

REPORT ON WOMEN EMPOWERMENT WORKSHOP BY UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI'S AFRICAN WOMEN STUDIES CENTRE AND DANIDA

DATE: 18/05/2015 VENUE: UON TOWERS, MINI LECTURE ROOM 404

I. Welcoming Speech by Acting Director AWSC- *Dr. Grace Nyamongo*

Dr. Nyamongo welcomed all the participants to the workshop. She mentioned that the African Women Studies Centre of the University of Nairobi is a Centre of excellence focusing on Academic Programs, Policy Advocacy and Linkages and networking with like-minded institutions. She highlighted the activities of AWSC geared towards women empowerment which included the courses on Women Entrepreneurship in collaboration with the UON School of Business which had conducted training for three cohorts of participants and was now focusing on business incubation to make women better at business and hence empowered economically. Dr. Nyamongo highlighted that the main objective of coming together was net-working, sharing and providing information for women empowerment. She then thanked the participants for coming to share their experiences and here from others and wished the congregation a fruitful workshop.

II. Remarks by Dr. Marygoretty Akinyi

Dr. Akinyi gave a brief snippet of the genesis of the workshop. She mentioned that she had earlier been sponsored by the Danish Embassy to attend course on *Women In Management* in Ghana. She said that she found the training course very useful and felt the program would also be good for Kenya. She then applied for the grant and Kenya was among the three countries selected in Africa. The areas of the training according to the call were:

1. Grant Proposal writing
2. Policy Formulation and Public Administration

3. Stress Management at Work Place

Dr. Akinyi said that she choose to focus on proposal writing, linkages and net-working, business entrepreneurship, and management of small businesses. These are all geared towards women empowerment.

III. Grant Proposal Writing- *Sam Oando*

Mr. Samuel Oando of Microconsult started his presentation by asking the participants' experiences with fundraising. The participants mentioned various fundraising project that they had been involved in. these included church fundraising, school fundraising and raising funds for social event like weddings. One participant mentioned that she had participated in proposal writing, raising funds for the Collaborative Centre for Gender Development, (CCGD)

Mr. Oando then mentioned that funds can be raised by individuals or organizations and highlighted that nearly all the participants had been "donors" in one way or another by making contributions towards various causes. However he mentioned that his presentation will focus on proposal writing for grants.

Oando mentioned that in Grant Proposal Writing, one may be responding to call or just making a random request. He indicated that in most cases the call will provide the template for the structure of the proposal. He indicated that grants come from Government and Philanthropic foundations where groups submit their project proposals, and the grant-maker picks the one they like best. He said that others are project-driven: the grant-maker has a specific project in mind, and advertises for groups who want to run that project. He cautioned that before accepting any grant the applicant must be sure they have the *capacity* to carry out the terms of the contract, and

after getting it you have *to deliver* and that the more you can establish a reputation the more chance you have for second round of funding.

He elucidated that a proposal is a written way of communicating your needs to prospective grant-makers and hence one must be sure you are communicating well and clearly. He reported that most decision-makers who read proposals see hundreds of similar documents so they need a professionally done document that is easy to read and understand. It is therefore imperative to make sure the most important things are, keep the proposal precise and concise, and that proposals should be based on an organisation or project's strategic plan.

In the preliminaries, Mr Oando highlighted that the proposal should be clear about the goals and purpose of the organisation and the specific objectives of the (proposed) project, funding proposal must be based on the strategic plan – to keep with organization's goal, there should be clarity on what exact service you will provide/specific tasks and solutions – who is the target group/beneficiaries; and the activities needed to implement and resources needed like funds, personnel, logistics etc

On the proposal structure, he mentioned that most proposals would have;

- Cover Page
- Executive Summary;
- Organisational overview and management;
- Project details, implementation plan and budget;
- Appendices and supporting documentation.

He went on to elaborate in detail what each section entails. (*details are contained in his presentation which is attached herein as an appendix*). He highlighted the importance of maintaining good relationship with the donors and that it was very important for fundraisers to understand the programmes and projects of the organisation and the benefits that the community will get from these. One should also make sure that they know details about the project and success stories and that you have things such as photographs, videos and newspaper articles to share with funders. Most funders want to know that the money that they give will be well-used and accounted for and hence it is very important to build a good relationship with the individual funders and to make them feel confidence in you and your organisational structures.

In conclusion, Mr. Oando highlighted the winning tips for grant proposal writing which included

- Remembrance to always thank funders when contracts, funds or agreement letters arrive.
- Inviting the funders to come and visit the project and show them what their money has achieved.
- Asking funders for advice since they are often experts in that field of development and most of them enjoy getting closer to projects.
- Sending in reports and financial statements before the deadlines Always be as honest as possible with funders.
- Not hiding the problems you are experiencing and rather ask for help and support if you need it.
- Making sure that your report answers all the questions and is according to the format that the funder has asked for.



A section of participants during the workshop

Plenary session

Participants asked:

- Why they write many proposals and yet they don't get funding
- How low or high they should go the budget for the proposals
- Number of pages for the proposal
- How the idea of requiring proposals from specified zones is impacting on other regions chances

Response from Oando;

- ✓ Emphasis should be on the technical capacity and capacity/capability to carry out the proposed project which should in essence appeal to the funders
- ✓ If you lack some technical skills as an organization or individual, you can partner with others to bring the required expertise
- ✓ There are donors that do not advertise for calls, hence one can visit their websites and see their interests and make a relevant proposal
- ✓ Where the number of pages has not been indicated by the call, stick to maximum of seven pages
- ✓ In terms of budgeting, highlighting of the key activities should give a good indication of the budget required for implementation.
- ✓ When evaluating proposals, most of them fail at the executive summary stage because they are not clear on methodology, activities and the expected outcomes.

IV. Net-working and Partnership for Women- *Dr. Anne Assey*

Dr. Assey started by reminding the participants that partnership is a sustainable development goal (SDG) number seventeen. She defined partnership as working seamlessly to achieve a particular goal. She mentioned that partners can leverage on their strengths and contribute to synergy. She implored organizations to look at other institutions that share in their vision and work with them. She also mentioned that partnerships improve the quality of the work and help in dissemination of good practice.

She highlighted partners which are useful for women empowerment and development which included: DANIDA, UNDP, UN-WOMEN, FAWE, AWID, National Gender and equality Commission (NGEC), Local Justice System Actors, Community Mobilizer ,CBAs, Faith-Based Groups, Healthcare Providers, Faculties , among others.

She highlighted that increasing international cooperation is seen as vital to achieving each of the 16 SDGs. Goal 17 is included to assure that countries and organizations cooperate instead of compete. She said that partnerships help in sharing knowledge, expertise, technology and financial support which is seen as critical to overall success of SDGs. She continued that high-impact partnerships have the power to harness innovative ideas through a wide range of stakeholders working together to generate sustainable solutions and realize the vision of planet 50-50 by 2030. She also mentioned that partnership helps in reducing the cost of introducing new organization's working together in a collaborative effort.



A group photograph of the participants during the workshop

She highlighted some areas of partnership in women can participate as;

- Local events and activities eg environmental cleaning, women empowerment sanitization campaigns
- International eg. Trainings and workshops, conferences
- Research-Collaborative research
- Development Issues
- Community support eg Training local women on entrepreneurship, orphans support etc

She went on to mention the outcomes of partnerships and the challenges involved. She concluded that partnerships and collaboration at International, National and Local level and with expertise is an optimum strategy to foster awareness, build capacity and develop sustainability in the goal of gender equity, women leadership and economic empowerment. *(Dr. Assey's full presentation is attached as an appendix on this report)*

Plenary

In response to Dr. Assey's presentation, participants asked how one can sustain a partnership. Dr. Assey replied that you can maintain and sustain a partnership by dedication, creating time for each other, being in touch, sharing and having several meetings. Dr. Akinyi also said that one way of building partnership is through membership of social and sporting clubs like golf clubs.

V. Women Entrepreneurial Skills- Annesofie Achera

Ms Achera started her presentation by defining a women entrepreneur as "one who starts business and manages it independently and tactfully, takes all the risks, faces the challenges boldly with an iron will to succeed". She mentioned that Women entrepreneurship is an economic activity of those women who think of a business enterprise, initiate it, organize and combine the factors of production, operate the enterprise and undertake risks and handle economic uncertainty involved in running a business enterprise.

On ways of enhancing women entrepreneurial skills, she highlighted that women's failure to gain the full strategic benefit from work relationships results in their exclusion from the opportunities that these relationships afford. Hence there is need to recognize the strategic potential of

informal networks and alliances, 'tap on the shoulder' that can open doors is elusive to most women.

She mentioned psychological characteristics recognizing opportunities as;

- ✓ personal value, such as honesty,
- ✓ duty, responsibility
- ✓ Ethical behavior,
- ✓ risk-taking tendency and the need for achievement

She also highlighted the role of leadership in entrepreneurship mentioning that it is the center for change and encouraging values, it involves the Skills of setting clear goals and creating opportunities. She said leaders must be effective in developing and mentoring people. Also key to leadership is mentorship and that an entrepreneur is more than a manager when it comes to mentoring, because he is a leader

In conclusion, she called for clarity where one identifies their strengths and weaknesses which making them self-assured and convicted to their personal effectiveness; Being different where one chooses their career based on interest, not something that most of your peers choose and stand up for what you feel is right no matter how many others think the same way or not Let go of all you preconceived notions; streamline the inner and outer image by taking care of one's well being; and development self organizational skills by prioritizing and accomplishing the most important work with discipline(*Annefogie Achera's full presentation is attached here as and appendix*)

Plenary

One of the participants remarked that she was encouraged young women like Annesofie have successfully ventured into entrepreneurship. Another participant asked how the presenter had

managed to utilize her uniqueness in succeeding in business. Annesofie mentioned that her uniqueness in the fashion industry has been timely delivery and self-rebranding



A section of the participants during the workshop

VI. Women Entrepreneurship Training Programme- *Prof Mary Kinoti*

Prof. Kinoti mentioned that Women Entrepreneurship Training Program is an initiative of The University of Nairobi's African Women Studies Centre(AWSC) and School of Business(SOB) whose goal is to enable women improve and transform their businesses into growing and sustainable business ventures, improved livelihood for families , and increased economic growth for the nation. It is intended to equip women with knowledge, attitude, and skills to succeed in business for their economic empowerment.

She mentioned that there is no doubt about women as leaders and that women entrepreneurs should be carriers of their own vision and should direct control and motivate their workers to get things done. She highlighted that the course helps women to take charge of their entrepreneurial journey by learning from experts from the industry and practitioners. The trainers coach women in professionalizing business, how to expand business, leadership influence, investment in human resource, record keeping, and marketing analysis.

She mentioned that AWSC and SOB have carried out business incubation training which involves practical sessions and follow up on the trainees for actual implementation of the concepts and ideas.

Plenary

Participants asked;

- Why many women feared taking huge loans from lending institutions
- What about women buy products for sale like shoes and end using those products themselves

In response Prof. Kinoti remarked that if you want what you want, go for it. She mentioned that experts can help in projections and financial needs of business ventures and can advise on the credit required. She concluded that as an entrepreneur you cannot do everything, but rather do what you can and employ others to do what you cannot do. *(Prof. Kinoti's full presentation is attached as an appendix)*