

## Women Can Win!

### ADVANCING WITHIN THE POLITICAL PARTY AND GETTING TICKETS

#### Case Study

*In Purushgunj<sup>1</sup> VDC, everyone is preparing for the local elections. There is a great deal of excitement, and many are wondering who will receive nominations (also called "tickets") for the VDC President and Ward President seats. Five years ago, during the elections, nine women were elected for the ward member reserved seats for women. One of these women, Ram Kali, has been an excellent leader. She has worked hard to represent all the people in her ward and to keep the citizens informed about VDC projects. Her ward is much more developed now because of her efforts. Ram Kali also did quite a bit of development work in her VDC area. As she is very popular in her ward and has five years of experience in office, she is hoping to get ticketed by her party for the position of Ward President. Four of the other ward members from the same VDC are also hoping to get the tickets for Ward President because they, too, have done excellent work and are well-liked by the voters.*

*But when word spreads in Purushgunj VDC of early party discussions on nominations, no women's names are suggested for positions outside of the women reserved seats. Initially, Ram Kali is only recommended for the women ward member position. Ram Kali decided to meet with district leaders and her party's women's organization to discuss the ongoing nomination process. She asked the party leaders why they did not consider giving her the Ward President nomination, given her experience and popularity in the village. The party leaders told her that the party was unaware of her good work in the VDC. Ram Kali realized that she had not worked closely with the party that nominated her during the last elections. She then decided to focus on establishing good relationships with the party leaders and work to advance the party's women's organization and participate actively in party activities.*

*When the party leaders came to know about Ram Kali's excellent work and her popularity in the ward they decided to nominate her for the Ward President seat.*

Tips for Advancing within the Political Party:

- Meet and get to know your local and district political party leaders. Make

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<sup>1</sup> Purushgunj literally means *Mansville*.

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sure that they know you and your name. Tell them what your ambitions are in politics and make sure they know that you support the party and encourage other people to support the party, too.

- Identify men in your political party who are supportive of your goals. Seek these men out and develop good working relationships with them.
- You have to be more active, more honest, more sincere, and harder working than any male elected representative. (Other men and women will find it easy to criticize women in politics. Therefore, you have to work hard to prove yourself capable and win the trust of others.)
- Never engage in any activities that might be seen as dishonest by the public. Never misuse any public funds for your own personal gain or for your relatives. Never accept gifts, money or special favors that you will be expected to return someday through your influence as an elected leader.
- You should go out of your way to show that you are a service-oriented politician, not interested in serving yourself, but others.
- Encourage more women to become involved in your political party and help them gain seats on various committees. Help build a movement by involving lots of women.
- Become involved in one of your political party's committees. Often these committee meetings do not take a great deal of time. You can work your way up within the party to higher-level committees in the future. Be an active member of the committee. Make friends. Volunteer to take on responsibilities and demonstrate your hard work.
- Get involved in your political party's village or district women's organization. The members of your party's women's wing can provide you organized support when you need to pressure the party. This is also one place where you can gain leadership experience. Keep in mind that the party realizes the value of women who are organized at election time.
- If there is not a VDC level women's organization for your political party, start one. Begin by networking and meeting with the district president of your party's women's organization. This will get you recognition even at

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the district level.

- Don't limit yourself to the activities of the women's organization of your political party; get involved in the main body of the party. (Keep in mind that the real power lies within the party structure where men occupy the party positions.)

## INFORMATION ON ELECTION CODES OF CONDUCT

### MEETING WITH THE ELECTION OFFICER

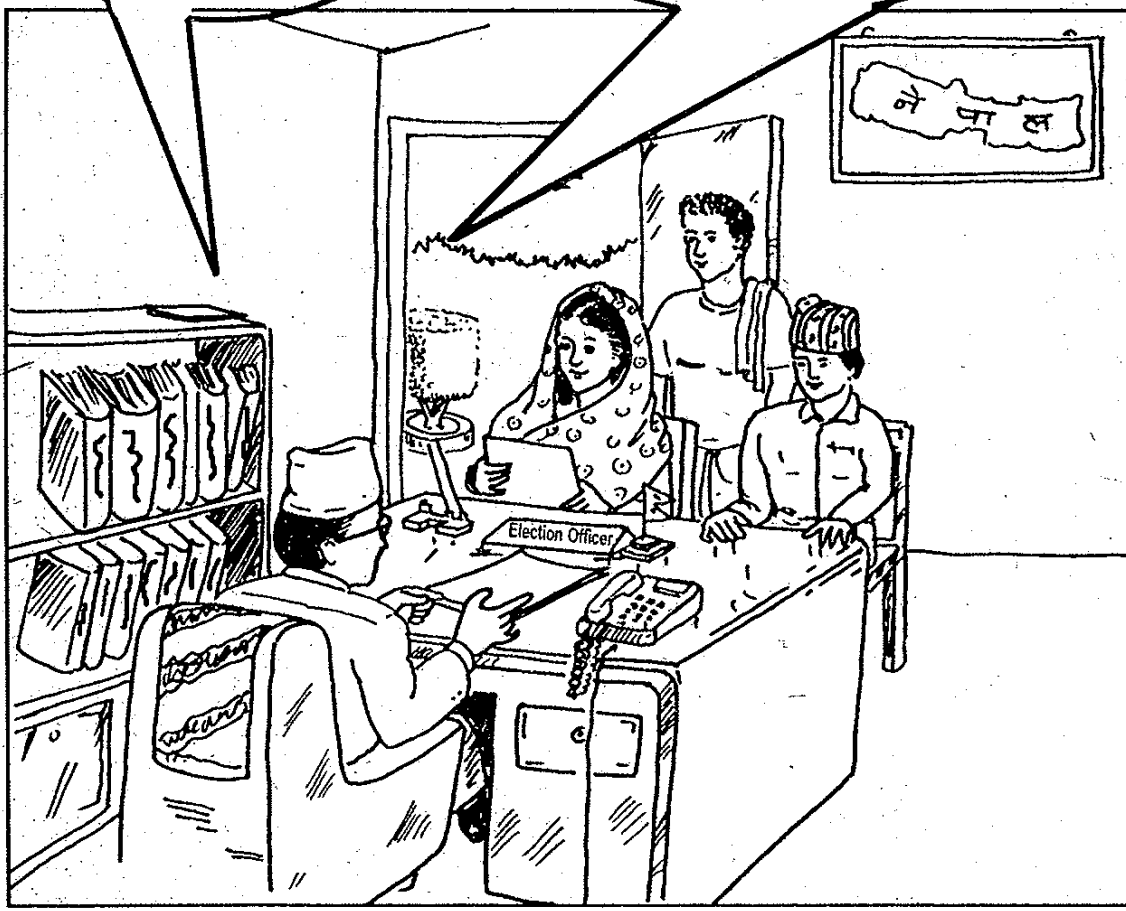
Election Officer: "Ram Kali, you must know the election codes of conduct and election laws so that you do not violate them and you are able to report if your opponent is in violation of the laws."

#### DO:

- Contact voters at their homes
- Host peaceful rallies and public meetings
- Follow the election codes of conduct

#### DO NOT:

- Falsify your bio data
- Distribute money or goods in return for votes
- Say anything to damage the character of the opponent or his/her family member
- Use weapons to secure votes
- Capture or seize a polling station or sub-station by using force or intimidation
- Forcefully snatch, deface or destroy ballot papers or ballot boxes or voting materials
- Organize processions, chant slogans or campaign 48 hours before polling starts



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To be a candidate for local government you must:	To be a voter you must:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be a Nepali citizen</li> <li>• Be at least 21 years old</li> <li>• Be registered in the concerned ward, municipality or VDC where you wish to run</li> <li>• Not be mentally disturbed</li> <li>• Not be declared insolvent or bankrupt</li> <li>• Not be a local government employee</li> <li>• Not be a current employee of His Majesty's Government (HMG) or an autonomous body owned or funded by HMG</li> <li>• Not have recently been convicted of a criminal offense involving moral turpitude or an election offense</li> <li>• Be capable under prevailing law</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be a Nepali citizen</li> <li>• Be at least 18 years old</li> <li>• Be a permanent resident of a ward</li> <li>• Not be mentally disturbed</li> <li>• Not be within 2 years of a prison sentence for a criminal offense</li> </ul>

### Necessary deposits to become a candidate for the local government elections

	Amount
Village Development Committee (Ward President, member or women member)	NRs. 50.00
Village Development Committee President or Vice President	NRs. 100.00
Municipality (Ward President, member or women member)	NRs. 200.00
Municipality Mayor or Deputy Mayor	NRs. 500.00
District Development Committee Area Member	NRs. 500.00
District Development Committee Chair or Vice Chair	NRs. 1,000.00

Make sure you get updated information about the election laws from your local election officer and do not forget to read the codes of conduct

**Mrs. Indu Gurung**

*“Parties must also try to encourage women to be involved in politics by giving more opportunities to women to gain party positions.”*



**Name** : Mrs. Indu Gurung  
**Home** : Shivanagar VDC-5, Chitwan  
**Age** : 41  
**Marital status** : Married, two daughters and two sons  
**Education** : School Leaving Certificate (SLC)  
**Political Experience** : Since 1977  
**Office held** : 1997–present: VDC Vice-President  
**Party** : Nepali Congress (NC)

**Why should women become involved in politics?**

I think in a male dominated country like Nepal, women are not treated as equals to men. Women are far behind in all aspects of society. Only women understand these circumstances and can explore the solutions to these problems. There should be women’s representation at every decision and policy-making level of government. In order to get to that position, more women should become involved in politics.

**Why did you become involved in politics? How did you first become involved?**

I grew up in a political environment; my family members were actively in-

involved in politics. I was actively involved in social work from the beginning and was well known in the community. I always worked for the betterment of our community and fulfilled my responsibilities sincerely. Because of that, neighbors and villagers, especially women sisters, encouraged me to run for the elections. In addition, I thought I should get involved in politics to work for the betterment of my community. With the support of my villagers, I am now in a leadership position.

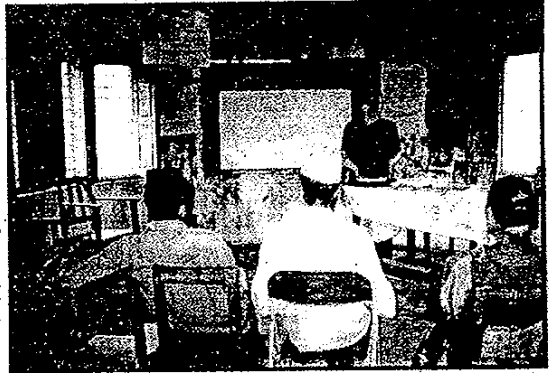
**Who helped the most in your work?**

I got full support from my party and from both men and women.

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### **How did you get the party ticket?**

I was actively involved in social work. I was working hard for the welfare of the community. Six months before the elections, my villagers pressured me to run for a higher position. I got special request from my village sisters. At first, the party decided to nominate me in a reserved seat.



But I said frankly, "if party treats both men and women equally then party must nominate men in a VDC President and women in a VDC Vice President or vice versa. If party doesn't want to nominate women in a higher position then party must stop saying men and women are treated equally in our party." In order for me to receive the party ticket, my party's internal women's organization (Nepal Women Association) pressured the party and at last the party nominated me for the Vice President position.

### **How did you organize your campaign?**

We had a joint meeting of the party's village area committee and candidates and planned accordingly for the campaign. We planned how to conduct mass meetings, bicycle rallies, and door-to-door visits. After that we started our campaign.

### **How did you raise your campaign funds?**

The party managed all the expenses for my campaign. The party provided nomination fees, banners, and pamphlets. I paid for the rest of the costs (tea and snacks) from my own pocket.

### **What is the secret of your success?**

I believe that the secret of my political success is my social work and the strong support I received from my party and the villagers.

### **What advice would you give a woman considering entering politics?**

More women should try to enter politics. The parties' internal women's organization must always try to advance capable women by recommending them for the party tickets. Parties must also try to encourage women to be involved in politics

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by giving more opportunities to women to gain party positions. Women also have the capacity to lead just like men. Everyone needs to realize that there really is nothing that a woman can't do. Women should leave behind weak attitudes and come forward to join politics.

**What is the most important skill for a successful woman candidate?**

Tolerance and patience are the most important skills for a successful women candidate.

**What is next for you in your political career? What other ambitions do you have?**

I would like to go further in politics. If the party tickets me, I am interested to run for the VDC President position for the coming elections.

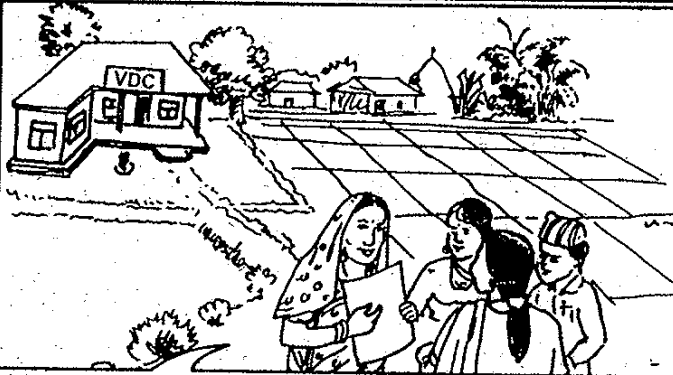
**These are NDI's specific questions – do you have any other comments?**

It's the responsibility of each party to give tickets to women during the elections, to help advance women in politics. A woman who is very active in the community may have difficulties running for elections, if her party does not ticket her. If the party wants to give equal opportunities and rights to women leaders, then the party must nominate women for decision-making positions. Women's participation in politics will automatically increase if the political parties give equal opportunities to women.



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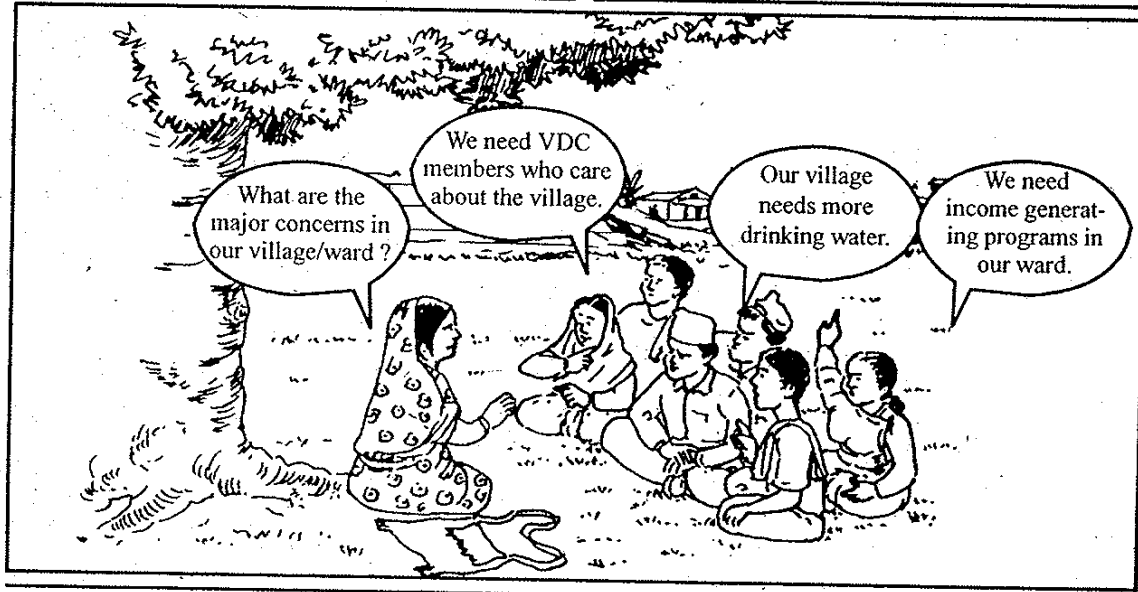
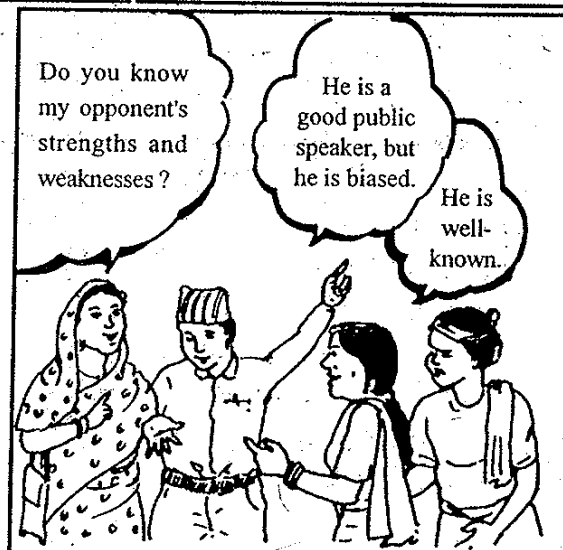
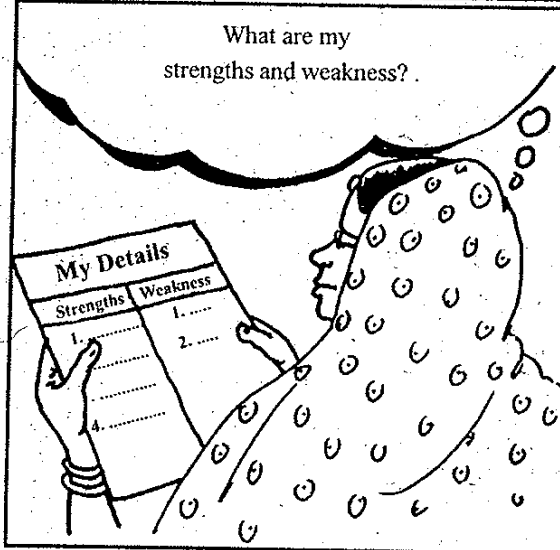
## LET'S START THE CAMPAIGN



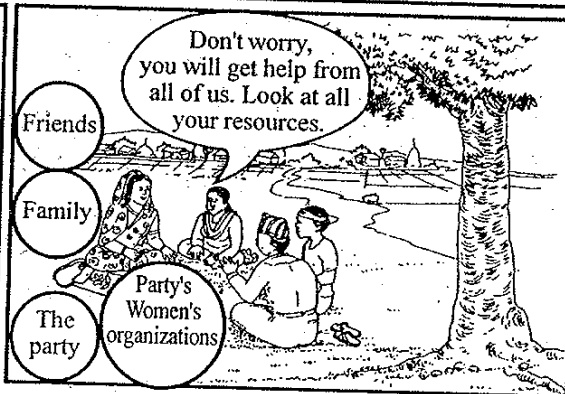
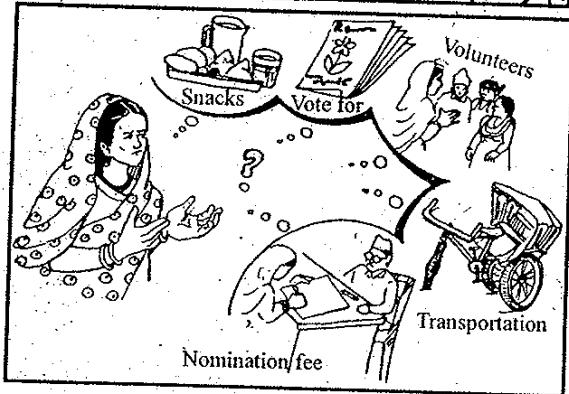
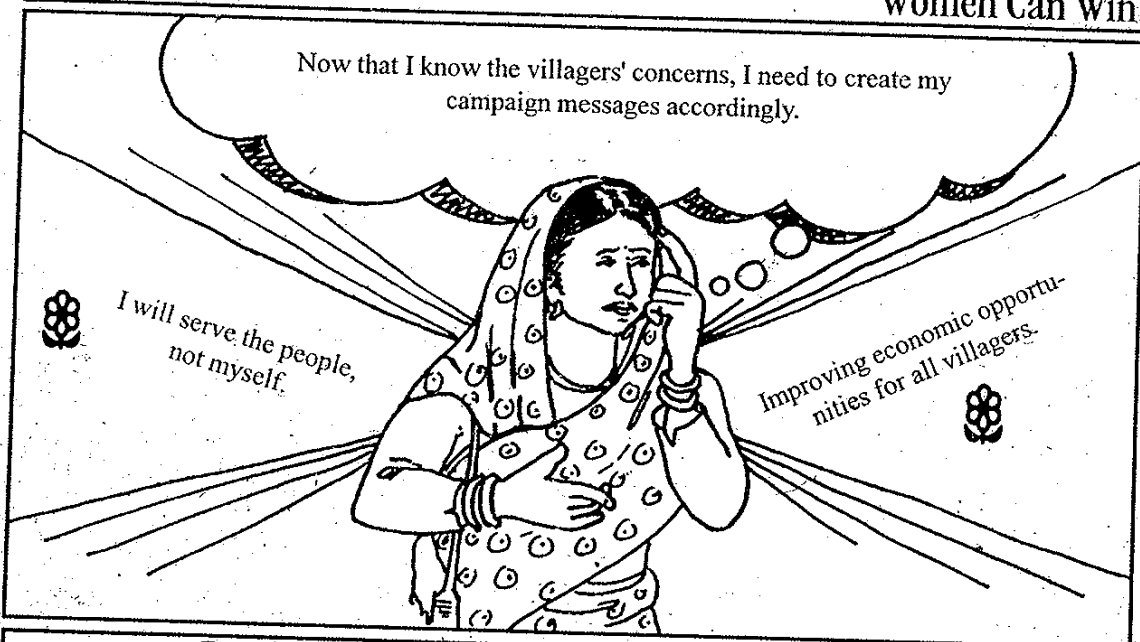
See, we need to remember the following important things for the campaign:

### Campaign Plan

1. Candidate's profile: strengths and weaknesses
2. Develop opponent's profile: strengths and weaknesses
3. Identify voters' needs/problems
4. Develop campaign messages
5. Draft budget and identify resources
6. Prepare schedule for the campaign
7. Prepare voters' list
8. Train and mobilize volunteers and party workers
9. Make contact with voters
10. Monitor the implementation of the campaign plan



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Schedule		
Week 1	Week 2	Week 3
make my message	distribute pamphlets	→
train volunteers	meeting with party leaders	→
contact voters	host public meeting	hold public rally

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Thank you all for volunteering. When you talk to a voter remember to give them my pamphlet and tell them my campaign message.



Hello, My name is Ram Kali. If you vote for me I will help improve economic opportunities for all villagers.

