

WOMEN CANDIDATE AND CAMPAIGN STAFF TRAINING

Within a few short weeks of NDI's Training-of-Trainers Workshops, the NDI-trained Party Trainers began to set dates and locations for the training sessions for women candidates and their campaign staff with the approval of the district party leadership -- well before the date of the elections was scheduled. Some party trainers organized training in each of the district's *chhetras*; others decided to focus on the municipalities, or conducted district-wide training sessions because of their limited resources. Below is a summary of the number of participants in the training sessions, by political party and by district. Since NDI suggested that each woman who was considered to be a candidate also bring another person to the training who could work with her as core support staff person on the campaign, NDI estimates that approximately 50 percent of training participants were potential candidates, and the other 50 percent were campaign staff members. A more detailed listing of the exact date, location and number of participants of each session can be found in Appendix 2 (Appendix 2: Final Training Status Chart).

Number of Women Candidate and Campaign Staff Training Participants: By Party and By District

PARTIES	NDI TARGET DISTRICTS								Total per party
	<i>Sunsari</i>	<i>Morang</i>	<i>Saptari</i>	<i>Dhanusha</i>	<i>Parsa</i>	<i>Chitwan</i>	<i>Nawalparasi</i>	<i>Rupandehi</i>	
NC	138	322	700	56	27	125	40	40	1,448
CPN- UML		484	352		58	50	39	62	1,045
RPP	52	518			24	77			671
NSP	29		335		25				389
RJP	32							27	59
UPF						21			21
IND					148	16	27	41	232
Total per district	251	1,324	1,387	56	282	289	106	170	3,865

NC: Nepali Congress Party

CPN-UML: Communist Party of Nepal-United Marxist Leninists

RPP: Rastriya Prajatantra Party

NSP:	Nepal Sadbhawana Party
RJP:	Rastriya Jana Mukti Party
UPF:	United People's Front (Samyukta Jana Morcha)
IND:	Independent Candidates

Training Resources and Contributions

NDI formed a partnership with the political parties to train women candidates and campaign staff. NDI agreed to support the training of women candidates and campaign staff by:

- training each party's trainers;
- training and paying the salary of NDI's District Coordinators who could assist in the training;
- developing a sample training agenda and lesson plans;
- providing women candidates and their campaign staff with a manual designed to provide with campaign tips and encouragement;
- providing posters designed to convince Nepali citizens to support and vote for women candidates; and
- providing the necessary supplies, including small notebooks and pens for each participant and butcher block paper and markers for use by the trainers.

The political parties, in turn, were responsible for providing other means of support to the women candidate and campaign staff training sessions, depending on the party's resources. They often furnished the training site, resource people to assist in the training, and meals for the participants and trainers. Some parties covered lodging and transportation costs for the participants, as well as, printed certificates of achievement which were distributed to the participants.

Women participants often contributed to their own training, bridging the gap between NDI and political party support. Some participants paid their own transportation costs when necessary, contributed nominal sums, and cooked meals together. Party Trainers and other party members often fed and housed women participants who traveled long distances to attend. Some print shops gave discounts on flyers announcing the training site, date and times. Some local shopkeepers donated tea and snacks. As a result, the women candidate and campaign staff training program took the form of a very modest, sustainable cooperative effort based on a partnership between NDI and the political parties.

Training Locations

The women candidate and campaign staff training sessions took place in a variety of modest settings: in party offices, in individuals' homes, underneath trees, in local NGO offices, in schools, in temple courtyards, in warehouses, in training centers and on verandas. Of the 64 training sessions that took place, 43, or 67 percent, were held in the rural areas, in the Village Development Committees. Holding these training sessions at the grassroots level made it easier for the women candidates and their campaign staff members to attend.

Trainers

Numerous Nepali people volunteered their time to assist in the training. The primary responsibility for the organization and delivery of the training sessions fell to the Party Trainers with the assistance of NDI's District Coordinators. NDI's District Coordinators and the Party Trainers developed solid working relationships through their efforts to organize and conduct training for women candidates. The District Coordinators visited the Party Trainers and party offices on average of once a week in order to ensure that the training plans were progressing. District Coordinators and Party Trainers often met and spent the night at each other's homes to develop training agendas. NDI's District Coordinators kept daily reports of their program activities, detailing their progress and assistance to the political parties. NDI's core field staff members also traveled to the eight target districts and assisted in the training process, at times delivering or co-teaching individual training sessions.

NDI encouraged its District Coordinators and the Party Trainers to approach local resource people and ask them to share their firsthand experience of sitting on a local body, serving as an election official in previous polls or running campaigns. District party presidents led sessions during the training, as did women officials elected to serve in 1992, and current local government officials -- including the Mayors of Bhairahawa (Rupandehi), Janakpur (Dhanusha) and Rajbiraj (Saptari) municipalities. Sometimes Party Trainers from competing political parties served as trainers for one another specializing on particular topics.

Training Topics and Techniques

NDI designed a sample two-day agenda for the women candidate and campaign staff training sessions (Appendix 3: Two Day Agenda). The District Coordinators and Party Trainers were encouraged to model their own training sessions on those of the Training-of-Trainers Workshops and to replicate the participatory training methods as well. The material was delivered through a variety of training methods, including presentations, group discussions, public speaking practicals, role plays, small working groups, panel discussions, and question and answer periods. The Party Trainers adapted the NDI sample agenda, modifying it to reflect the needs and interests of their districts and participants.

Potential women candidates and their campaign staff were trained in the following topics:

- Functions of local government
- Election law
- Attaining party tickets
- Message development
- Campaign planning
- Voter contact
- Public speaking

High points of the training sessions were often the training on public speaking. The participants completed a variety of public speaking exercises, practicing how to organize a political speech, how

to speak in front of a crowd, and how to get accustomed to speaking in front of a male audience.

The parties usually took time to inaugurate the training programs, and also conveyed their platform for this year's elections, or updated the women on the decentralization ordinance.

Training Participants

The participants in the women candidate training sessions attended at the invitation of their individual parties. Often, the NDI-trained Party Trainers collaborated with their party's women's organization to develop a list of potential women candidates and active party supporters who would benefit the most from training. Potential women candidates were told to attend the training with a friend in the party or husband who could serve as a campaign manager. As a result, NDI was able to train a network of campaign staff members for the women candidates, in addition to the candidates themselves.

Training participants represented each of the key political parties and other smaller parties active in the Tarai, and came from a wide range of educational backgrounds, political and professional experience, ethnicities, ages and castes. While the majority of the participants had attended school for some years, and several were college-educated, many of the NDI training participants could not read or write at all. Since the political parties that worked in partnership with NDI had never before provided such targeted training for women candidates, it is safe to assume that this was the first opportunity that the women who participated in NDI's program had ever benefited from campaign training.

Training for Independent Women Candidates

NDI's District Coordinators were responsible for identifying, training, and supporting potential independent women candidates and their campaign staff in their districts. They distributed flyers and pamphlets throughout their districts to inform the community of their plans to organize training for women candidates (Appendix 4: Independent Candidate Meeting: Pamphlet from Chitwan District). These notices often marked a meeting to identify potential independent women candidates and to discuss their training needs. NDI's District Coordinators from the western target districts of NDI (Parsa, Chitwan, Nawalparasi and Rupandehi) all conducted training for independent women candidates. For the most part, the District Coordinators from the eastern target districts, where the political parties were organizing multiple training sessions throughout the districts, were too busy assisting party sessions to organize training for independents.

CAMPAIGN MANUAL

NDI staff members collaborated with representatives of a Kathmandu-based publication, to develop and print a campaign manual designed to give women candidates and their campaign staff helpful tips and information for their campaigns and to inspire and encourage them by sharing the stories of other politically active women in the Tarai. NDI met with women government officials, NGO representatives, nonformal education experts and women political activists to determine the appropriate format and topics for the manual. For the manual, NDI staff members interviewed five women who had previously sought political office (representing each of the four national political parties and one independent) to learn of their experiences and to solicit their advice and suggestions for women interested in becoming politically active or running as candidates.

The manual, *Women Can Win*, was designed in a simple magazine format, with cartoons guiding women candidates throughout the development of a campaign plan. The manual was also interspersed with interviews with women political activists and basic information on the election law and the functions of local government. A fictitious woman candidate, named Ram Kali (a name typical to the Tarai) led the reader through the manual and through the stages of campaign planning. A total of 19,000 manuals in Nepali, Bhojpuri and Maithali were initially printed and distributed throughout NDI's target districts in time for the campaign period. NDI distributed the manual through the network of District Coordinators, Party Trainers, and political party leadership and members who had been active in NDI's program. Whenever possible, the manual was distributed directly to women candidates and supporters attending training sessions, and used as an instructional tool.

US Ambassador Sandra Vogelgesang showed NDI's manual to women political activists representing the key parties' central leadership in Kathmandu, and they all agreed that, despite the fact that the manual had been designed with women in the Tarai as the target audience, women beyond the Tarai could be encouraged and informed by NDI's campaign manual. With the support of the Ambassador, USAID and women's central party leadership, an additional 20,000 manuals in Nepali were printed and distributed in the Kathmandu valley and eastern districts. Additional copies of the manuals were made available through the Election Commission to members of the smaller parties. NDI also printed 500 copies in English, for distribution beyond Nepal's borders to women's organizations in neighboring countries and in the United States.

NDI received very positive feedback on the campaign manual from men and women alike. Its simple format and message that "women can win" was appreciated by women candidates and their campaign staff as they approached the campaign period. Women candidates remarked that they had never seen any such material designed specifically for women in the Tarai. Those who could not read it often enlisted the help of their children, husbands or neighbors. One of NDI's District Coordinators in the municipality of Birgunj, Parsa district, even saw a group of rickshaw pullers (all men) gathered around a copy. Participants in the NDI-sponsored training of independent women candidates in Butwal, Rupandehi district remarked that they were very encouraged by the stories of other local women who had families and many other responsibilities, but had found a way to play an active role

in politics. One NDI-trained candidate who won as Ward Member representing Ward two in Bharatpur municipality, Ms. Ram Maya Piya (NC), stated that she followed Ram Kali's advice on how to organize a public speech, and felt that the advice from the manual helped her as she went door-to-door to convince voters to support her.

NDI continues to receive requests for the manual in every language from women who feel that its message and advice are useful beyond the original concept and timeframe of the 1997 local elections (Appendix 5: *Women Can Win*: NDI's Campaign Manual).

PUBLIC INFORMATION CAMPAIGN

Posters for the Campaign Period

NDI staff members designed and distributed a series of four posters aimed at convincing Nepali citizens to vote for women candidates in this year's local elections. One of the election posters was designed by a local artist as part of a NDI-sponsored poster contest. In total, 30,000 posters in Nepali and Bhojpuri were distributed throughout the eight target districts and beyond. The Election Commission pre-approved the posters for distribution during the campaign period. The posters depicted the following images and slogans, all of which rhyme in Nepali and Bhojpuri:

- 1) *The Woman that Manages the Home Can Manage the Community.* This poster depicts a house with four rooms, each containing a scene in which a woman is playing an active role in her community's development, by enabling small businesses to flourish, overseeing an irrigation project, bringing drinking water to the community, and resolving conflict between members of the community.
- 2) *The Responsibility for Community Development Lies in the Partnership Between Men and Women.* This poster shows an almost equal number of men and women sitting in a circle to form a model depicting members of a Village Development Committee (VDC) working together. A woman is at the head of the circle, and she is actively engaged in leading the group's discussion.
- 3) *Women Support Parties that Support Women.* This poster depicts a cross section of women in the Tarai, comprising different ethnic groups, young and old, rural and urban, all thinking about how to cast their votes in the coming election. This poster was designed to encourage women to be deliberate in their voting decisions, but also to draw the attention of the political parties to the power that lies in women's vote, and that this should be taken into consideration in each party's platform.
- 4) *When Women Win, the Community Develops.* This poster shows a woman leader at its center, addressing a crowd in front of a microphone. Four panels surrounding this image include scenes of development priorities in Nepal: improved health service, equal access to education for boys and girls, reforestation, and problems of alcohol abuse. (Note: this is the poster that won in the NDI poster contest.)

NDI's posters were the subject of a great deal of interest, sparking discussion in local communities and appreciated by women candidates and their campaign staff, who actively ensured that the posters went up and stayed up. Posters were seen on the outside of homes and shops in remote corners of NDI's target districts. NDI continues to receive requests for the series of posters; the poster messages are timeless and should be considered throughout the year in addition to during the campaign period.

Media Promotion

During NDI's program, a serious effort has been made to promote the training of women candidates through local and national media in order to raise awareness about women's political activity in the Tarai. NDI's District Coordinators continuously wrote press releases, staged press conferences and invited local journalists to attend training sessions. They sent more than 30 clippings from local newspapers back to NDI/Narayangarh. Party Trainers also wrote articles about women candidates. Very few of these women had ever had much contact with the media before, and were pleased when a training they held was given the added prestige of an article in the newspaper.

NDI/Narayangarh also wrote press releases throughout the duration of the program, making headlines (on several occasions) in the national newspapers, *The Rising Nepal* and *The Kathmandu Post*. Radio Nepal was particularly supportive, sending their managing director, Mr. Dhruva Thapa, to the field office to interview the staff and spreading the news of women candidate training throughout the Kingdom in many local languages. (Appendix 6: Sampling of news clippings and translations of articles)

The NDI Bulletin

Every two to three weeks from March through May 1997, NDI distributed approximately 250 copies of *The NDI Bulletin* in the Tarai, a newsletter which updated women candidate training sessions scheduled throughout the eight districts and provided information on the decentralization ordinance and the elections as it was released. A total of five volumes of the bulletin were produced and distributed in Nepali to representatives from the media, District Coordinators, Party Trainers, district leadership of the key parties, individuals who had served as resources and trainers, as well as national political party leaders, and other interested members of the Nepali community (Appendix 7: Translations of *The NDI Bulletin*, Nepali Versions and English Translations).

The NDI Bulletin had the effect of fostering a healthy competitive spirit among the political parties; those who had not yet organized training for their women candidates and campaign staff were often motivated to do so when they learned of their party's efforts in neighboring districts, or opposing party training sessions in their own districts. Many District Coordinators and Party Trainers remarked that *The NDI Bulletin* was the only way to keep abreast of the progress and commitment of the political parties toward women candidates in the Tarai, since the national newspapers almost never run stories of political developments in these southern plains.