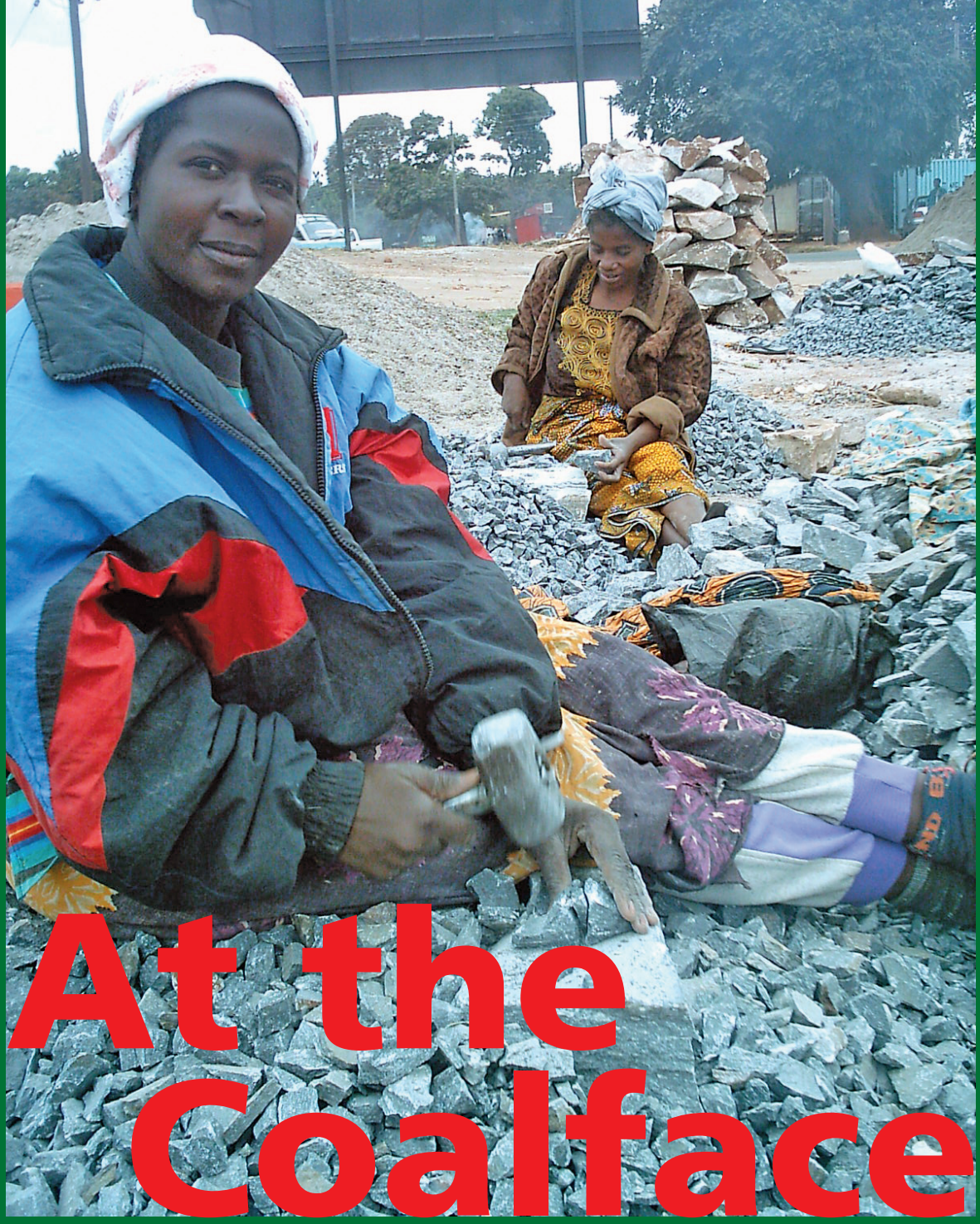


At the Coalface

Gender and Local Government in Zambia

Edited by Susan Tolmay and Colleen Lowe Morna

Gender links (GL) is a Southern African NGO that is committed to a region in which women and men are able to participate equally in all aspects of public and private life.

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Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS 3
THE RESEARCH TEAM 4
LIST OF ACRONYMS 5
FOREWORD 6

1. **OVERVIEW: 50/50 BY 2015** 7
   - Gender, democracy and local governance 10
   - Rationale for the research 12
   - Structure of the report 13

2. **CONCEPTS, CONTEXT AND METHODOLOGY** 15
   - Conceptual framework: Access, participation, transformation 16
   - Country Profile 19
   - Local government in Zambia 22
   - Research methodology 24

3. **ACCESSING LOCAL GOVERNMENT** 29
   - Women's absence from local government 30
   - Barriers to access 31
   - Strategies for change 35
   - Conclusions 38

4. **PARTICIPATION** 39
   - Measuring participation 40
   - Barriers to participation 43
   - Enabling factors 50
   - Conclusions 54

5. **MAKING A DIFFERENCE** 55
   - What women bring to politics 57
   - Attitudes of men 64
   - Conclusions 65

6. **GENDER IN THE WORK OF COUNCILS** 67
   - How local government works 68
   - Council work through a gender lens 69
   - Conclusions 76

Contents

7. FROM PRACTICAL TO STRATEGIC 77
Conceptual issues 79
Policies and strategies 83
Conclusions 86

8. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 87
Findings 87
Recommendations 89

GLOSSARY 91
ANNEX A: LIST OF INTERVIEWEES 93
REFERENCES 95

TABLES
Table one: Comparative analysis of women in parliament across the globe 8
Table two: Gender and politics in Southern Africa 9
Table three: Women in Politics in Zambia 21
Table four: Research sample 25
Table five: Sample councils 25
Table six: Gender breakdown of research sample 26
Table seven: Political party breakdown of research sample 26
Table eight: Summary table of focus groups 27
Table nine: Councils with no women councillors 30
Table ten: Women councillors per political party 35
Table 11: Women's participation in council meetings 41
Table 12: Representation of women on development committees 42
Table 13: Women in management in local government 43
Table 14: Functions of local government in Zambia 70

FIGURES
Figure one: Women in parliament and local government in Southern Africa 9
Figure two: Conceptual framework 17
Figure three: Women and men councillors per province 30

BOXES
Box one: Women told they can't lead 31
Box two: Lesotho women lead the way in local government 36
Box three: Difficulties of becoming Mayor 46

Acknowledgements

This report is part of the second phase of the research project that led to the Gender Links (GL) publication: *At the Coalface: Gender and Local Government in Southern Africa*. The aim of the second phase is to extend the research on gender and local government to all of the Southern African Development Community(SADC) countries. The first phase of the research was conducted in four countries: Lesotho, Mauritius, Namibia and South Africa.

This is a report on the research conducted in Zambia in 2008, in which 81 councillors in 18 localities participated in interviews and 53 women and men in focus group meetings. Their views and voices are the heart of this work.

Our partner in this project, Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA) Trust (Zambia) conducted the fieldwork. Joyce Shezongo-Macmillan, Hope Kasese-Kumalo, Sophie Kasonde-Ng'andu, Harriet Ntalasha, and Nkole Chanda undertook the bulk of the research. Hope Kasese-Khumalo conducted the desktop review and coordinated the research in Zambia. GL Gender and Governance manager Susan Tolmay coordinated and managed the research project and carried out the case studies with the assistance of the Zambia team. Lukhanyo Nyati analysed the questionnaires and prepared most of the graphs in the book. Brief biographies of researchers are at the beginning of the book.

The report draws on the methodology and concepts in the original study edited by GL Executive Director Colleen Lowe Morna and Susan Tolmay. Susan Tolmay compiled, and GL Executive Director Colleen Lowe Morna edited the final report.

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A vast array of inputs, skills and experiences inspired and enriched this work. Ultimately, however, GL takes responsibility for the interpretations, conclusions and recommendations drawn.

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List of Acronyms

ADC	Area development committee
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
AU	African Union
BPFA	Beijing Platform for Africa
CBO	Community based organisation
CSO	Central Statistical Office
CDC	Community development committee
CEDAW	Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CDF	Community development fund
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ECZ	Electoral Commission of Zambia
ERTC	Electoral Reforms Technical Committee
FBO	Faith based organisation
FPTP	First-past-the-post
GFP	Gender focal point
GIDD	Gender in Development Division
GL	Gender Links
GMS	Gender management system
GRZ	Government of the Republic of Zambia
GTZ	German Technical Assistance
GU	Gender unit
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HP	Heritage Party
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
IULA	International Union for Local Authorities
LGAZ	Local Government Association of Zambia
MMD	Movement for Multi Party democracy
NA	National Assembly
NEPAD	New Partnership for African Development
NDF	National Democratic Focus
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OVC	Orphans and vulnerable children
PF	Patriotic Front
PR	Proportional representation
RDC	Resident development committee
RP	Reform Party
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SARDC	Southern Africa Research and Documentation Centre
UDA	United Democratic Alliance
ULP	United Liberal Party
UN	United Nations
UNIP	United National Independence Party
UPND	United Party for National Development
WDC	Ward development committee
WDF	Ward development fund
WILG	Women in Local Government
WLSA	Women and Law in Southern Africa Trust
ZNWLG	Zambia National Women's Lobby Group

Foreword



Zambia, which hosted the 2007 summit of leaders of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), will go down in history as one of the countries in the region that fought hard for the Protocol on Gender and Development signed in South Africa the following year. Yet Zambia lags behind when it comes to one of the key targets of this Protocol: women's equal participation in decision-making.

Nowhere is this more evident than at the local level where women constitute a mere 6.7 percent of local councillors. Ironically, women are conspicuous for their absence in the sphere of governance where they could conceivably have the greatest impact: at the local level; the coalface of development.

Between the publishing of this report and 2015 (the target date for achieving gender parity in all areas of decision-making) Zambia has just one election, in 2011. Short of a miracle, a great deal of hard work and strategising will be required. As we have learned from painful experience, the time to start doing so is not a few months before the elections bur rather now, when a Constitutional review is under way and there is still scope for meaningful change.

An extension to the original study, *"At the Coalface: Gender and Local Government"* that covered four SADC countries (South Africa, Namibia, Lesotho and Mauritius) this report demonstrates both the challenges and possibilities at the local level. The lesson from the first study is that no country in the region is likely to make the SADC targets without adopting special measures. The example of Lesotho, which has a FPTP system at the local level but adopted a system of reserved seats for women that are rotated with every new election is pertinent to Zambia which has a similar electoral system. With 58 percent women in local government, Lesotho is living proof that change is possible.

The evidence gathered in this research shows that even in their small numbers women in Zambia bring different perspectives and interests to local governance. They are concerned about every day issues - health, education, land and waste disposal. They are seen as hard working; accessible; close to the people and to local issues. How much more value could women add if only there were more of them! Male councillors and constituents agreed that this is a goal to strive for.

But numbers alone are not enough. The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development is clear that access is just part of the story. Women must also be able to participate effectively in decision-making. What the Protocol seeks is not just jobs for the girls, but gender equality for the region.

So far, Zambia's successive gender policies have focused on mainstreaming gender at the national level. There is an urgent need for a national strategy to mainstream gender at the local level, accompanied by gender action plans and capacity building in each council. We hope that this report will be a catalyst for these next phases, as the original study has succeeded in doing in South Africa, Mauritius, Namibia and Lesotho.

We can testify that mobilising for gender equality at the local level is the most powerful way of making the SADC Gender Protocol a living reality in the lives of women. We have no doubt that Zambia would want to be at the front and not at the back of this march! We look forward to working with partners in ensuring that this research becomes a mobilising tool before the next elections, and in the months ahead. One Zambia, one march to equality!



Colleen Lowe Morna
Executive Director, Gender Links



Getting the balance right

Photo: Frank Windcheck

Overview: 50/50 by 2015

When the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Heads of State signed the Protocol on Gender and Development on 17 August 2008 in Johannesburg they committed themselves to achieving at least 50 percent representation of women in decision-making positions in the public and private sectors by 2015.

This first chapter provides the background and context to the research; its rationale and theoretical underpinnings. The chapter locates the Zambia research in the context of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Gender and Development and the campaign to

ensure women's equal representation in all areas of decision-making. It shows how the campaign to increase women's representation in local government is not just a have to do but one that will enrich the quality of governance and decision-making.

Zambia in the regional context

On average, SADC now has 21.9 percent women in both the lower and upper houses of Parliament; 3.5 percent higher than the global average of 18.4 percent as shown in Table one. This is second only to the Nordic countries but still far short of their 40.8 percent average and considerably below the 30 percent let alone parity target.

Table one: Comparative analysis of women in parliament across the globe

Region	Lower house	Upper house	Both houses
Nordic countries	41.4%		40.8%
SADC	21.9%	21.9%	21.9%
Americas	21.6%	20.1%	21.4%
Europe including Nordic countries	21.0%	19.5%	20.6%
Europe excluding Nordic countries	18.9%	19.5%	19.1%
Asia	18.3%	16.5%	18.1%
Sub-Saharan Africa (including SADC)	17.9%	21.1%	18.3%
Pacific	12.9%	31.8%	14.9%
Arab States	9.7%	7.0%	9.1%
Global average	**18.4%**	**17.5%**	**18.3%**

Source: IPU and Gender Links

Table two illustrates the huge variations in this average from 37 percent in Angola to 7.3 percent in the DRC. The variations at the local government level are even greater, ranging from 58 percent in Lesotho to 6.4 percent in Mauritius.

Table two: Gender and politics in Southern Africa

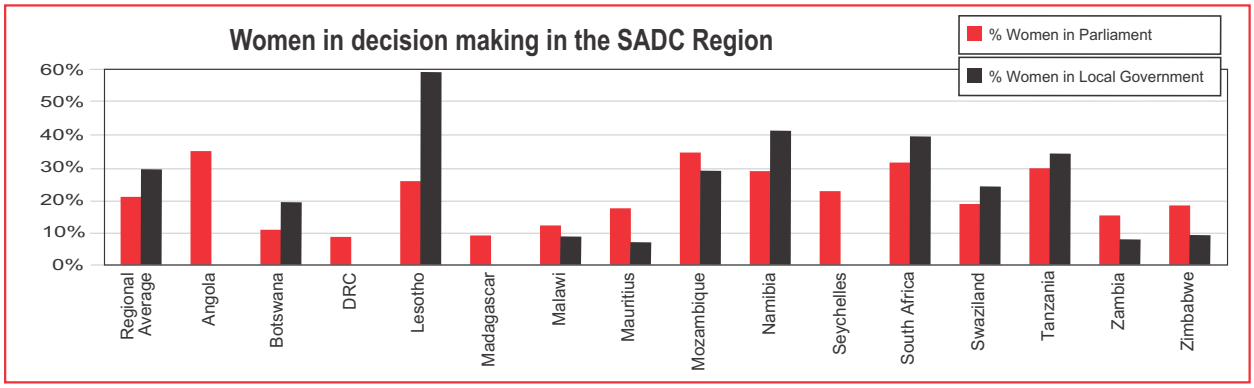
Country	% women lower house	% women upper house	% women both houses	% women cabinet	% women local government
Angola	37.0%		37.0%		unknown
Botswana	11.1%		11.1%	25.0%	19.5%
DRC	8.4%	2.5%	7.3%	16.7%	unknown
Lesotho	25.0%	29.0%	25.8%	27.8%	58.0%
Madagascar	7.9%	12.1%	8.8%		unknown
Malawi	13.0%		13.0%	12.5%	8.3%
Mauritius	17.1%		17.1%	10.0%	6.4%
Mozambiqe	34.8%		34.8%	25.0%	29.0%
Namibia	30.8%	26.9%	26.8%	24.0%	41.8%
Seychelles	23.5%		23.5%	25%	unknown
South Africa	32.3%	35.2%	32.6%	40.0%	39.7%
Swaziland	10.8%	36.7%	18.9%	18.8%	24.1%
Tanzania	30.4%		30.4%	14.8%	34.2%
Zambia	15.2%		15.2%	22.7%	6.7%
Zimbabwe	14.3%	33.3%	19.5%		9.5%
Regional average	**21.9%**	**21.9%**	**21.9%**	**19.5%**	**29.7%**

Source: IPU and Gender Links

As illustrated graphically in Figure one, at the time of writing this report only five of the 15 countries in the region had achieved or exceeded 30 percent women in Parliament (Angola, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania and Namibia). And only five countries (Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania and Mozambique) had achieved this target at the local level.

With 15.2 percent women in parliament, Zambia is fifth to last in SADC (ahead of Madagascar, DRC, Botswana and Malawi). With 6.7 percent women in local government, Zambia is second to last in the ranking of women in local government (after Mauritius).

Figure one: Women in parliament and local government in Southern Africa:



Gender, democracy and local government

According to Atkinson (2002:2) "governance' is a broader term than 'government' in that it encompasses the environment in which government, the institution, functions as well as its relationships with outside stakeholders. These external stakeholders include the electorate, the public, consumers of services and other non-state actors. It is therefore the function of government to ensure that all of these stakeholders are taken into account when performing the functions of government. The scope of governance therefore goes beyond the technical (service delivery aspects) and the political dimensions to civil society empowerment. Most definitions of good governance include four important components; transparency, accountability, efficacy and adherence to the rule of law."

Local government is an important entry point for women for a number of reasons, not the least of which because of its closeness to the people. Local council offices are geographically closer to communities, than national offices, which means they are easier to reach and that residents should be able to interact with this level of government. Areas are broken down into constituencies and wards that have local politicians who community members can approach and interact with. It follows then that this level of government should be the most responsive to the very specific developmental needs of communities.

Local governance could thus be defined as processes through which stakeholders interact in determining the local developmental agenda and in managing resources to implement these developmental priorities (Evertzen 2001:5).

Because women have historically been relegated to the home, they spend most of their time in communities dealing with local issues which include service delivery and as such are the ones best acquainted with and most affected by these services. Women are also more involved in community activities and organisations and have a far better grasp of what is going on at the local level than their male counterparts. It follows then that their involvement in the decision making at this level of government would benefit both them and their communities.

Local politics is also easier to gain entry into, having fewer requirements and because of its proximity to the home enable women to combine their domestic responsibility with their participation in politics.

According to Beall (1996:1) "A gender sensitive approach to urban governance has two principal objectives; firstly to increase women's participation in human settlements development and, secondly, to foster gender-awareness and competence among both women and men in the political arena and planning practice."

The involvement of women in politics can generally be looked at in two ways; there are the equity or quantitative arguments and then the efficacy or qualitative arguments.

Equity arguments

This school of thought argues that women should participate because they have a right to do so. This right is enshrined in most Constitutions and is based in principles of equality, democracy and legitimacy. 'The empowerment and autonomy of women and the improvement of women's social, economic and political status is essential for the achievement of both transparent and accountable government and

administration, and sustainable development in all areas of life'. (UN Women's Conference Beijing, 1995).

The justice argument is that because women constitute half the population (or over half as the case is in many African countries) they have the right to participate and be represented in equal numbers in decision-making structures. It argues that society where women are not represented equally is undemocratic and unjust.

Efficacy arguments

This argument takes account of the fact that women and men are different and as a result they have different needs, expectations, views and priorities: "Socially conferred roles and responsibilities differentially determine how women and men contribute to and benefit from city life" (Beall 1996:3).

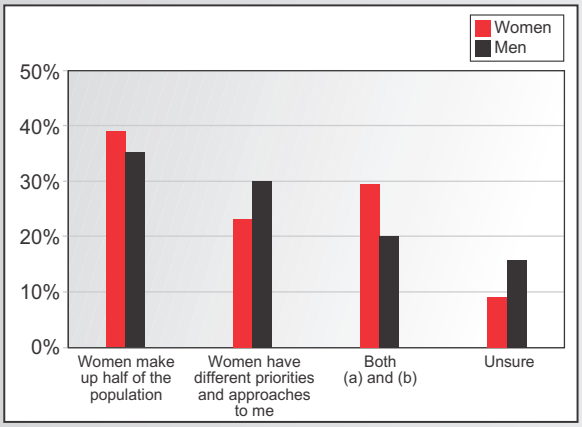
Women and men perform different task and functions. Because of the socially constructed roles that are attributed to women they most often perform the reproductive activities, which include all the domestic responsibilities as well as child rearing and which are mostly based in the private sphere. As such they experience first hand the delivery, or lack thereof, of services, which include water, sanitation, electricity, health services and public safety. Men on the other hand inhabit the public sphere as politicians and participants in economic activities. As a result men are not always aware of the inadequacies of services and as politicians they do not automatically represent these issues that are a concern for women.

This argument holds that women's participation in decision-making, especially at the local government is crucial in order to ensure that the needs, interests and priorities of both women and men will be taken into account in the development and implementation of policies and programmes at the local level.

Equity and efficacy

In Zambia, local government respondents took the view that both arguments are relevant, but seemed less categoric in their response than in the first study, possibly reflecting the fact the gender and governance discourse is still relatively new in this country and at this level.

What the councillors said: Is there a link between gender and democracy?



When asked if there is a link between gender and democracy, the majority of Zambian respondents (81.5 percent) agreed with the statement with marginally more women (84 percent) than men (80 percent) agreeing that gender and democracy are linked.

Asked reason why, 37.3 percent of the respondents answered because they make up half of the population, with more women (38.3 percent) agreeing with this statement than men (35 percent).

More men (30 percent) that women (23.4 percent) believed that the reason is that women have different perspectives. 29.8 percent of the women cited the reasons as both because they make up half of the population as well as because women have different priorities and approached to men; 9.8 percent higher than men. There were rather a high number of participants (15 percent men) and (8.5 percent women) that were unsure about the response.

These findings are different from the first *At the Coalface* study which found that overall 63 percent of the councillors interviewed agreed with both statements and there was very little difference between male and female responses. The countries involved in the first study included Lesotho, Namibia and South Africa, which all have high levels of women's representation in local government and Mauritius which has the lowest level of women's representation.

These findings could therefore be explained by the fact that councillors have a more developed sense of the importance of women's participation in local government in countries where there are high levels of women's representation. In Zambia, because women are in the minority in all councils it is difficult for them to demonstrate the value of women's participation.

Focus group discussions centred more on the efficacy argument as illustrated in the following responses:

"Yes, there is a link between gender and democracy. It is very important for men and women to work together. Previously, the Local Government was considered a Ministry for men only in terms of leadership positions but now that women are participating, it is a better development because they are now able to work together. However, women are still in the minority. " (Livingstone Men).

"There could be no development if men and women do not work together because men and women think differently, so they can compliment each other. This is why it is important for women to participate in local government."(Lusaka women)

The equity arguments are featured in the responses; for example: "There is a link between gender equality and democracy because if we say we are democratic and we bar women from participating in local governments then our democracy is fake." (Lusaka men)

Rationale for the research

Gender Links' (GL) 2004 study, *Ringing up the Changes: Gender in Southern African Politics* identified the uneven representation of women in local government in Southern Africa as one of the most glaring yet under-researched areas in gender, conflict and governance studies in the region. Southern Africa has vacillated between taking special measures to ensure women's increased representation in local government resulting in varying degrees of conflict (as evidenced in the recent local government elections in Lesotho) and not taking any action at all.

Local government sparks contradictory responses among male decision-makers under pressure to

redress gender imbalances. On the one hand, to the extent that countries in Southern Africa have been willing to legislate quotas for women's representation in politics, they have been more willing to do so for local than national elections. Lesotho, Namibia and South Africa (the three countries with the highest representation of women in local government) all have quotas of one kind or the other at local but not at national level.

The discrepancy suggests that rather than being a reflection of commitment to women's participation at local level, the measures taken in the three countries are a case of male decision-makers giving way at local level while resisting such measures in the more coveted national arena.

To the other extreme of the countries that have achieved rapid strides in women's participation in local government are a host of SADC countries in which women councillors constitute less than ten percent of the total. In these countries (such as Malawi, Mauritius Zambia and Zimbabwe) conservative attitudes on the ground continue to work against women's participation at local level, even more so than at national level.

With the decision by SADC Heads of State to increase the target for women in decision-making from 30 to 50 percent, and to ensure that all areas of decision-making are taken into account, pressure is increasing to ensure more even and greater participation by women in local government. As the campaign mounts to increase women's participation in decision-making at local level, the question that arises is: what is the least conflicting and most beneficial way for achieving this that will ultimately both empower women and change the attitudes of men towards gender equality?

In 2006, GL sought to answer these questions using case material from South Africa (that has adopted a voluntary approach to the 50/50 campaign at local level in the 2005 elections in a mixed constituency and PR system); Lesotho (that has a legislated quota in constituency-based system); Namibia (that has a legislated quota in a PR system and Mauritius (which held local elections in 2005 in a constituency-based system, with no quotas).

This resulted in the groundbreaking study, *At the Coalface: Gender and Local Government in Southern Africa*. The study has since been launched in all four countries and used to develop strategies for mainstreaming gender in local government, to be followed by roll out of gender action plans in all districts. With funding from DANIDA, GL has extended the research to cover the remaining SADC countries.

This study set out to draw lessons on increasing the representation of women in local government in a way that minimises conflict; increases participation and leads to more equitable, responsive government at the local level - the coalface of delivery - through:

- Studying the experiences of Southern African countries with different electoral systems and approaches to quotas in increasing the representation of women in local government.
- Examining how these experiences can be applied by other Southern African countries seeking to comply with the decision by Heads of State to raise the quota for women in all areas of decision-making from thirty to fifty percent.
- Examining the impact of women at local level and proposing strategies for overcoming barriers to their effective participation and contribution.

Structure of the report

Chapter one starts with an overview of women's participation in political decision-making globally and across the region and places Zambia in the

regional context. It highlights some key concepts around gender, democracy and local governance and sets out the arguments for the involvement of women in politics, which can be looked at in two ways; the equity or quantitative arguments and the efficacy or qualitative arguments. This Chapter sets out the rationale for the study.

Chapter two builds on the foundation provided by Ringing up the Changes that drew on Thenjiwe Mtintso's access, participation and transformation model to provide the conceptual framework for the research, which in turn informs the methodology that is described in detail in this chapter. The chapter also gives background information on Zambia, including the electoral system and how local government works in the country.

Chapter three concerns women's ability to access local government. While there are no legal impediments to women accessing local government in Zambia the study found that the structures within which women have to function still remain largely patriarchal and in some instances are obstructive to women's entry into the political arena. The chapter explores the barriers that women face in accessing local government and concludes with some of the strategies that can be implemented to ensure that women are able to enter this crucial area of decision-making.

Chapter four focuses on women's participation and the factors that either enable or hinder this. The chapter highlights that numbers only are not enough and that for any legitimate change to take place women need to be empowered to participate effectively. It attempts to measure this participation by drawing on findings from council meeting observations and in-depth interviews conducted with women and men councillors, as well as the focus group discussions. The chapter shows a number of barriers to women's effective participation in local government but goes on to illustrate that it is possible for barriers to be turned into an enabling factors.

Chapter five attempts to demonstrate what women bring to local politics and whether it makes a difference to the lives of women in their communities. While the study shows that women may have different concern and interests, it highlights the importance of them not being stereotyped into raising only the "soft" community and welfare issues which are generally associated with women, as well the importance of men raising these issues. The chapter draws on examples of the work that women are doing to illustrate the importance of their participation. It also gives the views of male councillors and questions whether attitudes are beginning to change in the way that they see women and whether they view the participation of women as important to both them and the communities.

Chapter six looks at the functions of local government and the extent to which gender is incorporated into the every day work of councils. The study draws on examples gleaned from interviews with councillors and focus groups and shows that women are beginning to influence councils' agendas. However, it does highlight that much of the work that women councillors do, addresses only the practical needs of women and that more needs to be done to address the more strategic needs of women in communities.

Chapter seven follows on from the previous chapter and begins to look at how councils can begin to address the needs of women in a more strategic way. The chapter explains some key concepts around practical and strategic needs and approaches to gender. It highlights the importance beginning to address the causes of women's marginalised status in ways that will have a meaningful impact on their lives. The study shows the importance of a systematic approach to gender which includes developing policies and strategies that address all gender concerns within councils.

Chapter eight summarises the key findings and recommendations of the study.



Ndola City Council Offices *Photo: Susan Tolmay*

Concepts, context and methodology

For women to make a difference, they must first be at the table where decisions are made. At that table they must be able to make their voices heard both by virtue of their numbers and because they are empowered to speak out about the things that most concern them. When they do speak out, their voices must be heard and translated into policies and decisions. It is only then that effective change can take place not just for these few women but for all the women in our region. This chapter sets out the conceptual framework for the research; the country context and the research methodology.

Conceptual framework: Access, participation, transformation

At the Coalface, Gender and Local Government in Southern Africa builds on, and is informed by the conceptual framework first put forward by Thenjiwe Mtintso (1999:33-52) a Board Member and former Chair of GL and former Chair of the South African Commission on Gender Equality (CGE). This framework, elaborated in *Ringing up the Changes*, is illustrated in Figure two.

The crux of Mtintso's argument is that access and numbers are a prerequisite for, but do not guarantee transformation. She argues that once women have entered decision-making, it is necessary to remove the barriers to their effective participation. Only when women are present in significant strengths, and are able to participate effectively, can they start to make an impact.

Access

Women have been denied access to political decision-making for a host of reasons that basically boil down to the fact that societies all over the world have defined women's space as being in the private rather than in the public sphere. Of all the areas of decision-making, politics is the most public of public spaces, and therefore has been among the most hostile for women to access. There is very little evidence to support the assumption that local government, as an area of immediate and direct interest to women, is more accessible to their participation.

Instead, there appear to be two diametrically opposed trends at this level: a relatively high representation of women where parties and countries have decided to push the 50/50 agenda and see local politics as a less contested power base than national politics; and low levels of representation where the forces of tradition on the ground are such that politicians have not dared to challenge them.

The "critical mass"

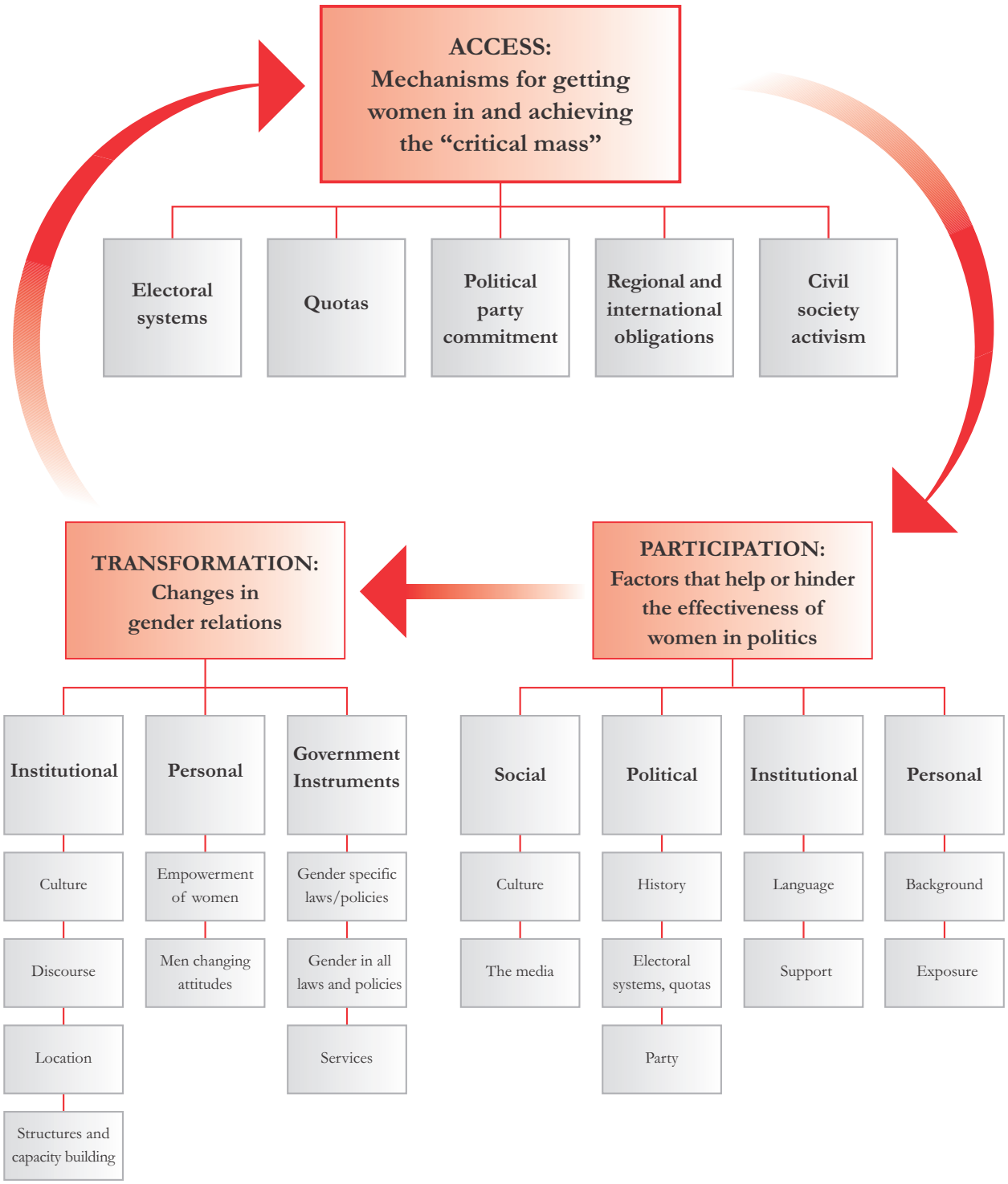
A question that frequently arises in access debates is the extent to which women have to be represented in specific numbers in order to make a difference. Put differently, how critical is the critical mass? How magic is the figure 30 percent?

The notion that to make a difference women should constitute a "critical mass" traces back to research by Danish political scientist Drude Dahlerup (1991:10) who declared: "Don't expect us to make too much difference as long as we are only a few women in politics. It takes a critical mass of women to make a fundamental change."

A study on women in public life carried out by the UN Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) in 2000 also argues that only a critical mass of women allows female politicians to bring different values to public life:

> As a minority operating in a male domain, for most women public figures to be accepted and function on a basis of equality with men they have to adapt to and adopt the male priorities predominating in public life. Minorities, such as women who are successful in a male world, according to the classic theory of minority behaviour, absorb the dominant culture to such an extent that they tend to dissociate themselves from other women, to undermine their own success and to perceive any discrimination they meet as a result of their own shortcomings. It takes a minority of a certain minimum size, 30-35 percent, to be able to influence the culture of groups and to facilitate alliances between group members. The theory may also explain why lone women who reach high office have

Figure two: Conceptual framework



often appeared not to bring distinctively female values to their office (2000:5).

However, as Britton points out (2003:219), there is "an equally rich body of 'women in politics research' finding that getting women into office is not enough to have an impact on either policy or legislative behaviour."

A middle-of-the-road argument is that while women are not homogenous, and while they may not openly advocate feminist agendas, they do have certain common interests, different values, outlooks and approaches to men. The mere presence of women in decision-making can be an impetus to change.

The argument that only self-declared feminists and gender activists can make a difference overlooks the important role that other women play in supporting such agendas and the importance of numbers in building consensus around these agendas. It also ignores the importance of the many women decision-makers who are not self-declared feminists or gender activists nor hostile to such agendas, but are sympathetic to the issues without being quite certain what they can do within decision-making structures to make a difference. It is this "critical mass" that needs to be targeted with appropriate empowerment strategies that build on their empathies and equip them with the skills to challenge the dominant male ethos of institutions and the services that they deliver.

What is undeniable is that increasing the numbers of women in office is not, on its own, a panacea for ensuring women's equality and ending gender discrimination. Numerous other factors play an equally important role, such as the cultural norms of society, the financial limitations of fledgling democracies, and the partisan constraints of political life (2003:378).

These factors can be especially intense at the local level, where the general disempowerment of this sphere of government combined with the often more blatant forms of patriarchy experienced on the ground pose particular challenges in measuring the impact of women in decision-making at this level.

For the purposes of this study, the **"critical mass"** is understood less as a fixed number and more as the point at which women, through a combination of numerical strength, enabling political environments, empowerment and conviction feel able to raise critical questions in mainstream environments.

Participation

For women decision-makers to be effective, strategies for increasing women's representation must go beyond mere access and address the barriers to effective participation. Political decision-making is fraught with obstacles for women. These include:

- **Ideological factors**, including the patriarchal nature of all societies and the intersection between racism, sexism; culture and religion. This may vary with time, place and country. It may also differ between the different spheres of government. As this study shows such forces often loom much larger as barriers at the local than at the national level.
- **Political factors**, such as support from the party and party structures; the kind of electoral system and where one sits in the political spectrum. Women in opposition, for example, face the challenges both of being female and of being in opposition; a combination of factors that can be especially challenging at local level where public scrutiny is often closer and more personal.
- **Institutional factors**, such as leadership and management roles within the institutions as well as links and networks with organisations outside

parliament. Again, these factors are often more acute at local level, where women may be numerous in number, but short on actual influence as men dominate key positions and decisions, either directly or indirectly.

- **Personal agency**, such as individual backgrounds, grounding, values and capacity. Generally, levels of education and exposure are higher at national than local level. Ironically many of the issues to be addressed at this level (levying of taxes, balancing of budgets, out sourcing, managing of infra-structure etc) are technical and require more than basic skills to be able to guide, manage, and hold officials to account. This raises serious questions concerning what kind of capacity building is most appropriate at local level.

What is important to underscore is that each one of the factors that serves as a barrier to effective participation can be turned around into an enabling factor. The very process of enabling participation becomes part of the transformation of people, institutions, and society as a whole.

Transformation

Representation and participation in decision-making allows for the full spectrum of voices to be heard, experiences and values to be centred and for citizens to take responsibility for, and change their own lives. Once citizens who had previously been reduced to non-citizens bring "other" views, paradigms begin to change. Those who had always spoken on behalf of the others, assuming they know what the others feel, get challenged. Various myths are exploded and a new understanding begins.

Thus when women enter decision-making, the concept, content and form of politics and governance, and the way that they are practiced, begin to change. Power relations shift. Outcomes begin to be informed by the new paradigm. But there is a constant struggle because the tools for transformation are often the very same institutions that need to be transformed.

Transformation of gender relations is understood in this study to consist of two core components:

- The **empowerment of women** to take their equal and rightful role in all areas of social, economic and political endeavour; and
- **Changes in the attitudes of men** to allow women to take their rightful place as well to free men of those burdens of masculinity that prevent them from working as equal partners with women; a process that illustrates the conflict transformation theory at work.

Country Profile



Zambia is a landlocked southern African country covering an area of 752 614 km^2 and bordering eight countries namely, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) to the north, Tanzania on the North-east, Malawi to the east, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Botswana and Namibia to the south and Angola on the west.

The country has a population of just over 11,5 million of which just over 50 percent are women. The 2000 census shows that 64 percent of the population live in rural areas and 34 percent in urban areas. English is the official language but there are about 72 indigenous languages that are spoken. Almost 90 percent of the population belong to the eight main ethno-linguistic groups which are Bemba, Nyanja-Chewa, Tonga, Lunda, Luvale, Kaonde, Nkoya and Lozi.

Zambia has the seventh highest HIV and AIDS prevalence rate in the world with 16.5 percent of the adult population infected with the disease (CIA World Factbook 2008). Zambia is one of the least developed countries with 64 percent of the population living in poverty.

The Zambian economy has historically been based on the copper mining industry, but the once middle-income country began to slide into poverty in the 1970s when copper prices declined on world markets. After a 30 year decline the output of copper had fallen to a low of 228,000 metric tons in 1998 due to lack of investment, low copper prices, and uncertainty over privatisation. Following privatisation of the industry in the early 2000's copper production rebounded to 337,000 metric tons and as a result investment in the country is on the rise.

The Zambian government has recently been granting licenses to international resource companies to prospect for minerals such as nickel, tin, copper and uranium. It is hoped that nickel will take over from copper as the country's top metallic export.

Rich in other natural resources the Zambian government has begun pursuing an economic diversification programme to reduce the economy's reliance on the copper industry. The purpose of the programme is to exploit other components of Zambia's resource base by promoting agriculture, tourism, gemstone mining, and hydro-power.

The country is divided into nine provinces, namely Central, Copperbelt, Eastern, Luapula, Lusaka, Northern, North- Western, Southern and Western and has a two tier governance structure comprising of central and local government.

Government

The Republic of Zambia is a representative democracy headed by a Republican President who is both head of state and head of government and who is supported by a cabinet of 22 Ministers appointed from amongst the Members of Parliament. The parliament, known as the National Assembly (NA), comprises 150 elected members and not more than 10 nominated members. Currently 22 of the 158 seats (15.2 percent) are occupied by women.

Zambia gained its independence from Britain in 1964 and practiced multi-party politics until 1973 after which the country fell under one party rule for 28 years. Zambia reverted to multiparty politics in 1991, since then, Zambia has had three elections, in 1996, 2001 and 2006. Zambia now has about 26 political parties. Five of these have seats in parliament and eight in local government.

Zambia has a dual legal system. Customary law governs the daily lives of most rural inhabitants while statutory laws are administered through a formal court system. The Republican Constitution recognises all Zambians as equal before the law and prohibits discrimination on grounds of sex but permits it in the practice of personal and customary laws (Cap 1, Article 23). The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development requires that all countries endeavour to enshrine gender equality in their Constitutions by 2015, and that this not be contradicted by any other provision in the Constitution.

Representation of women

Zambia is signatory to a number of regional and international gender instruments which advocate for increased or equal representation and participation of women in decision-making positions, such as the African Charter on Human And Peoples' Rights (African Protocol), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Most relevant, though, is the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development which was signed in August 2008 and which requires that member states endeavour to reach the target of 50 percent women in all decision-making positions in both the public and private sectors.

The Government has however failed to implement these instruments and adherence to these conventions and declarations has proved challenging due to the lack of strategies for domesticating these instruments with the result that women remain under-represented in all areas of decision-making. Table three below shows that Zambia has not achieved parity in any area of political decision-making and in fact has not achieved or come close to the initial target of 30 percent. Local government shows the lowest levels of women's representation at a mere 6.7 percent. The table shows little progression and in some cases regression from 2001 to 2006.

Table three: Women in Politics in Zambia

	Prior to 2001			2001			2008			Difference between 2001 and 2008
	Total	Women	% Women	Total	Women	% Women	Total	Women	% Women	
National Assembly	158	4	2.5%	158	19	12.0%	158	24	15.2%	3.2%
Ministers	24	1	4.2%	23	6	26.1%	22	4	18.2%	-7.9%
Deputy Ministers	41	4	9.8%	44	7	15.9%	41	4	9.8%	-6.2%
Local Authority	1287	81	6.3%	1287	74	5.7%	1406	94	6.7%	0.9%

Source: ZNWL Election monitoring report November 2006, Gender Links

The country has a **National Gender Policy** which was developed in March 2000 in which the Government recognises "the need for the full participation of women in the development process at all levels to ensure sustainable development and attainment of equality between the sexes." It commits the Government to redressing existing gender imbalances and providing equal opportunities for women and men to actively participate and contribute to as well as benefit from national development. There is no gender policy or strategy for local government.

The Electoral System

The Zambian Constitution defines the electoral system and provides the basis on which political affairs of the country are conducted. Elections are held once every five years for both central and local government on a first-past-the-post (FPTP) system to single member constituencies.

The Presidential and general elections are overseen by an independent Electoral Commission (IEC) of Zambia which (for the first time) is currently headed by a woman Justice of the Supreme Court.

Established under Article 76 of the Constitution of Zambia, it is governed by the Electoral Commission Act. It has authority to make regulations providing for the registration of voters, conducting presidential and parliamentary elections, election offences and penalties and petitions in accordance with the Electoral Act.

The Local Government Elections are overseen by the Local Government Elections Commission established under the Local Government Elections Act (Chapter 282 of the Laws) to which Councillors, Members of Parliament and Council employees are not eligible. This Commission is supervised by the Electoral Commission of Zambia in respect of conduct of the local government elections (ECZ 2002:1).

The Presidential and General elections were held in September 2006 when President Levy Mwanawasa was re-elected. The ruling Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD) got 73 parliamentary seats, Patriotic Front (PF) - 43; United Democratic Alliance (UDA) - 26; National Democratic Focus (NDF) - 1; United Liberal Party (ULP) – 3. Three candidates got seats as independents. In August 2008 President Levy Mwanawasa passed away and Zambian vice president succeeded him to the office of president, a temporary position until the emergency election on October 30, 2008. Banda won this election by a narrow margin over opposition leader Michael Sata, to complete the remainder of Mwanawasa's term.

Prior to the 2004 amendment (Local Government (Amendment) Act Number 8 of 2004), local government elections were held every three years. The amendment has extended the tenure to five years so that local government elections are now held concurrently with Presidential and Parliamentary elections.

Local government in Zambia

The local government system in Zambia is established by Part VIII of the Republican Constitution (Article 109). The Constitution provides that there shall be such system of local government in Zambia as may be prescribed by law based on democratically elected councils on the basis of universal adult suffrage. The relevant legislative text is the Local Government Elections Act of 1992.

Devolution of responsibility

Local authorities fall under the portfolio of the Ministry of Local Government and Housing. Prior to 1980 the Minister of Local Government and Housing held a lot of power over councils. The Local Administration Reforms of 1980 attempted to devolve power and functions from central government to councils but were unsuccessful due to the financial limitations of the Councils (MS Zambia NewZ, http://www.ms.dk).

A decentralisation policy (GRZ 2004) is currently being implemented and is intended to give more decision-making powers to the Councils. It is not clear how effective this will be given the poor financial resource base and resource capacities of Zambian councils. It has been suggested that for local government to be effective it must have adequate revenues as well as the authority to make expenditure decisions (Litvak, 1999:2-3). Meanwhile, the Minister representing central government continues to exercise wide authority over councils. The Minister has authority to suspend a council and appoint a Local Government Administrator to discharge the functions of the council. The Minister also has authority to appoint a Local Government Appeals Board to handle complaints by council employees.

Local government organisational structure

The local government structure is single-tier and councils are differentiated by their urban or rural nature. In the nine provinces there are 72 local authorities - 4 City Councils, 14 Municipal (urban) Councils and 54 District (rural) Councils. These are established by the Minister of Local Government and Housing by way of statutory order.

District Councils can either be rural district councils or urban district councils depending whether they are located in a rural or urban area. Administrative districts lying outside Municipal and township areas are governed by rural district councils. The rural district councils frequently cut across societal boundaries in order to establish larger and more viable units. The functions and powers of rural district councils are similar to those of the urban local authorities. Each Council is delimited into wards as prescribed by the Minister (Lusaka City Council www.lcc.gov.zm).

Political structures

Each ward is represented by a ward Councillor who is elected through the First Past the Post (FPTP) electoral system. Several wards in turn constitute a Constituency which is represented by a Member of Parliament, who also sits on the Council. Representatives of Chiefs in the district are also appointed by the Chiefs from amongst themselves. Councils have a Mayor and Deputy Mayor in City and Municipal councils and a Council chairperson and vice-chairperson in district councils. They are elected from among the Councillors every year and can serve a maximum of two consecutive terms. Members of Parliament are excluded from occupying these positions. The tenure of a Council is five years and runs simultaneously with the Presidential and Parliamentary terms of office (Local Government (Amendment) Act Number 8 of 2004).

The Council is required to hold ordinary meetings once every quarter of the year. Special meetings may also be convened by the Mayor or Chairperson. Minutes and proceedings of the Council are generally open to the public. Councils are financed through levies and property taxes and general and capital grants from Central Government.

Below the council at the ward level are ward development committees (WDCs) which are put together by the ward councillor and are chaired by them. Resident development committees (RDCs) are also established, especially in urban areas, to extend democracy. These committees are set up by the council and elections for positions are organised by council officers, they, however, do not have a legal standing and councillors sit on these committees as *ex officio* members.

Functions

Functions of the Council are set out in the Local Government Act (561) and include the establishment and maintenance of public utilities and amenities such as sanitation, abattoirs, public health and educational facilities. Council may exercise all or any of the functions set out in the Act. One of the key functions of Councils relates to Town and Country Planning under the Town and Country Planning Act which include approval of development plans, strategic planning and budgeting at district level and providing policy direction to the Local Authority. The work of local councils is examined in more detail in Chapter six.

Council Committees

Zambia has a Councillor Committee System that manages and administers the Local Authority. The Local Government Act (Part V) provides for standing and occasional Committees which have the delegated authority of the full Council. The standing

Committees are constituted by the first full Council meeting at the start of the civic year while occasional committees may be appointed from time to time as need arises. The Council Committees elect their own chairperson who presides over the committee meetings. Proceedings of committees are not open to the public. These committees are also at liberty to set up subcommittees for specific functions.

Standing Council Committees include:
- Finance and general purpose committee
- Plans' works and development committee
- Staff establishment committee
- Public health committee
- Integrity committee

While Councils may determine which standing committees they need to establish, the only statutory committee, under Section 31(2) of the Act, is the finance and general purposes committee. Membership to the finance committee is restricted to Councillors.

The Councils also work with structures at community level that are used to promote linkages with communities. These include Residents Development Committees, Area Development Committees, Village Productivity Committees and the District Development Coordinating Committees. The review revealed no current disaggregated data on membership of these various committees. Councils have power to make by-laws and prescribe penalties for infringement of these.

The Local Government Association (LGAZ)

The LGAZ is an informal part of the local government system in Zambia as it has no legal or constitutional recognition. Founded in 1947 as a voluntary membership organisation then under the name of the Local Government Association of Northern Rhodesia, the name changed to the Local Government Association of Zambia in 1964 following independence.

The principle objectives of the association are to promote the interests and autonomy of local government authorities as well as to be the national advocate and voice of local government. The vision of LGAZ is to achieve the democratic and participative local government that is more responsive to the needs and aspirations of citizens.

Women in local government in Zambia

The constitution of LGAZ recognises the need for popular participation in civic matters and the importance of women's participation. To achieve this, the LGAZ has a standing committee on women in local government. The committee has since developed a 'Women in Local Government (WILG) Policy Paper'. The focus of the WILG policy paper is aimed at promoting greater participation and inclusiveness of women in decision-making at local government level. It seeks to address the challenges and identify areas of intervention and strategic actions for the Women in Local Government Standing Committee.

The last local government elections took place in September 2006. Currently there are 94 women out of a total 1406 Councillors countrywide (6.7 % of the total). Prior to the 2006 elections there were 74 women out of a total of 1287 Councillors (5.7%) which means that between 2001 and 2006 there was only a very slight (1 percent) increase in the number of women councillors. The next elections will be held in 2011.

Research methodology

Desk top research and Literature review

Desk top research involved the review of a range of documents to get an understanding of the

workings of local government in Zambia. Documents reviewed included local government laws and policies, academic and NGO studies and reports on gender and local government.

Sample

The sample was in line with the first phase of the *At the Coalface* study in which researchers attempted to interview ten percent of councillors in the country with the smallest number of councillors (Namibia), six percent in countries with medium numbers (Mauritius and Lesotho), and three percent in the country with the largest number of councillors (South Africa). Zambia falls within the medium category. Table four shows the sample of local authorities covered and number of councillors interviewed (81 councillors in 18 localities). A full list of inverviewees can be found at Annex A.

Table four: Research sample

Country	Total local authorities	Local authorities covered	% councils	Total councillors	Total councillors interviewed	% Councillors
Zambia	72	18	25%	1406	81	6%

Source: ZNWL Election monitoring report November 2006, Gender Links

Table five gives a detailed breakdown of the areas visited and the type of local authority (City, municipal or district). The research covered a broad geographical spread and a good balance between the three main types of local structures, which also translates into a good balance between urban and rural.

Table five: Sample councils

PROVINCE	City Council	Municipal Council	District Council
CENTRAL		Kabwe	Kapiri-Mposhi
COPPERBELT	Kitwe	Chililabombwe	Masaiti
	Ndola	Chingola	Mufulira
		Luanshya	
		Kalulushi	
EASTERN		Chipata	
LUSAKA	Lusaka		Chongwe
NORTH-WESTERN			Zambezi
SOUTHERN	Livingstone	Mazabuka	Kalomo
WESTERN		Mongu	
TOTAL	**18**		

Gender considerations

Because the study is about women in local government researchers aimed to interview at least two-thirds women and one third men. The inclusion of men in the sample was important to understand the impact that women have on men in local government structures and to understand how they view changes, if any, that are taking place as a result of the inclusion of women in this sphere of government. Table six summarises the gender breakdown of the interviews conducted for the research: 81 women (69 percent) and 25 men (31 percent).

Table six: Gender breakdown of research sample

Country	Total councillors interviewed	Women interviewed	% women	Men interviewed	% men
Zambia	81	56	69%	25	31%

Political parties

Researchers also had to ensure the inclusion of all main political parties as far as possible in accordance with the percentage of seats held by the ruling and opposition parties in local government. Table seven shows that overall the researchers interviewed 46 percent ruling party and 54 opposition party and independent representatives.

Table seven: Political party breakdown of research sample

Party	Number interviewed	% interviewed
MMD	37	46%
PF	30	37%
UDA	4	5%
Independents	3	4%
UPND	7	9%
	81	

How the research was conducted

The research made use of the following techniques:

Structured one-on-one questionnaires

Researchers administered the one-on-one questionnaire to councillors in each of the localities according to the sample. These questionnaires provided the quantitative findings of this research which are interspersed throughout the text in shaded boxes with the graphs and commentary entitled "what the councillors said."

Semi-structured interviews

To obtain greater insight and depth, researchers identified councillors to profile in the following categories:-

- Women councillors who serve to highlight the impact of the electoral system on getting elected.
- Women councillors who illustrate the obstacles to effective participation at local level.
- Women councillors who illustrate the different interests and sensitivities of women at local level and how they make a difference.
- Male councillors who illustrate resistance to women's participation at local level.
- Male councillors who serve to highlight changing attitudes towards gender equality at local level.

The outcomes from these interviews are included in the book in the quotes, anecdotes, boxes and case studies that give the research a human face.

Focus groups

Researchers sought to conduct focus groups in the localities researched with a minimum of three people from the following groups:-

- Civil society groups,
- Male constituents where there are women councillors,
- Women constituents where there are women councillors.

Table eight shows that the researchers conducted 9 focus groups in 3 localities. A total of 53 people took part in the focus groups, 53 percent women and 47 percent men. The focus groups reflected on similar questions to those put to the councillors, but included discussion on the particular challenges faced in the localities and perceptions of how male and female councillors in the specific areas are conducting their work. The focus groups served to amplify and verify the responses provided by the councillors. Separating the participants into the three different groups also served to ensure that all parties (and especially women at local level) could express their views freely.

Table eight: Summary table of focus groups

Locality	Civil society		Women constituents	Men constituents	Total participants
	women	men			
Chililabombwe	5		6	11	22
Livingstone	6		5	5	16
Lusaka	1	3	5	6	15
TOTAL	**12**	**3**	**16**	**22**	**53**

Council meeting observations

To establish how women participate in local government and whether this participation is effective or not researchers observed 3 council meetings, the localities were Lusaka City Council, Ndola City Council and Chililabombwe Municipal Council. Researchers made notes and observations at each of these meetings regarding the gender dynamics underpinning the kinds of issues raised; who raised them; how they were debated; how they were resolved and what conclusions can be drawn regarding women's participation in such structures.

Researchers kept detailed quantitative records of interventions by women and men the council meetings with different proportions of women and men; some chaired by women, others by men etc. to assess the extent to which women participate in different scenarios.

Measuring change

Assuming that women have been able to access decision-making in significant numbers, and that the barriers to their effective participation have started to relent, the question then becomes what difference this makes and how this difference can be measured. This is the main focus of this study, which devised a number of yardsticks for measuring change. These included:

Institutional transformation

- Infrastructure changes, such as the provision of

adequate toilets and facilities for the increased number of women who may have recently accessed these previously "men only" clubs.
- Creation of a more family friendly work environment; dates of recesses, sitting hours and child-care facilities.
- Changes in the style of debate and discourse.
- The extent to which women have influence within the institution vertically (management and leadership roles within the institution) and horizontally (are spread across the different areas of work).
- Whether or not there are structures in place for supporting women-decision makers and promoting gender equality.

Personal transformation

- The attitudes and confidence levels of women in mainstream positions so that women feel themselves to be sufficiently empowered to champion gender causes even within these often hostile and patriarchal structures.
- The extent to which the attitudes of male decision-makers begin to change and they start to take up gender issues.
- The extent to which gender stereotypes about the roles and responsibilities of male and female decision-makers begin to change and that these roles and responsibilities are naturally inter-changed.

Transformation of key tools of government

- The existence of laws and policies to remove of all forms of discrimination against women and that have a direct bearing on improving the status of women, such as domestic violence legislation.
- The extent to which a gender perspective informs all laws and policies.
- The extent to which gender considerations are built into the delivery of all services.

Limitations of the study

Zambia is a vast country and budgetary and time constraints limited the number of localities in which GL could undertake primary research with the result that some interviews were done telephonically.

Contacting the councils and councillors proved challenging in many instances because of poor telecommunications. In many instances listed telephone numbers for councils were out of order. This hampered logistic arrangements and made it difficult to determine when council meetings were taking place. Some councillors were sceptical of the research and not as co-operative as might have been hoped.

A general limitation of any kind of qualitative research is the lack of "scientific measurement". By their very nature, attitudes and relationships do not lend themselves easily to quantifiable measures. They occur within dynamic and complex environments and are impacted upon by factors that cannot be controlled or held constant while other measurement occurs. However, the strength of this research is that the experiences of those being "researched" are vividly brought to life through their own anecdotes and stories in the pages that follow.



Luanshya civic centre *Photo: Susan Tolmay*



Where are the women? Ndola City Council Councillors *Photo: Susan Tolmay*

Accessing local government

Local government may seem an obvious place for women because of its closeness to the community and the daily issues of concern to women. However, it is also the level where culture and patriarchy are still deeply rooted and there is a belief that women are not capable and should not occupy public spaces.

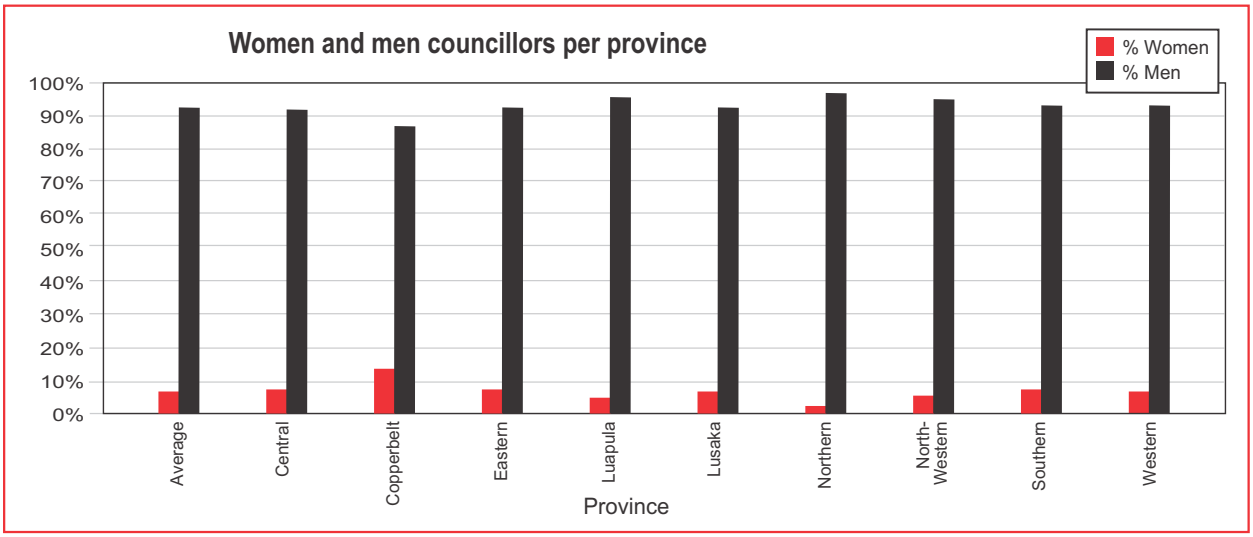
While there are no legal impediments to women accessing local government in Zambia the structures within which women have to function still remain largely patriarchal and in some instances are obstructive to women's entry into the political arena.

This chapter explores the barriers to women accessing local government and the strategies for change.

Women's absence from local government

Figure three shows that women's representation in local government ranges from 1.8 in the remote and rural Northern Province to 12.7 percent in the more urbanised Copperbelt.

Figure three: Women and men councillors per province



Of the 72 local authorities 26 (36 percent) have no women at all in their council. Table nine shows that Lusaka is the only province in which all of the local authorities have women's representation in council. The Southern province is the worst performer with over half of the councils having no female councillors despite Livingstone, the council with the highest representation of women (31 percent) and a female Mayor, being in this province.

Table nine: Councils with no women councillors

PROVINCE	Total councils	Councils with no women	% council with no women councillors
Central	6	2	33%
Copperbelt	10	1	10%
Eastern	8	1	13%
Luapula	7	3	43%
Lusaka	4	0	0%
Northern	12	8	67%
North-Western	7	3	43%
Southern	11	6	55%
Western	7	2	29%
TOTAL	**72**	**26**	**36%**

There has only been a marginal increase in women's representation in local government since 2001 when the figure was 5.7 percent. These figures point to obstacles to women's entry into local government.

Barriers to access

Several factors conspire to keep women out of local government in Zambia. These are ideological; social; political and financial in nature.

Patriarchal beliefs

Politics is a hostile environment for women because there is still a strong belief that women do not belong in politics. Patriarchy restricts women to the private sphere where they are expected to be wives, mothers and carers. As Councillor Christabelle Mwenda of Kabwe Council put it: "The culture still feels that women should not be seen in public and it should still be a woman with a *chitenge* in the kitchen, just like that and their responsibilities are to be mothers, taking care of children, so it's especially difficult for women of childbearing age to participate because it is expected that they should have children and look after that child"

Box one: Women told they can't lead



Councillor Febby Chanda

Photo: Susan Tolmay

One of four women in the 28-member Luanshya council, Councillor Febby Chanda faced an uphill battle when she ran for Council.

Approached to stand for election by the women in the peri-urban Chiluba ward because (unlike them) she was a teacher with an education she felt obliged to stand. Fed up with the inaction of men councillors, the women declared that this time they wanted a woman; as one put it: "we have been cheated by men, we have had men for quite some time now, this time we want a change; we want a woman to contest".

Despite having the support of the community, men from her own party did not want her to stand. Of the six contenders from her party, the MMD, she was the only woman. Following the interview with the community she was chosen as the candidate, but it did not end there, as it should have.

The male contestants protested saying that "a woman cannot be the councillor in the area because she will be not be able to do the work because the area is too vast". Fortunately she had the backing of the women and they stuck by her and protested. The outcome was a second interview. Following this interview, from which she again emerged the winner, she became the party candidate, stood for elections and won.

The clause in the Zambian Constitution permitting discrimination in the exercise of personal and customary law provides the ideological basis for male dominance in both private and public life. These attitudes, compounded by male-dominated political party processes account for the dismal number of women in local government (ZARD, 1998:34).

In a study conducted by the Local Government Association of Zambia (2007:24), ten percent of respondents opposed women's leadership citing reproductive, productive and community roles as hindering women's effectiveness. This group of respondents believed that men have a divine right to lead. A respondent in Monze is cited as having said, "Man was created by God but a woman was made from man. A woman is therefore subordinate to a man. The head of the house is a man. A woman is there to ensure that the welfare of the man is in order thus the man is leading", (2007:24).

Women in politics often step outside the box of socially acceptable norms and structures. Politics requires women to be outspoken and to engage with men in various capacities in the pursuit of different issues in society. As a result they are often labelled and called names by society when they pursue careers in politics.

Despite the new Electoral Act (Act number 12 of 2006) clearly outlining the enforcement mechanisms for the Code of Conduct, national campaigns are characterised by personal attacks rather than being issue-based. In the Zambian Parliament for example, Chimwemwe MP, Honorable Willie Nsanda (PF) called the Gender Minister, Honorable Patricia Mulasikwanda and the Deputy Minister of Home Affairs Honorable Grace Njapau "these two prostitutes" during a debate in Parliament. The Speaker reprimanded but did not discipline Nsanda (Zambia Daily Mail, July 12, 2007).

Councillors attest to similar forms of insult and intimidation at the local level. One councillor recalls how she was insulted: "They even start digging into your past, what you did 20 years ago so that they can let you down," she said. People also threw rocks at her house.

Women "their own worst enemies"

As in many other SADC countries the largest numbers of voters are women. The Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) recorded 3 940 053 eligible voters for the 2006 general elections, 52 percent of whom were female and 48 percent male (Electoral Commission of Zambia, 2006). Despite women being the majority of voters this has not translated into women being elected into positions of decision-making.

The tendency for any oppressed group of persons to internalise their own oppression is a common phenomenon. As a study on women in Zimbabwe observes, "Ironically, society has made women the custodians of the very cultural values that lead to their oppression. In that respect it is tempting to conclude that politically, socially and culturally society has turned women into their own oppressors as they too tend to see men as better leaders than women" (SARDC/ WIDSAA, 1998:43).

It has often been observed that women, who are usually the majority voters, tend to vote for men. This, argues Thenjiwe Mtintso, GL Board member and a former MP with the African National Congress (ANC) is "mainly because their own lived experiences have conditioned them to be subordinates" (Gender Links, 2007:72).

Electoral system

Global evidence shows that the type of electoral system in place has a bearing on whether women get elected or not. The *proportional representation* (PR) system has been shown to be far more conducive to women being elected as opposed to the *constituency* or *First Past the Post* (FPTP) system.

The **proportional representation (PR)** or *list system* is the system whereby the electorate vote for political parties which are then allocated seats in parliament according to the percentage of vote they received. In this system the individual candidates placing on the list is what determines whether they get in or not, i.e. The higher a candidate is on the list the more likely they are to get a seat. In a *closed list system*, the political party determines where candidates sit on the list and this is usually based on democratic nomination processes within the party, whereas in an *open list system*, voters determine where candidates sit on the list.

In the **constituency** or **First Past the Post (FPTP)** system citizens vote for candidates, who represent the party in a constituency, rather than the political party. The winning candidate is the one who gains more votes than any of the other candidates even if it's not an absolute majority. The system is also known as "the winner takes all" because even though a party may have received a significant percentage of the votes, they could still have very few or no representative in parliament.

Zambia follows the FPTP system under which the country is divided in geographical areas called constituencies for purposes of Parliamentary elections and wards for purposes of local government elections. For the above reasons this system has been criticised for being unfriendly towards increased participation and access to decision making positions.

The Electoral Reforms Technical Committee(ERTC), appointed by government to review the electoral system in Zambia in 2005, also criticised the FPTP system and recommended the introduction of a Mixed Member Proportional System, which combines the FPTP and PR System at both the Central and Local Government levels (ERTC, 2005, 154). This recommendation was, however, not acted on in the amendment of the Electoral Act immediately prior to the 2006 elections.

Political parties

As the gatekeepers to women's entry into politics, political parties have a crucial role to play in ensuring that more women are put forward as candidates. However, these structures are still largely dominated by men and in instances remain obstructive to women.



Inonge Wina, MP in Zambia *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

Manifestos and Constitutions

The study on the Status of Women in Local Government (LGAZ, 2007:27) shows that of the political parties analysed the *Patriotic Front (PF)* was the only party that has attempted to put in place tangible measures for women's participation. But the provisions are generally weak. The manifesto makes specific reference to putting in place measures aimed at promoting gender equality, including to "implement fully the SADC Protocol which advocates for the appointment of 30 percent of women in decision-making" whereas the SADC Protocol in fact advocates for 50 percent. The section on affirmative action merely mentions that there should be "proportionate representation of all political/ racial, gender, religious and age segments of our population" (PF Manifesto 2006:30-31).

The Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (*MMD*) manifesto outlines in detail what the party, in government, has done in collaboration with civil society organisations in developing a National Gender Policy and a Strategic plan of action for the Policy which were adopted in 2000 and 2004 respectively. The party further pledges to continue providing support to the institutional framework for gender mainstreaming through institutional capacity building (MMD Manifesto 2007-2011, 43-46).

The constitution of the United Party for National Development (*UPND)* (UPND Constitution Article 49) outlines several national organs of the party including a general assembly; national management committee; and the national executive committee. The party failed to provide gender disaggregated data on women's participation in these structures. Article 87 of the UPND Constitution provides that there shall be a women's committee which includes all chairpersons for provincial executive committees for women. It "formulates policies relating to gender issues and mobilises the women folk in the realisation of the goals of the party." The UPND Constitution endeavours to open up opportunities for women to rise to the highest office of any wing of government, equal opportunities in employment in decision making and national life.

At the time of the review the UPND was in the process of reviewing its constitution and manifesto and had requested contributions from the Zambia National Women's Lobby. According to the UPND National Woman's Chairperson, the party has recognised the 50 percent threshold of women in positions of decision making (telephone interview). The National Women's Committee has been tasked with involving all women to participate actively towards the manifesto and constitution so that their views are included.

There are no elected women councillors from the United National Independence Party (UNIP). The UNIP manifesto reads:

> "UNIP is committed to the role of women in development and will campaign strongly increase further the rights and opportunities of women. The role of women in development means that women not only participate in development but are also direct beneficiaries of development programs. The vital role of women in development should be more recognized by Zambians." (UNIP)

In essence, none of the key political parties have affirmative action measures aimed at ensuring the participation of women at either parliamentary or local government levels. On the contrary, women who have tried and failed to gain entry into politics are discouraged from trying again. As one woman councillor who wished to remain anonymous attested: "Once I stood for a political party and they didn't want to put me forward as a candidate because they said they would lose the seat because I am a woman.

So I stood as an Independent candidate. They put forward a man and he ended up losing the seat anyway."

Table ten shows that the MMD women councillors constitute over half the total number women councillors, followed by the PF, (25.5 percent), the UDA (19.1 percent) and 2.1 percent are Independents.

Table ten: Women councillors per political party

Country	Number women	% women
MMD	50	53.2%
PF	24	25.5%
UDA	18	19.1%
Independents	2	2.1%
TOTAL	**94**	

Source: Gender Links and WLSA

Political party processes

The way in which political parties adopt candidates coupled with the lack of affirmative measures limit women's participation in elections. The way in which interviews are conducted; the personal, and often irrelevant nature of questions such as "are you married and how do you conduct your marriage" are also deterrents.

The adoption process for candidates is spelt out in party constitutions in which men continue to control the senior levels of the party structures that are responsible for the selection or adoption of candidates for the party (ZARD/SARDC-WIDSAA, 1998:37). Late adoptions affected the planning on the part of most candidates but especially women. Candidates could not start campaigning until they were sure that they had been adopted (ZNWL, 2007:25).

Of the 4095 candidates put forward to contest elections in 2006, women comprised only 387 (nine percent). Of the 387 only 94 (24 percent) were actually elected.

Financial

Prior to the 2006 elections, most political parties decided not to fund their candidate's campaigns which proved to be a limiting factor for under-resourced women candidates. (ZNWL, 2007:25). Women councillors interviewed cited lack of resources as a barrier, saying that they had limited resources for campaign materials, such as posters and T-shirts and in many instance could not provide the same 'incentives' (eg. food) for people to attend their meetings. Transport is also a problem because many women have no personal transport to cover the vast wards that they are campaigning in and most often travel on foot or by bicycle.

Strategies for change

There is never a shortage of reasons why women can't be elected to decision-making. But there are plenty of examples, both in FPTP and PR systems, of significant increases in women's participation in decision-making as a result of deliberate measures being taken. The key factor is political will. If this exists, other measures will follow.

Quotas - lessons from the region

Quotas have been implemented effectively in the SADC region. All five of the SADC countries that have achieved or exceeded 30 percent representation of women in local government - Lesotho (58 percent), Mozambique (29 percent), South Africa (40 percent), Tanzania (34 percent) and Namibia (42 percent) - have some form of quota.

Voluntary quotas are measures taken by political parties to guarantee the inclusion of women on their party

lists or in their structures. The drawback to this form of quota is that there are often no sanctions for non- compliance with the result that they are often promises that remain on paper and are not implemented. South Africa's ruling African National Congress (ANC) and Mozambique's ruling FRELIMO have 50 and 40 percent voluntary quotas respectively.

Constitutional and legislated quotas are mandatory measures which dictate, through the Constitution or relevant electoral laws that a certain percentage of seats or positions are set aside for women. The advantage of this form of quota is that they apply to all political parties and there are sanctions or penalties for non-compliance such as rejection of lists by Electoral Commissions or disqualification from elections. Namibia has a PR system as well as a legislated quota of 30 percent at local level. More relevant to the case of Zambia is Lesotho which has a FPTP system and legislated quota at the local level.

Box two: Lesotho women lead the way in local government

Lesotho is the shining example when it comes to women's representation in local government in the region (and globally), with 58 percent women in this sphere. The reason for this is that for the first local government elections in 2006, Lesotho instituted a 30 percent quota for women through the Local Government Amendment Act of 2004. Every third constituency was set aside for women. These constituencies will rotate over three successive elections after which the quota system will be reviewed.

This process had its challenges as an aggrieved male councillor instituted a case against the Independent Electoral Commission ahead of the 2005 elections on the grounds that his constitutional right to contest the elections in a constituency of his choice had been violated by the reservation of constituencies for women only.

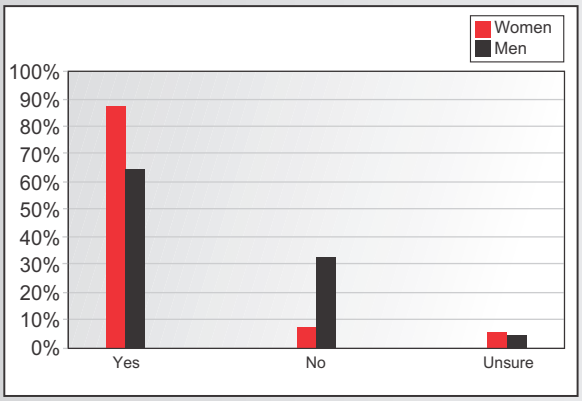
The Lesotho Court of Appeal dismissed the appeal to have the 30 percent reservation for women declared unconstitutional upholding the High Court ruling that affirmative action can be applied to redress structural imbalances. This landmark judgement is significant for the SADC region as it upholds the principle of affirmative action in increasing women's representation in decision-making and meeting the targets set by Heads of State.

In Tanzania articles 66(1)(b) and 78(1) of the Union Constitution provides for 30 percent of the seats in the national assembly to be allocated to women only based on the percentage of votes that each party garners. This while women are free to stand as candidates in this FPTP system the Constitution guarantees women 30 percent of the seats in the assembly through a PR mechanism for distributing these seats.

Quotas - the view from the ground

Interviews with Councillors and the focus group discussions reflected a high degree of support for quotas in Zambia, including among men. This is a change from the past and shows that higher levels of awareness are leading to restiveness among Zambians who realise that the country is being left behind by its SADC partners.

What the councillors said about quotas



Overall 80 percent of the councillors (87.5 percent women and 64 percent men) said they believed in the use of quotas to increase women's representation in decision-making at the local government level. This resonates with the first *At the Coalface* study conducted in Lesotho, Mauritius, Namibia and Lesotho where 81 percent of respondents agreed with the use of quotas.

This figure is higher than in the survey carried out in *Ringing up the Changes* in 2004 (78 percent women, 66 percent men and 76 percent overall supporting quotas). This study covered politicians in all areas of decision-making (parliament, cabinet and local government.) The finding in this study that covered local councillors only, reflects both a high degree of awareness at local level, as well as the greater degree of conscientisation four years on. It is a clear message to those who say that quotas won't work at the local level that they are not listening to the voices on the ground.

Focus group discussions with women and men constituents as well as civil society representative yielded interesting opinions. Interestingly men came out strongly in favour of the quota to level the playing field (especially is environments that are historically hostile to women) and to give an opportunity to capable women. Comments included:

- We feel this would be a good development if only it could be implemented because women at the moment women are still by far fewer. Implementation of the quota system would ensure that women are represented equally and their issues attended to. (Livingstone men)
- We think it is a good way of boosting women's participation.(Chililabombwe men)
- It is a good system to ensure equal access of women and representation. If it is put in place, there will be a better/greater chance for women to stand. (Chililabombwe CSO)
- Sometimes women are not given chance to stand as leaders in these positions. When there are elections they will choose men, even when they know there is a woman with the right qualifications. (Chililabombwe CSO)
- In some political parties, unless you belong to a certain party or linked by people on top that is when they can adopt you. So quota system would be a good thing. Communities and political parties would support such a thing. (Chililabombwe CSO).

Many of the participants agreed that quotas are required but felt that they should work in concert with other measures such as capacity building programmes and support systems that ensure that women are effective. Comments along these lines included:

- Quotas are a good idea but they need to be supplemented by giving women a lot of support -financially and in terms of knowledge and skills and confidence building. (Lusaka men)
- This could be good, women have brains but lack resources. However, this should depend on an individual's ability to perform. (Lusaka women)
- We don't just want women in numbers but they

should be elected on merit. So even if we are for advocating for quotas we want to emphasise that programmes of girl child education must also be advocated for to ensure we get women on merit that are educated and can perform. We need affirmative action now and then later on we can concentrate on issues of merit. But we do need to look at practical difficulties faced like distances to Council Chambers etc. (Lusaka CSO)

- Only if women are capacity built that is when quotas will make a difference. (Livingstone CSO)

A minority of women believed that women should not get any special privileges:

- We have not seen anything special women councillors have done so it will be difficult to fight for quotas for them. (Livingstone women).
- We feel that a woman has to be effective to be a councillor. So we need to be careful, otherwise, if we put in quotas and not concentrate on quality of women, we will lose out. So, quotas are not the best right now. (Chililabombwe women).

Electoral reform

The Electoral Reforms Technical Committee in 2005 (ERTC, 2005) recommended the introduction of a Mixed Member Proportional System. This would entail the introduction of Proportional Representation-based seats at the local level, some of which would be reserved for women. This proposal should be canvassed further and recommendations followed up in the run up to the 2010 elections.

Conclusions

Evidence from the region shows that quotas, both voluntary and legislated or constitutional, can be implemented effectively yielding large gains for women in local government. Zambia has shown very marginal increases in women's representation in local government over the past decade and in some elections has actually slipped backwards. It is time for bold measures to be taken to ensure that women are given an equal opportunity to participate at this level of government.

Political party commitment to gender equality is crucial and this needs to become more than merely encouraging women to participate. If political parties are genuinely committed to the principle of gender equality this should be explicitly stated in their manifestos, policies and structures.

The Zambian government has the opportunity to learn form the lessons in the region and implement a legislated quota system, either within the existing FPTP system or as part of electoral reforms that envisage a mixed system. While there are some reservations, the general opinion from councillors and constituents is that quotas are the only way to ensure the massive leap that women have to take from 6.7 percent to 50 percent in the 2011 elections.



UPND cadres celebrate as police return to Lilayi *Photo: Derrick Sinjela*

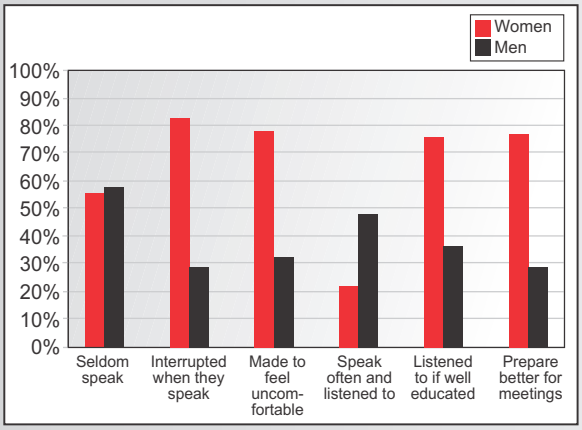
Participation

Many studies have shown that it is possible for women to be in decision-making but to be effectively excluded because of the institutional barriers to their participation. This chapter attempts to measure the extent of women's participation in local government in Zambia and the barriers to their effective participation. Conversely, the chapter explores factors that enable effective participation by women. Potentially, every disabling factor can be turned into an enabling factor. This is important because it is only through effective participation that women can change the institutional character of local government, its agenda and the services that it delivers.

Measuring participation

Once women have gained access to local government there are high expectations for them to perform effectively. Still very much in the minority in Zambia, women experience difficulties in getting their voices heard. There is a strong perception, particularly among women councillors that they are not taken seriously.

What the councillors said on women's participation in council meetings



As the graph shows, more than half of the respondents, both women and men agreed that women seldom speak in meetings but far more women (82 percent) than men (28 percent) believe that when they do speak women are interrupted and that they are also made to feel uncomfortable when they speak (78 percent women compared to 32 percent men).

These figures are much higher than the first phase of the *At the Coalface* study conducted in Lesotho, Mauritius, Namibia and South Africa. All of these countries, except Mauritius, have high numbers of women in local government. This suggests that where there is a "critical mass" of women their level of discomfort is much lower than in a country like Zambia where women are still very much in the minority in local government.

Both studies have found that more women feel that they are listened to only if they are well educated and that women feel that they prepare better for council meetings. These issues point to the fact that women are not always judged by the same standards as men and they often have to work to be recognised.

Participation in meetings and debates

What is it like for women, many of whom are in local government for the first time, to participate in these meetings? Research by the World Bank on local councils in India found that controlling for other factors women scored 24 points lower than men in a 100 point scale of political participation (1999:14). But evidence from the responses above show that women face an uphill battle when it comes to participating in council meetings.

In observations of three council meetings in Zambia, GL devised a detailed spread sheet of all the interventions made by councillors, divided into male and female. This was further sub-divided into decision-makers, whether male or female (mayors or deputy mayors) and ruling party or opposition.

Table 11: Women's participation in council meetings

Council	Total cllrs	Women	% women in council	Mayor/ Chair	Total interventions	WHO SPEAKS															
						MEN								WOMEN							
						DM		RP		OP/Ind		Total		DM		RP		OP/Ind		Total	
						No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Lusaka	33	1	3%	F	12	5	42%	2	17%	5	71%	7	58%	5	42%	0	0%	5	100%	5	42%
Ndola	22	2	9%	M	33	15	54%	13	46%	15	54%	28	85%	0	0%	0	0%	5	15%	5	15%
Chililabombwe	22	6	27%	M	14	7	50%	3	43%	7	70%	10	71%	2	14%	2	100%	2	50%	4	29%
TOTAL	**77**	**9**	12%		**59**	**27**	**46%**	**18**	**31%**	**27**	**46%**	**45**	**76%**	**7**	**12%**	**2**	**3%**	**12**	**20%**	**14**	**24%**

DM = Decision maker; RP = Ruling Party; OP = Opposition; Ind = Independent

Table 11 shows that men dominated all the meetings, with women participating only 24 percent of the time. However considering that overall women only constituted 12 percent of these councils, this figure is quite high. Lusaka had the lowest number of women (only one) yet women participated 42 percent of the time (the highest in the study). The reason is that this one woman is the acting Mayor and as a result also the chairperson of the meeting. This demonstrates the importance of women being in decision-making positions within councils (see below). It is significant that even in Ndola, with 9 percent women, women's participation constituted 15 percent of the total interventions made.

With 27 percent women, Chililabombwe had the highest proportion of women councillors, and these participated in virtually equal proportion to their strength (29 percent). One of the councillors is the Deputy Mayor. Women in opposition accounted for a significant number of the interventions underscoring the importance of women not only being in ruling parties.

Issues raised

The Lusaka meeting was an extraordinary meeting to discuss a market lease granted for a period longer than allowed by law. The interventions at this meeting related to this specific matter.



Market matters dominated the Lusaka meeting *Photo: Derrick Sinjela*

In Chililabombwe women raised concerns regarding a clinic project; shop licensing and painting, land allocations and funding for a wall for the clinic. Five of the ten interventions made by the men related to land issues and one was about councillors not receiving plots. The other agenda items concerned finances and one related to the misuse of vehicle.

Issues of concern raised by one of the two women councillors in the Ndola council related to waste, public toilets and the need for councillor orientation material. In the meetings observed women had a stronger tendency to raise the more social welfare and community based issues than men, even where there were only a few of them.

Positions occupied in Councils

The research found only three women occupying the highest decision-making position in council, the Mayor in Livingstone, Acting Mayor (Deputy Mayor) of Lusaka and the Council Chairperson of Chongwe. Mayors are elected each year by their colleagues in the council and in the past decade only Lusaka has had women mayors or deputy mayors.

Because of the very low levels of representation of women in councils with 36 percent of all councils having no women councillors at all, women are in the minority on council committees and some committees have no women sitting on them simply because there are not enough women in the council.

Committees

A survey of the councils where qualitative interviews were conducted (see Table 12) shows that women constitute 30 percent of development committee; an improvement on the 6.7 percent of women councillors but it is still far from representative of the population.

Table 12: Representation of women on development committees

Council	M/F councillor	Women	Men	Total	% women
Kitwe	F	1	7	8	13%
Kabwe	F	1	11	12	8%
Kabwe	M	6	6	12	50%
Chongwe	F	5	5	10	50%
Luanshya	F	3	9	12	25%
Lusaka	F	3	9	12	25%
Chililabombwe	F	5	7	12	42%
Chongwe	M	5	9	14	36%
TOTAL		**24**	**55**	**79**	**30%**

Women managers in local government

Women are more likely to be found in decision-making positions in the administration than as political decision-makers. There are several women occupying the positions of Town Clerk and District Commissioner across the country. These are senior management positions in local authorities.

As illustrated in Table 13 women also constitute 33 percent of the total number of employees in the Ministry of Local Government (LGAZ, 2007:28) and are equally represented at the middle management levels.

Table 13: Women in management in local government

Management levels	Female		Male		Total
	nbr	%	nbr	%	
Top management	7	29.17	17	70.83	24
Senior management	16	29.63	38	70.37	54
Middle management	39	50	39	50	78
Lower management	8	14.55	47	85.45	55
TOTAL	**70**	**33.18**	**141**	**66.82**	**211**

Source: Ministry of Local Government and Housing, 2007

Numbers make a difference

The perception among citizens is that women are not able to participate effectively because of their small numbers. Interestingly women from Chililabombwe, the council with relatively high numbers of women, were the most vocal on this issue. As one woman put it during the focus group discussion: "Women are not able to participate effectively because they are few in Councils and men do not support them. Men are selfish, in the homes and in Councils. They suffocate women. As a result women have no voice in the councils."

A man in Lusaka, where there is only one woman councillor, believed that women are able to participate effectively, but that numbers make a difference: "Sometimes it can be difficult to influence change when you are alone."

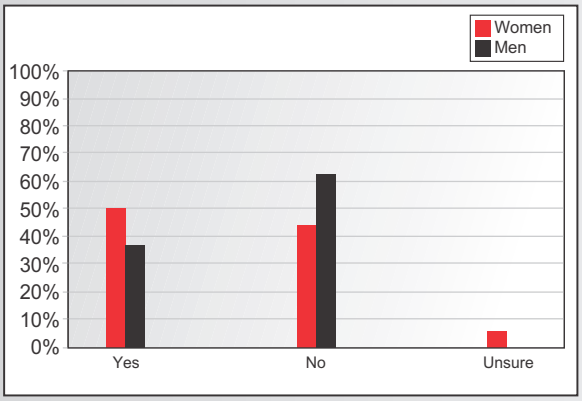
Barriers to participation

Interviews with councillors and focus groups, both women and men, highlighted major challenges for women councillors. Faced with the high expectations of the communities that elected them, women councillors have to operate in still largely patriarchal structures and communities where custom and culture are deeply rooted. They are not paid for their work as councillors (except the sitting fee that they receive for attending meetings); they lack the resources to implement the development projects that the communities expect; they have to travel long distances to meet with their communities and they often lack support.



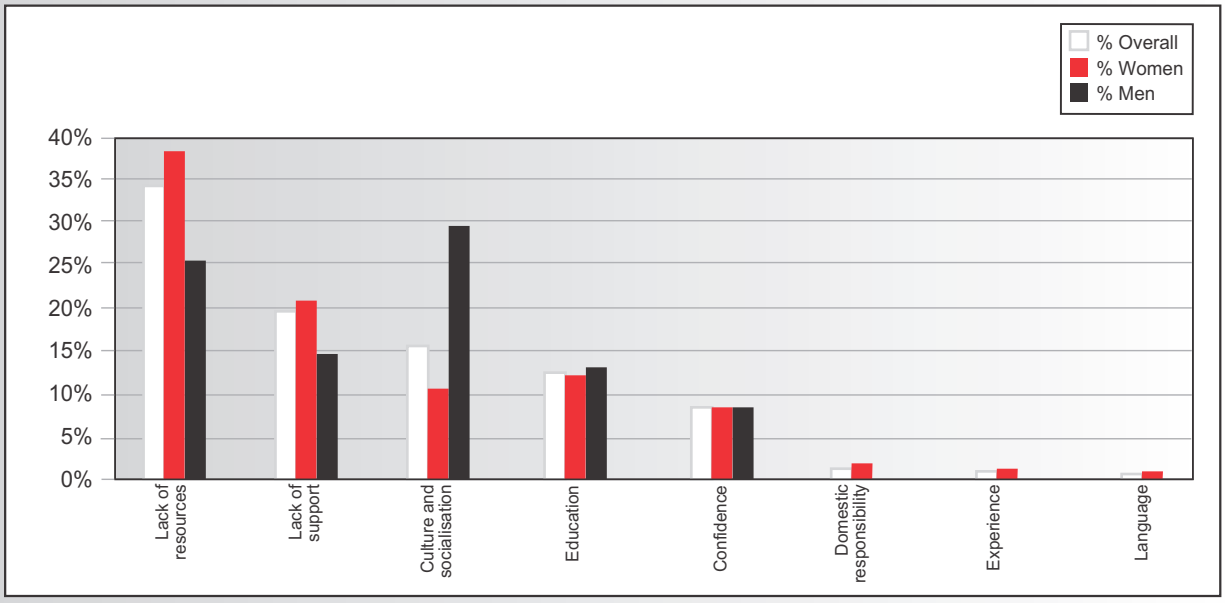
Chililabombwe municipal council *Photo: Susan Tolmay*

What the councillors said about barriers to participation



Overall 46 percent of the councillors interviewed agreed that there are barriers to women participating in local government but more women (50 percent) than men (37.5 percent) agreed with the statement. This is slightly higher than the first *At the Coalface* study which found that of overall in the four case study countries (Lesotho, Mauritius, Namibia and South Africa) 42 percent agreed with the statement (46 percent among women).

With regard to what these barriers are, councillors were asked to list up to three barriers that women councillors face in local government. The graph below shows that more women (37 percent) than men (25 percent) see lack of financial resources as the biggest barrier. Lack of support (34 percent) and culture and socialisation (15.3 percent) were the second and third highest rated barriers. Men see culture and socialisation as the biggest barrier for women with 28.6 percent of the male respondents rating it as a barrier.



Institutional barriers

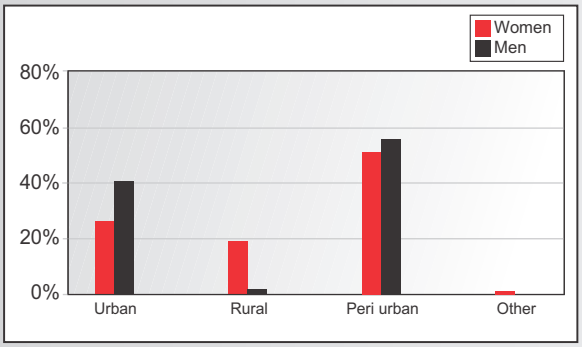
Institutions which do not take account of the specific and different needs of women and men can be disempowering. Decision-making structures that have been established and run based only on the needs and circumstance of men can prove to be obstacles for women. The main institutional barriers for women councillors in Zambia are lack of resources and lack of support.

Lack of resources

Lack of resources was rated as the highest barrier overall but more women than men see this as a barrier. Councillors are not paid a salary and they only get a sitting fee for meetings they attend. This barrier refers both to financial and physical resources which includes transport as well as lack of government funds to implement projects to develop and benefit the communities.

As Councillor Febby Chanda from Luanshya Council put it: "My ward is very vast, there are six different communities in my ward and I have to go everywhere on foot, if I want to go campaigning I have to go on foot, when I want to talk to the community I have to go on foot, this makes my job very difficult. I have to use my own my own resources to help the communities, I am not a business woman but a teacher. I grow maize and when the community approaches me for help I make sacrifices and give them bags of maize meal. When there is a death in the community, they come to me for money for a coffin or for food. And the council gives us about five million kwacha each year, which we use to develop the community, but in my ward, which is so very vast, it's peanuts."

What the councillors said about their constituencies



The research found that women (19.6 percent) were more likely to be in rural constituencies than men (4 percent), and men (40 percent) were more likely than women (26,8 percent) to be in urban constituencies.

Rural constituencies are generally more vast and therefore more difficult to get around (especially for women with no transport). They are also generally worse off when it comes to services. As Councillor Margaret Daka from Kitwe put it "urban wards already have services whereas rural wards have no services". Constituents' expectations are high and sometimes out of the control of the councillors.

Lack of facilities

The focus groups highlighted lack of meeting places and the fact that councillors don't have offices like the MPs as major impediment to the work of all councillors. The Civil society group in Lusaka noted: "Meetings are not held due to lack of meeting facilities in most wards. Some constituencies have been advised to offer offices for MP's but not for Councillors and therefore people go to the homes or work places of councillors for any issues. This makes them less accessible." This seems, however, to be more a problem in the bigger cities than in smaller towns.

Lack of support

At 19.8 percent lack of support ranked as the second highest barrier with more women (21.7 percent) than men (14.3 percent) perceiving this as a barrier. This barrier cuts across both the institutional and the ideological barriers. Women referred to three issues: lack of support from men (and the institution itself), from women (both councillors and the community) and from their families (husbands).

Men and the institution

Men dominate all areas of local government including decision-making. There are very few women Mayors across the country and some female councillors cited resistance from men when attempting to stand for these positions. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor positions are elected by the councillors every year. As men make up the majority of councillors in all councils it is rare to find women breaking through. The lack of targets and affirmative action in local government means that women simply do not get the chance to exercise leadership in local government structures.

Box three: Difficulties of becoming Mayor

Councillor Joyce Sakala of Chongwe council is one of the few women councillors who has managed to break through the male dominated councils to become a Council Chairperson (equivalent to Mayor at the district level). But a year after this appointment, the sign on her office door still reads "Council Chairman". This is just one example of how institutions perpetuate stereotypes that women are trying hard to challenge.

Councillor Jean Namukonda, Deputy Mayor in the Chililabombwe Council recalled how she was insulted by the man who she stood against to become the deputy mayor. Councillor Febby Chanda says men in her council in Luanshya resisted her attempts to stand as Mayor on the grounds that she had not been Deputy Mayor. This is not a council rule. "The four of us (women), what can we do against the 24 men?" she asks.

There are, however, some signs of change. For example Councillor Mary Phiri, the Deputy Mayor of Lusaka, who is the acting Mayor and the only woman in the Council, stood against three men for the Deputy Mayor position and won.

Inter-party politics

Local government functions within a political framework. Politicking can be a barrier to both women and men. The women focus group in Chililabombwe noted that political parties either enable or block councillors to do their work.

Two of the women councillors interviewed in Kitwe were of the opinion that councillors are not treated equally and the political party they belong to has an impact on whether they are supported in the work they do in the communities. These allegations are worrying especially at the level of government whose primary concern should be meeting the needs of communities irrespective of party politics. The men in Chililabombwe think the solution would be for councillors to come from the concerned communities and not from the political parties.

Ideological barriers

Culture and socialisation

Culture and socialisation were rated as the third biggest barrier to women's participation, with just over 15 percent of the respondent citing it as an obstacle. Interestingly however far more men (28 percent) rated it as a barrier compared to women (10.8 percent).

There are still very strong beliefs, especially at the local level where such views are often stronger, that women cannot and should not participate in politics, that they should not speak out in public spaces and that they should remain subordinate to men. The conservative attitudes on the ground in other countries (Gender Links, 2007:34) that continue to work against women's participation at local level are true for Zambia.

The study conducted by the Local Government Association of Zambia (LGAZ, 2007: 24), corroborates this. Respondents said that culture and traditional values are a major impediment to women's success and progression to leadership roles. They felt that women were not valued in a society that maintained that a woman is not equal to man. Women in our society were used to "listening to and accepting decisions made by men." This was said to be predominant in societies where women were uneducated. A respondent in Chipata is cited as having said, "Women are not allowed to stand and address men. It is also taboo for women to have direct eye contact with men" (LGAZ, 2007:25).

Councillor Christabelle Mwenda experienced this attitude first-hand when she was the only woman in the Kabwe council. She says: "The men used to try and shut me up, they would say 'shut up, you are a woman, you are not supposed to talk' ". She notes that things have changed somewhat since then and now she doesn't get shouted at or called a woman as often. She feels that the reason for this is that she is now in her second term.

These beliefs create barriers for women on two levels: first, within the council where they come up against resistance from men and second among members of the communities they are trying to serve who believe that women should be at home looking after their families.

Women not supporting one another

One of the most common responses heard when conducting this kind of research is that women do not support each other (at best) and pull each other down (at worst).

One of the tests of the oppression of any particular group in society is the extent to which that group internalises its own oppression and takes this out by oppressing others. In gender debates, "the mother-in-law" syndrome is a well known one: older women who have been denied power and agency all their

lives often lord it over daughters-in-law over whom society gives them some power and control.

It is important to note that men "pull each other down" all the time but this is usually dressed up in very different language like "manoeuvring" and "strategic positioning", "sidelining" and other forms of institutional intrigue. For women, the "pull her down" or PHD syndrome as it is often called occurs in the context of women whose own sense of agency has been undermined undermining the agency of others. (Gender Links 2007:120)

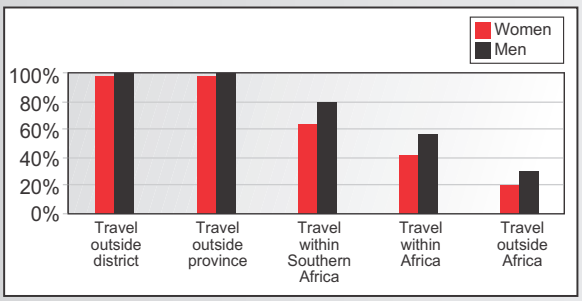
The problem with this barrier is that it is often misunderstood as jealousy and very seldom interrogated. It is also used by men as an excuse or a justification for women's low representation, saying "Women don't support each other so why should we support them?" Far more needs to done to help women understand this phenomenon, including the causes and effects.

Lack of confidence

Lack of confidence was rated fifth overall as a barrier, with almost equal numbers of women and men respondents rating it as such. What is alarming, however, is the misconception that women are born shy, or with a lack of confidence, which were some of the responses received in the more in depth interviews conducted for this research.

Lack of confidence emanates from the ideological barriers mentioned above, from the messaging that women have received throughout their lives that they worthless and subservient. These factors, linked as well to lack of education and exposure, have resulted in women lacking confidence and believing in themselves.

What the councillors said about travel and exposure



Asked about the extent to which they had travelled and been exposed, almost all women and men said that they had travelled within their district and province. But 20 percent more men than women said that they had travelled within Southern Africa and Africa and about 10 percent more men than women had travelled overseas. This points to higher levels of exposure for men than women, which contribute to women's lack of confidence.

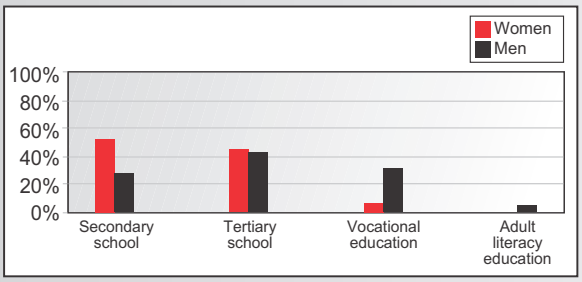
Personal barriers

Education

The ERTC (Electoral Reforms Technical Committee) stated that the absence of basic minimum academic qualifications for ward councillors has negatively impacted on the performance of councillors (ERTC, 317). The committee recommended that the minimum academic qualifications for a candidate councillor should be Grade 9 certificate or equivalent and full Grade 12 certificate or recognised equivalent for Mayors. This is likely to restrict women's participation further as there are more illiterate women than men in Zambia.

This study found that councillors rated lack of education as the fourth biggest (13.5 percent) barrier to women's participation with marginally more men (14.4 percent) than women (13.3 percent) seeing this as an obstacle.

What the councillors said about education levels

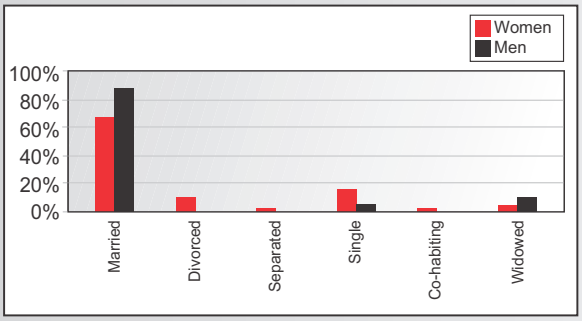


The study revealed that women are more likely to have achieved secondary than tertiary education whereas the reverse is true for men who are more likely to have tertiary or vocational level education than secondary level education. Far more women than men had achieved secondary school education but very few women (5.4 percent) have vocational education.

Domestic responsibilities

While the quantitative survey showed that only a few women rate this as a barrier, possibly because they have been socialised not to think of their domestic chores as a barrier, women have the burden of domestic or private responsibilities which they have to balance with their political and public duties. In addition many of them have other full time jobs so that they can support their families, resulting in them having to juggle their time between politics, work and home. Lack of support from husbands and families exacerbate this situation. In the LGAZ study, ten percent of respondents thought that women's effectiveness as leaders is hindered by the reproductive and community roles that women have to perform (2007:24).

What the councillors said about marital status



In response to the question concerning marital status the study found that male councillors (87.5 percent) are more likely to married than women (67.9 percent). Women are more likely to be divorced than men with none of the male respondents being divorced, this is in line with findings from *Ringing up the changes* which found that while none of the male parliamentarians were divorced 31 percent of the women had been through a divorce. Women also show a higher likelihood of being single than men.

In the interviews, some women councillors cited being married as a barrier for women. As a divorced councillor put it: "Married women, their husbands might not allow them (to be councillors) because every minute someone knocks on the door and you are always on the ground and you can't be at home to look after your house – it is a very hard job to be a councillor - you have to always be on the ground to see what is happening" She maintains the only reason she is as successful as she is, is because she is unmarried, "If I had a husband I don't think I could make it" and in fact if you have seen, most women who are successful don't have husbands because they pull you down."

Another woman councillor added: "If you are married most of the problems come from your husband because they will never support you – the work as a councillor has irregular times and sometimes you knock off quite late due to council activities and when you go home your husband is annoyed with you and doesn't want to talk to you – so you get discouraged, sometimes you get shouted at, when I started politics my husband thought that politics is dirty so he did not support me and I also had to look for my own funds, without support from him. But , when I am at the council I am a councillor, when I go home I am a mother and a wife, very submissive".

A male councillor expressed a similar sentiment, "When women are married, this is a barrier when their husbands do not want them to enter into politics. In Africa, especially in Zambia, it is known that a woman has to follow in the footsteps of the man and even in Christianity - when a man and a woman marry the woman has to follow the man to the Church.

Enabling factors

The research yielded examples of councillors who are managing well in their positions and are able to overcome the many barriers that have been mentioned. The examples below show that every one of the disabling factors above can potentially become an enabling factor that enhances the performance of women councillors.

Experience

Many of the councillors interviewed were in their first term as councillors and highlighted the challenges of understanding the council processes and functions. Lack of effective training and capacity building exacerbates this. However, councillors in their second term certainly seem to have grown on the job.



Joyce Sakala, Chairperson of Chongwe Council says that when she was the only woman in council the men used would victimise her and push her left right and centre. Fortunately she stood her ground and now, in her second term, she is the Chairperson of council. She says that the challenges are always greater in the first term of office when you don't know what the rules of the council are or what your functions are. This is where the support from civil society is so important. She cited examples such as the Zambian Women's Lobby and WLSA who can offer this support. She does warn, however, that in order to stand for a second term you have to prove to the community that you can do your job well. Women need to start improving their political influence and they should start campaigning early and lobby support.



Christabelle Mwenda from Kabwe says that when she was alone in the council the men used to try and shut her up. But things have changed in her second term: she doesn't get shouted at or called a woman. She believes this is because she has proved that she is capable and has past experience of the Council.

Background and grounding

According to councillors, their grounding and experience plays an important role in their success.



Councillor Maleta Kasonde from Kitwe believes that being known in the community is key, "You have to be known in the community. I didn't know that I was campaigning, I just had a good heart and I had already been helping the poor and needy people so when I decided to stand, everyone voted for me."



Councillor Margaret Daka from Kitwe had been the Kitwe branch Chair-person for 16 years and had acted as a campaign manager for other candi-dates before she decided to stand as a councillor. She believes that it was as a result of this political experience that she was able to stand for elections and succeed.

Joyce Sakala from Chongwe became interested in politics when she was with her late husband who was a politician during Kenneth Kaunda's presidency. She travelled with him everywhere and slowly she became interested in politics and she became

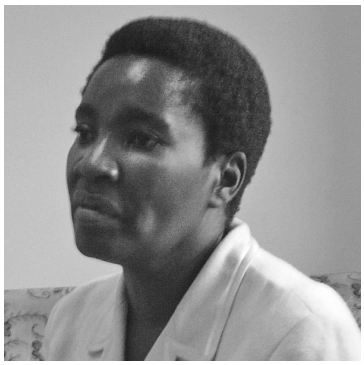
one of the founding members of the MMD in the Lusaka West. It was this experience, she believes that caused the National Party (NP) (one of the first breakaway opposition parties, which broke away from the MMD) to approach her in 2001 to stand as a local councillor and despite doing very little campaigning, she managed to win standing against four men.



Penny Mwape from Luanshya says **exposure** is very important. Formerly a secretary, she said that public relations work, dealing with people and managing relations has helped her in her political career: "You have to work very hard and expose yourself."

Support

The importance of **family support** cannot be over estimated, as Councillor Christabelle Mwenda from Kabwe attests. Married with four children, Mwenda has a supportive husband. When she ran for her second term her husband bought her a bicycle to assist her in getting around her sprawling ward.



Sandra Kabwela from Ndola is married with children and another job. She says she would not be able to manage without the support of her husband. He is so supportive that he is willing to go the communities with her and educate the men on the importance of having women in Council. Our message is "let the women participate as councillors in local government," she says.



Jean Namukonda from Chililabombwe and Joyce Sakala of Chongwe are appreciative of the **civil society support** that they have received in the past but say that often more is required. The support that Councillor Namukonda got from the ZNWL in the form of campaign materials, T-shirts and *chitenge's* with the slogan - *vote for women* - and bicycles so that they could go campaigning, proved a great help. Councillor Sakala has attended three workshops convened by the ZNWL, covering issues such as project management, resource mobilisation, advocacy and lobbying.

Without the **community support** Sandra Kabwela may very well have given up on the idea of becoming a councillor. After members in her community (both women and men) approached her to stand as a councillor she tried to stand on the ruling party ticket but she wasn't adopted because of party politics within the constituency. Ready to throw in the towel the community members came back and encouraged her to stand as an independent candidate. She registered as an independent after getting the required number of supporters and stood against four men for the seat in the ward and won.

Peer support is an obvious enabling factor, but there are some councils where women will not consider crossing party lines to form women's

caucuses. Jean Namukonda says that in the Chililabombwe council where there are six women councillors (4 PF and 2 MMD) they stand together: "we are all one actually, when we are out it's about politics but when we are here we are all together as one for the interests of the community - we work together".

The Local Government Association of Zambia (LGAZ) has been trying to bring women together through their Women in Local Government Standing Committee. The LGAZ is the umbrella national body with a committee in each province. Joyce Sakala, Chairperson of Chongwe Council and Sandra Kabwela from Ndola Council are members of these provincial committees. While these structures could achieve the goal of bringing women together across party lines they are at this point largely inactive. Support from the national body and help around mobilising women at the provincial level has the potential to be a large enabling factor for women who are grappling with how to address gender issues in their councils.

Capacity Building

Training and capacity building, as long as it is targeted and relevant, can greatly enhance participation and performance. Many of the councillors interviewed said that the training or orientation they received at the beginning of their term is insufficient, leaving many of them feeling lost as to what their roles and responsibilities are and how the council works. Orientation training seems to vary from council to council with some saying that it took place in a day while other say it is week-long.

Councillors who have attended various training courses attest to the benefit of these. Sandra Kabwela of Ndola Council said that their orientation was not very long but that she also been to a three day workshop called by the LGAZ with all the provincial heads of Ministries as well as a week-long workshop, funded by GTZ, where a lot of information was given about what they should do as councillors.

She was, however, not given the manual for the course and only acquired this through her own concerted effort. "We are not effective as councillors because we don't have access to all of the information, all councillors would be more effective if each councillor had the orientation manual." She says that training is so important because most councillors are not well educated, "the orientation teaches new councillors what our role as a councillor is because we don't know this beforehand. After this workshop we started to be able to contribute effectively - but if we were all given that book it would help us to be more effective. But even as we are now there are still some councillors in the council that are ignorant - we don't get enough orientation actually and it's worse for women as it is the first term for many of the councillors in the council."

At the Chongwe council various training has been offered. To begin with there is an in-house orientation workshop which is organised by the council, with facilitators either from the council itself or from the local government training institute. The purpose of this training is to orient the councillors on their roles and functions as councillors. A recent workshop focused on mainstreaming HIV and AIDS in council work. Councillor Sakala believes that this educative workshop was particularly helpful for first time councillors because it provided information on how they can start to address HIV and AIDS in their respective communities: "As civic leaders we are also expected to stand up and deal with this issue, and work together with various community organisations."

Conclusions

The previous chapter focussed on women's entry into the political arena and showed that without any mechanisms in place in Zambia to facilitate women's entry they often face obstacles to just gaining access to local government. But that is only the beginning of the process because once they are elected and become members of local councils, women face a number of similar and new obstacles that hinder their effective participation. These barriers can be divided into three main categories: institutional, ideological and personal.

Women work is institutions and communities that remain steeped in custom, culture and patriarchy. They often lack the resources and support they need to be effective. There are still too few women in decision-making positions to make a real difference to these structures. What is required is for institutions to be transformed and systems to be put in place that will enable women to participate more effectively. Women also need to work together to find solutions to these barriers and to create enabling environments.

Several examples show that disabling factors can just as soon be turned into enabling factors. Families can be unsupportive but they can also be supportive. Councils can disempower councillors through lack of information and training or they can provide this support and empower all councillors, men and women. Special forms of support for women, including such practical support as bicycles to run campaigns, can be determining factors in their success or otherwise. Thus this chapter highlights the problems, but it also points to the possibilities. What is required is a concerted effort to ensure not just that women get into local government, but that they have the skills, support and capacity that they need to be effective agents of change.



Kitwe council office *Photo: Susan Tolmay*



Councillor Jean Namukonda on the graded road *Photo: Susan Tolmay*

Making a difference

With the slogan *"Ifetenge kuntanshe" (women should lead and men should follow)* Councillor Jean Namukonda is a force to be reckoned with. Elected as Deputy Mayor of the Chililabombwe Municipal council in 2007 after being a councillor for just one year, Namukonda is also a business woman, who sells clothes across the region.

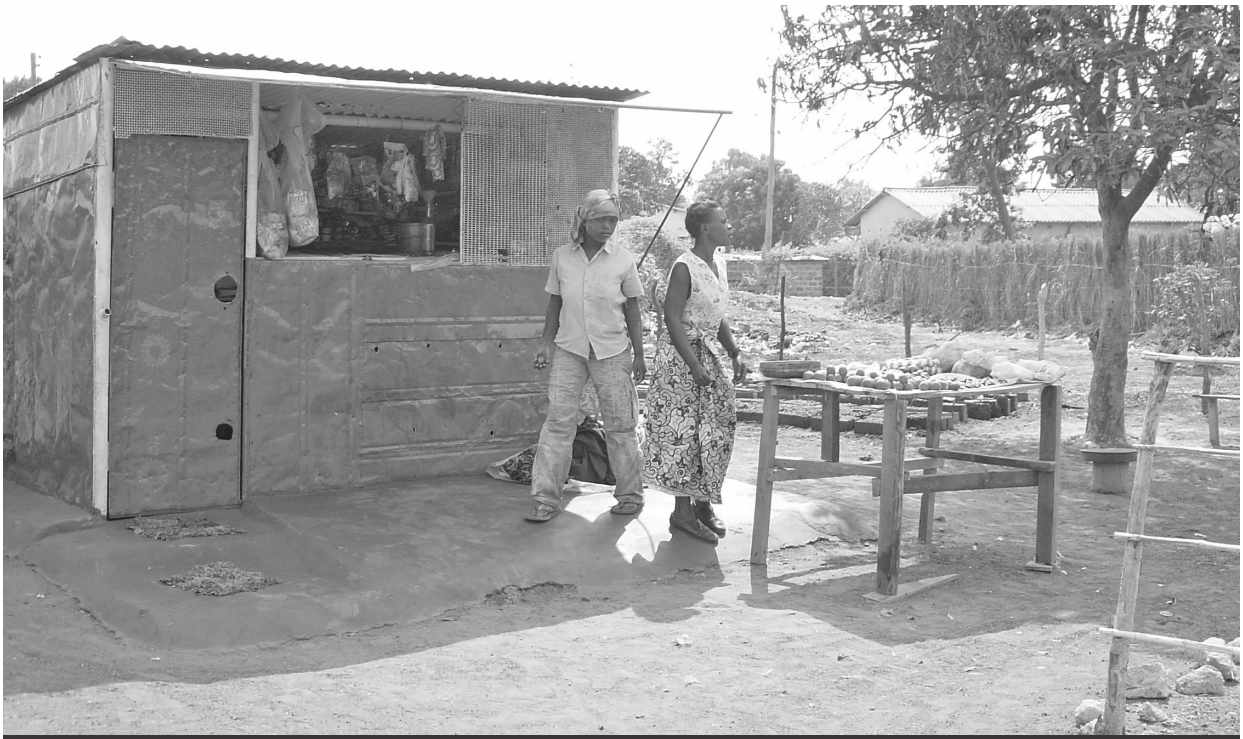
Stylishly dressed when researchers met her on the side of a dusty road in Chililabombwe, Namukonda spoke passionately about what she has done in her community. Clearing away a dumpsite in the middle of the community, which was both an obstruction as well as a health hazard, is one of the councillor's great achievements.

But she would not have managed to do this on her own, with the small amount of two million kwacha that she gets per year from the ward development fund (WDF). She often has to rely on community collaboration and the help of good Samaritans.

The dumpsite was an area in the community that had, over the years, become a mound of waste – situated in the middle of the road, next to people's homes making the road impassable for people walking, it was a health risk and an eyesore. So with the assistance of the resident development committee (RDC) she began the task of clearing the waste away. But in the absence of payment, she quickly lost over half of her assistants and went from 12 to 4 people. It was an arduous task but the result was miraculous - this space is now occupied by an informal trader who sells fruit and other products from the side of the street. And after all of the hard work, the councillor did manage to lobby for some compensation for all the work and the volunteers were paid a small token from the *Make Zambia Clean fund.*

On another project the councillor managed to convince and an energy corporation which was working in the area to use one of its graders to grade the road. With her two million kwacha WDF money she bought crushed stones and patched some of the roads.

The councillor sees the importance of partnerships and she has approached some other companies for assistance, for example, after paying for the first lick of paint for the bus stop in the area herself and realising that this would need to be an ongoing project she approached a local trust for assistance. They bought about three tins of paint and she has managed to paint the bus stop three times. With the help of community members of course, "they



An informal trader where there used to be a dump site *Photo: Susan Tolmay*

all do their little part and it gets finished, they don't get paid but they volunteer". She says that it is important for everyone to be involved in the projects that benefit them as she cannot do it alone.

Mortuaries and funerals are another area of concern for the councillor. Have a good grasps of the importance of mortuaries, the health hazards they can potentially become and the privacy required she made it her mission to clean the local one up, put up curtains and make sure that all community members can buy coffins, even on credit, so that bodies are not left in the mortuary. According to the men in the focus group she has also bought a tent which the community can able to use for funerals.

Other of her achievements include working with the community policing station so that it is open 24hrs; She is in the process are asking the government for money to tar the road that leads to the hospital and this year, with the WDF, she wants to clear out the drainage in B-section before the rain comes as this has been indentified by communities as a priority.

But it's not just about practical interventions. The councillor advised researchers that Chililabombwe has implemented a 30 percent quota for women in accessing plots. According to her, when interviews are done for awarding plots, there is a policy in place to ensure that at least a third be awarded to women. She stresses the importance of women sitting on the panel of interviews, if only to remind the men, who are in the majority, of the importance of complying with this policy.

The reason she sees women owning land as an important issue is that when men own land and a marriage fails it is usually the woman who is left destitute. Having the title deeds to land put women in a far more empowered position where they are then in control of their own lives and not beholden to men. She sees sensitising women to these facts as one of her objectives as a councillor. The councillor believes that consulting and involving the community will yield the best results for everyone, both women and men.

Once women have gained access to and are able to participate in structures of governance, do they make any difference to the lives of ordinary women in the ground? This is a difficult question to answer. One argument holds that it is unfair to expect women to necessarily care more about, or work harder for women. The other argument runs that in so far as women have different life experiences, it is reasonable to the expect that they should bring with them a different agenda and style, and that we should be able to measure what difference women make.

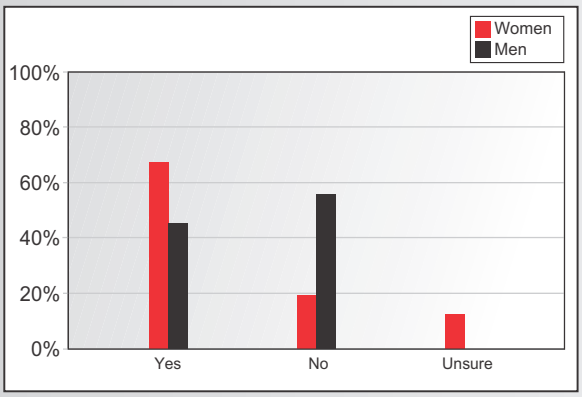
This chapter of the report grapples with the question of what women bring to decision-making. It also covers whether or not their presence makes a difference to the way in which men behave and conduct their business. The point of departure in this analysis is that ultimately the society we should work towards is one in which women and men participate equally and are equally concerned about all policy issues, from the "hard" financial and economic concerns generally associated with men to the "soft" community and welfare issues generally associated with women.

What women bring to politics

Interests and concerns

There is an instinctive belief that women's concerns and priorities differ from those men and that they should be involved in decision-making because they will raise issues that have previously been overlooked by men. The research probed how councillors view this issue.

What the councillors said about women's different interests and concerns



Women (68 percent) agreed far more with the statement that women bring different interests and concerns to decision-making than men (44 percent). These findings correlate with the first *At the Coalface* study which found that on average 61 percent of women and only 39 percent of the men agreed with the statement.

When asked to explain their views on the issue, the following were some of the responses:

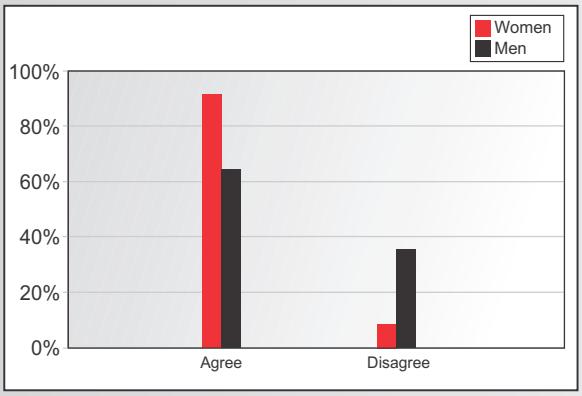
- Women are more concerned about issues that affect their communities such as water availability, food and health related issues.
- Women take care of special interests groups such as orphans, widows and youth and disabled.
- Would like to see more women in local government, they are more family oriented; they have a strong foundation so they need for them to participate in local government.
- Women are implementers, they value their people and work and that is why people vote for them. Women care about the needs of other community members unlike men.
- Women are mothers and so when in local government, they want to see their families live a better life, their priorities are their families and community they live in. They want to see that there is water, clinics and electricity in their communities.
- Men are generally not concerned about children's issues, food, shelter, health facilities which women are interested in.

Linked to whether or not women have different interests and concerns is the issue of whether or not women feel more strongly about local issues. The theory runs that because of their daily involvement in matters like water, sanitation and hygiene, it is fair to assume that women have a greater sensitivity to these issues at the level of public policy.



Zambian chicken market *Photo: Derrick Sinjela*

What the councillors said about women's sensitivity to local concerns



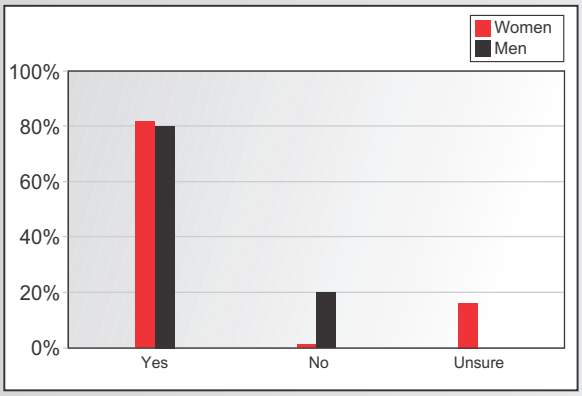
Asked whether they agreed with the statement "women are more sensitive to local concerns than men", an overwhelming majority of councillors (84 percent) agreed with the statement but more women (93 percent) than men (64 percent) agreed. This resonates with the findings in the first *At the Coalface* study which found that 81 percent women and 66 percent of men agreed with the statement.

As one of the male councillors put it, "As women, they understand community problems better than men. So, female councillors are most likely to attend to issues such as water shortages, health related projects because those affect them more than men."

Responsibility to women

Do women have a responsibility to raise and represent women's issues? In an ideal world the answer should be, not necessarily, purely because elected candidates should, as a matter of course, be representing everybody's interests. But evidence shows that as long as gender disparities persist, it is natural to expect women to be more sensitive to the concerns of other women; and for women decision-makers to feel that they have a responsibility to deliver on these concerns.

What the councillors said about women raising other women's issues



Councillors were asked whether women have the responsibility to raise other women's issues. Overall 81 percent of all councillors (82 percent women and 80 percent men) agreed that women have the responsibility to raise other women's issues.

These findings concur with the previous *At the Coalface* study which found that overall 83 percent of all councillors (86 percent women and 76 percent men) agreed that women the statement with concurrence across all countries in that study which covered Lesotho, Mauritius, Namibia and South Africa) and with little difference between women and men's views Similarly to the first *At the Coalface* study, many of the women councillors interviewed said that one of the

reasons that they stood to be councillors was because they saw women suffering and wanted to represent these women and become their 'voice'. Some comments from councillors include:

- Because women understand each other's problems, therefore women who are in elected in local government have the role to represent others because there are in that position to represent women's problems.
- Because as a fellow women we have been denied, so we need to advocate for our issues.
- Women in office should speak out for fellow women because some are afraid to speak out.
- Women in office must act as a voice for others who cannot speak out.
- Women have been disadvantaged, so women who are in elected office should take it upon themselves to speak for them.
- Because women have a low status in the community and don't have access to power, women in office can help to improve their status.

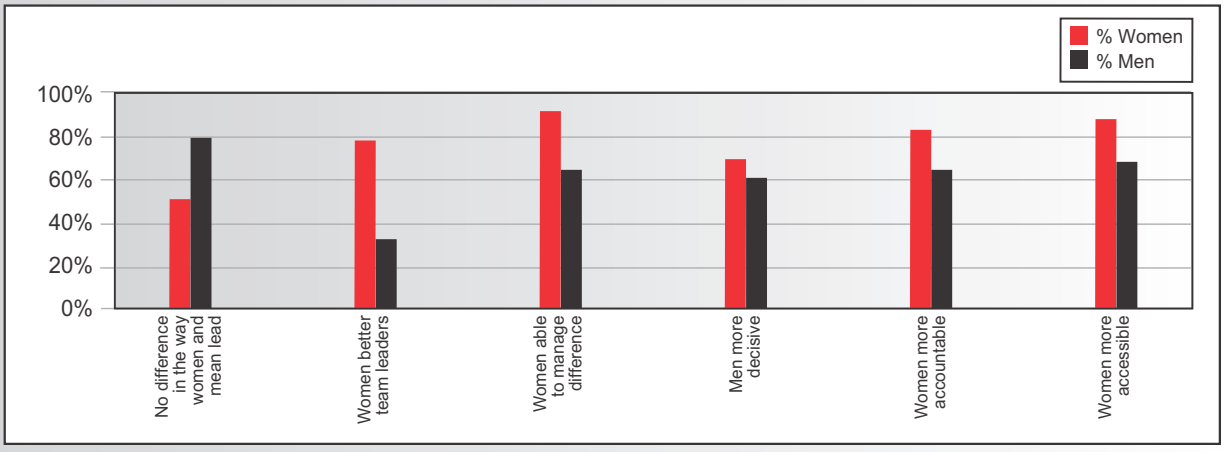
These findings resonate with global findings of women in decision-making. A survey of women's political experience carried out by the Inter-Parliamentary Union in 1999 including 187 women from 65 countries showed that 89 percent of women politicians consider that they have a special responsibility to represent the needs and interests of women (IPU, 2000).

Leadership style

Councillors were asked if they agreed or disagreed with a range of statements regarding leadership style:

1. There is no difference between the way women and men lead.
2. Women are better team leaders than men.
3. Women are better able to manage difference.
4. Men are more decisive than women.
5. Women are more likely to admit that they've made a mistake.
6. Women are more accessible than men.

What the councillors said regarding leadership style



More men (80 percent) think that there is no difference in the way that women and men lead. Just over half of the female respondents agreed with this statement. More than half the respondents agreed that men are more decisive than women. This statement also showed the smallest discrepancy between women's (68 percent) and men's (60 percent) views. The biggest difference in viewpoints (46.5 percent) was with the statement that women are better team leaders, with women strongly agreeing with this statement and only a small proportion of men believing this to be the case. All of these findings resonate with those of the first *At the Coalface* study. The biggest overall agreement was with the statement that women are able to manage difference (85 percent) followed by women are more accessible (80 percent) and women are more accountable (78 percent).

In the Zambia study, women's greater accessibility emerged as a key point. As a man in the Lusaka focus group put it: "Women are honest, hardworking and more accessible to the people." All of the women councillors highlighted the importance of consulting with their communities about priorities as opposed to them unilaterally deciding what needs to be done. Councillors see their role as the link between the government and the community. As Councillor Christabelle Mwenda from Kabwe put it, "we pick up the problems from the grassroots and take them to the MP".

Councillors also commented on the view held by both women and men that women are able to manage conflict, as a male councillor put it: "Men want to argue over things. Women argue less and are forward looking".

Performance

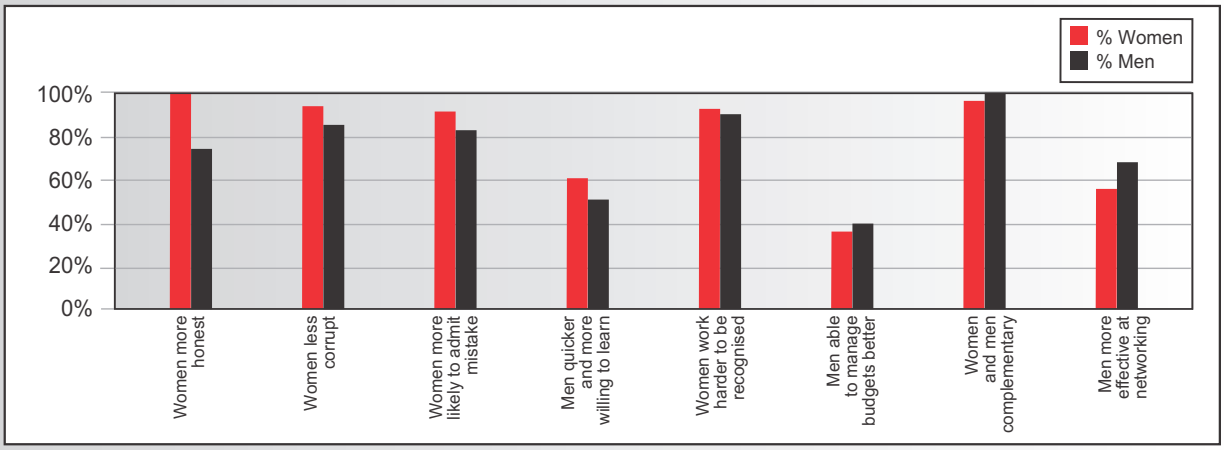
If women understand their communities and issues better than men, it follows that they should be better able to address these issues. Councillors were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the following statements:

1. Women are more honest than men.
2. Women are less corrupt than men.
3. More likely to admit they've made a mistake
4. Men are quicker and more willing to learn.
5. Women have to work harder to be recognised.
6. Women and men have complimentary strengths, all of which are important to decision-making.
7. Men are able to manage budget better than women.
8. Men are more effective at networking than women.



Chililabombwe municipal council offices *Photo: Susan Tolmay*

What the councillors said about women's and men's performance



Overall women and men agreed most (97.5 percent) with the statement that women and men have complimentary strengths. They disagreed most with the statement that men can manage budgets better than women.

The biggest discrepancy in perceptions (24 percent) was to the statement that women are more honest than men. All of the women agreed with this statement compared to only 76 percent of men. This resonates with the first *At the Coalface* study which found a 32 percent discrepancy.

Councillor Sandra Kabwela from Ndola sums up women's performance as follows: "Women are more committed, they are more hard working, more honest with public resources (we don't have boyfriends to spend the money on, we don't drink and go around buying drinks for our friends). Once a woman makes up her mind and says she will work in this way she works in that way, so I want to make a difference in my ward and in local government as a whole to show that women can actually make a difference."

As in the first *At the Coalface* study women and men tended to agree that women have to work harder than men to be recognised. More women in Zambia (61 percent compared to 52 percent men) believe that men are quicker and more willing to learn than women. The reverse was true in the first study

Impact

There are mixed views on the impact that women have made in communities. As discussed in chapter four there are still many barriers for women to overcome before they can really start making an impact in Zambia. The impact of women in local government is very difficult to measure when there are so few of them. The study did however point to interesting perceptions on the issue.

Idealistic expectations

Because of the location of local government, councillors are dealing with basic bread and butter issues in communities where a large proportion of people live in poverty. Many of the councillors had stories of how the electorate have high and sometimes unrealistic expectations of councillors. Many of the community members do not know what the role of the councillors are, they are also

under the misguided impression that councillors are paid and as such have money. Many of the councillors are approached regularly by community members for money, for coffins, funerals and food. Comments made by councillors include:

- People think that councillors move with money all the time, when they see the councillor they think she has money which she can distribute. They don't understand that it's not the councillor's job to hand out money and they don't know that the work that councillors do is unpaid.
- People think that councillors get a lot of money for being a councillor and they expect councillors to give them money.
- It has not been easy because I don't have money or transport and when people approach me for help I use my own resources and make sacrifices to help the community
- And this problem is not limited to women, a male councillor says that his wife complains because their money is running out because he is expected to give money to community members, "we don't get any money back because being a councillor is an unpaid position, so a woman councillor out in the village who does not have another job has problems when people want money for a coffin or because their child is sick and they cannot reach the clinic - where does she get the money? And then if she needs to get money and she has to ask her husband and he will say no - did I ask you to join (politics) - This is a real issue because we are with the people."

Focus group participants had mixed views about the impact women have had. Some say councils themselves are not effective because they are neglected by national government. As members of the Lusaka civil society group point out, "A long time ago Councils were doing well because they were being supported by government but now government neglects local governments."

Civil society was the most critical of women's performance:

- Not much has been noticed but to make matters worse, we do not document best practices (Lusaka civil society).
- There has been no real impact in having women but here is very little support from fellow women. A few women deliver and fulfil their obligations, they may want to do more but are limited. (Livingstone civil society)
- Even though our Mayor is a woman, we do not think she has done anything special for women. She works just the way a man can work. (Livingstone women)

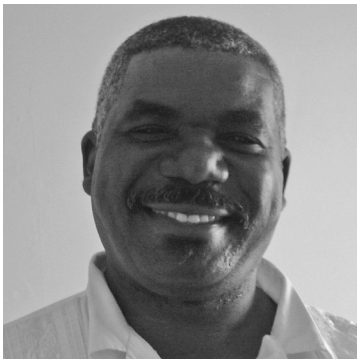
But others felt that councillors are breaking through, as underscored in the following statements:

- We think that women can bring about changes in terms of attitudes, accountability and gender specific issues but there is only one female right now and she cannot achieve much (Lusaka men).
- There has been a positive impact for this Ward because we feel female Councillors are able to get things done when given a chance, for example, we were not able to get plots but immediately the female Councillor came into office she was able to do it. The impact can also be seen in attitudes especially that of men towards women because they are beginning to see that even women can make a difference especially when it comes to accountability. (Livingstone men)
- She is still new so we cannot effectively measure her impact. But she has made a difference in the way she is working with the communities. (Chililabombwe men)
- The former Lusaka mayor who was female was known to have left a record of having cleaned up Lusaka. She put flowers in the main streets in Lusaka city. We should start giving awards to women for excellence projects. This will encourage them. (Lusaka civil society)

Attitudes of men

While interviews with men did not reveal any blatant resistance to women's participation in local government, women councillors spoke about some of the resistance that they have faced as councillors. Where male councillors have worked with women councillors they express progressive views. These are testimony to the fact that equal and constructive partnerships can be forged at the local level for the good of both women and men in communities.

Councillor Rabson Kopalande from Ndola believes



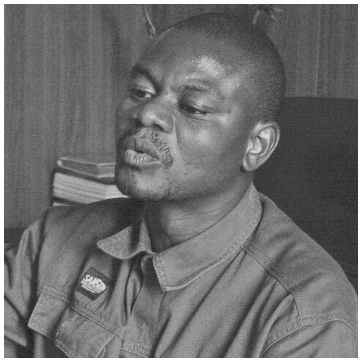
that women are not being given enough of a chance. Women still have to face tradition and culture as a barrier. "Women have no power over men, in the house women are second, men are the boss, married women are subservient to their husbands," he said. There is still the strong belief that politics is not for women, he adds and it's taking a long time for things to change. High levels of unemployment and men fearing that women are going to take their jobs are also factors that contribute to the resistance that women face. According to the councillor a lot depends on political will, for example during the Kaunda regime there were more women than during Chiluba's time and the late President Mwanawasa did a lot for women, especially establishing the Women's Ministry. He concludes though, that nothing in particular is done to assist women or to encourage them to participate.

Councillor Teo Kephas from Ndola believes that there are not enough women in the council (in Ndola



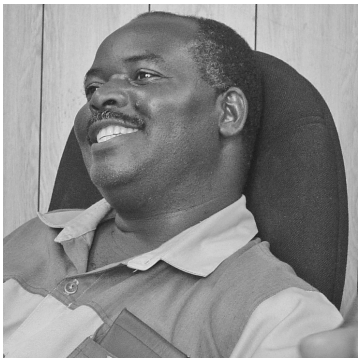
council there are 2 women out of 28 councillors) because not enough women stood for elections. A more concerted effort should be made to encourage women to stand as councillors. Both women and men in communities need to be educated and sensitised so that women will stand. No such sensitisation has been done 'on the ground'. He is an advocate of the legislated quota and believes that this coupled with electoral reform (changing from the constituency based system to the PR system) would yield good results for women. The council does not have any formal policy or structure for women but according to him the include women in all council activities (on an ad hoc basis).

Councillor Gerry Chama from Kabwe describes gender equality as working to ensure the participation of both women and men, in decision-making, governance and the area of development. He too says that the council tries to ensure that women are involved in all of the programmes, so that they are not disadvantaged because men are in the majority. But this only goes as far as encouragement as in the other councils and no policies are in place to enforce this. In Kabwe the town clerk is a woman and their MP is also a woman whom he believes gives encouragement to



women who might want to take up a decision-making positions and be involved in politics and fight for the rights of women and children. The councillor says he is not averse to a woman President, he says "Women are in the majority and it is good for them to lead and it would be good to have a woman President. We support women and would want them to lead us sometimes - even
the majority of the voters are women".

Councillor Shadreck Mwinga from Mazabuka has very active women in his constituency and as a result he has ensured that they receive funds from the Community Development Fund (CDF) to implement projects. He awarded a CDF of 1.5 million kwacha to a group of women to rear chickens who then started a club so that they could share the profits and help each other out. He was very impressed by the fact that they managed to raise about 2.3 million and instead of sharing the money between themselves, they decided that it would be better spent on a TV for the maternity wing in the local hospital so that people having to be at the hospital (mostly women) when children are born or sick have something to do while they wait. This, for him, highlights what women stand for, they give back to the community. He mentioned some other projects that they are involved in such as a home based care ones but admits that they are not enough because they are done on an ad hoc basis and believes that the solution lies in policies and training and capacity building for women's groups to ensure that they are able to sustain their businesses and to make profits.



Councillor Godfrey Mukamba from Ndola feels that it is important for women to participate because they should be given equal rights. And while he admits that the low levels of representation have been inherited and are rooted in custom and culture he does not believe that this is a barrier to their effective participation. In his council women do participate effectively but he thinks because many women are teachers they are only qualified for the more social committees and as a result this confines them their stereotypical roles. His view is that women usually only serve one term, with more men than women getting re-elected, the reason for this he cites is that they have failed to meet the communities needs and poor performance, he propose that women be monitored during their term of office, as well as capacity building in order to find a solution



Conclusions

While "making a difference" is always difficult to quantify, this chapter highlights strong perceptions that women bring different perspectives to local government; they are sensitive to local concerns and they feel a duty to represent women's issues and speak out for them. Women are more accessible and see the importance of working in consultation with communities.

Men can obstruct women's progress and agendas but they too can be agents of change. Where men do not feel threatened by women and have worked with them as professionals they see the difference that women can make and encourage them. One of the measures of the extent to which women make a difference is the extent to which raising gender issues becomes a normal part of council discourse, with women and men emerging as gender champions. The examples in this chapter show that there are many Zambian men who are supportive of women's equal participation.

The chapters that follow will attempt to measure the extent to which, even in such small numbers, women are making a difference in the day to day work of councils and in the more arduous task of mainstreaming gender in the work of local government in Zambia. This evidence is important in the campaign that needs urgently to get underway before the 2011 elections to increase women's participation at this level.



Young women in Zambia have a chance to contribute to decision-making *Photo: Frank Windcheck*



Clean cities are a priority for women

Photo: Derrick Sinjela

Gender in the work of councils

This chapter addresses the extent to which gender concerns are reflected in the every day work of local government, and that women are able to influence this agenda. The chapter begins with a description of how local government works in Zambia, including its competencies. The main issues and concerns are then analysed from a gender perspective. Interviews with women and men councillors, as well as focus groups, are used to probe the extent to which the limited number of women councillors in Zambia can influence the daily agenda.

How local government works

Local councils are made up of elected councillors, chiefs (appointed from among themselves in the district) and Members of Parliament. Local councillors are elected every five years and Mayors and Deputy Mayor's who are elected from amongst themselves each year.

Councils work closely with structures at the community level which provide an important link between the community and the council. These structures are residents, ward and area development committees (RDC, WDC and ADC). Positions on these committees are elected by the communities and include members from CBOs, FBOs and community members and they are chaired by the ward councillor.

Finance

Zambia is no different to local government in other southern African countries which are plagued by lack of resources and financial constraints. A decentralisation policy (GRZ 2004) is currently being implemented and is intended to give more decision making powers to the Councils but given the poor financial resource base and resource capacities of Zambian councils it is not clear whether this policy will be effective or beneficial.

Council generates revenue from four main sources:

- Rates taxes from property owners
  These are collected every six months and which account the largest portion (in some cases 70 percent) of the council's income.
- Services (licences and levies)
- Land allocation
- Government grants

Councils receive grants from the central government but these do not come consistently which makes it difficult to budget and plan effectively. The Ministry's budget of approximately 107 billion kwacha is divided amongst the 72 local councils (eg. Ndola receives about 90 million kwacha).

Researchers spoke to councillors to get an understanding of how this works on the ground, interviews highlighted practical applications and constraints in the financial workings of councils.

Councils receive a community development fund (CDF) from the Ministry of Finance through the line Ministry to the councils. These funds vary from council to council, for example the Ndola City Council receives about 160 million kwacha, but Lusaka Municipal Council receives 400 million kwacha. But at the time of this research neither of these councils had yet received this money for the current fiscal year. Funds through the CDF are applied for through the MP. Sometimes these funds are supplemented with external donor funding which the MPs are supposed to lobby for.

The ward development fund (WDF) is money dispersed through the ward councillors and the WDC/RDC to be used for 'community development' projects such as building bridges or clearing drains. The WDF comes out of the revenue received by the council. Researchers found large differences in the amounts of these funds as well as the frequency of disbursement. For example a councillor in Luanshya or Kabwe receives five million kwacha annually, a councillor in Ndola receives four million kwacha per month and councillors in Lusaka receive eight million every three months. According to Councillor Chama, Mayor of Kabwe council, availability of these funds depends on the capacity or 'health' of the council saying that receiving these funds is not automatic, it depends on the council revenue and resources. All of the councillors interviewed attest to the irregularity of receiving

this money as well, all of which makes development of communities difficult.

Allegations of unfair distribution of funds and differential treatment of councillors from different political parties abound. This kind of favouritism is not allowed and councils run the risk of having resources withdrawn if evidence of such conduct is found.

Planning and budgeting in councils

Councils plan (or should) on a five year cycle, in line with their tenure of office. In consultation with the RDC they should identify at least five priorities, develop budgets which should be approved by the council and then sent to the local government ministry for approval.

According to Gerry Chama, Mayor of Kabwe council, councils are starting to do so-called participatory budgeting (Kabwe is a pilot municipality for this new process). This involves starting the planning process early, collecting data before the new year on what the community wants and then developing budgets that reflect the needs and inputs of the community. According to the Mayor the planning is done yearly but there is also a long term plan 2006-2011 with activities being based on the budget. Management formulates the 5 year plan and all of the councillors are involved and they should all be aware of what is contained in this plan.

Members of parliament (MPs) and Councillors

All members of parliament of the district sit on the council. While MPs received allowance and loans, councillors do not. Councillors are paid 170 000 kwacha ($ 38) per sitting (120 000 of the meeting and 50 000 for transport).

Councillors do a large portion of the work in the constituencies and some of them feel that they are expected to do more work in the communities than the MPs. MPs are more involved in policy making, expecting information to be gathered by the councillors and reverted to them. This *on the ground* work is both time consuming and costly, especially for councillors who do not get paid for the work that they do.

Some councillors think that there is the need for government to provide more financial support to councillors because they are the people who stay within the community unlike the MP's who visit their constituencies during elections, "At the movement there is a feeling among community members that councillors are given as much money as MP's, which is not the case".

Competencies of local government

Functions of the Council are set out in the Local Government Act (561) and include the establishment and maintenance of public utilities and amenities such as sanitation, abattoirs, public health and educational facilities. Table 14 below summaries the functions of the different delivering authorities, the highlighted ones indicate local government functions.

Council work

Local government has the potential to make a difference to the very day lives of citizens- especially women – because it is concerned with basic services. Every function performed by the council has a gender dimension. Despite the obstacles that they face, the evidence shows that women councillors are using the space that they have to make a difference.

Table 14: Functions of local government in Zambia

FUNCTION/POWER	Delivery authority		
	Central	Provincial	Local
GENERAL ADMINISTRATION			
Police	*		
Fire protection			*
Ambulance services	*		
Civil protection	*		
Criminal justice	*		
Civil justice	*		
Civil status register	*		
Statistical office	*		
Electoral register			*
EDUCATION			
Pre-school			*
Primary	*		
Secondary	*		
Vocational and technical	*		
Higher education	*		
Adult education	*		
SOCIAL WELFARE			
Kindergarten and nursery			*
Family welfare services	*		
Welfare homes	*		
Social security	*		
PUBLIC HEALTH			
Primary care	*		*
Hospitals	*		
Health protection	*	*	*
HOUSING AND TOWN PLANNING			
Housing	*		*
Town planning	*	*	*
Regional planning	*	*	
TRANSPORT			
Roads	*	*	*
Transport			*
Urban roads	*	*	*
Urban rail	*		
Ports	*		
Airports	*		

FUNCTION/POWER	Delivery authority		
	Central	Provincial	Local
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC SANITATION			
Water and sanitation			*
Refuse collection and disposal			*
Cemeteries and crematoria			*
Slaughter-houses			*
Environmental protection	*		
Consumer protection	*	*	*
CULTURE, LEISURE AND SPORTS			
Theatre and concerts	*	*	
Museums and libraries	*		*
Parks and open spaces			*
Sports and leisure			*
UTILITIES			
Water supply			*
Electricity	*		
ECONOMIC			
Agriculture, forests and fisheries	*		*
Economic promotion	*		º
Trade and industry	*		º
Tourism	*		º
Other economic services	*		º

Source: Commonwealth local government forum - www.clgf.org.za

º discretionary service by the local authority

Education

Education is essential for all communities. It is important for women because women are the main carers of children who have the responsibility for child development. Good schooling facilities (accessible, clean, safe and well functioning) eases the burden on women on two fronts, in terms of them not having to provide this function themselves as well as freeing them to participate in other activities while their children are at school.

Joyce Sakala, Chairperson of Chongwe Council, identified the poor performance of learners because of a shortage of teachers in the rural school due to of a lack of accommodation as a priority. "Teachers are posted but they don't have anywhere to stay, so when children perform poorly because there are no teachers it's not the lack of teachers that is the problem, it's the lack of teacher accommodation that is the problem," she said. They have since commenced laying the foundation for the five roomed house using the Ward Development Fund.

Being a science teacher by profession, Christabelle Mwenda from Kabwe she sees education of all children as a priority. Her main task has been to build community schools and upgrade schools, she even managed in one instance to get money to build a one-by three classroom. She now has a community school in her ward which 20 to 30kms away from the town which was built using the CDF and this means that learners have a shorter distance to travel

to get to school. Her line of thinking is that "once children are educated, once women and men are educated then there will be development because people will understand issues". She also makes it a point to speak to girl children in schools about the importance of women participating in politics. One time she spoke about other women in politics and the importance of not leaving everything in the hands of the men, "women must come up and speak for themselves - we have other things that men do not understand."

Primary health care

Health is a core component of human development and women's health and wellbeing is closely linked to the wellbeing of the family. Women are the main consumers of primary health care because of their reproductive role in society, access to health care facilities has a positive impact on the lives of women and their families. At the local level this translated into clinics or hospitals being within reasonable walking distance, clean and safe facilities which offer friendly and affordable services.

Councillor Penny Mwape from Luanshya has made primary health one of her concerns. In her ward she goes to the clinics to find out how the medical personnel are dealing with patients because she had heard many complaints about the service at clinics and that nurses are rude. She gives the personnel talks and also advises on cleanliness in clinics. She recalls that she has found people washing their dishes, doing laundry and bathing their children at a communal tap which is unhygienic. As a result she conducts random checks to ensure that hygiene standards are being complied with. She recently approached the Rotary Club and they agreed to assist her with erecting a 'Mother's Shelter' for women, who bring their children to the clinic and have to wait for a long time, with the shelter they will have a place to sit, under shelter, while they hold vigil and it will also accommodate family visiting their daughters or wives who are in the maternity clinic.

The problem with Margaret Daka's ward in Kitwe, is that there is no rural clinic in the Kamakonde ward and women have to travel (often walk) 20kms to get to the nearest one. She has been instrumental in tabling the motion for a clinic to be constructed, but the cost is high (about 375 million, to start) and the funds are low. She has only received 41 million kwacha from the CDF so far to do the foundations; they advise her that she will receive the rest later. She has been working closely with the Ministry of Health which is ultimately responsible for the clinic.

Councillor Pamela Musonda from Ndola has recently applied for the land from the council for the clinic and they are processing the deeds. This project will see a new clinic in her ward so that women do not have to walk over 25kms to the nearest clinic outside their ward. She has approached Chilanga Cement Company to lobby for cement to assist her to build the clinic and while it looks promising she has not received confirmation of this assistance.

HIV and AIDS

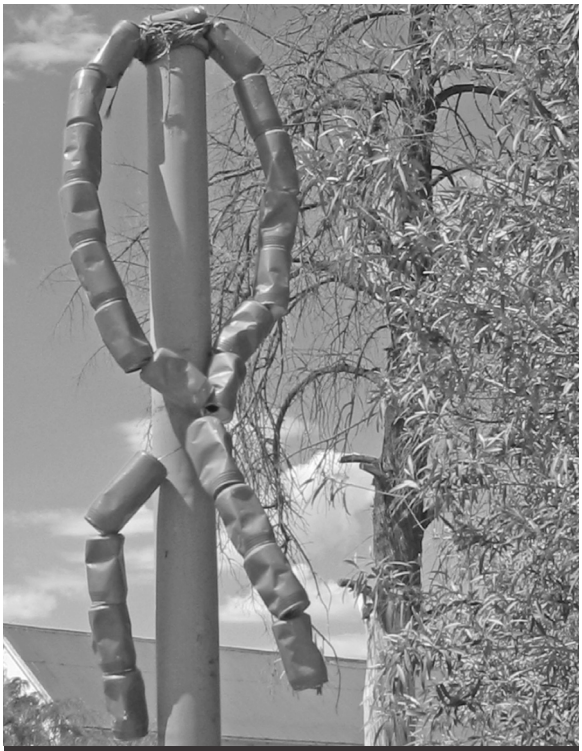
Zambia has one of the highest HIV and AIDS prevalence rates in the world (7th) with 16.5 percent of the adult population infected. Globally it has been found that more women are infected than men due to unequal power relations between women and men which also contribute to women not being able to negotiate safe sex and the use of condoms.

Sandra Kabwela from Ndola was one of the few councillors interviewed who highlighted HIV and AIDS as a major concern for both the country and local authorities. "As a councillor I am trying to bring cross-cutting issues such as HIV and AIDS to the fore to because these are the issues that affect people

in the wards – but our hands are tied because we only get reports from management and they say we want to do A-D, and then we debate on these points but if we want to make a difference at council we have to bring motions and we are not very good at this." She thinks that having policy on HIV and AIDS would enable the council to be more effective in dealing with the issues and affecting the lives of our citizens in the districts.

Stigma remains a huge challenge in communities and she believes that the reason for the disproportionate number of women to men with the disease often lies in the fact that women are not able to negotiate the use of condoms. This she says is grounded in lack of women's economic empowerment, "women aren't able to 'chase the men away' and they are threatened to be chased away if they ask their men to wear condoms. Because they are not empowered financially they think, 'if I am chased where I will go?'" She says that education of both women and men on HIV and AIDS is what is needed to stop this vicious cycle, "Men need to know that they should be responsible and are responsible not to spread HIV and AIDS and the women should learn that they too are responsible and should stand up against their husbands and boyfriends because at the end of the day they are the ones that suffer when the breadwinners die and the responsibility falls on the women to lead households that are poor/ poverty stricken. And this then has knock on affects to the children, the girls will go into prostitution to look after themselves… so we must stop the spread of HIV - while they say the prevalence is coming down there is still a lot that needs to be done."

As a councillor she sees her role as speaking out about the pandemic and participating at events such as those that take place on World AIDS day. But she adds that while the talking is good more serious interventions are required and this means a lot of other council activities around women and youth empowerment through women's clubs and youth clubs, "We have to empower women and also the youth and this will help a lot."



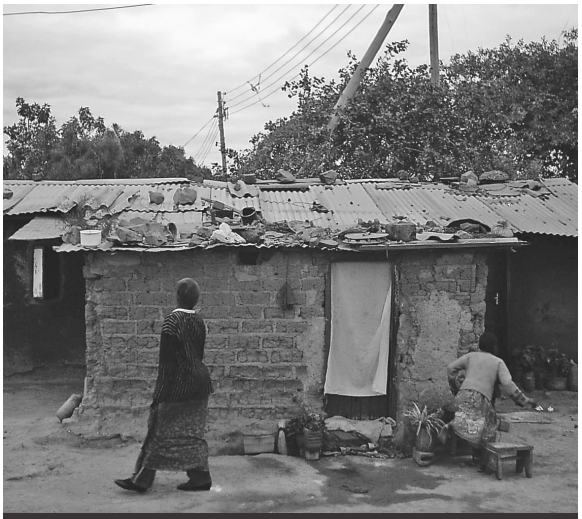
HIV and AIDS should be a concern for council *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

Housing

In a society where men have historically had the exclusive right to buy and own land the equal and fair distribution and allocation of land and housing has the potential to change women's lives substantially. The right to own land means that women no longer need to be dependent on men for shelter for themselves and their children. The participation of women on land allocation committees is critically important to ensure that women are taken into account in the process.

Jean Namukonda from Chililabombwe told researchers that her council has implemented a policy

to ensure that 30 percent of all plots allocated go to women. She stresses the importance of women sitting on the panel of interviews, if only to remind the men, who are in the majority, of the importance of complying with this policy. She sees women owning land as an empowerment issue, saying that when marriages end, as they sometimes do, it is always the woman that is left with nothing because the man controls the land, "So if he says she must go and she doesn't have a house she could end up on the street, so we want to lessen that." Educating women and sensitising them to these facts is part of her mission, "We encourage and sensitise women to put the plot into their own name so that it is her land and she is protected if anything happens".



Women should have equal right to housing and land *Photo: Derrick Sinjela*

Roads and transport

This function includes grading roads and building bridges. Roads mean access: to homes, schools, hospitals etc. Women are more likely to be using roads on foot or bicycle than by private motor vehicle. This means that bridges that shorten distances to be travelled or which make crossing rivers (especially during rainy season) or dongas safer for them and their children benefit women more than big projects to tar toads, for example.



Graded road in Chililabombwe *Photo: Susan Tolmay*

Maleta Kasonde from Kitwe used her CDF (community development fund) to build a bridge between her ward and the next because commuters needing to get to the hospital had a long way to walk around The bridge now allows easy and quicker access.

Jean Namukonda from Chililabombwe approached an energy corporation which was working in the area and requested that they grade the road in her ward. She then used the 2 million kwacha WDF to buy crushed stones to patch some of the roads. She is in the process are asking the government for money to tar the road that leads to the hospital so that it is more accessible for the community.

Water and sanitation

Water and sanitation are indisputably two of the most basic and important services that are provided by local councils. Lack of access to clean water and sanitation facilities has enormous adverse affects on the health of communities as well as the safety of women who often bear the burden of providing potable water and sanitation, but are often not consulted in the provision of these services.
According to the Central Statistics Office of Zambia (CSO) in 2006 only 59 percent of households had access to safe water, with access in urban areas (89 percent) being almost double that in rural areas (43

percent). With more women (51 percent) living in rural areas than men (49 percent) this means that they are adversely affected. Lusaka province has the largest proportion of households with access to safe water (96 percent) while the Northern Province has the smallest (16 percent) proportion of households with access to safe water.

Sanitation statistics are not dissimilar with only 15 percent of households using flush toilets (9 percent have their own flush toilet inside their house, 5 percent have own flush toilet outside house and 1 percent share a flush toilet.) About 59 percent of households have their own pit latrine, 7.3 percent share a communal latrine and 4.6 percent use their neighbour's latrine. About 13 percent of households have no toilet facility. 76.8 percent of rural households compared to 59.8 percent of urban households use pit latrines.

Pamela Musonda from Ndola started her tenure attempting to complete the work of her predecessor councillor building an ablution block in a basic school in her ward. She had received funds from the CDF to begin the project but the funds were not enough and it was left incomplete. When Councillor Musonda was elected she picked up the project and approached ZESCO and Bwana Mkubwa Mines to assist her with completing the project which they duly did. She has also been successful in lobbying Bwana Mkubwa mines to build a borehole for another basic school in her ward.
Councillor Mary Phiri of Lusaka says water is one of their biggest concerns because there is not enough supply so she has asked for assistance from central government to sink boreholes.

Refuse collection and disposal

Refuse collection is an environmental health issue, again women are most affected by these services due to their reproductive role in society and being the ones responsible for domestic chores such as cooking and cleaning. Failure of these services can detrimental health affects on the entire community.

The case study of Jean Namukonda from Chililabombwe at the beginning of Chapter five highlights the experiences of one councillor in her campaign to ensure that the community is kept clean. Many of the councillors interviewed, both women and men, referred to women's regard for the issue of refuse disposal and cleanliness. When Maleta Kasonda was Mayor she got the council to buy utility vehicles (grader, front end roader, garbage collection trucks) with money from the CDF) when she faces opposition from the predominantly male councillors she stood her ground and said "we need these things to clean up our City, as well as the bins around town." According to her it is not likely that the men would have dealt with garbage as all the previous years when men ran the council the garbage was a problem which they didn't deal with it.

Cemetries and crematoria

Mortuaries perform an important function in communities. But because of high levels of poverty family members often do not have the required funds to buy coffins to bury their loved ones. There is a potential health risk when bodies are left at mortuaries indefinitely. Councillors have to deal with these real issues. Many attest to being approached by community members for money for coffins and funerals.

Jean Namukonda (see Chapter five) has done a few things in her ward to address this issue. She has cleaned up the local mortuary and put up curtains so that when people have to frequent the place in usually unhappy circumstances the place doesn't smell bad and they at least have some privacy. She also has a credit coffin scheme of those who cannot afford to buy coffins whereby they are given coffins

on credit and they pay this back as and when they can afford to.

Penny Mwape from Luanshya advises community members about the importance of taking their deceased's to mortuaries. In her area, which is peri-urban, many people leave bodies in the house which is a big health concern: "They will have the body next to them and then eat!" she exclaims. She advises residents to take the body to the mortuary. Often she helps transport the bodies in her car.

Markets

With higher unemployment levels among women, informal markets have the potential to benefit women by economically empowering them and giving them a space to trade that is clean and safe.

Councillor Margaret Daka from Kitwe has been trying to finish a job started by her predecessor but is hamstrung by a shortage of funds. He got as far as laying the foundation for the market and procuring the roofing materials, which are now sitting with him, and the money for the rest of the building has not been released - this money will come next year. The problem is that the community thinks that it is her that is delaying this process: "They see that it was moving and now everything has stopped." She claims that the reason the previous councillor was able to move with the project was because both him and MP were from the ruling party, and because she belongs to the opposition things have come to a standstill.

Anthony Katango, Mayor of Ndola, said that the city has built the Lubumbashi Market which is run by women. He adds that as a result it is a very clean market place.

Conclusions

This chapter highlights some of the challenges women face with accessing funds and implementing projects, which range from receiving funds irregularly to not at all. This makes setting priorities, planning and delivering on their promises to constituents rather difficult. Despite these drawbacks, the research yielded numerous examples of women managing to use their positions in council to ensure that basic services are delivered.

The examples in this chapter illustrate how women councillors have started to address issues that were previously sidelined, such as refuse removal. It shows the concern of women with education, health care, mortuaries and land distribution.

But much of the work that women councillors do only addresses the practical needs of women. While this is important, it does not address the causes of women's marginalised place in communities and ultimately does not change their status. What councils need to start thinking about is how to move from the practical to more strategic interventions that have a real chance of transforming the lives of ordinary women.



Former Gender Minister Patricia Mulasikwanda, and Gladys Mutukwa, Advocate and Consultant

Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna

From practical to strategic

Now in her second year in council, Councillor Sandra Kabwela from Ndola City Council is well schooled in the theories of gender mainstreaming but has little to no support for implementing them.

She starts off from a point of disadvantage by being one of only two women in the 28-person Ndola council. She is an Independent, although she says that this can sometimes be more an advantage than an obstacle.

She does not hesitate to participate: "When we are in the chambers we are supposed to speak about the development of the council, so it is all about how you take yourself and I don't see myself as the

minority, I am just a councillor and I have made myself vocal on issues that affect Ndola and council as a whole." Men interviewed for the study spoke highly of her, describing her as "very active, involved and knowledgeable."



Councillor Sandra Kabwela *Photo: Susan Tolmay*

What is lacking, according to the councillor, are policies. She has put forward a motion to establish an HIV and AIDS committee in the council, and she wants to include gender as a cross cutting issue. She has been trying to mobilise women in the Copperbelt around gender issues by establishing a chapter on women in local government. But, she laments, "there is no coordination around gender issues, everyone is just working on their own and there is no gender policy." An initiative that was started by her predecessor died a natural death.

She says that the local government association (LGAZ) has been pushing for councillors to form provincial chapters but there is no support and there seems to be some resistance from men. She thinks that they can only be more effective as women councillors if we have their own forum where they can address women's issues, "Having an organisation where women can sit together and plan the development of communities will be the most beneficial solution for everyone." She is also of the opinion that this will work across party lines mostly because the LGAZ cuts across political parties.

She sees the LGAZ as the overarching body that should be providing support at the provincial level but instead they have become a bit of a stumbling block. She has attended a couple of meetings organised by them but gender issues are not addressed effectively, "The last time I brought it up with the national executive they said we should start a chapter in the Copperbelt, they told women who expressed interest to start chapters." But there seems to be a lack of follow through, after she went to a meeting in Livingstone they said 'go back and start a chapter' but up until now they have not contacted her, "The Provincial chapter says that they are behind it but nothing has happened." Each province has an executive which is made up of Mayor's and town clerks of all of the councils in the province.

There is no gender committee in the council which is why she wanted it to start from the provincial level, in the hope that it would filter down to all the councils so that they would all establish gender committees.

One of the major stumbling-blocks to gender equality is the fact that there are not enough women in decision-making bodies, even at the community level most of the development committees are made up of just men. She says that working with women in decision-making positions rather than men would make it easier to implement gender programmes because the men resist and because they are in the majority she has no chance.

The councillor is aware, however, that gender is much broader than just the participation of women, although having women at the same level as men is

crucial: "This gender business is not as narrow as gender, it's gender in relation to other factors," she says. "Gender is not a stand alone issue which is why we now need a proper gender committee or policy, this would start gender mainstreaming… but we must not lose sight of the fact that we still need to bring women up to the same level as men… men are in the majority in decision making positions and if this situation remains this gender mainstreaming will not work so effectively, we need women to come and remind policy makers - 'hey let me mainstream here and here…"

She knows that if there was a formal policy there would be no chance of anyone 'forgetting' to adhere to the principle of awarding at least 30 percent of plots to women, as has happened in the past. She believes that an active gender committee would be able to monitor these issues properly.

But they have a long way to go in the council because she has not "seen or felt" anything related to gender in the council. Gender activities are limited to Women's Day activities, "when we have T-shirts and we march and that's the end of gender."

On the other hand expectations on the ground are high. Constituents expect a lot from women (sometimes more than men). Without support coming from anywhere she feels lost: "I don't know what to do - on my own I do not know where to start from." Kabwela believes that the town clerk, who is a woman, would be keen to push the gender agenda forward. What they need is more women: "Bring more women into leadership positions and then we stand united we will be a force to be reckoned with."

This chapter grapples with how to go from the practical to the strategic, so that gender is institutionalised in the structures and work of local government, through ensuring women's equal access, participation on to transforming agendas and service delivery. It starts by setting out the key conceptual issues with regard to gender mainstreaming and then assessing the extent to which gender is being mainstreamed in local government in Zambia. The chapter concludes with a summary of what needs to be done to ensure effective mainstreaming.

Conceptual issues

As discussed in the previous chapter, the research found many examples of practical interventions that the councillors are making that are having an impact on the practical but not the strategic needs of women in the community.

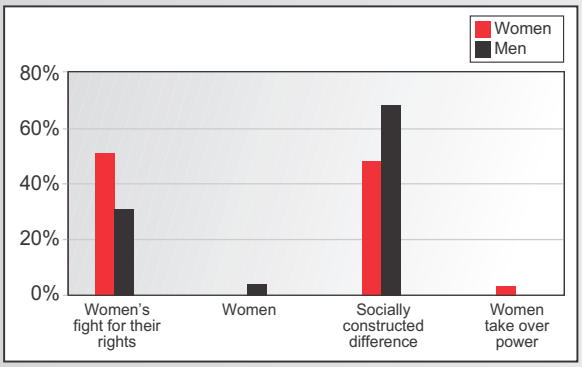
Moser (1993: 39-40) describes practical and strategic needs as follows: **Practical gender needs** are the needs that women identify in their socially accepted roles is society. Practical needs do not challenge the gender division of labour or women's subordinate position in society, although rising out of them. Practical gender needs are a response to immediate perceived necessity, identified within a specific context. They are practical in nature and are often concerned with inadequacies in living conditions such as water provision, health care and employment. Thus, for example, when poor women are given the option of loans and opt for sewing machines rather than purchasing land and starting an agro business, this option satisfies an immediate practical need to generate income within a safe space. But it does not challenge the status quo or start to address the strategic needs of women to start to share control over economic resources that have traditionally been in the hands of men, and upon which greater wealth creation is based.

Strategic gender needs are the needs women identify because of their subordinate position to

men in their society. Strategic gender needs vary according to specific contexts. They relate to gender division of labour, power and control and may include such issues as legal rights, domestic violence, equal wages and women's control over their bodies. Meeting strategic gender needs helps women to achieve greater equality. It also changes existing roles and therefore challenges women's subordinate position.

It is important to understand the term gender in order to understand the different needs and how they can be addressed. Councillors in Zambia showed a lower understanding of the meaning of gender compared to councillors in the first four case study countries (Lesotho, Mauritius, Namibia and Lesotho)

How councillors understood the term gender



Councillors were asked to choose which of four definitions of gender they found the most accurate: women fight for their rights; women; socially constructed differences between women and men and women taking over power.

Overall less than half, 48 percent, of all councillors chose the conventionally accepted definition of gender (socially constructed differences between women and men) but more men (68 percent) than women (46 percent) chose the correct response. The second most common response was "women's fight for their rights" with half of the women and 28 percent of the men choosing this as the meaning of gender.

The original *At the Coalface* study found that overall 76 percent of all councillors chose the socially constructed differences between women and men with but more men (79 percent) than women (73 percent) chose the correct response. It is interesting to note, however, that broken down per country the finding shows that Mauritius (the country with the lowest levels of women's representation in local government) showed lower levels of understanding of the term with only just over half (54 percent) of the respondents choosing the correct response and 33 percent choosing 'women's fight for their rights'.

This shows a direct correlation between low levels of women's representation and low levels of understanding the meaning of gender.

Approaches to gender

There are several different approaches to gender within the work of any organisation. These range from oblivion to emphasising the role of women to more gender aware approaches that place emphasis both on empowering women and changing the attitudes of men.

Gender blindness

In the gender blind approach, all human beings are viewed as being the same. This approach, by the far the most common, decrees that there is a universal set of laws and norms that should dictate the way society is organised. The approach overlooks the fact that the playing field is not level for women, and especially for certain categories of women. In South Africa and Namibia, the same argument can be made for race. Unless these discrepancies are recognised and built into policies and programmes, historical legacies continue to be perpetuated with little change.

Women specific

The women-specific approach views women as a special category, deserving special treatment in order to gain equality with men. There are two variants to the approach:

- The *welfare approach* sees women as an isolated category that needs physical inputs - food, fertility interventions (such as birth control) etc. These needs are related to women's constructed gender roles and their inferior status in society. Women are regarded as dependent on their male partners or family members or the state. This approach does not look at dismantling the system that oppresses women. If taken alone it will further disempower women in the long run since it ignores their intellectual and cultural capabilities, individual creativity and sense of responsibility.
- The *equality of opportunity approach* focuses on the creation of opportunities for women to enter spheres of authority, power and control. Fairness and equity are seen only as springboards with which to enter the male domain without necessarily changing the status quo in terms of power relations, dominant ideas and values. This approach wants women to engage in masculine activities in a masculine world. The approach tends towards numbers - getting women in - without much regard for what happens thereafter. It also assumes that women, by virtue of their sex, are gender aware or that they will automatically represent the interests of women. Gender transformation is assumed to occur "when women enter the fortress of power." (2005:9)

Gender awareness

The gender aware approach does not look at women and men alone, but at the relationship between them; how societies are structured along gender lines, and the impact of these relations on the whole society. It explores the subordination of women and men, and examines how this relationship impacts on all aspects of life and society. The approach recognises differences in context, economic and political terrain. A gendered perspective is concerned with ensuring a gender analysis with regard to policies, programmes, planning strategies and evaluation. It looks at fundamentally transforming unequal power relations and changing society (2005:10).

In *Beyond Numbers* Meintjes writes:

> Gender mainstreaming can simply mean integrating women at the top without confronting the fundamental issues of gender equality. Political will within the political parties has to be fostered by feminist politicians who in turn must be both accountable to and supported by civil society lobbies. The transformation agenda of a cluster of feminist politicians is what ensures that policy and legislation transcend the mere presence of a critical mass of women. The danger is that these feminist politicians do not stay the course. The important factor seems to be the relationship between parliamentarians and the women's movement and NGOs committed to gender transformation. This calls for a commitment to ensuring that women's organisations continue to work together. The challenge is to ensure that this happens. (2005:236)

Gender checklist for local government

The pitfalls of gender mainstreaming have led to some gender activists calling for a rethinking of this approach. It is argued that in paying lip service to gender mainstreaming, governments have effectively ensured that gender is everywhere and nowhere.

A painful upshot of gender mainstreaming for gender NGOs is that funding agencies are giving less money to these NGOs in favour of "mainstreaming" gender in the work of all NGOs. National plans and strategies for ensuring that departments take responsibility for gender are often sited by governments as evidence that gender has been "taken care of."

However, the alternative route, of locating gender within specific structures like women's ministries, with token budget allocations and little influence over other line ministries, has led to gender being marginalised.

Mindful of the criticisms of gender mainstreaming, but in the absence of any credible alternative, this study takes the view that at local and every other level, all structures in society must strive to ensure that gender is integrated into their work. The study thus evaluates the extent to which gender mainstreaming is taking place in local government against a set of parameters that cover the broad spectrum of work in local government. In Zambia no evidence of gender mainstreaming was found.

Gender policy framework

In theory, if gender were truly mainstreamed in an organisation, a stand-alone gender policy would not be necessary. However, until that is so, it is important for every organisation to have a gender policy.

Gender policies should be informed by such guiding documents as the Constitution, the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Declaration on Gender and Development. The first test of how effective having a stand-alone policy is in driving gender mainstreaming is whether gender forms part of the mission, vision, code of ethics, guiding principles or any other documents that define and guide an organisation.

Institutional transformation

In a sphere of governance such as local government, institutions comprise elected and appointed officials. The elected officials constitute the governance structure. The extent to which this exhibits gender balance and sensitivity is one obvious measure of gender mainstreaming.

At an administrative level, gender mainstreaming concerns the range of administrative measures that need to be taken to ensure that hiring and promotion policies do not discriminate against women directly or indirectly; the creation of work environments that are family friendly and free of sexual harassment; as well as the re-orientation of the culture of an institution- its language and practices- to ones that encourage the best in both men and women.

Planning

Effective mainstreaming starts with the extent to which gender considerations are integrated into planning and the consultation processes that take place during planning. Gender policies that do not link to the main planning instruments, whatever these may be in each country, are not likely to be taken seriously in the work of the organisation.

Programmes and projects

The most important test of gender mainstreaming is the extent to which gender awareness is reflected in the deliverables of the organisation. At a

programmatic level this is reflected in the selection of programme areas. Because women have been historically disadvantaged, one approach is to ensure that the specific needs of women are addressed through programmes specifically targeted at women. However, this should not be at the expense of ensuring that women benefit equally from existing projects, or indeed that women benefit more, as a way of redressing the existing inequalities.

Gender management system

Across the globe, organisations have found it necessary to put in place what the Commonwealth Secretariat refers to as a Gender Management System (GMS) for ensuring that gender mainstreaming takes place. This consists of:

- ***Structures:*** Institutional mechanisms are critical for ensuring that gender mainstreaming takes place. Care must be taken to ensure that these structures are not marginalised, and that they are not regarded as just pertaining to human resource or internal institutional issues, but extend to the policymaking, planning and implementation arms of the institution. The responsibility for gender mainstreaming must be shared by all, and especially driven from the senior management level while ensuring that specific responsibility and expertise are vested in a Gender Unit (GU) or (in smaller organisations) a Gender Focal Point (GFP) empowered to perform a cross cutting function.

- ***Monitoring and evaluation:*** The only way to measure the gendered impact of policies, laws and service delivery is by having gender indicators as part of the monitoring and evaluation system. These, in turn, can only be meaningful if the organisation keeps regular, accurate and updated gender disaggregated statistics. These statistics must go beyond how many men and women are employed by the organisation (usually the most readily available statistics in any organisation) to gender disaggregated data for beneficiaries.

- ***Gender budgeting:*** Another useful measure in gender mainstreaming is resource allocation. The easiest gender related statistic to pick out in any budget is resources specifically targeted at projects for women. However, such resources usually constitute only a tiny portion of the overall budget (often not more than five percent). Far more revealing is the extent to which women benefit equally from the resources allocated to mainstream projects and the extent to which these projects help to redress gender imbalances, for example through promoting access by women to non-traditional areas of work. Gender budgeting therefore refers not only to expenditures earmarked for women, but also to an analysis of the entire budget from a gender perspective.

- ***Capacity building:*** While the GFP and GU need to have in-depth gender analysis skills, it is important that all members of the organisation, have the capacity and skills to identify, recognise and address gender issues in their work, and in the workplace. Ideally, such training should not be once off, and should form part of the organisation's overall transformation agenda.

Policies and strategies

Across Southern Africa, the term "gender mainstreaming" is relatively new. While the concept has been flagged regularly in development circles at national level, there are very few policies or instruments that directly address the issue at local level. This section examines the policy framework in which gender mainstreaming takes place at local level through a review of what instruments exist at international, regional and national level that refer directly to gender mainstreaming at local level.

International and regional provisions

Among the international and regional instruments, there is only one that could be found in this research that has a direct bearing on local government. This is the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA) **Worldwide Declaration on Women in Local Government** which states that:

Women have the right to equal access to the services of local government, as well as the right to be treated equally in these services and to be able to influence the initiation, development, management and monitoring of services. The provision of services such as education, welfare, and other social services by local governments should aim to see women and men equally responsible for matters related to both the family and to public life, and avoid perpetuating stereotypes of women and men.

Women and men have the equal right to sound environmental living conditions, housing, water distribution and sanitation facilities, as well as to affordable public transportation. Women's needs and living conditions must be made visible and taken into account at all times in planning.

Women have the right to equal access to the territory and geographical space of local governments, ranging from the right to own land, to the right to move freely and without fear in public spaces and on public transport.

Local government has a role to play in ensuring the reproductive rights of women and the rights of women to freedom from domestic violence and other forms of physical, psychological, and sexual violence and abuse.

The recently adopted **SADC Protocol on Gender and Development** does not make specific reference to local government but contains provisions of direct relevance for women at the community level, such as health, education, productive resources and employment and gender based violence. Popularisation of the Protocol at the local level is being done in Mauritius and is proving to be a very effective tool for raising awareness of gender issues and informing community level women, who have in the past been excluded from such processes, what their rights and entitlements are.

Gender strategies at country level

The Zambian Government has tried to put in place measures to redress gender imbalances that exist in the country. Recognising that the full participation of women in the development process at all levels is essential for ensuring sustainable development and achieving equality and equity between the sexes.

Prior to 2000 there was no explicit national gender policy but an effort to increase the role of women in socio-economic development was made in the Fourth National Development Plan of 1989-1993, which included a chapter on Women in Development. These efforts specifically focused on the issues of full integration of women in development. However, this approach considered women in isolation without looking at the relations between sexes which re-inforce gender imbalances in society (National Gender Policy, 2000:1).

A document called Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women in Zambia (SPAW) was produced for the period 1996-2000 in conjunction with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO's) to translate the Beijing Platform of Action into reality(GIDD, 1996). It was intended to serve as a short term implementation plan for the Government's National Gender Policy, which was adopted in the year 2000. The Government intentions were good but there was no implementation. The Strategic Plan of Action for the Implementation of the national Gender

Policy (2004-2005) SPANGP replaced the SPAW. This plan is important, given that the National Gender policy prescriptions are to be implemented, coordinated and evaluated through the national gender machinery lead by Gender in Development Division (GIDD) (Status of women in local government 2007:18).

The National Gender Policy for the Republic of Zambia makes little or no reference to local government. Section 5.4 (200:67) states "At the district level, which is the main focus of the implementation of the National gender policy, a gender focal point will be established. The District Gender Focal Point will be linked to GIDD though Provincial Gender Coordinating Point". However, relatively low levels (57 percent of women) of awareness about this national policy point to a breakdown in implementation.

According to a report by Milimo (2004) the gender structure ends abruptly at district level. It is not linked to local government institutions such as Area Development Committees and Resident Development Committees at the sub district level where committees operate. In addition, the Gender Policy is not as widely publicised as it should be. "On the spot checks indicated an absence of interpretation of policies at community level resulting in a lack of understanding, ownership and appreciation of the policy."

Despite GIDD having the role among others to monitor progress in the status of women, it has had inadequate funding, has been under staffed and has suffered from institutional memory drain because of high staff turnover hence its inability to adequately function (Status of women in local government 2007:18).

Gender policies and mainstreaming at the council level

In 2004 The Local Government Association of Zambia (LGAZ) developed a policy paper and established the Women in Local Government (WILG) Standing Committee. The papers premise is the vision of the LGAZ, which commits and affirms itself to putting gender on the agenda of Local Governments (2004:8).

The Women in Local Government Standing Committee of LGAZ policy paper reverts around:

- Promotion of greater participation and inclusiveness of women in the decision-making process of Local Government;
- Promotion of local self-government as an integral part of democracy and social services delivery efficiency;
- The affirmation that the mission of the Women in Local Government Standing Committee cannot be realised without the systematic integration of an equal share of women into democratic local decision making. It has made it its duty to identify and study policies and programs which enhance women's participation in Local Government systems and to promote proportional female representation within democratic local decision making;
- And, the affirmation that the Women in Local Government Standing Committee will work and consolidate its current and future efforts to develop a clear policy as well as a set of objectives to guide the future work of the Committee.

The WILG Standing committee proposes to focus on five strategic actions:

a. Gender Mainstreaming in local government;
b. Empowerment of women in local government;
c. Capacity building;

d. Activism and
e. Constitutional, legal and legislative reforms.

The research found no gender policies in any of the councils where research was conducted. In most instances gender is simply not an issue in the council. One councillor said their council work is guided by The National Gender Policy. He also mentioned that the council tries to involve women on boards such as the farming management board but that this is done on an ad hoc basis and is not regulated by any kind of council policy. In some Councils, when asked about gender councillors mentioned that they have policies on awarding at least 30 percent of plots to women, but this also seems to occur on an ad hoc basis and is sometimes not implemented.

Gender training and capacity building are also virtually non-existent. Where this happens, it appears to be quite ad hoc. At the time of her interview for this study Councillor Joyce Sakala, Chairperson of the Chongwe Council, had just returned from a gender budgeting and planning workshop convened by the Eastern and Southern African Management Institute. She was, however, the only councillor that had been invited to workshop which was intended for provincial planners.

Sakala said that the workshop led to the launch of a national gender budgeting programme which she believes will help to start changing things once it becomes policy. She hopes that they will cascade the workshops down to the council level, "so that people can come to understand how gender issues are supposed to be addressed". She says that there has not been very much training on gender issues, adding "They come and give some training but it's not done in detail, it just scratches the surface."
The evidence thus shows that while there is a WILG policy paper and a Standing Committee there still seems to be a big a gap between policy and implementation because these structures have not filtered down to the council level.

Conclusions

This chapter starts by defining some of the key gender concepts and approaches to addressing gender, including the gender management system. The research shows that gender policies and programmes are non-existent in local councils in Zambia. While the LGAZ has developed a policy paper on women in local government and established a WILG Standing Committee it has not managed to give effect to its five strategic actions at the council level.

Evidence shows that gender mainstreaming does not happen on its own. If there are no formal policies and programmes, addressing gender happens irregularly and on an ad hoc basis, if at all. If there is no management system in place to ensure that gender is effectively being considered in all of the work that is done, and if monitoring and evaluation does not place then there is a high probability that it will not occur.

The country has a National Gender Policy which spells out policy measures to be taken in 17 different sectors, to redress the imbalances that exist, but there is little evidence that these policy measures are being implemented. The WILG policy paper had identified strategic actions but has failed to implement these. What is required is the systematic application and implementation of these policies and actions at the council level, coupled with gender training and capacity building for all councillors.



Men and women at a Zambian market

Photo: Frank Windcheck

Conclusions and recommendations

The preceding chapters detail the findings of this research which are summarised as follows:

Women are under-represented in every area of local governance: At 6.7 percent, Zambia has the second lowest number of women in local government in the SADC region. They are also under-represented as Mayors and committee members and chairpersons.

The ward and resident committee level representation is slightly better but there are no policies in place that regulate women's participation and this seems to happen in a unsystematic way.

The electoral system has an adverse effect on women: Zambia follows the constituency or FPTP electoral system, which globally has been shown to be more unfriendly to women because constituents vote for candidates rather than the political party which is disadvantageous to women in a society that is still holds deeply patriarchal attitudes towards them. Recommendations for electoral reform have not been adopted.

Political parties are part of the problem: As the gatekeepers to women's entry into politics, political parties have the potential to be enabling agents for women but in most instances they are unsupportive. While party manifestos refer to gender and some to affirmative action none of the political parties have made any concerted effort to put in place measures to increase the representation of women and to ensure that they get elected.

A quota would help: Zambia does have not any form of quota (voluntary or legislated). The study found that the majority of councillors, women and men, believed that a quota would be useful for increasing women's representation in local government. While there were some reservations from constituents, the majority also agreed that a temporary quota system would assist in levelling the playing field but that they should be accompanied with requisite training and capacity building to ensure that councillors participate effectively.

Lack of resources: Women across the board identified lack of resources (both financial and physical) as their biggest barrier both to accessing and participating in local politics. They all lamented the fact that many of them do not have the money that is required for campaigning, which they say is necessary for calling meetings and providing food. They often do not have their own transport and have to get around by foot or bicycle and the vastness of constituencies make this difficult. Once in council similar barriers exists but are exacerbated by unreasonable expectations of constituents who sometimes expect financial assistance from councillors. As councillors are not remunerated, except for the sitting they receive for meetings, this puts an additional strain on them.

Women are not adequately supported: Whether in councils (from men and women), in the community or in the home, women councillors all attest to not being supported adequately. Much of this is linked to the conservative cultural and social belief systems that relegate women to the private sphere. There are still strong views, especially at the local level because this is where patriarchal systems are still deeply rooted, that women should not participate in politics and that they are not capable of doing so. As result they come up against resistance from men in council, women and men in communities and often their own husbands. There are little to no support mechanisms or systems in place for women councillors.

Women can and do make a difference: There is overwhelming evidence from this and similar research that women represent different interests and concerns than men. This is why it is important for women to participate in decision-making, so that issues that were previously sidelined or ignored in male-only councils come to fore and get addressed. The study highlights many excellent examples of the work that women are doing often in difficult circumstances with limited resources. The research also found that the majority of women feel a responsibility towards representing other women's issues.

But numbers do make a difference: A recurrent theme in the interviews is that while women make a difference there are not enough of them. Councillors as well as focus groups noted that it is

difficult for women to begin to change institutions and policies where they are still so in the minority.

Barriers can be overcome by enabling agents: While there are many barriers for women to overcome, many of the councillors interviewed highlighted factors that have enabled them to be more effective. These include: experience and grounding (political and work exposure), support (from council, other women, civil society and families) and capacity building.

Men can be brought on board: None of the male councillors interviewed openly resisted women's participation in councils. Overall the men interviewed (councillors and focus groups) seemed open to women participating in local government. What is needed is to bring them on board, and for them to move further, from merely encouraging women to more concerted support of women.

Needs are being addressed at a very practical level: Much of what is being done at the local level is addressing on the practical needs of women. And while this is important because of the bread and butter issues that are being dealt with, a more strategic approach would yield longer term gains for women.

Strategies for addressing gender are non-existent: No gender policies or programmes were found in any of the councils visited. There is a National Gender Policy, but it has not been implemented at the local level and there are low levels of awareness of the policy. The LGAZ has developed a WILG policy paper and established a Steering Committee but this has not been filtered down to the council level. In the absence of policies, gender is not an issue in councils or it is dealt with in a very *ad hoc* way.

Recommendations

Key recommendations emerging from this study are as follows:

Learning from SADC: Zambia is a member of SADC and is also a signatory to the recently adopted Protocol on Gender and Development which calls for at least 50 percent representation of women in all areas of decision-making by 2015. The Protocol also proposes the use of affirmative action measures to achieve this target. Zambia has the opportunity to learn from other SADC countries which have managed to achieve 30 percent and more women in local government but specifically from Lesotho which has managed to achieve 58 percent women in decision making, with a constituency system and a constitutional quota.

Popularising the SADC Protocol: The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development has the potential to meaningfully change women's lives by addressing the issues that continue to marginalise them in their communities. Local government is an appropriate place to start popularising the Protocol so that women become aware of the instruments that are in place to protect their rights.

Develop and implement a gender strategy for local government and gender policies at council level: With the National Gender Policy and the WILG policy paper as the policy frameworks, a gender strategy for local government should be devised and cascaded into policies at council level.

Gender mainstreaming and action plans: Once there is an overarching policy and strategy for local government, local councils should be trained on how to mainstream gender so that they can develop their own action plans for how the council will address gender concerns in all of the work that they

do. It is essential that issues such as the equal representation of community development committees (RDC's and WDCs) and quotas for land allocation, etc. be addressed in these plans.

Communities should be educated: Civic education on the role and responsibilities of councillors will be beneficial to both councillors and community members. To community member, so they are informed about the roles and responsibilities of councillors and what they should be councillors accountable for. And for councillors so that unrealistic expectations of constituents do not have an affect on how they are perceived and they are held accountable for their actual roles and responsibilities. It is also important that they are educated about the importance of women's participation in local government and the importance of supporting them during elections and after they have been elected.

Support mechanisms: The LGAZ and councils should begin to implement some sort of support mechanisms for women who are often entering politics for the first time. *Mentoring* of new councillors, for example, would make their learning process easier and would benefit the council in general by new councillors becoming more effective in shorter period of time. More effective orientation and training for new councillors would also go a long way in assisting councillors grappling with understanding the institutional operations. *A Women's directory* of people and places that they can approach for assistance and support would address women's concerns that they are isolated and do not know where to go for help.



Edith Nawaki - more women should be participating in decision-making *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

Glossary

Closed list system is where the political party determines where candidates sit on the list, although this is usually based on democratic nomination processes within the party.

Conflict transformation refers to a change (usually an improvement) in the nature of a conflict; a de-escalation or a reconciliation between people or groups. Unlike **conflict resolution**, which denies the long-term nature of conflict, or **conflict management**, which assumes that people and relationships can be managed as though they were physical objects, the concept of **conflict transformation** reflects the notion that conflicts go on for long periods of time, changing the nature of the relationships between the people involved, and themselves changing as people's response to the situation develops over time. (Conflict Research Consortium (1998), University of Colorado, USA.)

A critical mass of women in decision-making is the point at which women, through a combination of numerical strength, enabling political environments, empowerment and conviction feel able to raise critical questions in mainstream environments.

Decentralisation is a policy through which many forms of power and responsibility are shifted from central governments to regional and local bodies.

Diversity means that each person brings individual characteristics of 'race', gender, nationality, religion, age, physical disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, language, and professional skill to the workplace. In order to effectively use diversity, the organisation does not merely recognise, manage or accept the individual differences of each person. The organisation encourages and values diversity.

Effective participation means the ability to influence and change processes as a result of being part of these processes. It is possible for groups of people to be included in decision-making processes yet have very little influence on these: being there and not there. Some of the ways in which participation can be measured include: the extent to which women occupy decision-making positions within the structure, e.g. chairs of committees; the extent to which women exert their influence in decision-making processes- see observation above; the extent to which practices and procedures have changed as a result of women's participation.

"**First Past the Post**" (FPTP) is a voting system where citizens vote not just for the party, but also for the candidate who represents the party in a geographically defined constituency. Thus a party can garner a significant percentage of the votes, but still have no representative in parliament, because in this system "the winner takes all".

Gender describes the socially constructed differences between men and women, which can change over time and which vary within a given society from one society to the next. Our gender identity determines how we are perceived and how we are expected to behave as men and women. Thus while the fact that women give birth to children is biologically determined, the fact they perform the majority of household chores, predominate in the informal survivalist sector and in the lower paid "care" work in the formal sector are all socially constructed. What is important to stress is that gender relations are dynamic. They are shaped through the history of social relations and interactions. They vary over time and place and between different groups of people. They may also be impacted by other factors, such as race, class, ethnicity and disability.

Gender analysis refers to an analysis of the relationships between women and men in society, as individuals, as groups and within institutions. It identifies and understands the different social, cultural and economic realities, needs and interests of women and men and the inequalities of their relationship. It is an important tool for identifying barriers and opportunities for the advancement of women and reduction of gender inequities. It is intended to identify the gendered components of the problem, which is under consideration, whether at the level of international or national policy, or of micro-level interventions. Such problem identification would then be used to inform the process of planning interventions, whether in policy or programmes or systems of monitoring. Gender analysis alerts the user to further questions, which need to be asked, and issues, which need to be addressed. Gender analysis is best done in conjunction with other tools of social analysis to ensure that all forms of social relations that contribute towards inequity are considered and that gender relations are not seen in isolation.

Gender aware policies recognise that women, as well as men, have an important role to play in society; that the nature of women's involvement is determined by gender relations, which make their involvement different and often unequal; and that consequently women have different needs, interests and priorities, which may sometimes conflict with those of men.

Gender-blind policies recognise no differences between the sexes. They mistakenly assume that men and male norms represent the norm for all human beings. As a result, they incorporate biases in favour of existing gender relations and therefore exclude women. Thus for example, although no policy of the DTI sets out to discriminate against women, the fact that these policies fail to specifically highlight the different access that women and men have to resources, and consciously make an effort to redress this imbalance, will inadvertently lead to the status quo being perpetuated.

Gender budgeting or accounting: Because of the different locations of men and women in society and in the economy, no budget line is neutral. Gender budgeting involves both an analysis of allocations between sectors (such as defence versus social allocations) and within sectors to determine their impact.

Gender disaggregated data is the statistical information that breaks down the base information for the activity under analysis by providing the numbers of men and women affected.

Gender equality is where women and men are respected and valued as equals. This means that any differences between women and men are not used to justify a power hierarchy favouring one group over another. It would require:

- That decisions are based on the needs and or interests of both women and men
- Balanced representations and participation of women and men within policy and governance and
- A reallocation of power and redistribution of resources from men to women.

For gender equality to be a reality for all women and all women, other social inequalities would also have to be addressed.

A **Gender Management System (GMS)** is the network of structures, mechanisms and processes put in place within an existing organizational framework, to guide, plan, monitor and evaluate the mainstreaming of gender into all areas of the organisation's work, in order to achieve greater gender equality and equity within the context of sustainable development. A GMS may be established at any level of government, or in institutions such as universities, inter-governmental or non-governmental organisations, private sector organisations or trade unions. The mission of a Gender Management System is to advance gender equality through promoting political will; forging a partnership of stakeholders including government, private sector and civil society, building capacity and sharing good practice. (Commonwealth Secretariat, Gender Management System Handbook, June 1999).

Gender mainstreaming: Is the sum of all the above processes, defined by the UNDP as: "Taking account of gender equity concerns in all policy, programme, administrative and financial activities, and in organizational procedures, thereby contributing to a profound organizational transformation."

Gender Policy - usually developed by particular organisations to provide a guiding framework and strategy, which intends to disrupt existing processes of gendering in relation to that organisation's work and practices.

Informal economy: Describes processes of income generation that are unregulated by the institutions of society, in a legal and social environment in which similar activities are regulated.

Institutional barriers refer to the ways in which the rules, norms and practices of institutions can create and perpetuate inequalities. They can be legal - for instance a law that says women can't inherit land in their own name or that you can only access credit if you have land as collateral. They can also be based in practice and include socio-cultural behaviours, which restrict or inhibit women's opportunities. For instance, an organisation that expects its workers' to routinely work overtime will discriminate against parents with responsibility for young children.

Practical gender needs are the needs that women identify in their socially accepted roles is society. Practical needs do not challenge the gender division of labour or women's subordinate position in society, although rising out of them. Practical gender needs are a response to immediate perceived necessity, identified within a specific context. They are practical in nature and are often concerned with inadequacies in living conditions such as water provision, health care and employment. Thus, for example, when poor women are given the option of loans and opt for sewing machines rather than purchasing land and starting an agro business, this option satisfies an immediate practical need to generate income within a safe space. But it does not challenge the status quo or start to address the strategic needs of women to start to share control over economic resources that have traditionally been in the hands of men, and upon which greater wealth creation is based (Moser, 1995).

Proportional Representation (PR) or "list system" is a voting system where citizens vote for parties that are allocated seats according to the percentage of vote they receive. Individual candidates get in according to where they sit on the list.

Open list system where voters determine where candidates sit on the list.

Sex describes the biological difference between men and women. Men produce sperm; women become pregnant, bear and breastfeed children.

Strategic gender needs are the needs women identify because of their subordinate position to men in their society. Strategic gender needs vary according to specific contexts. They relate to gender division of labour, power and control and may include such issues as legal rights, domestic violence, equal wages and women's control over their bodies. Meeting strategic gender needs helps women to achieve greater equality. It also changes existing roles and therefore challenges women's subordinate position (Moser, 1995)

Structural inequalities are Inequalities in society based on the way the society is structured and affecting large groups of people. For example, in a society (like Apartheid SA), where it was legislated that only 'white' people could be political leaders it would not matter what the level of skill or education of a black person, they could never achieve equal status. When economic rules and practices assume that activities which can earn a wage are more valuable than activities which are unpaid but are equally necessary to a society's survival, then automatically the people performing the unpaid labour are structurally unequal to the people performing the paid labour.

Zebra style party list is a system where political parties alternate male and female candidates on the party lists.

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Annex A List of Interviewees

Surname	Name	Council	Province	Sex		Ruling party	Non-ruling party
Brill	A	Livingstone City Council	Southern		Male		UDA
Bwalya	Lwisa	Luanshya Municipal Council	Copperbelt	Female			PF
Bwalya	Agness	Kalulushi Municipal Council	Copperbelt	Female		MMD	
Chalele	Paul	Lusaka City Council	Lusaka		Male		PF
Chanda	John	Ndola City Council	Copperbelt		Male		PF
Chanda	Febby	Luanshya Municipal Council	Copperbelt	Female		MMD	
Chansa	Derick	Lusaka City Council	Lusaka		Male		PF
Chapi	Alfred	Ndola City Council	Copperbelt		Male		PF
Chidakwa	F	Livingstone City Council	Southern		Male		UDA
Chikola	Loveness	Kalomo District Council	Southern	Female			UDA
Chikungulu	Grace	Zambezi District Council	North Western	Female		MMD	
Chipango	K.K	Livingstone City Council	Southern		Male	MMD	
Chitankwa	Elizabeth	Kapiri- Mposhi District Council	Central	Female		MMD	
Chulabantu	Lazarus	Lusaka City Council	Lusaka		Male		UPND
Chuulu	Janet	Kabwe Municipal Council	Central	Female			PF
Daka	Margaret	Kitwe City Council	Copperbelt	Female		MMD	
Didian	Mayaya	Kitwe City Council	Copperbelt		Male		PF
Hambale	Chewe Grace	Chingola Municipal Council	Copperbelt	Female		MMD	
Hanzoma	Faustina	Kalomo District Council	Southern	Female			UPND
Jambo	J	Livingstone City Council	Southern		Male		UPND
Jere	M	Livingstone City Council	Southern		Male	MMD	
Kabinga	Mumena Charles	Chongwe District Council	Lusaka		Male	MMD	
Kabwe	Christine	Kapiri- Mposhi District Council	Central	Female		MMD	
Kabwela	Sandra	Ndola City Council	Copperbelt	Female			Independent
Kaile	Saviour	Mazabuka Municipal Council	Southern	Female			UPND
Kalonga		Chongwe District Council	Lusaka	Female		MMD	
Kapundwa	Joyce	Chililabombwe Municipal Council	Copperbelt	Female			PF
Kasaka	Judith	Kalulushi Municipal Council	Copperbelt	Female			PF
Kasonde	Maleta	Kitwe City Council	Copperbelt	Female			PF
Kayela	Rosemary	Mufulira District Council	Copperbelt	Female			PF
Kephas	Teo	Ndola City Council	Copperbelt		Male	MMD	
Luchendo	Pauline	Kalulushi Municipal Council	Copperbelt	Female			PF
Luhana	Nenia	Chipata Municipal Council	Eastern	Female		MMD	
Maambo	Monica	Livingstone City Council	Southern	Female		MMD	
Makai	Mary	Mongu Municipal Council	Western	Female		MMD	
Mpepo	Lydia	Chililabombwe Municipal Council	Copperbelt	Female			PF
Mufaya		Mazabuka Municipal Council	Southern	Female			PF
Mukamba	Godfrey	Ndola City Council	Copperbelt		Male		PF
Mukosho	J	Livingstone City Council	Southern		Male	MMD	

Surname	Name	Council	Province	Sex		Ruling party	Non-ruling party
Mumbwe	Dawn	Mongu Municipal Council	Western	Female			UPND
Musesa	David	Livingstone City Council	Southern		Male	MMD	
Mushili	Brenda	Masaiti District Council	Copperbelt	Female			PF
Musonda	Pamela	Ndola City Council	Copperbelt	Female		MMD	
Mutale	Catherine	Mufulira District Council	Copperbelt	Female			PF
Mutale	Hildah	Mufulira District Council	Copperbelt	Female			PF
Mwamba	Clemencia	Kalulushi Municipal Council	Copperbelt	Female		MMD	
Mwamba	Martha	Mufulira District Council	Copperbelt	Female			PF
Mwange	Nathaniel	Ndola City Council	Copperbelt		Male	MMD	
Mwape	Penny	Luanshya Municipal Council	Copperbelt	Female			PF
Mweetwa	Pie	Kitwe City Council	Copperbelt		Male		PF
Mwenda	Christabelle	Kabwe Municipal Council	Central	Female		MMD	
Mwenya	Slyvia	Chililabombwe Municipal Council	Copperbelt	Female			PF
Mwiinga	Shadreck	Mazabuka Municipal Council	Southern		Male		UPND
Mwinda	Joram	Livingstone City Council	Southern		Male	MMD	
Mwitumwa		Mongu Municipal Council	Western	Female		MMD	
Nalupumbwe	Pear	Kalulushi Municipal Council	Copperbelt	Female			PF
Namukonda	Jean	Chililabombwe Municipal Council	Copperbelt	Female			PF
Ng'andu	Trudy	Chililabombwe Municipal Council	Copperbelt	Female		MMD	
Nguni	A	Livingstone City Council	Southern		Male	MMD	
Nyambe	E	Livingstone City Council	Southern	Female			UPND
Nyeleti	Vivian	Kitwe City Council	Copperbelt	Female			PF
Phiri	Grace	Chongwe District Council	Lusaka	Female			
Phiri	Mary	Lusaka City Council	Lusaka	Female			PF
Ponga	Wilson	Chililabombwe Municipal Council	Copperbelt		Male		PF
Sakala	Joyce	Chongwe District Council	Lusaka	Female		MMD	
Samboko	Rose	Chipata Municipal Council	Eastern	Female		MMD	
Shafik	G.S	Livingstone City Council	Southern	Female		MMD	
Shambulo	Julie	Luanshya Municipal Council	Copperbelt	Female			PF
Sianzyunge	M.M	Livingstone City Council	Southern	Female		MMD	
Sindala	Mirriam	Kapiri- Mposhi District Council	Central	Female		MMD	
Singokosa	Jean	Kapiri- Mposhi District Council	Central	Female		MMD	
Sinyangwe	Simon	Lusaka City Council	Lusaka		Male		PF
Soper	Florence	Kitwe City Council	Copperbelt	Female		MMD	
Soper	Chipili	Kitwe City Council	Copperbelt		Male	MMD	
Tasila	Hara	Kabwe Municipal Council	Central	Female			PF
Tembo	Phoeby	Chililabombwe Municipal Council	Copperbelt	Female		MMD	
Tischer	Anne	Livingstone City Council	Southern	Female			Independent
Tonga	Genevieve	Chipata Municipal Council	Eastern	Female			UDA
Walubita	Musiwa	Mongu Municipal Council	Western	Female		MMD	
Zulu		Chongwe District Council	Lusaka		Male	MMD	
Zulu	Catherine Tembo	Chingola Municipal Council	Copperbelt	Female		MMD	

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"This study is not just a challenge to Southern African countries to deliver on their promises to women. It is a challenge to all of us in the international community, not just to talk the talk of enhancing gender equality through decentralisation; but to begin walking the walk. This indeed is the call of history. There can be no turning back".

Excerpt from Foreword of At the Coalface, Southern Africa, by Winnie Byanyima



gender links

WLSA

Danida