

Democracy and Women's Politics in Germany and Tanzania

CHADEMA POLITICIANS ON VISIT IN HAMBURG AND BERLIN

The environment for women participating in politics and business was the topic of a one week study trip for ten female CHADEMA politicians in Germany. Various appointments took the group to national and local political institutions, party head quarters, trade unions and business associations as well as gender equity departments and women's councils. During the talks, despite many differences in both the countries, major similarities were observed relative to difficulties women face in their quest for economical and political power.

Ten female representatives from the Tanzanian opposition party CHADEMA took part in a political study programme, which was organised by Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, commenced on 27th October to 6th November exposing the delegates to political institutions in Germany. Tracing democracy and women's empowerment in Germany the politicians from BAWACHA (Baraza la Wanawake wa Chadema, CHADEMA's Women's Wing) met dialogue partners in the fields of politics, science and economy. Through various presentations and interactive discussions the women gained deep insights into historical development and the present condition of democracy in Germany, shortly after the federal election in September 2013. Furthermore the Tanzanian politicians from the official opposition party could inform their German dialogue partners about the difficulties and challenges they face in realizing democracy in their homeland. In this context the role of politically active women in a highly paternalistic envi-

ronment was one of the principal topics. Cultural distinctions notwithstanding the spokespersons from both countries agreed on basic similarities concerning the drawbacks women have to face in their quest for economical and political power.

During the discussions the BAWACHA representatives showed particular interest for practical examples pertaining to political routines and to projects on the acquisition of women for politics. In this context Christina Schwarzer, Member of Parliament, highlighted the time management, which poses a big challenge to female politicians that are family members and mothers at the same time. Summarized it is all about aligning childcare, house- and family management and social life with committed political work for the party. On their way into and inside politics women have to stay the course in a male dominated area. When planning and organizing political events it might be worth it to reflect on the idea of how children could be part of the event.

Various projects on women's access to politics were presented by Jana Belschner, research associate at the European Academy for Women in Politics and Business, and Dr. Sylvie Nantcha, town councillor (Freiburg) and winner of the 2011 Helene Weber Award, a prize awarded to outstanding women in local politics. These initiatives, that target on a more equitable placement of women's potentials into politics and business, include mentoring and support programs, a touring exhibition on the "Mothers of the German Constitution", network platforms for female politicians and the cam-

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V.

TANZANIA

DANJA BERGMANN

November 2013

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paign "Women – Power - Councils" (the play on words in the German title refers to „Women go for Local Councils“), which established concerted actions in municipalities to encourage women to get involved in communal politics. Especially the project "Democracy needs Women" grabbed the participants' attention. This German-Tunesian project, which is being operated by EAF in cooperation with the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, sets up measures for networking, exchange of experience and political dialogue for women in Tunisian. The overall aim is to improve their participation in politics.

Within the one week of the study trip from Hamburg (twin city to Dar es Salaam) to Berlin diverse institutions were visited such as the African German Business Association, Senate of the Free Hanseatic City of Hamburg, European Academy for Women in Politics and Business, Party Headquarters of CDU Germany, Department for Gender Equality Policies of the Federal Ministry for Families, Senior Citizens, Women and Youths, Association of German Women Entrepreneurs Berlin, German Federation of Trade Unions and the German Women's Council. The range of contacts included politicians from national and local level, scientists, business people and equal opportunity commissioners; and the topics referred to equal opportunities policy, diversity management, integration and women in entrepreneurship. The Germany seminar intended to impart to the participants an in-depth knowledge about the role, structure and functioning of women's policy in a major European party as an impetus for their own work. By organizing meetings with political counterparts the seminar aimed to strengthen self-confidence and impart understanding of the independent role of women in politics and the need to grasp responsibility and initiative within one's own political family.

Besides many similarities regarding the role of women in economy and politics in Germany and Tanzania the discussions pointed out the real-life-day for women in Tanzania:

Women who seek to play an active part in politics here have not only to take the double burden of reconciling family and career. Working life for women in Tanzania often implies the sole responsibility for family management and economic income under harsh living conditions in a paternalistic environment. Above all playing an active role for the opposition party in Tanzania bears a potentially life-threatening risk since the ruling party accelerates measures of stigmatization and repression against critical observers. Women in that situation are exposed particularly unprotected amidst the male dominated world of power and politics.

Repeatedly the participants of the study trip referred to the fundamental need of trainings in civic education and in the field of business and entrepreneurship for women in Tanzania. Only basic political knowledge and a minimum of economical independency provide the platform for higher self-confidence to go for an active role in politics. In agreement the women also pointed to the necessity of a open and transparent information policy under international organisations concerning the actual working conditions for the opposition party CHADEMA in Tanzania.

Against this background, the development and expansion of the BAWACHA women's organisation in Tanzania is both a great challenge and a great opportunity in the run-up to the local elections in 2014 and the national parliamentary elections in 2015. Women in Tanzania account for 51 percent of the population and are an important electoral group. Therefore KAS has set itself the task to help strengthen the role of women in political leadership positions of its partner party through training. The experience from their study trip to Germany will strengthen the BAWACHA representatives in their future personal political careers. In addition they can appear as multiplier in the service of women's empowerment and they can contribute to winning more politically active women. Overall the political study seminar in Germany helps to strengthen the womens's wing of CHADEMA as one of the political partners of Konrad Adenauer Stiftung in Tanzania.