Women and Political Leadership:
Facilitating Factors in Tanzania

UONGOZI Institute

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Preface

Based on a women and empowerment framework, this study used a life history approach to identify the factors in their life cycle that influenced and helped women during their journey to political empowerment in Tanzania. Twenty women shared with the authors their lived experiences of this journey. This study shows that parents, particularly fathers, played a central role in their empowerment, either by investing in their daughters' education or by inspiring them and serving as role models to them. Further, most of the women interviewed indicated that their spouses supported their leadership journey by providing emotional support and the financial resources needed, and by helping them to maintain a family-work balance. The respondents underscored the importance of these role models, who, as they explained, stirred their interest, supported their determination to make a difference and their personal ambition to attain a leadership role, and inspired in them a personal desire to serve others. Schools and teachers also influenced them on this journey; nurturing the respondents' leadership talents by giving them leadership roles when they were schoolgirls, encouraging their progress, and serving as another form of role model. Both informal and formal networks were key resources in enhancing the participants' capacity and in supporting their aspirations to fulfil their potential.

Although external factors can serve an empowering role, the decision to engage or disengage always originates in the individual. In this respect, their specific traits also played a central role in influencing the choices made by the women in this study. Some of these traits included determination to make a difference, the ambition to lead others, the drive to serve others, and a commitment to the hard work required to realise their goals.

This study recommends collaboration and coordination among key institutions to provide the research, training, mentoring and education needed to nurture and promote women's leadership in their chosen areas of influence.

Acknowledgements

Contents

List of Abbreviations

AU	African Union
CCM	*Chama Cha Mapinduzi*
CSO	*Civil Society Organisation*
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
MP	Member of Parliament
NCCR	National Convention for Construction and Reform
TGNP	Tanzania Gender Network Programme
UI	UONGOZI Institute
T-WCP	Tanzania Women Cross-Party Platform
UWT	Umoja wa Wanawake Tanzania (Union of Women of Tanzania)
VICOBA	Village Community Banks

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background to the Study

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Representation of Women in Political Office

Globally, there has been some progress in terms of women's participation in politics; however, this progress has been slow. In August 2015, only 22% of all national parliamentarians were female—an unimpressive increase from 11.3% in 1995. Worldwide, Rwanda had the highest number of women parliamentarians, having won 63.8% of seats in the lower house (Inter-Parliamentary Union [IPU], 2015). Globally, by August 2015, only 11 women were serving heads of state and 13 were heads of government (IPU, 2015); by January 2015, only 17% of government ministers were women, most of whom were overseeing social sectors. In 37 states, women accounted for fewer than 10% of parliamentarians in single or lower houses, and in six chambers there were no women at all (IPU, 2015). According to UN Women, these statistics are both worrying and impossible to justify (UN, 1995).

Tanzania is making some effort to promote women in leadership, yet advances are going at a slow pace in many of the top political leadership positions. For example, since proclaiming its independence from British rule in 1961, by 2015 no women in Tanzania had occupied a top-level leadership position, such as that of president or vice-president, prime minister, chief minister or attorney general. The first ever woman to become Vice-President was Her Excellency, the Hon. Samia Suluhu Hassan, after the general elections in 2015. In the same 2015 general elections, out of 1250 candidates in total only 238 women, or 19%, won a seat in Parliament (National Electoral Commission, 2015).

These trends do not seem to have improved significantly over the years. For example, from 1961 to 1965 7.5% of members of parliament (MPs) were women, and this percentage dropped to 3.5% during the 1970 to 1975 parliamentary elections. This forced the ruling party to introduce affirmative action to provide a quota of seats for women through their political parties. In the 1985 and 1990 elections, the percentage of women MPs going through the constituency seats was 2%; in 1995, it rose to 2.9% and in 2000, to 4%. In the 2005 Parliament, 97 of 324 seats were held by women, of whom 17 were elected through constituency seats—an increase from 12 in 2000 and eight in 1995. In 2010, there were 125 women altogether of a total 339 MPs, and 20 of these were elected from the constituencies (IPU, 2015).

Both these numbers and ratios are inequitable from a human rights perspective. This was eloquently expressed by the UN Women's Executive Director, Ms Phumzile-Mlambo-Ngcuka at a high-level thematic debate on advancing women and girls, who stated: 'Gender equality is a shared vision of social justice and human rights'. She emphasised that sustainable development cannot be achieved if the potential of half the world's population is constrained: 'We cannot win if we leave half of the team out of the game'. The three requirements for promoting gender equality are a tireless political will, unwavering leadership and an unwavering investment in the agenda for women and girls (Mlambo-Ngcuka, 2015).

1.1.2 Statement of the Problem and Study Rationale

While it is clear that there are some women in political leadership positions today, it is not known how and why some women have been able to break through some of the barriers in Tanzania's political environment. There are also few empirical studies on the reasons why women choose to become political leaders, the ways in which women go about getting elected, how leadership affects women, and how to overcome the barriers women encounter on their journeys to become leaders. Existing empirical studies on women and politics in Tanzania have focused on the challenges that

women face in political spaces. This research fills this gap by exploring the factors that facilitate women leaders to access and influence the political process at different levels in Tanzania.

1.1.3 Study Objectives

The overall objective of this study was to explore the factors that facilitate the success of women in attaining political leadership positions in Tanzania. The specific objectives of this research were

- to identify the specific factors that facilitate the success of women in attaining political leadership positions

- to solicit views on how women can be better prepared for political leadership

- to draw policy implications from the results of this study.

1.1.4 Defining Leadership

There is no single agreed definition of leadership. Some definitions describe the attributes of leaders, while others describe their functions. The Business Dictionary defines leadership as the activity of leading a group of people or an organisation or the ability to do this. It involves establishing a clear vision and sharing that vision with others so that they will follow willingly, and provide the information and knowledge and methods to realise the vision (Business Dictionary, 2015).

For the purpose of this study, the team adopted Kruse's (2013) statement that 'leadership is a process of social influence, which maximises the efforts of others towards achievement of a goal'. According to Kruse the focus of this definition (which connects to this study) is that leadership stems from social influence and not from power or authority. Further, leadership requires others—and there are many styles of leadership and many paths to being an effective leader.

1.1.5 The Conceptual Framework

This study is guided by the conceptual framework of women's empowerment and gender equality (Longwe, 1991), which starts by recognising that gender is a socially and culturally constructed attribute based on the roles that men and women play in their daily lives. Gender refers to the characteristics, opportunities and relationships associated with being a female or male, and the sociocultural relationships between women and men, and girls and boys. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are inculcated through the process of socialisation. Like the concepts of class and ethnicity, the term gender is an analytical tool used to capture a social process. The term sex refers to the biological distinction between females and males with which they are born, while the term gender refers to a socially and culturally learned identity and relationship—what is often referred to as woman or man, girl or boy. Unlike sex, gender identity is not a biological fact and unlike sex, gender relations can and do change over time in different social and political climates. Because it is socially and culturally constructed it can subsequently be deconstructed over time.

In the context of political development, we conceptualise the journey to women's empowerment and leadership as climbing a spiral staircase. At the top, women will have achieved equal control of the factors of production, and participate equally in development. To reach the top, women have to scale five levels:

- equal control in decision making

- equal participation in decision-making processes

- attain an understanding of fair and equal gender roles and the gender division of labour (conscientisation)

- attain equal access to the factors of production

- attain equal access to material welfare (food, income and healthcare).

The bottom of the ladder provides a foundation upon which basic skills, attitudes and norms are formed—in the context of this study, this constitutes experiences in childhood, the family and surrounding communities. A weak and disempowering foundation can have a lasting negative effect on a young girl. It is at this level that a girl starts realising that she is a worthy human person and affirming her own worth. The second level is attained in formal and informal education, where the individual child is equipped with the tools of what Freire (2005) called 'awakening critical consciousness'. It is at this level that women are able to look critically at the world in a dialogical encounter with others. This is the stage where women form the social networks that express collective discontent with discriminatory processes. It is at this stage that some individuals decide to engage with these discriminatory processes by entering the structures that discriminate against them. At the highest level of the spiral staircase one is fully empowered as an individual.

1.2 Research Design and Methodology

This is qualitative study that sought to explore the factors that facilitate women's access to political positions. This study was based on a life history approach that collected primary information from the 20 women who told the story of their journey to political participation. Bird (2011) maintains that individual life histories can be used to collect data on processes, decision making and perceptions, and to explore complex inter-relationships. She argues that this approach can generate powerful case studies that are useful for becoming politically engaged.

This approach enabled the research team to contextualise the participants' real lived experiences and interpretations in the wider social, economic and political reality. Thus, the study has identified the social reality created by our participants through the meanings and contexts that are jointly created in social institutions and reflected back in the subjectivity of participants in concrete situations (Flick *et al.* (2004).

1.2.1 Sampling Criteria and Sample Size

The 20 women in our study were selected randomly from a list of all women MPs from the Parliament website. They were categorised into groups that reflected different features of interest. The first category was based on the manner in which they entered Parliament—that is, whether they were elected, given special seats or appointed. These were further categorised into the five geographical zones that they represent.[1] The other category was their years of experience in Parliament.

Three women respondents were purposefully selected. One was an MP and district commissioner, and another was an MP and regional commissioner. They were chosen to capture the double roles they play, since each role has different responsibilities. The third respondent was Gertrude Mongela, a retired politician who had filled various positions, including that of the UN Assistant Secretary-General responsible for organising the Fourth UN Conference on Women who was also the first President of the Pan-African Parliament. Therefore, in total, we interviewed 20 women politicians. Specifically, we interviewed two regional commissioners, one district commissioner, 16 MPs and one retired MP. The diversity represented by this selection enabled the team to access rich and varying perspectives of women in politics.

1.2.2 Data Collection Method

The data collection technique for the study was based on both secondary and primary sources. The primary source used a life history approach that was supplemented by documentation. We used a semi-structured interview guide, which allowed our respondents to engage in an in-depth narration of their lived experiences. The role of the researchers was to listen, record and probe further into areas that needed clarification or where more information was required. The life narratives were preceded

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[1] The five geographical zones were the Central, Coastal, Northern, Lake and Southern Highlands Zone.

by some closed-ended questions that probed into the pre-determined background factors that are historically assumed to be main enablers or barriers to leadership.

1.2.3 Data Analysis

The analytical procedures we used were based on textual interpretations and descriptions of the real-life experiences of the respondents. During the data collection process, the interviews were conducted in Swahili and audio taped or recorded with the permission of the respondents. Before the analysis, the recordings were transcribed by experienced transcribers under the guidance of the research team.

To monitor and control the quality of the text, the researchers cross-checked the transcripts while listening to the tape recordings. In addition, the transcripts were translated into English by the researchers themselves. The data were sorted into themes and systematically analysed to identify issues emerging from the discussion and to interpret meanings under thematic areas. Some detailed narratives and quotations have been used in the findings chapter to provide evidence, explanations and a deeper understanding of the issues raised by the research, as well as to give the respondents voice as a way to demonstrate the value of their narratives.

1.2.4 Ethical Issues

For ethical purposes, the respondents were asked to be part of the team after sharing the objectives of the research. They agreed to use a tape recorder to record the interviews. They also agreed to have their views shared in the report. The team has made extensive use of the respondents' views in the data findings.

1.2.5 Study Limitations

The qualitative nature of this research and the life history approach used in this study have the weakness of limiting the level of generalisation of the analysis. However, the combination of the approach of primary data with secondary data from the literature review enabled the team to overcome this limitation.

The timing of the research was a challenge that forced the team to scale down the number of participants from 40 to 20 and to change the approach. The research team had planned to conduct most of the interviews during Parliament sessions. However, the team underestimated the election fever that was generated during the previous Parliament session, so that most MPs were divided between preparing the groundwork for their campaigns and attending Parliament sessions. Thus, it was difficult to attain the targeted number of participants when Parliament was in session. Thus, the team decided to reduce its sample to 20 women who agreed to be interviewed at different times—a feature that forced the team to change its approach from a triangulation method to a purely qualitative method based on a life history approach. Further, discussing the individual pathway of each woman's political journey took the research team longer than anticipated.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Women's Participation in Political Leadership

Most of the literature on women's participation in political leadership has revolved around the barriers or limiting factors that hinder many women from accessing political spaces. There is a paucity of information on the factors that have enabled some women to break through the multitude of barriers that women face throughout their life cycle. Nevertheless, throughout the political history of the world there have been powerful women who have occupied various political spaces. For example, as far back as the seventeenth century, the Kahina—a queen of a powerful Berber tribe of Djeraous in what is now Algeria—is believed to have provided both the spiritual and military leadership that prevented Arab expansion into her country (Becker, 2015). In Ghana, Yaa Asantewaa (who was nicknamed by the British the 'Joan d'Arc of Africa') led the last combat against the British in the famous Yaa Asantewaa War (Moore, 2013).

Similarly, in Zimbabwe, Mbuya Nehanda, a nineteenth-century spirit medium, provided military and spiritual leadership during the First Chimurenga War of resistance against the British (Gabriel 2007). More recently, Margaret Thatcher—known as the Iron Lady—became the first female leader of the British Conservative Party and later the Prime Minister, earning the party three consecutive victories. Angela Merkel, the Chancellor of Germany, has been ranked by Forbes (2015) as the world's most powerful female politician and is reputed to have strengthened the German economy to become the fifth-largest economy in the world. It is also believed that Merkel has been instrumental in influencing the stability of the Euro in the European Union. In Tanzania, the late Bibi Titi Mohamed was a historical icon in the struggle for independence through her persuasive skills.

The many women who have attained political leadership positions have had a significant influence on their country; however, compared with men,

the number remains small. Thus, the general focus of the current study is to devote attention to the features that have allowed women to rise to leadership positions, without downplaying the barriers that have stood in their way.

Tanzania has had a number of women holding powerful international and regional positions. Of these, Gertrude Mongella has already been named. The Hon. Asha-Rose Migiro became the first woman to hold the position of Deputy Secretary-General of the UN—the second highest civil service position in the world. Further, Anna Tibaijuka became the first African woman to head UN Habitat, while Amina Salum is Tanzania's permanent representative to the UN and is also a representative of the AU in the UN.

The following section examines the literature on the factors that have helped women overcome some of the barriers facing them in accessing positions of political leadership. There seems to be a general consensus that a legal framework is central to facilitating an enabling environment for women with political ambitions. This framework also provides a basis for women to demand the right to participate in politics.

2.2 Socioeconomics and Women's Political Participation

The political practices, norms and values that govern electoral processes have the potential either to enable or to restrict women from political participation. Most gender norms are learned at home as they are transmitted from parents to their children. The factors that constitute culture are learned through a socialisation process that begins at home and then extended to communities and translated into political norms and practices. As the chairperson of the AU until 2017, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma (2015), stated when addressing the Women in Parliament Global Forum: 'Gender equality begins at our homes'.

A study conducted by Steele and Barling (1996) on how socialisation processes affect the career choices of young women concluded that mothers had a stronger effect on transmitting values and attitudes to daughters than fathers. Mothers influence young women's perceptions of

what is considered 'appropriate' behaviour (Steele & Barling, 1996). By implication, if a mother has internalised the stereotyped roles that assign political roles to men, her daughter will more likely be influenced by such attitudes, which will not motivate her to seek a political career. However, Steele and Barling's (1996) study has not stood the test of time, as more and more women enter what were previously considered male-dominated fields, including political spaces. Additionally, this study does not explain why and how daughters protest against mothers' attitudes on gender stereotyped roles, or consider the alternative possibility that daughters may be influenced by their fathers' attitudes.

There are few studies in the Tanzanian context that have examined the power of parents in influencing the career choices of their children generally, and their daughters in particular. Most studies rely on generalisations of the socialisation process leading to gender-prescribed roles. Peterson and Runyan (1993) argued that the socialisation process defines the level of political engagement for women and men. The agents of socialisation include the family, schools, religious institutions and the state apparatus and the media. The authors further assert that sociocultural factors contribute to the structural obstacles by which institutions and practices sustain the gender hierarchy by generating conformity and compliance. This focus does not engage with processes of resistance to gender stereotypes.

A study conducted by Lavine (1982) administered a multiple regression analysis and indicated that girls' perceptions of higher maternal power are significantly related to a preference for a less feminine stereotyped career. Further, the same study revealed that the presence of a career mother in a family was not related to girls' future career choices. As will be discussed in the findings chapter, the current study's respondents held different views about their parents' influence on their own political ambitions.

A study conducted by Kandusi and Waiganjo (2015) examined how sociocultural factors affect women's participation among the Maasai communities in Tanzania. The results indicate that a belief in male supremacy and dominance has made it difficult for both women and men to accept women as political leaders. It has also tended to create

the perception that women are not capable of assuming formal political leadership positions. When women internalise these attitudes, they tend not to see that taking a leadership position has benefits, even when they are in leadership roles. Thus, by implication, the features that determine the careers women choose are largely influenced by their parents and surrounding communities.

However, while the social construction of gender is learned, it can also be deconstructed. Various studies show that undergoing formal education has the potential to deconstruct gender roles and provide an enabling environment for women to participate in politics.

2.3 Formal Education and Women's Political Participation

In an article on the education of women and girls in Tanzania, Meena (1996) locates existing educational gender inequalities in the socioeconomic and cultural norms and attitudes in Tanzanian society. She asserts that the relationship between women and men affects their participation in formal education. This subsequently shapes the perceptions that inform curriculum designers, textbook writers, audio-visual aids designers, teachers and pupils. In the field of knowledge, it has constrained women's participation as producers and consumers of knowledge because of the low participation of women in institutions of higher learning. Thus, education plays a vital role in the social construction of gender in Tanzanian society by allocating gender-specific packages that reinforce existing gender gaps.

Many structural factors influence whether women and men derive equitable benefits from educational processes. Education on the social capacity to transform gender relations can occur in the home, the school, the community and the workplace. Education can conscientise men and women on the need to transform oppressive gender relations and create empowering social relations that consider women and men equal partners in development. The liberating effect of understanding gender as a social construct makes it possible to appreciate how the relationship

is constructed attitudinally, socially, institutionally, politically and economically.

A study conducted by Sidney *et al.* (1997) asserts that 'Education is an especially powerful predictor of political participation'. The authors identify a range of the direct and indirect effects of formal education on political participation. in women and men. Its direct effects include the acquisition of knowledge and communication skills useful for public debate, and direct training in political analysis in courses with relevant content. Further, the authors claim that the school experience offers young people an early apprenticeship in politics, where they can exercise leadership, develop the civic skills of cooperation and negotiation, and acquire the bureaucratic and organisational skills useful for political activity. This is because individuals are exposed to a variety of activities, including participation in school governments, clubs and voluntary community-based activities. Additionally, schools open the door for future access to high-paying jobs and networks, which are an asset for political engagement (Sidney *et al.* 1997).

Expanding on the role of education in political participation, Burns *et al.* (1997) identifies several factors that motivate women and men to participate in politics, including a childhood socialisation in politics, educational levels, participation in high school clubs, employment in jobs providing political connections and opportunities, participation in non-political organisations, participation in religious organisations, available time, family income, own income, and experiences of gender-based discrimination. The study concluded that women had a higher endowment than men in some factors positively related to political participation, such as participation in high school clubs and religious associations, as well as the experience of gender-based discrimination. However, women's endowments in these participatory skills were outstripped by that of men. Men's advantages in political participation were linked to their stronger access to two key factors: education and the types of jobs that provide the resources and contacts needed for political participation.

However, Goetz's (2003) study cautioned that educational attainment does not automatically result in increased numbers of women in formal politics, and referenced the USA, where gender parity in education has been attained, yet a gender gap persists in political participation. Alternatively, countries such as Rwanda, Uganda and Tanzania, as well as a few Asian countries, have managed to reduce the gender gap in political participation despite a remaining gender gap in educational attainment.

Other studies have focused on the indirect effect of education on individual development. Sylva (1994) argues that social sentiments and cognitive capacities, such as intelligence and school curriculum, are also influenced by schools, and may be just as powerful in predicting outcomes in later life. The indirect effects of education include development of habits, traits, social responsibility and dispositions that enable individuals to perform tasks and relate to others. Sylva (1994) further argues that it is at school that the child starts to develop feelings of self-efficacy and a belief in the power of effort, as well as defining what the child considers to be success or failure. The author concludes that 'The impact of school is potentially powerful' (Sylva, 1994), and most of the effects of school are indirect because they are mediated by the change and development of individual cognition and motivation. She asserts that 'social responsibility is perhaps the most important of all other effects' (Sylva, 1994). This position was confirmed by the current study's dialogue with 20 Tanzanian women on the effect of education on their political path.

In linking education and political consciousness in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire (2005) states:

Every human being no matter how ignorant or submerged in a culture of silence he/she may be, is capable of looking critically of the worlds in a dialogical encounter with others if provided with proper tool for such an encounter. The 'awakening of critical consciousness' leads to the expression of real discontent precisely because the discontents are real components of real situations.

Although Freire was writing for the oppressed masses generally, with a focus on the Brazilian context, his key message on education for liberation is relevant to all oppressive systems, including the patriarchal system.

In summary, sociocultural factors shape and influence the nature and level of women's political participation. Such norms influence the design of political rules, laws, processes and institutions. Such institutions include the type of electoral regime, as well as the type and practices of political parties.

2.4 Electoral Regimes and Women's Participation in Politics

Matland (1998, 2006) classes world electoral systems into three main groups: plurality majorities, semi-proportional representative systems and proportional representative systems. The *Election Act of Tanzania Section 81* and the *Election Act of Zanzibar Section 80* provide a 'first past the post' system—also known as a plurality majority. This system is guided by the principle that the winner takes all. In this system, the contest is held in a single member district, and the winner is the candidate who has the most votes, who is not necessarily one with an absolute majority of votes. In contrast, the proportional representative system is based on conscious efforts to reduce the disparity between the party's share of national votes and parliamentary seats. This system is supposed to make it possible for very small minorities to be represented. Most studies claim that proportional systems are likely to promote gender equality than the first past the post system. However, electoral regimes do not operate in a vacuum—they are influenced by the socioeconomic context within which they operate.

2.5 Political Parties and Women's Participation in Politics

Political parties are the major gatekeepers in determining which candidates will be put up for election. They play a critical role in enabling or blocking women's participation in decision-making processes by using existing internal leadership structures that determine who leads the parties and who makes decisions about the nomination processes of electoral candidates. Various studies on internal party democracy in Tanzania have concluded that most political parties are male dominated and decision-making processes are hierarchal, and that women play a minimal role in these decisions (Makulilo, 2014; Meena & Makulilo, 2015), which affects the nomination of candidates.

Several studies have identified different nomination procedures that affect the participation of women in electoral positions. One body of work has identified two types of nomination: one that is rule oriented and one that is not guided by formal rules (Czudnowski, 1975; Lovenduski & Norris, 1993; Maitland & Studlar 2004). The rule-oriented type sets a benchmark for the minimum number of women to be nominated as candidates, while the type without rules does not define any such limits. Previous research claims that in the rule-oriented system there is a higher probability of improving women's participation because these rules and procedures are open and subsequently enable women to hold their political parties accountable if they fail to comply. Additionally, political parties that are guided by formal rules are more likely to build a culture of dialogue, which will enable members to present creative strategies to increase women's representation (Maitland, 2006).

A study commissioned by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (2014) identified three ways that candidates can be nominated: via legislated candidate quotas, legislated special reserve seats, and voluntary party quotas. These three systems differ in terms of helping to increase the number of women in representative organs of the state. The voluntary system involves political parties setting their own benchmarks for the number of women and men for party candidates. This

system is practised in some Scandinavian countries, such as Sweden, and in Africa it was adopted by the South West Africa People's Organisation in local government elections.

Tanzania uses legisled reserve seats. In Tanzania, special parliamentary seats for women were first introduced during the one-party era in order to increase female representation in the legislature. The quota system was not applied to women only. Other groups that received these seats included youths and members of the defence force. The idea of special seats was to ensure that the voices of special categories of citizens were heard in Parliament. The goal was not to create a balance, but to incorporate these voices, which otherwise would have been at a disadvantage in the normal electoral process. However, studies have expressed concern over the effect of the quota system on women's competitiveness (Maitland, 2006; Makulilo, 2009; Meena, 2003).

While the effect of quotas has increased the number of women in representative organs of the state, Tanzania's special seats modality raises several questions. For example, there is an issue of representation— whose interests are these women representing? These MPs do not enjoy the full status of MPs—they are not eligible for certain positions, such as that of prime minister or as chairs of parliamentary committees. They do not have constituencies and subsequently do not qualify for constituency funds, which means they do not have the resources to engage with the women they are supposed to represent. Thus, quota systems should go together with processes that seek to create a level field for women and men to compete and win fairly.

Regardless of whether sociocultural factors, electoral regimes and political institutions enable or constrain women, the decision to engage in electoral politics ultimately belongs to individual women. The elements that motivate individuals to make the best of the factors that facilitate development and overcome the obstacles are connected to their own personal traits and values.

2.6 Personal Traits and Values and Women's Participation in Politics

Schwartz's (1992) theory defines ten universal values humans need to thrive. These are power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, self-direction, universalism, benevolence, tradition, conformity and security. Each of these values expresses a distinct goal. Schwartz further specifies the structure of the relationships among these values; for example, the goal of openness to change is related to self-direction and stimulation. This encourages independence of thought, feeling and receptiveness to change. The author claims that these qualities contradict the conservative values of conformity, tradition and security. The conservative values call for submissiveness, self-restriction, preserving traditions and maintaining stability. In contrast, transcendence values include universalism and benevolence. This conflicts with self-enhancement values.

Meanwhile, McCrae and Costa (1996) define personal traits as 'dimensions of individual differences in tendencies to show consistent patterns of thought, feelings, and action'. In differentiating values from traits, Roccas et al (2002) maintain that traits are enduring dispositions, while values are enduring goals. Traits describe what people are like, while values refer to what people consider important. Thus, values serve as guiding principles in people's lives (Schwartz, 1992). The issue of how personal values and traits influence a woman's choice to engage in politics, and subsequently influence her political style, has not been researched in Tanzania. While this study cannot claim to fill this gap, the life experiences of the 20 women in this study include what they perceive to be the personal values and traits that they bring to politics. The personal experiences described here provide some insight into the way in which the individuals in this study have been products of their larger context, and show how their individual traits have helped each individual to overcome the multitude of barriers she encountered in becoming a politician.

Chapter 3: Key Findings and Analysis

3.1 Part A: Respondents' Background

Part A of this section describes the background information of our respondents, including their age, education and experience in leadership, while Part B describes the factors that played a role in nurturing the respondents' political leadership talents. These include the educational background of the respondents' parents, support given to them by family members, the role of their teachers, the type of studies they undertook, their role models and their networks.

3.1.1 Age Range

Only one of these respondents was between 20 and 35 years of age, two were between 35 and 45 years old, five were between 45 and 55 years old and 12 respondents were aged 55 or above. This age range provided the researchers with a variety of issues on the intergenerational features that may facilitate women's participation in politics. It also included a variety of challenges specific to an age cohort. This age range also mirrors the composition of female MPs, which probably results from the challenges of balancing child-rearing tasks with political responsibilities and demands.

3.1.2 Political Status of the Respondents

Of the 20 respondents, 12 held special seats, three were in opposition parties and five in constituency seats. One respondent was a regional commissioner, one was a former MP and one MP was appointed by the President. This representation generally reflects the picture of women in

Parliament, most of whom hold special seats, while a very small minority enter Parliament through constituency representation. According to our research findings, women who go through constituency seats have to prepare themselves more as they attempt to break through a male-dominated space.

3.1.3 Political Party Affiliation

Of the 20 respondents, 16 were from the ruling party, *Chama Cha Mapinduzi* (CCM) and four were from opposition parties. Of the latter, two were from Chadema, one from the Civic United Front and one from the National Convention for Construction and Reform (NCCR-Mageuzi). Again, this mirrors the representation of ruling party women in Parliament. Historically, the ruling party, CCM, has had most the MPs and most women MPs. For example, in the 2010 election, only 21 women were elected in the 239 constituency seats. Of these, 19 were from the ruling party, one was from Chadema and one was from NCCR-Mageuzi. The ruling party has more resources and a well-established electoral base from village to national level, and subsequently has a greater chance of opening doors to women through constituency competitions if its leadership has the will to do so.

3.1.4 Level of Experience

The respondents had a mixture of experience of serving in parliamentary politics. Seven had been in Parliament for less than 10 years, six had between 10 and 20 years, two had between 20 and 30 years of experience and five had more than 30 years of experience. One of the respondents had served in Parliament for only one term.

3.2 Part B: Factors that Inspired These Women to Join Politics

This part of the study explores some of the features that inspired and nurtured individual women who entered the field of politics. They are grouped into three categories: (i) the role of family and community; (ii) the role of public institutions, including schools (teachers) and formal networks (such as political parties and civil society organisations [CSOs]; and (iii) their personal traits.

3.2.1 The Role of Family and Community

Family background plays a critical role in providing enabling cultural practices and a supportive environment to girls, which are important foundations for grooming women for political leadership. The social construction of gender starts at the household level, and parents and family members play a central role in the process.

Of the 20 respondents, 15 strongly agreed that their parents' level of education played a significant role in preparing them for political leadership, while two respondents agreed, one respondent agreed to some extent and two respondents strongly disagreed. These data are supported by several stories they told. For instance, the Hon. MP and Minister Jenister Mhagama said:

> Although my mother was in politics for a long time as a regional chairperson of the UWT [Umoja wa Wanawake Tanzania], it was my father who inspired me because of his career as a teacher. After his official hours of work, my father used to give adult literacy classes to women. This community work inspired me to want to take up a position that would enable me to also to support communities, particularly women.

All respondents said that their fathers were instrumental in inspiring them to excel in school—which they considered important in opening

doors for their political career. There were very few who mentioned the direct role of their mothers. The Hon. Susan Lyimo said that her father's education had enabled him to overcome the patriarchal values that acted as a barrier to girls' education: 'My father was among very few men who believed in girls' education in my village during our time'. A similar sentiment was echoed by the Hon. Agripina Buyogera:

> My mother had not gone to school. She did not know how to read and write, but my father was an educated person. Nevertheless, both parents encouraged me to go to school and inspired me to do well.

The Hon. Stella Manyanya observed that, while her father (a teacher) supported her to go to school, it was her mother (who did not have a similar level of education) who provided financial support to her children to go to school, as she was an entrepreneur:

> My mother brewed local beer, made pots and sold rice, and was able to raise sufficient funds for our fees. Our father's salary was not sufficient to provide for our upkeep and meet school fees at the same time.

The Hon. Anna Abdallah noted that the educational background of her entire family laid a foundation for her own education and, later, her political career:

> I come from an elite family. My father was a Grade C teacher during the colonial period, my mother was a nursery teacher, and my maternal grandmother was literate. All the family supported and inspired me to perform well in school.

However, although these observations might reflect the growing trend in Tanzanian society, there are times when the parents' level of education does not help to open doors for women's political leadership careers. For instance, two respondents indicated that their parents supported them despite their low level of education. The Hon. Assumpter Mshama noted:

> There is no direct link between the level of my parents' education and my political career. My mother had four years of primary education, but I do not remember the level of my father's education. He was a businessperson and both my parents supported us and encouraged me to do well in school. For reasons that I cannot explain, my father's business went bankrupt and suddenly the family sank into poverty. This is what motivated me to invest in my education, as I realised this was the only investment that no one can steal, or that can be bankrupted..

Similar sentiments were expressed by the Hon. Zarina Madabida, who saw no direct link between her parents' education and her political career, but she admitted that her mother initially challenged her to join politics whenever she complained about issues not progressing in the direction she wanted. Her mother would say: 'Why are you always complaining? Why don't you join them and bring about the changes you want to see?'

Overall, all the respondents' parents seemed to have been instrumental in building a foundation for the respondents' political careers, particularly in supporting them to have an education, regardless of their parents' educational backgrounds. Fathers, in particular, had a positive effect on their daughters' education.

3.2.1.1 The Extended Family

We sought to examine the extent to which the extended family may have helped to build a strong foundation for the respondents' future leadership careers. The research team was guided by the assumption that the communities in which women live reinforce gender roles and stereotypes, either by evaluating positively the behavioural traits associated with being a female, which suppresses some leadership talents, or by challenging the stereotype. We found that members of the extended family, including grandparents, aunts and the surrounding community, played a role in influencing the respondents' in aiming for a political career, although in a limited manner.

The responses on this topic were mixed. Only seven agreed strongly, five agreed, three agreed to some extent, three disagreed and one disagreed strongly that the extended family had influenced them. The Hon. Beatrice Shelukindo commented that no one in her extended family motivated her in her aim for a political career. The Hon. Naomi Kaihura told an interesting story about her extended family, stating that her immediate aunts did not want her to go to school because her family was from a chiefly clan. According to chiefly clan belief, if women go to school they will be reduced to servants. It was her father who encouraged her to pursue an education—which she considered instrumental in her aiming for a political career.

3.2.1.2 Husbands

Spouse support was identified as a key enabling factor in the development of women's political careers. While this was important for all women political leaders, it was even more critical for young women MPs who were of reproductive age. This finding aligns well with emerging discussions in the literature suggesting that lack of support in the household, particularly from spouses or husbands, is a factor limiting women's participation in politics.

In Tanzania, women carry a heavy burden in most reproductive roles at the household level. When women at reproductive age decide to join politics, they therefore need extra help in what is constructed as their traditional roles. Additionally, when individual women join politics for the first time, they need resources to meet electoral-related expenses, which might include their household resources. Thus, spouse support can be critical in determining women's success in an election.

Responses to this topic again varied. In total, 14 respondents strongly agreed that their spouses supported them in pursuing their political goals, while two agreed to some extent and two strongly disagreed. There were some who said they had the full support of their spouses while they were trying to win an election, then had to persuade their family members,

particularly their spouses, to support them in their political career once they had won. First, they had to grapple with the dilemma of how to break the news of their political aspirations to their immediate family members. One respondent said that, in contrast, men announce their decision to stand and expect automatic support from their family. Thus, the first challenge is to address the traditional view that the man is the head of the household. Another respondent had to deal with wounded pride by convincing her spouse that her decision to enter politics would not alter the expected gender relationship in their home. Another issue is to convince the family that the decision will not negatively affect household resources. Thus, these women require negotiation skills. Spouse support can influence women's decision to join politics and chances of winning, while also influencing women's performance during a political career.

The Hon. MP and Regional Commissioner Stella Manyanya commented that her husband has been a great support and inspiration to her political career:

> To be honest, my husband has been very supportive throughout my political career. I am probably lucky in the sense that both of us are interested in politics, but I was the first to run for election. So when I attempted to get into Parliament for the first time in 2005 and did not succeed, he encouraged me not to give up. In 2010 he was part of my campaign team and, after I won, he has been there for me to support the family in activities that otherwise would have been my responsibility. I must admit I have never experienced the type of prejudice or oppression that other women politicians go through. This is what has enabled me to balance my three responsibilities as Member of Parliament, a Regional Commissioner and a mother.

Similar sentiments were expressed by the Hon. Agripina Buyogera, who explained that her husband was proud to have a wife who was a politician, and that he frequently supports her by running errands for her when her driver falls sick. She gave examples of her husband's supportive attitude:

> My husband has no complex at all, and this has made my career less challenging, particularly in the area of negotiating the demands of time at home. My husband gave me enormous support during the campaign. There were times I was confronted with false accusations from my opponents whose mission was to weaken me. But my husband encouraged me, he told me to go and face them, not to cry in front of the crowd and not to show weakness. 'Instead, go and fight them with all your strength. Then when you come home, lock yourself in the room to cry and tell me what happened.'

Similar sentiments were shared by the Hon. Angellah Kariuki:

> To tell the truth, my husband has been my anchor. He supports me in fundraising, he edits my speeches and at times he organises my transport. In a way, I am very lucky. As you can tell, I am a young mother—if you do not get the support you need, it can be very hard to balance roles.

Similarly, the Hon. Subira Mgalu—a young woman politician with young children—explained that, if it were not for the understanding and support of her husband, she would find it very difficult for her to balance her roles as District Commissioner, MP, mother of two children and wife:

> Because of my career we have been forced to live apart, and there have been many times where he has had to live with one of our children. My parents also supported us by looking after our sickly young child from the tender age of six months until she turned four. For us young mothers, politics is not supportive, and if you are not supported by your own spouse, it really becomes a challenge to balance the multiple roles.

Interestingly, those who partially agreed with this statement claimed that initially their spouses were reluctant to let them go into politics and did not fully support them, but once they were elected, their spouses began to support them. This could be explained in three ways. Firstly,

it is probable that the political position resulted in improved household income, which contributed to improved welfare at home. Secondly, the engagement of the individual in parliamentary politics did not result in threatening the power structure at home. Thirdly, the spouses may have come to terms with their fear of having a powerful wife by realising that personal relationships are not necessarily anchored in external power relationships.

When the Hon. Dr Mary Nagu was persuaded by the UWT to stand for a special seat she had a managerial position with an income of more than USD 2000 in the 1990s. The salary of an MP was then TZS 80 000 per month. The first problem was how to convince her family to accept that she was giving up a lucrative salary package for such a small income. Surprisingly, her husband received the news positively, telling her: 'This is a calling. You never know, the women need you now—if you turn them down, when you need them next, they won't be there for you'.

Some spouses completely disagreed with their wives' decision to enter politics, and their marriage broke up. However, the respondents said that this was not the only factor that led to their marriage ending. For example, the Hon. Al Shamai noted that, initially, her first husband was fully supportive; but, his attitude changed after she was elected and she had to undergo a divorce as per Islamic law. After this, she remarried and has since received a lot of support from her current spouse.

The question here is what causes these differences in the way spouses react when their wives decide to enter politics, and, in particular, why some are fully supportive of their spouses when they choose to enter a political career. One possible explanation is that some men believe in the principles of gender equality and have been able to overcome cultural barriers to the position of women in society. In addition, some men see women's political roles as adding value to their family's social and economic status.

3.2.1.3 Other Role Models

Women politicians, especially young women leaders, are motivated and influenced to enter politics by various others, including women and progressive male politicians. The research findings revealed that most of the women politicians interviewed (17 of 20 respondents) strongly agreed that role models have made a positive contribution to their political path. Several mentioned their women family members, such as their mothers, grandmothers and aunts, as role models to them. For example, the Hon. Anna Abdallah said:

> My first role model was my own mother—a strong, passionate woman. After completing Class 4 in Masasi primary school, I was selected to join Loleza Girls Secondary School in Mbeya—1122 kilometres from Masasi. She used to escort me on the journey, which took us 15 days! For me, this woman symbolised courage, resilience and love.

In addition to having relatives as role models, some respondents said that other women politicians motivated them to seek parliamentary office. These leaders included Anna Abdallah, who was the first woman regional commissioner, and who has been able to support women across party lines, and Gertrude Mongella, the Hon. Anna Makinda, a former regional commissioner, MP, Minister and first woman speaker; Sophia Kawawa, the first chairperson of the UWT and Bibi Titi Mohamed, a veteran political activist. Other women leaders were mentioned as role models from sectors beyond politics, including Professor Penina Mlama, the first woman chief academic officer at the University of Dar es Salaam, who later headed the Forum of African Women Educationalists whose focus is on educating African girls. Professor Mlama was described as being gentle and humble, with a unique way of handling problems that made one believe there was no problem that did not have solution.

Several respondents identified the late Mwalimu Julius Kambarage Nyerere , the first President of Tanzania as a role model for his commitment to building a just and peaceful society. He was described as a progressive male politician who provided these women with a role model and the motivation to become political leaders. For example, four respondents said Mwalimu Nyerere was a man with leadership qualities that included humility, personal integrity and honesty and as being someone who lived and died by his word. He was also admired for being a firm leader who was humble and down to earth. The qualities that attracted most respondents to their role models included humility, honesty, passion and firmness, which are mostly associated with feminine traits that are not normally considered leadership attributes.

In their daily work the respondents adopted complementary qualities and the leadership styles of their role models. Most of the respondents in this study employed a participatory leadership style. For example, the Hon. Jenister Mhagama remarked that she had learned to listen to people and subsequently earned their trust so that together they could find solutions to problems. The people in her community had asked her to enter politics after observing how she related to them.

When the Hon. Subira Mgalu was appointed District Commissioner of Muheza, she used a participatory leadership style to address the district's chronic water problems by convincing the District Management Team that the water problem could be solved using district resources. As a result of her leadership style, the citizens and leadership in the district placed more trust in her. According to this respondent, when a leader is honest, humble and committed to a cause that benefits the people, it is easy to win their full support. The Hon. Anna Abdallah was able to persuade women from different political parties to overcome their ideological differences and form a platform for voicing their collective concerns on women-specific issues. The Hon. Gertrude Mongella was able to convince various stakeholders—including bilateral, UN and multilateral agencies—to support and finance the Fourth Women UN Conference.

The study findings in this area show that women political leaders leave behind footprints when they leave their positions, thus potentially contributing to changing disempowering situations at different levels. For instance, in sharing their varied experiences, all respondents admitted that they have had significant influence in the various positions they have occupied as women MPs and leaders. By joining forces with other women to push for progressive legislation and by supporting community-based initiatives that have implications for women's advancement, women in political leadership provide role models to other women—especially younger women.

Commenting on the footprint she left in politics, the Hon. Devotha Likokola remarks:

> I am exiting formal politics a very proud person. I was a banker before I joined politics. I also tried my hand at business, and I wondered why formal banking shunned poor, hard-working women. It pained me to see how the micro-enterprises meant to support women ended up by impoverishing them. I took the opportunity of my position to advocate the formalisation of VICOBA [village community banks] and facilitated links between VICOBA and formal banking [the postal bank]. In this way I supported VICOBA to grow from a greatly marginalised programme to an economic empowerment movement. I have demonstrated beyond doubt that women are credit-worthy and trustworthy and that they have the potential to grow from engaging in projects for mere survival to leading big businesses.

The Hon. Angellah Kariuki believes that by becoming an MP at a young age she seems to have inspired young women, because they consult her and express their wish to join politics. As the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, she played a crucial role in ensuring the inclusion of gender equality principles and women-specific issues in the new Constitution proposed during the Constitutional Assembly. The Hon. Al Shamai explained that she has helped to make

issues of disability and albinism visible, including working to end violence against people who have disabilities or albinism. She is a role model to young women with albinism, as she inspires them to build up their self-esteem and work towards their own personal progress. The Hon. Gertrude Mongella believes that her work has resulted in a living force—the Beijing Conference, which stirred up unprecedented energy in the global women's movement. Further, the Hon. Anna Abdallah believes that she has left a legacy in facilitating women parliamentarians to overcome their differences when it comes to women-specific issues. She has also supported many young women parliamentarians to understand the hidden rules of the game, encouraging them to be strong and uphold their personal integrity.

This is an important finding. The lack of role models is often cited as a barrier that prevents women—especially young women—from aspiring to leadership positions. Further, in a context where norms and attitudes continue to be informed by belief systems anchored in an ideology of male supremacy, women leaders need role models to inspire them to venture into the socially constructed male spaces, including politics.

3.2.2 The Role of Public Institutions

The social construction of gender begins in the home, is reinforced in communities and schools, and is further legitimated at national institutional levels. However, the deconstruction of these roles can also occur at all these levels. This research sought to explore the extent to which the working environment, as perceived by the respondents, promoted or nurtured their political leadership skills. The research team probed the extent to which various public institutions had facilitated the engagement of women in politics. These institutions included formal schooling, parliaments and cabinets, formal and informal networks and political parties.

3.2.2.1 Schools and Teachers

The school setting and women teachers in particular, play key roles in instilling in children knowledge, morals, ethical standards, responsibilities and work discipline, all of which contribute to women taking up politics. Teachers played a positive role in nurturing the leadership talents in women leaders. Most respondents (15 of 20) strongly agreed that schools and many of their women teachers provided them with an empowering space and institutional support for demonstrating and exercising their potential leadership attributes, building up their confidence, determination and motivation so they could prove their capabilities.

Specifically, all those who agreed with the statement claimed either that their teachers encouraged them to perform well, supported their leadership potential and allocated them leadership responsibilities, or were particularly hard on them by setting them high standards. For example, the Hon. Jenister Mhagama noted:

> I acquired my leadership skills from the leadership positions I held during school. At primary school level I was a deputy head prefect; at secondary school I became a head girl; at college I became a vice-president.

This respondent was of the view that winning the vice-presidency position at school exposed her to many useful experiences and developed her campaigning skills. The college campaigns were tough and generally reflected the challenges that women face during campaigns in national elections. The leadership experience was also salutary because the college had a population of both sexes and different ages. As a result of her experiences, her confidence and communication skills were built up and all this prepared her for the real world where both men and women co-exist.

The Hon. Dr Mary Nagu explained:

> My primary school teachers loved me, and this really inspired me to like schooling. Whenever I performed well, they would reward

me, and whenever I needed additional support, they would help me. In secondary school, I had eye problems and it was my teachers who discovered this and had me treated. I feel that this type of support provided me with a foundation for my future profession and later my political career.

Similarly, the Hon. Agripina Buyogera, who was the only MP from an opposition party representing a constituency, commented that the responsibilities given to her by her teachers played a great role in enhancing her confidence. At school she was a member of the then-ruling party's Young Pioneers, which was a recruitment ground for young party members. She said that the exercises gave her a certain level of confidence and endurance. She was also a school bandleader and a member of the school choir. She believed that all these activities enhanced her self-confidence and gave her voice and courage. She considered that these experiences were a building block and foundation for her political career.

The Hon. Beatrice Shelukindo had a different experience. While her primary education enhanced her self-confidence, her secondary education did not:

> My father was a church minister, so I was offered a scholarship to study at an English medium primary school, which had teaching methodologies which promoted my self-confidence, my voice and ability to question. But when I entered secondary school this worked against me. I had to confront an environment which silenced us, and whenever I dared to ask questions, I found myself in trouble with my teachers. So I was constantly being punished, but fortunately this experience did not kill what had been instilled in me during my primary education.

The experiences of these women political leaders are supported by most of the existing literature on the social construction of gender roles, which shows that teachers and the school in general play a double-edged role. Schools and teachers can support girls to question stereotypes by nurturing their leadership qualities, or they can reinforce the learned behaviour that

discourages girls from uncovering their leadership potential, including political leadership.

3.2.2.2 Political Parties

Other than the women-specific units in political parties, particularly the UWT, the mainstream political party structures have not opened their doors to women and sometimes they even discourage women from engaging in politics. Most respondents were of the view that women with potential who are able to compete are fobbed off with a promise of being given special seats. In sharing their personal experiences in political parties they all referred to the special seat arrangement, which is used to deflect women away from representing a constituency. For example, the Hon. Magdalena Sakaya explained:

> My political party has very clear gender equality principles, as spelt out in our Constitution and even in our policy documents. But, in practice, the decision-making processes within the party are basically male dominated and when it comes to nominating and supporting candidates, the equality principle is not applied.

Some of the respondents had joined opposition parties with the belief that they would open more doors to give them voice and opportunities for participation in decision making. As the Hon. Magdalena Sakaya remarked:

> This is what made me join an opposition party. The environment in government and within the ruling party is suffocating. I did not want to join a party that would have suppressed my voice.

However, in contrast to this belief, opposition politics is still guided by patriarchal ideologies that sometimes marginalise women's leadership contributions.

The experiences described above, together with the works cited in the literature review, confirm that political parties act as gatekeepers in

deciding who can and cannot enter politics, who has access to political resources and who is discriminated against in terms of accessing such resources.

3.2.2.3 Supportive Networks

Social and supportive networks are a key resource for women political leaders and they are useful ways of improving leadership at different levels. In total, 14 respondents strongly agreed that their networks were highly supportive in helping them to leadership positions, with only a few strongly disagreeing with the proposition. The usefulness of these networks varied. For instance, most of the respondents with more than 20 years of experience in Parliament singled out the women-specific body of the then-ruling party—popularly referred to as the UWT—as an important network that either pushes or supports individuals to enter politics, sometimes against their will.

Other respondents referred to women and gender-oriented CSOs that offer training, including the Tanzania Gender Network Programme (TGNP). Other informal networks included family, friends, religious organisations and professional networks. The support ranged from conversations in which the respondents were encouraged to make a decision, to more material support, including financial support during campaigns. Commenting on the need for supportive networks, the Hon. Anna Abdallah said:

> When I entered politics the only supportive network was the UWT. The then-chairperson of UWT, the late mama Sophia Kawawa, used to headhunt educated women to join the party and enter politics. She also provided support to a few of us in politics whenever there were tensions. With time, there emerged other civil society organisations, such as TGNP and T-WCPT-WCP (also known as T-WCP). The latter is a cross-party network that brings together women from all political parties. What we emphasise is, regardless of our political differences, women need to support each other

and, when women-specific issues are tabled we need to bury our differences. This is what facilitated pushing through laws such as the sexual offence bill.

The Hon. Assumpter Mshama noted that, initially she did not have any supportive networks:

> I was working as a cabin crew member in the President's aircraft—a job that isolated me from all social networks. It was not until I decided to quit the job and joined UWT as a district chairperson that I started working with women's groups, which were to be my networks.

The Hon. Grace Puja, a presidential nominee, said that she was exposed to gender-specific and women-specific issues as a member of a women's research group at the University of Dar es Salaam, which started as a collective learning space for women members of academia.

These findings confirm that the social networks in the women's movement (non-governmental, community-based and grassroots women's organisations) and beyond contribute richly to promoting women's leadership when these potential and supportive platforms are well used. Both informal and formal networks have been instrumental in providing a space for women to prepare themselves for political leadership positions.

3.2.2.4 Parliament

Parliament is a strategic learning space where women political leaders can strengthen their leadership competencies and skills. All our respondents noted that being in Parliament exposed them to various experiences by being offered different responsibilities, including ministerial positions, members of parliamentary committees, and regional and district commissioners. Some respondents were also appointed as members to global networks and institutions, such as the IPU, and they subsequently acquired the experience and knowledge that has nurtured their leadership skills. For instance, the Hon. Anna Abdallah was given various positions, including

that of Minister, Regional Commissioner, and chairperson of various parliamentary committees, as well being appointed to join missions on various official parliamentary visits. Subsequently she became a mentor for many MPs.

The Hon. Susan Lyimo entered Parliament as a very junior member of staff from the University of Dar es Salaam, but was later appointed representative of the University Council. She was given a variety of opportunities and positions, including that of shadow Minister of Education and member of the IPU, and she participated in a number of training sessions within and outside the country. She commented:

> It's true that Parliament has nurtured my leadership skills. As a shadow Minister of Education, I have to do a lot more than the minister himself—like searching for evidence, developing arguments and producing an alternative budget. In this way, I must admit, I have improved my research skills, enhanced my analytical capacities and built up my self-confidence.

The Hon. Gertrude Mongella rose from a college tutor to an MP, a High Commissioner to India, UN posts and the first President of the Pan-African Parliament. This journey was made possible in various ways, but initially it particularly derived from being an MP.

The Hon. Devotha Likokola says that she was not born a leader but acquired leadership skills through practice and her involvement in Parliament. When she was a banker she had never held an administrative position, but she was flexible and able to perform other tasks and whenever there was a vacant position, she was called upon to act in that position. However, she had a passion for supporting women in areas of economic empowerment. Joining Parliament and undergoing various courses of training enabled her to use her position to influence the formalisation of women's microfinance institution, VICOBA, and now she is president of the international association of VICOBA.

3.2.3 The Role of Personal Traits and Competencies

This section explores the personal factors—such as traits and competencies—that facilitated these individual women to become involved in politics. The respondents were given a chance to share their personal views about their strengths, passions and capabilities that motivated them to venture into the political arena.

Each individual woman who shared her story had different personal traits and values that inspired her to join politics and determined her style of leadership. All our respondents were self-motivated individuals who challenged the status quo, and had a strong passion to change various features of their milieu. For example, the Hon. Devotha Likokola transformed the attitude that women were not credit-worthy by encouraging the development of microfinance institutions. The Hon. Gertrude Mongella reached the highest level of decision-making because she was frustrated at working in hierarchical systems that did not permit questioning:

> When I was working as a tutor, whenever I questioned the rationale behind certain decisions, the principal would say, 'this is an order from above'. I always wondered where this abstract 'above' was. I asked myself, where is this above? I have to be there, even if its heaven, as all of us will end up there anyway.

When the Hon. Angellah Kariuki first wanted to join politics, she could not use family resources to do so, but instead of being discouraged, she sold some of her own property and continued without financial support from her immediate family.

The Hon. Beatrice Shellukindo knew that the Maasai community was guided by very rigid patriarchal and age-set hierarchal systems that restricted women from decision making. She was able to use her cultural knowledge to win the support of an elderly Maasai man, who subsequently convinced younger community members to vote for her:

> A good number of my constituency members are Maasai. In this cultural setting, Maasai men refused to participate in meetings where both genders were present. I realised I needed to identify an elderly

male Maasai to ask for permission to meet the Maasai elders when I wanted them to vote for me. I had to learn the art of communicating with them. I managed to inspire the elders, and they initiated me as a woman of their community. In the Maasai age-set system, once the elders decide, the younger ones cannot go against the decision. In this way, I have been able to work with these communities using their age-set system.

When UWT women persuaded the Hon. Dr Mary Nagu to quit her well-paid managerial job for politics, she agreed, taking this as a call to serve women. The Hon. Anna Abdallah had noticed that patriarchal ideology used the tactic of divide and rule to prevent women's issues from being addressed. She decided to overcome this by encouraging women across parties to join forces to fight for their rights. This resulted in the formation of the cross-party forum, T-WCPT-WCP.

Collectively, the women in this study share a passion for serving others, a desire and openness to change the status quo, and a determination to make a difference. Most are strong-willed and self-motivated individuals who are extremely passionate in defending their beliefs and yet employ participatory approaches in decision making. Such values and traits have been instrumental in shaping their leadership styles.

3.2.3.1 Role of Education

The study results indicate that education is a salient gateway for women's access to and effective participation in various leadership positions, including political leadership. Of the 20 respondents, only one had a school-leaving certificate without other training, while three had a certificate and other professional training, four had a diploma and other training, five had bachelor's degrees, four had master's degrees, and three had doctorates[2]. Having a higher level of education enabled them to engage with bills when

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[2] The respondents had specialised in a wide range of subjects, including engineering, law, management, public health, pharmacy, economics, agriculture, management, accountancy, mental health and home economics. This implies that there was no specific subject needed to prepare these individual women for political positions.

tabled, participate effectively in committees and articulate issues from their respective constituencies. Well-educated female MPs stand a higher chance of being appointed to positions of power, including ministerial positions, regional commissioners and ambassadors. For example, the Hon. Anna Abdallah believed that her educational level facilitated her entering politics and being assigned to various responsibilities:

> After completing Class 12, I went to the USA to study sociology, after which I went to the UK to study home economics. During my time, there were very few women with this type of education in the country. I was appointed the first woman Regional Commissioner, and later appointed as Minister in the President's office, and have served in various committees during my 40 years of experience in our Parliament.

The Hon. Subira Mgalu considers that her qualification as a certified public accountant has exposed her to various management positions at a young age and, because she excelled in these roles, it was easy for her to get support for the bid for the position of district commissioner. Her skills in financial management enabled her to play an oversight role in supervising local government resources, which made her district stand out as one of the best, with clean Auditor General's reports.

It is clear from this that education has a role in promoting girls' and women's political participation. Firstly, the educational system can support men and women in overcoming the cultural barriers that lead to discriminatory practices at home. Secondly, an educational system can support teachers to discover and nurture leadership talents among both girls and boys, promote their empowerment and build their competencies both within the school and beyond.

3.3 Key Challenges Identified by Respondents

While there are many rhetorical gestures about empowering women in leadership positions, the context has not been adequately transformed to facilitate women's entry into politics. Thus, the working environment

remains a challenge to women. As all the respondents confirmed, the journey to obtaining a political position remains a challenge.

Furthermore, the electoral regime does not provide a conducive environment for women to enter politics through the competitive constituency system. For instance, some respondents stated that political party structures do not support the large-scale entry of women into politics. This forced the women members of political parties to form T-WCP in order to address and advocate for more inclusive political party structures. 'Through T-WCP, we have decided to bury our party ideologies when addressing discriminatory practices within our parties and in other structures' said the Hon. Anna Abdallah.

The third challenge is to overcome fears related to the way that the society at large views politics—particularly electoral politics. The masculinised construction of politics is that it is a dirty game that respectable women are not expected to play. For instance, the Hon. Anna Abdallah stated that the electoral process—and particularly the campaign—is rough for women and at times becomes dirty. There are many barriers that can discourage women: 'Either your male competitor showers you with lots of insulting words, or they use fellow women to "pull you down" by using sexist and derogatory language to discourage you during the campaign'.

The younger respondents mentioned that balancing work-life roles was a major challenge to those choosing to join politics or to be effective upon entering politics. The Hon. Angellah Kairuki and the Hon. Subira Mgalu noted that women with a family have a double burden, as they have to divide their time between caring for young children and a demanding political job. Society expects women to perform the two roles perfectly and, if they do not meet the constructed standards, they are judged for being unable to deliver on these roles.

Related to the above is the perception of society on the role of parliamentarians, and the role of women MPs in particular. Masculinised politics in a resource-starved economic context tends to construe the role of parliamentarians as that of delivering services, such as water, education and health. MPs and representative organs of the state are

considered to be the problem solvers of the practical needs of the society; hence, campaigns are guided by numerous political promises. The Hon. Devotha Likokola stated that women have to demonstrate beyond doubt that they will deliver such services. This has prompted many women, particularly those who represent a constituency, to undertake a lot of groundwork at community level to create a community power base and gain credibility prior to standing as a parliamentary candidate. Hence, the power base of women lies in social capital networks, including networks such as VICOBA and savings and credit cooperatives.

In general the education system does not work to liberate students from the cultural norms and beliefs that hold back one gender. Thus, girls have to rely on individual teachers to discover and support their talent and most students go through the system without such support. It needs a transformative educational system to empower and liberate students and to develop the leadership talents of both girls and boys.

The other challenge raised was the invisibility of the contributions made by the few women in political positions in their communities or in the institutions in which they work. Most of the stories shared by the women in this study do not make the news headlines—a feature that prevents the consumers of media from having an insight into the contributions that women have made in their political spaces.

The analysis and challenges described in this chapter inform the conclusions and recommendations in the chapter that follows.

Chapter 4: Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

All the study respondents agreed that the path to political leadership is like climbing a hill through thorn bushes, where each stage involves cutting through a multitude of thorns before progressing to the next stage, and each individual handling situations in a unique manner. All respondents admitted that the context remains a challenge, and that social and cultural norms and beliefs continue to create structural obstacles that limit women's access to the political sphere. While the rhetoric of empowering women is widespread, the context has not been transformed to facilitate their entry to leadership positions, and the work environment remains difficult. Further, the political contributions that women have made remain invisible. Nevertheless, the equal participation of women and men in political leadership is crucial to realising women's democratic rights and contributing to the overall economic performance of the country.

This study identified some of the factors that facilitate women's attainment of political leadership. These factors need to be recognised in order to inform interventions to support women to access political leadership positions.

- Individual factors: The decision to engage in political spaces is determined largely by the personal traits women possess that help them to overcome systemic, structural and institutional barriers to their political ambitions. These traits include: i) the personal goals they set themselves and their determination to make a difference; ii) the knowledge, competencies and skills they have for undertaking a political career; and iii)

the resources or capacity they have to mobilise resources for electoral campaigns.

- Family and community factors: The groundwork for women's political leadership lies in socialisation processes that begin in the family and community. This study found that the roles of fathers and spouses were important. This underscores the need for interventions that target men to champion women who want to participate in politics.

- Critical structural factors: These factors include the educational system, legal frameworks, political parties, Parliament, and social and civil society networks.

The study observed that the women leaders who participated in the survey brought valuable qualities to the political sphere. In particular, their listening skills, humility, down-to-earth nature and participatory approaches to problem solving were fundamental qualities for the transformational leadership needed to realize Tanzania's sustainable development. However, these competencies and contributions have not been made visible. Our informants' narratives, therefore, and the stories of other women leaders could be used as an advocacy tool to change the mind-set of women and men with negative attitudes about women in leadership positions.

The evidence indicated that the route by which the women entered positions of power tended to determine their degree of political influence. For example, the study found that women who entered Parliament through election to a constituency had greater opportunity to influence their communities than those who entered through special seats. Winning a constituency appeared to confer additional rights for appointment to higher-level political positions than women who entered through special seats.

4.2   Recommendations for government policy makers

Based on the evidence collected by the study, the research team makes the following recommendations to actively promote women's empowerment and leadership in Tanzania.

- Mainstream the collection of sex- and age-disaggregated data within the routine data management and reporting systems of all central government ministries, department and agencies (MDAs) and local government authorities (LGAs). The availability of accurate data will enable the identification of areas in the life-cycle of women during which gender disparities are greatest and inform the design of interventions to empower girls and women.

- Raise gender awareness through effective programmes of education and mass communication to transform the mind-set of girls, boys, men and women that places a disproportionate burden of household responsibility on girls and women, limits their educational and economic opportunities, and legitimates the politics of exclusion. In this respect, it will be necessary to include programmes that target men and identify male champions of women's social and political rights.

- Taking advantage of the ongoing constitutional review process, ensure that the new constitution enshrines gender-equitable principles in accordance with the country's international, regional and national commitments, including the African Union's *Agenda 2063*, the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)*, and the *Beijing Platform for Action*.

- Enforce all relevant laws to ensure that women and men have the same rights to make decisions and control their lives and

livelihoods, and to eliminate all forms of gender-based violence and discrimination. These include women's equal rights within marriage, and their rights to own, inherit and administer land, sign contracts, register and manage businesses, and access credit and financial services. In particular, following the landmark decision of the High Court of Tanzania in 2016, the *Marriage Act (1971)* will need to be revised to raise the minimum age of marriage for women to 18 years of age.

- As per the *Women and Gender Development Policy (2000)* and accompanying *National Strategy for Gender Development* ensure that gender concerns are incorporated into all government policies, plans, strategies and programmes so as to address gender inequalities in Tanzania. In particular, the implementation of gender-sensitive planning and budgetary processes in all ministries, regional and local authorities will be an essential component to ensure that adequate resources are directed toward closing gender gaps. Strengthening the role of gender focal points in sectoral ministries and other government structures will further contribute to the process of gender mainstreaming.

- Ensure that women are increasingly involved in decision-making processes at all administrative levels. In this respect, the continued implementation of the *Local Government Reform Program* to empower local communities and authorities to identify and implement development activities in line with local priorities will be vitally important in promoting women's political participation from the grassroots level up to national representation.

- Put in place programmes and mechanisms that address structural issues that hinder women from entering civil and political leadership. Critically, interventions will be required to improve women's access to economic resources, remove legal and social impediments to their participation in the country's transformation, and ensure their right to control their own lives within and outside the household. In particular, the education system will need to provide opportunities for girls and young women to complete secondary education and transition to tertiary-level studies, and the health system will need to ensure women's access to essential health and reproductive services, including comprehensive family planning services.

- Build awareness of the benefits that women bring to leadership roles, advocate for the equal representation of women and men (50:50) in political participation and leadership, and establish leadership and mentoring programmes that support aspiring young women leaders.

- Support research on the structural impediments to women's effective participation in both public and private institutions, and document and disseminate best practices on promoting women's leadership.

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