

Parliamentary Conference on Women in Leadership

Theme:

Value of women's leadership towards a positive culture to protect and hold women accountable

AT

THE INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL

4TH - 5TH NOV 2019

Challenges:

- ❖ Lack of implementation of laws and policies that govern women issues
- ❖ Non-prescriptive laws
- ❖ Cultural challenges/barriers to women in leadership
- ❖ Lack of resources
- ❖ Competition among women/lack of unity/caucus dynamics
- ❖ Violence against women and girls
- ❖ Women with disabilities are not elected as political leaders
- ❖ Deputy syndrome/Opposite Gender rule

Challenges (2)

- ❖ Under representation in the decision making table
- ❖ Lack of programmes that advocate for and support laws that govern FGM
- ❖ Medicalization of FGM
- ❖ Resistance to the anti FGM campaigns by some communities
- ❖ Cross-border practices of FGM
- ❖ Secrecy and unwillingness by witnesses to testify against perpetrators of FGM among others
- ❖ Poverty – leading to parents offering their children for early marriages.

Way Forward (1)

- ❖ Strengthen the capacity of women leaders and invest in robust mentorship for aspiring women leaders

- ❖ Amend the constitution to safeguard devolution and the position of women from the county level to the NA and Senate.
- ❖ Look at numbers and beyond – Invest in women leaders because they are better leaders
- ❖ Document experiences/cases where women's rights have been violated, women de-whipped from committees, etc.. and find recourse
- ❖ Work with political parties on inclusive politics. Political parties should invest more in the women leaders and offer financial support and resources to women
- ❖ Women in political positions need to make meaningful and valuable changes in order to give some confidence to the electorate
- ❖ Allow women's voices to be heard from the various formations

Way Forward (2)

- ❖ Empower women to be able to deal with the intrasex (internal) dynamics.
- ❖ Have conversations on what is working for women and strategize to get more women on board e.g. most women came to parliament through nominations and are currently elected
- ❖ Identify other areas considered 'powerful' where women can lead e.g. internal security, foreign affairs, defense forces etc.
- ❖ It's not only about legislation but also a change in attitude. We need a supporting society and supportive men to move the women agenda forward.
- ❖ Works towards retaining women's positions as we strive to have more women leaders elected

Way Forward (3)

- ❖ Include women with disabilities as women political leaders
- ❖ ~~Constitute an enabling environment for women to participate in the political environment through strict laws and policies~~
- ❖ Women need to redefine leadership
- ❖ Engage the male counterparts in the discussions on women agenda
- ❖ Form allies with these bodies in order for them to push further the women issues e.g. NGEC, CAJ and KNCHR
- ❖ Affirmative action and Opposite Gender rule should be enshrined within the constitution and should be across board in both public and private bodies
- ❖ Focus on implementation of article 27 of the bill of rights and the provision related to not more than 2/3 gender rule and related provision e.g. article 97,98 and 100 and article 43 of the Constitution.
- ❖ Develop a clear national women's agenda with a clear time frame.
- ❖ Article 100 bill – all party lists should start with the name of a woman

Way Forward (4)

- ❖ Sensitize communities on the dangers of FGM
- ❖ Property rights – women too have a right to own property
- ❖ Empower women to be independent enough and not offer their children for early marriages
- ❖ The government is working with stakeholders to address these challenges and build on the gains. The strategies or measures are people-centered, bearing in mind that ending FGM is about persons whose basic rights to live free have been violated.
- ❖ Kenya has a legal and policy framework geared towards the protection of women and girls from FGM and other harmful practices. Article 53 (1) (d) of the Constitution of Kenya provides that “Every child has the right to be protected from abuse, neglect, harmful cultural practices, all forms of violence, inhuman treatment and punishment, and hazardous or exploitative labor”.

Way Forward (5)

- ❖ Ensure we have fully prescriptive laws and self executing laws
- ❖ All parties should ensure their lists to IEBC are 2/3 compliant
- ❖ Expand our territories - 50/50 appointive positions i.e. ministries and parastatals, 30% implementation in appointment of chiefs, unions, boards, etc.
- ❖ 50/50 active participation of women in implementation and review processes
- ❖ Link FGM, early marriages, VAWG etc.. with the national priorities e.g. UHC
- ❖ GBV – proposal to remove bail
- ❖ Mixed representation a better deal for women
- ❖ Succession – right to equal rights
- ❖ Sanctions should be introduced for compliance purposes
- ❖ Finally, let leadership grow beyond 33% to 50%.