

TANZANIA*

**W-LEAD: Women Leaders for Equality,
Accountability, and Democracy****DURATION: 03/2026 – 12/2027**

Zanzibar has made progress towards gender equality, yet women remain underrepresented in leadership, governance and justice systems. Although women make up 51% of the population, they hold few elected and decision-making positions, particularly at local levels. Deep-rooted discriminatory social norms, weak accountability, limited enforcement of gender-responsive laws and inadequate support for women candidates continue to restrict participation. Online harassment and limited media visibility further discourage women's leadership. This project will strengthen women's participation, in particular of women with disabilities, challenge harmful norms, expand public visibility and support more inclusive and accountable governance in Zanzibar.

This project aims to strengthen the leadership, visibility, and meaningful participation of women, particularly young women and women with disabilities, in democratic and decision-making processes in Zanzibar. It will apply a multi-layered approach combining advocacy, training, mentorship, and institutional strengthening to address structural barriers limiting women's political participation. Key strategies to implement this project are:



Enhancing leadership skills, confidence, and political participation of women, especially youth and women with disabilities.



Transforming discriminatory social norms and public attitudes toward women's leadership.



Institutionalizing gender-responsive and inclusive governance practices within political parties, media, and civil society organizations.



Strengthening prevention, documentation, and response mechanisms for Violence Against Women in Politics and Elections (VAWP/E).

*Zanzibar.

KEY TARGETS INCLUDE

100

WOMEN

including 50% young women and 20% women with disabilities, strengthened their leadership and political participation skills

30

JOURNALISTS
AND MEDIA
PRACTITIONERS

trained on gender-sensitive and ethical reporting to promote positive narratives on women in leadership

30

SENIOR
WOMEN
LEADERS

paired with 60 emerging leaders through structured intergenerational leadership, mentorship and political empowerment programs

60

COMMUNITY
-BASED HUMAN
RIGHTS DEFENDERS

trained and equipped to effectively monitor, document, and respond to Violence Against Women in Politics and Elections (VAW-PE), while strengthening local protection, prevention and response mechanisms

PARTNERSHIPS



State University of Zanzibar (SUZA)

Zanzibar National Association of Blinds
(ZANAB)

Zanzibar University (ZU)

KEY ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Train women, including young women and women with disabilities, in leadership, advocacy, and negotiation to strengthen political participation and decision-making.
- ▶ Establish mentorship and fellowship programs, connecting senior and emerging women leaders with practical experience in CSOs, councils, and political institutions.
- ▶ Train journalists, influencers, CSOs, and political parties to promote gender-inclusive governance and advocacy for equality.
- ▶ Support SUZA and Zanzibar University to integrate women's leadership curricula and mentorship into academic pathways for future leaders.
- ▶ Conduct community dialogues with men boys and religious leaders; and multimedia campaigns to challenge harmful gender norms and promote positive narratives on inclusive women's leadership.
- ▶ Train human rights defenders on Violence Against Women in Politics and Elections.

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