.

These arguments include ‘custom and tradition’, culture, bogus religious reasons, lack of real priority (‘not right now’), biology, logistical reasons, financial cost.

The first part of this segment provides examples of justifications, excuses and arguments you may meet. The second segment suggests some rebuttals.

#### **Excuses and arguments**

The following are examples of real-life excuses (names and sources are withheld to save blushes of embarrassment!):

- *Why change things? “Women are legally allowed to stand for election. Nothing is stopping them.”*
- *We really are not against women candidates but... “There are no suitable women to stand as candidates – women have no previous experience in politics.....”*
- *Custom and tradition... “A woman’s place is to stay at home and look after her family.”*
- *Complacency and assumptions based on ignorance... “No women in this country would be interested in political participation....”*
- *Frankly, I am not interested in this subject... “We haven’t time to bother with inclusion of women right now – we are too busy making sure all sectors of the community are fairly represented*
- *Fear... “We have enough problems to tackle without upsetting religious leaders on the issue of women. Our religious leaders in this country wouldn’t like it if we helped women to participate in elections.”*
- *Again, I am not really interested in the subject... “It would cost too much money to spend time looking for ways to increase women’s participation in elections.”*

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- *Condescension... “In this country we respect women ‘even more than men’ and that is why we men want to protect women from unsuitable environments such as the world of politics.” (This was said despite the fact that women of that country were campaigning hard and openly for their right to participate as candidates in the election.)*
- *“Introducing a women's quota is dangerous. It can upset the lives of families if suddenly a great number of women enter politics.”*
- *Women’s human rights take second place... “The men in this country would not like it if we ‘imposed’ women’s participation in politics”*

### **Rebuttals.**

Winning the battle to overcome excuses for inaction can be the toughest and most important battle! The following is a selection of useful responses to counter limp excuses for inaction.

The section includes international agreements you can quote on human rights and democracy.

- ‘Participatory democracy’ is the most advanced form of democracy so far. It means what it says - the full participation of all citizens in elections and governance, i.e. women as well as men.
- The EU regards human rights, democracy, religious tolerance and rule of law as a necessary and desirable break with custom and tradition. Although it may be uncomfortable for the ‘ancienne regimes’, Democracy means a break from systems in which rights to power over others are based on categories such as gender, class, clan/tribal affiliation or some sort of hereditary principle.
- Check your national Constitution. The State Constitutions of many countries have provisions that guarantee human rights. A number of countries with new Constitutions specifically guarantee equal human rights to women, equal opportunity for political participation by women, and freedom from discrimination on the basis of gender.<sup>xv</sup>
- In most countries women compose between 51-54% of the population. By any definition of Democracy, this should be reflected in their political representation.
- On a lighter note, when it comes to women’s progress, men in every culture have been known to raise objections to breaking with tradition, but men everywhere do

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<sup>xv</sup>: ‘Guidelines for Reviewing a Legal Framework for Elections’ published by ODHIR 2001 on the ODHIR web-site [www.osce.org.odhir](http://www.osce.org.odhir). The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights have published a Handbook for use by election observers titled *Monitoring Women’s Participation in Elections* - Warsaw August 2003

not seem to view the introduction of computers and the Internet and mobile phones as an objectionable break with the old customs and traditions!

- Human rights signed into universal law (see the UN Charter below) take precedence over ‘custom and tradition’ if past practices put women at a disadvantage, socially/politically/economically.

You can quote from the following international instruments:

**European Constitution 2004:**

The final agreed text on values Article I-2; the Union’s Values:

“The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, liberty, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail.”

**The UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948**

Article 21: “Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his (*or her*) country...”

**The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)**

Article 25: “Every citizen shall have the right and the opportunity...to take part in the conduct of public affairs...”

**UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women.**

(CEDAW), described as the international Bill of Rights for women, prohibits ‘any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex that impairs or nullifies human rights and fundamental freedoms of women in all areas’. <sup>xvi</sup> One hundred and sixty five countries worldwide have endorsed the treaty, which came into force in 1981.

**The UN Beijing Global Platform for Action 1995**

UN Member States who signed up to ‘Beijing’ are required to:

- ‘ensure that women have equal access to and full participation in structures of power and decision-making.’
- ‘increase women’s capacity to participate in decision-making and leadership.’

**The Inter-Parliamentary Union Council Resolution in April 1992 stated:**

‘The concept of democracy will only assume true and dynamic significance when political parties and national legislation are decided upon jointly by men and women with equitable regard for the interests and aptitudes of both halves of the population.’

**The IPU New Delhi Declaration at the IPU Conference February 1997**

asserts: ‘what has to be developed, in modern democratic societies, is nothing less than a new social contract in which men and women work in equality and complementarity,

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<sup>xvi</sup> (*The texts for CEDAW and other UN human rights documents are available on [www.unhcr.ch](http://www.unhcr.ch)*)

enriching each other mutually from their differences. (...) What is basically at stake is democracy itself.’

138 national parliaments are affiliated to the Inter Parliamentary Union

**EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**

**30.5%**

Country	Date elections	of	Seats	Women	Percentage
Sweden	06.2004		19	11	57.9%
Luxembourg	06.2004		6	3	50.0%
Netherlands	06.2004		27	12	44.4%
France	06.2004		78	34	43.6%
Slovenia	06.2004		7	3	42.9%
Austria	06.2004		18	7	38.8%
Ireland	06.2004		13	5	38.5%
Lithuania	06.2004		13	5	38.5%
Denmark	06.2004		14	6	37.5%
Finland	06.2004		14	5	35.7%
Slovakia	06.2004		14	5	35.7%
Estonia	06.2004		6	2	33.3%
Hungary	06.2004		24	8	33.3%
Spain	06.2004		54	18	33.3%
Belgium	06.2004		22	7	31.8%
Germany	06.2004		99	31	31.3%
Greece	06.2004		24	7	29.1%
Portugal	06.2004		24	6	25.0%
United Kingdom	06.2004		78	19	24.4%
Latvia	06.2004		9	2	22.2%
Czech Republic	06.2004		24	5	20.8%
Italy	06.2004		78	15	19.2%
Poland	06.2004		54	7	13.0%
Cyprus	06.2004		6	0	00.0%
Malta	06.2004		5	0	00.0%
<b>Total:</b>			<b>730</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>30.5%</b>

*Classification by descending order of the percentage of women.  
Situation as of August 2004*

Statistics from: <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/regions.htm>

## **Media Coverage of Elections and women.**

At election time in many countries women and their opinions are made almost invisible by the media. The media is dominated by men, and not always the most progressive men either.

This absence of interest in women's views and rights has one result: media censorship of the views of over half the population. Women are frequently absent from TV and radio programmes discussing politics and current affairs. Nowhere near the same numbers of women are heard as male politicians, pundits, commentators, analysts and interviewees.

This means that men set the election agenda in the media. Women and their opinions and priorities are made invisible or unimportant at the very moment the majority gender's views and needs require the highest visibility and discussion. Apart from this gross misuse of our common airwaves, it is a significant disservice to Democracy and damaging to good journalism.

Some media trivialise women's political capacities by concentrating mostly on the way female politicians dress and their hair-styles. Female politicians are asked about their role as wife or mother, but similar questions are seldom directed at male politicians.

If you are dissatisfied with the Media coverage women receive, demand to meet the editors of the programmes or newspapers at fault. In your initial letter suggesting a meeting, explain your unhappiness, giving examples, and in the most positive way tell them you would like to offer advice for the future.

### **Media invisibility of issues of importance to women marginalizes those issues.**

It is not always biased and unfair coverage that damages women, it is also the absence of any coverage at all. More women than ever before are becoming journalists but journalists have less power than editors and producers to set the agenda. It is editors who decide which points of view and priorities they consider newsworthy. A 1995 UNESCO report on women's employment in the news media globally indicated that women led only 3% of the 239 media organizations polled, and held only 12% of their top posts.<sup>xvii</sup>

Research by 'Women in Journalism', a UK group representing female journalists, showed men make up 80% of decision-makers in British national newspapers.

### **Women politicians receive less coverage than male counterparts.**

In the British 1992 General Election, Loughborough University's Media Unit monitored the main news and current affairs programmes during the 3 weeks of the General Election Campaign.

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<sup>xvii</sup> Gallagher, Margaret, *An Unfinished Story: Gender Patterns in Media Employment*, UNESCO, 1995

British Member of Parliament Angela Eagle describing the media coverage of the election said “*It was like a glass trapdoor opened up and all of a sudden all the women disappeared*”.

Out of 1,031 appearances by politicians, Loughborough discovered that women appeared only 36 times - and 28 of those 36 women’s appearances were Margaret Thatcher.

The following British General Election in 1997 was no better. Despite the fact that a record number of women entered parliament - the number of women Members of Parliament doubled from the 62 to 120 - women continued to be invisible.

The Fawcett Society, an NGO campaigning for equal opportunities for women and men, commissioned research on the 1997 TV election coverage. In one week of TV coverage of the 1997 UK General Election, the Fawcett Society discovered out of 177 appearances by national politicians (excluding Party leaders) only 8 were women while 169 were men. Three weeks before polling day, researchers monitored the daily election output for one week of 44 programmes on the 5 main terrestrial TV channels. The gender breakdown was 315 men (84%) and 59 women (16%).<sup>xviii</sup>

93% of people who appeared on TV as experts and representatives of the public talking about a diverse range of election related issues were men.

Producers and TV hosts neglected to invite women to be panellists and pundits on radio and TV discussion shows about political and current affairs issues. 50 men were seen or heard compared to 4 women. 17 male academics were asked their opinions and not one woman from academia.

In one extended BBC TV report looking at the effects of the European Union on the entire region of the South West of England, 6 men were interviewed for the programme, but no women. Yet the programme was billed as a report which “crossed the wide breadth of the region and took its pulse”. The report covered tourism – the largest industry in the region with a large number of female employees - as well as farming, mining and unemployment. The report explained that the majority of low paid workers in England worked in that region. No mention was made about the fact that the majority of low-paid workers in the UK were and still are women.<sup>xix</sup>

It is not only the fault of the media that women are ignored. In the 2000 General Election campaign day after day, Prime Minister Tony Blair’s ‘Spin Doctors’ (publicity people) ignored the women journalists at the daily early morning press conferences which set the day’s political agenda. They also kept inviting questions from male journalists. It got so bad that one morning the male journalists themselves insisted the Spin Doctors should speak first with their female colleagues in the media.

A Dutch survey revealed that in the Netherlands too only one in every four experts appearing on informative media programmes was a woman.<sup>xx</sup>

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<sup>xviii</sup> ‘The Glass Trapdoor’ Fawcett ISBN 0 901890. 1998 Mary –Ann Stephenson

<sup>xix</sup> BBC 9 o’clock News 15 April 1997

<sup>xx</sup> NOS Bureau Beeldvorming Portrayal Department PO Box 444 1200 JJ Hilversum

## **SOLUTIONS for the future. Gender-Balanced Media coverage**

### **The media can contribute to the advancement of women positively by:**

- Increasing visibility of women by including at least as many women as men as interviewees, panellists and pundits on all topics
- developing public acceptance of the presence of women as a customary and natural feature of public and political life
- presenting women in a manner that promotes public confidence in their capacity and rightful place as leaders in all sectors of society
- ensuring they interview an equal balance of women and men when they interview citizens and experts on political and current affairs issues
- providing media coverage on issues of particular importance to women
- seeking out the extra angle which has an impact on women or a different perception on existing news stories

### **Political parties can:**

- Make sure women are visible in everything. There should be approximately a 50/50 gender balance among speakers at conferences, spokespeople for the Press and Media, pictures in party literature, women on all public platforms.
- Women may have particular views based on their often-different perspectives and experiences, just as valid and *just as interesting* as men's points of view.
- Provide at least one day's professional training for candidates on how to give interviews to the media.

### **Women's NGOs can:**

- learn to understand how to liaise with the media on how to get issues of importance to women on to the media, and can offer training to female candidates and activists.
- make sure all journalists get a good list of female spokespeople from your NGO. Editors often say they do not know sufficient spokeswomen. Keep the media supplied with interesting ideas for features and programmes about women in politics and issues of importance to women. Indicate which angle editors should take to bring out the importance of the issue.
- Photocopy the following checklist and give copies to Editors, Producers and journalists.

## **Guidance for Media. Gender considerations.**

### **Make sure women are seen and heard**

Make sure an equal balance of women as well as men appear on TV and radio and in the written press as commentators, interviewees, and panellists in debate programmes on politics and current affairs and as experts.

When conducting interviews or chairing panel discussions on TV and radio, make a conscious effort to make sure women have as much time to speak as men. Do not invite women and then ignore them while you talk only to the men.

Example:

On TV - a couple are invited to take part in a programme. The man is asked his opinion about an issue. His wife sits listening to him. The interviewer ignores her and does not ask the woman her opinion and how she feels about what the man has said. She is too embarrassed or inexperienced to break into the discussion with her own views.

This is an example of sex stereotyping – the journalist has made the unfair assumption that the man’s opinion is important and he will have something of interest to say. The journalist has therefore made the assumption that the woman’s opinion is not important and that in any case the woman will have nothing of interest to contribute to the discussion.

Conduct a survey of the photos/visuals in your publication/newspaper. How many women/men?

How are the women portrayed? (sexual objects rather than thinkers and participants)

How many articles are written by men/women? Are the women journalists mostly assigned to the more popular/trivial subjects?

How many programmes are produced/directed by men/women? What is the ratio of male/female editors?

Do women and men in your TV station/radio station/newspaper/publication have equal input on setting the media agenda?

Think about who controls the news, current affairs and political agenda. Be aware that there may be differing male and female perceptions about which political and news stories should top the news agenda.

#### **Find the extra 'women's perspective' on existing news stories.**

Seek out issues and stories of special importance to women.

Build a network of contacts who can keep you informed of issues of special importance to women. Journalists can find out more about these issues and topical stories on other issues from women’s NGOs, UNIFEM, international organisations, women’s rights newsletters, the Internet.

#### **Avoid stereotypes.**

Think about how women and men are often portrayed in pictures, stories and discussion programmes. Do pictures and programmes depict men and women in stereotype roles - men as important with women shown only in support roles?

#### **Develop gender balanced contact lists**

Journalists/Editors and producers should build contact lists of women as well as men who can speak on diverse topics: the economy, politics, environment, legal issues, social issues, transport, health, education etc.

#### **Avoid the trap of the ‘Yes, but...’ arguments.**

Media employees who are concerned about gender considerations will be familiar with the ‘Yes, but...’ argument:

‘Yes, we know we should have included an equal number of women and men in the TV discussion programme, but we didn’t know any suitable women who would be capable of commenting....’

There are plenty of articulate women in every country– widen your contact lists!



### **Avoid sexist journalism**

If you comment on physical appearance or family status about a woman (married/divorced/widowed/single children etc) you should do the same about the men in your story – otherwise do not comment on physical appearance and family status.

Avoid applying physical descriptions and family status to women only.

Example:

journalists frequently ask female politicians but not male politicians how they manage to combine their work and family life. This is sexist reporting and, equally reprehensibly, the result is female politicians have less air-time during the interview to give their views on other issues of the day – the real reason she is there.

### **Use gender neutral and gender inclusive vocabulary:**

Example: instead of ‘businessman’, find a more gender-inclusive usage. Refer to ‘business entrepreneurs’ or ‘businessmen and businesswomen’.

Use vocabulary and language that is inclusive of women as well as men - ‘she and he’...not just ‘he’.

The Canadian Broadcasting Company (CBC) produced a guide on gender neutral language for journalists.

### **Avoid confining media stories about women’s lives only to negative topics**

Avoid confining media stories about women’s lives only to topics which may women look as though they are perpetual ‘victims’. These topics are important but women are also surviving and contributing greatly to the world. Look for success stories and women role models too.

## **Section 2**

### **1. Public Speaking Workshop**

#### **Purpose of this public speaking training session**

By the end of this 3 hour public speaking training session participants will have enhanced their ability as individuals to put across their ideas

#### **Notes for trainers**

##### **Equipment**

*Flip-chart and flip chart pens. Sticky tape or blue-tack to stick flip-chart paper on the wall. Power Point or Overhead projector.*

#### **Suggested programme - Allow 3 hours:**

##### **Module 1 – 45 mins**

*Participants introduce themselves. Trainer explains the purpose of the day and assesses the needs and priorities of the participants.*

**Module 2 – 60 mins**

*Presentation from trainer giving advice on public speaking Followed by questions from participants.*

**Module 3 – 60 mins**

*The Election Persuasion Game*

**Notes to Trainers**

*Most of the advice in this Public Speaking session applies to candidates as well as to NGO advocacy campaigners. A few of the advice tips are more specific for female election Candidates.*

*In advance of this training session on public speaking, Trainers should prepare by choosing examples to illustrate each advice point from their own local experience and local context. This will help to make the workshop relevant to the context in which the participants are active.*

**Assess the needs of your participants**

*Make it clear that the session will be useful to everyone at all levels – beginners as well as those with experience*

*In order to make everyone feel welcome and included, the Trainer should start by asking how many participants have no previous experience of giving talks and speeches to audiences; how many participants have a little experience and how many participants in the workshop have had a great deal of experience of public speaking. The trainer can then say that later in the session, participants with public speaking experience should feel free to contribute useful advice tips to the participants who have less experience.*

*Next step is for the trainer to ask participants to describe what types of communication problems they have encountered when speaking in public. The Trainer writes a ‘shopping list’ on flip chart paper of the issues and questions raised by the participants.*

*The trainer explains that she/he will do their best to address the problems and issues raised by the participants during the rest of the workshop.*

*The following topics for the public speaking session are written in the speaking style of a script which the trainer can deliver.*

**HOW TO PREPARE AND GIVE A TALK/SPEECH**

**Plan, prepare and practice**

**Introduction**

Don't worry if you feel shy or nervous - warmth, sincerity, and honesty is more important than technique!

A good political activist or candidate learns to overcome her/his fears of public speaking and to enjoy the experience. Think of speaking to an audience as a privilege which gives you the opportunity to put across your ideas to other people.

### **WHAT do you want to achieve?**

Your goal is to deliver the right message, at the right time to the right audience.

#### **If you want to get elected :**

Do you want to get elected? Or do you want people to support your advocacy campaign?

The aim of a candidate is to get enough voters to go to the polls and vote for her and her party. She should start her speech by saying her name and the political office for which she is seeking election. For example:

*“My name is Julia, and I’m running for Mayor.”*

#### **What do you want to achieve by speaking?**

1. persuade your audience to believe something/to support your cause/ to support your political party/to vote for you?
2. rouse people to action?

If you are a candidate or an NGO activist the most usual reason you will be giving a talk/speech is because you want to persuade your audience to support your cause and to take action.

You may need to convert people to the way you are thinking – to make people see things differently, to grow and to develop.

### **Preparation and practice is the key to good public speaking.**

You can rehearse on your own or in front of family, friends or colleagues. The more opportunities you get to speak in public, the better public speaker you will become.

Believe in what you are saying. Do your homework, so that you know what you are talking about. Emotion alone is not enough – you need a few concrete facts and figures too. Remember that your audience wants you to do well.

#### **Purpose of your speech**

- **Attract attention**
- **Convey a message**
- **Impel action**

## **Overcoming nervousness**

Speaking in public is like having a baby. When you hear your name called to speak, slow down your breathing, drop your shoulders, and take control!

**Shyness is a form of selfishness** – it means you are thinking more about yourself than about the needs of others. Start to think more about putting other people at ease instead of focussing on yourself.

You are waiting to address a meeting and your knees feel weak, your stomach is tied in knots and you are shaking with nerves. You are blushing, sweating with fear, hands shaking, *certain* that you're going to make a fool of yourself.

Just remember that many of the best known and most successful speakers have experienced these stressed feelings at some time.

**Slow down your breathing.** Any scuba diver will tell you it is difficult to panic when you are breathing slowly and evenly.

**Start thinking about practical details.** While you are waiting for your turn to speak - start to take control of the situation by concentrating on practical details:

Where will you leave your hand-bag whilst you are at the podium? Is the microphone too high for you? If so, whom will you ask to adjust it for you? Note the position of TV cables so you don't trip over them. Count the number of steps you need to climb up to the platform so you don't fall over the steps. Have you organised a glass of water in case you need a drink? (When people are nervous the increase in adrenalin makes their mouth dry.) Have you got a clock or watch so you keep an eye on the time to help you keep to your time limit?

Once you've started on your checklist of practical details you will find there will be no time for nerves.

## **Power point slide**

### **Golden rules to overcome nerves.**

1. Believe in what you are saying.
2. Do your preparation.
3. Slow down breathing, drop shoulders
4. Take control

**Communication is Presentation/image/voice**

Voters vote for someone they feel they can trust. An audience forms favourable or unfavourable impressions of a candidate based on the candidate's visual and vocal presentation.

#### **Rehearse**

- 1. Tone of voice**
- 2. Volume**
- 3. Posture**
- 4. Body language**

#### **Make good eye contact with your audience.**

A good communicator makes good eye contact with her audience. Avoid the trap of looking down continually at your notes. During your speech – look up at your audience as often as possible. Pick out a few people in different parts of the audience who appear to be listening closely. Focus on these individuals, and occasionally move your eyes across the entire audience. Some speakers choose to move their eyes across the audience in the movement of the letter 'S' as a way of covering everyone.

#### **Your image**

##### **Note to trainers**

*You could bring along a selection of pictures of male and female public figures and use them to hold a short discussion with participants. Or even a few short video clips. Ask what visual image each politician projects and why. There is more about visual image and dress code in the section on Media.*

People make a quick assessment of other people within 7 seconds. Therefore try to make a positive visual impression on your audience in the first few seconds.

It is unfair but true that voters and the media pay more attention to a female candidate's visual appearance than to how a male candidate looks.

A candidate will perform best if she feels confident about how she looks. Her hairstyle, make-up, clothes should give her extra confidence. Beware of short skirts on platforms. When you sit down, or even when you are standing, unless there is a covered table in front of you, the audience will be looking up your skirt.

Most candidates opt for professional business clothes. But it is up to each person to decide on the image she wants to project.

Wearing a bright colour can help a woman to stand out from the crowd.

#### **Make the spinach check!**

Take a quick look in the mirror before you speak - to check for spinach or lipstick on your teeth, a splotch of ink on the end of your nose, or anything else that might distract your audience from listening to what you have to say.

Keep a spare pair of tights or stockings, emery board, a handkerchief, and a sanitary towel in your hand-bag for emergencies! Peppermints for sweet smelling breath.

#### **Power point slides – The way people receive your messages**

- 1. 60% depends on your body language and visual image**
- 2. 33% depends on the sound of your voice**
- 3. 7% depends on the words you use**

**...in that order!**

## **Preparation of the content of your talk/speech**

### **Stand confidently.**

*Trainer can invite the participants to stand up with confidence and with their weight spread evenly between both feet and feel. Then ask them to sit down again.*

### **Speak in a confident manner - say “When I’m elected....” Not “If I’m elected.”**

A candidate should present herself as if she has already won the seat she is contesting and is already a Member of Parliament/Mayor/City Councillor etc

Walk to the podium with an air of confidence. Stand with both feet well grounded, look up and smile at the audience.

### **Increase your credibility as a leader.**

Weave examples based on your experience into your speech. Show you know your subject with examples from real life experience. Turn the fact you are a female candidate to your advantage. For example, if you have children - you could point out that you have first-hand knowledge of the education system from the point of view of a parent, you may have the bonus advantage of understanding family issues, but you also have experience to bring to the role of an elected politician from running a business/working as a lawyer/being active in a trade union or voluntary group/organising the Olympic Games etc...!

### **Be prepared to speak on all issues that you might have to tackle once you are elected.**

Build yourself a coterie of experts on each issue from international affairs to the environment or the economy etc. These will be people whose views you trust. Contact one of them whenever you need an up to date briefing on their topic. This is particularly useful when you have to give a speech at the time a particular issue has become highly topical.

### **WHO are you speaking to?**

Ask yourself: what is important to your audience? Place yourself metaphorically in the seat of your audience. When you are preparing to give a talk or a speech always start by thinking carefully about what issues are important to the audience you will be addressing, and what shared common experiences you may have with your audience....

### **WHAT issues are important to your audience? Find out!**

Finding out the issues that are uppermost in the minds of your potential audience may require an hour or two of research ahead of time about the type of people you will be speaking to. You can find out by:

1. Contacting one or two people who expect to attend the meeting and asking them what issues are important to them.
2. Reading the local newspaper/listening to the local radio station/and watching the local TV station to get a sense of topical local issues.
3. Looking at recent local surveys and opinion polls.

4. Asking the person who has invited you to speak, to get their thoughts on what issues are a priority to the people in your audience.

**Start by briefly building a bridge of mutual understanding between you and your audience....**

Set up a good relationship between you and your audience by giving them small signals that you understand them and continue to drop in other allusions throughout the rest of your speech. What do you share in common? Gender? Nationality? Profession? Background? Experiences? A shared concern about key issues/values? This will help to get your audience on side with you.

Example:

You might stress how long you have lived in the area and therefore how well you understand local issues. Or if you are a doctor or a parent, you can relate your experience to discussing health problems you want to discuss and your solutions for improving health services.

Be inclusive....make everyone feel welcome.

E.g. "I am very happy to see so many familiar faces AND I am equally happy to see new faces here in the audience too.

**Power point slide - Your audience will probably be a mix:**

1. **People who already agree with you.**
2. **The persuadables - floating voters who haven't yet made up their minds.**
3. **Unconvertible.**

Direct some of your speech at reinforcing the support and enthusiasm of the converted who already agree with you, but direct most of your speech to the persuadables - 'floating voters' – people who have not yet firmly made up their minds.

Don't waste much time on the 'unconvertibles' who will probably never change their minds.

**Power point slide. Learn About Your Audience - Who are you talking to?**

- humans who are living *their* lives, not *your* life**
- what issues are important to your audience**
- build a bridge to link you with your audience**

**WHAT do you want to say? List the 3 key points you want to make,**

In addition to the questions your audience need answered – decide on the main points that YOU want to make. It is generally more effective to make 3- 4 points clearly – if necessary repeat them in

different ways in order to reinforce the points - than to try to make too many different points in one speech.

**State each issue and how it directly affects your audience.**

Support what you are saying by giving concrete evidence/examples - in a style which your audience will understand. Show how this issue directly affects your audience.

If you are a political candidate if possible link your political opponent to the problem. Avoid mentioning your opponent's name – you don't want to help them with name recognition. Refer to them as your 'opponent.'

**WHY should they support you?**

Offer your solution to the problem and show how your solution will relate to the audience. **Conclude by offering a vision for the future,**

Describe your vision for the future and suggest how your solution will contribute to this vision. Suggest ways in which your audience can participate in the process of building your vision.

**HOW are you going to make your points?**

**Get to your first point fast without giving introductory padding.** Right at the start of your speech say something interesting. You can explain the context later in your speech.

**Give concrete examples to illustrate each statement.**

**Be interesting, understandable and memorable.**

Think of each of your audience as though they were holding a TV remote control switch – if you are not interesting within the first 30 seconds they will switch off!

Make your key points memorable – e.g. by using illustrative anecdotes.

**Support your argument with evidence.** Say it in a way in which your audience can easily understand and relate to. State any problem in terms of how it directly affects your audience.

**Include real life anecdotes from your life and experience to illustrate the larger issue.** If you mention statistics and describe the big picture on an issue, illustrate the point you are making by describing a real life anecdote. This reinforces your credibility.

**Relate the macro to the individual.** To an audience 20,000 people killed in a war are a statistic. One hostage beheaded by his/her captors is a tragedy.

**Make your talk understandable.**

Don't use jargon, technical language or acronyms unless you are talking to an audience in which you are certain that every single person will understand all your technical allusions and acronyms.

**Power point slide**



- **Keep it clear**
- **Keep it simple**
- **Speak in pictures not abstracts**

**Don't use too many statistics or numbers.**  
When you do use statistics and numbers, make them easy to understand. Instead of '25% of people,' say, '1 in 4 people.'

### **Use 'colour' words – Szeged, Santorini, Sicily**

'Colour' words will add life to your talk. For example instead of simply referring to 'trees' give the names of trees e.g.: 'palm trees', 'oak trees', 'olive trees' etc  
Instead of simply referring to rivers, seas or cities or villages give the names of cities, rivers or villages: Paris, London, Oslo, Athens, Budapest, Rome, the River Tiber, River Seine, River Thames, the Buda, The Aegean Sea etc. Try to mention the names of towns, villages or the island in the region where you are giving your speech e.g.: Szeged, Santorini, Sicily.

### **Make it topical.**

Relate what you are saying to something that has happened that day or that week. This will help you to retain the interest of your audience. Human beings like to hear the latest news.

### **Quotations**

Keep a page always handy with your favourite quotations by famous women and men relating to the topics on which you are most likely to be asked to speak. This can be a useful tool. If you get asked to give a talk or speech at short notice you can insert one of the quotations...

### **Humour**

When it comes to humour, unless you are totally confident that you won't offend your supporters and potential supporters – leave it out. Avoid telling spontaneous jokes or making impromptu wisecracks - under the pressure of a formal talk, a truly spontaneous effort at humour can go disastrously wrong! Don't risk it. Although it should come over as virtually 'free-flowing', you can prepare an amusing anecdote or two ahead of time.

### **Powerpoint slide - Mistakes to avoid**

***Don't give the wrong type of speech to the wrong audience – make your speech appropriate to your audience***  
***Don't tell jokes which do not work***  
***Don't be uncertain about your topic***  
***Don't use clichés***

**Listening is an important skill.**

Pick out points from each speaker who spoke before you and incorporate

the points in your speech...

**Signal the end of your talk ahead of time.**

Give clues to your audience that you are coming to the end of your speech so they can be prepared to break into applause!

"And to conclude..."

"I'll finish by running quickly through the main points..."

"And my final points are 1,2,3."

Use a repetition sequence to emphasise an idea and to build up a crescendo...

"We will not get elected by inaction.

We will not get elected by confusion.

We will not get elected by wishful thinking.

We will ONLY get elected by dogged, unrelenting hard work...

**Tell your audience what you want them to do. Mobilise them to take action!**

You have given them information – the facts. You have told them why you became involved in your cause and what your goals are. Now tell the audience how they can move the agenda forward – what do you want them to do?

"I'd like you to go home and...write to the newspaper/contact your Member of Parliament/Sign our petition/join our campaign as a paid up supporter/volunteer to help in the campaign/organise our next major event/hand out leaflets/write to your local councillor/MP/ put up a poster on your house/bring your friends along to our next meeting on xyz date at xyz place/ tell your family and friends about our campaign/stand as a candidate in the next local council elections/ write to the Minister to protest/support our campaign by helping as volunteers/donate money.

Ask them to tell friends and family about your suggested solutions and vision.

If you are a candidate, remind the audience of the date they need to vote and ask them to vote for you.

"Vote for the Cat lovers Party on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> November." (Always remind them of the voting date)

**Prepare to answer intelligent questions, mediocre questions and stupid questions.**

Example:

"What does your husband think about you standing for election?"

Possible response:

"My husband supports me because he believes my background and work in the community make me the best candidate for this constituency."

**Power point slide. Do not antagonise Your Audience:**

1. by demeaning their intelligence
2. by demeaning their understanding
3. by demeaning their knowledge
4. by being condescending or insulting
5. by hectoring and bullying them

**It causes an adverse reaction - and how would YOU like to be treated that way?**

### **Good Behaviour**

*Keep within the time you have been given.*

### **Practicalities**

#### **Speech Notes:**

Write down key points you want to make on cards about half the size of an A4 sheet of paper. If you are nervous stiff card will not rustle. Use a large type face.

Some speakers prefer to write out the full text of their speech. Make sure the text is easy for you to read in large bold type – probably in minimum 14 point size type and with at least one and a half spaces between the lines of text.

Never hold your notes up in front of your face. Whilst you are speaking place them on the lectern or table or hold them at just above elbow height.

Always put page numbers on all the pages – that way, if you drop them you can easily put them back in the correct order. If the pages are numbered it also helps you to estimate how you are doing for timing on your speech.

#### **When are you speaking?**

At the beginning of the day?

Last slot before lunch/ending the day? (not the best, as people may be hungry or keen to get home - try to move your slot! or finish right on the time allotted)

Who else is speaking? Your talks should not clash/be too similar. You can sometimes get in touch beforehand with the other speakers to check each other's speech content.

#### **Your opponent.**

If the other speaker is a political opponent – listen carefully to what she/he says and judge whether you need to pick up on any of their points or to rebut them. Avoid referring to your opponent by name (you don't want to help them with name recognition).

#### **Where are you giving your speech?**

Indoors/outdoors. If it is outdoors on a windy day, avoid wearing a skirt that could blow up in the wind to reveal your underwear or worse! Avoid having your speech on paper that could blow away or rustle in the wind.

Formal gathering/informal gathering. If it is a very formal meeting or dinner check out the protocol ahead of time to find out if you need to start your speech with formalities such as... Your Majesty, Your Excellencies etc

### **Layout of the room.**

Take control of the furniture. Check it out ahead of the meeting. If you are not tall and you think the lectern is too high for you – ask for a box to stand on or for the lectern to be lowered or insist on standing to speak away from the lectern. There is a famous press photograph of the HM Queen Elizabeth of England giving a speech. The only part of the Queen the audience could see above the lectern was her hat!

### **Equipment**

Make sure the microphone is set to your height. If you are not accustomed to using a microphone, remember not to speak as loudly as you would without one.

Organise a glass of drinking water to be within reach when you are speaking. When people are nervous the adrenalin increases and causes a dry throat. Make sure the glass is not placed in a position where you are likely to knock it over!

### **Power-point Slide – summary check-list**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>WHO?</b></li><li>• <b>WHAT?</b></li><li>• <b>HOW?</b></li><li>• <b>WHY?</b></li><li>• <b>WHEN?</b></li></ul>	WHO are you speaking to? Build a link with your audience. WHAT points are you going to make? HOW are you going to make your points? WHY should they support you? Offer a solution to the problem and how it directly affects your audience.
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WHAT actions do you want members of the audience to take as a result of attending the meeting?

WHEN? date of the election/date of voter registration/date by which they need to write to the Minister to protest etc.

### **Debating skills**

By the end of this brief module on *Debating Skills* - participants should feel more able to debate in meetings and on TV and radio. The module focuses on advice for women on how to handle situations where they feel men are trivialising or ignoring what the women are saying.

**Good preparation ahead of time is the key to succeeding in debates.  
Attack ideas not people.**

**The following are sample ‘put-downs’ with examples of ways to deal with them.**

**Trivialising what you are saying** – making you look ridiculous – laughing and joking about women and trying to make you look stupid. E.g.: ”You women are always whingeing.”

**Solution**

Be prepared to demonstrate that respected people share the same opinion as you. Prepare ahead of the meeting so that you can quote from other people supporting your views. You can do this by producing a quotation from someone such as the Secretary General of the United Nations or your Party leader or some other eminent person in support of the point you are making.

**Trying to make out it is your problem and not relevant to them.**

E.g.: ‘It’s women’s fault there aren’t more of you in parliament, you don’t support each other...It’s nothing to do with us men. You women will have to solve that problem.’

**Solution**

Remind them that men have more power at present and therefore men have more responsibility to correct the situation.

**Withholding or hiding relevant information** – keeping back any evidence about an issue.

**Solution**

Research your topic ahead of time – show your concrete evidence

**Making you or what you say seem invisible** – e.g.: ignoring what you have said. Saying they don’t see that what you have to say is relevant to this issue.

**Solution**

Research your topic – give concrete evidence – make yourself heard.

**The Election Persuasion Game (devised by Lesley Abdela)**

**Notes to trainers**

*This game is a good way to complete a day’s coaching in public speaking.*

***Purpose of the Election Persuasion game***

*The purpose of the game is to reinforce the learning points from the public speaking session. The game gives Participants the opportunity to put into practice the key points they have learned about public speaking:*

*Allow 45 minutes to one hour for The ‘Persuasion Game’.*

**Equipment:**

*One box to use as a ‘ballot box’ with a slit cut in the top so that participants can post their votes into the ballot box.*

*A small blank square of paper to give to each participant to use as their 'voting paper'. In advance the Trainer will need to make sure each piece of paper has a different number on it depending on the number of participants...1,2,3,4,5 etc. For example - if there are 30 participants the voting papers will be numbered 1 to 30. If there are 25 participants the voting papers will be numbered from 1 to 25.*

*A prize for the winner of the game. (A box of chocolates or a box of biscuits is a good idea because the winner then has the choice of offering them around to other participants or taking them home!)*

*A plastic bag or open box in which to put all the name badges of all the participants.*

*Choose someone ahead of time to act as the Election Returning Officer for the game.*

### **Rules**

*The trainer explains the rules of the game:*

*Every participant must prepare a 3 minute speech.*

*Trainer briefs the participants about the topic of the 3 minute speech :*

*'Participants are asked to imagine they are a candidate standing for election to become Minister for Women. The purpose of a candidate's speech is to persuade the audience to vote for her to be Minister for Women.' The Trainer should tell the participants what type of audience the Candidates are addressing.*

*(The Trainer explains that she knows that in reality no one stands for election to become Minister for Women – this is purely a game.)*

*She also explains that everyone will have 5 minutes in which to prepare their speech. The trainer tells the participants that she expects them to try to use the key advice tips they have learned about public speaking in the preparation of their 3 minute talk.*

*She explains that after the 5 minutes preparation she will choose 3 candidates at random to be the competing speakers. The trainer will choose the 3 candidates by pulling their names out of a bag. (At this point the trainer should ask all participants to put their name badges into a plastic bag or other container.)*

*Before the participants commence the preparation of their speech - the Trainer should remind the participants of the key learning points from the presentation session on public speaking. This can be done by asking participants what are the key points they remember.*

**The Trainer can print out the following notes and give a copy to each participant:**

## **Handout**

### **Notes on Public Speaking**

*WHO are you speaking to?*

*Establish a bridge between you and your audience*

*WHAT 2 to 3 points are you going to make?*

*State each issue and how it directly affects your audience.*

*How are you going to make your points?*

*Give concrete examples/anecdotes to illustrate each statement.*

*WHY should they support you?*

*Offer a solution to the problem and how it directly affects your audience.*

*Support what you are saying by giving concrete evidence/examples - in a style which your audience will understand. Show how this issue directly affects your audience.*

*If possible link your political opponent to the problem.*

*Conclude by offering a vision for the future and describe how your solution will contribute to this vision. Tell your audience how they can participate in the process of building this vision. (Vote for me!)*

***The Trainer then explains that participants will have 5 minutes in which to prepare their talk. In real life there are sometimes occasions when candidates and political candidates are suddenly unexpectedly asked to give a talk at short notice (for example if the visiting guest Speaker is delayed).***

***The trainer gives each participant a copy of the following guidelines for how to prepare a talk/speech at 5 minutes notice:***

### **How To Prepare A Talk In 5 Minutes**

1. *For one minute*

- *write down anything to do with the topic*

2. *For the next TWO minutes*

- *Build a relationship with your audience*
- *Choose one of the items you have written down and expand on it.*
- *How does this topic impact on your audience?*
- *What is the problem? Give anecdotes, examples, evidence.*
- *Show how your solution(s) will impact on your audience.*

3. For the final TWO minutes

*Condense it all down for a conclusion. What is your vision for the future?  
Describe how your suggested solution fits into your greater vision.*

*Remember to ask your audience to vote for you!*

**Instructions to trainers continued:**

*Whilst the participants are preparing their speech the Trainer gathers all their name badges and puts them in a bag.*

*After the 5 minutes speech preparation the Trainer explains that after the 3 speeches every participant including the 3 candidates will be given a blank numbered ballot paper. Each participant can only vote for one candidate. Voters must write only the name of the candidate who convinced them she would make the best Minister for Women. The Trainer reminds everyone to vote for the individual who they believe has genuinely convinced them that she will make the best Minister for Women. She explains that voting is by Secret Ballot and she will give the voting rules after the 3 speeches are completed.*

*The trainer appoints a 'Time Keeper' to signal to each speaker when she has 30 seconds left to speak and when her 3 minutes is finished.*

*The Trainer then invites someone to draw out the name of the first candidate from the bag without looking.*

*Whilst each candidate is delivering their speech the trainer writes notes about what each of the 3 speakers did well (including body-language, eye contact, tone of voice and content of the speech) and makes written suggestions for what she could do to improve.*

*After the first Speaker has finished her speech the Trainer invites someone else to draw a name out of the bag to be the second candidate.*

*After the second Speaker has finished her 3 minute speech the trainer invites another person to draw out the name of the final speaker.*

*To remind everyone of the names of the speakers the Trainer writes the name of each of the 3 candidates on the flip-chart.*

*When all 3 'Candidates' have finished their speeches the Trainer explains the voting regulations:*



*Each of the 3 Speakers will appoint a participant whom she trusts as her 'election observer'. The Trainer asks the 3 Election Observers to come and stand beside the Election Returning Officer and the Ballot box.*

*The Trainer instructs the Election observers to remain with the Ballot Box at all times until the counting is completed.*

*The trainer asks the Election Returning Officer to show the audience that the ballot box is empty.*

*Participants are told that each participant must put her own vote in the box – no one else is allowed to put her vote in the ballot box for her. The 3 Candidates and the Election Observers are also allowed one vote each.*

*The trainer explains that when everyone has voted the Election Returning Officer and the 3 Election Observers will go into another room to count the votes. The Trainer makes it clear that although in a real election the number of votes for each candidate would be announced, in this case the Election Officer will not announce the number of votes (the Returning Officer and the Election Observers are instructed not to tell anyone how many votes each candidate won – the reason for this is that the purpose of the training is to increase everyone's confidence and not to embarrass or demoralise anyone who didn't get many votes.)*

*Whilst the votes are being counted the Trainer stays in the room with the participants and gives the 3 Candidates constructive feed-back on their talks in front of the others so that everyone learns. The trainer highlights points each speaker did well and gives a few suggestions and advice for anything that would improve performance in the future.*

*After counting the votes - the Election Returning Officer will announce the name of the winner. The Trainer then asks the 3 Election Observers if they are satisfied that the election was 'Free and fair'!*

*The winner gets applause and a prize!*

## **Constructive Feed-back**

### **Notes to trainers**

*When you are giving feed-back to participants on their public speaking practice try to use constructive feed-back. This will encourage people and help to build their confidence.*

- *Take key notes*
- *Focus and build on their strengths*

- *Encourage the participant to identify what they feel are their strengths and weaknesses*
- *Ask open questions – What did you feel you did well?*
- *How do you feel you can improve the way you do this?*
- *Summarise key points*
- *Give positive feed-back on the performance*
- *Encourage and make suggestions*
- *End on a positive note*

## **2. Media Interviews Workshop**

### **Purpose of this media training session**

By the end of this media interview session, women will have enhanced their ability as individuals to communicate their priorities and messages through TV and radio.

### **Instructions for Trainers**

*The full programme should take approximately 5 hours.*

*The facilities and equipment for the following programme can be adapted to the size of your group.*

*You can photocopy the Question and Answer briefing on Quotas, from ‘Section 1’ of this manual. Distribute a copy of the ‘Q and A’ briefing to each of your workshop participant as an example of how to prepare answers for questions on any topic.*

### **Equipment and personnel**

*Flip-chart and flip chart pens. Sticky tape or blue-tack to stick flip-chart paper on the wall. Power Point or Overhead projector.*

### **Equipment for the final 2 hour session – TV interview practice.**

*For a group of 25 – 30 participants you will need:*

- *3 rooms and 3 sets of TV equipment, but if there are 8 – 10 participants you need only one set of TV equipment.*
- *3 video cameras with 3 camera operators. The microphones must have strong enough capacity to record good quality sound of both the interviewer and the interviewee.*

- *3 TV monitors large enough for a group of 10 people to view comfortably. Technical capacity in each room to play back the recorded interviews on the monitors.*
- *3 trainers or 1 trainer plus 2 other facilitators. Trainer/Facilitators should have extensive experience of media interviews and politics or advocacy campaigning. The trainer/facilitators could be TV or radio political journalists or politicians or activists with extensive experience of giving interviews on TV.*
- *6 journalists. The Lead trainer will need to brief the journalists ahead of the practice session. Assign 1 facilitator plus 2 journalists to each of the 3 rooms. The briefing for the guest journalists is written in the final module below which explains the TV Practice session.*

### **Suggested programme**

#### **Module 1 – 60 mins**

*Trainer explains the purpose of the day and assesses the needs and priorities of the participants.*

#### **Module 2 – 60 mins**

*Presentation from trainer(s) giving advice and tips on how to prepare for media interviews and how to give media interviews. Followed by questions from participants*

#### **Module 3 – 30 mins**

*Working in pairs, participants prepare and rehearse for practice TV interviews.*

#### **Module 4 - 120 mins**

*This module gives participants the opportunity to put what they have learned into practice in front of video cameras and then to receive extra coaching.*

#### **Module 5 – 25 minutes**

*Trainer checks off points covered from the participants’ ‘shopping list.’*

*Reinforcement of key learning points.*

*Conclusion of the day.*

#### **Optional Extra module**

*On a separate evening or week-end session a group could organise a couple of extra separate sessions from colour specialists such as ‘Colour Me Beautiful’ on advice on which colours suit individuals best and advice from a professional TV make-up artist on how to apply make-up for TV.*

#### **Introduction to the session**

*Trainer introduces herself/himself and explains the purpose of this Media training session. Briefly describe the programme.*

*Tell the participants that you are aware that amongst the group of participants there may be different levels of previous media experience, including possibly some participants who have never yet appeared on TV.*

*Explain that you want to make the session as useful as possible to everyone – those who already have a great deal of media experience and those who don't - so you are going to conduct a quick survey to help you to assess the levels of experience within the group:*

- 1. ask participants who have never yet appeared on TV to put up their hands.*
- 2. ask people who have given interviews on TV once or twice or just a few times but not a had great deal of experience to put up their hands*
- 3. ask participants who feel they have had a great deal of experience to put up their hands.*

*If there is a wide range of different levels of experience within the group – reassure everyone that this is a good thing because it gives participants the opportunity to benefit from each others experiences.*

*Say you would like each participant to imagine she is coming for a cup of coffee and a chat with you to ask your advice about how to improve her Media interview skills. What are the questions she most wants to ask? For any participant who has had previous TV/Radio experience - did she encounter any problems? What would she like to ask about? For any participant who has never had experience of a TV interview- what are the questions she would like answered?*

*Give everyone 2 minutes to think quietly and to jot down notes for themselves about what they most want to know.*

*Then ask participants to give you the issues they want covered. Write up each of their points on a flip-chart list. Put the completed 'shopping- list' on the wall where you can see it throughout the rest of the day.*

*Tell the group that throughout the training you will do your best to answer as many as possible of the issues they have raised.*

*You will find that most of their questions are already covered by the programme outlined below, but you may need to add a few additional points.*

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*The following presentation on public speaking session is written in the speaking style of a script which the trainer can deliver.*

## **HOW TO GIVE EFFECTIVE INTERVIEWS ON TV AND RADIO**

"It's a curious phenomenon that in this glacial age of computers and technology, it's warmth, and warmth alone that succeeds on television."

*Peter Ustinov (actor)*

**Television and radio are the most important outlets for influencing public perceptions. Anyone can learn how to improve their performances on TV and radio.**

**Preparation. Preparation. Preparation.**

Ahead of appearing on the media, you will need to prepare. You have to know what you are talking about. The guidelines for preparing an interview are simple. Prepare and rehearse in advance with a colleague/friend.

Allow your personal warmth and sincerity to shine through. People respond to energy and enthusiasm.

### **Overcoming nerves**

*Note to Trainers:*

*See advice on 'overcoming nerves' in the section on public speaking*

### **Pre-interview preparation**

**Power point slide – TV preparation for interviews**

**What 2 points do you want to make?**

**What are the obvious questions?**

**What are the unexpected questions?**

**Who?What?Why?  
When?Where?How?**

**What is the nastiest question?**

**Use the following format to help you to prepare:**

**What 2 points do you want to make?**

**What are the obvious questions you will be asked? Expect 'open' questions from journalists - Who? What? Why? When? Where? How? How will you answer them?**

**What is the nastiest question you might be asked? How would you answer it?**

**What 2 points do YOU want to make?** Make a list beforehand of the 2 or 3 main points you want to get across in the interview.

## Power Point slide

**Decide :**

**why you are giving the interview**

**what you are going to say.**

**how you are going to say it.**

**KISS – keep it clear and simple.**

### **Why?**

Think about *why* you are appearing on TV

### **Who?**

Keep in mind the person you are trying to persuade is the *viewer*, not the interviewer.

### **What?**

*What* do you want to achieve by this TV appearance? If you are a political candidate your aim is to come across as someone who voters feel they can trust. Plus you want to motivate them to vote

for you.

If you are representing an advocacy campaign your aim is to persuade viewers to support your cause.

### **How?**

Think about how you are going to persuade viewers to support your campaign.

#### **Be available**

TV and radio stations may want you to come to their studio for programmes at any time in the 24 hours of the day - very early in the morning, late at night, midday, afternoon, weekdays or week-ends. You or your spokespeople should be prepared to travel, at short notice if necessary.

#### **First contact**

Most first contacts with interviewees are made by a producer or researcher. They will make a friendly call to their potential interviewee to ask for background information - it's like an 'audition'.

They will be interested in what you say and how you say it.

#### **Be articulate**

- **Can you say things simply and clearly?**
- **Can you make things sound interesting?**
- **How do you react to 'difficult' questions?**

#### **You have the right to find out in advance about the programme**

Use the pre-interview chats with Producers and Researchers to help you prepare the groundwork for your interview.

#### **Learn about your audience**

To help you to put across your message in the most appropriate way, ask what audience profile the programme attracts – age group/gender/rural or urban/highly educated or less well educated/ high income or low income.

Tell the researcher what you feel is the scope of your information and be clear about topics you can speak about and also about topics you cannot or will not speak about.

### **Learn about the programme**

Ask the radio or TV researcher or producer the following questions:

- what is the name of the programme, the name and status of the person who has contacted you?
- what is the topic - what 'angle' they are looking for?
- What type of questions will they ask?
- will it be a studio broadcast, outside interview or what?
- how much air-time will your interview be given?
- will the programme be live or pre-recorded? If your interview will be pre-recorded, ask how many minutes from your interview they plan to broadcast? Be aware that if they interview you for 30 minutes with the intention of selecting just 3 minutes from your 30 minute interview for actual broadcasting, you have lost editorial control.
- who else is taking part in the item as a whole? Knowing who else is appearing may help you to decide on how you will give your own answers.
- what angle will the interviewer be taking on the matter?

### **Be punctual**

You are lucky to have the chance of a TV or radio interview, so it's important not to keep the interviewer waiting.

Also – especially with radio - you don't want to be breathing heavily into the microphone because you had to dash upstairs to the studio at the last minute.

### **TV or radio interview**

**Make your most important point as soon as possible.** If the interviewer is not very knowledgeable on the subject, do not allow this to spoil your interview, quickly lead with the questions you yourself want asked. Try to use the very first question to turn the interview directly to your reason for being there. Stick to the script you have mentally prepared - getting your two or three important points across to the audience.

You can say 'I'll try to come to your question in a minute, but I want to make an important point' - go ahead and make it briefly, then answer their question. Radio and television interviews can feel surprisingly short. You will kick yourself later if you realise you spent time on something less important, and ran out of time.

**Treat a TV or radio interview as if you are having a conversation with one or two people.** Do not speak as though you are giving a speech to an audience of hundreds of people. TV and radio are very personal media - just you and the interviewer talking together on a one to one basis. You will look and sound better if you act as though you are having a chat with a friend over a cup of coffee. The majority of Viewers and

Listeners are watching or listening at home or in their cars on their own or in small groups.

**Don't get angry if a journalist asks you questions you don't want asked.** The role of a journalist is to ask you the questions their viewers/listeners would want to ask if they had the chance. Expect the unexpected. Trick questions are part of the Media and journalism business and add excitement and interest to an interview. Answer such questions as honestly and in as straightforward a way as you can. Never say 'No comment'. Instead say "I'm not prepared to answer that right now."

**Do not lose your temper** or raise your voice, no matter how provocative the questions may be. Stay calm and never lose your cool. If you get angry it will not help your cause. You will look as though you have lost the argument. Some interviewers try to 'attack' you because they think controversy makes a good interview. Do not take this personally, it is just their technique. A useful way to deal with a question that has stirred up your anger is to stick to giving factual information.

**Always correct inaccurate information or the viewer/listener may assume it's correct.** For example give the accurate figure if the interviewer starts a question with an incorrect statistic for the number of women elected to the European parliament from Greece/Italy/Hungary...

**Never lie to a journalist – always tell the truth or just avoid answering the question.**

**Avoid jargon and speak in simple language.**

**Try to illustrate any point you make with a brief real-life anecdote....**

Think of examples to go with each of the points you want to make. Examples are like painting a picture for the audience. They make the interview more alive.

**Be topical.** Make sure you have up-to-the-minute information on the latest news and especially on the topic of your interview. This makes the interview more interesting and you are less likely to get caught out by the interviewer who will have seen the latest news. Try to watch or listen to the latest news before your appearance on TV or radio. To help you update swiftly on your information, build your own set of informal expert advisers on different topics plus your own list of useful websites. For example the Inter Parliamentary Union web-sites has continually updates statistics for women in Parliaments around the world: [www.ipu.org](http://www.ipu.org)

**Be brief and to the point. Keep your answers focused,** don't carry on speaking for more than 3 or 4 sentences. Giving long answers on TV and radio is a common mistake. Viewers and listeners have very short attention spans. They will get bored and switch off.

BBC news interviews last around 3 minutes maximum. American TV news items can be as short as 7 to 10 seconds. In Italy the radio or TV spot interview's time is 50 or 60



seconds, but during the election campaign the media give more time for interview or debate: about 30 minutes.

**Stop speaking when you have finished your point**

If you try to fill an uncomfortable silence it could lead you to blurt out words you had no intention of saying. It's up to the interviewer - not you - to keep the interview going. Beware - a favourite trick by journalists is to leave a silence in the hopes that their interviewee will unwittingly add an extra point that they did not want to say in public!

**Be authoritative** - But without being bossy, know-all or condescending.

**Switch off your mobile phone and banish the baby and the bird!**

You may be asked to do telephone interviews ('down the line') for radio. Make sure you shift howling dogs, singing budgerigars, chiming clocks, crying babies and others out of the room so you won't be interrupted! **AND SWITCH OFF YOUR MOBILE PHONE!**

**Never assume after your interview has ended that the recording equipment has stopped.** Many people let their guard drop because they do not realise the microphone and recording equipment are still switched on so they may say something they bitterly regret later.

In one famous incident, British Prime Minister John Major thought a TV interview was finished. After the TV interview, when he saw the camera had stopped filming, he was suddenly very outspoken and critical of his colleagues. For some months he had been having problems with certain Ministers in his Cabinet, but did not talk about the problems in public. He had not realised that the sound recording equipment was still switched on. John Major said to the interviewer: "Three of my Ministers are bastards!" His angry words were publicised right across the nation.

**Don't fidget or use 'stutter' words**

Don't fidget on TV with fingers, pencils, bracelets, pieces of paper etc. Fidgeting will distract from what you are saying.

Ask friends to tell you if you have any little habits such as rubbing the side of your nose, fiddling with a pen or a piece of paper, continually rubbing your fingers. Or repeatedly using a 'stutter' word such as 'actually'. Listeners will be so busy counting the number of 'actuallys' that they won't listen to what you are saying.

**In a radio studio** – avoid tapping with a pencil, pouring water into a glass, or knocking the wires when you speak. A tapping pencil will sound like a thudding noise, pouring water will sound like you are peeing, and banging the wires will disrupt the quality of sound.

**Don't refer openly to notes during a TV interview** (though you can glance briefly at your cue cards). The information should be inside your head. Broadcasters say, "If it's read, it's dead."

**Don't drink alcohol before an interview.** Ahead of appearing on TV or radio the excitement is likely to increase the adrenalin level in your body. Adrenalin combined with even a small swig of alcohol can cause you to behave as though you are highly drunk!

**Switch off your mobile telephone**

## **Visual image - what to wear and body language**

**People receive their messages from:**

- 1. your visual image**
- 2. the sound of your voice**

**the actual words**

**...in that order!**

### **Power point slide**

On television your visual image makes the highest impact. On radio the tone of your voice is important. You can learn to use all three tools – your visual image including body language, the tone of your voice and words.

### **Eye Contact**

For both radio and TV keep eye contact with your interviewer.

For TV if your interviewer is standing sideways on to the camera look at the interviewer's eye closest to the camera.

### **Hands**

Keep your hand gestures to within an imaginary box the size of a domestic TV screen from your chin to your chest, between your shoulder blades and no further out than 15 to 20 centimetres.

### **Posture**

When sitting, tilt slightly forward with a straight back.

When standing don't have your arms crossed (it can look defensive or as though you have something to hide). Have both hands relaxed loosely by your side or bend arms at waist level.

If you find it comfortable, stand with one foot slightly in front of the other.

### **Clothes**

When it comes to choosing clothes for TV, despite what many people may tell you there are no rules. You can develop your own personal image. It is important that you personally feel comfortable with the way you are dressed so that you can concentrate fully on getting your messages across to the audience.

If you want to be perceived as an energetic pro-active environmental campaigner you may choose to be filmed out in the countryside wearing walking boots or Wellington boots and jeans and casual tops such as shirt, t/shirt/sweater anorak.

If you are a political candidate standing for election, it is good advice to look and sound as though you are already an elected Member of Parliament/Local Councillor/Mayor/Prime Minister/President.

If you want to be perceived as a serious professional politician you could choose to wear a smart jacket and skirt or jacket and trousers in plain colours with a simple plain coloured top or shirt. Or if the weather is very warm you may choose a well cut shirt with a skirt or trousers. Or a plain coloured linen dress.

The general guideline for TV is to keep your general look neat and simple. Plain colours rather than patterns or checks work best on TV.

An advantage for women is that you can choose to wear muted colours or bright colours. Bright colours help you to stand out from men in navy and grey dark suits

If a woman wants to be taken seriously as a political candidate, avoid showing too much bare skin on neck-lines, shoulders and legs.

Be aware that sofas and armchairs in some TV studios are quite low – a skirt that seems perfectly modest in length when you are standing up, can ride up your thighs when you sit on TV studio furniture. Viewers will be looking at your thighs rather than listening to what you say!

On TV, stiffer fabrics look better than soft clingy fabrics. A well cut jacket or shirt works better than a clingy sweater or soft blouse. Soft fabrics may wrinkle, look untidy and highlight nipples and bulges. If you want to wear a softer fabric such as a sweater, t shirt or soft blouse then I suggest you team it with a jacket.

A tip from professional TV announcers is to tuck the back of your jacket under your bottom when you sit down. This will help to keep your jacket looking neat and wrinkle-free.

If you want to be seen as a professional, keep your jewellery simple. For TV, wear neat ear-rings not long dangling ear-rings. If you wear dangling ear-rings, flashy bracelets or eye-catching necklaces (especially in close-up camera shots) viewers will be so busy watching your ear-rings or necklace flashing and moving that they will not be listening to what you say!

### **An advice tip for women over 30ish in age.**

Remember to smile when you are listening to your interviewer and at the end of the programme. It is unfair, but true, that a man over 30 who has a serious expression on his face looks as though he is thinking serious and important thoughts, but a woman with a serious expression on her face can look angry and ferocious. If you don't believe me – take an honest look in the mirror.

It's OK to smile at your interviewer even when the issue you are discussing is a serious topic (unless you are discussing a disaster such as a train crash or a terrorist attack etc). When people are not on TV they smile when they are chatting to other people to build up a relationship. Smile at the end of your interview. Your smile will leave a warm image of you and build empathy with the audience and your potential voters.

## **Hair**

In general neat tidy hair styles work best on TV.

However I have seen women who have decided to make a statement about their personality by having curly hair – it gave them an image distinct from others and more memorable.

Whatever style you decide to wear your hair, make certain it is not flopping across your face. It is important to ensure that your hair is not going to cast a shadow across your face when you are filmed.

### **Make up**

Men as well as women should expect to wear make-up for TV appearances. Without make-up the bright lights of a TV studio can make you look sweaty or washed-out. Avoid wearing too much heavy eye make-up.

### **Spectacles**

If you wear spectacles and you are going to appear frequently on TV it may be worth purchasing spectacles that don't reflect back the lights.

### **Take control of your environment. Look behind you!**

If you are being interviewed at a conference or out of doors, ahead of the interview always check to see what is behind you. You do not want to be interviewed in front of a sign saying 'Toilets' or 'EXIT'. Nor do you want to be interviewed in front of your opponent's poster.

If you are being interviewed at your Party conference or offices you might want to make sure there is one of your campaign posters behind you and/or you could place a coffee mug with your campaign logo on your desk where it will show on camera.

If you are outside and being interviewed in front of an ugly concrete wall, (unless the poor conditions of the building are relevant to what you want to say), suggest you move to stand in front of a more friendly back-ground such as nearby flowers or trees.

Some studio chairs and sofas are designed for tall people (usually men). Before going on air, check if you are comfortable. If not – ask for a cushion or bag to put behind your back.

### **Tone of Voice**

Remember to smile and to put energy into your voice, especially when you are speaking on radio.

**Include these key elements in your message:**

- 1. the problem you have identified**
- 2. your suggested solution**

### **Power Point Slide – key elements**

**Think about how to make what you say 'memorable' and 'interesting'**  
On radio – try to paint pictures with

words.

### **Advice Tips for candidates:**

Speak in a positive style – “When I’m elected.....” not “If I’m elected.”

Throughout your interview – highlight any experience which shows potential voters that you have experience of making tough decisions/ leading others/etc. This will help to overcome any stereotype perceptions that women can’t be political leaders.

Use opportunities to mention the name of your constituency/village/town/district. Don’t just say “the people in my area are suffering from traffic pollution ....” Or “in my district we have a problem of shortage of drinking water .....” Say “The people in Athens are suffering from traffic pollution...” or “I know that the people in Pyrgos have a problem of shortage of drinking water...” Viewers and listeners relate to hearing the name of a place in their area.

### **An opportunity for NGOs to promote name recognition**

If you are representing your NGO on the media keep mentioning the name of your NGO. Instead of saying “We are campaigning to increase the number of women in parliament...” Say, “*KETHI/MONA/Arcidonna* are campaigning to increase the number of women in parliament.”

### **Make your message clear and uncomplicated**

Example:

Ronald Reagan’s message in his 1980 Presidential campaign:

“I will make America strong and lower taxes.”

It was clear and effective!

*Notes to trainer: explain that in a few minutes you will give the participants the opportunity to prepare and rehearse in pairs for the TV practice session. At the end of this part of your presentation distribute a copy to each participant of the information on the following Power Point slide.*

*Note to trainer:*

*To help reinforce the learning points:*

*Invite a participant to read out loud the first item on the following list from the screen.*

*Then continue round the room until each item has been read by a different participant.*

### **Notes to Trainer**

*Distribute copies of the following handout guidelines to participants:*

### **TV interview preparation summary notes**

- Prepare the groundwork for the interview in the pre-interview chat.
- Be punctual.
- Make a list of the 2 or 3 main points you want to get across.
- What are the obvious questions? How will you answer?
- Prepare for the unexpected question.

- Keep eye contact with the interviewer.
- Smile and put energy into your voice.
- Be topical.
- Be brief and to the point.
- Switch off your mobile phone!

**Questions you should be able to answer:**

**WHAT exactly is the problem?**

**WHAT concrete alternatives do you propose that that could solve the problem?**

**WHAT do citizens think about the issue?**

**WHO else is already conducting a campaign on this issue?**

**WHO are your likely supporters/ allies?**

**WHO are your likely opposition and what are their likely arguments against you?**

**WHAT is the state of existing legislation on this issue? Does it need amending or is new legislation needed? Does current legislation simply need enforcing?**

**WHAT International agreements exist that may affect your issue?**

**HOW do current costs/benefits/damages compare to your suggested solution?**

**WHAT is your opinion on the latest development on your issue (you are especially likely to be asked this question if there is a breaking news story which affects your issue.)**

**WHO will be likely to be winners or losers from your solution?**

**The TV interview Rehearsal Exercise**

*Trainers divide participants into pairs.*

*Suggest that each participant selects a topic for the interview on which they are likely to be interviewed at some point in the future in real life.*

*The interviewee should decide that two points she want to make in her interview.*

*The other person in each pair pretends to be a TV or radio interviewer and interviews the other using the question sheet below.*

*The interview is for maximum 5 minutes, then they reverse roles and the other person acts as TV interviewer. They give each other feed-back and coaching.*

## **TV interview practice in front of TV camera or cam-corder**

### ***Instructions for trainers:***

*Explain to participants that the TV interviews in this session are purely for practice. They will be filmed and they will have the opportunity to view themselves, but their practice interviews will not be broadcast in public on TV.*

*Briefing for guest journalists. Each of the invited journalists will interview a participant for 3 minutes maximum.*

*Each Participant will choose a topic on which they wish to be interviewed. It should be a topic on which they are working in the NGO or if they are a candidate it should be a topic on which they might be interviewed at some point in real life in the future.*

*The interview should start with easy obvious questions and then progress towards one or two more difficult questions. Whilst one journalist is conducting her/his interview on camera, the other journalist is outside the room having a pre-interview preparation chat with the next participant. They continue to swap over until they have interviewed all the 6 – 10 participants in their group.*

*There should be a Trainer/Facilitator in each room who is capable of giving feed-back and coaching on each interview.*

*After all the first interviews and feed-back on each interview are completed participants can opt to have a second interview for about 2 minutes each. Hopefully they will see how much they have improved! The second interviews do not need feed-back.*

*This coaching session should help build confidence in participants, therefore it's important that trainers give constructive feed-back to participants, not disparaging criticisms – at all times remember - the purpose of the session is to build their confidence. Always start by telling a participant what she did well. Then say something such as "I think it would be even better if you....." The trainer should note body-language, tone of voice, verbal skills in putting across her message etc.*

*Explain to the participants that this is an opportunity to put into practice what they have learned.*

*Each participant should choose to be interviewed on a topic she expects to have to handle in real life. She should decide on what are the 2 most important points she wants to make in her interview.*

*To help them to focus their thoughts. Ask the participants to work in pairs. Each will help the other to prepare for their interview using the format you have given them. Each will tell the other the 2 points she wants to make in her interview. They will act as 'Observers' for each other. After each woman has had her practice TV interview with the journalist the trainer/facilitator will ask the 'buddy' who acts as Observer to*

*say if her colleague made the points she wanted to make and to help give her feedback.*

*By the end of this session each participant should have:*

- 1. given at least one 3 minute interview on camera*
- 2. had the opportunity to view their interview on screen*
- 3. been given constructive feed-back and coaching.*

*After participants have been given constructive feed-back/coaching advice on their interviews, each participant has the chance to give a second interview of 2 minutes each.*

**Notes to Trainer:**

**Conclusion of the day**

*The trainer reads out each item on the original list of topics requested by participants. At each item the trainer asks the participants if they feel the topic has been covered in the workshop. If they say 'yes' put a tick by the item.*

*If they say 'half covered' put a half tick by the item or if they feel it was not covered mark that these are topics to cover in a future training workshop.*

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### **3. Chairing Meetings Workshop**

**Purpose**

*By the end of this 3 hour session participants should have increased their capacity to chair meetings.*

**Instructions for Trainers**

*Notes to trainers: each training module in this Meetings section can be conducted as a stand alone workshop or as part of a longer session on 'Communication skills and Meetings'.*

**Equipment**

*Flip-chart and flip chart pens. Sticky tape or blue-tack to stick flip-chart paper on the wall. Power Point or Overhead projector.*

**Suggested programme**

*Allow 3 hours approximately:*

- Assess the needs of participants 20 minutes*
- Presentation, questions and discussion 45 - 60 minutes*
- Role-play Exercise and feed-back – 90 minutes*



### **Introduction to the session.**

*Ask participants to put up their hands if they have had some experience of chairing meetings. Then ask if there is anyone who has never chaired a meeting. Explain that this session will be useful for those who are more experienced as well as those who are new to chairing.*

*Ask participants to tell you what sort of meetings they have chaired: committee meetings? Public meetings with guest speakers? Other types of meeting?*

*Ask participants what questions would they like covered in this session? Write up each of their points on one flip-chart list. Put the completed 'shopping-list' on the wall where you can see it throughout the rest of workshop.*

*Tell the group that throughout the training you will do your best to cover as many as possible of the issues they have raised.*

*The following presentation on chairing meetings is written in the speaking style of a script which the trainer can deliver.*

### **Chairing Meetings**

The first woman Speaker of the British House of Commons, Betty Boothroyd, said she considered the three most important things about chairing meetings are:

*"Humour. A smile on one's face. Pure common sense."*

That's excellent advice. But it isn't the whole picture.

Chairing a meeting requires:

- excellent communication skills – the ability to listen, to know how to say things in a diplomatic way
- the ability to intuitively understand the dynamics in the room
- the ability to 'control and conduct the orchestra'

### **Note to Trainers**

*Distribute a copy of the following check-lists and ask individual participants to read out an item on the check-list:*

#### **Who Is In Charge? You Are!**

The Chair's word is final, especially in meetings that include angry debate. It is important to make sure everyone knows you are in authority BUT you are also the servant of the meeting.

#### **Chairing is about:**

- achieving decisions that lead to actions
- setting objectives - what do you want out of a meeting?

#### ***Chair's check-list***

- Be sensitive to other people's proposals

- Look confident
- Give everyone a chance to speak
- Research shows that men talk more and listen less than women. Make sure that in your meetings you hear the views of women as well men.
- Keep everyone happy - but keep *firmly* to the schedule!
- Monitor speakers so no one person dominates
- Seek agreement
- Make people feel they want to be there and that they are able to contribute
- Meet clear objectives before, during and after meetings.
- Summarise and define the agreed action
- At the end of a well-chaired meeting everyone should feel they have had a fair say, and they are at least partly satisfied with the outcome

### **Pre-Meeting Preparation for committee meetings**

Written actions stand a 60% better chance of being carried out than verbal ones.

1. Include written instructions about any actions required before the next meeting.
2. Name the people responsible for carrying them out (record in the minutes).
3. Prior to the meeting contact the members and check on progress and any matters they want raised.
4. Send out details of the next meeting with the minutes of the previous meeting.

### **Preparing The Agenda**

Send out the agenda 7-10 days before the meeting. Check ahead that the meeting time suits women members as well as men members.

- Make contact with individuals ahead of the meeting. It will give you useful feedback. It helps you find out in good time if things are going wrong. It gives you time to think over new ideas and to decide which way you want them to go.
- Work out the timing for each item.
- Don't place important topics first on the agenda - in case there are latecomers.
- Put the most controversial topic as the one before last. This is most likely to give you an 'easy passage'...people are getting a bit tired, and it leaves time for repairing bad feelings afterwards!
- Try to simplify the agenda. Group smaller items together. Specify a time for each, such as 2 minutes.

### **Your role chairing the meeting**

Be a good host:

1. welcome everyone - Start with a welcome such as "We must work together to get things done on time. The purpose of this meeting is..."
2. introduce yourself
3. introduce the other people at the meeting
4. spell out how long each section of the meeting will take and what topics you expect to cover in that time

5. ask if everyone is happy with the agenda
6. make sure adequate notes of the meeting are kept  
make sure every participant has a 'say' -  
(In a public meeting, if one member of the audience is being verbally disruptive give them time to say what they want to say. If you try to stop them speaking too early on you will most likely lose the support of the audience. The audience will feel you have been unfair to the person who wants to say something. You need to give the disruptive person sufficient time to annoy the audience. The audience will then most likely be very supportive of you when you ask the person to sit down. )
7. control the time
8. arrive at a conclusion

### **Seating arrangements for a Committee Meeting**

In Committee meetings deciding where you want people to sit can be an important part of getting the answers you want.

International teams of consultants earn lots of money advising governments and multinational companies on table designs and layouts for international negotiations.

Invite members of the committee who agree with you on a difficult point to sit opposite you and at 45 degrees to you. You can move from one supporter to another, keeping up a democratic atmosphere and allowing minimal time for opposing views in between. This gives you allies you can address and it helps split up the opposition. A divided opposition is always easier to handle.

Seat people you think might make difficulties next to you - you are less likely to notice them!

### **Rewards And Recognition**

Give public acknowledgement for a person's work and contribution. Thank them in public as well as in private.

Everyone likes positive recognition for their work.

### **Conflict Diffusers!**

The best means of defence is prevention.

- **Poor communication builds suspicion.** Make sure that between meetings everyone is kept well informed of what is happening.
- **Work out how to build the team morale** - have some fun - a meal or a summer picnic together.
- **Be gracious and smiling** when you chair a meeting - it will make other people feel more positive.

**If things get tense have some announcements ready to give out.** This is a useful method to diffuse an uncomfortable atmosphere.

e.g:

*"I thought you would all like to know that our committee member Anna has just been awarded the Nobel prize for poetry."*

*"I have been meaning to tell you that our Political Party/NGO colleague Maria gave birth to a daughter last Sunday. They are both doing well."*

*"Perhaps this is a good time for our 20 minute coffee break."*

**Nevertheless there will be times when people get angry.**

You can always cut the meeting short in order to gather further information or to check the rules.

It is useful to have an aide at the meeting who knows the rules.

There will be occasions when your view is not acceptable to other people.

Keep your dignity. Remember the words of Ghandi:

*"It is not enough to merely tolerate another person's beliefs. You must respect them as much as you respect your own."*

## **Role Play – chairing meetings**

### **Notes for trainers**

*For 20 participants allow approximately 90 minutes in total for this role play. This includes time for Trainers to give instructions; role play exercises; and report-backs from the Observers. If you have more than 20 participants you may need to allow more time.*

*Divide participants into groups of approximately 10 people in each group.*

*Ask each group to imagine they are in a committee meeting for a political party or an NGO.*

*Participants can decide on a meeting related to the real life context in which they are operating.*

*The Chairs and their groups have 20 minutes in which to discuss and agree on a timed agenda for the meeting they are going to hold.*

*Plus they have 25 minutes in total to discuss and agree two issues on the agenda.*

*In each group of approximately 10 people*

- *One person chairs the meeting*
- *One person plays the role of someone who is quiet unless the chair invites their opinion*
- *One person plays the role of someone who speaks too much*
- *The others play the role of other members of the committee*
  
- *Two people act as observers to see if the Chair follows the advice in the check-list. The observers should be briefed to note down what they think the Chair did well and what could be done better in future. (Observers should be given the*

*check-list on how to give Constructive Feed-back which can be found earlier on in this manual.)*

*At the end of the role play allow each pair of observers approximately 10 minutes to give their observations.*

*Trainer gives a summary of key learning points.*

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#### **4. Advocacy Workshop**

Previous workshops in this manual have concentrated on developing the communication skills of individual women. This section of the manual concentrates on developing communications skills for groups. The section is designed to be useful for women NGO activists and for groups of women in political parties – for those who are newcomers to advocacy campaigning as well as for more experienced advocacy campaigners.

You achieve change when enough people become convinced they want those changes too. Advocacy campaigns run by civil society groups such as KETHI and Arcidonna are an established part of Greek and Italian political life, but the concept of NGOs acting as agents for change is a relatively recent concept to many citizens in the newer democracies. In Hungary as in other new democracies, NGOs carry out a complex set of activities, part of which is service provision. This was made necessary by a decreasing number of services provided by the state. However their activities include research and advocacy as well. MONA is one of the NGOs who are developing a capacity as advocacy campaigners. Some of the very few Hungarian NGOs with a feminist agenda, have a strong advocacy profile.

#### **Notes to trainers.**

##### **Purpose**

*Activities in the Advocacy workshop will develop the skills, knowledge and understanding about how to conduct effective advocacy campaigns. Participants will also share ideas on how to engage in useful dialogue with political leaders and officials and how to make these representatives more accountable to female citizens.*

*Trainers may need to explain that advocacy campaigns are often much more complex than just simply raising public awareness. An effective advocacy campaign may also need to understand how to influence and advise on public policy.*

##### **Equipment and personnel**

*Invite two guest speakers who have run successful advocacy campaigns to give brief presentations about their campaigns and to answer questions from participants about how they organised their campaigns and what worked and what lessons they learned.*

*Examples of advocacy women's campaigns in Greece, Italy, Hungary and Bulgaria which illustrate some of the points made in the Advocacy workshop are given at the end of this manual.*

### **Suggested programme**

*Total time – approximately 5 hours*

*Module 1- 45 minutes - Trainer explains the purpose of the day and asks what participants want to learn..*

*Module 2 - 60 minutes - Presentation from trainer(s) giving the basic principles of an advocacy campaign. Questions and discussions with participants.*

*Module 3 - 60-90 minutes - 1 or 2 presentations giving case samples of successful advocacy campaigns followed by questions and discussion.*

*Module 4- 2 hours Putting it all into practice – advocacy exercise.*

### **Notes to Trainers**

*In advance of this training session on advocacy, Trainers could prepare by choosing examples to illustrate each advice point from their own local experience and local context. This will help to make the workshop relevant to the context in which the participants are active.*

*Also trainers should distribute copies of Section 1 of this manual to each workshop participant. Section 1 has been written as a valuable briefing information tool for women in politics advocacy campaigners.*

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*Start the session by asking participants what they understand by an 'advocacy' or 'lobbying' campaign. Write their suggestions on flip-chart paper.*

*It is important that everyone has a clear understanding of what we mean by an 'advocacy campaign'.*

*Explain that in some countries the role of NGOs is seen mainly as 'service providers' helping to supplement services for citizens that could be provided by the state such as running shelters for women who have experienced violence. BUT another important role for civil society is to act as agents for change on behalf of citizens and to influence public policy.*

### **Definition of Advocacy campaigning**

*Advocacy means organising to give a voice and power to large numbers of citizens who do not have economic, social or political power.*

*Advocacy campaigners see that something is not right and decide to campaign for change on issues such as: equal political representation for women; women's economic rights; widows rights; and the right to information about how public **money is spent**.*

*The trainer can use any or all the following slides to sum up the discussion on advocacy.*

**Power-point slides.**

**What do we mean by ‘Advocacy’?**

**National and local authorities and global organisations have enormous power over the lives of citizens.**

**Centralised power with an ill informed acquiescent citizenry is a dictatorship.**

**By grouping together, citizens develop expertise on their subject and the power to draw attention to it.**

**Advocacy can mean asking the awkward questions such as:**

**“For what purpose is public money used?”**

**PUBLIC POLICY ADVOCACY**

- **promoting and representing the interests of citizens for the public good.**
- **an advocacy campaign exists because citizens want an existing policy changed or because they want a new policy introduced.**
- **NGOs, and individuals campaign to influence public policy.**
- **They raise awareness and feed ideas and information into the Public Policy law-making process.**

**Public Policy Advocacy**

Public policy is the mix of laws, regulations, and spending priorities decided and passed into law by elected politicians, advised by Departmental civil servants. Town Halls and parliaments debate and vote on tax policies and budgets. They set priorities for spending public funds.

**Power Point slide**

**Public advocacy ensures :**

- **balanced debate**

- **decision-makers hear all the facts and are able to make better informed and fairer decisions**
- **a better informed citizenship which increases accountability and transparency from decision-makers to citizens.**

### **The role of advocacy campaigners**

Advocacy campaigners decide on the problem they want to address. Work out how to do your research on the issue so that you can produce an action plan with appropriate activities.

If you decide on the actions first, you will find that the group develops a tailor-made structure geared towards achieving its objectives.

### **Notes to trainers**

*You can either ask the participants for their suggestions about the role of advocacy campaigners and show the following slide as a summary of the discussion.*

*Or just ask individual participants around the room to each read out one item from the following list.*

### **Power Point Slide**

#### **Role of Advocacy campaigners**

- **raise awareness about an issue among the public and decision-makers**
- **provide well-informed briefings to decision-makers**
- **give accurate information on an issue to the Media**
- **monitor decision-making**
- **promote initiatives to reform laws**
- **ask officials and politicians awkward questions**
- **combat lack of transparency in institutions**
- **whistle-blow when there is corruption**
- **remind decision-makers of their obligations to fulfil international agreements**

### **Notes to trainers**

*Once you feel that everyone in the workshop understands clearly what is meant by Advocacy campaigning move on to the next phase of the workshop.*

### **Universal principles of advocacy**

Most advocacy campaigns start with one or two people feeling that ‘something must be done’ about a negative and unjust situation.



In a democracy – persuasion is your only tool.  
You achieve change when enough people are convinced they want those changes too.

### **Power Point Slide**

#### **Universal Principles of Advocacy**

##### **Decide:**

- **what you want to achieve**
- **who you need to target**
- **how you are going to reach them**
- **why they should support you**
- **what you want them to do**
- **when you want them to do it**

**Who are the target people or target organisations you need to influence?** – target your limited resources and efforts towards the people who can actually cause the changes: Political Party Leaders and their Advisors, Policy-makers, Members of Parliament, local councillors, employers, Civil Servants, private sector, public sector, EU...

- Inform – your target audiences about your issue
- Persuade – your target audiences to agree with you
- Motivate - your target audiences to feel strongly enough about your issue to take action in support of your cause
- Move to Action

#### **Why should they support you?**

What are the advantages of your campaign to your target groups?

Prepare the ground - texture opinions.  
Medium term/long term.

#### **What do you want them to do?**

Make sure you tell people what you want them to do:

- Write a letter to a politician

- Sign your petition
- Deliver leaflets
- Come to a meeting
- Put up a poster
- Vote for a piece of legislation in parliament etc etc.....

**How do you reach the target groups you want to influence?**

Which radio/TV programmes/newspapers/magazines/do they read/watch/listen to?

**Power Point Slide**

**Your Resources:**

- **Money**
- **Time**
- **People**

Apart from the universal principles there are no fixed rules on how to campaign for change. Campaigners have a choice of a wide range of activities and strategies.

The fun of running advocacy campaigns is that within limits you can apply your imagination and creativity to dream up new approaches.

Developing a campaign is like growing tomatoes. Every variety of tomato in every country requires certain basics in order to grow – soil, nutrients, water and sunshine.

Once you have those basic requirements, each tomato grower will choose when to plant and when to harvest, how and when to prune, different methods of keeping off pests and what fertiliser to use.

Dates and methods for growing tomatoes will be different in Italy from Hungary or Greece. Similarly your choice of campaign tactics depends on your targets and the issue, and the timing and what stage your advocacy campaign has reached.

The greatest asset for any person or group campaigning for change is for people to have confidence in what you say.

If you have credibility combined with the ability to dream up imaginative but appropriate ideas for putting across your message you are likely to be a brilliant advocacy campaigner.

You earn credibility by ethical self-management within your own organisation and by building a specialist knowledge about your issue, keeping it updated, and telling the truth about it.

Having access to information and knowing how to make good use of the information is the well-spring and basis for successful activism.

### **Define the problem.**

Identify the problem, publicise the problem - and your solutions - to your audience(s), and begin your advocacy.

Society seems to resist change because change makes many people uncomfortable and worried. People eventually accept change if they recognise there is a problem that must be addressed and overcome.

Once you have made people understand there is a problem, the process can commence.

### **Power Point slide**

**Define the problem**

**Do your research**

**Prioritise**

**Suggest a solution**

**Be ACTION orientated!**

At your first meetings concentrate on discussing how to be active. Action and early successes build a sense of purpose and an air of positive excitement within your campaign group. An atmosphere of action and early success will attract people to support your cause.

A number of groups fail because they spend their first meetings bogged down in the minutiae of discussing who are the ideal candidates to fill a post and other administrative

details.

Decide on the problem you want to address and how you are going to do your research on the issue so that you can produce an action plan with appropriate activities.

If you decide on the actions first, you will find that the group develops a tailor-made structure geared towards achieving its objectives.

### **Prioritise**

Focus your energies on one or two issues at any one time. It is impossible to be effective with too many issues to address. You will overstretch your colleagues and your financial resources.

We live in a noisy and cluttered and busy world. Your goal is to get policy-makers to take the policy-action you want, to introduce the policies you believe are needed.

### **Research**

Do your research. Research will help you decide on the best choice of action. Once you have the information at your finger-tips you can educate others, particularly decision-makers, and start to develop solutions.

Do not rely on assumptions and presumptions.

Gather the facts and figures before you start your advocacy campaign.

Carry out research to discover the root cause (s) of the problem, to establish why your advocacy campaign is needed.

Find out what are the reasons for the current policy.

For example: what method and what criteria do each political party use when it selects its candidates to represent the party in the elections?

### **Good research makes your argument more effective.**

Too many people simply define a problem without suggesting a solution. They simply ask the authorities to fix it and then wonder why nothing happens.

An NGO's goal is to help lawmakers and especially the public to make informed choices, based on facts and good analysis.

Getting information makes it possible for you to understand your issue better and to talk about it effectively.

Research will equip you with persuasive arguments and to help you to choose the best strategy.

Your power to influence the Media, decision-makers, opinion-leaders, the judiciary and the public will only grow if the information you pass them is credible and trustworthy.

### **Gender-proof your advocacy campaign.**

Start at the planning stage and check at each phase to make sure that you have included gender considerations throughout your advocacy campaign.

#### **Power point slide - Gender Proof – key words:**

##### **Gender:**

- **Representation and participation**
- **Access**
- **Norms and values**
- **Human Rights**
- **Allocation and beneficiaries of resources**

**Representation and participation** - Is there equal representation and participation of women and men in all levels of planning, policy-making and decision-making? Political Party nomination processes? Political

Party hierarchy? Local Government? National government? European Parliament?

**Access** – Do women have equal access with men to attending meetings, training, conferences etc?

**Norms and values** - Are completely different values attached to roles of women and men, and to male and female characteristics? Division of labour, what are the attitudes and behaviour?

**Human Rights** – is there fair access to justice in the legal, political and social and economic environment, freedom from sexual violence, degradation and intimidation - and from direct and indirect sex discrimination?

Do women have more difficulties than men in obtaining their rights through the legal system? If so, what are the reasons for this?

What are other blockages (such as intimidation from members of the family or high cost of legal fees) that make it difficult for women to access the law? What steps have other societies taken to overcome the conflict between traditional and civil law on the issue of women's human rights?

### **Allocation and Distribution of resources –**

If you are looking at any aspect of budget expenditure, grants, or loans - WHAT is the current budget? HOW are the money and training, education, property, political and economic power being allocated? WHO is receiving the major share - men or women?

### **Who are your likely allies and opposition?**

Who are your target audiences? The target audience means the decision-makers with the power to bring about the changes you want – for example, a key policy-maker such as Minister for Health or Justice or Education or Transport or Agriculture, but also parliamentarians, Ministry officials, local officials, managing directors, judges. They are the people you most want to persuade. You want them to listen to your message.

Make a list of all the individuals and institutions who have an interest in your issue. Rank them according to their ability to be helpful or harmful to your goals.

### **‘Who’s Who’ in the power structures in Italy/Greece/Hungary?**

Do your research to discover precisely WHO you need to influence. You do not have surplus resources of time and personnel!

With your colleagues, agree a list of groups and individuals you need to target with your message and information.

Target your limited resources and efforts towards the people who have the power to take the steps needed to increase women's access to the economy.

Make a list of useful names and the posts they hold – keep it up to date.

Make contact with the person in the Government department most concerned with your issue. Politicians can change posts more quickly than their Civil Servants.

Once you have compiled a power-map, spend your time and resources mobilising and informing people and institutions who are either already on your side or neutral.

Never let potential support remain passive. Always give your target audience suggestions of actions they can take to support your campaign.

### **Who influences these people?**

If you want to influence a politician about a reform you want them to make such as increasing the number of women in Parliament or on the Local Council, you may need to get the following groups on your side first:

Women; and men and women whom the politicians respect or admire; an alliance of other groups who are respected in the community.

## **The Power Map Exercise**

### **Notes to trainers**

*Conduct the Power Map Exercise. This can either be done in plenary or divide participants into two groups. Ask one group to draw up a power map of potential foes: the other group to draw up a Power Map of potential allies.*

*Each group presents and explains their list.*

### **Instructions:**

#### **Design a POWER MAP of Friends and Foes**

You can create a 'power-map' using a flip-chart.

Divide the page into 3 columns:

On the left hand side of the paper make a list of people or institutions (perhaps a friendly lawyers' association) who are most likely to be able and willing to help.

On the right hand side write the names of individuals and organisations most likely to oppose their advocacy campaign.

In the middle column put the names of the people who are undecided and might be persuaded to support your cause.

### **Notes to trainer**

*Give each participant a copy of the following lists including the gender-proof check-list and invite individual participants to read out an item each:*

## **Guidelines - Good research makes your argument more effective.**

### **Define -**

- What exactly is the problem?
- What are the alternatives that could solve the problem?
- Work out which is the best alternative and make your decision.
- What is the state of existing legislation on your issue? Is it OK? If yes - Does it need enforcing? If NO does current legislation need amending or is new legislation needed?
- What international agreements exist that affect your issue?

- How do current costs compare to your solutions?

### **Key points for research ahead of your campaign**

WHAT information do you need?

WHERE are you going to look?

HOW are you going to apply the information to your advocacy campaign?

WHAT do citizens think about the issue?

WHO else is already conducting an advocacy campaign on this issue?

WHAT can you learn from their approaches to the problem?

WHO are your likely allies for a coalition?

WHO are your likely opposition and what are their likely arguments against you?

WHAT is the state of existing legislation on this issue?

WHAT International agreements exist that may affect your issue?

WHAT are the current costs/benefits/damages?

HOW do current costs/benefits/damages compare to your suggested solution?

WHO will be likely to be winners or losers from your solution?

HOW are you going to apply the results of your research to your advocacy campaign?

### **Deciding which option to choose**

You and your supporters have to decide which option to campaign for. Ask yourselves the following questions:

- Will your choice of approach succeed?
- How much will it cost (and who will pay that cost)?
- Who will support the option you have chosen, and who would oppose it?
- Which option will attract enough political support to get it acted on?

## **Gender-proof check-list.**

### **Notes to trainers**

*The trainer should distribute copies of Section 1 of this manual to each workshop participant, if you haven't already done so. The section has been written as a valuable briefing information tool for women in politics advocacy campaigners.*

Make a list of other organisations in your country who are working on similar issues

Find out what work has been done in other countries on your issue – use the internet; ask personnel working in international organisations, ask representatives from other countries based in your country.

Read Section 1 of this manual. The section has been written as helpful briefing information for women in politics advocacy campaigners.

### **Power point slide**

Summary of key points:

### **Research**

- **find the information you want**
- **assess its credibility**
- **interpret it**
- **repackage it to meet your needs**

### **Strategy**

Most advocacy campaigns start with one or two people feeling that ‘something must be done’ about a negative and unjust situation. Your goal is to achieve change on behalf of the cause you represent.

#### **Decide on the aims and objectives of your campaign.**

The aim is what your campaign wants to achieve in the long-term.

Long-term aims might be ‘50/50 representation of women and men in Parliament’.

#### **Define your goals and objectives precisely**

Decide – exactly what do you want to achieve? Agree clear goals with your colleagues.

Clearly define both short-term objectives and long-term goals. Then you can –

#### **Tell lawmakers and other decision-makers what you want them to do.**

#### **Define clear instructions and requests for action to supporters.**

#### **Choose a Name.**

The name of your campaign should be short and easy to remember.

Example:

‘The 300 GOUP’ was the name of a campaign in the UK to get at least 300 women (about 50%) elected to the British House of Commons.

#### **Vision statement.**

Agree on vision statement. The following is an example of a vision statement:

*‘Women do not want to be mainstreamed into a polluted stream. We want to clean the stream and transform it into a fresh and flowing body. One that moves in a new direction – a world at peace, that respects human rights for all, renders economic justice and provides a sound and healthy environment.’* WEDO Vision statement by U.S women’s rights campaigner, Bella Abzug (1920-1998)

#### **Decide on a simple main message:**

Before you start contacting policy makers or the Media, get your aims clear and define your message in simple language. Define a clear message about what you want: keep it simple, directly to the point, and stay on message. You should be able to describe what you want in less than 8 or 10 words. Maximum 3 sentences.



Put yourself in the seat of your target audience – was the core message clear (what was it?)? After hearing the message, are you informed, motivated, persuaded, and moved to act?

**Make sure your message is:**

1. clear, concise and easy to understand. Check it with friends or friendly professionals.
2. based on your aims and objectives, and sums up your demands clearly.
3. gives your target audiences clear, consistent statements about the ideas, issues and actions you are advocating.
4. contains solutions – not just complaints and criticisms. People are more responsive to messages that present solutions rather than messages that simply focus on the problem.

**Build a coalition with other groups who share your objective.**

**Power point slide - Clear simple message**

**Include these in your message:**

- **the problem you have identified**
- **what you want done about it - the solution you propose**
- **why you believe this solution should be carried out**

**Power point slide**

**‘It’s a man’s world, unless women use their vote’.**

US National Women’s Political Caucus campaign.

**‘If you do not vote, others will decide instead. Vote for Equal Opportunities on 13th June.’** MONA slogan for the 2004 European Elections in Hungary.

**‘Give new value to politics! Vote for many women everywhere!’** KETHI campaign slogan in the 2004 Greek elections.

**‘Democracy needs women.’** ARCIDONNA slogan for 2004 European Parliament Elections in Italy.

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Repeat, repeat, repeat, repeat, the same message.....

## **Mobilise your supporters and persuade the people who are undecided to support your campaign**

Don't waste time trying to convince the firm opposition.

### **Tell a good story – present your information in a user-friendly style.**

State what is happening – and what needs to be done. Communicate your information in an interesting and compelling way. If you try to present your information in the style of a university lecture you will lose the attention of busy people.

State what is taking place among the people whose cause you represent.  
What needs to be done about it.

Use time-frames people can relate to – for example an international NGO campaign said:

“It has taken you one minute to read this advertisement. In that time a baby has died unnecessarily somewhere in the developing world”.

That is easier for most people to absorb than ‘525,950 babies die each year from disease, malnutrition and lack of parental health education’.

### **Cross-Party Advocacy**

A golden rule of parliamentary lobbying for NGOs is to pursue an all-Party approach where-ever possible. It is a mistake for NGOs to engage only with one political Party and its elected members. Make contacts with opposition Parties as much as with the governing Party or Parties.

In a multi-Party democracy there will be changes of government from one part of the political spectrum to another. This is called the Swing of the Political Pendulum.

In Opposition, political Parties have more time and are often more willing to listen to your message than the governing Parties. One day the opposition Parties may be in power and can implement promises they may have made to you. In any case, NGOs should usually be seen as non-aligned to any one political Party.

### **Notes to trainers**

*The trainer should distribute copies of this check list on Advocacy to participants*

### **WHAT, WHO, WHERE, HOW, WHY, WHEN**

- **What** are the long-term goals and short-term objectives? NGOs need to clearly define their short-term goals and long-term objectives.
- **Whom** do they need to influence? NGOs need to draw up a list of key individuals and groups to target.
- **Where** are the likely allies? NGO Groups will draw up a list of likely allies and supporters.
- **Why** should the target groups and individuals support these causes? Understand the reasons that different groups and individuals might be motivated to support them.

- **What** are the points of possible intervention in policy development, the political cycle, preparation of new laws etc. What are the decision-making processes on issues of importance to specific NGOs (e.g. environment, women)? NGO groups need to analyze the entry points.
- **How** can NGOs become proactive in getting through the entry points to become part of the decision-making processes and to influence the decision-making processes?
- **How** do NGOs change public perceptions?
- **How** do NGOs mobilize potential supporters?
- **How** do NGOs influence and lobby opinion leaders?
- **What** do the NGOs want the various groups to do? NGO groups will focus on how to define clear instructions and requests for action to supporters.
- **When** should each action take place? Timing can be a key tool in campaign and lobbying. NGOs will be assisted to think about timing and to design a campaign timetable. Participants will be asked to bring with them to the training session a list of the dates of the main holidays, political, international and public events for the next three to five years.
- **What** resources are needed?
- **How** and where will NGOs find the resources?
- **How** to increase resources and how to make the best use of existing people and resources inside each NGO. This will include how to develop creative thinking in teams and how to improve internal communications and organization.

**Further useful information: [www.toolkitparticipation.nl](http://www.toolkitparticipation.nl)**

## **Advocacy Exercise**

### **Notes to trainers**

*Explain to the group that they are going to be asked to work in groups to design an advocacy campaign. Divide the participants into groups of approximately 6-8 people. Explain that you want their advocacy campaigns to be able to answer the questions on the check-list above!*

*Give the groups 90 minutes to prepare their advocacy campaigns. When they have prepared their campaigns, Allow 15 -20 minutes for presentation and discussion of each campaign in a plenary session.*

#### *Group 1*

*A campaign to increase women's representation on local councils.*

#### *Group 2*

*A campaign to increase women's representation in the national parliament.*

#### *Group 3*

*A campaign to increase women's representation in the European Parliament.*

*Each group will appoint rapporteurs to present their campaign*

## **5. Meeting decision-makers workshop**

**Politicians, Government Ministers senior civil servants, the mayor ...**

### **Notes to trainers:**

*This module is primarily designed to be useful for NGO advocacy campaigners.*

Purpose. By the end of the workshop on *Meeting with Decision-makers* - participants should have acquired skills that will improve their chances of persuading important decision-makers to meet with them and to support their advocacy campaign. This is an especially useful training workshop for women advocacy campaigners at a time when most of the senior officials are still men.

### **Introduction to the session.**

*For the assessment exercise ask participants to work in small groups of 5 – 6 in each group. Ask participants to discuss in their group any meetings with decision-makers they may have attended. Did they get the action they wanted from the decision-maker? Ask each group to make a list on a sheet of flip-chart paper about what went well, plus what they think could have gone better. What questions would they like covered in this session? Ask each group to appoint a rapporteur.*

*Invite the rapporteur from each group to stick their sheet of flip-chart paper on the wall and to recount to the plenary session of participants the key issues that came up in the discussion – what worked well and what did not.*

*Ask a helper to consolidate their points and write up each of their points on one flip-chart list. Put the completed ‘shopping-list’ on the wall where you can see it throughout the rest of workshop.*

*Tell the group that throughout the training you will do your best to cover as many as possible of the issues they have raised.*

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*The following presentation is written in the speaking style of a script which the trainer can deliver.*

A major part of an advocacy campaigning NGO’s life is spent meeting your target audiences – the public, the Media, opinion-leaders, sponsors and supporters, and particularly decision-makers – the people who can cause the changes you want.

***Decision-makers are your number one target audience.***

Your encounters with decision-makers are of exceptional importance for the obvious reason that they are not automatically sympathetic to your cause – they have many other issues on their agenda.

### **Building your credibility – become the expert on your issue**

Develop an expertise and in-depth knowledge about issues on which you want reforms so you can provide decision-makers with briefings and solutions.

One important role for groups running a campaign to introduce reforms is to provide a pool of expertise and knowledge about the issue they are promoting.

#### **Why should politicians listen to you?**

Politicians, media or other policy-makers will pay attention to what you have to say if you have useful information to tell them. It is a physical impossibility for politicians and officials to know all that is happening on every issue. This is especially true for the manner in which policies and decisions affect the lives of women. Women live in a community where the majority of politicians and official decision-makers are men.

#### **Case Sample: Women’s Budget Group**

In the United Kingdom a group of women formed an NGO called The Women’s Budget Group. The Women’s Budget Group develop analysis and encourage debate about the implications of economic policy for women. They gather expertise from a wide range of individuals and organisations. The group use their information to make policy-makers and the Media aware of the implications for women of economic policies and through this to influence government policy.

The Women’s Budget Group has gained credibility to such an extent that the Media and Government now contact them for their expertise.

When the British Chancellor of the Exchequer makes his annual statement in Parliament about the Government plans for raising and spending the national budget for the coming year, representatives from The Women’s Budget Group are invited by TV, radio and press to comment and assess the ways in which the budget proposals and will be good or bad for women. The Treasury Department recently consulted the Women’s Budget Group at the planning stage about the potential impact on women of Government proposals for reforms to the tax and benefits system.<sup>xxi</sup>

#### **Chose the right person to meet.**

This may sound obvious, but do your research to make sure you are asking to meet the person who is in a position to deliver what you want. Otherwise you are wasting everyone’s time.

#### **Your Letter of Approach.**

Make your letter presentable, clear, concise free of jargon or technical terms. Your aim is to get the target person to read the letter and to be sympathetic to your needs. Letters carry your message plus they create an impression of you and your work.

Decision-makers receive hundreds of letters and e-mails each week. For example British Members of Parliament each receive 500–1000 letters a week. Government Ministers receive even more.

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<sup>xxi</sup> Women’s Budget Group (United Kingdom) [www.wbg.org.uk](http://www.wbg.org.uk)

### **Credentialise**

At the start of your letter make it clear which group you are representing and mention names of people who support your cause - people your target might know and respect.

The first thing any person in power wants to know is 'who are these people who want to meet with me? 'Who do they represent?' Spell out the width of support you have at the start of your letter.

### **State what you want.**

Describe the issue you want to discuss.

Put key points of information in small paragraphs.

### **Keep it simple**

Keep it brief

State facts (based on your research)

If you are able to do so - include any cost-implications for what you propose. Cost is always on any decision-maker's mind. Provide arguments why those costs should be found.

Suggest a time and date the meeting could take place. Even invite decision-makers to come to your offices, but also say you would be ready to meet at a time and place of their choosing.

Make your letter easily understandable by someone who may not know a great deal about the issue on which you are campaigning. Spell out any acronyms you use. For example - don't just write UN CEDAW – write 'United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women'.<sup>xxii</sup>

Before sending your letter, read it from the point of view of the recipient – is it the sort of letter which would catch her/his attention and engage their interest?

### **Power Point slides – Letter of approach**

**Your purpose is to -**  
**Inform**  
**Persuade**  
**Motivate**  
**Move to action**

**Who are you?**  
**Demonstrate the amount of support for your campaign.**  
**What do you want?**  
**Why should she/he meet with you?**

**Keep it simple**  
**Keep it brief**  
**State facts**  
**Make it interesting to the recipient.**

**Examples of letters from NGO campaigners requesting a meeting :**

*Professor  
Romano Prodi  
President of the European Commission*

*Mr. President,*

*Your intention quoted many times in the media is to look for the support of social actors in building up the program of reform that you have been leading with authoritativeness and open-mindedness. This has induced us to ask you for a meeting. Arcidonna is a not-for-profit organization established in 1986, and an NGO recognized by the UN. We have ideas on how to overcome the challenges that the centre-left has to solve in order to propose a convincing strategy to the country. The purpose of our meeting would be for us to present to you issues that we believe are shared by all those Italian women who are aware of the European and progressive issues in the political agenda of our country. We feel our suggestions could help to answer some of the many and urgent problems on the table.*

*Arcidonna led a highly successful campaign with the slogan “Democracy needs women. More Italian women in the European Parliament” In the run-up to the 2004 European Elections. We believe our campaign and events and through the press and media, made a significant contribution towards the substantial increase in Italian women MEPs from 11.5% to 19.2% and in raising the community’s and political parties’ awareness towards this issue.*

*Arcidonna are holding a national meeting in Rome on the 7th of November, to discuss the solutions to overcome the challenges and build up an alternative for women and for men in our country, within a European framework that successfully expresses a policy of common peace. At our meeting with you we want to discuss recommendations from the meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> November with you.*

*Arcidonna’s actions focus on increasing women’s decision-making power in institutions, in politics and in financial and economic sector power centres. Arcidonna has campaigned on these issues since 1998. Our activities support women in the fields of labour, employment and business creation, in the framework of a welfare system and with particular attention to the problems of women in Southern Italy – still the most deprived ones in our country. Actions to increase and safeguard women’s freedoms and rights,*

*against all discriminations and in defence of a lay state that guarantees the freedoms of everybody;*

*Women are at the centre of the problems of the time we're living in, and, at the same time, we are also crucial for their solutions. The awarding of the Nobel prize for peace, for two consecutive years, to women engaged in battles that are amongst the hardest ones the world has to face, is an evidence of that, and those who are the most sensitive towards the issue of sustainable future have great expectations from the female part of humankind. Also, it would be superfluous to mention the attention paid by the UE to women-related issues to the president of the European Commission.*

*Even though we're fully aware of the many commitments that your roles, crucial in Europe and in Italy, imply, we would like to ask you for a meeting, since we are convinced that politics and active forces in civil society must find chances of contacts and exchanges that are necessary for a planning activity that takes into account the needs of male and female citizens.*

*Looking forward to you kind reply, and with our best wishes for your work,  
Regards,*

*Valeria Ajovalasit*

*President Arcidonna*

*Rt Hon Baroness Anderson of Paddington  
Minister for Women  
House of Lords  
London*

*Dear Baroness Anderson,*

*I write to say many congrats on the way you and your officials put forward (and publicised extremely well) the situation on domestic violence in the United Kingdom. Along with sexual harassment in the workplace, it must be one of the least analysed and most damaging experiences for the majority gender, mentally as well as physically.*

*I had hoped to see you this afternoon at the farewell party in hour of Jane Smith, but our hosts tell me you will not be able to stay long. There is a matter I would appreciate you and your office taking on, as the Ministry for Women, which could be considered a niche area but quite extraordinarily important – women in journalism and the Media. The BBC over the years he has completely failed to break down the old boys' stuff at the most senior levels of the Corporation, despite a good deal of information and ideas being passed to him from women journalists.*

*Would it be possible for you to have an informal chat with a couple of people from Women In Journalism, after the results of their present survey (the form enclosed) comes in? If women do not have a very large say in how material is covered, what subjects are*



*covered and by whom, and what rises to the top of our newsprint or airwaves, it is not only bad journalism, it's a stamping-down of women's views, culture, attitudes and interests, and influence.*

*You appear to be thriving in your work, but I bet you're looking forward to the break, as must Tony Blair be too.*

*With kindest regards.*

### **Pre-meeting preparation**

The decision-maker has agreed to meet with you and your colleagues. Your aim now is to get her/him to do what you believe necessary to forward your cause.

### **The key to success is preparation! preparation! preparation!**

*Never leave this important event to chance*, even if you have already had considerable experience meeting decision-makers. Plan ahead. Prepare fully for every meeting. Carry out a rehearsal with your team a day or two beforehand.

### **Power point slide**

Discuss with your colleagues ahead of the meeting and agree the results you want from the meeting. What actions you would like the person to take as a follow-up to the meeting. Think of actions that they are able to take. Once a person has taken action they will feel some commitment in the future to support your cause.

Examples of actions you might ask them to take....

Vote in support of your proposal? Write to another official asking for action to be taken? Speak at a public meeting you are organising? Send you a message of support which you can make public (with their agreement)? Ask their officials to work with you to draft an amendment to a law?.....or other actions you think would help move your cause forward....

### **DO YOUR RESEARCH ahead of the meeting**

### **Pre-meeting preparation**

Prepare for the meeting - plan ahead

Decide:

**WHO** is going to represent your group organisation at the meeting? Select between 2 – 5 people who are trusted by your members to represent them – plan what each of them will say and do at the meeting. Is it one major issue or a series of separate matters that you are raising? This may help you in determining who should attend.

**Appoint a leader** who will ensure the key points are made and who will give each of your team a chance to speak. Have a pre-meeting rehearsal to ensure that each of your team knows which of the points they will be raising.

**Appoint a note-taker** to take notes of the meeting and write them up later, particularly if you get promises of support, but also in case you get a hostile response, so you can ensure you reply to all the points made against you.

**WHAT** you want to get out of this meeting

Is it one major issue or a series of separate matters that you are raising?

Once you have decided on your agenda it will help you to decide which of your colleagues should attend.

Do your research ahead of the meeting...

Be clear about the facts to support your case (make notes of details to help you present your facts clearly}.

**WHO** is the person/people you are meeting? (do your research ahead of time)

What are their:

- current responsibilities?
- key interests?
- previous career?
- if possible read any of their latest speeches or articles they have written.

**WHY** should they support your cause?

- What are the advantages to them?
- Give a list of reasons to support your cause that are appropriate to the person you are meeting.
- More voters? Makes them look good to the community? It will help to make a better life for their children/grandchildren? Other reasons????

**WHAT** influences a politician?

- Their own moral or political belief
- The interests of their local constituents
- Political Party patronage
- Possibility of positive media coverage
- They are more likely to help – if they feel you are asking them to do something which they can actually achieve

**WHAT** are their likely arguments against what you want?

Anticipate the points that could be made by those opposing your case and incorporate the answers in your written and verbal briefing.

How will you answer any questions at the meeting?

**WHAT** do you want them to do

When you have a meeting with busy people – be as precise as possible about what action you want them to take i.e:

- Will you support the proposed new law by taking the following actions....
- Will you vote in support of our issue in the debate on Monday....

- Will you ask the Prime Minister the following question in parliament.....
- Will you set up a meeting for our NGO with the Mayor to discuss this further...etc. etc

### **Prepare a written briefing**

Prepare a *short* written briefing ahead of time, outlining your case point by point. Take this briefing with you to the meeting and/or send it ahead of time to the person with whom you are meeting. Keep the language simple – spell out any acronyms or abbreviations, avoid technical jargon.

Anticipate any points that could be made opposing your case, and put your answers in your written briefing.

**HOLD a pre-meeting rehearsal** to plan exactly what each of you will say and do at the meeting.

**How will you answer any questions at the meeting?** Make sure your team can illustrate facts with anecdotes. It does not have to be serious all the way through – some humour is reassuring.

**Key Test:** Does this material and your presentation make clear why you should be supported and what you want them to do?

### **At the meeting**

**LISTEN as much as you speak.**

**If the person shows they disagree with you.** Invite her/him to explain why they disagree. Listen carefully to what they have to say. You need to know their arguments so you can counter them. The meeting is a chance to pick up clues on the decision-maker's own concerns. This can help you make your arguments more concentrated and persuasive.

**DO NOT THREATEN anyone at face to face meetings.**

For example don't threaten them by saying you could get them bad publicity. Do not pick an argument with them. Your aim is to come to agreement, not conflict. As Winston Churchill said 'Jaw Jaw (talking) is better than 'War, War''.

If discussions and persuasion fails, after you have tried very hard for months to get cooperation from them, then you might decide to give them negative publicity, but do not use that as a threat.

**Keep Control of the agenda.** During the meeting, the person you are lobbying might try to change the subject. Do not allow this. Be determined. Be friendly and polite, but bring the discussion back to the matter you want discussed.

It is not likely you will get everything you want from one meeting. Do not be disappointed. Decision-makers must balance your case against other conflicting demands on their time and limited budget. Be prepared to trade, like a salesperson and a customer. If you cannot get the main problem solved immediately, suggest two or three small steps forward (a small sale).

Is there an extra advantage in inviting the VIP down to see your organisation at work?

**Pre-plan how to end the meeting.** Many meetings just trickle to an end. Try to make the end of the meeting purposeful and businesslike. Ask which of the decision-maker's staff you should see next time, what additional or new information should you supply. Confirm briefly what you and the decision-maker have agreed to do.

**Is the meeting in private or in public?**

**Is there scope for involving the media?**

**After the meeting**

**Send a thank-you letter for their time and interest.**

Write a letter to confirm the points they agreed at the meeting with you, and ask them to confirm back to you that they agree with the points you have written.

Remind them clearly of anything they agreed to do. Answer any points from the discussion which were not clarified at the time and send any further information requested. Sum up what your group will now be doing as a result of the meeting. Say you will keep them informed of your activities in the months ahead. Invite them to stay in touch with you, on this subject.

Even if you did not achieve everything you had hoped, send a straight-forward thank-you letter, without anger or sarcasm in its wording. You need their cooperation more than they need yours.

**What follow-up have you planned, including a review of the meeting?**

## **6. Media workshop**

This section is about how to communicate your messages through the press and media. This section is not about paid advertising, it is about how to get free editorial coverage.

**Note to trainers**

*The Trainer for this workshop should either have had Public Relations experience or been a journalist or editor*

*For the Media Panel dialogue*

*Invite 4 – 6 Editors and journalists (a gender balanced panel of women and men) from newspaper, radio and TV to take part in a panel dialogue.*

**Personnel and equipment**

*Flip chart paper. Flip-chart pens, sticky tape to stick up sheets of paper on the walls.*

*Ahead of time prepare power-slides which show examples of interesting photographs from advocacy campaigns*

**Suggested programme - Allow 4 – 5 hours:**

**Module 1 – 30 mins**

*Participants introduce themselves. Trainer explains the purpose of the day and assesses the needs and priorities of the participants.*

**Module 2 – 45 - 60 mins**

*Interactive presentation from trainer giving advice on media including questions from participants.*

**Module 3 – 120 mins – dialogue between participants and 4-6 journalists/editors**

**Introduction to the session.**

*For the assessment exercise ask participants to raise any questions they have from any previous experience dealing with the media. Did they get the action they wanted from the media? On a sheet of flip-chart paper make a list of topics that participants would like covered. Tell the group that throughout the workshop you will do your best to cover as many as possible of the issues they have raised.*

**Learn what makes a topic interesting to the press and media**

It is amazing how many groups complain their activities don't get covered by the press and media.

Journalists cannot use stories and material that are boring and not newsworthy.

Your obligation is to make your material more interesting to the journalists than other material reaching their ears and eyes.

Your biggest enemy is the editor's yawn and the editor's rubbish-bin.

How do you best grab people's attention?

It is a busy busy world in which to try and gain attention - one UK national newspaper receives over 1500 press releases *each week*.

**Make your topic interesting to the Media**

The essence of News is 'new' – bring in an element of surprise.

In journalism schools students are taught:

'Dog bites human' is not a news story.

'Human bites dog' would be a story because it is an unexpected new angle to an old story.

Make your topic interesting to the Media

Prepare the ground - texture opinions over the medium term/long term

The following attract media coverage:

- Events involving celebrities
- Controversial speeches
- Sound-bites (short headline-type punchy sentences)

- Awards ceremonies
- Publishing reports or results of a survey
- Highlighting newsworthy stories to your advantage
- Relating a national or international story to your local area
- Human interest stories
- Television feeds off action, not people just sitting still
- Visually interesting events attract TV cameras
- Linking your campaign to a news story. React fast to link your campaign to an appropriate news story
- Taking advantage of silly remarks by your opponents or silly coverage as yet another opportunity to explain your side of the issue again

### **Awards ceremonies with celebrity speakers attract Media**

**In UK the 300 GROUP campaign to get more women elected to Parliament held annual Nancy Astor Media Awards.** The ceremony was named after the first elected woman to take her seat in the British parliament, Nancy Astor. At an annual Dinner in an attractive setting, awards were presented to journalists who had produced or published the best stories on women in politics that year. Main guest speakers over the years included Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, Paddy Ashdown (then Leader of the Liberal Democrats), Robert Welch, the Minister for Women in Ontario, Canada, American politician Elizabeth Dole who was considering a run for the US Presidency, and Member of Parliament Betty Boothroyd who became the first woman speaker of the British House of Commons. The event was also used to raise funds for the campaign.

### **Visually interesting events attract the TV and press camera.**

**Be creative. The Media feeds on *action*, not people sitting still. Hold a brainstorm session with your colleagues to come up with creative ideas. Think in visual images that will be attractive to TV and press photographers.**

*Women in Argentina used brooms on the street outside the Parliament to symbolise sweeping away corruption.*

*Women's campaign groups in Sri Lanka organised 'the clothesline anti violence campaign'.* In the capital city Colombo on International Women's Day 2002. Clotheslines were strung around the centre of the city, hung with clothes and pieces of writing paper. Each piece of paper carried a woman's story about domestic violence, and was written by the survivor herself or by someone who cared about her. Displayed on International Women's Day it made a powerful visible testimony about the violence being inflicted on Sri Lanka women. It was a brilliant and inexpensive way of airing the nation's dirty laundry, which is why a clothesline was used.

### **Human interest stories**

Use a human-interest story of one person or one family to illustrate a much wider issue. Radio, TV and newspapers like human-interest stories. A human-interest story of one person or one family seems local but it can also create interest in the subject at a national

level, causing the Government to take positive action. Relate a national or international story to your local area.

***Kosovar NGO “Motrat Qiriasi” encouraged a young woman to publish a story in a book about a girl who was not allowed to go to school.*** Her story drew wide attention to the common experience of women in that region. The story attracted Media coverage. It helped to educate the population and policy-makers about this serious issue and to persuade politicians to look for ways to remedy the situation.

### **Public opinion polls, surveys and research results attract Media coverage.**

Journalists love results from polls, surveys and research. You could conduct a survey at least once a year. The results of any survey, poll or research have a high chance of being published by the Press or broadcast by TV and radio. This applies just as much to a local survey as a national survey. Like an earthquake, the results of a survey can have ‘after-shocks’ for months to come.

#### **Purpose of surveys**

Surveys have an important part to play in changing people’s understanding of an issue. Surveys are designed to test or assess (and inform) public opinion. Because of this they attract press and Media coverage. Surveys have an important part to play in changing people’s understanding of an issue. Surveys can be used to discover or uncover interesting information but also to highlight a bad situation.

#### **Get maximum publicity for the result of your survey.**

Work out a strategy to get maximum coverage for the results of your survey. Use results from your survey to influence legislation and help involve international organisations such as the European Union. Present and distribute the results of your research for maximum effect and benefit for the cause you are promoting. Distribute key findings in a powerful Press release designed to galvanise supporters in the community and shame people opposed to your ‘cause’. A one-or-two-page synopsis of the key points of the results of the survey for a press release. Add a few quotes from experts/respected members of the community/political leaders/celebrities about the results of the survey and about your issue.

#### **Distribute results of the survey.**

Distribute the results of your survey to politicians and officials at the local and national level, economic as well as political magazines, academics, internationals, sponsors, other NGOs etc.

### **Grass Roots Surveys**

NGOs cannot always afford to commission a professional polling company to carry out a survey. Sometimes NGOs can find a sponsor who will pay for two or three extra questions, you want asked to the public, to be added in with a much larger opinion poll that is being conducted by a professional polling company. Or NGO campaigners can carry out their own grass-roots-surveys.

### **Interactive Polling.**

Interactive Polls are rapidly coming up over the horizon as a means of testing public opinion and as a useful device to attract Media coverage.

Interactive polls can be carried out using text messaging on mobile telephones or using e-mails or web site. Another forum is a chat-room on specific subjects by people with a real interest, not just the general public, and located on your website.

### **Information Releases.**

An information release is not the same as a press release. What is an Information Release? An Information Release is used by NGOs to pass interesting information from the original source to the Media. Small NGOs and NGOs who want to build a bigger profile can make excellent use of 'information releases'.

**Purpose of an Information Release**

Your main purpose is to circulate interesting information, but in doing so you have given your cause and your NGO a useful bit of publicity.

An Information Release does not necessarily call for any particular action. It simply sets out information that journalists and Editors might find useful for stories on your issue.

If the source of the information is authoritative, supplying this information further down the line to your contacts increases your organisation's value and credibility.

Information Releases can be especially useful in giving a global context and examples from other countries about issues on which you are campaigning in your own country.

Information releases are cost-effective (the same as press releases).

You can include Information Releases in your own newsletters.

You state the original source of your Information Release, together with information on how the Media can contact them. The original source of the information might be an organisation such as: the European Parliament, World Health Organisation, UNIFEM, the European Commission, a Human Rights group, trade unions or a university. You could issue an Information Release to the Media, and target groups like lawmakers and opinion leaders, relating the global material to local circumstances.

A campaign group seeking legislation on equality of opportunity for women would find OXFAM 'Links' newsletter on Gender a useful source for Information Releases. 'Links' is produced 3 times a year by Oxfam GB for its staff and partners. (Individuals can be put on Oxfam's mailing-list by faxing +44 1865 312245)

### **Tips for writing a letter for publication**

Letters to the Editor are excellent free publicity for your cause.

Letters from an NGO published in newspapers and magazine are excellent tools for ventilating a subject and opening up a discussion.

Letters to the Editor of a newspaper or magazine can have a deep impact on a Government Department.

Editors are more likely to publish your letter if it is provocative, informative with one or two hard facts, and topical – linked to an item that has appeared in the newspaper or magazine.

### **Tips for exploiting your letter as a tool for your advocacy campaign**

After your letter is published – move your advocacy campaign forward by circulating photocopies of your published letter to people you want to influence.

If your letter is published you can immediately

photocopy it or scan it into a computer and distribute it very widely, to international politicians, to the local Press

and Media. Distribute it with a covering note to opinion-leaders, politicians,



internationals and the Media with suggestions for further action. You could suggest further articles or TV/radio programmes on the subject. Your NGO can offer to write a feature, and provide experts to appear on TV or speak at local or regional conferences.

### **Be pro-active**

Write to producers of appropriate programmes and say you would like to be invited to appear on their programme. Be proactive – seize the initiative! Don't just sit back quietly and expect to get Media coverage. Media is fast moving. You need to be able to leap into action when the opportunity arises – as it will.

### **Rapid Response**

When an opportunity arises, be ready to act fast with high profile media campaigns.

'Rapid Response' campaigns are short, usually inexpensive and often highly visible campaigns that spring up when the opportunity suddenly presents itself.

React fast to link your campaign to an appropriate news story that arises out of the blue. Provide the Media with background concrete information they can use.

### **Pictures**

Pictures of people in action work best rather than just posing. Build a collection of interesting photographs of people in your campaign (NOT 'mug shots' only) and of campaign activities to send to the press.

### **Create A Fact Sheet**

Write (and keep up to date) a clear, simple, one or two-page sheet of facts and figures that back up your campaign message.

### **Build A List Of Spokespeople**

If a journalist says "Do you have any contacts I can talk to on the issue?" who would you suggest - a list of people you trust to communicate your message well.

### **Develop a Political Calendar.**

**EXERCISE. Write up a calendar of dates you could use as pegs on which to promote your issue. When writing up your calendar take into account the following:**

- the months before an election (local or national) – campaigns designed to influence political candidates and existing politicians can be attractive press items, especially effective near elections.
- dates when issues related to your campaign are due to be discussed in committees of parliament or the municipal council. Inspect the parliamentary or municipal council timetable for opportunities to get your views and cause publicised in the press and Media. When the municipal or national Budget is being discussed is one obvious time.
- upcoming international events such as a meeting of the G8 countries or a World Bank, European Union or World Trade Organisation summit etc
- upcoming visits to high profile international figures to your country/city/region – you can invite an international celebrity as a speaker - contact the embassies – and let them know you are interested in inviting international speakers.

- regularly peg your Media activity to annual events such as World HIV/AIDS day, Human Rights Day, International Women's Day etc.

## **Learn to understand Your Media**

### **Get to know your Media**

#### **Learn the needs of people working in the Media**

Study the contents of publications and programmes. Find out what sort of material individual journalists/editors/producers prefer: stories with a regional bias/human interest stories/stories about older people/younger people/rural/urban etc.

Do research on editors, producers and journalists - read features they have published in the past year or two, watch their TV show, or listen to their radio programme. It could give you useful clues to their work. Find out who are their audiences and readers etc. Study the newspaper or magazine readership or radio/TV audience

#### **Build a relationship with the Media**

Cultivate your Media contacts and get to know the angles that will appeal to them and their newspapers, TV and radio stations. Find out their deadlines. Get to know editors as well as journalists. Contact the Editor when you want something published, especially if you are not yet well-informed about the journalists below the Editor.

*Once you identify who might be interested in your issue go and meet them personally. Editors and Journalists are easily approachable.*

**Avoid overloading journalists with too much material. Ask them how often they like to receive material.** Our guess is that once a month on average would be easily enough. We all know that familiar, oppressive feeling of panic and fear if we get swamped by information-overload. Editors and Journalists are no different. They may be journalists (as we authors are), but they are humans first.

#### **Who?**

Decide which journalists/editors/programme producers might be interested in your subject. Never forget young journalists - ten years later they may become senior editors.

Keep journalists/editors/producers informed. Get to know some of them personally.

#### **When?**

Find out when is the best time of the day/week/month to contact them.

Many radio and TV programmes have a 'forward planning unit' - you can inform weeks ahead of an upcoming event.

Time your events carefully - choose a time likely to get you maximum coverage. If it is a fast-breaking story you want on the television evening news - you must schedule the event for, at the latest, early afternoon. Learn what day of the week gives you best opportunity for catching the newspapers.

For a weekly magazine - their final copy date could be Wednesday midday for Saturday publication. Find out when journalists have their deadlines, when they plan what they will cover, and when they like to be contacted.

**How?**

Ask individual journalists how they prefer to be contacted - fax/telephone/press release etc.

**Press Officer**

Choose a press officer (she/he could be a volunteer or a paid press officer.)

Your press officer should:

- be proactive in contacting the media
- get to know journalists and editors.
- have the ability to react fast
- be available - one job of the Press Officer is to make sure journalists know where to contact them and other competent spokespersons for your campaign at any time of the day or night, including week-ends and vacation periods
- always check the content of what they are saying with at least one person on the team. Plus anyone the Press Officer quotes should have approved their quote in advance
- be able to write a good press release
- understand how the media works

**Learn to target**

Study the contents of publications and programmes. Find out what sort of material individual journalists/editors/producers prefer: stories with a regional bias/human interest stories/stories about older people/younger people/rural/urban etc. Many local media and press will only take stories with a local angle. If you can supply photographs of an event they may be happy to take them.

**Develop a Media strategy****What do you want to achieve?**

Develop a clear and concise understanding of your organisation's campaign.

**Decide on a simple clear main message.**

KISS - Keep It Short and Simple.

***How* are you going to say it?**

Words can be interpreted differently by different audiences. Have you used the right words for your target audience?

The same thing can be said in many different ways and you need to choose your words according to the audience. You may use different ways of speaking to an urban audience from a rural audience or to a youth group compared to a pensioners group, but the message will remain the same.

**Where are you going to say it? Select and target the right medium to deliver your message:**

- a radio phone-in programme
- a TV politics and current affairs debate show
- a TV chat show

- a personal comment piece in a newspaper or magazine
- a documentary TV or radio programme
- a letter for publication in the letters page of newspaper or magazine
- a face-to-face meeting
- a radio/TV advertisement
- press releases
- Press conference
- public meeting
- a radio/TV advertisement
- wall-posters
- press releases
- public meeting

### **Be a chameleon – adapt to the house-styles of the different Media**

- Some radio/TV and newspapers only carry stories with links to their local area
- Some use formal styles of language, others are less formal
- Media aimed at a younger audience may use a different style from Media aimed at an older audience

**Choose the most appropriate person to deliver your message.** You may choose a different person for different situations. Have you selected the right person for the target audience? Is the person delivering your message credible to that audience?

### **Media Panel Dialogue**

#### **Notes to trainers**

*Allow approximately 2 hours for this session.*

*Explain to participants that the purpose of this dialogue is to help them to get to know and understand the needs of people working in the media.*

*Ideally the panel should comprise 2 men and 2 women or 3 and 3. Brief your 4 or 5 guests (hopefully some of them are political editors or political journalists). Explain that you would like them each to briefly describe their newspaper/radio programme/TV programme. Say the demography of what type of audience their programme attracts – age/group. What type of stories or ideas would interest them from women's NGOs. How do they prefer to be contacted? What time of week? What time of day?*

*If you are chairing the meeting – remind your participants that the panel are there as guests and the participants should not be aggressive towards these representatives of the media. Say this is a unique opportunity to learn about how the media works.*

*Invite the participants to put questions to the media and to ask advice for how to improve the coverage of their NGO campaigns.*

*Before the end of the session ask each panellist to write up their telephone number and e-mail address so that participants can add it to their press contact lists. And give each journalist a list with the name and contact point for each NGO.*

*Sum up key learning points from the session.*

#### **Power point slide – media check-list**

- **Make it interesting**
- **Avoid being invisible to journalists**
- **Make sure all journalists get a good list of spokespeople from your NGO**
- **Provide Media with ideas for features and programmes**
- **Build a list of press contacts**
- **Get to know your media**

#### ***And Finally...***

Don't be disappointed if your story is overtaken by a major news story breaking.

*Never* get angry with journalists - they may take your material at a future date.

#### ***And remember...***

Many important campaigns can take ten years to achieve even half their aims....be a long-distance runner as well as a short-distance sprinter.

#### **Notes to trainers**

**Trainers can distribute copies of the following Guidelines for Press Conferences to workshop participants. Ask each participant to read out one of the points.**

#### **Guidelines For Press Conferences**

Press conferences should be used only for significant events.

Only organise a Press Conference if you have something really interesting and immediate to say.

Keep It Short.

30 minutes to 45 minutes is sufficient time to give journalists the most important information. A press conference should finish with you still in command of the agenda.

If the conference continues longer than 30 or 45 minutes, journalists could begin to ask wider questions than you want on this particular occasion.

### **Check-list for organising a press conference**

*Have something significant to announce.*

*Find out ahead of time from editors and journalists what would be the best time for them to attend Press conferences.*

*It helps to attract journalists if you tell them you will be providing refreshments – even if it is just sandwiches or biscuits and coffee or possibly a small amount of alcohol.*

*Morning conferences ensure the evening newspapers as well as evening radio and television programmes can get their material processed in time.*

*Send invitations at least one week ahead to journalists. Telephone them two days before the conference to check they have received the invitation. Then check with them again the day before. Sell the story on the phone.*

*If possible have a 'big name' as one of your speakers or chairing the Press Conference.*

*Keep announcements short to leave time for questions from the Media.*

*Finish your press conference after 30-45 minutes.*

*If you expect only a few journalists to arrive, do not choose a large room. Keep it intimate.*

*Choose an accessible place for journalists. Journalists are busy so this should not be far from the town centre.*

*Try to use an interesting venue and send a map with clear directions, especially if the venue is difficult to locate*

*Provide the name and phone number of a contact the Media can call on the day of the press conference when you might be away from your office.*

*Hand out fact sheets/press kits with background information on your campaign and facts and quotes about the issue, for journalists and editors to take away.*

*Make it clear if you are providing a photo-opportunity for the Media.  
State the time and place the photo-opportunity will take place.*

*Place Press kits on a table near the door or on each chair or have members of your team handing press kits out.*

### **Photo-opportunities.**

Often a photo-opportunity is scheduled for ten minutes before the press conference commences, to avoid the photographers' needs interfering with the programme.

Arrange an attractive or interesting spot for the photo sessions, even creating a 'mini-studio' with flowers and posters or a banner.

Be sure photographers know the correct spelling of the people's names in the photo

### **After the Press Conference.**

Telephone journalists who did not attend as soon as the Press Conference is over and report on the event in a lively and interesting way (don't be angry with them for not appearing, it might turn them against you). If you have taken your own photographs, rush different photos to each journalist. This way you may still get very good coverage the next day.

### **Press Kits**

Press kits are folders that contain a good amount of basic information on your issue. Your press kit should contain the following information on:

- how to contact your NGO
- useful background information, facts, statistics.

It can contain copies of positive features about your campaign from newspapers over the past year or two.

It can include copies of speeches about your issue.

Photographs in press kits should be professional both in quality and composition. Usually press photos are 15cms by 25cms. For television stations you can include good-quality 35mm colour slides. Try to supply different sets of photos and slides to different newspapers and television stations.

As with press conferences, invitations should be sent well ahead of the day, plus a reminder call a day ahead of the event.

## **7. Press Releases**

### **Equipment and personnel**

*This session on Press Releases should be given by a Trainer who has experience of acting as a press officer or who has worked in the press or media.*

**Access to computers.** *Ensure participants have access to computers for the exercise on writing press releases.*

*Flip-chart and flip chart pens. Sticky tape or blue-tack to stick flip-chart paper on the wall. Power Point projector.*

***Sample press releases.*** The trainer should collect examples of a few successful press releases in the local language and bring them to the workshop. The trainer should distribute copies of the press releases to the participants as examples.

### **Notes for trainers**

#### **Purpose of this Press Release session**

*This interactive session will give useful insights for candidates and NGO activists into how to get their message across and gain maximum coverage. The session will give advice how to improve content, style and layout.*

*In the practice exercise participants will receive individual, tailored feedback on press releases.*

### **Suggested programme**

#### **Allow 3 hours**

#### **Module 1 – 45 mins**

*Participants introduce themselves. Trainer explains the purpose of the day and assesses the needs and priorities of the participants.*

#### **Module 2 – 40 mins**

*Presentation from trainer on how to prepare a good press release Followed by questions from participants.*

#### **Module 3 – 95 mins**

*Working in groups or 3 people - participants practice writing press releases. Each group has access to a computer.*

*Give the groups 45 minutes to write their press releases.*

*Allow approximately 30 minutes for giving constructive feed-back.*

#### **Assess the needs of your participants**

*Make it clear that the session will be useful to everyone at all levels – beginners as well as those with experience.*

*In order to make everyone feel welcome and included, the Trainer should start by asking how many participants have no previous experience of writing press releases; how many participants have a little experience and how many participants in the workshop have had a great deal of experience. The trainer can then say that later in the session, participants with experience should feel free to contribute useful advice tips to the participants who have less experience.*

*Next step is for the trainer to ask participants to describe what types of problems they have encountered with press releases. The Trainer writes a ‘shopping list’ on flip chart paper of the issues and questions raised by the participants. The trainer explains that she/he will do their best to address the problems and issues raised by the participants during the rest of the workshop.*



*The following topics for the press release session are written in the speaking style of a script which the trainer can deliver.*

### **Press releases**

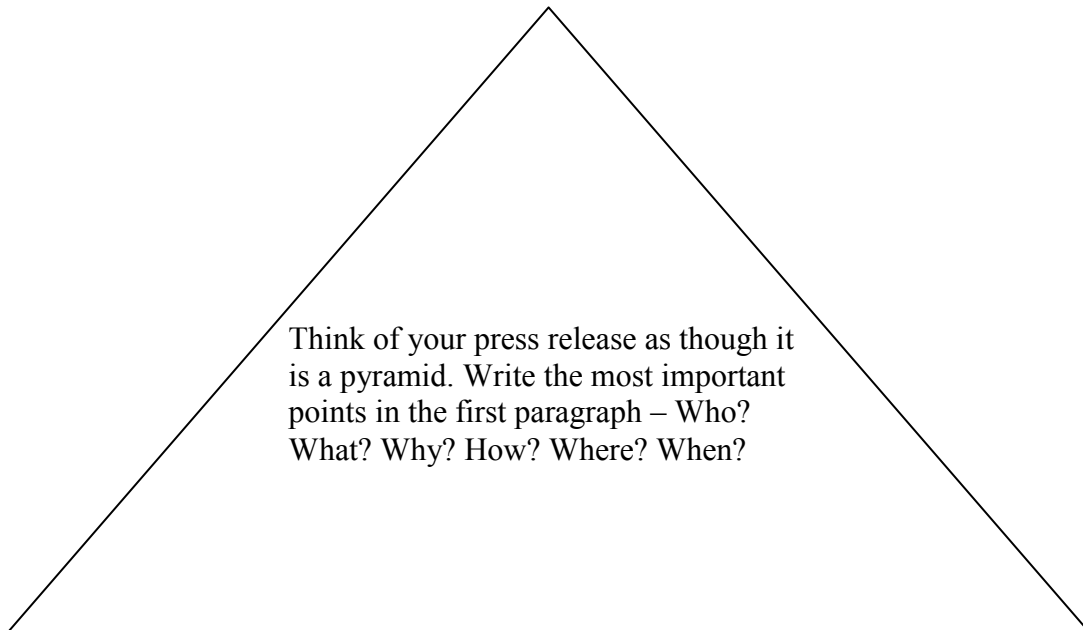
Your constant aim in Media relations is to set the agenda.  
You can set the agenda through clever use of press releases.  
Editors and Journalists need useful material from you.  
Someone has to tell Editors and Journalists about news or events.  
Press releases are a vital source of news and events for Editors and journalists.

Think of your press release as though it is a pyramid. Write the most important points in the first paragraph – explain briefly - Who? What? Why? How? Where? When? Busy journalists may not read any further than the first few lines.

Many journalists get ten or twenty press releases every day. You have to be professional in your use of press releases or you will waste your time.

It is a busy, busy world in which to try and gain attention - one UK newspaper receives over 1500 press releases each week. You are in competition with everyone else who wants press and Media coverage. It is amazing how many groups complain their activities don't get covered by the press and media. You must make your material more interesting to the journalists than other material reaching their ears and eyes.

### **Power-point slide – press releases**



## **What makes a good press release? Make your material interesting**

1. Make it memorable
2. A press release should look professional. Print your own press release notepaper with the words 'Press Release' at the top.
3. Keep it short - one or two pages. If necessary you can attach extra pages to your press release with further background material and statistics designed to interest and inform journalists.
4. Start with the date the press release has been issued, so journalists – this shows it is fresh information.
5. Give a short eye-catching headline... describe the event or announcement in 5 or 6 words. At the top, in the middle of the page, print one sentence in capital letters or large bold letters, This should be informative and catch the reader's attention.
6. Put all the important details in the first paragraph. State who will be speaking - anything controversial they may be going to say - or anything especially interesting that might take place.
7. When you are writing a press release you should imagine you are a journalist. Your press release should explain: Who, What, When, How, Where, Why... If it is an event give the name of guest(s) or speaker(s) (if any) Date/time/place of the event and an interesting two or three sentences describing the event.
8. Include the name of your organisation and full contact details.
9. State where you or another spokesperson for your organisation can at all times be contacted - phone/fax/mobile/e-mail) - including weekends and evenings.
10. Include a few attributable quotes by experts or well known personalities. Quotes are very useful to use in press-releases, pamphlets, and leaflets, or to give to journalists or use in television and radio interviews. Endorsements also help to reduce the confidence and determination of people who oppose you.

### **Endorsements – compile a list of quotes**

Compile a list of strong quotes supporting your cause from experts on the topic and well known and respected members of the community. You can use endorsements in press-releases, pamphlets, and leaflets, or to give to journalists or use in television and radio interviews.

People are heavily influenced by opinion leaders. Just like any product for sale, your goals can get positive impact from endorsement by opinion leaders such as:

experts on your topic, famous television or male or female politicians, well-known writers and poets, business leaders, writers, scientists, educators, sports stars etc.

Use their endorsements in letters to Editors, or letters to politicians or use them effectively in television, radio or newspaper interviews, or articles.

Negative quotes against your campaign can also be valuable. Collect negative quotes made by senior politicians or people writing in newspapers or speaking on television. Put these into a pamphlet. This pamphlet can be sent to the

foreign Press, opinion leaders, to embarrass to shame the people who spoke the words, and to gather useful sympathy and understanding for your cause.

Endorsements also help to reduce the confidence and determination of people who oppose you.

### **Agree ground-rules with colleagues**

Ahead of issuing any press statement, particularly if it involves a strong commitment or statement of policy, the press officer should:

Get agreement from as many colleagues as possible

Get agreement for the wording from anyone who is quoted in the press statement

Media is so powerful and emotionally charged that internal fighting and disagreements and recriminations amongst your campaign team over Press and Media coverage can cause serious damage. You can reduce chances of internal conflict by making sure the Press spokesperson consults fully and early with colleagues to agree a Media strategy for your campaign.

If things go wrong and the feelings of members of your campaign team are bruised, remind everyone that 'the cause' is more important than personal ego. Handle anything that seriously endangers the campaign firmly, diplomatically, and as soon as possible.

### **Distributing your press releases**

Send your press releases to potential donors/supporters and opinion leaders you want to influence. Send copies of your press releases to potential funders/supporters/opinion leaders, politicians, civil servants and your supporters and donors as well as to the Media. This is a useful and inexpensive way of keeping your campaign profile visible.

### **Target the most appropriate outlets for your story.**

Target your efforts towards Editors and Journalists who reach your Target Audiences with their programmes and stories.

Learn to target the right journalist and the right outlet for your story is essential. All newspapers and especially magazines have their own areas of interest. Some NGOs spend a lot of time sending their stories to inappropriate outlets and wondering why their stories are never used.

**Always send a press release to named individuals.** If you do not know the right person by name, telephone the radio station/TV station/newspaper to find the name of the editor or producer.

Watch and listen to programmes and read the paper to get names of journalists you think might be interested in your subject.

### **When to send out press releases.**

Only send out a press release when you have something to say which will be of interest to the Media about your issue. (See further suggestions for what is interesting to the Media in the Advocacy modules in this manual.)

## **A few Pegs on which you can hang press releases**

### **Link your issue to International Events**

#### **Example**

A meeting of the G8 Group of countries or a World Bank Conference to discuss world economic issues might be a good time to promote a campaign against women's poverty and unemployment.

### **Special Dates and anniversaries**

Editors of newspapers and magazines and the Media like to know about special dates and anniversaries. It helps them build a feature or programme, both as a public service and for the interest of their audiences. One of many useful anniversaries is 10 December - anniversary of the UN Declaration of Human Rights or 8<sup>th</sup> March International Women's Day. You could relate this anniversary to an issue in your community.

Send the information on the special date or anniversary to the media at least 4 weeks beforehand.

You can suggest the approach or 'angle' they might use for a feature.

Suggest people they can speak to. Where possible, get quotes from appropriate people (if it is a political date, get a quote from a friendly politician) and opinion leaders about the special date or anniversary to include in the press release.

If possible create an event on that day that amplifies the anniversary, to increase your chance of press and Media coverage.

For example: 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary since the first British woman Member of Parliament – Nancy Astor - was elected and took her seat. Lesley Abdela used the peg of the anniversary to write a feature in the Times Newspaper about progress that had been made in equality for women for the past 70 years and speculating what legislation and what progress still needs to be made. Women's organisations in your country might create an anniversary celebrating a woman from your country.

### **E-mail press releases**

#### **Keep the text brief and focused.**

An e-mail press release should follow the same 'pyramid' format as any other press release (see section on 'writing a good press release.')

#### **Write an e-mail subject line that's compelling or provocative.**

The subject line is the first thing the recipient will see when they download your release. Never e-mail a press release (or any other message) with a blank subject line because most people will not even open an e-mail with no subject line.

#### **Include your electronic contact information.**

Include your e-mail address and Web site URL in addition to your phone and fax number, and address. Put all your contact information at the top of the press release.

#### **Use hyper-links where appropriate.**

If there is additional information available on your Web site, such as an event

announcement, include a hyper-link so reporters can click right to it. Online publications often include these links in their stories, making this an effective way to direct visitors to a useful Web site.

**Send a test message before distributing your press release.** Before distribution, send a copy of the e-mail press release to yourself or to a colleague. Check the format to make sure there are no broken lines of text.

Check for any mis-typed Web address URLs by testing them to make sure they work.

**Avoid disclosing the recipients' e-mail addresses.** Type the recipients' addresses in the "Bcc" field of your e-mail message header, rather than in the "To" or "Cc" field.

**Treat e-mail Media inquiries the same as phone inquiries.** Always respond just as promptly to e-mail Media inquiries as you would to phone calls. If you are responsible for answering Media enquiries, check your e-mail frequently throughout the day. Journalists work on very short deadlines.

**Post press releases only to appropriate lists, news groups, and publications.** If you plan to post your press release to any e-mail discussion lists, news groups or online publications, make sure the topic of your release is appropriate content for the list or Web site.

**Collect e-mail addresses from your Media contacts.** If you have been distributing your press releases by fax or postal mail, ask your Media contacts if you can switch to e-mail distribution. Major newspapers frequently have separate staffs for their online versions, so you'll need to include those contacts on your list, too. There are also Media directories and news services specifically for online publications that may be appropriate to add to your Media list.

Draft your e-mail press release as you would any other message. If you are worried about 'e-mail overload' at the receiver's end, you can fax or post the press release as well as e-mailing it.

### **Take a long term view**

Not all your press releases will get attention. Do not worry. Press Releases are also reminders to journalists that your organisation exists so they know who to contact when a news item on your issue attracts their attention.

## **Press Release Exercise**

### **Notes to Trainers.**

*The trainer divides participants into groups of 3. Each group sits at a computer and prepares a press release on an issue on which one of the group is working in real life.*

*The trainer can gather in the press releases and read them overnight or in the coffee break and then give constructive feed-back on what was good and what could be done better*

*A variation on this is for the trainer to also present a prize for the best press release and to explain why they think this is the best press release.*

## **8. Communication Tools. Workshop.**

**How do you reach target audiences? You have a wide menu of choice:**

The purpose of this workshop is to make participants aware of the wide variety of choice of communication tools they can use. Communication tools are all the various methods available for citizens to use in order to get messages to lawmakers, opinion-leaders, supporters, the public, and target audiences. This workshop includes examples of how creative use of imagination can generate free publicity as well as examples of publicity which may cost money

**Brainstorming is a useful tool for generating ideas.**

Brainstorming is a useful system for generating ideas and to enable everyone to have an input. Brainstorming should be fun. Participants can offer their wildest ideas. Do not at first go into detail. The more ideas and the widest range of ideas the better.

Explain the rules at the start of the brain-storm. The whole point of a brain-storm is to trigger an uninhibited free flow of ideas.

No-one is permitted to criticise an idea. Criticising ideas kills them right away, embarrasses or angers the person suggesting the idea, and could lose any inherent value somewhere in the idea which a more full discussion later could bring out. The facilitator writes up all ideas on a flip-chart without comment.

After everyone has made their contribution, the group scans the ideas and votes for which ideas should be discussed in more detail. Write down the ideas you have agreed to look at in more detail and send them to each participant for further comments and follow-up.

### **Power point slide**

**A brainstorm summary should include –**

- 1. The key points of discussion and agreement**
- 2. The main items requiring follow-up**
- 3. Who is responsible for each action or follow-up**
- 4. Clear deadlines for each action**

## **Game. 50 tools of Communication**

### **Notes to trainer.**

*Explain that the purpose of this game is to get participants to think widely and not just be confined to the same old formats. It is also useful for waking everyone up!*

*Divide participants into team of 4 - 5 in each team.*

- a. Give each team a sheet of flip-chart paper and flip-chart pens.*
- b. Each team has to write a list of 50 different methods for communicating their message.*
- c. The first team to reach 50 gets a prize!*

*In case they miss any communication tools - here are some suggestions:*

Press and Media

E-mail and Internet

Text messages on mobile phones

Web-sites

Conferences

Notice boards

Word of mouth

Specialist debates

Open air videos

Cartoons

Soaps on radio or TV

Street theatre

Concerts

Faxes

Conducting surveys

Public meetings

Briefing packs

Posters

T/shirts

Balloons

Emery boards

Badges

Stickers etc

### **Calendar cards**

Print and distribute calendar cards with your NGO's contact details.

Plus useful local telephone numbers (ambulance, etc), together with the district's elected politicians and key officials names and contact numbers and addresses and a 6-month or one-year calendar.

### **Paper Fans**

Italian NGO ARCIDONNA distributed paper fans during the European elections with the slogan 'More Italian women in the European Parliament'. Women used the fans in the hot meetings.

### **First Tuesdays.**

At any time in your campaign, you can move the agenda forward with surprising speed by acting as organisers and hosts of a monthly 'First Tuesdays' lunch series which discusses the cause you support. At these meetings you could bring together leaders from business, government, nonprofits, social service agencies and think-tanks. If the first Tuesday of the month is not the best day, choose another, but make sure the time and day suits as many people likely to attend as possible.

### **Action tent.**

The Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO) and Mandisa Monakali, the Official South African Women's Delegate/Women's National Coalition worked together to organize a Women's Action Tent at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg 2002. The Women's Action Tent provided an opportunity to share experiences and hands-on knowledge and tools across communities and regions. Each Coordinating organization designed and planned their day-long program, in consultation with other groups working on the theme. You can place an Action tent or 'Portacabin' at any large event, even if you have not been part of organising the larger event. The public can come into the Action Tent to become members of your group, donate money, take part in discussions, offer help, ask questions, take away materials for further reading.

### **Green Caravan.**

This idea was used successfully in several cities in Brazil by the Green Caravan of Women For A Healthy Planet ([redenh@ax.apc.org](mailto:redenh@ax.apc.org))

It is a useful way to get to know your community's views, and to share your views with the public. Fit out a caravan or bus and move it from village to town, placing it where the public can come to you and ask questions about your cause. Keep notes on what the public say. And give them something they themselves can do, even if it is taking 25 leaflets from you and putting them through other people's doors. It is also a very useful method to get in touch with local councillors, to influence them, particularly when they are preparing the Municipal Budget.

### **Create a Listserv.**

An e-mail listserv on gender and sustainable development was used to ensure that the outcomes of the event were disseminated and expanded upon beyond the World Summit of Sustainable Developments. By facilitating the exchange of information and resources, the listserv provided women activists around the world with a sustained forum for developing ideas and sharing methods and experiences.

### **Post-cards**

**Anti-Slavery Society post-card campaign against traffickers.** The Anti-Slavery Society is the world's oldest human rights organisation. They sent out an A4 leaflet in paper heavy enough for part of the leaflet to be a postcard. The leaflet says:



*'Traffickers use VIOLENCE, DECEPTION and COERCION to take women, children and men away from their homes and families and force them to work against their will. Those trafficked may be forced to work as domestics, in prostitution, as labourers and in many other jobs. It is estimated that at least 700,000 women and children are trafficked across borders globally each year.'* (www.antislavery.org)

### **Newsletters**

Most NGOs produce a newsletter, perhaps once a month, more likely one every 3 months or even twice a year. Newsletters should be short, transparent, and in a reader-friendly format. They do not need to be glossy like expensive magazines. In fact, looking expensive can be a disadvantage and cause less impact on readers.

They should contain action photographs of your group and campaigns, informative pieces, contact names and coordinates, perhaps a cartoon, and a diary of events.

### **Circulate your newsletter to important people you want to influence**

Send each edition with photographs of your group in action to each Member of Parliament, minister, deputy minister, journalist, and trade union representative and other targets. Send them to local editors and journalists.

Distribute a newsletter when the issue it addresses is most "hot". Recipients will be more motivated to read it. Put your newsletter on your web-site.

You can also circulate your newsletter using e-mail – see section on e-mail.

### **An Open Letter.**

One cost-effective method is to compile an 'open letter'. This is an ordinary letter to a named decision-makers outlining your position and asking for a clear action to be taken.

You invite a dozen or more opinion-leaders and influential people to sign it. You send it to the decision-maker and also send copies to an appropriate, useful wider circle, including the local and national Press and Media. This can also be done using an e-mail.

## **Non Violent Direct Action**

Direct Action Public happenings are a fundamental part of NGO advocacy. They catch press and Media attention, they inform the public and lawmakers about your existence and your goals.

They can be fun for your supporters and can bring in more volunteers and contacts. They can also make a strong impact – especially if the direct action is part of a planned advocacy campaign.

### **Examples of non-violent Direct Action**

**16 days of Activism Media Campaign and Silent Witness March by NANE, Hungary in 2003.** (NANE - 'Women United against Violence against Women' in Hungarian) is an organisation that provides help for female and children victims of domestic violence and is also involved in advocacy activities for women's rights.

The 16-day media campaign and the related annual "Silent Witness" march on the weekend following 25 November is an example of successful peaceful direct action.

### **Timing**

NANE chose a Saturday so the maximum number of people could take part in the march without being restrained by working hours.

One of the issues related to domestic violence in Hungary was the pending introduction of a bill that would enable the police and other authorities to issue restraining orders to abusive family members. At the time of the 16-day campaign, the Ministry of Justice showed a lack of willingness to consult the NGOs active in the field. The campaign was a successful tool to focus public attention on this process, with very concrete results.

### **Activities**

The most important public event of NANE's 16 days campaign was the Silent Witness March, which started at the building of the Supreme Court and ended in front of the Ministry of Justice, which was especially targeted by the campaign. The participants of the march carried life-sized red female figures made of plywood board that represented victims of domestic violence, with a few details of the crime regarding actual victims written on them.

The peaceful march was one component with other communication tools.

A video spot, commissioned by NANE, showing a boy who promises to become a non-violent adult was aired 15 times on consecutive days. A flyer, two postcards and a poster with up to date data were distributed. The information also made available through the NANE website to the public. One postcard listed real-life quotations from battered women who had called NANE's hotline, and a folded flyer described the international Silent Witness and 16 days movement, which served to clarify the international context in which the Hungarian activities took place.

### **The advocacy campaign slogan:**

***“In Hungary, every third day somebody is killed as a result of domestic violence. First let us grieve and then let us act! Domestic violence is not a private issue!”***

### **Results**

As an immediate result of the march, the Ministry of Justice officials, who were informed about plans for the event, handed over a letter to the organizers that was signed by political state secretary Mr. Miklós Hankó Faragó, in which he promised to involve NGOs more actively in the process of formulating the bill enabling the restraining order. The letter was read to the marchers and the media after the statement by NANE.

The direct action march and the messages by NANE during the 16 days' campaign contributed to three other results:

by mid-December the State Secretary called together a meeting to which he invited the three NGOs that have a real expertise in the field. The draft proposal of the restraining order bill was given to NANE for feedback, and the second draft contained relatively many of the above NGOs' comments and criticism. Secondly, the National Police Chief Dr. Salgó agreed to display the Silent Witness statues at the regular meeting of the county police chiefs on December 14, where the first topic to be discussed was domestic violence. They were visible behind the police chiefs during the discussion of the issue, and since the event received press coverage, the police chiefs were filmed by television channels in front of the Silent Witnesses. Thirdly, the National Board of Justice (the independent body supervising the judiciary) showed interest in cooperating with NGOs

on the issue. In January a meeting was scheduled with the educational committee of the Board, who are responsible for the training of judges. Following a discussion of the training needs of the judiciary, NANE organized a one-day consultative meeting on domestic violence and trafficking for high officials of ministries, relevant Parliamentary committee chairs. Leading state prosecutors, judges, and international experts presented their experiences with the legislative, executive and judicial tasks and duties related to domestic violence and trafficking. This NGO-organized event took place in the National Council of Justice. The event was opened by the Head of the Office of the National Council of Justice, who even sponsored a birthday cake to celebrate NANE's 10<sup>th</sup> birthday.

The campaign gave wide publicity to the issue. Two dailies (*Népszabadság and Magyar Nemzet*) published relevant and critical articles supporting legislative changes regarding domestic violence on the day of the Silent Witness march. At the march several big national television channels were present, and the march was shown in several of the national news that evening. Furthermore, when television channels bring coverage about domestic violence, more often than not the Silent Witness March is used as footage. NANE received feedback from professionals as well as survivors and victims on the hotline regarding these materials.

(As of November 2004, the bill that was created by the Ministry of Justice based on the consultation and feedback of NGOs as well as legal experts, has been rejected by the Parliament, with the reason that no consensus was reached on the issue and with a declared intention to reintroduce the bill for discussion at a later time.)

### **9.They did this and it succeeded. Advocacy Campaigns in Elections:**

#### **KETHI Greece, ARCIDONNA Italy, MONA Hungary, WAD Bulgaria**

As part of the 'Parity in Decision-making: Women in the Heart of Europe project KETHI, MONA and Arcidonna ran advocacy campaigns to increase women's participation in the 2004 elections to the European Parliament. The Women's Alliance for Development ran advocacy campaigns to increase women's participation as candidates and voters in the Bulgarian elections to national parliament and local councils. Examples of any of these advocacy campaigns can be used in the Advocacy Workshop. Media workshop and Communication skills workshop.

### **KETHI**

#### **Research Centre for Gender Equality Greece. [www.kethi.gr](http://www.kethi.gr)**

In Greece KETHI ran advocacy campaigns to increase women's participation in the 2004 national and European elections. Due to the proclamation of the national elections in Greece two months earlier than the initial notice (7/3) KETHI divided their advocacy campaign into two phases. Campaign activities during the first phase focused on how to empower and promote women candidates in national elections. The second phase of the campaign focused on European elections and how to promote the need for more women to participate in the European Parliament.

Specific outputs:

**3 brochures:**

100,000 copies of the brochure titled ‘VOTE FOR WOMEN’ were published in February 2004. ‘VOTE FOR WOMEN’ brochures were distributed on the main streets high streets) and on central squares in Athens, Thessaloniki, Volos, Patras, Irakleion, Larissa. Approximately 200 envelopes with brochures, were mailed to all women candidates of the 5 parliamentary political parties in order to distribute them as their pre-electoral material. (in total 170 envelopes X 200 women candidates = 34,000 copies). 10,000 copies were mailed to the local branches of KETHI in order to be distributed in the pre-electoral meetings, events, as well as to all women candidates of their region who were unable to receive envelopes from Athens. 500 copies were mailed to the women’s departments of each political party. 2000 copies were mailed to the company ATTIKO METRO for distribution to its staff, 7000 copies were given out at a central meeting for women, which was organized by PASOK on February 23, 2004, in Athens. 3000 copies were posted to people on the KETHI mailing list.



The brochure “WOMEN IN DECISION MAKING – WOMEN IN THE HEART OF EUROPE” was published in 20,000 copies. The main theme of the brochure was the promotion of the program. Its contents include excerpts from speeches of political executive representatives, who participated in the opening session of the program. The brochure was distributed complementary to the ‘VOTE FOR WOMEN’ brochure.



The brochure about the need for parity in the European Parliament was published in 20,000 copies. The brochure was also posted to the mailing list of KETHI (approximately 3,000 subscribers) plus it was distributed to all regional meetings.



### Radio spot

With permission from the National Radio-TV Committee, the Radio spot of KETHI' s campaign was aired as a social message to well-known national and local radio stations from February 25, 2004 until March 7, 2004 (date of the national elections).

### TV spot

With approval from the National Radio-TV Committee, a TV spot about the Euro-elections was first aired on May 3<sup>rd</sup> (and continued to be aired until the eve of the elections, June 13th) on all national TV stations.

### Website

In February KETHI designed and posted a new web-page on the KETHI website. The web page carried the slogan “**GIVE NEW VALUE TO POLITICS! VOTE FOR MANY WOMEN EVERYWHERE!**”



**The web-site comprised:**

Lists of women candidates from the 5 parliamentary political parties in all electoral regions with profession, telephone, address, picture, and CV of each candidate. Data was updated on a daily basis.

Documents related to the advocacy campaign and a series of texts with the arguments in support of gender parity in decision making.

A welcoming note to all visitors.

Charts of women candidates per party, region, and prefecture, including their pictures and CVs. The charts were checked, updated, and cross-examined against the websites of the parties and the data of the Women's Departments until two days prior to the elections, on March 5th.

A letter from KETHI addressed to all women candidates. The letter included a description of the program and its activities. It also gave statistical data for the participation of women in decision-making, and texts advocating the equal participation of women and men in decision making.

Links to KETHI's transnational partners and other useful links.

After the European Elections, the website gave the results of the elections regarding women's participation in the National and the European Parliament, the names of the women MPs (Members of Parliament) and MEPs (Members of European Parliament).

**Publicity for the Web-site**

KETHI sent out two kinds of letters to encourage people to visit the new web-page. They sent one type of letter to women candidates and women's departments of the political parties and a different letter to all KETHI's mailing-list subscribers.

After the national elections, the website was given its own separate attractively designed web-page on KETHI's main site.

## **ARCIDONNA - Italy. [www.arcidonna.org](http://www.arcidonna.org)**

Aim of the Arcidonna advocacy campaign:

‘To sensitise public opinion on equal democracy issues.

To rebalance women’s presence in decision making positions and assure their presence in European parliament elections of 2004.’

Plus Arcidonna conducted education in high schools on the importance of equal participation by women in politics using specific materials and manuals they created for students. In addition Arcidonna organised opinion polls to find out the views of Italian people on equal participation by women and men in democracy. ‘

Their theme was ‘democracy’. Arcidonna campaign message:

“A balanced representation of men and women in parliamentary institutions favours the circulation of ideas, enriches political action and enables the needs and aspirations of all civil society to be better represented. Don’t forget it when next 12 and 13 of June you go to vote. We have to choose a democracy that represents us better.”

### **We can express 3 preferences on each party list : let’s vote women.**

The Arcidonna campaign included meetings, discussions, press conferences, Post-cards, leaflets, fans and sticky labels.

Arcidonna set up a working group to work with an advertising agency.

The Arcidonna advocacy campaign slogan was: ‘There is no Democracy without women’.

### **The BUS**

Arcidonna held their opening press conference on a bus. Arcidonna distributed fans with their slogan at each place where the bus stopped.

Arcidonna included celebrities in their campaign – this helped to increase the media coverage.

Arcidonna used posters, radio and TV slots, banners, press, banners, promotional materials and merchandising.

Arcidonna campaign posters were put up in the airports in Milano, Rome, Palermo and Catania.

### **Power-point slides of Arcidonna campaign**



# THE MESSAGE

**MORE ITALIAN WOMEN AT THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**



**DEMOCRACY NEEDS OF  
WOMEN**

[www.arcidonna.org](http://www.arcidonna.org) 

## COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN

December 2003 • June 2004



**Posting  
in the most important Italian Airports**

**Posting up in the cities**



[www.arcidonna.org](http://www.arcidonna.org) 

## Some of the products of advertising



### **SUCCESS!**

In 2004 Arcidonna's campaign contributed to the increase in the number of the Italian women elected to the European Parliament from 10 women out of 87 parliamentarians to 16 women out of 78 MEPs.

**Before 11.5%. Now 19.2%.**

### **MONA – Foundation for women of Hungary [www.mona-hungary.org](http://www.mona-hungary.org)**

#### **Aim of the campaign**

The Foundation for the Women of Hungary - MONA ran a campaign to mobilise women to use their votes in Hungary's first election to the European parliament on 13 June 2004.

#### **Why the campaign was needed.**

In the 2002 Hungarian elections 10% fewer women than men voted.

The MONA campaign was twin-track:

1. to raise women's awareness about the importance of using their vote.
2. to persuade women to vote for a Party that either had a clear equal opportunities strategy for women, or more women candidates on its list.

#### **MONA's campaign Message :**

**'If you do not vote, others will decide instead. Vote for Equal Opportunities on 13<sup>th</sup> June.'**

As part of their strategy MONA ran a consCiousness raising campaign about gender issues such as the need for: family-friendly workplaces, abolition of sex discrimination in the workplace, sharing housework equally between women and men, flexible childcare facilities.

### **Media strategy**

**Radio spot** (20 seconds), **poster** in the press, **leaflets** to 50,000 households.

Purpose of MONA's media campaign was to raise awareness among women that one of the duties of Members of the European Parliament is to represent women's rights in

Power point slide – MONA poster

the European Parliament and to put equal opportunities on the agenda.

**„If you do not vote, others will decide instead” poster**



### **What next?**

MONA'S next goal is to mobilize women into contacting their elected women EP candidates with their problems and to make MEPs accountable for the implementation of directives and resolutions of the EU.

Advocacy for women's participation in local council and national parliament.

**Results - Women elected to the Bulgarian Parliament increased from 10% to 26% !**

**Local council elections 26 October 2003**

Bulgarian NGO Women's Alliance for Development coordinated a network of 7 Bulgarian women's NGOs working in partnership with the US National Democratic Institute. The 7 NGOs were awarded small grants in a competition. Grants were used for small community based campaigns.

As a national partner in this campaign WAD provided support with information, logistics and expertise to the other NGOs in the Network and to all other organisations working on issues of gender equality. They also published a special brochure targeting women voters. This brochure, together with the national leaflet published by the National Democratic Institute was distributed throughout Bulgaria by the Network member organizations.

**Bulgarian Parliamentary elections - May 2001 – July 2001.**

The first phase of the campaign was aimed at getting more women in the parliament. The WAD campaign also indirectly influenced the policy of a new political party which won the election - 'The King's Party' (National Movement Simeon ). The King's Party made a great deal of publicity about the fact it was putting forward a high percentage of female candidates.

**Voter Participation – 'Get out the vote campaign'**

WAD and partners conducted a national program to educate women voters and to stimulate women's vote in the 2001 parliament elections.

The goal was to increase the participation of women voters in the parliamentary elections. The Women's Alliance worked with 13 local partner organizations to involve and inform marginalised groups of women, such as young women, first time voters, young mothers, unemployed women, rural women, minority women, elderly and disabled women about the electoral process and how to hold candidates accountable.

The voter participation campaign focused on educating and motivating citizens to go to the polling stations and to use their vote.

The particular success of this campaign lies in the impact of the various local voter education events, the phone banks, and the voter education materials, produced by WAD and complimented by the partners' literature pieces. As these events and activities were part of the National Campaign, through the central coordination unit at WAD, working very closely with NDI staff and the National Coalition partners, there was a strong, mutually reinforcing effect.

**Major components of the project:**

- Local campaigns using new forms of voter education and motivation tools, including PHONE BANKS.
- Voter education strategy and skills training for the activists, provided by experts from NDI.
- Media campaign, both at local/ regional and national level.

- Central coordination and facilitation through WAD. WAD established a central coordination unit (consisting of a program manager, the Executive Director overseeing the activities and linking with other 16 NGOs not directly involved, a program accountant) for the link with local network organisations, national media, as well as the link with National Democratic Institute for advice, reporting, accountability and information. The number of target audience reached was almost seven times more than planned.

#### **The tasks of the Coordination Unit:**

- to collect, process and provide information and arguments to local network organisations by means of e-group (moderating the group included), mailing, phone and fax.
- design campaign materials (i.e. WAD's input into a general voter education literature piece, women-specific leaflets/ brochures)
- popularize the campaign by using national print and electronic media in order to attract more participants
- facilitate links between local network partners and other relevant initiatives
- organize training events for network organisations with respect to voter contact and media work
- support the development of test messages and messengers that work best to persuade women to vote

*WAD organized a meeting with the 14 local community organizers. The NGOs presented their work-plans for the implementation of the local voter education campaign, discussed networking issues, possible support by the National Coalition, logistics and financial matters. Terms of reference, implementation plans, reporting requirements and budgets were fixed in writing.*

#### **Training of Local Activists**

- For most of the network partners this was their first experience of campaigning. Therefore WAD network partners were trained by NDI .
- The 3-day voter contact training workshop covered – techniques to educate voters and develop persuasion messages, organize focus groups, develop phone lists, carry out phone banking – 12 participants
- 2-day skill specific training on forum facilitation, media outreach – 15 participants

#### **Phone Banks**

WAD attained the rights for the usage of phone lists for 5 districts of the city of Sofia. Those lists were adjusted and up-dated by the Sofia volunteers. The partners in Plovdiv and Pleven developed phone lists by using information available at local Employment Services, Social Support offices, and own sources. In the case of Plovdiv, additional information was collected, namely about attitudes and readiness of the respondents to join citizens' initiatives and pressure groups to promote equal opportunities for women and men.

The phone banks provided exact information about the concerns and hopes of 10,836 women and their families. That information was collected within a period of 6 to 10 days

by 36 volunteers. They also hoped that the respective NGOs would make sure that politicians would hear their voices. This is especially true for those groups of women who found themselves in a situation of social isolation due to impoverishment, unemployment, family and caring responsibilities.

As a result, three NGOs obtained a base of information and names of different target groups for use with further activities within the communities.

### **Research – Focus Groups**

In the first decade of May, Alpha Research organized four focus groups in order to test messages for mobilizing women-voters in the different target constituencies. Again, the idea was to enable local NGOs to make use of this important tool, which is hardly used outside professional polling institutions.

Major insights were:

- ✓ Women-voters do not pay attention to abstract messages, but prefer concrete messages
- ✓ Unemployment and lack of means to make ends meet are the greatest concerns, yet messages to change the situation are not easily trusted any longer
- ✓ Messages around the future of the children would be most attractive

Analysis of the findings of the focus groups outcomes helped WAD and their partners to design the two types of campaign materials – for the national campaign of WAD, and for the local community voter education campaigns.

The overall message chosen was: MY VOTE (VOICE) IS MY OWN SELF

Campaign materials reached an additional 32 NGOs in the WAD network, thus multiplying the effect of the voter education effort.

### **Community Voter Education**

The local partner NGOs organised a variety of public events which offered direct contact between voters and candidates. Three partners followed up on pre-election promises and in one case a formal agreement was signed. By doing so, WAD partners have successfully started to work as advocating NGOs. Those who have done their own polls during the election campaign now know the particular concerns of women-voters in their community – a pre-condition to be able to hold the elected representatives responsible for what they are doing in the national Parliament.

#### **Activities, carried out by WAD partner organisations in May/June 2001:**

- 15 voter-candidates fora, with the participation of around 760 women-voters
- In Plovdiv, voters have ranked candidates according to their performance during the forum, and during another forum, several candidates (which have not been elected) agreed to sign up an agreement with voters, by the force thereof they would donate 35% of their salaries as MPs in case they will not fulfil the terms of the agreement.
- meetings with newly elected members of Parliament to hold MPs accountable and to advocate the interests and needs of women-voters

- 2 Public opinion polls
- Using data of previous elections.
- Meetings with various women-voters to inform them about the electoral process, citizens' rights, how to hold MPs and political parties accountable.
- Meetings with local public opinion leaders, representatives of local government and activists (local youth leaders, intellectuals, scientists, sociologists, lawyers, business leaders, NGO leaders)
- Concerts, local festivals and fashion reviews to distribute voter education materials  
Support to and participation in the BAFE organized Rock-the-Vote-Concerts and the national bus promotion tour
- Neighborhood Canvassing
- Local Media Campaigns
- National Voter Education Bus Tour
- The bus tour visited a number of WAD-targeted communities across Bulgaria

#### **Analysis and publication of results**

- WAD prepared a comprehensive record of the campaign in the Bulgarian language, so that other lobby and advocacy NGOs could learn from the cooperative experience.

#### **POSITIVE OUTCOMES OF THE WAD VOTER EDUCATION CAMPAIGN:**

- Partner NGOs and WAD earned credibility within the respective communities, the target groups and media and increased public outreach, thus growing into their “natural” role as advocates of citizens’ rights and interests.
- Target groups and the public at large have experienced new forms of participation – more direct democracy.
- MPs and candidates were exposed to informed citizens. Some politicians made concrete commitments for which they can be held accountable.
- Women voters started to express concrete demands for themselves and their families, as opposed to abstract national reform agendas with which they cannot identify.
- The general public, politicians and journalists have gained increased awareness regarding gender issues.
- A mechanism of smooth flexible cooperation was set up, in which particular partners take an active role and whose different strengths and contributions are equally valued.
- Partners have increased their knowledge and skills – thanks to special training provided by NDI, on-going consulting with WAD and between each other, and learning by doing.
- Young women have joined campaign activities and particular organizations as volunteers.
- Participatory research methods have been tried out – phone banks, opinion polls.

**After the parliamentary elections in 2001** – WAD ran a project "Bridging the gap between elected representatives and voters. Open dialogue: Educational programs for prevention of trafficking in the secondary

schools", which was the first step to work with the elected MPs on specific topics.

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