

**MPHAMVU  
KWA AMAYI**



*Empowering Malawi Women As Leaders*



Evaluation Report for:

# **EMPOWERING MALAWI WOMEN AS LEADERS (EMWAL) PROJECT**

**Submitted to:**

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June, 2014

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## ACRONYMS

<b>ALC</b>	Active Learning Centre	<b>NA</b>	Needs Assessment
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organization	<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>DCDO</b>	District Community Development Office	<b>NICE</b>	National Initiative for Civic Education
<b>DFID</b>	Department for International Development	<b>PP</b>	Peoples Party
<b>EMWAL</b>	Empowering Women as Local Leaders	<b>TOT</b>	Training of Trainers
<b>GCN</b>	Gender Coordination Network	<b>UDF</b>	United Democratic Front
<b>GSP</b>	Gender Support Programme	<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>MEC</b>	Malawi Electoral Commission	<b>WOLREC</b>	Women's Legal Resources Centre



## 1.0 BACKGROUND

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WOLREC in partnership with ALC implemented a project on 'Empowering women as local leaders' (EMWAL) between 2012 and 2014. The project which was funded by the Scottish Government, under its Malawi Development Fund, was supported by the Government of Malawi.

The initiative which targeted all the districts across the country was intended to build on similar interventions focusing on gender and democracy consolidation including the 50-50 campaign that WOLREC and partners have been supporting in several districts in the country. The project was aimed at empowering women to effectively participate in the 2014 local government elections. Women's active participation in politics at community level is deemed to be instrumental in ensuring that development related issues that affect them are mainstreamed into local and national development programmes. It is against this background that the project planned to empower 2,000 across the country to effectively participate in the 2014 local government elections.

The project adopted a cascade training model. The model envisaged development of a vibrant capacity of women as trainers to facilitate skills and knowledge transfer to 2,000 women who would in turn be empowered to stand in the 2014 local government elections across the country. Districts were grouped into 20 clusters countrywide. A pair of trainers (one from government and one from CSO) was responsible for facilitation of local training programmes for women aspirants in each cluster.

The evaluation process randomly sampled out 7 out of 20 clusters representing a sample size of about 35%. One cluster was sampled out in the northern region while 2 and 4 clusters were sampled out respectively in the central and southern regions. During the evaluation interviews were conducted with 9 trainers, 10 trained women aspirants and 2 WOLREC staff – refer to annex 2 for details.

## 2.0 EVALUATION PROCESS OBJECTIVES

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The evaluation process envisaged the following:

- To compute the number of women that participated in the programme across the country
- To identify the number of women that have emerged candidates for the Tripartite elections
- To document some challenges and successes that our trainers faced setting up and preparing and delivering their local training
- To analyse the effectiveness of both training of trainers and local women's training
- To document case studies of 6 women that went through the trainings and managed to contest
- To analyse the effectiveness of project methods
- To identify how the project fitted into the national 50-50 campaign and how it has contributed to its achievement
- To provide some analysis of other outcomes for women who took part in the programme but did not manage to contest

## 3.0 PROJECT OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES

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Following is a detailed outline of the evaluation process outcomes based on the key aspects of the project areas

vis-à-vis expected outputs that were assessed in line with the Terms of Reference established by WOLREC and ALC

### 3.1 PRODUCTION OF TRAINING MANUALS

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Production of training manuals was facilitated by ALC, and distributed at the first training of trainers held in April 2012 in Lilongwe. The trainers received hard and soft copies of the manuals. The manuals also include templates for all the administrative and financial tasks and reporting associated with the delivery of the local trainings. The Ministry of Gender supplemented the project with manuals which were designed for the 50-50 campaign.

session as these had been updated for the 2014 elections, and there was no point in ALC and WOLREC duplicating this work. The version from the Ministry of Gender contained important topics that were missing in the training manuals produced by the project. The missing topics included how to conduct successful campaigns, public speaking and presentation to the media for effective campaigning.

In the course of project implementation a decision was reached to use the manuals from Ministry of Gender during the last (4th)

## 3.2 Production of 2,000 handbooks for training participants

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It was agreed at the first training of trainers to use the materials contained in the training manuals as well as the Government of Malawi's handbook to form the basis of the training materials for

the local training. Each trainer received a memory stick with soft copies of all the material so they could adapt it for their local session as required.

## 3.3 Training of trainers for 40 facilitators

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After discussion with the Ministry of Gender and representatives from the NGOGCN, it was agreed to draw the trainers from the Ministry's community development staff and relevant civil society organisations. Forty one facilitators (two per cluster, with three for the Mzimba cluster) were recruited evenly split across the Ministry and NGOs. Facilitators were paired together in 20 clusters in every district in Malawi so that each cluster had an NGO and a GofM facilitator.

The facilitators attended a 5 day training of trainers (TOT) in Lilongwe in April 2012. The workshop was also attended by senior representatives from the Ministry of Gender, including the Principal Secretary Dr Mary Shawa, the Director of Gender, and the 50-50 Campaign lead officer, Peter Elesani. There was also media coverage by MBC (TV) and Zodiak Radio.

After the TOT, the facilitators started identifying women aspirants to train within their clusters. However, the identification of women aspirants to undergo trainings was challenging especially with respect to the first cohort.

According to the facilitators interviewed during the evaluation process, initially the selection criteria and process for women aspirants were not clear. This resulted into targeting of women that were less qualified in terms of literacy levels, personal interest to contest, among other attributes. Other cases were also reported in Blantyre rural cluster where some local leaders were putting forward names of their relatives who were neither qualified nor ready to contest as ward councillors.

After the first round of training the project held a second ToT workshop in October 2012, in Blantyre, to update the trainers' training and to draw lessons from the first round of local trainings. This was attended by ALC, WOLREC, Ministry of Gender officials and all the facilitators.

Senior representatives from eight of Malawi's political parties attended the ToT in Blantyre for a Q and A session with the facilitators which prompted further discussion about how best to engage with political parties at the grassroots.

It was agreed that although political parties had been engaged at a national level there was a need to engage with political parties at a local level, and the identification process would be preceded by briefings with local political leaders.

WOLREC undertook to manage this process, and money from the existing project budget was re-allocated to this activity. In the ensuing weeks and again in year 2 of the project, the facilitators held briefings with local political party officers, where they explained the project's concept and its objectives as well as encouraging them to put forward women aspirants.

Feedback from the facilitators suggests that the quality and seriousness of the participants improved in the three training rounds that followed.

## 3.4 Local trainings for women aspirants

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During the project period, about 1,700 women aspirants were trained across the 20 clusters. This was within the target set by the project in its funding application, which was in a range of 1600 – 2000 women. Some clusters trained more women than planned, others found hitting their targets more difficult, reflecting the challenges that some of the more rural areas face. For example, Lilongwe urban cluster trained 9 more women than planned while Karonga/Chitipa cluster trained 68 women against a target of 100.

According to the facilitators, the challenges faced when recruiting participants included:

- High illiteracy level among women in most areas which was an automatic disqualifying factor
- Lack of plans in most major political parties to field women as candidates
- Lack of interest to contest
- Lack of self-confidence among most women in all the clusters across the country.



The project delivered all the 80 workshops as planned. The last (4th) training session focused on women aspirants that had excelled through primaries, presented nomination papers and qualified to contest by the Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC). This meant that the training courses had to be held at a later date than planned. It also meant that some workshops had fewer participants but that every women candidate standing in the council elections was guaranteed training in her locality.

### 3.5 The project advisory group and 50-50 campaign

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A project advisory group was set up. It comprised of the Government of Malawi (Ministry of Gender), the Parliamentary Women's Caucus, The NGO Gender Network, DFID Malawi, the Royal Norwegian Embassy and UNDP.

ALC and WOLREC provided the secretariat, and reported on the project's progress to each meeting. There were four meetings held during the project's two years. It was useful for sharing

It was hope to advertise the training sessions for all the clusters through paid-for media on Zodiac Broadcasting Corporation (ZBS) and MBC- TV. However as this activity had not been identified in the original budget, this proved too expensive. There was however coverage of the project in both print and broadcast throughout its two years.

experiences, ideas and updates on the progress of the 50 – 50 campaign, and led directly to RNE asking ALC and WOLREC to develop a proposal for training councillors, post the election.

ALC and WOLREC were both members of the 50-50 Campaign's technical working group, and the EMWAL project was one of the campaign's key activities.

### 3.6 Setting up of a website resource

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The website is [www.emwal.org](http://www.emwal.org). It has still to be updated with the final reports from the project.

### 3.7 Project planning, monitoring and reporting

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The project was conceived and designed by ALC with WOLREC, with input from the Parliamentary Women's Caucus of Malawi and NGOGCN.

Soon after the funding was approved, and before the first ToT was held, there was a planning and design meeting held with Ministry of Gender, and NGOGCN. This was chaired by the then Director of Gender, and it was agreed to recruit 20 Ministry of Gender staff, as well as NGO representatives, to the core group of 40 facilitators.

It was also agreed at this meeting that the project would cover every district in Malawi, which was a change to the original concept but significantly improved it.

One key aspect of the design of the project that required more consideration was the relationship with the political parties. It was agreed at the first ToT in July 2012 that WOLREC write to the General Secretaries of each political party to inform them of the project and to ask them to encourage their local parties to take part.

However, at first review meeting held in October that year, it was apparent that this message had not filtered down to the grass root party structures, therefore it was decided to take action (see 3.3).

Two review workshops, involving all the facilitators, Ministry of Gender officials and the lead officer for the 50-50 Campaign, were conducted during the project period.

The review processes created space for assessing progress of planned project activities by key project implementing partners including representatives of members of the advisory group. The reviews also facilitated sharing of lessons, challenges and promising practices among implementing partners including streamlining the targeting process for women aspirants to be trained. However, some of the trainers interviewed during the evaluation process highlighted that some key issues were never given attention by the project management despite being raised during review meetings. Such issues included limited time and budget allocations to local trainings.

Training progress reports (narrative and financial) were compiled and submitted to WOLREC by facilitators from each cluster.

It was also established during interviews with various project stakeholders that on-going monitoring of the project at implementation level by trainers and WOLREC staff was a challenge because the activity was not budget for. This resulted into lack of support to women aspirants by trainers and WOLREC staff after trainings and during campaigns. Women aspirants interviewed during the evaluation process strongly felt that monitoring activities like follow up visits by trainers and WOLREC staff after trainings would be instrumental in

sensitizing community members and political party leaders on the importance of promoting women aspirants thereby garnering support for the same.

With respect to the actual numbers of trained women aspirants who emerged as candidates as well as winners in the 2014 local government elections at ward level, the evaluation process randomly captured results from 7 sampled clusters namely Karonga/Chitipa in the northern region, Lilongwe rural and Lilongwe urban in the central region, Zomba, Blantyre rural, Blantyre urban and Mwanza/Neno in southern region.

No.	Cluster	Number of trained women who contested	Number of women ward councillors elected	Number of male ward councillors elected
1	Karonga/Chitipa (sampled)	6	1	18
2	Lilongwe city (sampled)	40	5	51
3	Lilongwe rural (sampled)	22	3	51
4	Blantyre city (sampled)	35	5	31
5	Blantyre rural (sampled)	4	1	31
6	Mwanza/Neno (sampled)	3	None	8
7	Chiradzulu/Zomba (sampled)	26	5	34
8	Nkhatabay/Likoma	9	1	12
9	Rumphi/Mzuzu	26	2	21
10	Mzimba	12	2	20
11	Kasungu/Mchinji	21	2	32
12	Dowa/Ntchisi	20	None	17
13	Salima/Nkhotakota	17	2	17
14	Dedza	16	2	14
15	Mangochi	6	None	33
16	Balaka/Ntcheu	13	None	20
17	Machinga	18	1	9
18	Thyolo	18	3	18
19	Mulanje/Phalombe	21	4	26
20	Chikwawa/Nsanje	11	None	21

From the data in table 1 above, it is clear that more male councillors (89.2%) were elected in 7 sampled clusters where the project trained women aspirants. At national level, 56 out of 457 ward councillors elected were female translating into 12.3% female representation.



## 4.0 Overall analysis of project outputs and outcomes

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According to 9 training facilitators (refer to annex 2 for details) interviewed during the evaluation process, the ToT for facilitators was effective in terms of content, material, venue arrangements and the timeframe allocated to the same.

'The ToT was instrumental for facilitators as it enhanced our understanding of both the project concept and objectives', commented Anthony Mkupira from Gender Support Programme (GSP), who was one of the trainers for Blantyre rural cluster.

'I found the ToT which we had at Pacific hotel in Lilongwe to be very effective in imparting skills and knowledge about the project. The ToT also equipped us with skills that enabled us to effectively conduct the trainings in our cluster, although I would have liked the local trainings to take more than a day to enable us to thoroughly cover the training material' commented Roselyn Bvulumende, the DCDO for Neno who was also one of the training facilitators for Neno/Mwanza cluster.

Both facilitators and training participants felt the local trainings for women aspirants were good in terms of content and material as they covered the practical aspects of the project which effectively prepared the participants for campaigning. According to the participants interviewed during the evaluation process, topics covered included public speaking, how to approach and prepare for campaign meetings, packaging and articulation of issues during campaigns and roles of ward councillors and MPs in district assemblies among others. However, all women interviewed complained about some aspects of the organization of the local trainings. This was specifically with respect to limited time allocated to training sessions and training venue arrangements. One-day non-residential training sessions were conducted. Since most participants were coming from distant places, the actual time for the sessions would in some cases be reduced to about 3-4 hours for some clusters.

'Participation of women in the trainings was affected as sessions would start late and finish early because participants had to cover long distances to and from the training venues', said Mrs Velda Ngwira, one of the trainers for Karonga/Chitipa cluster. 'Majority of the participants in our cluster were coming from hard to reach and hilly areas like Wenya, Nthalire, Misuku and Kameme' she stressed. This, according to both training facilitators and participants, resulted in some cases into inadequate coverage of training material. The time limitation became more significant as participants were required, after theory sessions, to practice what they were taught through demonstrations on how they would facilitate similar processes during campaigning.

Dysfunctional status of some cameras that were provided to facilitate taking of pictures during trainings was another challenge mentioned by trainers interviewed. Organization of local trainings was also affected by low funding levels which affected both participants and facilitators especially those that were coming from distant places. For example, one of the trainers for Mwanza/Neno cluster was coming from Blantyre to facilitate local trainings in Mwanza and Neno. This was so because, the CSO which paired with the DCDO has their offices in Blantyre.

With respect to actual campaigning, women interviewed expressed satisfaction with the role the training processes played. The majority of women indicated to have been equipped with skills in areas of public speaking and confidence projection following the training processes. The same also enabled them to articulate their manifestos during campaigns. Most of the women interviewed said before the training they used to experience challenges in handling the public during meetings. This was partly a result of shyness, lack of confidence and fear of male aspirants – refer to case studies attached as annex 1.

Male aspirants were regarded to be influential during campaigns mostly because they were using handouts to woo supporters. It was clear during interviews that handouts mostly in the form of money and other material items worked to the disadvantage of the majority of women who could not afford to use the same to woo supporters because of cash flow problems. In all the 7 clusters that were sampled for the evaluation process, handouts were deemed to be one of the key factors that led to poor performance of women aspirants in the 2014 tripartite elections generally and local government elections specifically.

At national level, the 2014 local government elections results show that out of 457 candidates that were elected as ward councillors only 56 were female representing about 12.3%. Similarly, a study of 7 out of 20 clusters (35% sample size) that were sampled for the project evaluation process indicated that female candidates performed poorly as male candidates registered success in most wards – refer to table 1 above.

According to the overall evaluation process findings, several other factors were responsible for the general dismal performance for women in the 2014 tripartite elections generally and local government elections specifically. These included:

- Absence of a clear criteria for selection and/or identification of qualified women to contest vis-à-vis targeting of unqualified women especially the first cohort
- Lack of plans by most political parties participating in the elections to promote and field women aspirants as candidates
- Lack of support to trained women by political parties to contest who in some cases were replaced with untrained women.

Logistical setbacks during campaigning like lack of proper means of transport especially for big wards like Nalikule in Lilongwe and Mlare in Chitipa and limited campaign materials (T-shirts and posters) had a negative impact on the effectiveness of campaigns for some women aspirants. Other challenges were poor timing of the last (4th) training sessions that were conducted just prior to onset of campaigns (March 2014), favouring of specific candidates while sidelining trained women during primaries which resulted into others standing as independent candidates, lack of follow ups by trainers to provide support and touch base with political party leaders and community members to promote women aspirants and fielding of candidates that were party loyalists versus those that were popular.

## 5.0 Evaluation process challenges

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The evaluation process experienced a number of challenges in relation to availability of evaluation participants (trainers and trained women aspirants) largely because of their involvement in pre-election activities and actual elections. These coupled with delayed finalization of the TORs to guide the process delayed data collection, analysis and report compilation processes.

Initially, data collection was planned to start before elections and continue thereafter. However, it proved to challenge as most of the key evaluation participants were engaged until the release of official results that was also delayed by over a week.

Actual data collection including taking of pictures was also another challenge especially for participants from the cluster sampled in northern region (Karonga/Chitipa).

The nomination fees (MK15, 000.00) as required by the Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC) acted as a barrier for some women aspirants to register and contest for the elections. For example, majority of women aspirants in Mwanza (under Mwanza/Neno cluster) reported to have failed to stand because of the same.

It was also clear from the evaluation process findings that the proportion of trained women aspirants who finally contested after filing nomination papers with MEC was generally very low in most clusters – refer to table 1 above. This has been largely a result of the challenges that have been quoted in the preceding paragraphs.

The timing of the last (4th) training session was agreed by the 50-50 Campaign technical working group, and was delayed by negotiations about resources. It is worth noting that the timing of the first three sessions had been agreed by ALC, WOLREC and the facilitators.

The timing of the last (4th) training session, although it targeted women aspirants that had gone through primaries and filed nomination papers, was deemed to be inappropriate because it was within the period that most of the aspirants were busy and anxious about campaign activities they had scheduled which may also have affected concentration.

Since the project was implemented countrywide and to ensure that the findings in relation to the project performance are representative of the whole country, sampling of evaluation participants covered all the 3 regions. This affected availability of pictures for participants that were interviewed on phone because the evaluation team could not physically visit some areas like Karonga/Chitipa cluster (the last and farthest districts in the northern region of the country) largely because of time limitations and evaluation budget constraints. However, quality of data collected from all sources (evaluation participants) was not affected as triangulation of information collected from all the 7 sampled sites showed similar patterns.



## 6.0 Conclusions

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It is clear from the evaluation process findings that both the TOT and local trainings had significant impact on both trainers and women aspirants. Trainers became conversant with both the project concept, scope and what they were required to deliver during local trainings. Similarly, trained women aspirants were empowered in areas like public speaking, confidence projection and general handling of campaign meetings.

It is also apparent from the evaluation findings that the number of women aspirants trained was within the target of 1,600 to 2,000 with about 1,700 women trained representing an achievement rate of about 85%.

The proportion of trained women aspirants that contested in the 2014 local government elections was also low just as the proportion of those that won the elections against those that contested. For example, in 6 out of the 7 sampled clusters only about 12.1% of the women aspirants that contested were elected as ward councillors – refer to table 1 above. These results are likely to have implications on the leadership of local government councils as more likely than not key decision making positions of chairpersons and their vices in most district assemblies would go to male councillors because of their numbers if no clear guidelines that would aim at promoting women representation in those positions are provided at district assembly level during elections of local government office bearers.

Entrenched cultural attitudes that promote gender stereotypes among local and political party leaders, community members, women themselves and other challenges that have been captured in the preceding paragraphs were deemed to be responsible for the general dismal performance of women aspirants in the 2014 local government elections.

While the majority of women aspirants that were trained vis-à-vis who contested did not make it during the 2014 elections (as an immediate result in the short term), the training processes laid a strong foundation for the trained women and created a vibrant crop of future competitive women aspirants. Relatedly, this is likely to have far reaching impact in the medium to long term with respect to contributing towards having more women in decision making positions at both local and national levels, in line with the 50-50 campaign.

Organization of local trainings which were non-residential and required participants to travel to and from the training venues coupled with limited allocation of training time (one day) negatively impacted both on the participation of women and effectiveness of the trainings, generally.

On a different note, pairing of trainers (one from government and one from CSO) enhanced complementarity of expertise and experience which enriched and added value to the training processes.

While the project concept worked well – cascade training delivered by local trainers – the project would have benefitted if more thought had been given to the role of the political parties in the selection of women candidates.

The culture of giving handouts to woo support from potential voters worked to the disadvantage of majority of women aspirants who contested because the majority could not afford to provide the same because of cash flow problems.

## 7.0 Recommendations

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The following recommendations are based on the overall findings of the evaluation process and are intended to guide project designing processes of similar initiatives in future. These recommendations should be read alongside the recommendations that have been made by women aspirants who participated both in the project and the evaluation process – refer to case studies (annex 1).

- Project designing processes and delivery of key project outputs should in future fully involve key local partners. This will facilitate tapping of their expertise and local experience of the country context (social, cultural, economic and political) which are key in coming up with more relevant interventions
- Future similar projects should continue to work with and build the capacity of women aspirants that have been targeted by this project, building on the skills and knowledge they have acquired through the project. Relatedly, identification of women aspirants to contest in elections should be a process with a clear selection criterion that involves traditional leaders and recognized structures like political parties. Capacity building of the same should be ongoing and conducted over time and in between elections, for example between 2014 and 2019.
- Women aspirants should be encouraged to upgrade their educational qualifications. For example, by enrolling with Community Day Secondary Schools (CDSS) for those who have not acquired Malawi School Certification Education (MSCE) or tertiary institutions for those with MSCE
- In addition to direct capacity development of women aspirants, there should be consideration given to an advocacy campaign targeted at key players like local and political leaders, community members and other women (non-aspirants) by sensitizing them on the importance of promoting women aspirants
- Local training programmes should be organized on a residential basis with adequate time allowed to ensure thorough coverage of training material. All training programmes should be complemented with follow up and monitoring activities by trainers and key implementing partners to provide support and help in sensitizing local and political leaders and community members to support women aspirants. Sensitization on gender and human rights should be strengthened to help break traditional and cultural barriers that reinforce marginalization of women which works to the disadvantage of women aspirants
- In view of the high proportion male to female councillors in district assemblies based on the results of the 2014 local government elections, local project partners should proactively advocate for selection of female councillors (though in minority) to decision making positions of either chairpersons or vices in the local councils. This will ensure that issues that affect women are mainstreamed into development programmes at local level, in line with the 50-50 campaign.
- At district level, to fully involve key stakeholders (MEC district staff, multiparty liaison committee – all political parties in the district, DC's office, District Consultative Committee and DPD) in the mobilization of women aspirants and dissemination of various related messages
- To ensure fairness and level playing field during elections, there is need for policy level interventions on banning handouts during election campaigns



## Annex 1: Case studies

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### Case study 1:

**Patricia Nkhono**, a widow and 33 years, was one of the women aspirants who contested for the position of ward councillor under Malawi Congress Party (MCP) ticket in Nalikule ward (LL North East constituency). Patricia had a lot to say about the training she received under the EMWAL project and how it contributed towards her success in the 2014 local government elections. 'Before I was exposed to the training programme I could not handle the public during meetings because of lack of confidence, being a woman and owing to my age,' she said. 'Imagine in my ward there were 7 aspirants competing for the position of ward councillor, two of which were female and I happened to be the youngest of all' she continued. 'The training for women aspirants enhanced my understanding in a number of relevant areas like duties and roles of an MP and a Ward councillor, public speaking among others', she emphasized. Patricia asserted that the skills acquired during the training assisted her a lot as she could, during community meetings, effectively articulate development related activities she intended to pursue in the ward once voted for. 'At party level, I had all the support. However, it was not easy to convince potential voters that a woman and young as I was could deliver any meaningful development in the area' she stressed. Patricia went on to quote some challenges she faced during campaigns. Key ones included limited finances, lack of appropriate means of transport and inadequate campaign materials in the form of posters and T-shirts to distribute to community members during campaigning. She also stressed that potential voters were mostly swayed by male aspirants who were providing handouts

### Case study 2:

**Beatrice Simbiye (nee Kaghabe)**, 31, was one of the women aspirants who contested in Chitipa cluster (Zambwe ward) on UDF ticket. 'Before the training I used to have fears to speak in public and I also lacked confidence. I also underrated myself by convincing myself that as woman I could not compete with male aspirants', narrated Beatrice. 'Initially, my campaign messages were not that organized as I hardly had any manifesto on which to base my campaign' she added. 'After the training, I realized that I had a lot potential to compete with men, my public speaking skills improved so much that I could effectively articulate my manifesto to people and convince them based on the development plans that I intended to initiate in the area once voted for,' she stressed. Beatrice said she felt empowered after the training and she attributed her failure to win in the elections to a number of challenges that she experienced during her campaigns. 'Though I contested on a party ticket, I faced a number of setbacks which I believe contributed to my failure to win like lack of transport as I

and expected every aspirant to do the same during campaigns. Inadequate civic education on the voting process was another challenge that Patricia mentioned which she attributed to failure by NICE, an institution that was accredited by MEC to conduct civic education on the same, to reach some areas within her ward with voter education. 'In such cases I ended up civic educating the people myself' she concluded. With regard to areas that need improvements in relation promoting women to succeed in future elections, Patricia made a few suggestions. She proposed that shortlisting and interviews should be conducted and selection of women aspirants should be based on a merit with regard to minimum qualifications. She strongly believed that such vetting processes would ensure identification of aspirants that can effectively compete with their male counterparts and increase the number of women winning elections. She also observed that targeting a lot of women using fewer resources as was the case with the project is ineffective. She proposed that adequate resources should be invested in intensively building the capacity of few women aspirants as it would increase chances of having more women winning elections. Other suggestions Patricia put forward included selection of women aspirants that have real interest in politics and on-going capacity building those that have excelled in elections so that they are able to deliver during their term of office. According to Patricia, strategically, on-going capacity building of elected female councillors would ensure that they deliver in the wards and in turn this would encourage community members to vote for more female councillors in the next elections slated for 2019.

had to cover 18 polling centres which were located further apart and sometimes I would take about 5 hours to reach a meeting venue, inadequate campaign materials as those supplied by the Ministry of Gender (T-shirts, posters) were not enough', she stressed. 'While people were convinced with my manifesto which outlined development priorities that I planned to facilitate in the ward once elected councillor, they got swayed by other aspirants that were giving handouts in the form of money' she concluded. Beatrice said although she did not make it in the 2014 elections, the exposure she had during both the training and campaign made her to realize that she needed to go back and re-enrol in school. 'I failed MSCE but I now plan to repeat (to start from form 3) as this will also increase my chances of winning in future elections' she emphasized.

### Case study 3:

**Joyce Simwaka (nee Nyondo)**, 54 years, was the only female aspirant elected as ward councillor in Chitipa/Karonga cluster in the 2014 elections. Joyce contested on the Peoples' Party (PP) ticket in Karonga central constituency (Mlare ward). 'We were 5 aspirants in the ward and I was the only female contestant,' she narrated. 'Before the training, I did not have skills in a number of areas like how to woo support from potential voters, how to organize campaign meetings and how to conduct needs assessment (NA) to identify development priorities in my area' she continued. Joyce indicated that after the training she could effectively interact with community members and appreciated the importance of upholding such values as humility and observing culturally sensitive dressing to which she partly attributed her high acceptability among the people in her ward. Joyce said the training also enhanced her understanding of the qualities of a ward councillor and their roles at the district assembly. 'Because of all that, I all the time treated people in my ward with dignity which further consolidated our relationships and I was also able to assess development needs in the ward before community meetings and articulated the same during the meetings' she continued. Joyce indicated that because of her ability to conduct development needs assessment, all the meetings she was conducting were issue-based as she would share the NA findings with the people and together discuss how to address the same. 'Handouts have been spoiling people who expect the same from all aspirants' she pointed out. 'However, to

address that I would each time reason with the people in my ward by stressing to them that sustainable development is based on good and visionary leadership not handouts. I would also enlighten them by emphasizing that majority of aspirants who promote handouts do it for their own short term benefits of wooing voters and not for real passion of serving people' she emphasized. In her case, Joyce complained of lack of appropriate means of transport to get to hard to reach (hilly) areas which necessitated walking sometimes 5 to 7 km during meetings and limited time allocated to training as some of the challenges she faced during campaigning and training, respectively. Joyce suggested that there is need for intensive civic education to promote women leaders. She further recommended that women aspirants themselves should be active participants in development activities taking place in their areas even when they are not elected yet, referring periods between elections. 'I feel I have won partly because of my commitment to development activities in my area. I have been facilitating establishment of women groups, nursery schools etc. As such I am convinced that people voted for me because they expected that I will continue with such initiatives' she continued. 'Am a retired teacher but I managed to beat male aspirants some of whom were in employment. I also attribute my success to the training as it opened my eyes on a number of relevant issues that I have shared with you already' she concluded.

### Case study 4:

**Lignet Thupilifana**, 26 and single contested as an independent candidate in Chilim'bondo ward in Neno/Mwanza cluster. 'Before the training, I had challenges with public speaking. I was unable to communicate messages effectively. But after the training I became a good public speaker, effective communicator and able to woo supporters', she narrated. Lignet said as an independent candidate she lacked reliable sponsorship as most of the people were expecting handouts. 'You know, each time you visit people in either groups or door to door they expected handouts in the form of money, salt among others', she stressed. Other challenges that Lignet mentioned as having affected her campaign included inadequate campaign materials which were supplied late by GCN and poor accessibility to some areas within the ward largely because of poor road network especially during the rainy season. Lignet proposed a number of areas that she felt required improvements for the project to be effective in registering better results for women aspirants in future. She recommended that there should be enough lead time for supply of campaign materials as in her case they were supplied just two weeks before elections, trainers should conduct follow-ups to

provide support to trained women aspirants and also sensitize communities on the importance of promoting women into decision making positions. 'My ward had 7 candidates who contested, 6 were male and I was the only female contestant, and I came 3rd. Between now and next elections in 2019, I plan to continue engaging with people and participating in development and social activities in the ward as I prepare for the 2019 elections' she concluded.



## Case study 5:

**Rose Libamba**, 58 years, contested in Nkolokoti ward (Blantyre city cluster) as an independent candidate. 'I was identified by local leaders around here to stand as a candidate' narrated Rose. 'Later I received a phone call from one of the trainers who informed me that I have been selected to attend a training by NICE. With regard to the details of the training, I was not aware until at the beginning of the training which was held at NICE offices', she went on. According to Rose, she adopted a door to door campaign approach whereby she would meet with people in their homes. 'Before the training, I used to be shy but thereafter

I would communicate effectively with people, articulate my manifesto and be able to assess and understand development challenges affecting people in the ward. The skills I acquired during the training also assisted in improving the relationships with parents as I also run a nursery school', she concluded. Rose attributed her failure to succeed in the 2014 elections to a number of challenges ranging from handouts that other aspirants were using to woo voters to a short voting period. 'People in my ward voted for only about 4 hours, from around 6pm to 10 pm instead of 12 hours (6 am to 6pm) as stipulated by law', she emphasized.

## Case study 5:

**Dorothy Palika**, 36, contested in Mapanga ward in Blantyre city cluster as an independent candidate. 'I received a phone call from Mrs Botomani, one of the trainers informing me that I had been selected to attend training' she narrated. Dorothy said the training covered a number of topics that included how to effectively campaign, building self-confidence, building resilience, how to engage with local leaders and how to conduct meetings. After the training, Dorothy planned to conduct a community meeting which she later called off upon learning that another aspirants (male contestant), had hired youth to disturb her meeting. She then resorted to door to door campaigns. Dorothy quoted a few challenges which she felt contributed to her failure to win in the

2014 elections. According to Dorothy, the training period, one day, was too short as there was a lot to cover. In terms of her campaign, Dorothy felt people liked her development ideologies but was convinced she could not compete with aspirants that were offering handouts including money. 'Whenever people asked for money and I failed to provide the same, I ended up getting insults with others openly telling me that I should forget about their votes', she concluded. Dorothy proposed that in future projects, training processes should be followed up with field visits by trainers to support trained women aspirants and encourage community members to promote women aspirants.

## Annex 2: List of Project Evaluation participants

### Facilitators (sampled trainers)

- Mrs Roselyn Bvulumende – Neno/Mwanza cluster (Southern region)
- Mr Odreck Kathamalo – Neno/Mwanza cluster (Southern region)
- Mrs Flossie Bottoman – Blantyre urban (Southern region)
- Mr Anthony Mkupira – Blantyre rural (Southern region)
- Mr Enock Linje – Zomba (Southern region)
- Mrs Annie Kamwendo – Lilongwe rural/urban Cluster (Central region)
- Mr Jeremiah Mpasu – Lilongwe rural/urban Cluster (Central region)
- Mrs Velda Ngwira– Karonga/Chitipa cluster (Northern region)
- Mr Mwafulirwa – Karonga/Chitipa cluster (Northern region)

### WOREC staff

- Loma Mtema
- Richard Muluzi

### Training participants (women aspirants)

- Joyce Nyondo – Karonga/Chitipa cluster (Northern region)
- Beatrice Kaghabe – Karonga/Chitipa cluster (Northern region)
- Patricia Nkhono – Lilongwe rural (Central region)
- Mphatso Kasunda – Lilongwe urban (Central region)
- Dorothy Palika – Blantyre urban (Southern region)
- Rose Libamba – Blantyre urban (Southern region)
- Veronica Makanjila – Zomba (Southern region)
- Agnes Chipatala – Zomba (Southern region)
- Gloria Chona Neno/Mwanza cluster (Southern region)
- Lignet Thupilifana Neno/Mwanza cluster (Southern region)

