

WALL

WOMEN AS LOCAL LEGISLATIVES

A Self-mentoring Module for Elected Women Representatives from Five South Asian Countries Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka



Conceptualised by



Developed by



Funded by



WALL

Women As Local Legislatives

**A Self-mentoring Module for Elected Women Representatives
from Five South Asian Countries**

Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka

Conceptualised by

**Commonwealth Local
Government Forum**



Developed by

**Resource and Support
Centre for Development**



Funded by

The European Union



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Conceptualised by: CLGF

Developed by: RSCD

Funded by: The European Union

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Please acknowledge use of WALL Module and your feedback through the following e-mails or phones.

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PAUSE A MOMENT...

Pause a moment & ask yourself...

How many women own the family jewellery?

Do they have their names on the receipts?

Do women ever decide what will sown in the fields this year?

Pause a moment and ask yourself...

How many women have water rights on village water sources?

How many shares do they have in village assets?

Pause a moment and ask yourself...

How Many No confidence motions are passed merely because there is a woman Sarpanch in the chair?

How much anger and opposition from men who feel threatened by 50% reservation for women in Panchayati Raj

Pause a moment and ask yourself...

How many women hold Power in the village?

When important decisions are taken

Do they ever consult women?

Pause a moment and ask yourself...

How much land & property is owned by women?

How many mansions do they own

Pause a moment and ask yourself...

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ABBREVIATIONS

EWR	Elected Woman Representative
GB	General Body
LSG	Local Self Government
MRA	Mahila Rajsatta Aandolan
SHG	Self Help Group
VGB	Village General Body

SYMBOLS










	DURATION
	OBJECTIVES
	MATERIAL
	PROCESS
	FACILITATOR NOTE
	POST-SESSION EXERCISE
	SUMMING UP
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1. FOREWORD

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, provides a blueprint and a plan of action for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership. SDG 5 aims to strengthen the commitment towards a more gender equal world and calls for action to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. Women's equality and empowerment is integral to all dimensions of inclusive and sustainable development.

One of the sub-goals of SDG 5 refers to the target to ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life (SDG 5.5). Indeed, equal rights of women, men and people in all their diversity to participate at all levels of political and public life is critical in ensuring a sustainable, inclusive and prosperous future of the global community.

The Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF), as the designated Commonwealth agency for local government, has been working in support of democratic values and good governance across the Commonwealth. In 2005, CLGF and its members drafted the Aberdeen Agenda: Commonwealth Principles on Good Practice for Local Democracy and Good Governance. As an international declaration, the agenda was formally adopted as part of the Commonwealth's values and principles in 2005 and incorporated into the Charter of the Commonwealth 2013, which all Member States signed up to as a demonstration of their commitment to the shared values and principles of the Commonwealth. One of the 12 principles of the Aberdeen Agenda is inclusiveness, giving importance to a process of decision-making that ensures the needs of the whole community, including women, people with disabilities and marginalised groups, are met.

Inclusion underpins the core values and principles of the Commonwealth as articulated in the Commonwealth Charter.

CLGF supports the SDG 5 target of gender parity in political representation. It has been actively implementing programmes and projects which work to support women in local government and local decision making. Across the Commonwealth, CLGF seeks to guide the development of appropriate support structures to enhance and strengthen women in local government in their efforts to execute their legal and institutional mandate for transparent and accountable decision-making and service delivery at the local level; and to become active development actors in implementing the SDGs. CLGF has been an active participant in the Commonwealth Women's Forum since its inception in 2015 in Malta. In 2018, CLGF was part of the Commonwealth Women's Forum Organising Committee and jointly led a session on Women's Political Participation at All Levels with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA).

In keeping with its commitment to women's political empowerment and contributing to achieving SDG 5, CLGF launched its Commonwealth Women in Local Government Network (ComWLG). The network actively supports women to enter and advance in local government. The four priorities of the Network are:

- **Working with existing elected women** - to build the capacity of existing women leaders and help them overcome barriers within local government systems to be more effective as leaders, representatives and decision-makers.
- **Working with prospective elected women** - at the community level to increase understanding of the roles and responsibilities of local elected leaders and encourage women (with a focus on young women) to run for council;

- **Working with political parties and Local Government Associations (LGAs)** - to remove barriers to women within political systems, work with all members to increase awareness and ability of elected leaders to include a gender perspective in all aspects of their work (legislation, oversight and representation); improve gender sensitivity in Local Governments and LGAs;
- **Working at the Commonwealth and International level** - to gather best practice and share and replicate successes; advocate towards Commonwealth bodies to increase women's representation and strengthen systems of inclusion and gender mainstreaming; monitor levels of elected women across the commonwealth and feed into the SDG 5.5.1 monitoring process, ensuring CLGF meets its commitments on gender and inclusion.

During discussions with members of the ComWLG network it has been highlighted that women entering local government often do so with limited knowledge of the processes and potential pitfalls of the sector. While women face all the challenges that their male counterparts encounter, they also face additional challenges, both in terms of imposter syndrome, less support from their political parties, limited support networks and systems which were designed without consideration to many of the additional role which women play in running homes and looking after families. They are less likely than male candidates to run for a repeat term and this is partly due to a feeling of having had limited impact while in office.

This gender and local governance based training module, along with digital tools for the Elected Women Representatives (EWRs) from local governments in South Asian countries has been developed by CLGF and the Resource and Support Centre for Development (RSCD) to enhance the capacities and engagement of women in the local governance processes at their respective levels. The module has undergone rigorous stages of validation and inputs from CLGF's partners in the South Asia Region. Development of the training module and the digital tools is a part of the European Union funded pan-Commonwealth Programme focusing on the SDGs and, specifically, the role of local government in its localisation and implementation, linked to the strategic partnership between CLGF and the EU to strengthen and support local government as partners

in development. CLGF is confident that the use of this training module and the digital tool will support the EWRs to better understand and exercise their role as 'local legislators', knowing and exercising their rights and responsibilities, understanding the local government structures, setting clear and realistic targets for their time in office, and helping them avoid problems arising from a limited understanding of the internal working processes of their local government. It will also look to increase networking opportunities for the elected women and provide a framework of peer support and knowledge that they can draw on while in office.



Ms. Lucy Slack

Secretary General

Commonwealth Local Government Forum

2. PREFACE

CLGF is committed to supporting women in playing a full and active role in public life, particularly with regard to equal representation in local governance. This is in line with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable world.

Representation of diverse interest groups, including women, is the crux of any vibrant, democratic governance. Women's participation in decision-making is essential to ensure that women's interests are incorporated into governance. Experience has shown that governance structures that do not provide for the adequate participation of women, often suffer from state interventions that are neither inclusive, nor democratic. Including women, especially in local government, is an essential step towards creating gender equal opportunities and gender sensitive policies.

Over the years South Asia has produced some powerful women leaders; as prime ministers, leaders of major parties, and heads of state. However, women's representation in the governance processes in South Asian countries, from the central to local levels, has remained poor. To remedy this situation, countries in the region have taken steps, mainly in the form of providing reservations or quotas of women in local self-governments. India and Bangladesh since 1993, and Pakistan since 2000, reserve 33% of seats in local governing bodies for women. This has developed a situation where, 20 states in India made provision for a 50% reservation, or quota, for women in the Panchayati Raj institutions in their respective State Panchayati Raj Acts. Sri Lanka introduced a 25% quota in 2016, which was first practised in the local government elections held in 2018. The latest to allocate a third of all council seats to women in local governments was Maldives through the recently held local government elections in April 2021.

Have a limited knowledge of the processes and potential pitfalls of the local government. While women face all the same challenges as their male counterparts, they also experience many additional issues like restricted mobility, financial dependency and patriarchal social norms, making it more difficult for women to participate in the decision-making processes and planning mechanisms of their local councils. The culture of silence often seen in the South Asian context, prevents women from speaking and having their points considered when important decisions are being taken. This is further compounded because of the minimal assistance they receive from their political parties; the limited support networks and systems which were designed without consideration for many additional roles that women play within their families and homes.

The recent COVID-19 pandemic further aggravated the existing inequalities for women and girls across every sphere from health and economy to security and social protection. The limited progress achieved on gender equality and women's rights is in danger of being rolled back. Putting women and girls at the centre of post-pandemic recovery will place the world back on a footing to achieve the SDGs.

While there are existing training and capacity-building interventions planned and executed by civil society organisations as well as the governmental agencies, the nature of training needs to undergo a transformation because the challenges faced by EWRs have become more complex, and these changing needs must be addressed, sensitively. A need-based capacity building support is particularly useful and effective in the region.

This training module developed by CLGF and RSCD, seeks to empower EWRs with the knowledge and confidence as well as hands-on skills to become the active agents of change. It will prepare women to know what their role, rights and responsibilities are as councillors; and what kind of difficulties to expect as women councillors, providing them with strategies

to combat these. The main purpose of this module is to identify, test, select, compile and share effective strategies for increased and meaningful participation of EWRs in local governments of the South Asia region. This training module will help to conduct activities such as capacity building for EWRs, training of trainers (ToT), peer-to-peer learning and networking for mutual support and knowledge exchange as adult learners. It will improve the number and capacity of women contesting the local elections and post elections, build their capacities to play a meaningful role in the local governance.

The core team designing the training module brings together over two decades of experience in training and working with Elected Women Representatives (EWRs). The experiences of different partners across the South Asia region have further enriched this training module, making it relevant for the EWRs at various stages of socio-political development. Presence of women in local governments will encourage more women to enter diverse professions and lead to breaking stereotypes of the role of women in society and public life. People will gain confidence in women as good public administrators and local government representatives after seeing them making a positive difference in other people's lives; the society will acknowledge the sincerity and commitment of women to their duties.



Ms. Anuya Kuwar

Programme Manager Asia Region

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3. JOURNEY OF THE MANUAL

In many countries, women have been granted 'Quota or Reservation' in Local Self Governing bodies. Naturally, women with or without political backgrounds stepped into the political arena. Many were and are apprehensive, worried and inhibited due to contextual pressures due to gender-biased notions about women's participation in politics.

The CEDAW, (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women) that has been adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly, is often described as an International bill on the rights of women.

Grameen Bank, Bangladesh is the initiator of the SHG (Self Help Group) movement. Even the Declaration of the International decade between 1975-1985 has been a great push for women's reservation in LSGs of many nations.

Today women are visible and active in the politics in the LSGs. By overcoming several external and internal hurdles - be it lack of political education, an unsupportive environment or a habit inculcated as women of undermining one's own strengths - they are striving to make a mark. They are marching ahead with staunch determination.

These women leaders are our real VVIPs, albeit with a difference. We call them VVIPs - Very Very Important Persons - because in the decision-making process at the local level, their focus is on -

- V = Vulnerables First**
- V = Values first (Constitutional Values)**
- I = Issues first (Developmental issues)**
- P = Priorities first (Need-based governance)**

Women are becoming the 'pillar' of LSGs in the form of VVIP as Role holders. Therefore, in the title of this module, we refer to them as Women As Local Legislatives (WALL).

Many women leaders have faced pains and tensions from their own families but they have a lot of expertise and experience. CLGF & RSCD had implemented a Pre-Election Support Campaign through WALL Project. We found that along with laws and technical expertise, EWRs wanted to learn simple tricks and tactics as immediate solutions to the common issues that they face as individuals, as members of their own family and constituency and as pro-active representatives of the Institution, ie LSG.

Generally, every human being is the product of his or her context. Hence 'Self' is a very important focal point for capacity building. Human beings are also a part of the most undemocratic and popular institution called 'Family'. A change at the family level is essential to strengthening the self. The constituency is the work zone of EWRs, where the key component is addressing the genuine needs of the public. Lastly, a sound knowledge of the functions and procedures of the local body provides the required confidence and competence to represent and serve the constituency. Thus, empowering of EWRs in the context of Self, Family, Constituency and Institution is the real key to good governance.

This journey of this module begins with the Saigata Convention that took place in India in 2000 and led to the birth of 'Mahila Rajsatta Aandolan' (a campaign with women in governance). Through various lessons, the module presents core learnings of MRA in empowering EWRs and in tackling structural and systemic barriers in their way.

We wish to share our learning and micro-strategies evolved by EWRs in the process with our co-travelers in the South Asian Zone. By working together we will support the cause of the larger global campaign initiated by CLGF - the Commonwealth Women in Local Government Network.

After the pandemic, WALL module will again begin the horizontal learning process across the Commonwealth partners. This is more than a module, it is a medium of connecting us and spreading our wings far and beyond.



Mr. Bhim Raskar

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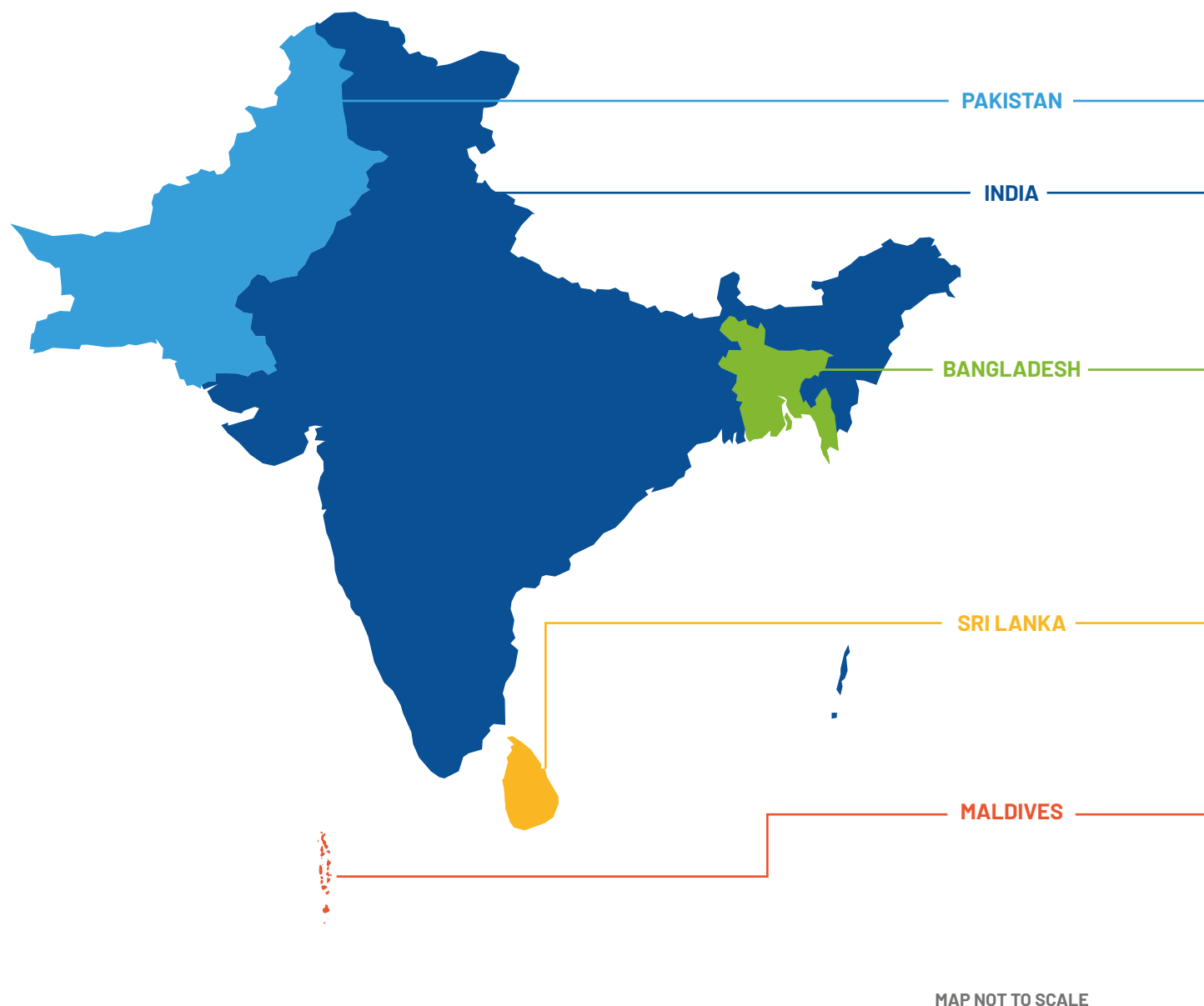
Resource And Support Centre For Development

4. COUNTRY PROFILES

Every country is unique in terms of its composition, culture and socio-economic-political realities. The five countries covered in this module too are different from one another and yet they have certain commonalities. The WALL Module bases itself on this latter aspect, the things the countries share in the context of women's participation and representation in LSGs.

The following graph and table present the commonalities and distinctness in a nutshell and form the reference points for planning and designing learning tools in the module.

Graph 1: Overview of the status of LSG and Women's representation in the five South Asian countries* covered in the module



*For more information and details kindly visit the source website <https://www.clgf.org.uk>

PAKISTAN

Local Government	Three-tier system
Lowest tier	Union Council
Women's Quota introduced in	2001
How much?	33%
Earlier situation	By nomination

INDIA

Local Government	Three-tier system
Lowest tier	Gram Panchayat
Women's Quota introduced in	1992
How much?	Started with a one-third quota, which is also increased to 50% by some states
Earlier situation	Two women by nomination

BANGLA DESH

Local Government	Three-tier system
Lowest tier	Union Parishad
Women's Quota introduced in	1997
How much?	3 women representatives by election
Earlier situation	By nomination

SRI LANKA

Local Government	Three-tier system
Lowest tier	Pradeshiya Sabha
Women's Quota introduced in	2016
How much?	25% and was applicable from 2018 election
Earlier situation	By nomination

MALDIVES

Local Government	In April 2010 Decentralisation Act was passed and the Local Govt Authority was formed
Lowest tier	Local Council
Women's Quota introduced in	2021
How much?	One-third of council members and was applicable from April 2021 election
Earlier situation	The formation of the Women's Development Committee is mandatory since 2010, but it has no funding and hence remained inactive.

Graph 1 presents the status of LSG, which are constitutionally recognised bodies in all five countries. The powers and responsibilities of the local authority vary from country to country. LSG is a three-tier system in India, Bangla Desh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, which are the countries with considerable rural populations, unlike Maldives. India first introduced the reservations to women, almost three decades ago, followed by Bangla Desh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Maldives recently held the first election after the introduction of the women’s quota in 2021. Before the provision of quota, all countries had informal systems, such as nomination or WDC in Maldives, for including women in local bodies. Then the women were selected for these posts, whereas now with legal quotas they are elected through a democratic election process. The latter exposes women to the formal electoral process and makes them more aware and active as political representatives.

Table 1- Enabling Conditions & Challenges of EWRs in South Asian Countries

Enabling Conditions	Challenges
More Awareness	Patriarchy
More Education	Insensitivity of Political Parties
Alert Media	Policy Gaps
History of Movement	Pressure from fundamental forces
Quota for Women	Strong Feudal Value
Independent Election Commission	Increasing Disparity
Media Freedom	Increasing Threat
Access to Information	Changing Rules & Roles
Civil Society Organisations in support	Character Assassination
Women in Multiple Power Centers	Parallel Proxy Power Centers

The provision of a quota for women certainly eases their entry into the political bodies. It, however, does not guarantee a supportive working environment for them. Table 1 outlines issues of concern common to all five countries. A thorough assessment of enabling conditions vis-a-vis challenges specific to your local context is essential to devise ways and strategies for widening spaces for women. It must be recognised that the structural challenges are intimidating for EWRs and they impact their ability to fulfil their expected responsibilities as well as personally affects and demoralises them. Experiences of various countries like India and Bangla Desh show that the formation of women’s collectives has proved to be supportive and empowering for EWRs. Therefore, emphasis should be given to forming local women’s groups and collectives along with equipping EWRs with the information and knowledge need to perform their roles and responsibilities

5. HOW TO USE THE MANUAL

This manual is developed as a hand-holding tool for organisations and trainers working with EWRs in the LSG. By now the reality of legal quotas for women is well-rooted in the five countries covered in this manual. We also have numerous examples of effective women leaders who can be role models to EWRs just taking their first baby steps in politics. By building on these experiences, this manual shares tips, tricks and strategies for EWRs along with building their perspective for addressing structural issues and strengthening democratic governance.

A disclaimer:

Giving due consideration to the specific context of each country, we have tried to make the manual as inclusive as possible. Still, the users of the manual may think some lessons are not relevant in their context and they are free to drop what is irrelevant or inapplicable to them.

Contents of the manual:

The manual contains total of 32 training lessons divided into four sections - Self, Family, Constituency and Institution.

Each lesson is self-explanatory and includes guiding questions useful to facilitate discussion with the participants. Some lessons use case studies, either as an example or as a tool for discussion. While some lessons use digital tools and they can be accessed through the QR code given in the respective lesson. We urge the trainers to make use of the post-session exercises given at the end of some of the sessions and take their review in the subsequent sessions. Also, check the feedback assessment tool (given in Annexure - 3) to know the learning gained by participants and to further plan accordingly.

Steps to use the manual effectively:

Read and understand the manual and the lessons thoroughly before using them. Read especially the introductory chapters and Annexure 1 and 2 to get clarity of context.

Know the group and their needs beforehand. Plan the sessions to address the needs of the group. Prepare yourself before each training session and also note down your reflections after the session.

Understand your role as a trainer:

A trainer plays a significant role in the lives of trainees. Be aware of your responsibility in all phases of training, ie. preparing oneself before the training, being attuned to the needs of the trainees during the training and hand-holding support after the training sessions. Most probably participants will need some support system after the training when they will start asserting themselves and using the knowledge they gained. Make sure this mechanism is available for them.

Organise online, offline or hybrid sessions:

By forcing us to use online platforms, the pandemic has opened up a new avenue for reaching out to others. Taking advantage of the technological know-how and access, the training can be online or hybrid and can also be organised in the conventional offline or physical manner. Take into account the pros and cons of each method and choose the one that falls in your means and best serves the purpose.

Accessing Digital Tools:

Some lessons use digital tools in the form of short animation films made specifically for the purpose of this training module. The link and QR code are included in the lessons. To access the films, either click on YouTube link or use QR code reader/camera from the phone to scan the code.

Tips for trainers:

As trainers, you will be already aware of the dos and don'ts for effectively conducting training sessions. Following are some additional tips for facilitating an online meeting/training effectively.

- Set some ground rules for participation and ask everyone to comply.
For instance, ground rules for online meeting
 - Staying on video
 - Staying on mute until you address the group
 - Using the raise/lower hand to manage Q&A, especially with a larger group
- If you are hosting the session, you can pair up another person as a co-host for the session. One person can play the technical support role and manage tasks such as admitting people into the room, assigning people to breakout rooms, recording the meeting, spotlighting key speakers, placing essential information in the chatbox to share with the group, and sharing questions addressed in the chat.
- Breakout rooms are great tools for giving people a chance to talk one-on-one or in small teams and dig into details or brainstorm together. Learn and use this technique.
- You may decide to record the session and make it available to all attendees for future reference.
- Deliberately position yourself to include body language and tone just as you would in a face-to-face conversation.
- Utilise a whiteboard behind you to draw, take notes and capture the conversation.
- When others talk, look them in the eyes as you would if you were face to face.
- Act as though you are in a real conference room face to face with people. Pay attention and show the same courtesy and professionalism that you would in a live meeting, and things will go smoothly, and the virtual meeting will be productive.

6. TRAINING LESSONS

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SECTION 2 **FAMILY**
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SECTION 3 **CONSTITUENCY**
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SECTION 4 **INSTITUTION**
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SELF

As the following table indicates, the seven lessons in this first section focus on self-reflection and self-development of EWRs as they take on the new role. This covers primary and entry-level support they need to feel confident and informed to participate in the functioning as well as inputs to develop a questioning mind towards the stereotypical norms and practices that hold women back.

#	Title	Focus
Lesson 1	Bursting the Balloons	Questioning gender stereotyping
Lesson 2	Collect Objects of No Use	Self-confidence and self-worth
Lesson 3	Five Things You Should Know Before Signing a Document	Things to remember before signing
Lesson 4	My Work Diary	Importance of writing and recording what you do
Lesson 5	Develop Your Local Think Tank	Broadening the perspective
Lesson 6	Exposure Visit to a Government Office	Knowing the office and systems
Lesson 7	Addressing Biases and Barriers	Questioning gender biases and double standards

SECTION 1

LESSON 1

BURSTING THE BALLOONS

DURATION



120 MIN

OBJECTIVES



- Identify discriminatory gender norms
- Analyse gender stereotypes

MATERIAL



Inflated balloons, sketch pens/marker pens, string

PROCESS



- Explain the context of the game.
- We live in a patriarchal society. Patriarchal norms dictate as well as perpetuate gender stereotypes, i.e. beliefs people have about the characteristics of males and females. These norms and beliefs are biased and discriminatory towards women. These discriminatory norms, which are deep-rooted in the social psyche, limit women's access to opportunities, progress and meaningful participation in decisions that affect them. As elected representatives and leaders, we should take initiative to challenge and change the discriminatory norms.
- In this exercise, we will bust some of the misconceptions you find problematic.
- Ask participants to think about prevalent gender norms/ misconceptions they disapprove of.
- Start the discussion by sharing some of the following gender stereotypes;

"Girls should play with dolls and boys should play with cars."

"Girls should be well-behaved, but boys will be boys!"

"Women are natural nurturers; men are natural leaders."

"Women are too emotional to undertake certain kinds of work."

"Politics is a dirty game, not meant for good women."

- Encourage participants to share misconceptions they know.
- Ask everyone to write one misconception each on the inflated balloons. Display all balloons by tying them together to a string.
- Ask participants one by one to share their responses to the statements on the balloons.
- Ask them to burst the balloons with statements they disagree with or don't believe in.

SUMMING UP



- Awareness that gender misconceptions are socially constructed with the purpose to hold women back and exclude them from power and decision-making.
- Misconceptions need to be challenged and busted to weaken their hold on you.

LESSON 2

COLLECT OBJECTS OF NO USE

DURATION



60 MIN

OBJECTIVES



- Understand self-worth
- Gain self-confidence

MATERIAL



Poster papers, glue, threads and stationary

FACILITATOR
NOTE

You must have interacted with newly elected women. They often have mixed feelings. While they are happy about the new phase in their life, they are also unsure of their capabilities to do the work. This session is to enable them to acknowledge their feelings and overcome the diffidence.

PROCESS



- Ask participants, what did you feel when you got elected and assumed the post?
- Write down the feelings/questions they share. Such as, 'Will I be able to do it?', 'Will I go wrong?', 'Will people laugh at me/ridicule me?' etc.
- Fear and hesitation could be normal responses when one venture into unknown territories; a new arena of life.
- Explain to them that whatever your primary response can be, it does not define your capacity to fulfil the responsibilities your role demands. You have it in you, but you have to find it out.

EXERCISE



- Ask participants to find out and bring an object that they think is of no use. They can explore the classroom as well as surrounding areas and can go through several objects. But they have to carry back only one.
- After everyone gathers, settle down in a circle.
- Ask everyone to explain one by one to show the object they have collected and the reason they chose it? Why do they feel it is useless?
- Facilitate discussion around possible uses of the objects that they have identified as useless or purposeless.
- By using the collection, let participants make a new object. Such as a vase, an idol, a motif etc. Take a group photo with the creation.

SUMMING UP



- Conclude the discussion by explaining that no object is useless, not even the seemingly useless one. Each one serves some purpose or the other.
- Likewise, we human beings also have potential in us. What is good in you? How can you adapt it to your work as an elected representative?
- Think about the unique skills and qualities that you use in your personal life. (Encourage participants to share their skills and qualities, for instance, I am a good listener; I have good handwriting; I can get things done from others; I can prepare tasty food and so on)

POST-SESSION
EXERCISE

Think and write: Unique skills and qualities in me and my past experience that will help me in my work.

LESSON 3

FIVE THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW BEFORE SIGNING A DOCUMENT

DURATION



60 MIN

OBJECTIVES



- Know that signing a paper is a responsible act
- Get aware of things to remember before signing a document

MATERIAL



Graphic charts: Do's and Don'ts of signing, photo copies of some sample signed office documents

FACILITATOR
NOTE

Awareness of signing protocols is an important safeguard for the elected women. This session explains the do's and don'ts of signing the official documents (proposals, letters, cheques etc). If possible, keep some photocopies of official papers handy to show them to participants.

PROCESS



- Ask the following questions. Do you remember the last time you signed a document? When was it? What was the document? Who asked you to sign it? Did you read or asked what it says before signing?
 - In our personal or professional lives, we may not have to sign documents, papers, letters etc. as often as it is needed when we assume a position after getting elected, especially as the head of the elected body.
 - Explain that the administrative matters are handled by the local government office Secretary/equivalent official in your country, but you are the signing authority. By signing, you endorse the content on the paper, which means you agree with what is said. Therefore, you should know what it says before signing. To avoid being misled by anyone, remember these five things before you give your signature.
 - With the help of graphic charts, explain the dos and don'ts of signing a paper.
1. **Never sign** on a blank page.
 2. **Read before you sign** a letter/document.
 3. **Keep your Digital Signature Copy (DSC) with yourself** and do not hand it to anyone else.
 4. **Leave no blank space** above your signature. This means, giving the sign just after the last paragraph. So that no new text can be inserted without your knowledge after you have signed.
 5. **Mention the date** along with the signature, especially when receiving a letter. This signifies the day you obtained it. This along with creating a record saves you from fraudulent transactions.

SUMMING UP



- There are several instances where women elected representatives are misled and made to sign documents that are later used against them. In some cases, false corruption charges were leveled against them. In one instance, being ignorant of the content on the paper, a woman Sarpanch signed the no-confidence motion against her.
- Do not trust anyone blindly. Remember the due procedure is followed before your signature is taken.

LESSON 3 Graphic Chart



1. **Never** sign on a blank page.



4. **Leave no blank space** above your signature. This means, give the sign just after the last paragraph. So that no new text can be inserted without your knowledge after you have signed.



2. **Read before you sign** a letter/document.



5. **Mention the date** along with the signature, especially when receiving a letter. This signifies the day you obtained it. This along with creating a record saves you from fraudulent transactions.



3. **Keep your Digital Signature Copy (DSC) with yourself** and do not hand it to anyone else.

LESSON 4

MY WORK DIARY

DURATION



60 MIN

OBJECTIVES



- Develop a practice of writing a daily work diary
- Understand the importance of writing work experiences daily as a source of learning and reflection
- Explore the use of social media (Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp) for dissemination

MATERIAL



Film clip and arrangements for screening



Daily Diary of an Elected Women Representatives

<https://youtu.be/ZSyxXWQmqic>

PROCESS



- Explain the topic of the session. Tell participants that today we are going to learn a technique of recording the work we do as social and political workers.
- Ask participants to watch the film carefully to know how it has helped Salma, the lead character in the story. After this preliminary introduction, screen the film.
- Facilitate discussion with the help of the following questions after the screening;

Can you relate to the situation shown in the film? If yes, in what ways? If not, why?

What learning can we draw from the story that is useful in your context?

How would you like to keep a record of work? Encourage participants to share their experiences of writing a diary or maintaining a record of their work.

- Suggest topics that they can include in their writing.
 - Tasks done in the office today
 - Tasks done in my constituency today
 - People I met today
 - Important meetings and decisions today
 - Training/learning
- Discuss the benefits of maintaining a work diary.
 - Improves writing and communication skills
 - Creates a record and strengthens memory
 - Helps to plan further based on what is done
 - Develop content/messages to disseminate through social media

SUMMING UP



- Conclude the session by explaining that maintaining a work diary is not a matter of choice. It is an essential part of your role as a social and political worker. It is a good practice with numerous benefits.

Sharing the following tips for writing;

- Commit to writing every day to develop it as a practice.
- Spare 30 minutes every day for writing before going to bed.
- Start by jotting down important happenings of the day. Use it as source material to create posts for Twitter, WhatsApp and other social media platforms.

DURATION



120 MIN

OBJECTIVES



- Enable women to be informed to form and express their opinions on current affairs/issues of concern

MATERIAL



Newspapers, Clips of television news and Social Media Posts of your choice along with Khabar Lahariya links

PROCESS



- Explain the purpose of the lesson. If exercise develops your physical fitness, knowledge building develops your mental fitness. Be mentally fit by reading regularly.
- Your sphere of work expands when you become an elected representative. Accordingly, your knowledge base also should be widened. Fortunately, it is not hard to access information and knowledge these days. Newspapers, TV News, social media posts are important sources of information, especially to keep abreast with current happenings around us.
- Introduce Khabar Lahariya as an all-women rural media organisation. This is a story of ordinary, rural women, who have transformed them into a force to reckon with.

About Khabar Lahariya

tinyurl.com/KhabarLahariya

Khabar Lahariya, which translates as “news wave”, is an all-women rural news organisation. It is truly local watchdog journalism with a feminist lens. Founded by a Delhi-based NGO as a weekly print edition in 2002, Khabar Lahariya began as a women’s collective led by a group of urban and rural feminists. Eighteen years later, the “country’s only digital rural network” is thriving, employing about 40 women journalists from socially and economically marginalized groups to report on issues that directly impact their communities. Now fully digital, their award-winning model has been recognised internationally, having received the UNESCO King Sejong Prize in 2009. Empowering rural communities, and particularly women from disadvantaged groups through reporting in and on communities inaccessible local dialects such as Bundeli and Avadhi. Their feminist perspective aims to challenge the prevailing upper caste, and male-dominated, city-centric journalism. They hope to bring rural and urban women together to produce stories, taking a “bottom-up approach”.



LESSON 6

EXPOSURE VISIT TO A GOVERNMENT OFFICE

DURATION



120 MIN

OBJECTIVES



- Know people, systems and protocols related to The local government office Office/s
- Address the fear of engaging with the system

MATERIAL



Flip charts, marker pens, plain papers

FACILITATOR
NOTE

Women never get a chance to visit local government offices. The familiarity with these offices and their functioning enable them to visit the offices whenever they need to. For this, they have to take initiative and this lesson will guide them in this regard. Participants can choose any local government office for the visit

This is a collective exercise. Plan this exposure visit together with other women elected members and members of the women's collective in the village.

PROCESS



- Ask participants to decide on any Local Government Office they want to visit.
- If you are visiting your own local office, no need to write a formal letter. It is enough to intimate the Secretary of the local government office to be present at the time of the visit to give needed information.
- If you are visiting Local Government Offices at the upper tiers, i.e. block and district levels, write a letter addressing the officer-in-charge mentioning purpose of the visit and request an appointment. Confirm the date and time allotted to you for the visit.
- Prior preparation is necessary to understand the working of the office. Ask participants to think about what they would like to see or know in the office.
- Accordingly, prepare a list of questions they would ask during their visit. Everyone should participate, therefore each one will have at least two subject-specific questions ready with them.
- Visit the office at the scheduled time, thank the officer-in-charge for sparing time and get information by asking questions one by one. Also, carry a pen and notebook to take notes.
- After the visit, organise a meeting to share information and discuss the learning from the visit.

SUMMING UP



- Conclude the session by stressing the need and benefits of the exposure visit.
- It will help the elected women to know whom to approach to get specific work done. They will be introduced to concerned officers, which will help to build a rapport with the office.
- This collective learning also strengthen unity and bonding among women.

POST-SESSION
EXERCISE

Plan the visit: Plan the visit to the Local Government Office along with other women in your village and write your experience.

LESSON 7

ADDRESSING BIASES AND BARRIERS

DURATION



60 MIN

OBJECTIVES



- Address gender biases prevalent in our society
- Analyse misconceptions as socially constructed barriers for women

MATERIAL



The case study

FACILITATOR
NOTE**Questions to facilitate the discussion:**

1. In this incidence, one group opposes the selection of the woman while the other defends it. Which side do you agree with? Why?
2. Should the persons be judged by the work they do? Why?
3. How the incident in the case study portrays double standards applied to women in politics?

PROCESS



- Read out the case study.
- Facilitate discussion with the help of the above questions and highlight the following points during the discussion.
- Both men and women are likely to face challenges as they enter politics and hold public offices. But there are some women-specific challenges, which are meant to demoralise women who want to assert their voice. To tackle them u have to bust skewed gendered notions ruling the mindsets of men and women in our society.
- Both men and women are likely to face challenges as they enter politics and hold public offices. But there are some women-specific challenges, which are meant to demoralise women who want to assert their voice. To tackle them u have to bust skewed gendered notions ruling the mindsets of men and women in our society.
- Both men and women are likely to face challenges as they enter politics and hold public offices. But there are some women-specific challenges, which are meant to demoralise women who want to assert their voice.

SUMMING UP



- Highlight the key points shared by participants in the discussion.
- Tell participants that it is based on real life.
- Sum up by explaining the need to cleverly tackle skewed gender norms. Women's entry into politics is never going to be smooth sailing for them. As women enter politics, they have to be prepared to take on these challenges.

LESSON 7 Case study

Unwilling Acceptance

Venue: District Office of a political party.

Subject: Selection of the president for the sub-district level women's wing

A meeting was going on for the selection of the president for the sub-district level women's wing of a political party. The meeting was chaired by District Party President. All district-level leaders, the majority men, are present along with the madam president of the district-level women's wing.

Madam announced the name of the woman she had shortlisted as the sub-district president. But as it gets announced, men get visibly upset. Sensing the uneasy air in the room, Party President asks *'How have you finalised this name madam?'*

Others also express their disapproval and a heated argument ensues. Expressing the reason a male party member asks, "Madam, do you know the background of the woman you have shortlisted for the position?" He explains that the woman works in a liquor bar, which is indicative of her low character. *"How can we allow such woman to hold a prestigious post in the party?,"* he asks. Other men support this stand.

"How can you judge the woman by the work she does? You cannot dismiss her like this because she works in a bar. She is sincere and has good leadership qualities," madam president tries to explain her reasons for selecting this woman, but Party President was not ready to change his mind.

Madam president asked, *"Do you know who is the owner of the bar where this woman works?"* Of course, everybody knew the owner. He was none other than a senior party member and spokesperson. *"If you have no qualms in having a bar owner as your spokesperson, why are you against a woman who is just an employee in this bar?"* This question created a pin drop silence in the room. No one dared to counter any further. The same woman shortlisted by Madam got selected for the post. Party President and other male members were still hesitant but they had to accept the decision.



FAMILY

As the following table indicates, the six lessons in this section focus on earning and nurturing family support from the EWR by encouraging them to be assertive in their family space. When we talk about politics and power, we should remember that the system of family is also a power structure and women are at the bottom of the power hierarchy within the family. Power dynamics within the family need to be challenged to change it. Family support is immensely important to boost women's confidence and motivation to participate in politics.

#	Title	Focus
Lesson 8	My Family, Democratic Family	Collective decision making
Lesson 9	Creating a Space for Yourself Within the Family	Family bonding and trust
Lesson 10	A Day Off from Kitchen	Question gender-based division of labour
Lesson 11	Being Together As Equals	Ensuring an equal status for women within the family
Lesson 12	Finding the Role Models Around Us	Encouragement through the real-life stories
Lesson 13	Felicitation of the Family	Public appreciation of the supportive family members

SECTION 2

LESSON 8

MY FAMILY, DEMOCRATIC FAMILY

DURATION



120 MIN

OBJECTIVES



- Introduce the idea of an egalitarian family system
- Understand the process of the collective decision-making

MATERIAL



YouTube Ted Talk by Hajer Sharief:
How to use family dinner to teach politics and arrangements for screening



My Family, Democratic Family
<https://youtu.be/aK8r448LE9Y>

FACILITATOR
NOTE**Questions to facilitate the discussion:**

1. In this incidence, one group opposes the selection of the woman while the other defends it. Which side do you agree with? Why?
2. Should the persons be judged by the work they do? Why?
3. How the incident in the case study portrays double standards applied to women in politics?

PROCESS



- Introduce the topic of the session.
- Most of you have heard the word Democracy. Have you? It means rule by the people. The word is invariably used in the context of the governance system of a country. A democratic country means a country has a system in which the government of the country is elected by its people.
- Just like a 'democratic country', can we think of a 'democratic family'? Can we associate the word with the family? A democratic family would essentially mean a family ruled by its people, which in simple words means a family where every member in the family has a say in the decision-making.
- Today, we are going to watch a Ted Talk clip, based on the personal experience of a woman - Hajer Sharief from Libya, who grew up in a democratic family set up.
- Start film screening after briefly explaining its content.
- Facilitate the discussion after watching the film by asking different sets of questions as follows.
- First ask questions to ensure the film has conveyed its message: Who is the lady in the film and what she is talking about? What points you like the most? What points did you dislike or were not clear about?
- Ask questions related to the practice being adopted by the family: What do you think of the 'Friday Meetings' of this family? Do you as a child feel that your views are disregarded by your family?
- This is an example of adopting democratic decision-making practices within the family. What are the benefits and merits of this practice? Can we adopt this practice and what are ways to do it?
- Note down key points on the board/chart paper for everyone's reference.

LESSON 9

CREATING MORE SPACE FOR YOURSELF WITHIN THE FAMILY

DURATION



60 MIN

OBJECTIVES



- Develop mutual respect and family bonding
- Ensure family's recognition of the woman's work

MATERIAL



The case study

FACILITATOR
NOTE

As homemakers, women take care of their families. They listen to everyone patiently and act as a sounding board and confidante for them. These are undoubtedly good qualities to have. But do women ever share what goes on in their minds with other family members? This session encourages them to talk about their work experiences, as EWRS, with families. This works to keep them informed and ensure their support when needed.

PROCESS



- Do women talk about themselves with their families? What do they talk about? Encourage participants to share their experiences by asking questions such as whom do you talk with? What do you talk about, When do you usually talk and How do they feel when they talk? Highlight useful points in what they say.
- Explain that such a sharing is important for every woman, especially the elected women representatives like you who have started a new inning of their life in the public domain.
- Read out the case study of Jaya Kurane and discuss what did she do to lessen the work burden and stress?
- Initially, you may feel odd to talking about yourself or you may not find a topic to start the conversation?
- While you do your work, you will get new experiences and face new challenges that you never had earlier as a homemaker. While some family members will be curious to know what you do, some will be skeptical about what you do. To address their curiosity or skepticism, you should proactively start talking about yourself with your family. Let us see how this can be done and what benefits it will bring.
- Think for a while and you will have topics to talk about. It can be simple, day-to-day things in your work life. People you met, discussions in meetings, new things you learned, any of the difficulties you encountered and any such things you would like to share.
- What is the preferred time for this sharing? Any time when everyone is there, such as dinner time or any other time when you are together when every member can share how their day went.

SUMMING UP



- Conclude the discussion by stressing the need to take initiative to share your work with the family.
- Ask them to talk about simple day-to-day happenings, to begin with. It will be easier to talk about and family members will be interested in listening to it.
- Stress possible benefits of such family interactions, such as increased family bonding, respect for your work and so on.
- Such informal interactions make the family atmosphere pleasant and joyful. Also, your family can become your support system when you confide in them.

POST-SESSION
EXERCISE

Start sharing what you do as EWR with your family.

LESSON 9 Case study

My journey from home-maker to a political leader

Jaya Kurane, Social and Political Activist, Kolhapur district, India

I stepped into politics in 2007 by contesting Panchayat Samiti (Sub-district or middle tier of the LSG) election and got elected. Till then nobody in my family had ever taken part in active politics. My husband respected my wish to get into politics and was supportive. But he expected that housework will remain my first duty and will not get ignored. I thought I can easily balance both. That is how all women manage, right?

Initially, I did it well. But political work is not a time-bound work, it is a full-time responsibility. With passing time and increasing responsibilities at work, it became stressful for me to do both.

I would get up early and cook for everybody, but I neglected my diet and slept for lesser hours. I started facing health issues. Then I decided to do something to tackle the stress I was experiencing. As a first step, I started sharing my day-to-day work with my husband. I shared just casual everyday things like whom I met, what meetings I attended, what work I completed and so on. Initially, he thought it is odd and asked, 'why are you telling me all these things?' Still, I continued to talk with him and gradually he got interested in my work. This helped him to understand the nature of my work and the responsibilities I handle. This work cannot be compared to an office job with fixed hours. With this realisation he started to actively support me and shared household work.

I did one more thing. I asked him to accompany me to some public functions and meetings. He never shared the stage with me, but he would sit in the audience and listen to the speeches. By actually seeing the working of political meetings and functions and my participation in them, he realised the significance of my work and the people's support and trust I have earned. I sensed subtle changes in his behaviour. His respect for me grew further. Thereafter he never insisted that housework should be my priority and I could devote as much time to political activities as required in the stress-free way.

LESSON 10

A DAY OFF FROM THE KITCHEN

DURATION



120 MIN

OBJECTIVES



- Analyse the conventional views related to housework
- Understand housework as a shared work

MATERIAL



Blackboard/Chart Papers, Chalks/Marker pens, News Clipping

FACILITATOR
NOTE

The burden of housework is disproportionately high on women. If the burden of housework is not eased, how will women find time for themselves, to learn and do things they like and also get socially and politically active? By discussing various aspects related to housework, this session calls for lessening the work burden on women by sharing cooking, cleaning and care work.

PROCESS



- Explain the topic of the session. Everyday housework is essential for the smooth running of the family. What constitutes the housework? Let participants share one by one. Make a list of all housework activities done during the day. Make an exhaustive list. Along with everyday tasks, you may also add tasks done on a seasonal/periodic basis.
- Ask participants to go through the list and mark the activities expected to be done by women and men separately.
- Ask them to estimate. How many housework activities do women do in a day? How many activities do men do in a day? Roughly how much time do women and men spend on daily household work? Allow them time to calculate and come to a figure.
- Share ILO statistics given below.

Do you Know

In Asia women spend over 5 hours a day on housework and perform 80% unpaid care work. While men perform the lowest share of unpaid care work (1 hour and 4 minutes) compared to all regions in the world. It is further less in Pakistan - 28 minutes (or 8.0 percent of men's total working time) and in India - 31 minutes (7.9 percent). (Ref. https://www.ilo.org/asia/media-centre/news/WCMS_633284/lang-en/index.htm) Every worker gets a weekday off from his/her work. While this is a paid off-day for people working in the organised sector, it may not be so for workers in the unorganised sector. Nevertheless, every worker is entitled to free days/holidays. If this is so, why do mothers/wives not get a day off from the housework? Have you ever thought about it?

LESSON 11

BEING TOGETHER AS EQUALS

DURATION



60 MIN

OBJECTIVES



- Ensuring an equal status for women within the family

MATERIAL



The discussion sheet

PROCESS



- Use the above discussion sheet for facilitation.
- Start by discussing situations given in the sheet. Then ask participants to share their similar experiences.
- Encourage participants to speak openly, and express their emotions and challenges in asserting their viewpoints in the domestic space.
- Tell them that bringing desired changes in the home is the most challenging but equally essential task. You must start with seemingly small issues and build on them.

SUMMING UP



- The family is the smallest institution in the world, which is hierarchical and gender-biased by nature. Unless this is changed and families uphold equality and mutual respect, women are not going to get their dues.
- This is a difficult battle that can only succeed if women start asserting themselves.
- Ultimately politics means choosing your side and taking a stand on issues of your concern, which is equally applicable in the family context as well.

POST-SESSION
EXERCISE

Recall similar situations you have confronted in your life. What happened at that time? Were you able to express what you wanted? What should have happened differently? Write down it in your diary for self-reflection.



LESSON 11 Discussion Sheet

	Situation	What usually happens?	What could happen!
1	Your daughter has completed schooling and wants to study further. Her father and grandfather have planned her marriage, but the daughter does not want to marry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elder men in the family decide on behalf of other family members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support your daughter's wish to study further.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You console your daughter, but are unable to actively support her. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speak up persuasively. Make the male family members realise that times are changing and marriage is not the only goal in the lives of girls.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The daughter gets disappointed and disheartened. 	
2	You are EWR and left home early in the morning for an important outstation meeting. The meeting gets prolonged and you realise you are going to reach home very late.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You feel guilty that you are out the whole day and family members have to look after themselves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no reason to feel guilty, as you are using the time required to fulfill your role.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are scared that your husband will get angry and will not allow you to attend such meetings in the future. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The family members understand the importance of your work and what it means to you. They ensure your safety.
3	Your family has renovated the home and planning a ceremony by inviting relatives and friends. You wish that your name should also be included in the nameplate displayed on the front gate of the home along with the husband's name.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You hesitate to express your wish and keep it to yourself. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You can express your wish. Having your name on the nameplate along with his means the house belongs to you as much as to him.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You express your wish, but it gets dismissed by the husband, who thinks it is unnecessary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your husband feels it is the right thing to do.
4	You are elected representatives and people approach you with their problems. Since your political responsibilities have increased you get less time to do housework. You feel stressed out in managing both.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To balance the work inside and outside the home, you get up very early. Finish household chores. You compromise on your sleep and feel tired. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your family understands your increasing responsibilities.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are advised to cut down your political activities to give more time to housework. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Together you share household work among you, which gives some free time

LESSON 12

FINDING THE ROLE MODELS AROUND US

DURATION



120 MIN

OBJECTIVES



- Identify stories of change in the local context
- Encouragement through the real-life stories

MATERIAL



Set-up required for a local public function, Case studies

FACILITATOR
NOTE

This session essentially evolves from the previous four lessons in this section, which have sown seeds of change within the families. Have these seeds germinated? Take the following steps for taking this activity.

PROCESS



- Identify stories of positive change at individual/family level.
- Talk with the EWRs and their families to know their motivation to bring about the change and what they feel about it.
- Changes can be small or large and can be related to issues discussed in the previous lessons, such as consulting one another as a step towards adopting democratic practices; sharing housework to lessen the burden on women's shoulders; actions supporting gender equality and so on. There can be different changes than these, which have a favourable and positive impact from the perspective of EWRs.
- Organise a public programme where these family members will speak about their experiences. Ask them to talk about the steps they have taken, challenges they faced and how did they overcome them.
- By organising a public programme to share experiences of positive change, we acknowledge and appreciate these initiatives.
- Refer to the following story.
- Also refer to case study by Jaya Kurane in the Lesson 9.

Case study

A living example of good governance: Suvarna Junghare, EWR in India

My mother forced me to drop out of school, but I like my school and liked to study. In 2011, I was elected as the head of local governing body and decided to make up for the missed opportunity. I completed graduation through a distance learning educational course. I encourage girls in our village to continue their studies.

After taking charge, I took initiative to check liquor sale in the village, as it was the main demand from women. Despite several challenges we succeeded in closing the liquor shops. Our initiative inspired women in the neighbouring villages to take similar initiative.

LESSON 13

FELICITATION OF THE FAMILY

DURATION



120 MIN

OBJECTIVES



- Public appreciation of the supportive family members

MATERIAL



Set-up required for a local public function, Family Felicitation Certificate

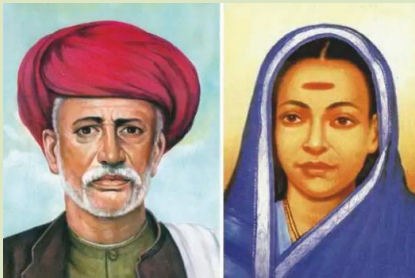
FACILITATOR
NOTE

Just like the previous session, this one is also a public programme that will evolve from processes initiated through the previous lessons in this section.

PROCESS



- Do the preparatory work of identifying families adopting positive changes in support of EWRs in particular and girls/women in general.
- Organise a public programme to felicitate the families for their affirmative actions. Honour them with the Family Felicitation Certificate.
- By organising a public programme to share experiences of positive change, we acknowledge and appreciate these initiatives.
- Public felicitation gives recognition to positive steps and inculcates a feeling of togetherness between families of EWRs and community members.



The certificate by **Mahila Rajsatta Aandolan** carries photos of **Jotiba Phule** and **Savitri Phule**, social reformers in the 18th century who devoted their lives for betterment of people, especially widowed women and promoted girl education.



The text says, 'We appreciate you for your courage to go against the tide and support EWR in your family to do her work. Your actions are attuned with MRA's vision of an egalitarian society where women enjoy freedom, equality and can participate freely in all walks of life. By extending active family support to the elected woman in the family, you are setting an example and also contributing to the women's rights movement. This certificate of honour is a token of appreciation of your pro-active initiatives to strengthen women's rights and democratic governance in our society.'

CONSTITUENCY

As the following table indicates, the ten lessons in this section focus on the need to effectively reach out to your constituency and strengthen the support base. Elected representatives are essentially public servants who need to know the pressing needs and concerns of the people they represent including the women. These lessons provide important guiding principles in this regard.

#	Title	Focus
Lesson 14	A Public Manifesto	Developing a people-centered manifesto
Lesson 15	A Public Swearing-in Ceremony	Emphasise the role of elected representatives as public servants
Lesson 16	My PR Kit	Using creative means to reach out to people
Lesson 17	Mobilising Women's Support	Organising women's public meetings to press their demands
Lesson 18	Mapping Local Power Centres	Increase women's participation in decision-making at all levels
Lesson 19	Success through 'Six-S'	Understanding of the local Institution
Lesson 20	Respect Your Opponents, Fear None	Maintain healthy relations with your opponents
Lesson 21	Let the Genuine Needy Benefit	significance of participatory and democratic decision-making
Lesson 22	Proposal Making and Project Monitoring	Introduce skills in drafting a proposal
Lesson 23	Use a Suggestion Box	Proactive efforts to know people's pressing issues

SECTION 3

LESSON 14

A PUBLIC MANIFESTO

DURATION



120 MIN

OBJECTIVES



- Understand the significance of a manifesto
- Understand the process of developing a people-centered manifesto

MATERIAL



Public Manifesto film and arrangements for the screening



Public Manifesto Film

<https://youtu.be/yXRtpw1fy2M>

PROCESS



- A manifesto is a public declaration of your aims and priorities of work made at the time of the elections. Ask participants whether they or their panel had prepared a manifesto at the time of the election.
- Encourage participants to speak. What promises they made to people to get the votes? How did they decide what they should promise and why? Apart from their speeches, how did they convey them to people (pamphlets, hoarding, wall painting etc)?
- A manifesto is an important document as it helps voters to differentiate one candidate from the other.
- Today we will watch a film about the making of a public manifesto and discuss how we can adopt this practice.
- After this preliminary discussion you can screen the film.
- Facilitate the discussion, with the help of the following questions after the screening;

Can you relate to the situation shown in the film? If yes, in what ways? If not, why?

Share your thoughts about the initiative.

What learning can we draw from the story that is useful in your context?

- Highlight the learning from the film;

Prepare your election manifesto by studying the needs of your constituency.

Understand the issues by visiting and talking to people in their residential areas.

Promise what you can deliver, it should be implementable.

- After you are elected and take charge, turn your manifesto into an action plan. Make it public and implement it.

SUMMING UP



Sum up the session by emphasising the significance of making your manifesto;

- The participatory process of making a manifesto gives a clear understanding of the needs of people in the constituency and the way to address them.
- Increased public trust and support

LESSON 15

A PUBLIC SWEARING-IN CEREMONY

DURATION



60 MIN

OBJECTIVES



- Emphasise the role of elected representatives as public servants
- Understand your role and responsibilities as an elected representative

MATERIAL



Public Swearing-in Ceremony film
and arrangements for the screening



Public Swearing-in Ceremony

<https://youtu.be/zYWzRF77-0I>

PROCESS



- Explain the significance of taking a public oath when you assume the post after the election. After the election process is complete and the elected body assumes the power, a public swearing-in ceremony should be organised wherein each elected member will take oath of public service.
- Ask participants, have they taken a public oath or have seen anyone in the local government taking the oath. Let participants speak and share their experiences and views on the public oath initiative.
- After this preliminary discussion you can screen the film.
- Facilitate the discussion, with the help of the following questions after the screening;
 - Can you relate to the situation shown in the film? If yes, in what ways? If not, why?
 - Share your thoughts about the initiative and the content of the public oath.
 - What learning can we draw from the story that is useful in your context?

Public Oath

I _____ (name)
swear that as a state authority I will work for the welfare of the people to the best of my ability. I do not want to get votes but I want to make my constituency an ideal one. Voters are my biggest human wealth. The poorest of the poor will be able to live with dignity – that will be my goal. I will be satisfied only after I achieve that goal. I will treat my voters, even my opposition, with compassion. I will not discriminate on basis of religion, caste, gender, language and class and treat everyone equally. To provide the best leadership to my voters, I will consistently learn new things and increase my capabilities.

SUMMING UP



Sum up the session by emphasising the significance of the public oath as follows;

- This emphasises the role of elected representatives as public servants.
- This is a respectful way to assume positions of power.
- This results in increased trust of people in you and boosts your confidence as their representative.

LESSON 16

MY PR KIT

DURATION



60 MIN

OBJECTIVES



- Understand the importance of regularly interacting with your voters
- Ability to build their awareness on important topics and issues

MATERIAL



Collected samples of songs, slogans, stories, pamphlets etc. to share as examples

PROCESS



- We all have some good communication skills that can help us get closer to people. In this lesson, we will explore such qualities in us and learn to use them systematically in our personal and public interactions as elected representatives. This is essentially called a PR or Public Relations Kit.
- Don't shy away from using your skills when you are interacting with people or addressing a public meeting. What skills do you have? (Encourage participants to share and speak about them)
- You may be good at singing songs, telling stories, making slogans and so on. Think about ways to weave them in your meetings.
- Make a collection of suitable stories, songs, slogans and use them appropriately.
- Prepare a write-up to be part of your PR kit that will convey your values and vision as a leader, your achievement and future plans for improving the standard of life for the people.
- As an elected leader, it is as important to show and tell what you do as to do your duty. For this purpose, you need to interact with the people in constituencies.
- Be creative in your interaction with people. Make use of songs and slogans and corner meetings.
- Encourage creative talents among the public. Organise various competitions for writing songs, slogans and stories in your ward on topics of public concern.
- Share your initiatives and noteworthy developments with people through information boards.

SUMMING UP



- The voters will remain informed and they would appreciate the representative's initiatives
- Creative use of various media will strengthen your public image

POST-SESSION
EXERCISE

Organise your PR kit.

LESSON 17

MOBILISING WOMEN'S SUPPORT

DURATION



120 MIN

OBJECTIVES



- Build your support base through women's mobilisation
- Build women's confidence to voice their concerns and demands
- Improve women's participation in village Gram Sabha

MATERIAL



Mahila Sabha Film and arrangement for screening



Women's Village Assembly (Mahila Sabha)

<https://youtu.be/fvTkDiXHjY8>

PROCESS



- To introduce the film, start by discussing what problems EWRs face.
- All of them have first-hand experience of problems faced as EWRs. Explain that some arise because they are inexperienced and have no background in doing political or public work. Such problems can be overcome through your persistence coupled with capacity building and self-learning.
- There are, however, a host of other problems that arise because of social prejudices and attitudes towards women, especially women in politics. Generally, it is believed that women are not cut out for politics, they better be homemakers and let men hold the reins of power and politics! This social mindset is one of the biggest barriers all EWRs have to confront. If we wish to make a mark, this patriarchal mindset needs to be challenged and changed.
- A well-proven and effective strategy is to build women's collective strength and assert our collective voice. To do this EWRs have an effective tool in their hand in the form of Mahila Sabha or Women's Gram Sabha.
- After this preliminary discussion, you can screen the film.
- Facilitate the discussion, with the help of the following questions after the screening; -
- Can you relate to the situation shown in the film? If yes, in what ways? If not, why?
 - What helped women in the film to find a way out of the problem?
 - What learning can we draw from the story that is useful in your context?

What is Mahila Sabha? What is its significance?

Mahila Sabha means Women's General Body. This practice of organising Mahila Sabha was first popularised by Maharashtra, a state in India and was later adopted by some other states in the country. Mahila Sabha or Women's Gram Sabha are organised just before or a day before the village Gram Sabha meeting mobilising a large number of women who otherwise hesitate to participate in village meetings. Even when women participate in the mixed meeting, they don't feel confident to express their views. But, the all-women Mahila Sabha give them a platform and safe space to express themselves freely. It helps them to identify and articulate their issues and concerns. Regular organisation of Mahila Sabha eventually helps to increase women's participation in village Gram Sabha. It also develops as a support base for EWRs.

- Along with other EWRs take the following steps to organise Mahila Sabha
1. **Reach out and awareness:** Talk to women individually as well as through the meetings and explain them the significance of Mahila Sabha. Encourage them to share their needs and problems that need to be tackled by the local governing body.
 2. **Mobilisation meetings:** Organise follow-up meetings with women's groups and self-help-groups in the village and ensure they have understood the significance of Mahila Sabha.
 3. **Coordination with elected members and concerned officials:** Simultaneously, contact concerned officials, the secretary of the local government office and male elected members to inform them about Mahila Sabha and be present for the meeting.
 4. **Deciding the date, venue and publicise the notice:** By keeping women's convenience in mind, finalise the date, time and venue for Mahila Sabha and ask the Secretary of the local government office to issue a notice and public announcement of the meeting. Also, send them meeting notice to SHGs and other women's collective and ask them to share with their members. Choose such spots for public announcements where women gather more frequently and in more numbers. Such as community water taps.
 5. **Conducting Mahila Sabha:** Prepare the meeting agenda based on needs and problems shared by women in the preparatory meetings. Encourage women's active participation in Mahila Sabha and note down the minutes and decisions.
 6. **Follow up after Mahila Sabha:** Present the decisions and resolutions passed by Mahila Sabha before the Village Gram Sabha. Ensure women's participation in this meeting as well, so that your submissions will not be ignored or dismissed.

SUMMING UP



Sum up the session by emphasising the need to have Mahila Sabha and its benefits;

- EWRs should insist upon organisation of Mahila Sabha, the all-women general body meeting, where women can freely participate and express their views. Organise Mahila Sabha regularly by engaging Self-Help-Groups and other local-level women's groups.
- This will increase transparency in the decision-making.
- It will make EWR support base stronger.
- It will sensitise government officials, villagers and elected male leaders regarding concerns of women and will lead to gender-sensitive planning.

POST-SESSION EXERCISE



Discuss the idea of Mahila Sabha with other EWRs and women's groups/SHGs in the village. Plan for Mahila Sabha.



LESSON 18

MAPPING LOCAL POWER CENTRES

DURATION



60 MIN

OBJECTIVES



- Learn about different power centres in a village
- Strengthen women's participation in decision-making at all levels

MATERIAL



Chart paper and marker pens

FACILITATOR
NOTE

The term power is usually associated with political power, but power is omnipresent. We have learned to deal with the power dynamics within the family in the previous section. This lesson is to understand power centres in a village beside the local elected body. To make this lesson relatable in your context, do the necessary groundwork to identify the local power centres before taking this lesson with EWRs

PROCESS



- The term power is normally associated with politics. It is assumed that gaining power means winning an election, holding a position of authority and so on.
- Political power is only one form of power. There are other power centres in the village as well, where women have no or negligible representation.
- Power means the authority to take the decisions.
- Power centres mean places/locations where decisions are taken.
- Let women become decision-makers and not just remain followers.
- Ask participants to identify power centres with the help of the following diagram;

Power Mapping Exercise

Identify locations of power or power centres in your village

Political

- Local Governing Body
- General Body
- Functional Committees in the local body

Economic

- Cooperative Society
- Dairy
- Credit Societ

Cultural

- Informal/ unconstitutional/ groups in a village
- Religious groups

**Locations
Of POWER
in a village****Social**

- Women's collective
- Village Panchayat

Education-related

- Parent-teacher committees in school

Health-related

- Health committee at the health centre

LESSON 19

SUCCESS THROUGH 'SIX-S'

DURATION



60 MIN

OBJECTIVES



- Develop an in-depth understanding of the local Institution
- Learn the significance of people-centered use of available resources

MATERIAL



Chart paper and marker pens

PROCESS



- Political power and allied systems are your means and not ends. Use your authority to make a difference in the lives of the people who voted you to power.
- Through your work, you can set an example of how the position of power is utilised for the benefit of people.
- An in-depth understanding of Structure & Systems, Services & Strategies, Sources and Stakeholders will facilitate people-centred functioning and make lasting changes.
- The 'Six-S' in the following table are guiding principles that will help you in this regard.

Six-S

Sustainability	Structures	Systems
Spontaneity	Services	Strategies
Solidarity	Stakeholders	Sources

Attain **Sustainability** through a proper understanding of **Structures** and **Systems**

Maintain **Spontaneity** through the appropriate use of **Services** and **Strategies**

Build **Solidarity** by consolidating **Stakeholders** and **Sources**

SUMMING UP



Sustainability is the dire need of today's LSGs. LSG is one of the formal and legitimate institutions of governance. The ultimate goal should be strengthening this institution and ensuring its sustainability.

LESSON 20

RESPECT YOUR OPPONENTS, FEAR NONE

How to communicate with people when stakes and interests differ

DURATION



60 MIN

OBJECTIVES



- Learn to maintain healthy relations with your opponents
- Learn to contain animosities

MATERIAL



Chart paper and marker pens

PROCESS



- Start by explaining the context of this lesson. Explain that the elections, though an important aspect of representative democracy, cause to disrupt villagers into factions based on who one supports. However, once the elections get over these political divides should become insignificant and the winning candidates should be allowed to work for the betterment entire village. This may sound like an ideal scenario, but you can take initiative to make it real by working with your opposing side and diffusing their resistance. In this session, we will learn the importance of reaching out to our opponents and how we can do this through an exercise.

Clenched Fist exercise

- Ask people to stand and then pair up with another participant (modify suitably for online or hybrid sessions)
- The participants in pairs will play a simple exercise. One participant will clench his/her fist and another participant has the challenge to open or unclench the fist within 30 seconds (and without hurting the other person)
- In the second round ask them to change roles and see if the other person can now get the fist unclenched.
- When all pairs are done, invite all of them together. Ask for a show of hands to see who was able to get their partner's fist unclenched
- Ask them how they did it
- Ask the participants what they got from the activity.

Reflections about the exercise

- Ideally, people would have just asked a partner to open their first and they would have done it taking less than 10 seconds
- However what happened in reality:
 - People immediately try to force a fist open which meets with resistance
 - People ask the other person to open their fist and they refuse
 - People start to use all sorts of convoluted reasons why somebody should open their fist
- Discuss what we can learn from this game.
- Was the use of force necessary? Why the force was used as a spontaneous response?

LESSON 21

LET THE GENUINE NEEDY BENEFIT

DURATION



60 MIN

OBJECTIVES



- Understand the significance of participatory and democratic decision-making

MATERIAL



Story of Internal Parliament of potential Beneficiaries film and arrangements for the screening



Story of Internal Parliament of potential Beneficiaries
<https://youtu.be/Q6pfaCGv6to>

PROCESS



- Explain the significance of participatory decision-making. Involving stakeholders in making decisions related to them is a good governance practice.
- "Justice must not only be done but must also be seen to be done". This dictum was laid down in 1924 by the then Lord Chief Justice of England in giving a verdict.
- Similarly, decisions must not only be done in a participatory manner they must also be seen to be done so. Seeking the participation of people is a way to share your power with them and empower them to decide for themselves.
- Tell participants we are going to watch a film that will illustrate this point further. Screen the film.
- Facilitate discussion with the help of the following questions after the screening;

Can you relate to the situation shown in the film? If yes, in what ways? If not, why?

What do you think about the method adopted by the EWR to identify genuine needy?

What learning can we draw from the story that is useful in your context?

SUMMING UP



- Sum up the lesson by highlighting key points in the discussion.
- Let the General Body members discuss and decide who is the most eligible for a benefit. You participate in the discussion, but let people decide. Never impose your decisions on the public.
- When the people are involved in the decision-making, they would realise that the General Body meeting is an important platform and they will participate actively.



LESSON 22

PROPOSAL MAKING AND PROJECT MONITORING

DURATION



60 MIN

OBJECTIVES



- Introduce skills in proposal drafting
- Learn the importance of monitoring implementation

MATERIAL



Chart paper and marker pens

PROCESS



- This lesson is related to drafting a proposal, one of the important skills that EWRs need to know. Explain the steps in the planning cycle to participants as follows.
- Suppose you want to start developmental work in your village. It can be need-based, such as some major repair work or it can be a totally new idea, such as introducing an improved farming technique to women.
- The development work you want in your village is termed as 'project'.
- Understand the 'planning cycle' of a project.
 - Identify the Priority
 - Community Mobilisation
 - Mapping
 - Make and Present the Case
 - Create a Plan of Action
 - Implement the Plan of Action
 - Meeting the Goals
 - Building on Accomplishments
- To get a project you have to submit a 'project proposal'. Proposal making means converting the need or the idea into a formal request to send to the appropriate office for getting finances. Essential aspects of a proposal are as follows;
 - Establishing the 'need' for the work and its potential benefits for the people
 - The Proposal should have a 'plan of action' - steps of implementation and the total time required to complete it.
 - An important aspect of the proposal is the 'budget', which means estimating the required expenses for the proposed work.
- After your proposal gets through and the work starts, you have an important role to play. You need to check whether the implementation process is furthering smoothly and the quality of work is good. This is referred to as 'monitoring' of implementation.
 - Visit the work site from time to time to ascertain the progress of work as mentioned in the proposal.
 - Monitoring is important to know the problems, if any, at their early stage and tackle them.
 - EWRs have the authority to monitor ongoing developmental work or any service delivered in their village.

LESSON 23

USE A SUGGESTION BOX

DURATION



60 MIN

OBJECTIVES



- Stay attuned to the needs, demands and requirements of local people
- Improve communication with people in the constituency

MATERIAL



Suggestion Box film and arrangement for screening



Public Suggestion Box

https://youtu.be/DP_UNXofKkw

PROCESS



- Explain the topic of the session.
- As an elected leader, people in your constituency/ward expect you to address their needs and problems. You also want to work to improve the situation in your ward. To be able to do so, you need to be updated on the issues in your constituency.
- This can be done in various ways. What ways you will adopt to get a sense of needs and problems in your ward? (Encourage participants to talk. Let them suggest ways they would adopt or they have already adopted. Appreciate their good efforts)
- Tell participants you are going to learn a method adopted by EWRs in India. This has helped some proactive EWRs in India to get close to the communities they work with.
- After this preliminary introduction, screen the film.
- Facilitate discussion with the help of the following questions after the screening;

Can you relate to the situation shown in the film? If yes, in what ways? If not, why?

Would you like to place a suggestion box for people? Where would you prefer to place it?

What learning can we draw from the story that is useful in your context?

- Let participants speak - Would they like to try out this idea? Encourage them to speak. Address their doubts and queries, if any.
- To know people's views and concerns, these women fixed a 'Suggestion Box' outside their home and appealed to people to drop their views and suggestions by writing them on paper.
- Explain to participants how to set up a working Suggestion Box. Place it outside your house. Let the voters know that they can convey their views, needs and complaints through the box.
- Open the box once a week, read suggestions and implement them through The local government office.
- Discuss potential benefits of having the Suggestion Box.

INSTITUTION

As the following table indicates, the nine lessons in this section focus on the working and work ethics of the local governing bodies. Along with familiarising EWRs with the systems and procedures of the local body, the lessons also provide inputs for making the functioning more inclusive and democratic.

#	Title	Focus
Lesson 24	Institutional Identity Kit	Developing identity as the head of the local governing body
Lesson 25	Know the Local Functionaries	Know functions and functionaries of the local body
Lesson 26	Information Board of Employees in the Local Government Office	Display info for the benefit of people
Lesson 27	Administrative Records in the Local Body Office	Understand administrative files and records
Lesson 28	Get Your Election Certificate	Know your rights as EWRs
Lesson 29	Allowances and Honorarium for EWRs	Know your entitlements as EWRs
Lesson 30	Elected Representative's Report Card	Self assessment tool for active participation
Lesson 31	Snakes and Ladders	Get aware of the traps and tricks in the politics
Lesson 32	Progress Card of the Local Body	A framework for reviewing the functioning

LESSON 24

INSTITUTIONAL IDENTITY KIT

DURATION



60 MIN

OBJECTIVES



- Know the benefits an EWR is entitled to as the head of the local body

MATERIAL



Institutional Identity Kit film
and arrangements for the
screening



Institutional Identity Kit
https://youtu.be/jCGqg_GFV1Q

PROCESS



- Explain that every elected member, man or woman, who heads the local governing body is entitled to all benefits of the position he or she holds.
- Ask participants whether they know about these benefits, which are supportive of the administrative responsibility the person's shoulders. Encourage them to share.
- Usually, men get these benefits without even asking for them, but it does not happen organically for women. Sometimes women do not know them and sometimes they are deliberately denied to them.
- Tell participants we are going to watch a film that will illustrate this point further. Screen the film.
- Facilitate discussion with the help of the following questions after the screening;

As the head of the local body what benefits a man or woman should get?

What is the significance of these benefits, especially for women?

Institutional Identity Kit contains

1. The Nameplate mentioning EWR's name and designation to place on the table
2. Including EWR's name on the local body's information board
3. Letterhead with EWR's name and designation
4. Visiting cards
5. The Identity Card with the name, photo and designation

SUMMING UP



- Realisation of entitlements builds confidence and a sense of responsibility.
- All these things help you to establish your identity as an administrator, as Sarpanch but it also helps one win acceptance from the people as the people's representative.

POST-SESSION
EXERCISE

Ask participants to visit other local body offices and observe whether the benefits of the position are given to men and women who head the local body.

LESSON 25

KNOW THE LOCAL FUNCTIONARIES

DURATION



60 MIN

OBJECTIVES



- Understand the range of services delivered by the local bodies
- Know local functionaries, their roles and responsibilities

MATERIAL



Chart paper and marker pens

FACILITATOR
NOTE

Local bodies are essentially multi-purpose bodies responsible for delivering a broad range of services. The responsibilities are specified in the LSG Act and facilitators should refer to their respective Acts for this session. Study the following two tables created with reference to India, prepare similar tables relevant to your context and use them for this lesson.

PROCESS



- Explain that today's lesson is related to the responsibilities of the local body and the human resource they possess to fulfil them.
- Some functions of the local body are obligatory, these are core functions and the others are optional functions. New functions get added to these lists from time to time.
- Show Table 1 specific to your context to participants.

Table 1 : Functions and Functionaries of Local governing bodies in India as per Gram Panchayat Act and Rule

Obligatory functions	Optional functions
Civic functions relating to sanitation, cleaning of public roads, drains and ponds, public toilets and lavatories, primary health care, vaccination, supply of drinking water, constructing public wells, street lighting, social health and primary and adult education, etc	Tree plantation on road sides, setting up of breeding centres for cattle, organising child and maternity welfare, promotion of agriculture, etc

- Some functionaries are appointed by the local body and report to it. Their number is limited. While a majority of government functionaries working at the village level are appointed by the district or state authorities and they report to their officers.

Table 2: Government functionaries working in the village

Functionaries directly working with the Local Body	Functionaries of various departments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secretary of the Local Body Data entry operator Health worker Employment Guarantee worker (Rojgar Sevak) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Teachers Staff for Education and nutrition of pre-school children Health functionaries Water department staff Sanitation department staff Ration distributor Agricultural department staff Police staff Employment Guarantee work functionaries

- Functionaries looking after functions mentioned in Table 1 and functionaries appointed by and reporting to various authorities mentioned in Table 2 work at the level of the village.
- Since all of them work in the village, they should be also accountable to the local governing body. Start this practice in your village.
- After the election process is over and you take charge of your work, ask the Village Secretary to organise a meeting of all govt. and semi-govt. functionaries.
- Ask all functionaries to be present at the village GB meeting.

SUMMING UP

- Get familiar with the local functionaries/service providers and their specific jobs.
- Local functionaries should feel accountable to the local body.

POST-SESSION EXERCISE

Identify all functionaries/service providers working in your village.



LESSON 26

INFORMATION BOARD OF EMPLOYEES IN THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICE

DURATION



60 MIN

OBJECTIVES



- Displaying information of employees in the local government office for the benefit of people

MATERIAL



Information Board film and arrangements for screening



Information Board of Employees
<https://youtu.be/Ti-Df6ldYv4>

PROCESS



- Explain the topic of the session. People trust their elected representatives when they and their offices are accessible to people. We have to think of ways to smoothen this accessibility as well as the responsiveness of the office.
- Let us see the story of a Local Government Body that achieved this through a simple measure.
- After this preliminary discussion, you can screen the film.
- Facilitate discussion with the help of the following questions after the screening;

Can you relate to the situation shown in the film? If yes, in what ways? If not, why?

Share your thoughts about the initiative and the content on the board.

What learning can we draw from the story that is useful in your context?

- Ask participants whether they can take a similar initiative in their local body office?
- Make a board with the names, designations and contact numbers of the employees in the local government office and display it at a prominent place in the Office.

The Information Board should have;

- Name of the employees with their position and duties and responsibilities
- Contact number and work timings/availability in the office
- A separate board with the names of elected members and their contact numbers should also be available.

SUMMING UP



- Sum up by explaining the significance of this initiative. Proactive disclosure of information from the elected body means adoption of transparent and people-friendly procedures for functioning.
- When the people will know whom to approach and when, the Local Government Office will become more accessible to them

LESSON 27

ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS IN THE LOCAL BODY OFFICE

DURATION



60 MIN

OBJECTIVES



- Understand administrative files and records in the local body office
- Bring transparency by sharing information

MATERIAL



Chart paper and marker pens

FACILITATOR
NOTE

Local bodies are mandated by the LSG Act as well as government notifications issued from time to time to maintain certain registers and records. EWRs must be aware of the range of records, files and documents available in the local body office. Study the following table created with reference to India, prepare a similar table relevant to your context and use it for this lesson.

PROCESS



- Explain the significance of knowing the administrative records available in the local body office.
- The local body office is mandated to maintain certain records. Ask participants whether they know the number of and kind of records available in their office? Have they seen/used any of them? Encourage them to speak.
- The secretary of the local body is responsible to maintain the records. However, the elected members also should be aware of the range of records, registers and documents available in the office.
- Samples of registers, receipts, charts, auditor's reports, minutes, notices etc are formulated by the law. The local body cannot make any changes to these. Neither can they cancel any of these samples.
- The number of files and registers can increase according to the requirement.
- Explain the table. Ask participants how many of these records and registers they know about.

Some of the Compulsory Records, Registers, Files in the Local Body Office in India

Files and records maintained in the local body

- Annual budget
- Re-budgetting file
- Annual income
- Village Development Plan
- Income-Expenditure Receipts / statements
- Receipt book for levied taxes and fees
- Minutes book
- Salary records book

LESSON 28

GET YOUR ELECTION CERTIFICATE

DURATION



60 MIN

OBJECTIVES



- Know your rights as an elected representative

MATERIAL



Election Certificate to Elected Women Representatives film and arrangements for screening



Election Certificate to Elected Women Representatives

<https://youtu.be/WzhDm4HEimY>

FACILITATOR NOTE



Find out the rules related to certification of election results in your country to share with the participants through this lesson.

PROCESS



- Explain the significance of the election certificate. After the election results are announced the Election Officer certifies the results and issues certificates to elected members.
- The Election Certificate is an important document and a proof of your winning the election. Any manipulations after that could be challenged if you have the certificate.
- Show the sample of the election certificate to participants.
- Ask participants whether they have the certificate and explain to them the procedure to get it.

SUMMING UP



- Having the certificate with you helps in checking malpractices after the announcement of election results.



LESSON 29

ALLOWANCES AND HONORARIUM FOR EWRs

DURATION



60 MIN

OBJECTIVES



- Understand your entitlement to get honorarium as an elected representative
- Know the provisions related to Meeting and Travel Allowances

MATERIAL



Concerned official notifications concerning the allowances and honorarium

FACILITATOR
NOTE

Elected representatives are entitled to get certain benefits, which vary from country to country. What are the potential entitlements for elected women in your country? Find out and make women aware of them.

PROCESS



- An elected representative does a public service and therefore is entitled to get honorarium. The provisions differ from state to state. You should claim you are entitled to.
- Elected representatives are entitled to a get a meeting allowance. It is justified as the persons lose their wages when they attend the meeting and are unable to go to work.
- Understand the procedure related to claiming the meeting allowance and ask the Village Secretary to fulfil it.
- An elected representative can claim travel reimbursement for work-related travels.
- The Head of the Local Government Body has the authority to sanction travel bills after checking and verifying the details.

SUMMING UP



- Ensure getting the rightful honorarium
- It will be also an incentive to work
- The wage loss will be compensated
- Will increase the presence and participation in meetings
- The elected representatives will not have to spend from their pockets for official trips



LESSON 30

ELECTED REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT CARD

DURATION



60 MIN

OBJECTIVES



- Understand the significance of the Progress Card
- Ensure active participation through self-assessment

MATERIAL



EWR Report Card film and arrangements for the screening



Report Card of Elected Representatives
<https://youtu.be/pFjxEZzk1xo>

PROCESS



- Explain the topic of the session. A report card is like a school progress card with a small difference. In a progress card school teachers evaluate a student's performance for a specific period, a report card is primarily a self-assessment or peer-assessment tool.
- Ask participants to watch the film carefully to know how Sunita uses the report card. After this preliminary introduction, screen the film.
- Facilitate discussion with the help of the following questions after the screening;

Do you think that a report card is a good idea? Why?

Would you like to use this self-assessment tool?

If yes, which questions you will include for the assessment?

SUMMING UP



- A Report Card is useful to measure EWR's performance. If making a report card, every six-month or every year is made mandatory, the elected representatives will be more alert and proactive in doing their duties.
- This will be a tool for voters to assess the performance of the representatives they elected. This will make the elected representative accountable to the people.



LESSON 31

SNAKES AND LADDERS

DURATION



60 MIN

OBJECTIVES



- Get aware of the traps and tricks in the politics
- Understand the dynamics of governance

MATERIAL



Snakes and Ladders board game

PROCESS



- Introduce the Snakes and Ladders game.
- You all must have played this game in your childhood. What is the game? You have a board with 100 squares full of traps and tricks. Players roll the dice and move up the squares. Ladders take them up and Snakes bring them down! It can be played by two or more persons at a time
- This conventional game is modified as a learning tool to make EWRs aware of the traps and tricks they will encounter in politics.
- Show the board game and let participants read and explore it.
- Let participants play the game and in the process understand what takes them up (ladders represent good governance practices) and what brings them down (malpractices).

SUMMING UP



- Play the game for fun as well as to learn what is helpful and what is not.

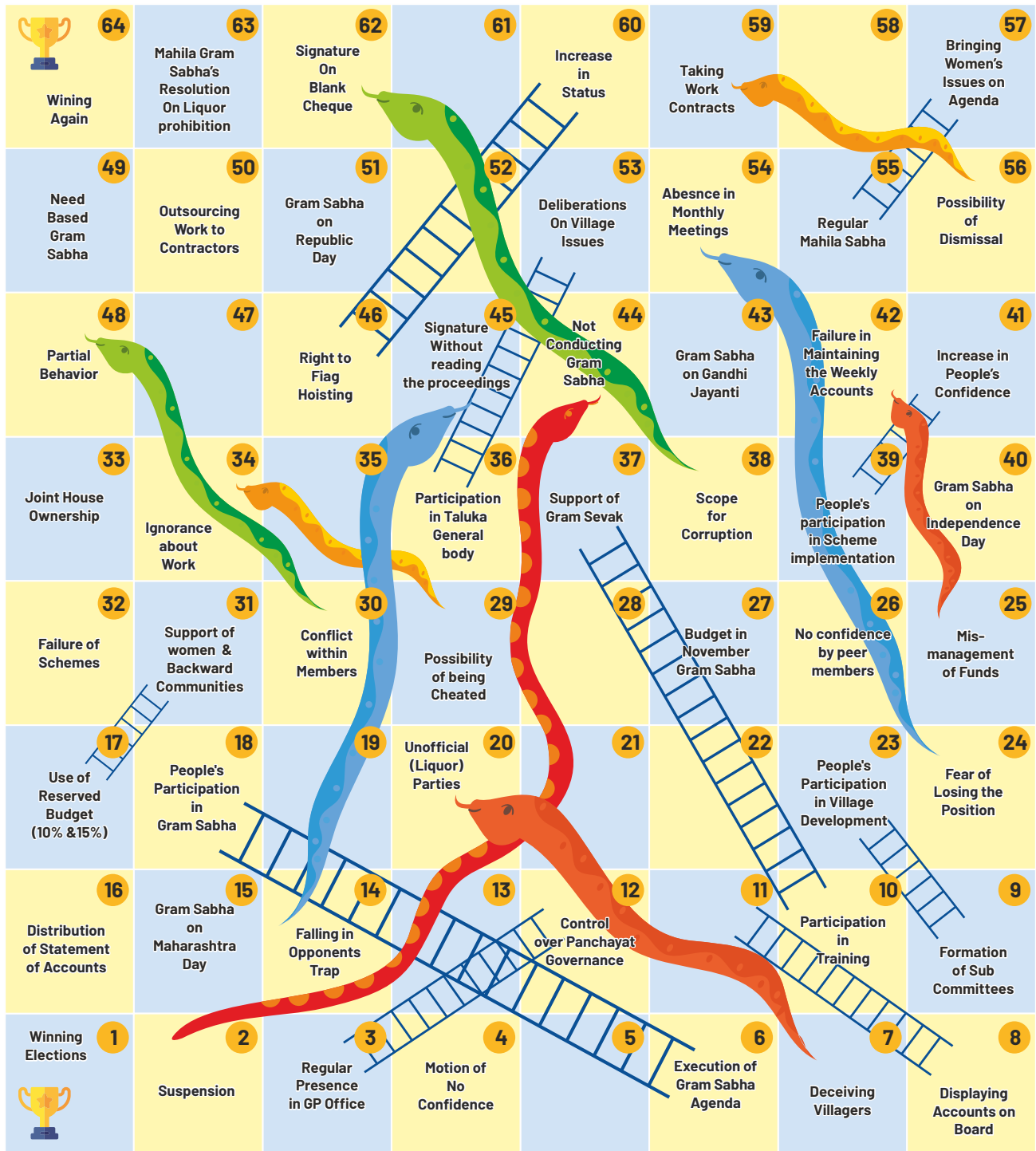
POST-SESSION
EXERCISE

Make use of the game with other elected women and members of your women's group/SHG.



LESSON 31 Snakes and Ladders

Governance - Snakes and Ladders



If Snake swallows, you Loose Election ;
keep climbing, to Win Election

LESSON 32

PROGRESS CARD OF THE LOCAL BODY

DURATION



60 MIN

OBJECTIVES



- Understand essential core functions of the LSG body for village development
- Have a framework for reviewing the functioning

MATERIAL



LSG Progress Card Worksheets

PROCESS



- Explain the significance of having a progress card.
- A progress card reviews the work done in a specific period based on the pre-determined specific parameters and presents what was good and what are the gaps. It is a useful document to get a sense of what is achieved and what needs to be done further.
- You all must be familiar with school progress cards, which evaluate students on educational parameters. Similarly, LSG Progress Card evaluates the functioning of LSG body at the village level on the parameters of good governance.
- Share the following format of the progress card and ask every participant to go evaluate their institution's functioning on each question and note down the score.
- After everybody is done, ask a few participants to share their scores. Ask them why did they give a particular score.

LSG Progress Card

(Village-level indicators for Good Governance)

Marks: (20x5each=100)

Sr.	About Village General Body	Marks
1	The LSG office is always open for general body members	
2	General Body Meetings are conducted in village as per the Act	
3	Women's General Body Meetings are conducted before every GBM	
4	Decisions are taken with consensus after discussions	
5	Govt. and semi govt. employees attend every GBM	

Sr.	Services of LSG Body	Marks
6	Village level LSG body has provided Public Toilets in village	
7	Quality food grains are available at subsidized rates in ration shops	
8	No malnourished children in the village	
9	Health check up camps are organised every year	
10	No out-of-school child in the village	

Sr.	Women-centred Practices	Marks
11	Participation of 50% women in village development committees	
12	Display board of village development committee members	
13	Houses are in the joint ownership of husband and wife	
14	House name plates are in the joint names	
15	By taking measures to check gender-based violence, LSG initiates campaign to make the village safer for girls and women	

Sr.	Financial Transparency	Marks
16	All beneficiaries are selected in the village GB meeting	
17	Budget of the LSG body is displayed in local office	
18	The annual income-expenditure statement of the LSG body is available for information to all GB members	
19	LSG utilises 10% of the total budget as women and child development fund	
20	LSG utilises 15% of the total budget for the development of socio-economically weaker sections in the village	
Total out of 100		

SUMMING UP

- Explain that the score is mere number to qualify the success. It is the thought process and reasoning in the scoring process that is more significant aspects of this exercise.
- Ideally, this exercise should be done by the elected body members together.

POST-SESSION EXERCISE

Use the score card to review and evaluate functioning of your local elected body.



ANNEXURE 1

COMMONWEALTH PRINCIPLES ON GOOD PRACTICE FOR LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

- 1. Constitutional and legal recognition for local democracy:** local democracy should enjoy constitutional and legal recognition. Local government should be recognised as a sphere of government. Legal and constitutional recognition are important to protect the fundamental principle of local democracy. Respect for this protection ensures institutional security for local democracy.
- 2. The ability to elect local representatives:** citizens should be able to elect their local representatives in conditions of political freedom. It is important for local representatives to reflect the views and needs of the community they serve. We believe that this is best achieved through regular/timely local elections which are both open and inclusive. Whatever the means or processes of local democracy, the results should reflect the wishes of the electorate.
- 3. Partnerships between spheres of government:** there should be cooperation and partnership among local, regional/provincial and national spheres of government. Effective democracy demands respect between the different spheres of government and recognises the defined roles they play in serving their citizens. It is important to ensure that there is regular dialogue and cooperation between the different spheres. Strong intergovernmental relations will promote greater alignment of national, regional and local priorities. Significant decentralisation requires cooperation and strengthened coordination between the different spheres of government.
- 4. Defined legislative framework:** local democracy should ensure local government has appropriate powers in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity. Democratic local government, with clearly defined powers, serves as the means by which the community can shape their livelihoods. Effective devolution enables the views of the local community to be expressed and their views taken into account in decisions implemented to improve the quality of life of all citizens locally.
- 5. Opportunity to participate in local decision-making:** All citizens should be able to participate actively in the local democratic process.

Local democracy gives citizens the freedom to participate in making decisions that are locally appropriate and serve the needs of local community. Effective consultation is central to the engagement of the community in the local policy making process. However, critical to this is a vibrant civil society and a clearly defined relationship between it and local government. It is important for local government to be proactive, and reach out to its communities to ensure that public participation is maximised. The political will to develop that relationship with its electorate must be nurtured within the local council itself. The building of a robust relationship between local government and civil society is central to local democracy and to the development of sustainable communities.

- 6. Open local government – accountability:** local government should be accountable to the community it serves. Local government should be accountable to the community it serves while operating within the legal and policy framework of other spheres of government. Robust, independent regulatory bodies need to be in place to safeguard against corruption, mismanagement and the inappropriate use of resources by local government, politicians, and officials. Civil society needs to be strengthened as a counterpart in this process. Participatory budgeting is a tool for enhancing accountability which is also effective at training local civil society in holding their local councils to account.

- 7. Open local government – transparency:** the local decision making process should be open and transparent. The way local government makes decisions should be clear and clearly communicated to the community it serves. Local councils need to adopt a public information strategy using different media and reaching all of society
- 8. Openness to scrutiny:** The work of the executive should be subject to scrutiny. Policy determined by the executive/local authority should be open to scrutiny by other elected members and appropriate civil society organisations/community individuals. Effective leadership should welcome scrutiny both from within the local council and by the wider community. This requires skilled councillors and individuals in civil society able to effectively scrutinise policy and processes intelligently and constructively.
- 9. Inclusiveness:** the process of local decision-making must reflect the social, economic, environmental and cultural needs of the entire community. Decisions should be taken at the level closest to the community to which they relate. Consultation is essential to ensure the needs of the whole community are met, especially with disadvantaged groups including women, youth, minority groups and people with disabilities, whose voices are often neglected. The Commonwealth and the CLGF are committed to a target of no less than 30 per cent of women in decision-making in the political, public and private sectors, and to developing strategies for increasing their active participation. Commitment to downward accountability is critical to citizen engagement. Participatory planning is a tool to ensure inclusive and equitable planning.
- 10. Adequate and equitable resource allocation:** in order to respond to the needs of the local community. Local government must have adequate financial resources to fulfil its mandate and ensure significant autonomy in resource allocation. An independent and secure revenue base is key to sound management of resources, and included in this is the predictability and adequacy of financial transfers from central to local government in terms of timeliness and amounts. Such transfers must be free of political bias, and a local government agreement or legal framework to govern such transfers is often of critical importance. In the distribution of resources, local government must be seen as an integral part of the overall public sector involved in delivering key public services.
- 11. Equitable service delivery:** the distribution of services should reflect the diverse needs of the local community. Services provided by local government should be accessible to all. The poor and marginalised, may in certain circumstances, require local government to adopt proactive policies to address their particular needs. There is a balance to be struck between nationally set standards and locally set priorities. Local government should have the space to respond to the needs of its local area.
- 12. Building strong local democracy and good governance:** Commitment to continuous capacity development of democratic local government Effective leadership is central to strong local democracy. It is important to strengthen and build the capacity of councillors, officers, and local governance institutions to ensure that local democracy can enable local government to deliver quality services to the local community. Community leadership is an important and growing role for local government in the creation of sustainable communities. There is also a need to promote civic education and build the capacity of civil society organisations to enable them to engage in and participate effectively in the local democratic process. Measuring a council's process and performance in terms of local democracy and governance based on empirical evidence, is key to informing its developmental strategies. There is a role for councils and communities to develop international partnerships. There is a role for international local government organisations, including CLGF, in assisting its members in building stronger local democracy. CLGF should assist in building capacity through a number of means including the exchange of good practice, the dissemination of information and specific technical assistance projects.

ANNEXURE 2

POWER & GENDER EQUALITY

Experience of MRA of working with EWRs since 2000 has build our understanding on major challenges faced by EWRs and effective strategies to counter some of them. Based on this, here is the Power Matrix exercise.

	Major Challenges	Strategies	Outcome
Self as a power Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of exposure, Lack of Confidence, Poor self esteem, Lack of participation in decision making Illiteracy/ years of gap in women's education Lack of knowledge about village politics and Panchayat affairs, Fear, anxiety and pressure to perform Restrictions based on caste, class and religious ideologies, Economic dependence, Threat of all sorts of Violence in home and outside 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BOSS Course (Door Step Education Course) Congratulatory Certificates and Felicitation Programme Women Leadership Workshops and Training of Trainers Perspective Building Workshops Ideal Local Self Government Leader Information dissemination through annual and quarterly games, reflective games like Snakes and Ladders Membership and Identity card Crisis Support Squad Involving women's delegations in active lobbying and advocacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increases self confidence and Dignity Increase in awareness and knowledge Creates a new Identity in women Struggle for Value based governance Change in perspective Courage to take up issues independently
Family as a power Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restrictions on mobility, Lack of support, Interference by husband, Burden of household responsibility, Doubt on character, Non-cooperation, Ego issues and jealousy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family Felicitation Family/Couple felicitation Public dialogue with supportive family and community members, especially men Seeking support of family members to facilitate participation in socio-political, governance activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase their Social acceptance Turning interference into support Increase in women's status within family Increase in family status Acceptance of women as political actors More space for women in decision making
Village as a local power Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong Traditional Power centers Patriarchal Stereotypes, Control and pressure of influential and powerful people, Domination of Caste, class, religious ideologies, Various political parties, Vested interest groups, Women are not a homogenous category, Corruption and other malpractices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visit to a local government office Promotional Campaign for the Village Assembly Popularising Women Social Reformers Ideal Village Award Violence Against Girls Campaign Election Campaign Village level women's collective EWR Support group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change in development agenda Reaching out to the marginalized sections Awareness building on new issues Creation of new support systems Rapport building and alliance with various stakeholders Effective and efficient Local Government Change in power equations
Institutional power centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insensitive bureaucracy, Non-cooperation by the higher authorities, Lack of Support and encouragement Corruption, Poor linkage from state to the village 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Let's Check the Account' campaign Joint House Ownership Campaign Local Government Resource Centre Campaign on Reserved Budget Reservation/quota Campaign Annual convention of EWRs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating new practices to change situation Cross Section Alliances Implementation of Government Resolutions and orders Sensitizing the bureaucracy Changing the mindset and perspective of people

ANNEXURE 3

TRAINING FEEDBACK FORMAT

Format for before and after feedback on training by the participants.

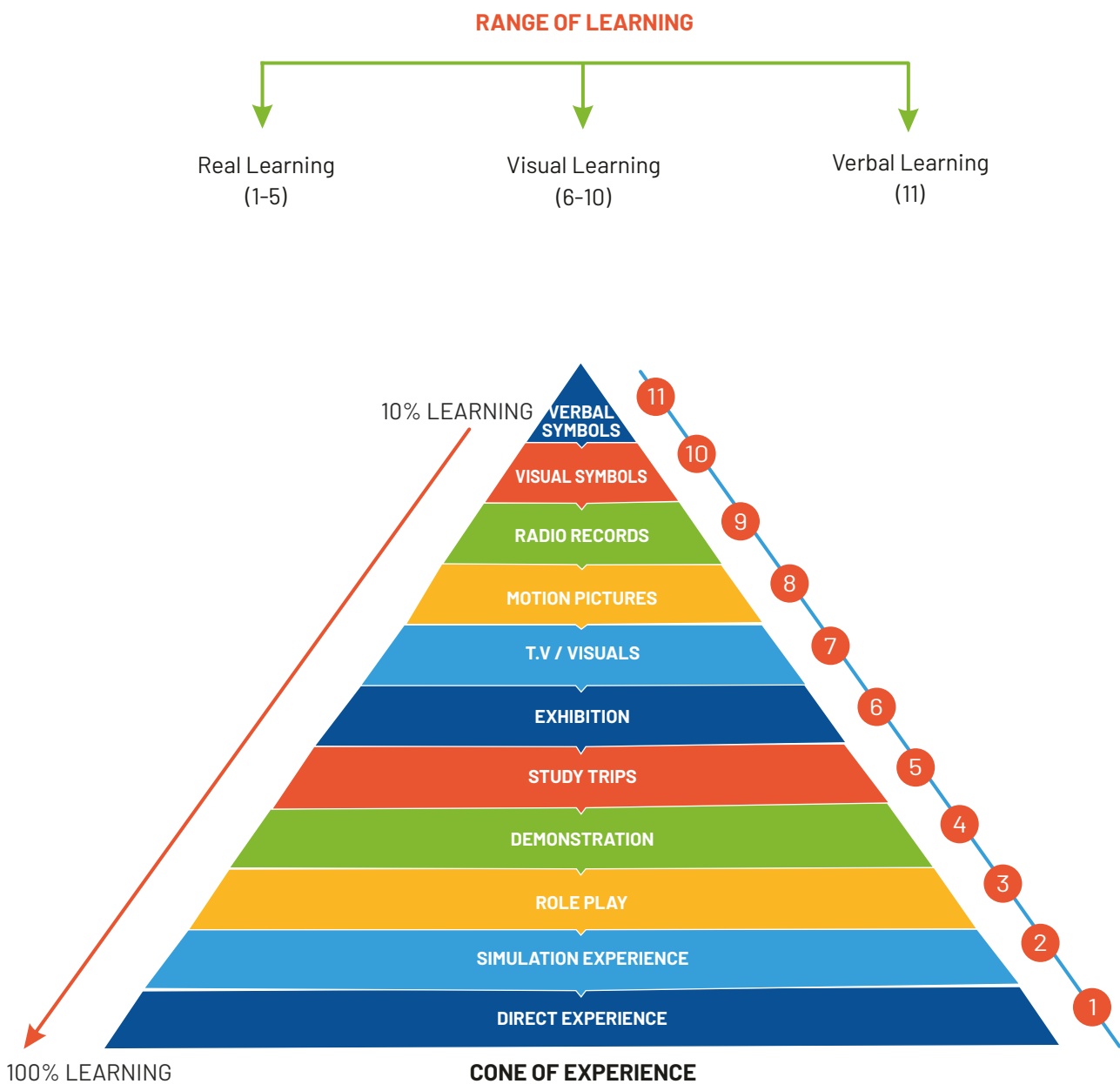
Sr.No	Section(Scale in 1-5)	Awareness, Confidence & Competence	
		Before Training(20)	After Training(20)
	Self(5 Marks)		
	Family(5 Marks)		
	Constituency(5 Marks)		
	Institution(5 Marks)		
Total Marks			

- This is a self assessment tool for participants.
- Participants have to give them a score on the 1 to 5 scale. [1 - Very Poor, 2 - Poor, 3 - Average, 4 - Good, 5 - Very Good]
- Ask them to score based on their awareness, confidence and competence vis-a-vis each section.
- Ask them to score before the training and also after the training and then compare the before-after scores.
- This scoring exercise is a useful feedback to the trainers and a reflection for participants on key takeaways.

ANNEXURE 4

EDGAR TRIANGLE OF LEARNING by Edgar Dale

During the 1960s, Edgar Dale theorised that learners retain more information by what they “do” as opposed to what is “heard”, “read” or “observed”. His research led to the development of the following Cone of Experience. Today, this “learning by doing” has become known as “experiential learning” or “action learning”, which is an integral aspect of any participatory training.



ANNEXURE 5

DIGITAL TOOLS : Link & QR Code



Lesson 4 : Daily Diary of an Elected Women Representatives - <https://youtu.be/ZSyxXWQmqic>



Lesson 8 : My Family ,Democratic Family
<https://youtu.be/aK8r448LE9Y>



Lesson 14 : Constituency Manifesto
<https://youtu.be/yXRtpw1fy2M>



Lesson 15 : Swearing In ceremony of Elected Representatives - <https://youtu.be/zYWzRF77-0I>



Lesson 17: Women's Village Assembly (Mahila Sabha)
<https://youtu.be/fvTkDiXHjY8>



Lesson 21 : Case Story of Internal Parliament of potential Beneficiaries - <https://youtu.be/Q6pfaCGv6to>



Lesson 23 : Public Suggestion Box
https://youtu.be/DP_UNXofKkw



Lesson 24 : Institutional Identity Kit
https://youtu.be/jCGqg_GFV1Q



Lesson 26 : Display Board of Local Functionaries
<https://youtu.be/Ti-Df6ldYv4>



Lesson 28 : Election Certificate to Elected Women Representatives - <https://youtu.be/WzhDm4HEimY>



Lesson 30 : Report Card of Elected Representatives
<https://youtu.be/pFjxEZzk1xo>



To access the films, either click on YouTube link or use QR code reader/camera from the phone to scan the code.



Tale of a Strange Male

*You follow the tradition,
Just let me have the freedom !!*

*You take care of the house,
Only give me ownership !!*

*You work hard,
Just give me the land !!*

*You Raise the children
Just use my name !!*

*Work hard, earn, work,
Just have the property in my name!!*

*We worry for you,
Let control be in my hands !!*

*Get the right to vote,
Let us run the government !!*

*Come to the Gram sabha , be its part,
Just let us decide the budget of the panchayat !!*

*Take all this bondage, anxiety, hard work,
But let Freedom, ownership, power be with us !!*



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