



Newsletter of the African Women Leaders Project - a project of the Club of Madrid, funded by the European Union's Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights and the Canadian International Development Agency

## About AWLP

The African Women Leaders Project (AWLP) is an 18-month Club of Madrid ([www.clubmadrid.org](http://www.clubmadrid.org)) initiative that provides support to high-level women leaders in Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Uganda. Nine missions to the target countries will be organized, with Club of Madrid Members and experts sharing with African decision-makers leadership experiences related to increasing women's access to decision making in the social, economic and political spheres.

The project contributes to the strengthening of female political leadership and, in the long-term, to greater public confidence in women political leaders and increased women's political participation. Project activities revolve around three pillars: political leadership capacity building and gender awareness; building of sustainable international networks; and advocacy actions.

The project is implemented with the help of local partners in each of the countries. Funding comes from the European Commission and the Canadian International Development Agency.

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## Enhancing Women's Political Participation in Sierra Leone

A few weeks before the Presidential and Legislative elections in Sierra Leone, and while the Parliament was debating three laws on women's issues, the Club of Madrid organized the first of four planned missions to the country. The objective of the high-level delegation in country May 28 – June 1, was to encourage women leaders to run in the elections, raise the profile and exposure of women candidates, and advocate for legislative initiatives that protect and enhance women's rights.

*See First and Second Missions, page 3*

## The AWLP Website Airls!

The AWLP has launched its own website following the success of the first and second missions. The website serves to complement, reinforce and disseminate project's main activities and results. The website is a running log of the project's activities and progress, and the discussions undertaken in its public and password-protected forums will also serve as a baseline for the project's conclusions and recommendations that will be presented at the final conference.

*See AWLP is online, page 2*

## Survey Mission to Uganda

Following consultations with stakeholders in Uganda, Club of Madrid conducted a preparatory mission to Kampala at the end of August. The mission's objectives were to present the Club of Madrid and the AWLP, analyse Uganda's needs and current political situation to better tailor the project, and identify achievable objectives for the project.

*See Preparatory Mission to Uganda, page 2*



*AWLP delegation leaders Kim Campbell, Ketumile Masire and Dora Byamukama with Ministers and legislators in Sierra Leone*



## Project Interlocutors Gather at Preparatory Meeting

*Continued from page 1*

On March 25-27, the Club of Madrid convened a strategy meeting to initiate implementation of the African Women Leaders Project (AWLP) in Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Uganda. Partner organisations, associates, and representatives from the Nigerian President's office and from the European Union Delegation in Nigeria participated in the meeting.

During the meeting, participants decided on mission activities, including mission dates, identification of participants, objectives, expected results and monitoring instruments. The participants also agreed on the roles that each organisation will fulfil and clarified administrative procedures for this project.

The meeting allowed all project interlocutors to meet together for the first time to discuss goals and expectations for the project. It also provided the opportunity to raise concerns and address key challenges to implementation in the political context of each target country.

Club of Madrid Project coordinator, Rosemary Kaduru (right) and Bernadette French, Project Officer from CGG, discuss preparations for upcoming missions at the launching meeting



All participants underlined the importance of this project and its potential to have an impact in the region. According to the participant representing the EC delegation in Nigeria, this is the first macro project targeting the issue of political empowerment of women in the area.

## AWLP is online!

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On the website, you'll find:

- **Updates** on mission activities
- A wide selection of **research and policy resources** related to women's political participation and rights.
- A **participants' password-protected area**, where project participants – registered political leaders from target countries – are able to engage in online discussions and debates as well as share lessons learned, best practices and advocacy strategies. The forum also gives participants an opportunity to provide feedback on the utility and impact of the project. Most importantly, it creates a regional network for women leaders. In the participants' area there is also a member database and a chat room for net meetings with other leaders throughout the world.
- A **public online discussion forum** accessible to the general public that establishes communication channels between women leaders participating in the project and their constituencies. Any citizen with an internet connection has the opportunity to present his/her concerns, questions and requests to their representatives, within the discussion format.

Visit the AWLP website at [www.awlproject.org](http://www.awlproject.org). To register in the Participants' Area please contact [info@awlproject.org](mailto:info@awlproject.org).

Design of the AWLP website's homepage

## Uganda: Preparatory Mission

*Continued from page 1*

The team – AWLP Project Coordinator, Rosemary Kaduru and Programme Assistant Sara de la Peña – followed up on existing contacts with relevant stakeholders and reached out to international community representatives, national authorities, and civil society organizations, among others.

Meetings were held with Members of Parliament, women's organizations, partner organization AWEPA (European Parliamentarians for Africa), representatives from UNIFEM and the Delegation of the European Commission to Uganda, and consultants, including the Hon. Dora Byamukama and the Hon.

Miria Matembe, both of whom have recently participated in AWLP missions to Sierra Leone.

Those with whom the delegation met commended the Club of Madrid and said the project was timely given the new parliament, inaugurated in May 2006, now organized on a multiparty basis after a long period of non party democracy in Uganda. There are currently 101 women in the national assembly (they occupy 30% of parliamentary seats), many of them newcomers who need skills to make them more effective in their roles as parliamentarians and leaders.

## AWLP Gets Started in Freetown First Mission to Sierra Leone

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The delegation was led by Club of Madrid Members the Rt. Hon. Kim Campbell, former Prime Minister of Canada, and Sir Ketumile Masire, former President of Botswana. The Hon. Dora Byamukama, former Member of Parliament of Uganda and currently a Member of the East African Legislative Assembly, also participated in the delegation as a political leader and expert in women's participation issues.

The aim of the first mission to Sierra Leone was to strengthen female leadership, build greater public confidence in women political leaders and expand women's political participation in Sierra Leone. To this end, the mission encouraged stakeholders to provide space and support for women's political participation, particularly their involvement in the upcoming elections in August 2007.

The delegation met with over 250 people including a representation of civil society groups, political and civic leaders, female government ministers and parliamentarians, political party executives, political aspirants and government officials, traditional leaders, town and district councillors and journalists in Freetown and Makeni (Bombali district).

Masire, as former President of Botswana offered his particular vision on how a democratic society can not be fully developed without equal participation of women and men in public life. According to Byamukama, women's political participation is crucial as it brings to the fore unique characteristics that give priority to social issues; if women are not present in decision-making, justice and equity will be elusive. In Ms. Campbell's words, "the more women get into politics, the more they will push for change in their favour."

***"We cannot have full development without fully involving women. We have been running a two-piston engine on one piston. We need all hands on deck to make up for lost time."***

*Ketumile Masire, former President of Botswana.*



*Women candidates express their concerns during the training*

***From this training I'm going to better myself. I'm 100% sure I'm going to win (...) And with this training, I assure you that Husainatu is going to be an honourable Member of Parliament"***

*Ms. Husainatu Jalloh, Candidate\**

*\*Ms. Jalloh didn't win a seat in Parliament, but will run again in May 2008 local and municipal elections.*

***This training has been an eye-opener for me***  
*Male campaign manager*

***This is not an 'Us vs. Them' proposition (...) Women need to work with our male colleagues on these issues, because it is for the benefit of our societies as a whole.***  
*Kim Campbell, former Prime Minister of Canada.*

Campbell and Masire urged political parties to continue to support women in becoming actively involved in politics and to consider equal representation as a prerequisite for building credible parties. They also encouraged the promotion of good governance and affirmative action as methods for removing internal party obstacles.

Campbell highlighted the need to promote legislative, national and international norms to eliminate the obstacles for women's rights, and Byamukama encouraged women to support other women and work with men to be accepted. Masire stressed the need for women to form a caucus of female parliamentarians and work together by crossing party lines to achieve common goals.



*Club of Madrid delegation: President Ketumile Masire, Prime Minister Kim Campbell, and Dora Byamukama, MP*

## AWLP Trains Women Candidates

Upon the requests of the participants in the first mission, a practical follow-up workshop was organized a month later on July 10-13 by the Hon. Miria Matembe, former MP and Minister for Ethics and Integrity in Uganda and former member of the Pan-African Parliament. Ms. Matembe facilitated an orientation programme to train female candidates.

This second mission to Sierra Leone was timely as it came just a day before the formal launch of the country's 2007 elections campaign. This election was particularly difficult for women because the country just recently moved away from a system of proportional representation to a constituency based-based electoral system, which makes it harder for women to win elections. Under the proportional electoral system, 14% of the outgoing parliamentarians were women.

Matembe took the women through the key strategies for a successful campaign. Participants, mainly from the three major parties went through practical steps of developing a winning campaign and had a stimulating session in which each participant was given an opportunity to practice the new skills.

Women were also put through a practical session on public speaking and answering questions from constituents and the media. They were trained for two days on facing the press, fundraising and managing the campaign resources, and they were given tips on what to do after a successful campaign that gets you into parliament.



*Hon. Miria Matembe, Former Minister and MP, leading the training for women candidates*

#### **Miria Matembe on strategies for success:**

1. Have a clear and specific objective, coupled with unwavering commitment to your goal.
2. Knowledge. One needs to be very well informed, on top of the situation at all times.
3. You must identify yourself with a particular interest in which you must specialise, be it gender issues, human rights, children's rights, corruption, environment. That is when you excel in your work. Otherwise, you become irrelevant.
4. You must keep in touch with your constituency. Be personal also. People want to know that you care for their personal interests.
5. Honesty is a good value. People need to know who you are; don't be a dubious person; mean what you say; don't just swerve all over the place.
6. Associate and maintain a link with civil society organisations as a second constituency.

## Upcoming Events with the AWLP

### **First Mission to Nigeria, November, 2007**

The Club of Madrid's first planned Mission to Nigeria follows the April presidential and legislative elections and the subsequent seating of the new Parliament. The main objectives of the mission will be to provide capacity building for women leaders, especially those recently elected, and to increase gender awareness among male politicians.

### **First Mission to Uganda, November-December, 2007**

The Club of Madrid will undertake its first planned Mission to Uganda where a Club of Madrid delegation will provide support to female parliamentarians and help build leadership skills to raise their effectiveness. A particular emphasis will be put on the passing of legislative bills related to women's rights.

### **Third Mission to Sierra Leone, December, 2007**

The third mission to Sierra Leone will take place the first week of December and will focus on this occasion on building and strengthening the capacities of newly elected female parliamentarians and government officials, as well as on advocating before political parties and new governmental authorities for creating equal opportunities for women in decision-making.

## Contact Information

For more information on the African Women Leaders Project, please contact us at [info@awlproject.org](mailto:info@awlproject.org)

## Implementing Partners

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### **Campaign for Good Governance (CGG)**

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### **European Parliamentarians for Africa (AWEPA)**

#### **Uganda Office**

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### **Women's Rights Advancement & Protection Alternative (WRAPA)**

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