

At the Coalface

Gender and Local Government in Zimbabwe

Edited by Susan Tolmay and Colleen Lowe Morna

Gender links 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 in accordance with the provisions of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Gender and Development.

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Back Photo: Women In Local Goverment Forum (WILGF) meeting, by Gender Links
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This is a report on the research conducted in Zimbabwe between November 2009 and April 2010, in which 101 councillors in 19 localities participated in interviews and 315 women and men in focus group meetings. Their views and voices are the heart of this work.

GL would like to thank Francis Duri and Roger Mozhenty, secretary generals of the Urban Councils Association of Zimbabwe (UCAZ) and the Association of Rural District Councils in Zimbabwe (ARDCZ) for their assistance in facilitating the research, as well as all of the council personnel who assisted in setting up meetings with councillors and focus groups with community members. We would also like to thank our NGO partners, the Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre Network (ZWRCN) and the Women In Political Support Unit (WIPSU) for their invaluable advice.

The research was conducted by Kwanele Muriel Jirira, Priscilla Maposa, Susan Tolmay and Sikhonzile Ndlovu. Priscilla Maposa conducted a desktop review and coordinated the research in Zimbabwe. GL Gender and Governance manager (at the time) Susan Tolmay coordinated and managed the research project and carried out the case studies with the assistance of the Zimbabwe 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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List of acronyms

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ARDCZ	Association of Rural District Councils in Zimbabwe
AU	African Union
BPFA	Beijing Platform for Africa
CBO	Community based organisation
CEDAW	Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CEO	Chief executive officer
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
FBO	Faith based organisation
FPTP	First-past-the-post
GFP	Gender focal point
GL	Gender Links
GMS	Gender management system
GU	Gender unit
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
IULA	International Union for Local Authorities
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
NA	National Assembly
NEPAD	New Partnership for African Development
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OVC	Orphans and vulnerable children
RDDC	Rural district development committee
PR	Proportional representation
RDC	Rural District Council
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SARDC	Southern Africa Research and Documentation Centre
SHP	Sexual harassment policy
UCAZ	Urban Councils Association of Zimbabwe
UN	United Nations
VIDCO	Village Development Committee
WILGF	Women in Local Government Forum
WLSA	Women and Law in Southern Africa Trust
WiPSU	Women in Politics Support Unit
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union - Patriotic Front
ZEC	Zimbabwe Electoral Commission
ZESA	Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority
ZILGA	Zimbabwe Local Government Association

Foreword


Fanny Chirisa

In the Southern African region Zimbabwe stands out as one of the few countries that has both signed and ratified the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. Among the 28 targets to be achieved by 2015, the Protocol calls for equal representation and participation of women in all areas of decision-making. Yet in Zimbabwe these numbers have been declining. At national level, women's participation in parliament has gone down from 20.8% in 2005 to 17.9% in 2010. At local government level women make up 18.8% of all councillors, 19% in rural districts and 17% in urban councils.

With only one more election before the 2015 deadline, Zimbabwe still has a long way to go to achieve the parity target. Some of the key challenges for women are an unfriendly electoral system; the lack of affirmative action measures; lack of resources; socialisation, culture and patriarchy which are rooted in unequal power relations between women and men. The political violence that has accompanied recent elections coupled with economic challenges further deter women's political participation.

With elections slated for 2011, a clear policy, strategising and hard work is needed to radically increase women's representation. This will require a concerted effort from all stakeholders including political party leadership, government and civil society. Experience has shown that the time to start doing the work is not a few months before the elections but rather now, when a Constitutional review is under way and there is still scope for meaningful change.

Furthermore, decisions are made in political parties on who participates in the elections and in which constituency/ward. It is therefore strategic and important to lobby these political parties to make sure women are in strategic constituencies/wards where they are likely to win and lobbying has to start now.

An extension to the original study, 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 "At the Coalface: Gender and Local Government" 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 First-Past-the-Post (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 Zimbabwe, which has a similar electoral system. With 58% 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 Zimbabwe bring different perspectives and interests to local governance. They are concerned about every day issues - education, health, marginalised groups, utilities and housing, markets, gender based violence and community and youth development. They are also seen as hard working; accessible; close to the people and to local issues. Many of the women and men interviewed for this research also spoke about how having women in local government has had a positive impact on gender relations in communities and that women are starting to reap the benefits of the increased representation of women in public office.

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. The National Gender Policy focuses on mainstreaming gender at the national level. The Zimbabwe Local Government Association (ZILGA) has a draft gender policy for local government that we hope will soon be adopted.

Experience in other SADC countries has shown that where a concerted effort is made to develop strategies and action plans at the local level - the coalface of service delivery and development - there is enormous potential to start changing the lives of ordinary women. It will be important for all local government stakeholders and partners to ensure that this research becomes a mobilising tool before the next elections. At the Gender Justice and Local Government Summit in March 2010 Harare Councillor Phumulani Musagwiza coined this slogan: *2015: Yes we can! Yes we can… The time is now!*

Now indeed is the time for the women of Zimbabwe to claim their rightful place at the decision-making table. Let us grab this opportunity with both hands!

Fanny Chirisa
Executive Director, Women in Politics Support Unit (WIPSU), lead organisation for the Southern African Gender Protocol Alliance Gender and Governance cluster.

Overview: 50/50 by 2015



Women Councillors at the Women Chairpersons Empowerment workshop in Kadoma in 2010. *Photo: Priscilla Maposa*

When the 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% 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 Zimbabwe research in the context of the 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.

Zimbabwe in the regional context

Table one shows that on average, SADC now has 24% women in both the lower and upper houses of Parliament; 5% higher than the global average of 19.1% as shown in table one. This is second only to the Nordic countries but still far short of their 41.6% average and still below the 30% let alone parity target.

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

Region	Lower house	Upper house	Both houses
Nordic countries	41.6 %		41.6%
SADC	**24.6%**	**19.8%**	**24 %**
Americas	22.7%	21.6%	22.7%
Europe including Nordic countries	21.9%	19.4%	21.4%
Europe excluding Nordic countries	20.1%	19.4%	19.9%
Sub-Saharan Africa (including SADC)	19.1%	20.5%	19.2%
Asia	18.4%	17.1%	18.3%
Pacific	12.6%	15.4%	12.7%
Arab States	11.1%	8.1%	10.5%
Global average	**19.3%**	**18.2%**	**19.1%**

Source: IPU and GL, 2 November 2010.



Chimanimani council offices. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

Table two illustrates the huge variations in this average from 42.7% in South Africa to 7.7% in the DRC. The table also shows that with a regional average of 23.9% women at the local government level the variations are even greater, ranging from 58% in Lesotho to 6% in Madagascar.

Table two: Gender and politics in Southern Africa

Country	% Women lower house	% Women upper house	% Women both houses	% Women cabinet	% Women local government
Angola	38.6%		**38.6%**	25.7%	Unknown
Botswana	7.9%		7.9%	21.1%	19.3%
DRC	8.4%	4.6%	7.7%	14.3%	Unknown
Lesotho	24.2%	18.2%	22.9%	31.6%	58.0%
Madagascar	8.7%	17.9%	10.3%	15.4%	6.0%
Malawi	20.8%		20.8%	22.7%	No elected officials
Mauritius	18.8%		18.8%	12.0%	6.4%
Mozambiqe	39.2%		**39.2%**	32.1%	35.6%
Namibia	26.9%	26.9%	26.9%	18.2%	41.8%
Seychelles	23.5%		23.5%	16.7%	No elected officials
South Africa	44.5%	29.6%	**42.7%**	41.2%	39.7%
Swaziland	13.6%	40.0%	21.9%	23.5%	17.9%
Tanzania	30.7%		**30.7%**	20.0%	34.2%
Zambia	14.0%		14.0%	13.0%	6.6%
Zimbabwe	15.0%	24.2%	17.9%	17.1%	18.8%
Regional average	**24.6%**	**19.8%**	**24.0%**	**22.1%**	23.9%

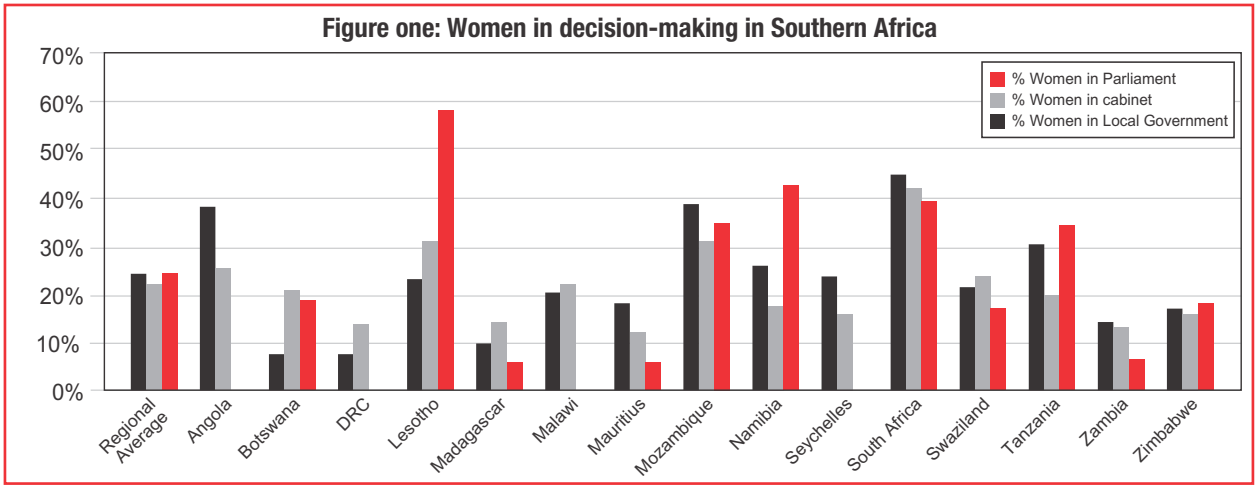
Source: IPU and GL, November 2010.

As illustrated graphically in figure one, at the time of writing this report, at national level only four countries (Angola, Mozambique, South Africa and Tanzania) have reached or surpassed the original 30% target. And only five countries (Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania and Mozambique) had achieved this target at the local level.

With 17.9% women in parliament, Zimbabwe is rated 79 (out of 136) globally. Regionally Zimbabwe rates tenth (out of 15) in terms of women's representation in parliament, being 6.1% lower than the regional average of 24%. At the local government level Zimbabwe is rated seventh in the SADC region with 18.8% women in both urban and rural councils, 5.1% below the regional average of 23.9%.



Lettinah Nyoni and Danisa Mujere at empowerment workshop.
Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna



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 close to the people. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

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 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).

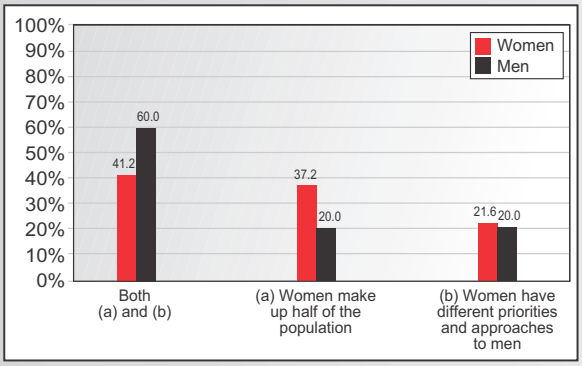
Women and men perform different tasks and functions. Because of the socially constructed roles that are attributed to women they most often perform the reproductive activities, which include all the domestic responsibilities as well as child rearing and which are mostly based in the private sphere. As such they experience firsthand 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 Zimbabwe, local government respondents took the view that both arguments are relevant, but seemed less categoric in their response than in the first study.

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 respondents (85%) agreed with the statement with marginally more women (86.4%) than men (83.3%) agreeing that gender and democracy are linked.

Asked why, a large number of respondents (49%) cited the reasons as both because women make up half of the population as well as because women have different priorities and approaches to men. More men (60%) compared to women (41.2%) cited this as the reason, which would be considered to be the most appropriate as it takes into account both the equity and efficacy arguments.

Some 30.2% of the respondents answered "because (women) make up half of the population," with more women (37.3%) agreeing with this statement than men (20%). Marginally more women (21.6%) that men (20%) believed that the primary reason is that women have different perspectives.

These findings are different from the first *At the Coalface* study which found that overall 63% of the councillors interviewed agreed with both statements, with 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 had the lowest level of women's representation.

The findings could be explained by the fact that councillors in countries with high levels of women in decision-making have a more developed sense of the importance of women's representation in local government. Zimbabwe still has a relatively low number of women councillors (18.8%).

In the focus groups, women and men agreed that there is a link between gender equality and democracy, but that this has not yet been realised. Some comments include:

- One cannot say we have democracy when there is no gender equality in the local government system or the country as a whole" - Bindura women.
- Hindering women is a clear sign that true democracy does not prevail - Umguza men.



Chimanimani women's focus group. *Photo: Susan Tolmay*

- As long as women are still lagging behind we cannot talk of democracy in Zimbabwe - Zvishavane women.
- We need to have 50/50 representation, then we know we are enjoying the fruits of democracy - Chimanimani women.

There were some who saw the qualitative contribution women make in local decision-making. These centred mostly on the fact that women are more caring and nurturing and are therefore more concerned about vulnerable groups of people like children, the elderly and people affected by HIV and AIDS. Some comments include:

- Women bring different aspects and sensibilities which should not be suppressed in a democratic society - Bulawayo women and men.
- Issues should be articulated and resolved with women's inputs - Bulawayo women.

Public/ private space contradictions

Respondents highlighted contradictions between democracy and gender equality in public and private spaces. Focus groups participants in Bulawayo (men and women) indicated that gender equality and democracy are good developments, but with the proviso that this is really only for public spaces and that women should still "know their place" in the home. The men went on to say that it is the men who should be making all of the decisions for their families: "the man is the head of the home and as such he should help his family make informed decisions since he knows what is best for them".

The men in the Kwe Kwe focus groups felt that women misuse their positions and fail to distinguish between work and home. Men in Makoni concurred saying that "women should differentiate between work and marriage." Even in Tongogara where there is equal representation of women and men in the councils the focus group felt that women "should know their roles once they are in the house and should be able to differentiate between work and home roles and responsibilities."

Rationale for the research

GL's 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 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.

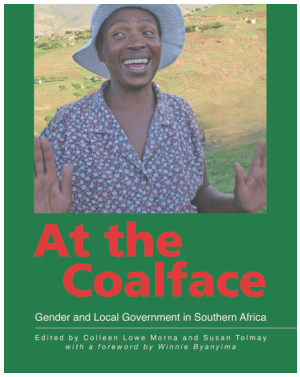
The discrepancy suggests that rather than being a reflection of commitment to women's participation at local level, the measures taken in the three countries are a case of male decision-makers giving way at local level while resisting such measures in the more coveted national arena.

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 10% of the total. In these countries (such as Madagascar, Mauritius and Zambia) 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%, 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, followed by roll out of gender action plans in all districts. With funding from DANIDA and DFID, 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 Zimbabwe 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 Zimbabwe, including the electoral system and how local government works in the country.



What women bring to local politics: Council timber project in Chimanimani employs women. *Photo: Susan Tolmay*

Chapter three concerns women's ability to access local government. While there are no legal impediments to women accessing local government in Zimbabwe 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 effective 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 in-depth interviews conducted with women and men councillors, as well as the focus group discussions. It also looks at where women are in the decision-making structures in councils such as being members and chairpersons on committees. 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 goes on to the role that women's participation in local politics plays in changing attitudes to towards women in society in general. It illustrates some views from male councillors and community members and how their 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 everyday 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.

CONCEPTS, CONTEXT AND METHODOLOGY

2

AT THE COALFACE



GL Zimbabwe local government facilitator Priscilla Maposa speaks to community members about the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development.
Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna

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 in Local Government in Southern African builds on, and is informed by the conceptual framework first put forward by Thenjiwe Mtintso (1999:33-52) A Board Member of GL 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.



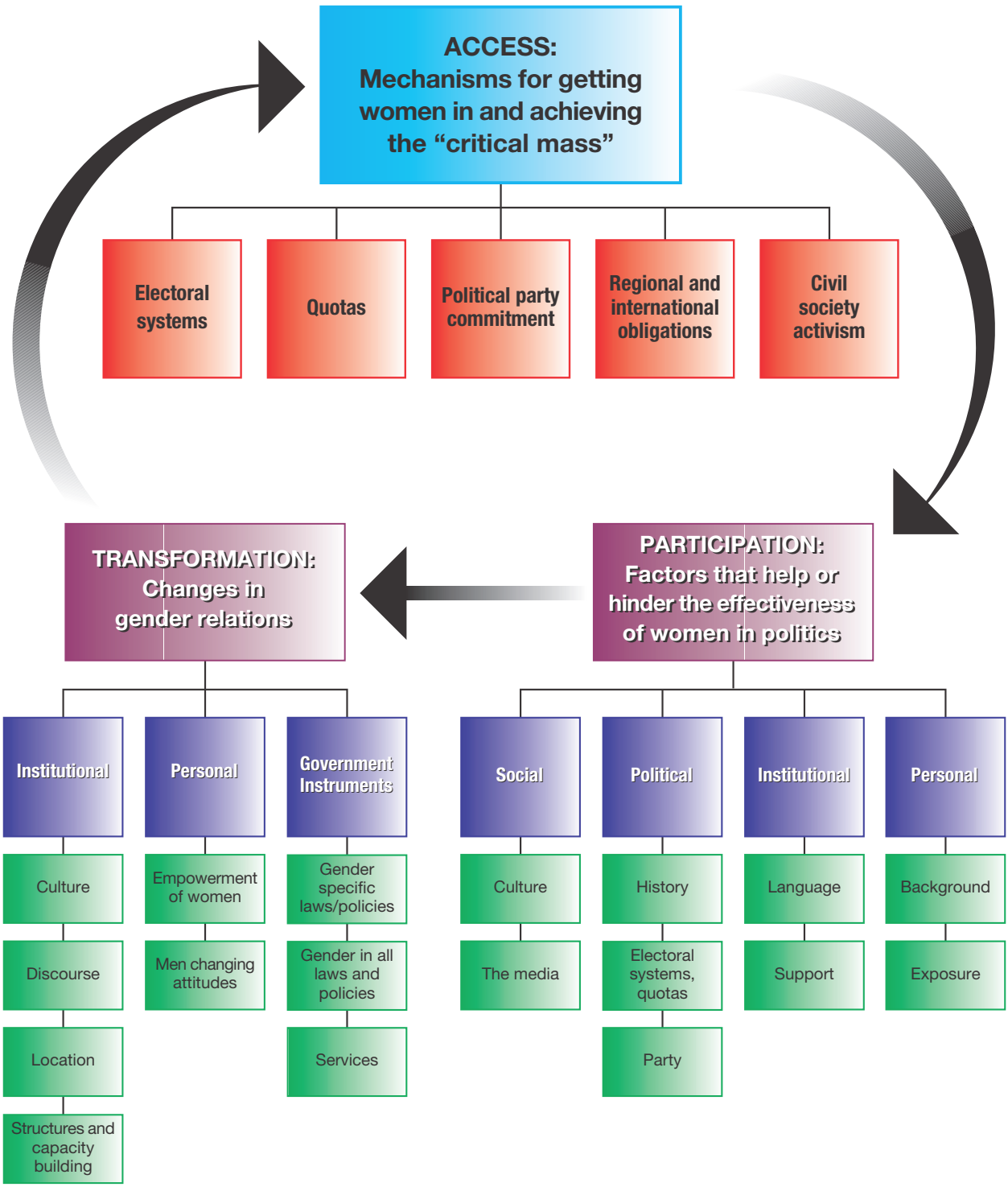
Gweru municipal offices. *Photo: Susan Tolmay*

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.

Figure two: Conceptual framework



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%?

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 %, 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 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.

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.

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.

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.



Empowerment through participation - Kadoma workshop.
Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna

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 infrastructure 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



The Republic of Zimbabwe is situated in the southern part of Africa between Limpopo and Zambezi rivers. Zimbabwe borders with Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa and Zambia and it covers an area of 390,757 km^2. The capital and the largest city of the Republic of Zimbabwe is Harare. Zimbabweans recognise English as the official language; although Shona and isiNdebele are spoken by the majority of population.

According to the Central Statistics Office, Zimbabwe has a population of approximately 13,400,000 people, of whom 52% are women. Approximately 75% of the population live in rural areas; 60-75 percent of these are women. The life expectancy for women is 40.2% compared to 41.1% for men. Zimbabwe has got the second highest literacy rate in the SADC region at 86%; however women still constitute 60% of the illiterate adult population.

Zimbabwe was a British colony until 1965 when the white-minority government led by Ian Smith made a Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) from the United Kingdom. Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) and Joshua Nkomo's Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) fought a protracted war that finally led to Zimbabwe's political independence in 1980.

Zimbabwe has experienced major socio-economic and political unrest over the last decade: “The country has experienced a prolonged humanitarian crisis categorised by economic decline, food insecurity, increased chronic poverty and displacements” (Mitullah, 2009:75). Hyperinflation, large scale retrenchments, unemployment and shortages of foreign currency have resulted in the number of poor households increasing dramatically. Many people, especially women have been pushed into the informal or “parallel” economy. According to Mitullah (2009:75) 90% of the population are structurally unemployed with many of them earning a living through activities such as cross-border trading, illegal mining and currency trading.

The Electoral system

The Republic of Zimbabwe is a semi-presidential system with a parliamentary government. Zimbabwe uses the constituency or ‘First Past the Post' (FPTP) electoral system. Under this system it is the candidate with the highest number of votes that wins, regardless of the number of votes garnered. This “winner takes all' system is extremely competitive and means that a candidate

can win with less than 50% of the vote. The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) is the coordinating body of election procedures in Zimbabwe.

Since independence, ZANU-PF has been the dominant party in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe's last presidential and parliamentary elections took place in 2008 with three major presidential candidates: Robert Mugabe of the Zimbabwe African National Union - Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF); Morgan Tsvangirai of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) and Simba Makoni, an independent candidate. Following the heavily contested election results, the two main parties, and a breakaway MDC M (Mutambara) party agreed to a power-sharing agreement with Mugabe retaining the Presidential position while Morgan Tsvangirai became Prime Minister. There has never been a female presidential candidate. An amendment to the Constitution in 2005 led to the reinstatement of the Senate.

Well documented evidence shows that the First-Past-the-Post system is not friendly to women candidates and that they have a better chance of getting elected under the Proportional Representation (PR) system and more especially the closed list system. The reason for this is that voters then focus on the political party and its policies and programmes rather than on the individual candidate. This is advantageous for women as there are still deeply entrenched patriarchal attitudes and views that women should not participate in politics, and if given a choice between a female or male candidate voters are more likely to vote for the man.

The Zimbabwean constitution and electoral laws have no provision for quotas to advance representation of women in publicly elected bodies. Advocacy efforts by women parliamentarians and the Women in Politics Support Unit (WiPSU) for constitutional and electoral reforms such as the introduction of the proportional representation system and legally enforced quotas have been in vain.

Representation of women

Zimbabwe is signatory to a number of regional and international gender instruments which advocate for the 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, signed in August 2008. This requires that member states endeavour to reach the target of 50% women in all decision-making positions in both the public and private sectors by 2015. 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: Women in politics in Zimbabwe

	2000			2005			2010		
Level of decision-making	Total	Women	% women	Total	Women	% women	Total	Women	% women
National Assembly	150	14	9.3%	150	24	16.0%	214	32	15.0%
Senate	-	-	-	66	21	31.8%	99	24	24.2%
Combined parliament	150	14	9.3%	216	45	20.8%	313	56	17.9%
Cabinet	-	-		31	4	12.9%	41	7	17.1%
Local Authority	-	-		2500	355	14.2%	1989	373	18.8%

Source: IPU, GL, Beyond Inequalities 2005.

Table three shows that Zimbabwe 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. The table shows some progression since 2000 in cabinet representation (from 12.9% in 2005 to 17.1% in 2010) and local government (from 14.2% in 2005 to 18.8% in 2010). But in both the national assembly and senate there has been regression, with the combined result that women's representation at the national level has declined from 20.8% in 2005 to 17.9% in 2010.

Zimbabwe has a National Gender Policy as well as a National Gender Policy Implementation Strategy and work plan which sets out priorities for gender mainstreaming and empowerment for the period 2008 - 2012. One of the objectives under the goal of mainstreaming gender and women's empowerment into policies, strategies, programmes and processes in Zimbabwe is to track the progress made on the participation of women in decision-making and leadership positions.

Local government in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe has two levels of government, central and local government. The government of Zimbabwe established local government structures immediately after gaining independence in 1980. Local government consists of the provincial councils, local authorities, ward development committees, including ward assemblies and village development committees, including village assemblies.



Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna

The local authorities are housed under the Ministry of Local Government. Its policy is to recognise local democracy and decentralisation of powers and responsibilities from central government to lower tier structures. The local government election in Zimbabwe is supported by the 1980 Constitution, Electoral Act, Zimbabwe Electoral Commission Act and Referendums Act. The local government elections are based on the single member constituency system.

Administratively, Zimbabwe is divided into ten provinces, which are headed by Governors appointed by the President, while provincial governments are run by Provincial administrators appointed by the Public Service Commission. Local government is defined in the Councillors Induction handbook (2009:5) as a lower level of public administration that uses delegated powers and functions to manage local affairs and provide services through council, a body of elected/ appointed representatives at local level.

Devolution of responsibility

Local government in Zimbabwe operates on a system of delegated power. The Councillors Induction handbook (2009:6) defines delegation as "the giving of one's rights and powers to another for a period of time." Local authorities are expected to use their delegated powers within a given set of rules. If local authorities misuse their powers they can be taken away.

The Minister of Local Government is not the only Minister who delegates powers and functions to local authorities. Local authorities (urban and rural) carry out functions on behalf of various Ministries including those responsible for health, education, environment, roads and water. Standards are set by the responsible Ministers and activities are monitored to ensure that they are effectively executed by councils. It is the responsibility of the Ministers to oversee councils and to provide advice and assistance and in some cases they may provide funds as well.

Local government organisational structure

Figure three: Local government organisational structure

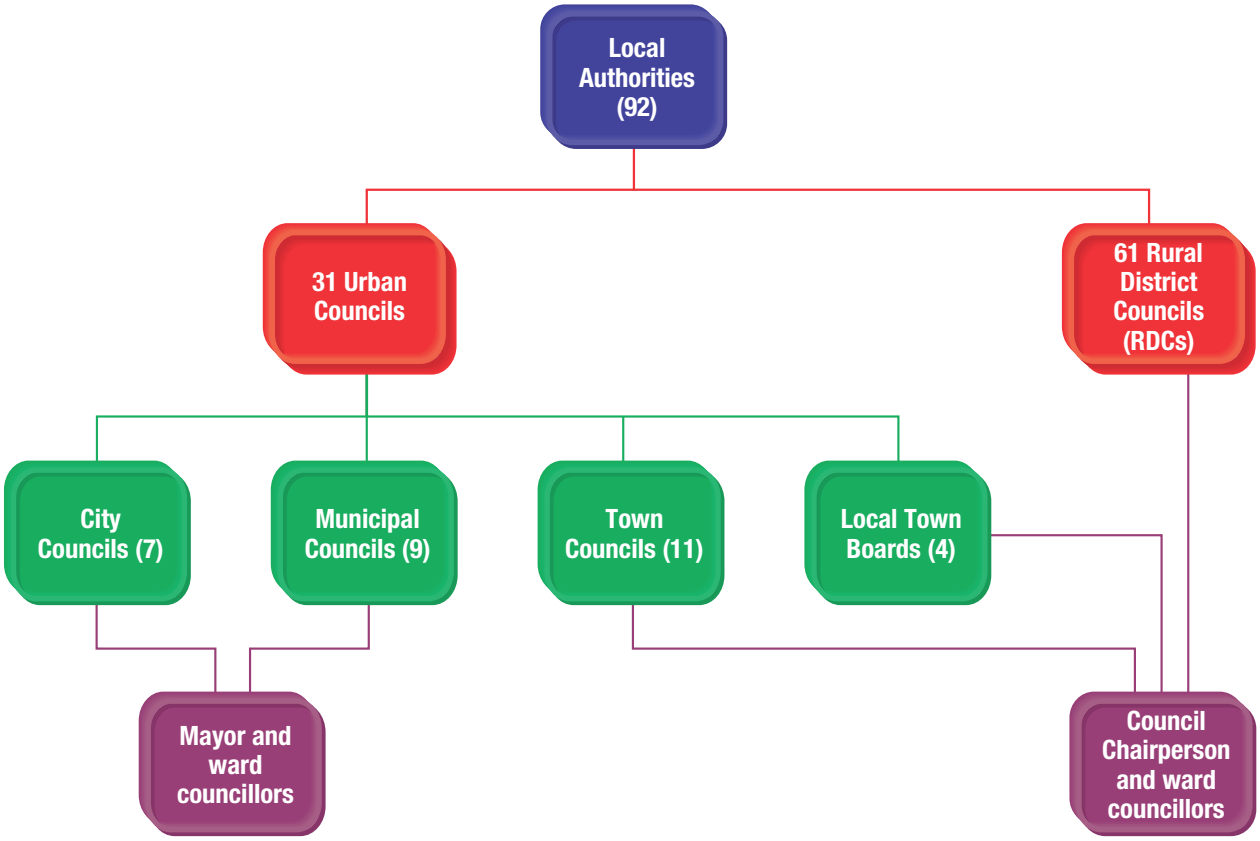


Figure three illustrates that there are two types of local authorities in Zimbabwe:

- Rural district councils, established in terms of the Rural District Councils Act and which cover non-urban areas. Currently there are 61 rural district councils and
- Urban councils, which are established in terms of the Urban Councils Act and which cover urban areas.

There are four types of urban councils; cities, municipalities, towns and local boards. The status of the urban council is dependent on a range of factors including size, population, infrastructure, services offered and social developments. Currently there are 31 urban councils in Zimbabwe.

Political structures

Both the Urban and Rural Councils are further divided into wards for purposes of electing councillors. Each ward is represented by a ward councillor who is elected through the First-past-the-post (FPTP) electoral system. Chairpersons for the Local Boards, Town Councils and Rural District Councils are selected from amongst councillors. Municipalities and City Councils also

elect their Mayors at the first meeting of the council. A mayor or chairperson keeps their office for the whole term of the council unless they resign from that position or from the council.

Town secretaries are employed by Local Boards and Town Councils as heads of administration while Municipal and City Councils are headed by Town Clerks. All RDCs employ Chief Executive Officers to assist with administration.

Functions

The councils exercise powers and functions which are delegated under national legislation which is the Rural District Councils Act Chapter 29:13 and the Urban Councils Act Chapter 29:15. Councils are accountable to the residents in the local area and to Central Government which exercises oversight on councils and gives policy direction through the Ministry of Local Government.

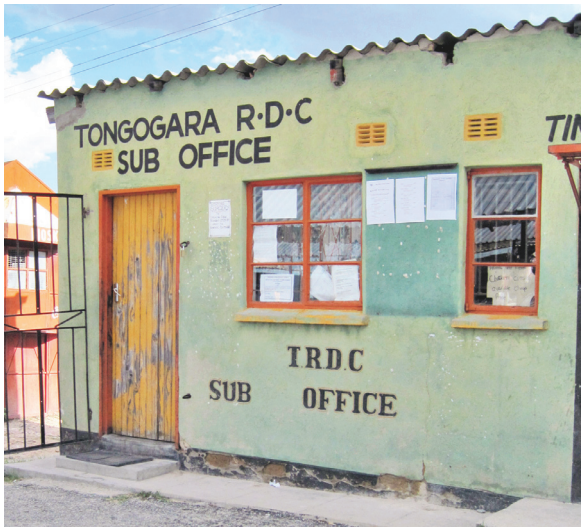


Photo: Susan Tolmay

Local authorities in the urban confines are responsible for provision of water (domestic, commercial and Industrial areas), hospitals and clinics, schools, housing and transport facilities, refuse disposal, pollution and recreation. The Rural District Councils provide social services such as health and education, construction of varies infrastructure such as sewage works, roads and dams as well as land allocation.

The Local Government Association

Formed in 1923, the Urban Councils Association of Zimbabwe (UCAZ) is one of the oldest local authority associations in Africa, representing the interests and needs of elected officials, town clerks, finance officers, public works directors, and other municipal officials.

The Association of Rural District Councils of Zimbabwe (ARDCZ) is a membership-based organisation which was inaugurated in 1993. It is a civic organisation that aims at strengthening Rural District Councils through promoting stakeholder participation, accountability and transparency, social, economic and political empowerment policies and programmes of the Rural District Councils.

The Zimbabwe Local Government Association (ZILGA) is the body which represents all local authorities in Zimbabwe and is a federation of the Association of Rural District Councils of Zimbabwe (ARDCZ) and the Urban Councils Association of Zimbabwe (UCAZ).

Women in local government in Zimbabwe

Table four: Women in local government in Zimbabwe

	Women	Men	Total	% women	% men
Urban councils	66	327	393	16.8%	83.2%
Rural councils	307	1289	1596	19.2%	80.8%
Local councils combined	**373**	**1616**	**1989**	**18.8%**	**81.2%**

The last local government elections took place concurrently with the national elections in 2008. Currently there are 1989 local councillors in Zimbabwe. Of these 373 (18.8%) are women. Table four shows that there are more women in rural councils (19.2%) compared to urban councils (16.8%).

Both UCAZ and ARDCZ have undertaken various programmes to increase women's participation in local government politics and decision making over the past decade, through research projects, workshops and initiatives carried out separately by the associations. In particular, ARDCZ adopted a Sectoral Gender Policy to guide the process whilst UCAZ adopted the IULA Worldwide Declaration on Women in Local Government and commissioned a gender audit which set out a gender mainstreaming programme.

The ZILGA Gender Policy seeks to take the process forward by:

- Crystallising all past efforts on gender mainstreaming in local government.
- Ensuring a more structured, systematic and lasting way of engendering local government structures. (4th draft ZILGA Gender Policy, 2010).

The ZILGA Gender Policy aims to promote gender equality and equity by increasing the participation of women in leadership positions and access to resources. According to the policy this will be achieved by "developing gender sensitivity amongst all councils, councillors and staff. Women's equal participation in decision making is not only a demand for justice and democracy, but is a necessary condition for women's needs and priorities to be reflected in planning and service delivery by local authorities. The Policy will assist ZILGA and all councils to reorient some traditions and the stereotyping of women which contrive to reinforce inequality, exclusion, gender neutral policies which fail to address practical gender needs."

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 Zimbabwe. 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).

Zimbabwe has 92 local councils in total (31 urban councils and 61 rural district councils) with a total of 1989 councillors. For this study a sample of 5% was drawn, which resulted in 101 people to be interviewed, of which 59 were women and 42 from the 19 municipalities. Table five shows the sample of local authorities covered and number of councillors interviewed (101 councillors in 19 localities). **See Annex A** for the list of councillors interviewed.

Table five: Research sample

Total local authorities	Local authorities covered	% councils	Total councillors	Total councillors interviewed	% Councillors
92	19	21%	1989	101	5%

Table six: Sample councils

Province	City (7)	Municipal (9)	Town (11)	Local Board (4)	Rural District (61)
Bulawayo Province	Bulawayo				Umguza
Harare Province	Harare	Chitungwiza			
Manicaland					Chimanimani
					Makoni
Mashonaland Central Province		Bindura			
Mashonaland East Province				Ruwa	Mutoko
Mashonaland West	Kadoma		Norton		Zvimba
					Ngezi
Masvingo		Masvingo			
Matebeleland North					Bubi
Midlands	Gweru		Zvishavane		Tongogara
	Kwe Kwe				
Sub totals	**5**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**8**
Total councils included	**19**				

Table six gives a detailed breakdown of the provinces and municipalities visited. The research covered a broad geographical spread and a good balance between urban and rural. 19 of the 92 local authorities were reached in nine of the ten provinces in Zimbabwe.

Gender considerations

Table seven: Gender breakdown of research sample

Total councillors interviewed	Women interviewed	% women	Men interviewed	% men
101	59	58%	42	42%

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 seven summarises the gender breakdown of the interviews conducted for the research: 59 women (58%) and 42 men (42%).

Political parties

Researchers also had to strive to ensure the inclusion of all main political parties, and tried as far as was possible to get equal numbers of Zanu-PF and the MDC. However due to the fact that in some localities one party dominated over another it was not always possible to get an even split. As a result of the councillors interviewed 41% were from Zanu-PF while 59% were from MDC.

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.



Susan Tolmay conducting focus group discussion in Chitungwiza.
Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna

Interviews with council administration
Interviews we held with Council administration (CEO's/ Town Clerks and gender focal persons where councils have these.) See **Annex B** for the list of interviews.

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: Summary table of focus groups

Council	Focus group participants		
	Groups	Women	Men
Bulawayo	3	7	7
Umguza	2	8	4
Harare	2	7	3
Chitungwiza	2	13	11
Chimanimani	2	5	3
Makoni	2	8	10
Bindura	2	10	10
Ruwa	2	9	10
Mutoko	1	5	5
Kadoma	2	10	10
Norton	2	8	9
Zvimba	2	10	13
Ngezi	2	7	9
Masvingo	2	12	6
Bubi	2	10	10
Gweru	1	14	5
Kwe Kwe	2	7	6
Tongogara	2	12	9
Zvishavane	2	7	6
	37	**169**	**146**
TOTAL		**315**	
Percentage		**54%**	**46%**

Table eight shows that the researchers conducted 37 focus groups in 19 localities. A total of 315 people took part in the focus groups, 54% women and 46 % 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.

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

Councillors are busy people, juggling their full time work with council responsibilities. This sometimes made it difficult to secure appointments with them. Due to changes in scheduled council meetings and the fact that these do not always take place per the schedule researchers were not able to observe any council meetings as was done in the other research countries.

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.

ACCESSING LOCAL GOVERNMENT



Making a plan? Chitungiza councillors Wendy Chirisa and Clara Makwara. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

Clara Makwara, an MDC councillor from Chitungwiza Municipal Council speaks openly about how she got into local government: "It was very difficult, men are violent and some men lie too, but women speak the truth which is quite difficult in politics". Door to door campaigns are difficult and people who help on the campaign trail need to be

fed and paid which is not easy when you have limited resources. There is also the issue of lack of support from your own party members who ask you to stand down because they fear they will lose the seat because you are a woman. These are just some of the challenges for aspiring women candidates.

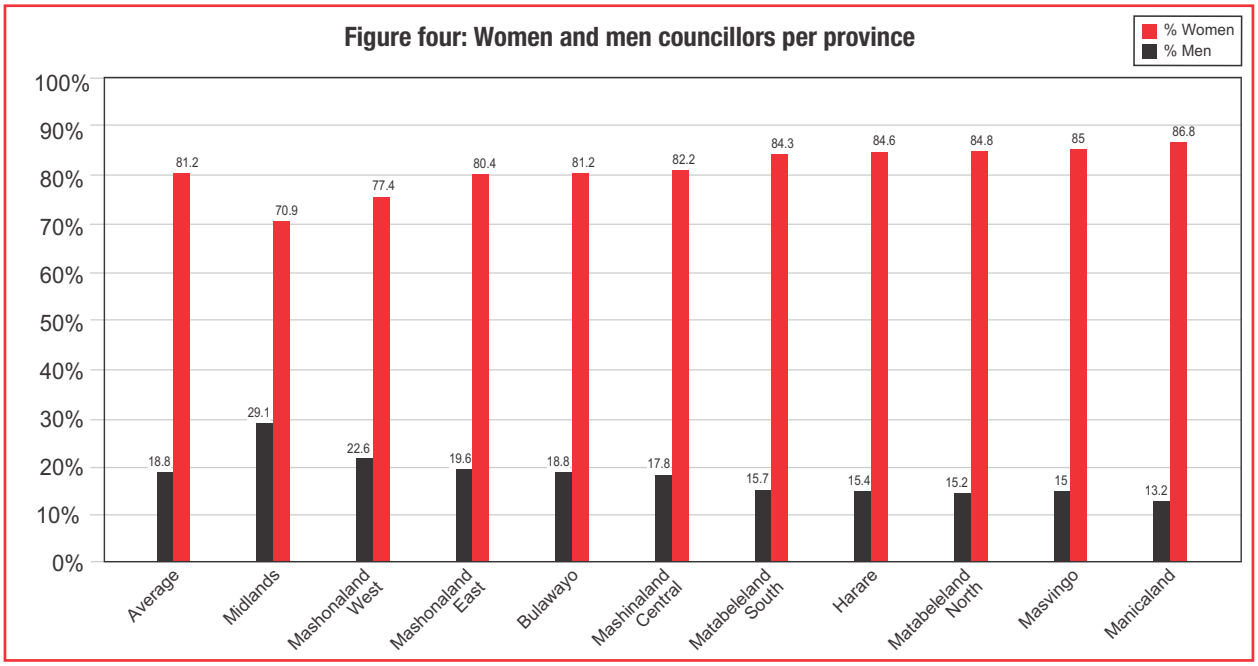
Violence or open threats and resistance from men, lack of access to financial resources, low levels of confidence and exposure and domestic responsibilities are just some of the factors inhibiting women from getting into political decision-making according to the councillors interviewed for this research. While local government may seem an obvious place for women because of its closeness to the community and the daily issues of concern to women 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.

There are no legal impediments to women accessing local government in Zimbabwe but the structures within which women have to function still remain largely patriarchal and in some instances are obstructive to their 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

There are only 18.8% women in local authorities in Zimbabwe (19% in rural district councils and 17% in urban councils). **Annex C** shows details of women and men per council. The research found that there are big disparities between councils, for example, four councils have no women councillors at all but 12 councils have achieved or surpassed the 30% mark. Two councils (Norton Town Council and Tongogara RDC) have achieved the parity target.

Figure four shows women's representation per province ranges from a very low 13.2% in the more remote and rural Manicaland Province to 29.1% in the more urbanised Midlands Province.



Barriers to access

Several factors conspire to keep women out of local government in Zimbabwe. These are ideological; social; and financial and political 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 is particularly robust at the local level and myths abound about women politicians, including that they are prostitutes and have loose morals. Women in Tongogara said “Men say negative comments to women who want to engage in politics, like they are prostitutes and so many women end up not wanting to campaign.” Patriarchy restricts women to the private sphere where they are expected to be wives, mothers and carers. According to Shaba, L (2010: 199) men in politics only have to contend with the opposition political parties, whereas women have the added disadvantage of having to first challenge their male colleagues before they take on the opposition parties.

Box one: Men in Chitungwiza speak about the challenges of patriarchy



Chitungiwza male focus group. *Photo: Priscilla Maposa*

According to the men in the Chitungwiza focus group, culture and tradition are major barriers to women accessing political decision-making. They said that violence hinders participation and as one participant put it “Men can stop their wives from participating”. Most of the men said that men will lose confidence in the institution of marriage if women become politicians (because the general view in Zimbabwe is that politics is for single, unmarried and 'loose' women'). Culture is a barrier to women's participation in local government because women are expected to be at home by 6pm (to perform their care work role and this thus affects women's freedom to move; it is also a power and control issue). The 'political campaigning environment' was pointed out as an inhibiting factor. One man said that the environment was 'not conducive for women though everyone is free to participate. In reality though, it is a different thing.”

Women “their own worst enemies”

One of the common arguments for women's participation in political decision-making is that they make up half of the population and therefore they should have the opportunity to participate equally in all areas of public life. This fact is also often used against women when asking the question why the representation of women is so low. In many of the focus groups men argued that “it is women who do not vote for each other, that's why there are not more women in decision-making”.

In most SADC countries women constitute the majority of voters. In Zimbabwe it is difficult to ascertain if women predominated as voters because of disputes over the voter's roll and the fact that none of the figures were disaggregated by sex. Pre- and post- election violence is also likely to have taken a toll. According to Shaba (2002:212), "Women are burdened with children and are generally not armed. As voters, therefore, they are easier to intimidate."

However, the issue of women "pulling each other down" is still seen as a major obstacle to women's access to 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." (GL, 2007:72)

Responses from the focus groups discussions reinforce this observation with many stating that one of the biggest obstacles for women is the lack of support that they get from their female counterparts. At worst it is women who spread negative to malicious rumours about their women leaders. Interestingly it was one of the male focus group participants from Bulawayo said that he believes that that this phenomenon is mainly due to socialisation which has resulted in women becoming 'comfortable' with being led by men, and that there is need to educate both women and men about the importance of women's participation and the benefits of bringing in fresh angles to local politics.

Interestingly in the only two councils where women are represented equally (Norton Town Council and Tongogara RDC) the issue of women not supporting one another did not come up in any of the focus groups. From this we might draw the conclusion that numbers do matter and that the more women get into local decision-making the more they will start to support each other and the stronger they will become.

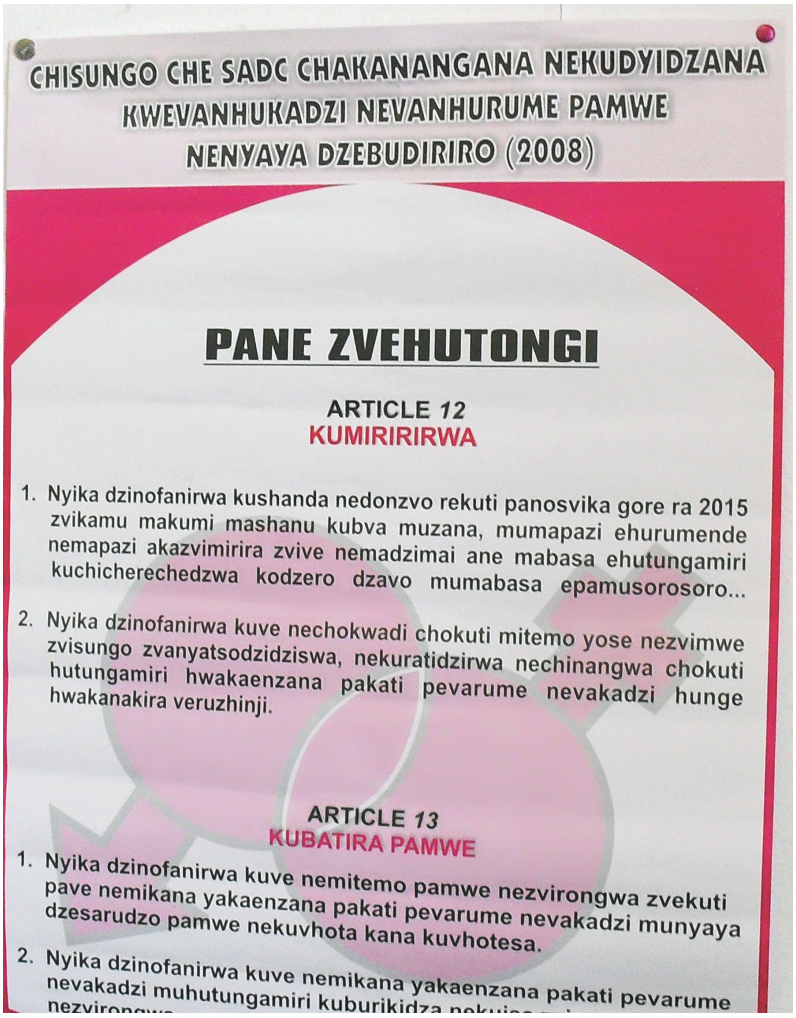


What is keeping the doors shut?. *Photo: Susan Tolmay*

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,



Poster on the SPGD in Harare City Council. *Photo: Priscilla Maposa*

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.

The legal framework for the elections is provided under the following:

- The Constitution of Zimbabwe
- The Electoral Act of 2004
- The regulations the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission Act of 2004
- The Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment Number 18 of 2007

Zimbabwe 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 by women.

Political parties and voluntary party quotas

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 some instances remain obstructive to women. Political parties in Zimbabwe are under no legal obligation to ensure gender equality or equal representation of women. Candidates are selected through a vigorous process under the FPTP system where they compete in primaries to determine which candidate will represent the party in a particular constituency. According to Shaba (2010:207), the primaries are so viscously contested that most women get eliminated by their parties at this initial stage and they are usually placed in the party's weak areas being denied access to stronghold areas.

Manifestos and Constitutions

Table nine: Integration of gender in party manifestos

Political Party	Quota	Women Specific Projects	Gender Mainstreamed in Manifestos
MDC M	None	None	Not provided
MDC T	Committed to 50% women in decision-making	• Creation of a just society where women's rights are at the core of a healthy and productive society • Support the role of women in agriculture • Enhance gender equality in education • Ensure gender equality in urban title holding • Establish a gender commission • Ratify all international instruments that advance the cause of women	In addition to the indicated projects, the manifesto has a section on Gender and Women Empowerment which focuses on mainstreaming gender so that women and men enjoy equal rights and opportunities in a just society.
ZANU/PF	Committed to 30% women in decision-making	• Programmes for general education of women • Promoting and sustaining the role of the women's league • Fostering the unity and harmony of all women's associates and organisations in Zimbabwe	Gender balance and equity incorporated in all economic and social spheres of the party and society

Table nine outlines commitments by the three main political parties to gender in their party manifestos. ZANU/PF has always had a 30% quota for women representation in the party leadership. According to the MDC T Deputy Chairperson of the Women's Assembly, Hon Evelyn Masaiti, the MDC T adopted a 50% quota for women's representation in the party leadership at their 2009 Conference (Shaba, 2010:207).

Table ten: Women candidates per political party

Political Party	House of Assembly			Senate		
	Total candidates	Women candidates	% women	Total candidates	Women candidates	% women
ZANU/PF	214	44	20.56%	59	27	45.76%
MDC-T	209	25	11.96%	60	18	30.00%
MDC-M	144	19	13.19%	34	6	17.65%
Makoni	51	8	15.69%	9	3	33.33%
TOTAL	**618**	**96**	**15.53%**	**162**	**54**	**33.33%**

Source: http://www.eisa.org.za/WEP/zim2008women1.htm

Unfortunately, however, the paper commitments to gender equality in party manifestos have not resulted in more women put forward as candidates by political parties. Table ten shows that the only level of participation where parties have achieved their 'quotas' is for positions in the Senate. But candidates for positions in the House of Assembly fall far short of the targets.

Unfortunately available candidate data for councillors was not disaggregated by political party. Overall, of the 3431 candidates, women comprised only 740 (21.5%) of the total, suggesting that political parties fell short of implementing their own party quotas.



Zimbabwe elections.
Photo courtesy: http://www.google.co.za/imgres?imgurl=http://2.bp.blogspot.com

Financial

Financial resources are a crucial factor in winning votes in a constituency system as campaigns are costly. In Zimbabwe political parties that garnered 15% of the votes in the previous election are entitled to apply for funding from the government. Funding from external organisations is prohibited in terms of the Political Parties Financing Act. Unfortunately there are no guidelines in this legislation as to how these funds should be administered and no provisions around promoting women's adequate access to these resources. “Women have to negotiate for the funding of their specific activities within their parties, and their allocation has always been minimal if not insignificant. This was cited as a major hindrance to their mobility and visibility during campaigns.” (Shaba, 2010:209).

Participants in most of the focus group discussions pointed to poverty and lack of financial resources as being barriers to women being able to campaign effectively. Women in Chitungwiza said: “Barriers include women's lack of financial resources to mount political /election campaigns which are very expensive to run, they need greater financial support if they are to effectively compete.” Women from the Masvingo added: “People don't want to vote for poor people, they want things and rich people can give them something, also no car means that you will not be noticed.” This implies that people see women as poor and who can therefore not give them what they want, while men are perceived as having access to the resources that they need.

Political unrest and violence

Throughout the research in Zimbabwe, in interviews with councillors and focus groups with community members, the issue of political violence arose as a barrier to women getting into local politics.

Shaba (2010:212) maintains that in the 2008 post election violence women were systematically raped to ensure their isolation from the communities in which they had been politically active. Holly Dzuda a MDC-T councillor in Gweru City Council told researchers that women drop out of election races because of the fear of being beaten and violated. She also knows of incidences where people have been abducted and some have never been seen again. She says that women feel that standing for elections is not worth the sacrifice they have to make. Cllr Nyemudzai Murukutira MDC-T from Norton also told researchers that opposition supporters destroyed her house and property making it unsafe for her to stay at home in the lead up to elections.

Many of the focus group participants concurred with this view, with both women and men citing the violent nature of Zimbabwean politics and the country's political instability as a deterrent to women standing for local office. Ironically it is the women councillors who are the ones who promote unity and harmony in communities, as one of the women from the Chitungwiza focus group explained: “During the June 2008 elections, women councillors went about telling residents not to participate in violent activities as this fuels more violence. Instead they were promoting peace in the community. Women councillors are a unifying force in times of conflict.”

Box two: Two women councillors light the torch for peace



Councillors Constance Bangani and Carolyn Munjoma. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

They come from two bickering political parties and they are the only two women in the Chimanimani council. But when Councillors Constance Bangani and Carolyn Munjoma go to workshops, they opt to share a room, because "we have a lot to catch up on."

In a country divided, the MDC and ZANU/PF councillors stand out as a beacon of hope that being in political opposition does not mean being enemies. As women, the two face similar challenges. And they have buried their differences in the interests of development in the picturesque eastern highlands of Zimbabwe that is pregnant with potential, yet still hurting from the scars of the last elections.

Unlike other councils that are either strongly MDC or strongly ZANU/PF, the 23 member Chimanimani council comprises 12 MDC- T and 11 ZANU/PF councillors. Four additional councillors are appointed. The only two women on the council come from opposing sides. And MDC-T Councillor Munjoma points with pain to her home, gutted during the 2008 elections.

"When other women see this, they are afraid to go into politics," she said in an interview from her shop, her main source of income. But she added: "Councillor Dhinda and I are the best of friends. We fight the same barriers. We try to show through working together that peace will benefit everyone."

Among others, the two women have lobbied for a school and at the time of writing had developed a proposal for a clinic submitted to World Vision and the Canadian embassy. They have also solicited donations of school books and pencils.

Munjoma, a single mother of five children, says she stays in politics because she can see change in her community and the nation. Since the peace agreement between ZANU/PF and the MDC, "we are no longer counting our money in billions. We have a stable currency. Children are back in school. If I plough, I can sell, I can live. We should not just be relying on donors. We should be empowered to uplift our community."

"We are seeing the benefits of working together," added Dhinda. "Nothing good can come out of fighting."

During the March 2010 Gender Justice and Local Government summit the two councillors made a special joint plea for women's to lead from the front in conflict resolution at the local level. The summit afforded them the opportunity to travel by air for the first time. Singing "I am leaving on a jet plane" the councillors told an evaluator how the experience had strengthened and empowered them. "No man can ever look down on us again," Dhinda said. "We have wings. We can fly."

Strategies for change

There is never a shortage of reasons why women cannot 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% representation of women in local government - Lesotho (58%), Mozambique (35.6%), South Africa (40%), Tanzania (34%) and Namibia (42%) - 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% 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% at local level. More relevant to the case of Zimbabwe is Lesotho which has a FPTP system and legislated quota at the local level.

Box three: 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% women in this sphere. The reason for this is that for the first local government elections in Lesotho in 2006 instituted a 30% 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.



Challenging quotas in Lesotho.
Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna

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.

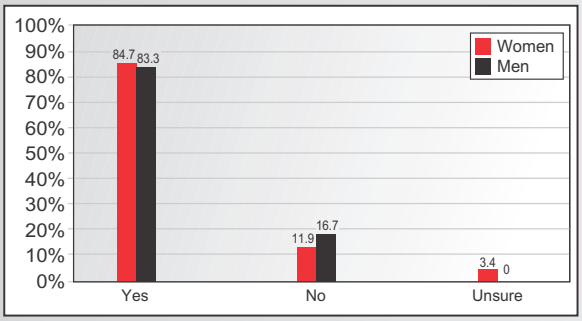
The Lesotho Court of Appeal dismissed the appeal to have the 30% reservation for women declared unconstitutional upholding the High Court ruling that affirmative action can be applied to redress structural imbalances. This landmark judgement is significant for the SADC region as it upholds the principle 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% 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% of the seats in the assembly through a PR mechanism for distributing these seats.

Quotas - the view from the ground

Interviews conducted with councillors showed that the majority are in favour of quotas as a way of increasing women's representation in local government. However, participants in the focus groups were not as supportive of the idea with many holding strong views against the use of this affirmative action measure.

What the councillors said about quotas



Overall 84% of the councillors interviewed (with a marginal difference between the views of women and men - 84.7% women and 83.3% men) said they believed in the use of quota to increase women's representation in decision-making at the local government level.

This is higher than the results from the first *At the Coalface* study conducted in Lesotho, Mauritius, Namibia and Lesotho where 81% of respondents agreed with the use of quotas. This figure is also higher than in the survey carried out in *Ringing up the Changes* in 2004 with 76% overall supporting quotas (78% women, 66% men). This study covered politicians in all areas of decision-making (parliament, cabinet and local government). These findings reflect a higher level of awareness and conscientisation at local level in Zimbabwe.

Focus group discussions with women and men constituents as well as civil society representatives reflected low levels of awareness and understanding of quotas. Many of the participants believe that quotas mean that women will be appointed by political leaders rather than that women will contest in constituencies which have been set aside for women only. Some participants saw quotas as promoting corruption. An illustration of these views can be found in the following quotes:

Box four: Quotas viewed with suspicion

- "Women should be elected by residents not appointed by top officials, whose interest will they serve if they are appointed?" - Bindura men.
- "If there is any appointment the Minister should come down to the local level and find out from people, as appointed councillors will not do what people want" - Makoni men.
- "From previous experience we have seen that quotas result in corruption as the leaders appoint their friends or people who will be loyal to them" - Makoni women.
- "Quotas are not a good idea as the people appointed will not accountable to the party or person who appointed them and forget about the community" - Ruwa Men.
- "Councillors will become unaccountable and if you ask them to be accountable to some issues they will end up giving you some answers like, I am not in this position because of you, I was appointed" - Norton women.

About two thirds of the focus groups indicated that they were against quotas compared to a third who saw quotas as a favourable or necessary intervention to see an increase in women's representation in local politics.

Those against quotas did not see the importance of using this system because they feel that everyone should be given the opportunity to vote for the candidate of their choice and that imposing candidates on the electorate is undemocratic.

Many of the views expressed were also in line with those above, questioning the capacity, performance and accountability of those elected through a quota system. The men in the Masvingo focus group held a particularly strong view against quota's saying: "Let people compete and if the environment is not friendly to women they should just back off". Men in Kadoma were of the view that education is key: "Quotas promote laziness, everyone should compete and women should just be educated. Democracy involves the voice of the majority and so there is no need for quotas." Men in Bubi saw quotas as a clear sign that the electorate does not have confidence in women's leadership.

Findings from this research clearly show that it is important to educate communities and raise awareness on the meaning of quotas and why these are an important tool for increasing women's representation in political decision-making.

Table 11: Pros and Cons of quotas

For quotas	Against quotas
• Quotas for women do not discriminate, but compensate for actual barriers that prevent women form their fair share of the political seats; • Quotas imply that there are several women together in a committee or assembly, thus minimizing the stress often experienced by the token women; • Women have the right to equal participation; • Women's experiences are needed in political life; • Election is about representation, not educational qualifications; • Women are just as qualified as men, but women's qualifications are downgraded and minimized in a male dominated political system; • It is in fact the political parties that control the nominations, not primarily the voters who decide who gets elected; • Introducing quotas may cause conflicts, but only temporarily.	• Quotas are against the principle of equal opportunity for all, since women are given preference; • Quotas are undemocratic, because voters should be able to decide who is elected; • Quotas imply that politicians are elected because of their gender, not because of their qualifications, and that more qualified candidates are pushed aside; • Many women do not want to get elected just because they are women; (women in politics); • Quotas promote access by those who are incompetent; • Quotas and competency are mutually exclusive; if you are in through quotas, you are probably not competent.

Table 11 highlights the pros and cons of quotas for women in decision-making. Birgitta Dahl, former Speaker of parliament in Sweden, makes the point that quotas are but one of the mechanisms that can be used to advance gender representation:

> "One cannot deal with the problem of female representation by a quota system alone. Political parties, the educational system, NGOs, trade unions, churches all must take responsibility within their own organizations to systematically promote women's participation, from the bottom up. This will take time. It will not happen overnight, or in one year or five years; it will take one or two generations to realize significant change. This

is what we are working on in Sweden. We did not start with a quota system. First we laid the groundwork to facilitate women's entry into politics. We prepared the women to ensure they were competent to enter the field; and we prepared the system, which made it a little less shameful for men to step aside. Then we used quotas as an instrument in segments and institutions where we needed a breakthrough" (Women in Politics: Beyond Numbers, 2005:143).

Political education

According to the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) report voter education in Zimbabwe did not take account of gender issues and while education materials were distributed in a range of forms none of the strategies used targeted women specifically. In Zimbabwe the '*Women Can Do It*' campaign highlights the importance of political parties taking responsibility for increasing women's repre-sentation. But according to Shaba (2010:200), when The Women's Trust ran the '*Women Can Do It*' campaign in the lead up to and after the March 2008 harmonised elections, one of the astonishing facts it came across was the lack of accurate information regarding the procedures to stand as a candidate available to women who were interested in contesting the elections. Information brochures had to be produced to provide this information. Spreading of misinformation was also a problem with some of women saying that they were told that they needed to have 'O' levels by some men in their parties.

This points to the need for awareness raising and education of potential candidates and voters alike. Campaigns such as the *'Women Can Do It'* campaign should commence well in advance of the elections and women who have won elections should be provided with requisite support by the NGO's that have lobbied for their inclusion. These campaigns should also involve the media in constructive ways to ensure that they are effective.

Conclusions

The biggest barriers to women gaining access to political decision-making at the local level in Zimbabwe are patriarchy, lack of finance, an electoral system that does not favour the inclusion of minority groups, political unrest and election violence.

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. Zimbabwe still has a low level of women in the sphere of local government and has shown very marginal increases in women's representation over the past decade. 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. Commitments on paper in manifestos need to be adhered to and implemented. The Zimbabwean Constitution is currently being reviewed and the country has the opportunity to learn from the lessons in the region and implement a constitutional or legislated quota system, either within the existing FPTP system or as part of electoral reforms. The majority of councillors interviewed for the study agree that quotas are the only way to ensure the massive leap that women have to take from 18.5% to 50% in the next elections.

Campaigns such as the '*Women Can Do It*' campaign are essential for raising awareness providing information to aspiring women candidates, but such campaigns should not be left until the eleventh hour and the support being provided should continue throughout the term.

PARTICIPATION



Harare Council Secretary Josephine Ncube at the Women Chairpersons Empowerment Workshop in Kadoma.

Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna

Representation and participation are two distinct terms, but they are sometimes used interchangeably when discussing the women in political decision-making. However, representation (discussed in the previous chapter) focuses merely on the number of women in decision-making positions and is thus only half of the story (Mtintso, 1999: 39).

Participation looks at what the women do once they get into these positions; it directs the focus to whether they are able to participate effectively and influence decisions that are made (Mtintso, 1999: 40). It is important not to merely focus on the numbers because, as mentioned above, there is the chance that even with equal numbers of women present in decision-making that transformation may not necessarily be the outcome if they are not enabled to participate effectively.

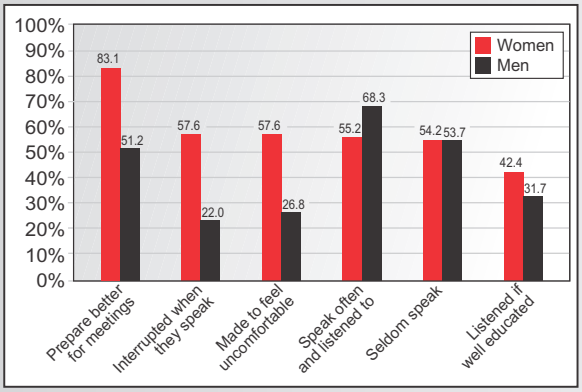
Effective participation is more than women merely being present. It means that women are able to contribute and make an impact on decisions taken by council. According to Mtintso (1999: 40) there is an incorrect perception that once women enter into decision-making that they may freely participate. But in the same way that there are obstacles to women's access to decision-making so too are there barriers to women's effective participation.

This chapter attempts to measure the extent of women's participation in local government in Zimbabwe 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. At 18.8%, women councillors in Zimbabwe are still heavily outnumbered by their male counterparts and they experience difficulties in getting their voices heard.

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



Over half (60%) of the councillors interviewed for the research believe that women speak often in council meetings and that they are listened to. Interestingly more men (68.3%) than women (55.2%) agreed with the statement. Slightly more women (54.2%) than men (53.7%) believe that women seldom speak. These results also show that there were contradictory responses to this question with some respondents choosing both responses. There is a bigger perception by women (42.4%) compared to men (31.7%) that women are only listened to if they are well educated and assertive. This suggests that women are not always judged by the same standards as men and they often have to work to be recognised.

More than half the women interviewed (57.6%) agreed that they are interrupted when they speak and also that they are made to feel uncomfortable by their male counterparts.

The figures are 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 Zimbabwe where women are still very much in the minority in local government. These finding also concur with research done in Zambia which has a very low number (6.4%) women councillors. The Zambia study also found that women are prevented from expressing themselves effectively in council meetings.

Qualitative responses from women councillors indicate that they often feel undermined by their male counterparts who look down upon them and believe that women cannot reason and that they cannot add value and contribute effectively. Some also said that men hold women back and that they prevent women from reaching higher positions in council which seem to be reserved for men.

Positions occupied in Councils

If women are to influence decisions they need to occupy positions in the structures where decisions are made. One of the main indicators of participation is therefore where women are found in the decision-making structures of councils, ie. as Mayors or chairpersons and members and chairpersons of council committees.

Top decision-makers

The research found only four out of 92 women mayors/council chairpersons (or 4%) and a mere three women as council Chief Executive Officers (or 3%). There is also a low representation of women as chairs on council committees.



Councillor Patricia Ndlovu of Beitbridge Town Council which has three women chaipersons of committees. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

Committees

Participation on council committees is imperative because it is in these committees where decisions are made. Women need to be present in order to influence change and more importantly they need to have equal opportunity to chair these committees. A survey of women's representation on committees in 71 councils shows that women are still grossly under-represented. Of the 2121 committee members only 436 (21%) are women. And they are even less likely to chair committees with only 72 of 370 (19.5%) chairpersons being women.

There are two councils which have no women on committees at all. Tongogara RDC (which has an equal representation of women and men councillors overall) is the only council which has achieved parity in terms of women on its committees. The picture is bleaker when it comes to women chairpersons of committees with 19 of 71 councils (27%) having no women chairpersons at all.

Figure five: Councils with women chairpersons

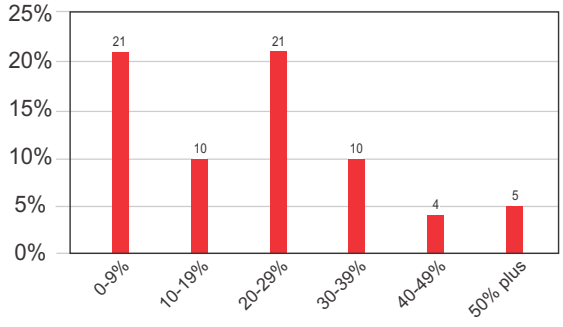


Figure five shows that 21 councils have between 0 and 9% women as chairpersons of committees, while only five councils have 50% or more women as chairpersons of committees (see **Annex D** for the detail).

Box five: Women need the same opportunities as men



Councillor Selina Maridza. *Photo: Susan Tolmay*

Councillor Selina Maridza MDC-T is the Deputy Mayor in Masvingo City Council, one of the few in the country. Unfortunately this position does not come with the same perks or recognition as that of the Mayor even though some of the functions are similar. One of her main challenges in this position, she says, is that she is not given the same space to participate in activities. There does not seem to be equal distribution of opportunities because if there are trips it is always the Mayor that goes. What Maridza would like to see is more opportunity for exposure and education, possibly even training and workshops for Deputy Mayors so that she can learn how to be more effective and how to do things better. Opportunities like this would see women gaining confidence and it would result is more effective participation in council activities by them.

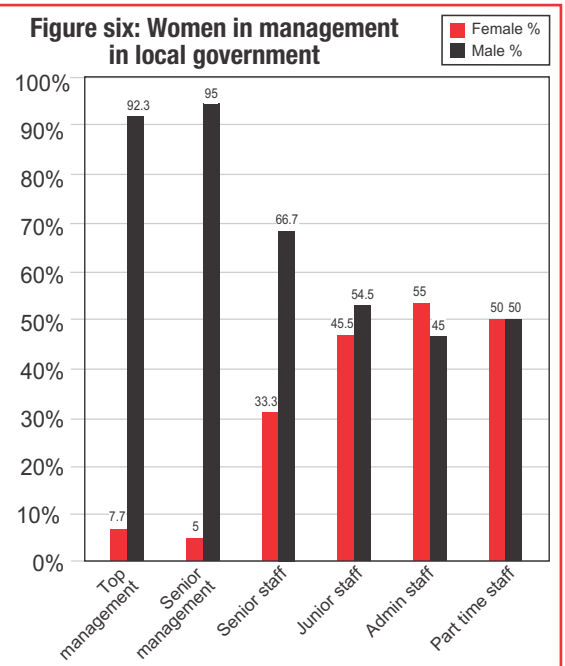
Women managers in local government

Research on the administration arm of councils found that while there are more women employees than councillors women are still in the minority in local council administration and more especially at the management level.

Figure six shows that for the seven councils where comprehensive information was available women are only equally represented in administrative and part time posts. They are in the vast minority in top and senior management.

Interviews (Town Clerks/ CEOs and gender focal persons (GFPs)) highlighted that gender is not an issue that is being taken seriously in councils. Some of the interviewees said that there is a lot of talk about gender but this does not translate into action. At worst there are cases in councils where senior management abuse young female workers who have no recourse because there is no policy dealing with sexual harassment in councils. It is imperative that attitudes towards gender start changing at the top management level. But one of the biggest challenges cited is getting women into management positions in council. Interviewees believed that the more women there are in the council the more likely gender issues will be addressed.

Figure six: Women in management in local government



Source: Information gathered from Gweru CC, Kadoma TC, Makoni RDC, Mutoko RDC, Ngezi RDC, Tongogara RDC, Zvimba RDC.

The GFP in Masvingo, Anette Breda, did say however, that the council is conscious about employing women, especially getting women into management positions and that there has been some effort in this regard despite there being no formal policy stipulating this. All of those interviewed said that training and capacity building on gender issues for staff and councillors was crucial and that this should take place on a regular basis.

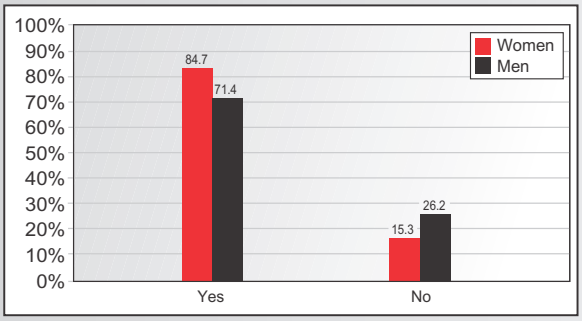
Numbers make a difference

Interviews with the councillors and focus group discussions with community members highlighted the importance of numbers. And while they are not a panacea numbers do have a role to play when it comes to women being able to participate effectively. Councillors made comments like "because we are five women and 41 councillors are men when it comes to voting we usually lose out" and "we are only two women and we need others to participate". Women in the Ruwa focus group felt that because there is only one female councillor they have not really seen any impact but they went on to say, "We need to make sure we support more women next time so that at least we manage to bridge the gap and get to feel a presence of women."

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 only paid small allowances for their work as councillors (sitting fee that they receive for attending meetings, cell phone and transport allowances); they lack the resources to implement the development projects that the communities expect and they have to travel long distances to meet with their communities and they often lack support.

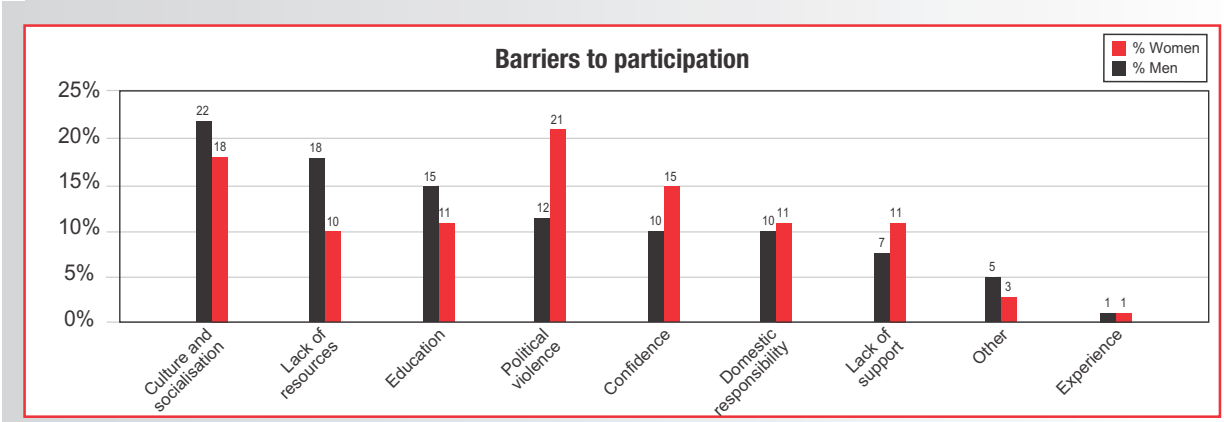
What the councillors said about barriers to participation



Overall the majority (79%) of the councillors interviewed agreed with the statement that there are barriers to women participating in local government but more women (85%) than men (71%) agreed with the statement.

This is a much 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% agreed with the statement (46% among women). All of the countries in the first study, except Mauritius, have high numbers of women in local government which shows. The findings in Zimbabwe therefore show that obstacles are felt more strongly in countries with low levels of representation.

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 women see culture and socialisation as their biggest barrier (22%) to effective participation. Men on the other hand see political violence as a key barrier for women. Lack of resources (18%), education (15%), political violence (12%), domestic responsibilities (10%) and lack of support (7%) were cited as the key barriers.



Ideological barriers

There has been slow, though measurable progress in reversing the marginalisation of women in Zimbabwean society. At the formal level there are policies which elevate the issue of gender equality onto the national platform, and make it imperative to address women's empowerment. However patriarchal attitudes remain tough to transform, and this still permeates all levels of society. As woman focus group participant from Chimanimani succinctly put it, “Our African culture is not friendly to women and it negatively affects their participation.”



Women preparing meals. *Photo: Trevor Davies*

There are strongly held beliefs that women should not participate in politics and myths abound about women who dare to venture into the male dominated territory. Many examples from focus group discussions were cited in chapter three regarding the cultural barriers that women face when trying to gain access to political decision-making and unfortunately these beliefs do not disappear when women get in. A man from Zvishavane said that “marriage is not a problem but the women do not know how to differentiate marriage duties and duties at work” He went on to say that the female councillors expect husbands to respect them. And one male focus group participant in Bubi RDC illustrated how dangerous these myths can be by saying “Once the power gets into their heads they get involved with other men and lose focus and this is how they lose the respect of the community”. At worst women are victimised, in Tongogara a woman was forced to stand down as a councillor to save her marriage after someone had written that she was in love with another man on a bridge.

Interestingly women sometimes also buy into the skewed standards set for women. Women in the

Masvingo focus group said that female councillors need to behave respectably while in office and should be above reproach, when questioned whether the same applied for men they conceded that it does not and agreed that there are double standards when it comes to women and men's participation in politics and that these are rooted in culture and socialisation.

Women not supporting one another

One of the most common responses in this and other similar research is that women do not support each other. Women and men councillors and focus group participants all mentioned this as a key barrier.

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. (GL 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

Respondents ranked lack of confidence fifth as a barrier, but more men (15%) than women (10%) saw this as an obstacle. A large number of the focus group participants also rated lack of confidence as a key obstacle. 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.

Harare women articulated this barrier best, saying that women's gender roles have a big part to play in women's marginalisation from decision-making and leadership positions. They added that women's upbringing is an inhibiting factor, especially their tendency to have '*low self esteem*' and that it '*takes a while for women to adjust to being leaders.*' "Even in churches, women are brought up to believe men are the heads so it affects their decision-making abilities. So women tend to think 'I am not good enough'."

Institutional barriers

Hassim and Meintjes (2005:15) point out that "institutional norms and procedures and the nature of processes of deliberation can undermine the extent and impact of women's voice in the public sphere". Likewise, 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.

Lack of resources

The graph above shows that the second biggest barrier to women's effective participation is the lack of resources. The list of community demands is long and these can often not be met. This should also be seen in the context of limited resources for local government in general with many of the council CEOs interviewed citing limited budgets as the biggest challenge that they face.

Linked to this are often unrealistic expectations by community members that councillors provide them with food, jobs and even money for events

like funerals. With limited resources of their own this places undue pressure on women councillors.

There also seems to be a perception amongst community members that it is easier for men to acquire resources than it is for women. A woman councillor interviewed also commented that "Men in local government want to have more say and they are heard but women are not heard. Men's projects move but women's hardly do. Men say women talk too much but are not heard." Men in the Bindura focus group discussion said that they have noted that it is more difficult for female councillors to acquire resources compared to their male counterparts" they said, "Women councillors are the last to source very important things like fertilizers. Men are very good at that and by the time women councillors get to know fertilizers are being issued, already those led by male councillors will have benefited."

A mixed focus group in Bulawayo said the lack of adequate financial resources has been a major impediment and has made it difficult for women to make an impact. In a woman- only focus group in Bulawayo, participants felt that there are still too few women in local government to make a significant difference to people's lives and that they do not have money to implement community development projects. However the perception of women councillors and their participation improves where they are able to source food and money to buy coffins for deceased community members, and while the women acknowledge that this has little to do with development, councillors who are able to make their immediate lives more bearable, are seen in a favourable light.

Political violence

Zimbabwean politics is fraught with violence and unfortunately women are seen as easy targets. Political violence was rated the fourth biggest barrier to women's participation in local politics in Zimbabwe with 15% of the councillors interviewed saying that this is an obstacle. Interestingly, however, it was rated by men (21%) as the biggest barrier for women while only 12% of women saw this as an impediment for them.

This barrier cuts across both the institutional and the ideological barriers. Political violence can take many forms (psychological, physical and sexual) and is rooted in unequal power relations between women and men and is often institutionalised. Socialisation and a patriarchal society in which predefined stereotypical roles are ascribed to women and men are used to promote and sustain violence against women. Unfortunately very little information exists on this form of violence against women in southern Africa. It is underreported and not well documented.

Lack of support

This barrier also cuts across both the institutional and the ideological barriers. More men (11%) than women (7%) listed lack of support as a barrier to



Bulawayo women's focus group. *Photo: Susan Tolmay*

women's participation in local government. In most instances the comments were related to the fact that women do not support each other (discussed in detail above) but very little reference is made to the support that men do or do not provide to women councillors. Many of the focus group participants made comments such as "men enjoy making life difficult for women", which implies that in many cases little or no support comes from men.

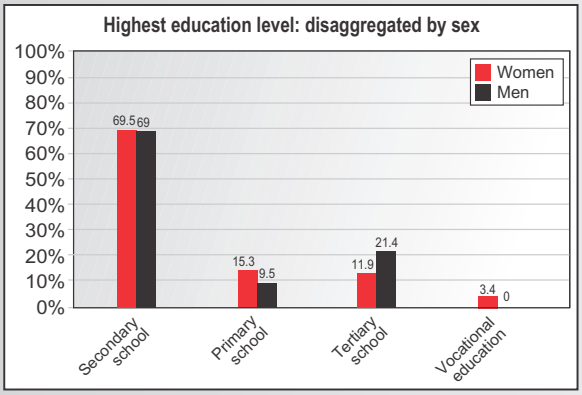
Personal barriers

As the previous section illustrated, the dominant ideologies and ethos can be undermining of women, resulting in low self confidence. Related factors that can undermine women's agency are low levels of education and exposure; inappropriate training and capacity building; age as well as juggling work and family responsibilities.

Education

In Zimbabwe there is no educational requirement to become a councillor. The Councillors Handbook (2009:42) states "It does not matter if you are male or female, old or young, educated or unschooled, left or right wing, you should aim to be the best councillor you can be." However, education is still seen as a key barrier to women's effective participation by women and men, councillors and community members. Women rated lack of education as their third biggest obstacle, fewer men (11%) saw this as a key barrier.

What the councillors said about education levels



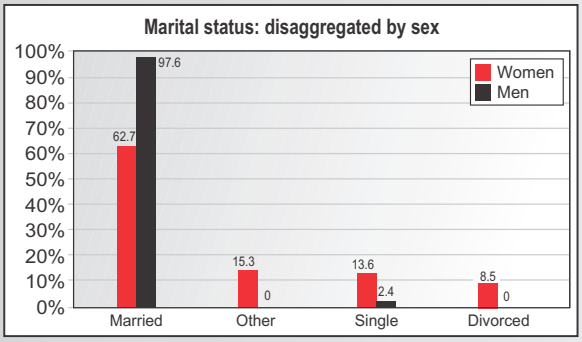
The study revealed that women are most likely to have achieved secondary education but that there are more women (15.3%) than men (9.5%) who have only achieved primary level education. Almost double the number of men compared to women have tertiary education, whereas women are more likely to have received vocational education.

Focus group participants felt that women's lack of education was a key contributing factor to their lack of confidence. They also said that women's participation could be enhanced through education starting at a young age. Others said education was important because it would mean that women would start to raise issues in council.

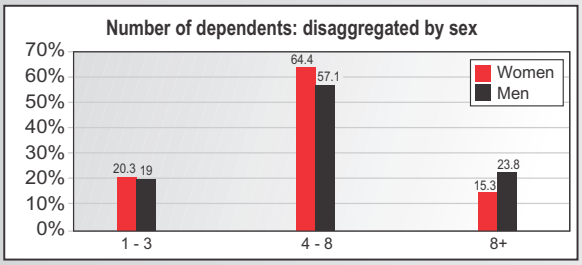
Domestic responsibilities

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.

What the councillors said about marital status



The study found that male councillors (97.6%) are far more likely to be married than women (62.7%). 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% of the women had been through a divorce. Women are more likely than men to be single.



Because of the 'care work' role that is ascribed to women, another factor in relation to their domestic roles and responsibilities is the number of dependents that they have. The graph shows that women are more likely to have between one and eight dependents than men.

There were very strong feelings from focus group participants regarding marriage being a barrier to both access and participation of women councillors (see box one). These barriers are of course closely linked with those discussed under the ideological barriers heading.

Experience

Many of the participants in the focus group discussions spoke about how women's participation is improving because they are getting more experience. The perception is that the more they participate, the better they become. In Tongogara the women spoke very highly about

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.



Focus group with women in Bubi. *Photo: Susan Tolmay*

their Mayor who has been a councillor for ten years, saying that she is now experienced and that they continue to vote for her because she can deliver. The men in Tongogara concurred with this view saying that some of the women councillors had served more than three terms because they work hard and done a lot for the community.

Many women also spoke about the positive effects that women's participation in local politics is having on societal attitudes towards women in general. Women in Bubi RDC spoke about the positive development as a result of having women in local government; they said "women are now more respected in the communities. Because women have come into power and shown that that they are as capable as men, they are now treated as equal in most meetings. There are now more opinions and views coming from women. In the past women lacked confidence and self esteem but this has changed significantly."

Background and grounding



Photo: Susan Tolmay

Namarita Chivanga, a ZANU-PF councillor from Masvingo, believes that she was appointed as a councillor because of her experience as a business woman. Because of her line of work she is concerned about markets and how she can start to involve women in the economy and business. Because of knowledge of business she has been identified as the councillor to look over markets and as chairperson of the women in business committee in the community she organises groups of women to do cross-border trading. She is also able to assist women in getting travel documents so that they are able to conduct business out of the country.

Support

In spite of all the views that people have about women not supporting one another, the more in depth interviews with women councillors uncovered some encouraging examples of women in fact supporting one another. This support comes in different forms including encouraging women to stand for office as well as working together on key issues for the council.

In Kwe Kwe a female councillor spoke about how women councillors work together and support one another while not allowing the men to come between them. Councillor Clara Makwara also spoke about how the women councillors in Chitungiwza are working together in a *clean-up campaign* with only two of the male councillors participating.

Women from the Bubi focus group also shared their story of support and encouragement, "There is a general stereotype that women do not want to see other women in better positions than themselves and would then start spreading negative things about them, this has not happened in this community. Female members of the community do not look at female leaders with disdain. Instead they support them. Even this meeting, people were willing to come with the councillor even though it was called at short notice."

Role Models

Role models and mentors play a key role in inspiring and keeping aspiring women politicians and those already in power focused on their goal and to also provide a support base for success. Councillor Maybe Chinyonga from Tongogara is the youngest person in her council to have stood for elections. She spoke to researchers about how Councillor Nyoni encouraged her to stand as a councillor and how she assisted her during the campaign. She has been a role model to her, leading by example, she says, "It is important for young women to see other women participate in local government so that they are encouraged..."



Photo: Susan Tolmay

Women in Chitungwizwa also see women's participation as in terms of role modelling and empowerment, the women pointed out that the women councillors had assisted them to be empowered and to know that "women can do more than just '*zvemapoto*'[1]". Furthermore, the women felt that "If we are given space we can do it also" i.e. can be economically empowered and can be in leadership positions.



Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna

Councillor Wendy Chiriri from Chitungwiza had this to say: "Women have historically been looked down on and not encouraged to go to school. This has disempowered women in society. There is a saying 'Behind every successful man there is a woman. We now want to say that women must come out in the public and show their powers!' "If you have set a goal for yourself, even if people discourage you, you yourself know your goal. Do not be discouraged by people who tell you that as a young woman you need to do other things and not participate in politics. If you set your heart on something, continue doing that and achieve your goals that you have set for yourself. That is all that is important"

Capacity Building

According to councillors and community members one of the major stumbling blocks to women's effective participation is attributed to their lack of confidence to express themselves in public and sometimes lack of proper education Training and capacity building, as long as it is targeted and relevant, can greatly enhance participation and performance. While training is provided many councillors feel that it is insufficient.

According to the GFPs interviewed councillors do get orientation training from the council but that this is once off and that gender is forgotten in this training.

ZILGA is working to provide training for women councillors and also works closely with civil society organisations such as GL to provide targeted and relevant capacity building such as the empowerment workshop for women chairpersons of committees held in Kadoma in February 2010. These workshops are important for building capacity as well as the morale of women councillors who often feel isolated and disempowered in councils where they are the minority.

It is crucial to include men in gender training initiatives because addressing gender inequalities is about empowering women as well as changing the attitudes of men. And if women are empowered



Women at the empowerment workshop in Kadoma. *Photo: Photo: Priscilla Maposa*

[1] Women are there just for cooking and being housewives.



Full of possibilities: Gaining new knowledge at the Kadoma workshop. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

without men being brought on board and efforts made to train and conscientise them regarding gender issues it has the potential of being disempowering to women who will not be able to forge changes in councils that remain male dominated.

Conclusions

The previous chapter focussed on women's entry into the political arena and showed that without any mechanisms in place in Zimbabwe 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.

The chapter highlight several examples show that disabling factors can just as soon be turned into enabling factors. Women can be unsupportive but they can also be supportive and stand as role models. Lack of education, experience and confidence can disempower women councillors but councils and civil society organisation can provide capacity building initiatives and support to empower all councillors, men and women. 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.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE



Danisa Mujere at Tongogara flea market.

Photo: Susan Tolmay

Danisa Mujere has been a ZANU-PF councillor for 12 years. At the time of writing, she was serving her third term as the Chairperson of the Tongogara Rural District Council which has equal numbers of women and men councillors. She cites courage, confidence and most of all her leadership skills as the keys to her success.

Mujere recalls how members from her community approached her to stand for the 1998 elections because of her approachable and honest nature. In her first election she stood against four men and one woman and won. The following elections saw her defeat five men and two women candidates.



Photo: Susan Tolmay

Councillor Danisa Mujere.

Patriarchy and culture continue to be barriers for women who have to ask permission from their husbands to participate in community activities. But things are changing. Mujere, for example, initially had to ask her husband's permission to stand as a councillor. Now he is her biggest campaigner, driving her around and encouraging the constituents to vote for her. She says that this support is invaluable and crucial to her success. And because she has the support of her own husband she is able to travel around her constituency and speak to men about the importance of women's participation in community activities and development projects.

Mujere believes that being in local government has changed the perceptions that women are not able to address public meetings and participate effectively in local politics. When she became a councillor for the first time there were only two of them, but through calling meetings and encouraging other women to stand for elections and to vote for other women there are now 12 women councillors: half of the rural district council.

The chairperson of the Tongogara council sees education and capacity building as crucial to development and essential for women's ability to participate in the economy. Because of this, one of her main aims is to train and empower women, something she has done since she worked at the public service training centre in Gweru, teaching women how to sew, cut and design dresses so that they could earn money. Her training extended to women in Shurugwi where her trainee's won prizes in local competitions. But her skills are not only in the conventional areas usually occupied by women. She has challenged gender stereotypes by branching into small scale mining, something which she is praised for by her community members because of the jobs that she has created for local youths.

Mujere says that one of her main responsibilities as both a councillor and the chair of the council are to raise other women's issues, especially educating them on their rights and working with them on income generating projects such as garment manufacturing, peanut butter making, poultry, bakeries, gardening, wine making and cattle feeding. A good example of how women are participating and benefitting are the 15 women in her ward who are involved in growing peanuts and producing Mashava peanut butter which they sell to schools and stores in growth points. The gardens that have been established in each ward are also a source of income for women urban farmers who make use of the Tongogara flea market sell their produce and also travel as far as the mines in Shurugwi to vend their products.

The main development issues that she has been pushing in her ward are roads, bridges, boreholes and schools. She has been involved in moulding bricks for building schools. When she became a councillor there was only one school, now there are four, two primary and two secondary schools. There were also no bridges, but she has managed to ensure that the council builds two bridges and that each ward has a borehole. Her goals are to see all rivers having bridges and she is advocating for the dams to be extended to help irrigation.

Mujere meets with her community once a month and the members are free to raise problems and issues which she takes to council. All of these efforts are recognised by her women constituents, who remarked in a focus group discussion that they are continually updated of developments taking place in their community and are always being encouraged to do self help projects some of whom are involved in horticulture programmes, uniform making and few of them in mining as well. The participants also felt that women were better placed than men to help out other women to engage in self help projects and that they get

support from female councillors. One participant went so far as to say, “Had it not been for support I got from my councillor, I could have been the laughing stock of the community, failing to take my children to school but now here I am as a widow with all my children going to school, well fed and well dressed”.



Tongogara flea market. *Photo: Susan Tolmay*

Asked whether women make a difference in local government, she responded emphatically: “Yes, there is more development in the wards where there are women councillors.” A participant in women's focus group reflected: “A councillor like Mrs Mujere cannot be compared to other people. She has been our councillor for 10 years and we vote for her because she can deliver.” The men's focus group concurred with this view showing that women are more than capable of performing effectively as local councillors and that voters will continue for vote for councillors who deliver the services and bring development that they so badly need.

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.

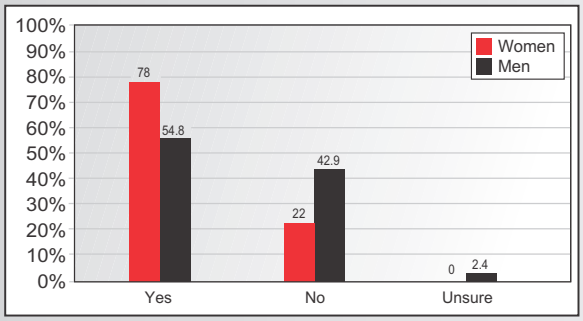
This chapter of the report grapples with the question of what women bring to decision-making. It also covers whether or not their presence makes a difference to the way in which men behave and conduct their business. The point of departure in this analysis is that ultimately the society we should work 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



Overall the majority of all respondents, agreed with the statement that women bring different interests and concerns to decision-making but far more women (78%) than men (55%) agreed with the statement.

Councillor views are stronger in this regard than councillors who participated in the previous *At the Coalface* study which found that on average 61% of women and only 39% of the men agreed with the statement.

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

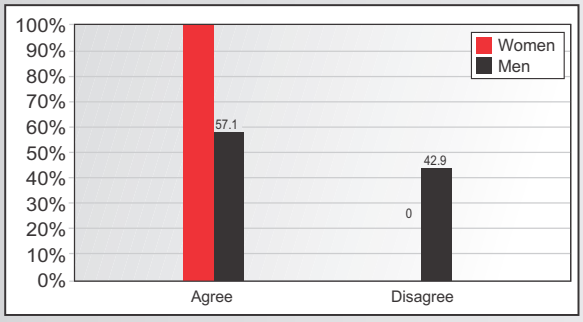
- Women have a different view, they want to help communities; men only want to serve their own interests.
- Women are concerned with raising the living standards of other women.
- Certain issues are better understood by women and cannot be addressed by men, eg. Sanitary wear, children and education.
- Women are concerned about development.
- Women want school which are close to their homes but men don't really care. Women are concerned about women issues.

Sensitivity to local concerns

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.

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



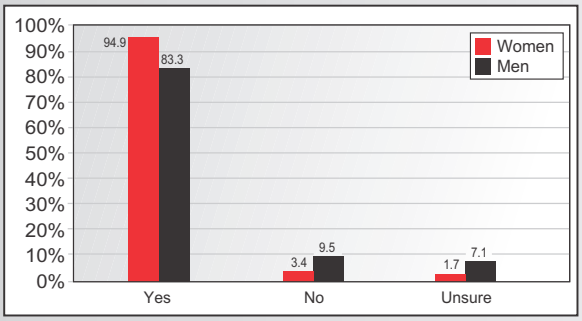
Asked whether they agreed with the statement "women are more sensitive to local concerns than men", an overwhelming majority (82%) of councillors agreed with the statement but with sharp differences between women and men. While all of the women agreed with the statement, only 57% of the men concurred. These figures compare with 81% women and 66% of men agreeing with the statement in the initial *"At the Coalface"* study. As one female councillor put it, "Women are more concerned about the problems in the community such as market sheds and development projects for the community as well as the education of women."

Community members concurred that women are far more sensitive to local concerns and marginalised groups. Women in Bubi said that women and men are different by nature and that women are more compassionate than men. They went on to say that women in local government are more likely to look out for the interests and needs of special interest groups such as orphans, the disabled and the elderly. While men may be good leaders, participants in focus groups said they are more likely to overlook community concerns. Women have the ability to empathise with the less privileged especially children. The men in Bubi agreed with female counterparts adding that women are more compassionate than men and they take everybody's concerns seriously, they are also patient and make people feel valued.

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



Overall the majority of all councillors (95% women and 83% men) agreed that women have the responsibility to raise other women's issues.

These findings resonate with the previous *At the Coalface* study which found that overall 83% of all councillors (86% women and 76% 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

Similar to the first *At the Coalface* study, many of the women councillors interviewed said they stood to be councillors to become the 'voice' of other women. Some comments from councillors include:

- "Women we have been looked down upon and now we must rise above this and represent women who have been oppressed."
- "We feel the pain with other women, most issues are close to our hearts and women sympathise with other women especial when they have been abused."
- "Women's issues need to be put on the agenda; before things were not being done as women were silenced and marginalised and they had no education, especially women and young girls, but we have the opportunity to change this."
- "How else can women's issues be heard? It has to be through us, the leaders."
- "Most women have had no exposure so it is my duty to empower other women."

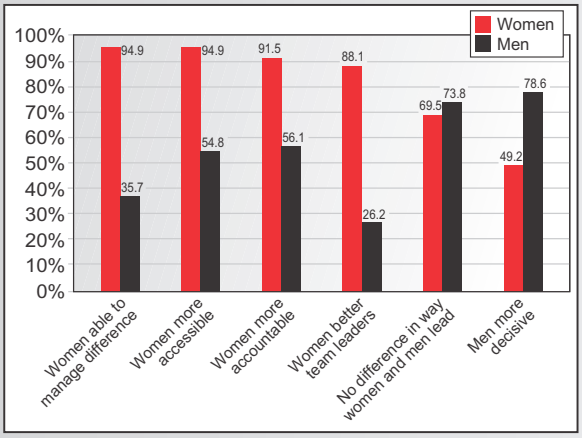
These findings resonate with global findings of women in decision-making. A survey of women's political experience carried out by the Inter-Parliamentary Union in 1999 including 187 women from 65 countries showed that 89% of women politicians consider that they have a special responsibility to represent 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 accountable than men.
6. Women are more accessible than men.

What the councillors said regarding leadership style



The graph shows little concurrence between the views of women and men in terms of women's leadership style. The closest correlation was with the statement that there is no difference between the way that women and men lead. The biggest discrpancy concerned the statement that women are better team leaders, with 88% of women agreeing with this statement compared to only 26% of men.

There statement that "women are better able to manage difference" yielded the largerst gender gap with 95% women compared to 36% men agreeing with the statement. This is quite interesting because community members are of the opinion that women are better able to manage conflict and they are seen "unifiers" who bring harmony to communities. Men from the Bubi focus group said: "Women deal with conflict better than men. They will listen to both sides of the story patiently before they pass their judgments, something which most men are not able to do."

Interestingly just over half the men interviewed believe that women are more accessible (54.8%) and more accountable (56%) compared to over 90% women in each case. This is interesting because in focus group discussions participants (both women and men) had strong views that women are in fact more accessible and accountable to their communities.

Some of the views expressed in the focus groups are as follows:

- Women councillors are more accountable to the people because they give feedback to the community (Zvimba women).
- It is easier to approach women councillors than men (Makoni men).
- Women in local government have made it easier for people to access their leaders. People feel that they are part of the community. Male leaders see themselves as being higher than the people who

put them into power. Women are more eager to involve the community in development initiatives. Men on the other hand are more likely to adopt a non consultative stance where they impose decisions on the community. Women believe in feedback from the communities (Bubi women).

- Women have brought honesty and accountability to local government. Theirs is an open kind of leadership whereby the communities are kept abreast of all developments that affect them. They have an inclusive way of looking at politics. This is a new phenomenon as men have not shown this quality in the past (Bubi men).
- We are always updated on developments in our community and the women councillors are free and friendly and anyone can approach them (Tongogara women).
- Women are generally good leaders. To them local government leadership is more than a job to them. It is something that they are passionate about and brings out the best in them. This is mostly evidenced by the way they carry out their duties. They exhibit a lot of honesty and respect for the people. Male leaders seem to account more to their party more that the communities they are elected to lead (Bulawayo men).
- Women interact and engage more with communities, they are accessible to the people (Bulawayo women).
- Women are more accountable than men, hence they can bring development in their areas (Chimanimani women).
- Women's softer side is not a disadvantage because it makes them accessible to the people. Their very nature is not intimidating and as such people are free to interact with them. When it comes to making key decisions, they are very decisive, the soft side is only seen when they deal with people's problems (Umguza women).
- Women have been interacting a lot more with people in the communities which has won them people's confidence. They do not look down upon people as has been the case with some men in local government. Women in local government are very accessible. They sit with people and listen to their issues. There have not been instances where women leaders have been called to a situation and turned people down (Umguza men).



Chimanimani carpentry project benefits women. *Photo: Susan Tolmay*

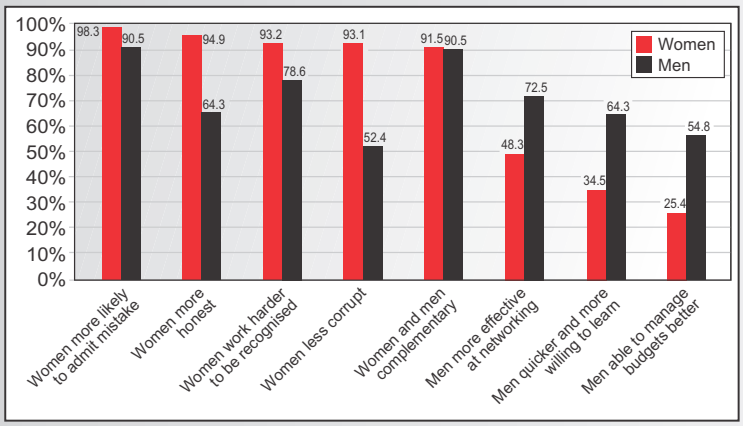
Performance

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. Men are able to manage budgets better than women.
4. Men are quicker and more willing to learn.
5. More likely to admit they've made a mistake.

6.Men are more effective at networking than women.
7.Women have to work harder to be recognised.
8.Women and men have complementary strengths, all of which are important to decision-making.

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



Overall women and men agreed most (98% women and 90.5% men) with the statement that women are more likely to admit that they made a mistake. The smallest discrepancy in views concerned the statement that women and men have complementary strengths. Women disagreed most with the statement that men can manage budgets better than women.

The biggest discrepancy in perceptions (41%) was to the statement that women are less corrupt than men. 93% of women agreed with this statement compared to only 52% of men. This resonates with the first *At the Coalface* study which found a 32% discrepancy in opinions between women and men.

On the ground there is a strong view that women are in fact less corrupt and more honest, that they are better at networking and that they are more likely to admit to their mistakes than men. Some comments from community members are as follows:

- Women in local government do not always wait for the people to come them; they also network with local people thereby fostering a spirit of togetherness (Bulawayo mixed group).
- Women have also shown that they are able to listen to the people. They take criticism where it is due and are bound to acknowledge their mistakes more than men would. Men tend to be defensive and do not accept criticism. When it comes to interacting with the community, women network more with the people and other local government leaders. Men would most often keep to their homes and wait for people to come looking for them. Women on the other hand go out and mingle with the people. They even relate a lot with councillors from other wards. There is a spirit of uniting and working with other people as equals (Bubi men).
- Female leaders are more open to correction and criticism (Bubi women).
- Women can make an impact at local government if they head the local government finance department because they are not as corrupt as men, are more honest and know how to budget in a family-friendly way than men (Chitungwiza men).
- We have seen the level of corruption decrease since the coming in of women councillors (Zvimba women).



Proactive: Chair of the Women in Local Government Forum, Holly Dzuda, with UCAZ Secretary General, Francis Duri.
Photo: Susan Tolmay

Impact

With a few exceptions, communities view women's political participation as positive. Many of the women who participated in the focus group discussions spoke about how having more women in local government has changed the quality of their lives and how it has brought about better opportunities for women especially.

Many examples centred on how women have started development projects and brought aid agencies and food programmes to the communities and have ensured that food aid is distributed equitably and have included marginalised groups, such as children, orphans and the elderly, which have previously been excluded from receiving such aid. Community members all spoke about how women include everyone irrespective of sex, age or political party affiliation.

Box six: Residents talk about the impact that women councillors have made



Bulawayo focus group discussion. *Photo: Susan Tolmay*

In Bulawayo residents said that women have shown their effectiveness in local government and that their inclusion is not just for the sake of balancing numbers. “They are service oriented as seen in various development and empowerment initiatives they have undertaken.” Women cited urban farming initiatives that are now more structured. Urban farming falls under the jurisdiction of the city municipality although in the past it has been done in a haphazard manner. Now with women in local government, they have brought in order and structure to urban farming. One of the councillors has even introduced awards for best farmer to motivate people to take this seriously.

Men cited the clean up campaigns that women have undertaken as an important contribution because in recent years the Bulawayo City Council has struggled to keep the city clean due to lack of resources. Now with women in local government, they have mobilised residents to keep their environment clean. People have even gone into the bushes to burn unsightly litter and even materials and regalia often dumped in the bushes after traditional rituals.

According to women from Umguza local government structures are now much clearer since women are also participating, they feel that women have brought order to the whole system. The women councillors are working closely with the Village Development Committee (VIDCO) and they complement each other. They say that in the past when it was only men, there was no clear outline of responsibility for the two offices and women have helped communities understand these roles.

In addition they say that the evidence of women's effective participation can be seen by the increasing number of development projects being initiated. The women are not just token leaders, they are doing the work like seeing to it that boreholes have been drilled, expanding gardening projects as well as sourcing funds for other projects such as sewing and knitting. Men spoke about the tangible evidence on the ground of women's effective participation in local government saying that now there is more food aid trickling into the communities. They said that women are compassionate and have taken the plight of the people to the donor community. Aid in the form of farming inputs and food is also coming from government.

Changing attitudes

Many of the women and men spoke about how having women in local government has had a positive impact on gender relations in communities. For example, women in Umguza spoke about how men have always viewed women as children but as women have taken up public offices and worked as effectively as men, they have gained respect from male members of society. They said that men now view women in a different light because they know they are as capable as they are.



Men are starting to take on caring roles. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

Both male and female participants from Bulawayo said that women have brought in more unity in their communities; that people have stopped despising each other on party lines or even sex and this has resulted in them coming together and participating in activities that benefit their communities. Women, especially feel that they are respected in society. They now view men as companions and partners in developing their wards which was not the case in the past as women always felt that were treated like second class citizens.

Women from Bubi had similar views saying that having women in local government leadership has made a difference in the way that they view life and their position within the larger community. They said they particularly feel that they are well represented when they know that one of their own is in part of local government. As women, they are coming from a past where women have not had a voice. They see this changing with more women venturing into local government. Women in leadership give women in the community the freedom to express their opinions in meetings. Now women's views are taken more seriously. Such developments are even seen at national level where there are a lot of head mistresses in schools, "This is surely a sign of what the future holds." Participants said they eagerly await a time when they would have female village head.

Women in Chitungwiza said that the impact that women have had can be measured at attitudinal level: "Having a female vice president, deputy prime minister and women councillors is influencing societal attitudes about women in leadership and decision-making in public life."

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. Harare Councillor Phumulani Musagwiza (MDC-T) is one such male councillor who see the importance of involving and empowering women at the local government level.



Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna

Councillor Phumulani Musagwiza.

"I come from a Christian view that says that 'we are

our brother's keepers.' I thus am involved in my community to represent the interests of the vulnerable social groups in my community i.e. the elderly, the albinos, the disabled, OVCs, women and children" says Musagwiza. "Resentment is due to lack of understanding of gender policies and the need to conscientise and educate the masses. I have a daughter and she needs a platform where she can say my father smoothed things for me and has empowered the girl child from providing her with educational to business opportunities, to give her equal opportunity."



Women are starting to venture into non-traditional jobs . *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

"Women have added value to local politics for there cannot be a world of men only. Everyone needs the opportunity to exercise their rights and talents in an environment set for equal standards regardless of sex. The presence of women is basically to do with service delivery issues as non-service delivery affects women the most. So their presence means there is no stone left untouched. Women will also be lobbying for improvements in service delivery. Men in turn have lost nothing. But what they have gained, however, is that women's participation enhances and contributes a lot to a polarised society. We thus need a society that can also understand gender issues. Service delivery-related issues as these affect women the most on a day to day basis e.g. water, electricity issues.

"I introduced the gender policy motion for women and the disabled, the albinos and other vulnerable social groups in our society in the City of Harare. I am in favour of changing the current restrictions by building a community of participation where everyone is given room to air and participate.

Culture is dynamic and changes are happening within our generation when it comes to culture. Our generation needs a paradigm shift to engage culture more dynamically. The Zimbabwe Constitution should enshrine women and citizen rights to advance where they have been deprived. Culture has been disadvantaging women and does so in the context of a diversified world we now have today. It has to rise to the challenges as well by changing and becoming more dynamic."

Conclusions

While impact and social change 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.

Community members speak compellingly of the impact that the participation of women in local government has had on the attitudes of men towards women and how they feel more empowered as a result. And while men can and do continue to obstruct women's progress and agendas they can also 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 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 Zimbabwe.

GENDER IN THE WORK OF COUNCILS



Women and men work together at the Masvingo market. *Photo: Susan Tolmay*

Faced with the stark reality of cholera and its effects on women, Wendy Chiriri an MDC councillor from Chitungwiza, decided to combine youth empowerment with a project to clean up the community.


Photo: Susan Tolmay

Councillor Wendy Chiriri.

The Forum for Youth Empowerment (FOYEM) started as a clean-up campaign, but the cleared areas soon became dumping areas again. The groups then decided to be more strategic in their approach, starting with teaching people how to manage their waste. Members of FOYEM went on a door to door campaign teaching residents about waste separation. The youth dug pits for all bio-degradable materials. They put plastics and bones (recyclables) in separate bags which are collected for resale.

Waste management is an on-going process as waste is produced every day: "The process of clearing existing waste will take us three years judging from the number of people and tools we have." Management is done by the committee who also monitor the process.

FOYEM has managed to partner with German Agro-Action, an emergency response organisation currently working in Chitungwiza in response to the cholera outbreak. This organisation has managed to supply protective clothing, soap handouts and tools. They have also set up a committee that monitors all the households. They evaluate through conducting interviews with community residents. They also have plans of nominating "resident of the month" on waste management and also offering incentive on the best residents who monitor their areas.

This chapter addresses the extent to which gender concerns are reflected in the everyday work of local government, and how women are able to influence this agenda. The chapter begins with a description of how local government works in Zimbabwe, 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 Zimbabwe can influence the daily agenda.

How local government works

Local Government is defined in the Councillors Induction Handbook (2009:5) as a lower level of public administration that uses delegated powers and functions to manage local affairs and provide services through council. Councils are defined as a body of elected and appointed representatives.

There are two types of local authorities in Zimbabwe. Urban councils which look after the interests of those living in cities and towns and which are divided in four categories (cities, municipalities, towns and local boards) based on the size of the population, infrastructure, services offered and social development. There are currently 31 urban councils in Zimbabwe. Rural councils cover non-urban areas and there 61 rural development councils in the country. The urban and rural councils are divided into wards, in total there are 1958 wards as per the last elections held in March 2008. Each ward is represented by an elected councillor.

Councils are legal entities: urban councils are established in terms of S 4 of the Urban Councils Act, 29:15. Rural councils are established in terms of the Rural District Councils Act, 29:13. This legislation outlines the functions and duties of the councils as well as the controls and limitations applicable. In terms of S 4 (1), it is the President of Zimbabwe who establishes councils. The President is granted powers to establish councils, be they municipal town, city or local board status. Further, the President is bestowed powers to alter the boundaries of any council and even to abolish it.

The political head of city councils, municipal councils and town councils is a Mayor while in local boards and rural district councils the political head is the chairperson. In terms of the Local Government Laws Amendment Number 1 of 2008, S 22 (c) the Mayor is elected by councillors from amongst the group of elected councillors and serves for the full five year term of council.

According to The Local Government Laws Amendment as amended in 2008 the Minister of Local Government can appoint special interest councillors in terms of S 7 (b). The number of appointed councillors cannot exceed 25% of the number of elected councillors. These special interest councillors participate in the business of the municipal or town council to which they are appointed and perform the same functions and are entitled to the same benefits in every respect as if they were elected councillors, except that they do not have voting rights in meetings or decisions council (Mushamba, 2010:3).

Councils are made up of two arms:

- The elected councillors who serve as policy makers and the legislature for making and passing bylaws and budgets, and
- The executive and technical arm, which is responsible for day to day running of council and implements decisions of council. The head of appointed staff in urban councils is the Town Clerk (TC) and in the rural district councils is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in the case of rural district councils.

There is a separation of functions which means that councillors should not become involved in the day to day operations of the council and the council staff should not become involved in the political aspects of the council.



Bulawayo City Council. *Photo: Susan Tolmay*

Both urban councils and rural district councils operate through a committee system. Committees are provided for in relevant legislation and can include any of the following:

- Finance
- Human resources/ staffing
- Planning
- Audit
- Housing
- Health
- Roads/ works
- Environment/ natural resources management
- Social/ community services

Finance

Sections 284 to 307 of the Urban Councils Act, as well as, Schedules to the Act provide for a wide range of powers to mobilise local resources. For rural district councils the financial functions are provided for in Part XIII of the Rural District Councils Act Chapter 29:13. The financial functions of both urban and rural district councils are further referred to in other Acts which are not directly under the supervision of the Ministry of Local Government.

Both urban councils and rural district councils in Zimbabwe are largely self financing. The main sources of funds for local governments are:

- Sale of land, property tax;
- Levies, rates, and rents;
- Service charges paid to council in respect of any services provided by it;
- Revenue received from income generating projects such as commercial, industrial, agricultural;
- Any other activity meant to raise revenue for the council;
- Transfers from the central government.

Once a council is conferred with municipal status it becomes a landowner for land within its boundaries and one of the council's financial functions is to sell land. Councils derive a large proportion of their revenue from this function as they not only get revenue

from the sale of land but also from property tax when it is transferred to the purchaser.

Unlike with urban councils, rural district councils do not derive much revenue from the sale of land and property tax. On average rural district councils in Zimbabwe raise only 15% of total revenue through the sale of land, taxes, rates and charges. The remainder comes in the form of transfers from the centre all of which are tied to particular activities; approved centrally rural district councils have very limited powers of taxation. They collect a small amount of revenue from the development levy, from fees, licenses and income generating activities. Zimbabwe is one of the few countries in the region where local governments derive a substantial amount of revenue from property tax.

In addition to their own sources of revenue, local governments in Zimbabwe receive transfers from the central government. The main forms of transfers from central government are loans under the Public Sector Investment Programme and grants for public health. While there is a formula for calculating the central transfers, they have not been followed or funded in full resulting in operating deficits on the part of local authorities. Local authorities complain that disbursements are neither predictable nor transparent. Most of the transfers from the centre have traditionally been reimbursements of costs already incurred (Mushamba, 2010:12-18).

Planning and budgeting in councils

Councils develop five year strategic plans which are then used to develop annual plans. Planning is supposed to be participatory and should involve critical stakeholders who make contributions and suggestions for budget priorities which are then taken to the council for approval.

The budgetary cycle should take place in four stages annually:

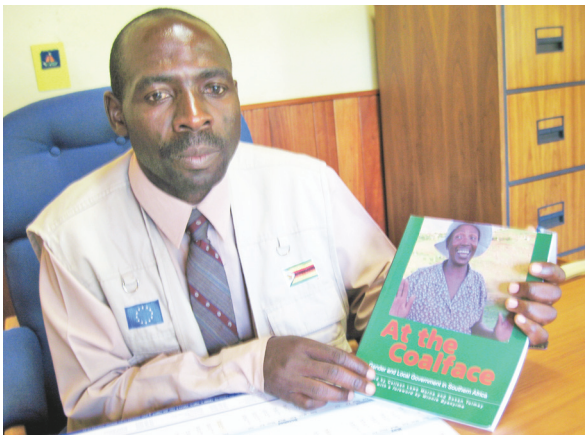
- 1st quarter - performance review of previous budget and setting new priorities
- 2nd quarter - current performance of budget
- 3rd quarter - intermediate budget review (June)
- Final quarter - formulate the next budget (September)

There should be four public meetings each year in line with this budget cycle.

The following is the hierarchy which shows the people involved in council planning and budgeting

- Full Council
- RDDC (HODs of all Ministries chaired by the DA)
- Ward Assembly (submitted through the council to the MLGPUD)
- WARDCO (compile and come up with one priority list of the Programme)
- Village Assembly (3 members of the community)
- VIDCO (village head and 6 members, representative of women and youth)

According to Timothy Marango, Acting CEO of the Chimanimani RDC council planning is a participatory process. First there are meetings at the village level through village development committees which are lead by headmen. Then meetings are held with ward development committees and it is at these meetings that the communities set out their priorities. They decide what they can do themselves and what they require help with from the council. Each village then presents their priorities to the RDDC (rural district development committee) council who do a screening in terms of what they can do which is then presented to the council who do budgeting around September. They develop a five year plan and big projects are referred to national government.



Timothy Marango, CEO of Chimanimani RDC.

Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna

Competencies of local government

As mentioned above the legislative sources of the powers and functions of urban councils and rural district councils, these are provided for in three principal laws:

- The Urban Councils Act Chapter 29.15 for urban councils;
- The Rural District Councils Act Chapter 29.13 for rural district councils; and
- The Regional Town and Country Planning Act 29:12, for both urban and rural councils.



Education is a core concern of local government. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

These Acts are administered by the Minister responsible for Local Government. There are other Acts which are not under the supervision of the Ministry of Local Government but which bestow important powers and functions on local governments. These include (but are not limited to);

- The Environmental Management Act Chapter 20:27
- The Public Health Act Chapter 15:09
- The Shop Licences Act Chapter 14:17
- The Vehicle Registration and Licensing Act Chapter 13:14
- The Education Act Chapter 25:04
- The Roads Act Chapter 13:18
- The Communal Land Act Chapter 20:04
- The Road Traffic Act Chapter 13:11
- The Traditional Leaders Act Chapter 29:17
- The Water Act Chapter 20:24

Table 12: Functions and powers of local government in Zimbabwe

FUNCTION/ POWER	Urban council	Rural district council
GENERAL ADMINISTRATION		
Police	*	
Fire and emergency services	*	
Civil protection	*	*
Liquor licenses	*	*
EDUCATION		
Primary	*	*
PUBLIC HEALTH		
Primary care	*	*
Hospitals	*	*

FUNCTION/ POWER	Urban council	Rural district council
Health inspection	*	*
Health committees	*	*
HOUSING AND TOWN PLANNING		
Land acquisition	*	*
Estate development	*	*
Dwelling regulation	*	*
TRANSPORT		
Construct sidewalks		*
Parking garages, spaces and meters	*	
Public transport services	*	
Naming of roads	*	
Railway slidings	*	
Roads	*	*
Traffic control	*	*
Street lighting	*	
Storm water drainage	*	*
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC SANITATION		
Water and sanitation	*	*
Refuse collection and disposal	*	*
Cemeteries and crematoria	*	*
Slaughter-houses	*	*
Environmental protection	*	+
Consumer protection (nuisance prevention)	*	*
CULTURE, LEISURE AND SPORTS		
Entertainment	*	
Parks and open spaces	*	*
Sports and leisure	*	
UTILITIES		
Sewerage and drainage	*	*
Water supply	*	*
Electricity	*	
Boreholes	*	*
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT		
Control tender process		*
Licenses and permits	*	*
Farming and animal husbandry	*	
Fisheries		*
Planning and M&E		*
Income generating projects	*	*
Facilitate establishment of cooperatives	*	*

Source: An Analysis of Powers and Functions Of Local Government Authorities In Zimbabwe (2010).

Table 12 summaries the functions and powers of urban and rural district councils. It shows that while these two have similar areas of responsibility, there are some additional areas for urban councils (such as police; emergency services and public transport).

Council work through a gender lens

Local government has the potential to make a difference to the every 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.

Women and men in the focus groups spoke about the very tangible contributions that women are making to their communities especially around initiatives that are development focussed.

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.



Education is a priority for councillors in Bubi RDC. *Photo: Susan Tolmay*

Councillor Helena Mkosana (MDC-T) from Kwe Kwe City Council spoke about the challenges in her council but said that she has been trying her best by requesting that teachers get incentives, she also bought school books for needy children but unfortunately she cannot do everything she wants to due to the economic crisis that all councils face.

Mollen Rutsate (MDC-T) is the chairperson of the sports committee in Norton Town Council. She moves from ward to ward mobilising youths to be involved in sporting activities, working with mostly disadvantaged children in my community. She says that two of her main achievements as a councillor have been sourcing funding for girls and boys who had failed to get funds to go to school.

Women in Bubi spoke about how councillors have introduced special projects for orphans in the community, “They had gone a long way in alleviating the problems that these children often have to carry on their young shoulders.” As a result of their interventions the children's school fees are now taken care of and they even receive clothes regularly from well wishers and donor agencies.

Primary health care

Health is a core component of human development. 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, and offering friendly, clean, safe and affordable services.



Annette Breda, Matron of the Mucheke Clinic. *Photo: Susan Tolmay*

Annette Breda is the Matron of Mucheke clinic as well as the gender focal person for Masvingo Council. She cites progress in primary health care: there are clinics in most rural areas with staff including a nurse, nurse's aid, general hand and a health officer. Women do not have to travel too far to get to a clinic. She says that all of the money they get comes from the council but that approximately 70% of their drugs are donated by UNICEF. Women in Zvimba spoke about how women are working to ensure that clinics have electricity.

Marginalised groups

Most of the community members who participated in the focus group discussions spoke about how women councillors are more concerned about marginalised groups of people such as children, orphans and the elderly. Councillor Matty Chivanga (ZANU-PF) spoke to researchers about what she is doing for street children in Masvingo by feeding them and trying to find them a better place to live.



Patricia Muchekesi from Victoria Falls Municipality presented a case study at the first Gender Justice and Local Government Summit which illustrates the role of local stakeholders in working together to address the needs or marginalised groups.

Rose of Charity is a registered orphanage in Chinotimba, but their services stretch further than Hwange District. They provide feeding and accommodation facilities to over 120 orphans mainly from the Victoria Falls region. However due to lack of houses only 37 of the orphans reside at the orphanage the other 83 only come for feeding and return to their guardians.

After the controversial Operation Restore Order “Murambatsvina” in 2004, many people in Matabeleland North and specifically in Victoria Falls were displaced from their ”illegal” homes. Churches and well wisher's housed the fortunate while the majority slept with children in cold trenches, outdoors and even at the railway station.

Concerned about the issue Muchekesi gathered the residents of her community (ward four) to discuss the situation. Following the meeting they established a board of six members drawn from different sectors including the local authority and the business community. The board comprised four women and two were men. It had the task of finding a house to accommodate abandoned children who had become destitute and orphans.

The patron is a community leader and also the councillor of the ward in which the home is. The board members started contributing monthly subscriptions which could fund all the expenses encountered, for example rent, water, electricity and health care bills. The board was then able to rent a house which accommodated a few orphans.

The major sources of the centre's income are donations from hotels and the business community. International aid agencies such as the Red Cross and Organisation of Rural Association for Practice (ORAP) have intervened directly and indirectly in this project by providing food. The International Organisation of Migration sourced stands from the council and provided funding for building two roomed houses for displaced, homeless people.

The centre provides crucial services which include:
- Children are fed at the centre daily three times.
- Boarders have their clothes washed as a child at home.
- There is also counselling provided to traumatised children from broken homes.
- Children are provided with toys to play with and they play with each other as a big family.
- Non boarders have two meals at the centre, lunch and supper.
- Children who are reasonably older attend crèche education at the centre.
- They also get pre-school education.

Gender violence, HIV and AIDS

Zimbabwe like most other countries in southern Africa is severely affected by the HIV and AIDS pandemic. 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.

Justin Chivavaya, Director of housing and community services, presented a case study of the City of Harare's Youth Empowerment through Sport Project (Y.E.S.) at the first Gender Justice and Local Government Summit in 2010. The objectives of the Y.E.S. programme are to raise awareness among the youth on Gender Based violence, domestic violence and HIV and Aids. Youth groups are established in wards where the youths participate in various sports such as basketball, volleyball, tennis and soccer. Before and after the games, they are divided into smaller groups where they are educated on HIV and Aids, Gender Based violence, domestic violence and economic empowerment issues. The rationale is that sporting activities attract the youths which then ensures a captive audience to learn about key gender issues. The council believes that it is important to involve youths while they are still young in order to mould them into better adults.

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 effects on the entire community.

Many of the focus groups participants spoke about how women councillors have taken up cleaning campaigns as one of their key issues. Bulawayo men highlighted that women are hard workers and they worked tirelessly to ensure that their surroundings are kept clean. An example was cited of a female councillor who organized the community to participate in a 'clean-up campaign' in the ward.

Residents in Kadoma and Norton also attested to women's contribution to cleaning up communities. In Kadoma women said that through women participation, bins are now being collected, they have borehole water and sewerage problems have been solved. Norton men said, “For so many years our drains were filled with sand but we noticed a change when our women councillor was elected, drains are now clean and all the grass was cut”



Jambanja Environmental Sanitation Initiative (JESI) is a community based and owned local environment action group based in Clara Makwara's Ward 24 in Chitungwiza. Jambanja is a Shona word meaning *people driven war against foreseen potential hazards*. In this case the community is declaring war against Cholera and its root cause. Ward 24 has been affected by the cholera epidemic since October 2008 and to date thousands of men, women and children have succumbed to the epidemic.

The disease has been accelerated by the accumulation of garbage in the wake of the Municipality being affected by severe logistical and financial constraints. In addition Ward 24 has been experiencing persistent water cuts and shortages since 2005, resulting in compromised flow of sewage and sustainable health life.

The lack of garbage collection has seen residents dropping domestic waste by the road side, in the drainage systems and undeveloped open spaces within the locality. Where water drainage systems are blocked, burst sewerage flows over land exposing residents to flies, air pollution and health hazards. With 90% unemployment in the country, ward 24 residents have now resorted to informal trading particularly vegetable vending. Sewage overland flow has become a norm and acceptable with vendors continuing with their normal businesses besides flowing sewage: a risk undertaking in this cholera - devastated community.

The cholera outbreak in ward 24 uncovered a number of community developmental gaps such as lack of environmental awareness, lack of solid waste management skills, lack of supplementary/alternative safe water sources, lack of sustainable community disaster management plans and poor environmental policing at community level. To address this, JESI undertakes extensive quarterly environmental awareness campaigns; initiates community based and sustainable solid waste management programs; conducts full time community clean up campaigns and provides clean up campaigns tools and protective clothing for volunteers.

JESI also managed to set up five community-based peer educators groups as well as establish a community based Local Environmental Protection Committee, as a way of building an intergenerational resource base. JESI consults widely on project implementation with local stakeholders including the municipality, hospitals, clinics, schools, vendors, informal traders, business community, men, women and children.

With environmental rehabilitation and management programs in place, Ward 24 has now reduced the amount of garbage, and the risk of another fatal cholera outbreak. The successful implementation of this project has created an increase in economic stability; increased family and community stability; created employment for youth and the aged, decreased dependency on external disaster management intervention and increased community members' self-esteem through a greater ability of self-sufficiency.

Land and 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.

Shortage of housing is one major problem affecting Bulawayo as a city and local government leaders have to constantly grapple with this challenge. However male focus group participants said that in recent years there has been a significant decrease in the number of homeless people. The case study of how one councillor has worked to promote land rights for women in Chapter eight is an example of strategic ways that women are making a difference.



Land and housing - Tongogara RDC. *Photo: Susan Tolmay*

Utilities

Water and electricity are indisputably two of the most basic and important services that are provided by local councils. Lack of access to clean water, sanitation facilities and electricity 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.

Bulawayo focus groups spoke highly of the work that women councillors have been doing to ensure access by community members to basic utilities: "Where there have been water disconnections, women in local government have been at the forefront to ensure that reasonable settlements are reached that would ensure that residents are given leeway to pay their bills over an extended period." They cited another example of a Ward councillor who engaged the Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (ZESA) not to cut off electricity supplies to widows who could not settle their bills. In some cases she even had the local municipality reconnect water supply for some elderly women whose water had been disconnected due to huge water bills.



Women in rural areas often have to walk long distances to collect water. *Photo: Trevor Davies*

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.

Women in Chitungwiza spoke about the changes that they have seen since women started participating in local government: "We never saw the change when men were there for all those years. Now with vending/ selling, for example, women councillors are assisting and making legalisation of document requirements easier, for example, for

those selling. The council is also not as strict as before as to where we sell or products."

Female vendors in Kwe Kwe said that they were happy that women councillors had lobbied for all long distance buses to drop and pick up passengers from the main market so that vendors benefit by getting more clients. A concern for them, however, is the construction of toilet facilities which should be speeded up to avoid problems eg cholera outbreak.

Development projects

Many of the focus groups spoke about how women are making contributions to communities through development projects that they initiate.

In Chimanimani some members of the community made a living through a Council-initiated timber project in which women are doing woodwork and carpentry. Women constituted seven of the 15 workers.



MPCC market place. *Photo: Gender Links*

Bulawayo participants said that women are service oriented, evidence by the various development and empowerment initiatives that they have undertaken. Women cited urban farming initiatives that are now more structured. Urban farming, which falls under the jurisdiction of the city municipality has been done in a haphazard manner in the past. But now with women in local government, they have brought in order and structure to urban farming. According to the men the introduction of urban farming projects in communities has started to change women's financial circumstances.

Councillor Sithokozile Nkomo (ZANU-PF) from Bubi RDC has established the Progressive Women in Mining Association (PWIMA) whose purpose it is to see women benefitting from the mining industry in Zimbabwe. She is involved in negotiations with the Zimbabwe Mining Development Company (ZMDC) regarding initiatives to train women on mining management so that they can begin extractions in certain mines. Currently there are about 75 women who are involved and they are negotiating with investors for capital and equipment. If successful this initiative could have positive and sustainable consequences for the women involved and has the potential to really uplift women in communities.



Gender awareness starts with little boys playing with dolls. *Photo: Susan Tolmay*

Community development and youth empowerment

Councils have a major role to play in developing a healthy and gender-aware community. Where women have the support of their communities they have made tangible differences. For example in Bulawayo some of the participants said that their local female councillor had engaged aid agencies like World Vision and CARE International to support starving people in the community. Previously there were no food aid programs in their ward.

Makoni rural district council has also embarked on community and youth development projects by establishing youth centres in the peri-urban areas of Nyazura Township and Chendambuya districts service centre which have become education and recreation places for the youth in the district.

Annah Murigwa, committees officer and GFP in Makoni RDC, said that the objective of these centres is provide education and entertainment to youth in the hope that this will minimise inappropriate behaviour of youths including drug abuse and early engagement in sexual activities which exacerbates HIV and AIDS. In this case, the National Aids Council (NAC) submitted a project proposal to Makeni RDC for the project. Makeni RDC consulted ministries of health and education for the services of nurses and for the establishment of football and netball teams. Council supplied football and netball grounds. The NAC budgeted for salaries and allowance for the nurses whilst council supplied houses to the nurses. Council budgeted for yearly repairs and maintenance of the equipments. IEC materials were provided by the ministry of education, health and the National Aids council.

Conclusions

This chapter highlights some of the challenges women face executing their council duties. The economic crisis in Zimbabwe and lack of funding for development makes setting priorities, planning and delivering on their promises to constituents 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, GBV and HIV and Aids.

It shows the concern that women have for marginalised groups, education, land distribution, development projects and the empowerment of youths.

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.

FROM PRACTICAL TO STRATEGIC



No compromises on gender mainstreaming: Tsitsi Mhlanga of the Women in Politics Support Unit (WIPSU) makes a point to UCAZ Secretary General Francis Duri at the Women Empowerment Workshop in Kadoma. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

When the judges at the first Gender Justice and Local Government Summit in Johannesburg in March 2010 reviewed Bernadette Chipembere's entry, it defied simple categorisation. One thing they knew for sure: she deserved a prize for her multi-faceted work to promote the rights of women. So it was that the judges


Photo: Gender Links

Bernadette Chipembere.

created an exceptional award for this "special interest" councillor who takes up cases of land rights for dispossessed widows; fights the eviction of market traders; has started a campaign against trafficking, and intervenes with local police in domestic violence cases when these get botched.

Being a "special interest" councillor means that the minister appointed Chipembere to the council for her skills. It is space that Chipembere, also deputy chair of the Zimbabwe Women in Local Government Forum (WLGF), puts to good effect. "Not answering to any political party means that I can advocate for women's rights in council," she explains. "I cater for all women."

At a WLGF meeting just prior to the publication of this study in November 2010, Chipembere proudly showed off the laptop she won and the good uses to which she has put it. In less than a year, the Chiredzi councillor had obtained an E Mail address, becoming the main "send and receive" box for all council documents. She receives and distributes information from the GL list serve, and coordinated the 2010 Sixteen Day cyber dialogues in Chiredzi. You will also find her on face book where she had 200 friends at the time of writing this report.

Most important, the work on the ground is steaming ahead. When GL first met Chipembere in early 2010, she had taken on the district administrator who is the chairman of the land board at district level because Land Officers were taking away farms from vulnerable groups despite there being a policy clearly stating that in the event of a death all properties left behind become issues of inheritance. She took on the plight of the women and children because they had no-one to turn to in the face of repossessions.

Chipembere assisted 72 widows to write their problems and forward these to the district land board. Frustrated by not getting anywhere using formal channels she decided to contact the Sunday mail reporter Emilia Zindi who started running her story in the paper and also helped by lobbying for urgent response at ministry level.

The councillor had to dip into her own pocket for trips to Harare and accommodation for meetings; cell phone bills; accommodation and meals for three days for three reporters who went to Chiredzi to cover the story plus fuel and farm visits. Finally the government sent the national task force to Chiredzi for three weeks. And following the publicity she received after winning the award, the minister himself visited Chipembere, ensuring resolution to all 72 cases. "This was the end result of six months hard work," she reflected. "I could not believe my eyes when eleven cars from the national lands inspectorate converged at the offices of the town council, and one after the other solved the cases I had raised."

Moreover, the district now has a woman District Administrator, appointed, she suspects as a result of "all the noise we make here. If you talk about gender in Chiredzi, yes we do make a noise." Chipembere and her colleagues made it clear that they would expect the support of the new DA by organising a welcoming party with the support of the local business women's network that is also helping Chipembere to host the 2010 Sixteen Day cyber dialogues in the hot and dry Sabi Valley of south east Zimbabwe, well known for its sugar plantations and large scale irrigation schemes.

One problem solved sparks many more challenges. Laughing that she is the unpaid legal advice centre for women, Chipembere reels off a number of domestic violence cases in which police (in cohorts with perpetrators) have lost the files of women or otherwise frustrated the prosecution of cases. "I am telling the police they must get on top of their game," she says. "These officers know that when Mai (mother) Chipembere comes along, there is going to be a lot of noise. I will not allow the police and perpetrators to win when they should not."

When cholera broke out in Chiredzi and council officials pounced on women selling food at local markets, Chipembere intervened to find solutions

short of evicting the women from their stalls. “When council officials look at women vending food, they see cholera,” Chipembere observed. “I see women working to send their children to school.”



Bernadette Chipembere receives an award at the Gender Justice and Local Government Summit. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

Information, she reflected, is empowering. For example, while at the Gender Justice and Local Government summit, Chipembere learned of the plight of South African women traders harassed by police ahead of Soccer 2010. Later she read an article on the GL list about how these women had sought redress. “When you read something like that it inspires you,” she said.

The versatile councillor stumbled on Face book while tinkering on the Internet, followed the instructions and signed up. “The friends have not stopped coming,” she laughed. “I have met so many interesting people, feminists, gender activists, who want to network with me. I am learning so much about gender through these networks.”

A pragmatist who looks for solutions to every day challenges, Chipembere is also concerned about the long-term empowerment of women. For example, she and the business women's forum (of which she is patron) have started a campaign to get women to share among themselves. 'We are saying at this time of economic hardship that if you have ten pairs of shoes surely you can afford to part with one. If you have nappies in the cupboard because your children have grown up, surely you can share them with a mother using newspapers because she cannot afford nappies.”

But when you ask her about the key challenges of her council, the Chiredzi women's rights campaigner cites bringing about gender balance to a council comprising two women and seven men in the next election, as well as mainstreaming gender in the work of the council. Chipembere sees gender budgeting as a critical tool for ensuring that the needs of women are catered for. “Women need to have a strong voice in decision-making,” she said. “They also need to be empowered to exercise their rights.”

This chapter concerns how to move from the every day concerns of women on the ground to addressing their more strategic needs. The argument put forward is that unless gender considerations are embedded in the work of councils, contributions by outstanding women like Chipembere will come and go with these gender champions. The gender gaps in local government are clear. Many strategies and action plans are in place. What is now required is concerted action to build these into practise.

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

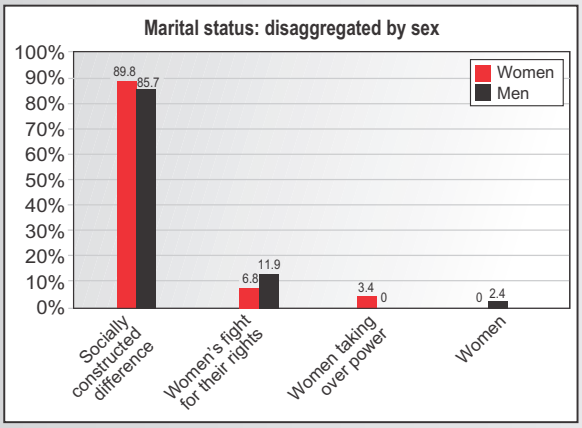
provision, health care and employment. Thus, for example, when poor women are given the option of loans and opt for sewing machines rather than purchasing land and starting an agro business, this option satisfies an immediate practical need to generate income within a safe space. But it does not challenge 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 wealth creation is based.



The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development addresses strategic needs.
Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna

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.

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 the majority (88%) of all councillors chose the conventionally accepted definition of gender (socially constructed differences between women and men) but more women (90%) than men (86%) chose the correct response. The second most common response was "women's fight for their rights" with more men (12%) than women (7%) choosing this as the meaning of gender.

These figures are higher than original At the Coalface study which found that overall 76% of all councillors chose the socially constructed differences between women and men, also with more men (79%) than women (73%) choosing the correct response. This finding is an indication that despite the smaller numbers of women in local government there is still quite a high level of understanding about what gender means.

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. 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).



Melania Mandeya of the Women in Local Government Forum is concerned with outcomes. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

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 cited 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 Zimbabwe very little 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 SADC Protocol 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 mainstreaming requires planning. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

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 Zimbabwe 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 Government of Zimbabwe has made an attempt to address gender inequalities through various pieces of legislation. The National Gender Policy was developed in an effort to provide the framework for engendering sectoral policies, programmes, projects and activities at all levels of society and in the economy.

There is also a National Gender Policy Implementation Strategy and Work Plan with priority areas for gender mainstreaming and empowerment for women during the period 2008 - 2012. The purpose of this strategy is to operationalise the government's commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment. One of the objectives for mainstreaming gender and women's empowerment into policies, strategies, programmes and processes in Zimbabwe is to track the progress made on the participation of women in decision-making and leadership positions.

The goals of the policy are:

- To eliminate all negative economic, social and political policies, cultural and religious practices that impede equality and equity of the sexes.
- To mainstream gender in all aspects of the development process.
- To ensure sustainable equity, equality and empowerment of women in Zimbabwe in all spheres of life.

The national gender machinery consists primarily the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development with gender focal units in the line ministries and government departments. The gender machinery has got structures that are decentralized to the province, the district and down to the ward level in the communities.

Gender policies and mainstreaming at the council level

Both the Urban Councils Association of Zimbabwe (UCAZ) and the Association of Rural District Councils of Zimbabwe (ARDCZ) have been involved in various initiatives to address gender inequalities at the local government level. In December 2000 UCAZ conducted a situation analysis of gender mainstreaming in urban councils, while the ARDC developed a sectoral gender policy to guide their process. These initiatives have shown an awareness of gender and the importance of ensuring that gender inequalities are addressed in this sphere of government. Unfortunately, however, implementation has not really happened. And in the past few years the two associations have begun trying to bring their initiatives together for a common cause.

In light of this the two organisations have come together under the umbrella Zimbabwe Local Government Association (ZILGA) to develop a gender strategy for both urban and rural councils. The overall goal of the ZILGA Gender Policy which is in its fourth draft, is to mainstream gender in the development process and to enhance participation of women and men for sustainable and equitable development and equal access to services.



Debating strategies: ARDC Secretary General Roger Mozhenty, GL Executive Diretor Colleen Lowe Morna and ARDC Gender Co-ordinator Lucy Furamera.

Photo: Priscilla Maposa

Table 13: Gender management systems in Zimbabwe

Council	GFP	Functions	TOR	Reports to	Other position in council	Gender committee	Policy/ Plan	Status	SHP	Gender programmes	Budget/ Support
Bindura	Yes	None	No	Town Clerk	DD Finance, Acting Chamber Secretary	No	No	N/A	No	No	None
Bubi	Yes	Educate women on their rights	No		Finance officer	No	No	N/A	No	No	None
Bulawayo	Yes	Coordination of gender activities	No	HR Manager	Senior safety officer	No	No	N/A	No	No	None
Chimanimani	No		N/A			No	No	N/A	No	No	None
Gweru	Yes	Responsible for mainstreaming gender and coordinating gender related programmes	No	Town Clerk	Assistant Director	No	Yes	Draft	No	Poverty alleviation, HIV and AIDS programmes, Income generation, GBV campaigns	None
Harare	Yes	N/A	No	Town Clerk	Council Chamber Secretary	No	Yes	Draft	Yes	No	None
Kadoma	Yes	Representing gender issues in council, organising the community, bringing women's issues into the budget, ensuring job ads cater for women	No	Town Clerk		No	No	N/A	No	HIV counselling, Supporting old people's homes, HIV policy	USD5000
Kwe Kwe	Yes	Sensitising council on gender issues, gender mainstreaming, training, policy development	No	Chamber Secretary	Chamber Secretary, Deputy CEO	No	No	N/A	No	None	None
Masvingo	Yes	Check policies and budgets to ensure they are gender aware	No		Matron	No	No	N/A	No	No	None
Mutoko	No	None	N/A	N/A	N/A	No	No	N/A	No	No	None
Ruwa	No	None	N/A	N/A	N/A	No	No	N/A	No	No	None
Tongogara	No	None	N/A	N/A	N/A	No	No	N/A	No	No	None
Umguza	Yes	Coordinate meetings, establish projects	N/A	CEO	Campfire officer	No	No	N/A	No	No	None
Zvimba	No	None	N/A	N/A	N/A	No	No	N/A	No	No	None
Zvishavane	No	None	N/A	N/A	N/A	No	No	N/A	No	No	None

The research found that at the local government level little effort is being made to develop gender policies or to develop strategies to mainstream gender. Table 13 shows that of 15 councils reviewed only two (Gweru and Harare) have developed or started to develop gender policies. While eight of the 15 councils (53%) have gender focal persons these individuals have other full time positions and they have no clear terms of reference regarding their functions, roles and responsibilities.

Only two councils have gender specific programmes and these are closely linked with the care work that women are expected to perform and do not appear to address the strategic needs of women in communities. There are no gender committees in any of the councils and only one council attested to receiving a small budget for gender related activities. One council has a sexual harassment policy (SHP).

Taking up gender issues in the Garden City



Persuaded: Dr Tendai Mahachi, CEO of Harare. *Photo: Gender Links*

Harare - Zimbabwe's capital city - is known as the Garden City for its leafy parks and convivial ambiance. Although the economic down turn of the last few years has hit the City badly, its officials are working around the clock to restore some of its former glory. And they are coming around to the awareness that gender mainstreaming could be part of the winning strategy.

When GL first made a presentation to the city management team in late 2009, most expressed scepticism, wanting to know what gender had to do with their everyday challenges of keeping the lights on, water running and city clean. But when they scored themselves using the gender and local government score card, the team came up with a dismal score of 27%. A high powered delegation, led by Harare City Council CEO Tendai Mahachi subsequently participated in the GL Gender Justice and Local Government Summit in March 2010. The programme included a briefing by the City of Johannesburg on its gender mainstreaming programme.

On his return to Harare, Mahachi employed women drivers for street cleaning trolleys: a job previously the sole preserve of men. Harare has since joined the Centres of Excellence (COE) in Gender Mainstreaming programme. At the time of writing GL had conducted a situation analysis that revealed the following:

Gender policy framework

At policy level, the City of Harare (CoH) has been somewhat gender-responsive. The CoH was the first council that came up with a housing policy that protects women. The policy states that if one is married,

you will not cede your rights unless there is mutual consent by the spouses. Even though the housing policy allows that women can be on a waiting list in their own right, what is lacking, however, is that there is no prioritisation as such that women will always get first preference.

Sexual harassment policy

A Sexual Harassment policy exists in the CoH. It is included in one of the modules covered during the induction of councillors. Ncube points out that during the induction sessions *"It was a struggle to get councillors to seriously appreciate gender concepts. Councillors would refer to biblical quotes despite the fact that most of these councillors are young man and not old men at all!"*

In the Code of Conduct of the CoH, there are provisions there that make Sexual Harassment a disciplinary offence. According to Ncube: *"The major constraint, however, is at enforcement and implementation levels as workers, especially female workers in the lower ranks still need to have their capacities built to empower them so that they can recognize sexual harassment when it occurs and the courage to report sexual harassment incidences when they arise."*

Gender issues in council agenda

There are no gender issues that have been tabled in the council agenda except the policy review made on the Sexual Harassment Policy Code of Conduct and the Housing Policy. There is a motion that was tabled and is still in draft form.

Employment policy and affirmative action

There is no affirmative action policy as such in the CoH when it comes to employment. In the CoH, below the Assistant Director level[1], there are many women i.e. at the highest leadership and decision-making echelons on the council. Women are crowded in the lower levels as clerks, sweepers and council nurses in the health department. At middle management Assistant Director Level, there are a few women. In the Health Department, the Assistant Director is female and she is responsible for Nursing Services (a department also dominated by women).

In the Finance Department, there are no women at Assistant Director Level - the department is dominated by men. The Assistant Director of the Housing Department is female (Mrs Fologwe) while the Deputy Director is male. In the Urban Planning Department, there are many women urban planners but not at the highest decision-making levels. Men still dominate. In the Engineering Services Department, there are again no women, not even at professional level i.e. there are no female engineers. In the Waste Management Department, men dominate in the higher decision-making levels yet at lower levels the majority employees are women *(female sweepers)*.



City of Harare Council Secretary Josephine Ncube is the highest ranking woman employee. *Photo: Priscilla Maposa*

[1] 4th Grade/Level according to Council employee grading scales.
[2] In the CoH, since 2003, women have been the Chief Legal Officers.

At Chamber Secretary Level, Josephine Ncube is the highest ranking female but at Grade 4 level, there are no women. The Chief Legal Officer is a man (since 2009). He took over from a female Chief Legal Officer who resigned[2]. In the legal office below the 4th Grade level, there are 3 women out of 2 men. In terms of gender balance, there is still a huge discrepancy as one goes up the leadership and decision-making ladder at the CoH council administration levels. What makes it even harder is the absence of an institutionalised gender policy in the CoH council.

Moving forward

The political leaders are very much in support of gender mainstreaming and evidence is obtained from previous meetings with the mayor Muchadeyi Masunda, and deputy mayor Emmanuel Chiroto. One of the male councillors, Phumulani Musagwiza raised a motion to have the council adopt gender policy. Musagwziza regularly speaks on gender issues and coined the slogan: "2015: Yes we can!" at the Gender Justice and Local Government Summit. GL is hopeful that Harare will complete all the COE stages in 2011.

Establishing Centres of Excellence

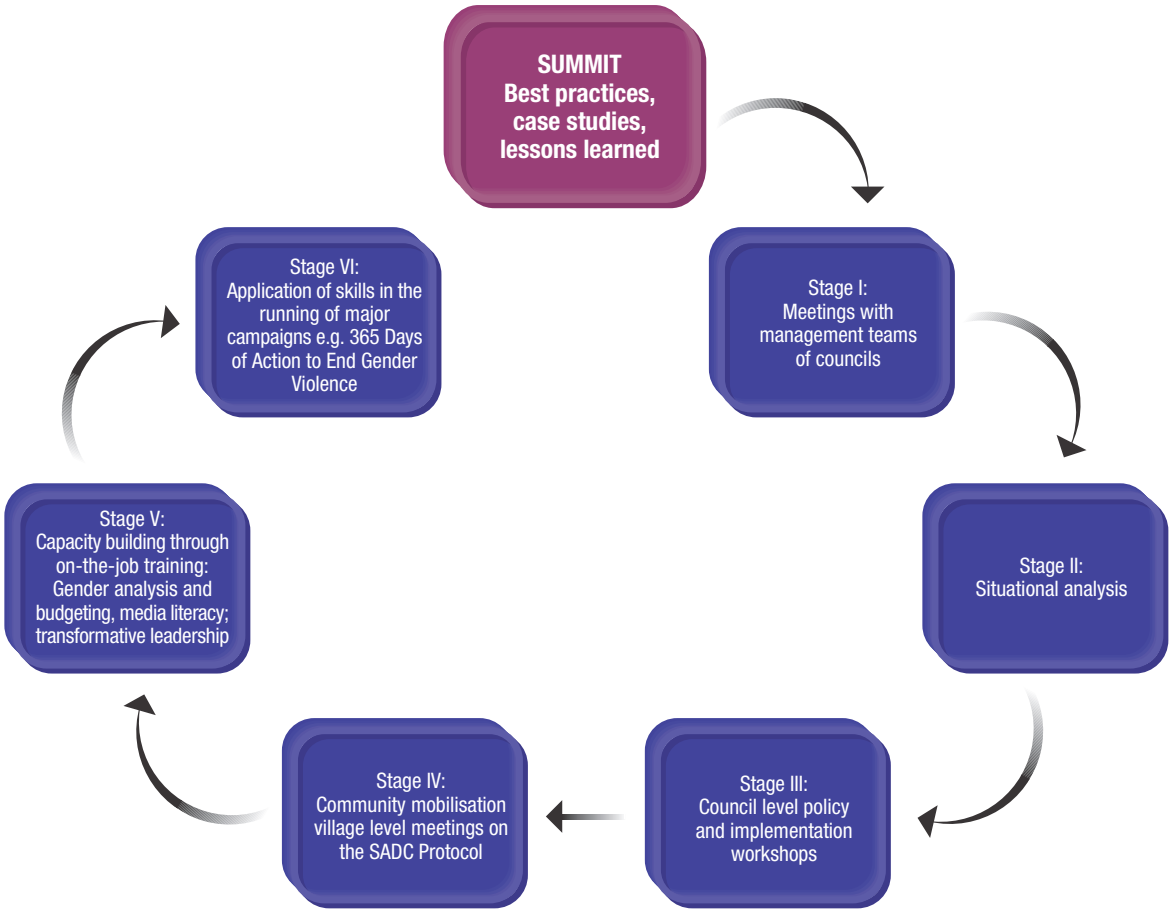
The Centres of Excellence for Gender Mainstreaming in Local Government are an outcome of gender and local government research, strategies and Gender and GBV action plans roll-out that have been taking place from 2007 - 2010 across municipalities in the SADC region that GL has been working with. This initiative seeks to ensure that key councils are identified across the region and worked with very closely in their process of getting gender on their council's agenda. This will take place through sustained interventions that bring together policy, implementation, capacity building through-on-the-job training, monitoring and evaluation and the annual sharing of good practices at the annual Gender Justice and Local Government Summit.

The approach builds on experience that GL has gained over several years in working with media houses on developing and implementing gender policies and action plans through a six stage process, as well as several years collaboration with the City of Johannesburg on its gender audit, policy and gender mainstreaming programme.

The approach also seeks to develop synergy in GL programme work by focusing various projects from our SADC Gender Protocol, governance, media and justice programmes in specific localities. These include: including the GBV and local government action plans; on-the-job training for women in politics; village workshops on the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development and media literacy. Working closely with the local government associations with whom we have close links, we will seek to mobilize resources and create multiplier effects from the initial 100 councils in at least ten countries that we work with.

In Zimbabwe GL is working with the following ten councils, Harare CC, Chitungwiza MC, Ruwa LB, Makoni RDC, Beitbridge TC, Victoria Falls MC, Kariba MC, Gweru CC, Chiredzi TC and Bulawayo CC. The stages of the process are illustrated and described below:





Stage I: *Meetings with management teams of councils* - During this stage key municipal councils need to be identified that have gender and GBV action plans that would like to work with GL around council level policies and action plans around gender - and a GL country facilitators will engage councils around hosting meetings with management teams of these councils to get buy in and support for the policy and action plan process.

Stage II: *Situational Analysis* - During this stage country facilitators need to do situational analyses of the identified councils, i.e. they need to define and interpret the state of the council with regard to gender issues, e.g. where gender is on the council's agenda in terms of gender mainstreaming across departments and programmes, etc.

Stage III: *Council level policy and implementation workshops* - At this stage GL will host policy and implementation workshops with these identified councils based around the needs and courses/ modules identified by the councils - module content will be designed by GL.

Stage IV: *Community mobilisation village level meetings on the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development* - during this stage GL, in conjunction with the elected steering committee will be doing



Zimbabwean delegation to the Gender Justice and Local Government Summit. *Photo: Susan Tolmay*

backstopping and host follow up meetings with councils that have done policy and implementation to ensure that these councils get the necessary support and capacity building through on-the-job training.

Stage V: *Capacity building through on-the-job training: Gender analysis and budgeting; media literacy; transformative leadership* - The on-the-job training focussed on key areas like gender analysis, transformative leadership, strategic communication, etc. workshops, engage communities (community participation) around the policies and action plans and do indentified gender modules with councils and communities to ensure that positive cycle continues.

Stage VI: *Application of skills in the running of major campaigns, e.g. 365 Days of Action to End Gender Based Violence* - during this final stage, GL in partnership with the council and the bigger community will work towards a 'big event', i.e. a big 16 Days initiative to ensure that the council and the community works towards one collaborative 16 Days activity as it is often found that communities are brought on board too late when 16 Days activities are planned for.

Best practices, case studies, lessons learned: Amidst this, GL will also continuously scout and market the annual local government and gender justice summit and awards. The 'event', if planned for correctly and is successful, can then be entered

into the summit in the category 'specific GBV campaigns'.

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 almost non-existent in local councils in Zimbabwe. While some council's have appointed GFP's, these individuals have no terms of reference, budget or support to undertake gender related programmes. UCAZ and the ARDC have undertaken separate gender initiatives with not too much success but they are now working together under the umbrella ZILGA to develop a gender policy for all local councils in Zimbabwe.

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 take place then there is a high probability that it will not occur. Working in partnership GL, UCAZ and the ARDCZ are establishing ten centres of excellence in Zimbabwe for mainstreaming gender in local government.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



Councillors Constance Bangani and Carolyn Munjoma from Chimanimani at the Kadoma women empowerment workshop.
Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna

The findings of the research may be summarised as follows:

Women are under-represented in every area of local governance: At 18.8%, Zimbabwe is below the average of 23.9% of women in local government in the SADC region and 31.5% below the SADC target of 50%. Women are also under-represented as mayors and committee members and chairpersons.

The electoral system has an adverse effect on women: Zimbabwe 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.

A quota would help: Zimbabwe 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.

Socialisation, culture and patriarchy: Culture and patriarchy are still deeply rooted in Zimbabwe society and this remains one of the biggest obstacles for women to overcome. 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. Interventions to address gender equality in Zimbabwe will need to include strategies that target this particular hurdle.

Lack of resources: Women identified lack of resources as their second 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. Once in council similar barriers exists and are exacerbated by unreasonable expectations of constituents who sometimes expect financial assistance from councillors.

FACT FILE

Women in local government in Zimbabwe

- 18.8% women in local government
- 19% in rural districts.
- 17% in urban councils.
- Four councils (4.3%) have no women representation at all.
- Two councils have achieved parity between women and men councillors.
- 12 councils have achieved or surpassed the 30% mark.
- 4.3% women mayors/council chairpersons.
- 3.2 % women CEO's.
- 21% women members of committees
- 19.5% women chairs of committees

Political violence and intimidation: Interviews with councillors and focus groups with community members highlighted the issue of political violence both as a barrier to women getting into local politics as well as to their ability to participate effectively once they were in. Socialisation and a patriarchal society in which predefined stereotypical roles are ascribed to women and men are also used to promote and sustain violence against women. The roles ascribed to women which keep them looking after the home and the welfare of the children, make it challenging for them to venture into politics because there is a high risk of injury to themselves and their family.

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.

Women still lack support: Whether in councils (from men and women), in the community or in the home, many women councillors 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. Women come up against resistance from men in council, women and men in communities. There



Making a difference: Cll Danisa Mujere is an advocate of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

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. The research found that the majority of women feel a responsibility towards representing other women's issues. 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.

But numbers are important: 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, background and grounding, support, role models and capacity building.

Attitudes are changing: Many of the women and men spoke about how having women in local government has had a positive impact on gender relations in communities. Women, especially feel that they are more respected in society as a result of the increased representation of women in local decision-making.

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 scarce: Only two councils (out of 92) have started to develop policies or programmes. 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. ZILGA has developed draft Gender Policy which is in its fourth draft and is yet to be adopted. In the absence of policies, gender is not an issue in councils or it is dealt with in an ad hoc way.

Recommendations

Key recommendations emerging from this study are as follows:

Learning from SADC Zimbabwe is one of the only SADC countries that has signed and ratified the 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. Zimbabwe has the opportunity to learn from other SADC countries which have managed to achieve 30% and more women in local government but specifically from Lesotho which has managed to achieve 58% women in decision-making, with a constituency system and a constitutional quota.



Director of gender Caroline Matizha (left) played a key role in the adoption of the SADC gender protocol. She is photographed here with Cll Pat Ndlovhu from Beit Bridge. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

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.

Building a gender quota into the new Constitution: Efforts to ensure that the new Constitution enshrines gender equality and includes a specific quota for women's representation in decision-making must be intensified. In particular, the demand for a gender quota in the paper on the "Local government we want" needs to be reinstated and vigorously lobbied for.

Holding peaceful, free and fair elections in 2011: This is essential for women's participation as voters and candidates, as well as for the health of democracy.

Finalise, adopt and implement the gender strategy for local government: ZILGA should finalise and adopt the Gender Policy for local Government and ensure that it is popularised and implemented by councils.

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 committees and quotas for land allocation and procurement etc. be addressed in these plans.

Cascading of the Centres of Excellence: In 2010 GL - in partnership with UCAZ and the ARDC - has worked with ten councils to develop Centres of Excellence for gender mainstreaming. This is a practical model for ensuring that policies are not left on paper but get implemented. There is now need to come up with strategies for replicating the COE's through capacity building for the local associations as well as peer education to cascade this work across the country.

Communities should be educated: Civic education on the role and responsibilities of councillors will be beneficial to both councillors and community members. To community members, 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 affect how they are perceived and so that 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.



The Zimbabwe Centres of Excellence are inspired by the Gender Justice and Local Government Summit. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

Partnering with men: The are examples of the positive attitudes shown by men and it is possible for men not only to be supportive of the struggle for gender equality, but to also enable it. Men should also be targeted and be sensitised on issues of gender equality because the process of changing attitudes begins with awareness.

Support mechanisms: ZILGA, councils and civil society should begin to implement 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.

The Gender and Governance Forum: Strong partnerships should be developed with gender organisations to tap into their technical expertise in order to support the gender and local governance agenda. A number of the councillors interviewed benefited from training or some form of exposure provided by civil society groups that work on gender issues. Local government authorities in the region are directly benefiting from joint planning and training initiatives with civil society groups to enhance gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment. This should give impetus to the Gender and Governance Forum that has held a few meetings under the auspices of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) but needs to be formalised; meet regularly; develop synergies between programmes; and ensure coordinated support for gender mainstreaming in local government.

Annex A List of Interviewees

Surname	Name	Council	Province	Sex		Political party	
Bakare	Samuel	Makoni RDC	Manicaland		Male	ZANU-PF	
Bango	Charity	City of Harare	Harare	Female			MDC-T
Batson	Kenias	Ngezi	Mashonaland West		Male	ZANU-PF	
Bent	Jennifer	Bulawayo CC	Matebeleland North	Female			MDC
Bhunu	Tangai	Makoni RDC	Manicaland		Male		MDC-T
Cecil	Mathambo	Bubi RDC	Matebeleland North		Male	ZANU-PF	
Chamunorwa	Kizito	Zvimba	Mashonaland West		Male	ZANU-PF	
Chifodya	Victor	City of Harare	Harare		Male		MDC-T
Chigodora	Patience	Norton	Mashonaland West	Female			MDC-T
Chigwaza	Pascalia	Makoni RDC	Manicaland	Female		ZANU-PF	
Chikambi	Francis	Zvimba	Mashonaland West		Male	ZANU-PF	
Chikoto	Blessing	Ngezi	Mashonaland West		Male		MDC
Chinawa	Rosemary	Mutoko RDC	Mashonaland East	Female		ZANU-PF	
Chinyongo	Maybe	Tongogara RDC	Midlands	Female		ZANU-PF	
Chiriri	Wendy	Chitungwiza	Harare	Female			MDC-T
Chisangowerota	Matambudziko	Ruwa	Mashonaland East		Male		MDC-T
Chitopo	Queenly	Kwekwe CC	Midlands	Female			MDC-T
Chitsa	Mununudzi	Makoni RDC	Manicaland		Male		MDC-T
Chivanga	Matty Namatira	Masvingo CC	Masvingo	Female		ZANU-PF	
Dlodlo	Sihle	Umguza RDC	Matebeleland North	Female		ZANU-PF	
Dzuda	Holly	Gweru CC	Midlands	Female			MDC-T
Gono	Johannes	Masvingo CC	Masvingo		Male		MDC-T
Hoshiki	Margaret	Zvimba	Mashonaland West	Female		ZANU-PF	
Jochore	Kenneth	Zvimba	Mashonaland West		Male	ZANU-PF	
Josiah	Grace	Masvingo CC	Masvingo	Female		ZANU-PF	
Kanyama	Tinei	Chitungwiza	Harare		Male		MDC-T
Kapenzi	Josias	Makoni RDC	Manicaland		Male		MDC-T
Karimazondo	Christopher	Mutoko RDC	Mashonaland East		Male	ZANU-PF	
Kariwo	Joyce	Ward 36 Mufakose	Harare	Female			MDC-T
Kativhu	Shame	Mutoko RDC	Mashonaland East		Male	ZANU-PF	
Khoza	Thembeni	Bulawayo CC	Matebeleland North	Female			MDC-T
Kwangwari	Despes	Tongogara RDC	Midlands	Female		ZANU-PF	
Linyane	Memory	Bubi RDC	Matebeleland North	Female			MDC
Lubimbi	Monica	Bulawayo CC	Matebeleland North	Female			MDC-T
Macharangwanda	Paula	City of Harare	Harare	Female			MDC-T
Mafios	Elizabeth	Bindura	Mashonaland Central	Female			MDC-T
Mafunga	Idah	Chitungwiza	Harare	Female			MDC-T
Mafuratidze	Goodwell	Chitungwiza	Harare		Male	ZANU-PF	
Mafusire	Benigna	Zvimba	Mashonaland West	Female		ZANU-PF	
Magura	Rachel	Mutoko RDC	Mashonaland East	Female		ZANU-PF	
Majachani	Florence	Makoni RDC	Manicaland	Female		ZANU-PF	
Makoni	Timothy	Makoni RDC	Manicaland		Male	ZANU-PF	
Makwara	Clara	Chitungwiza	Harare	Female			MDC
Mangezi	Luckson	Ngezi	Mashonaland West		Male	ZANU-PF	
Mangoni	Bessie	Zvimba	Mashonaland West	Female		ZANU-PF	
Marenje	Tedius	Tongogara RDC	Midlands		Male	ZANU-PF	
Mareverwa	Getmore	Zvimba	Mashonaland West		Male	ZANU-PF	
Maridza	Selina	Masvingo CC	Masvingo	Female			MDC
Marukutira	Nyemudzai	Norton	Mashonaland West	Female			MDC-T

Surname	Name	Council	Province	Sex		Political party	
Masendeke	Jane	Mutoko RDC	Mashonaland East	Female		ZANU-PF	
Matanhire	Ivory	Bindura	Mashonaland Central	Female			MDC
Matsangura	Sylet	Makoni RDC	Manicaland	Female		ZANU-PF	
Mavondo	Elves	Gweru CC	Midlands		Male		MDC-T
Mayepudzo	Mbira	Ruwa	Mashonaland East	Female			MDC
Mazike	Mavis	Kadoma	Mashonaland West	Female		ZANU-PF	
Midzi	Sheila	Tongogara RDC	Midlands	Female		ZANU-PF	
Mkosana	Helena	Kwekwe CC	Midlands	Female			MDC-T
Modhara	Gift	Tongogara RDC	Midlands		Male		MDC-T
Moyo	Joyce	Kadoma	Mashonaland West	Female			MDC
Moyo	David	Umguza RDC	Matebeleland North		Male	ZANU-PF	
Moyo	Thaba Patrick	Bulawayo CC	Matebeleland North		Male		MDC-T
Mpofu	Amen	Bulawayo CC	Matebeleland North		Male		MDC-T
Mpofu	Muchaneta	Gweru CC	Midlands	Female			MDC-T
Muchemwa	Rindai	Bindura	Mashonaland Central		Male		MDC-T
Mudadi	Vengai Washington	Bindura	Mashonaland Central		Male		MDC-T
Mufahove	Precious	Norton	Mashonaland West	Female			MDC-T
Mugabe	Caroline Tsitsi	Zvimba	Mashonaland West	Female		ZANU-PF	
Mugabe	Elijah	Chimanimani RDC	Manicaland		Male	ZANU-PF	ZANU-PF
Mugwira	Tinashe	Kadoma	Mashonaland West		Male		MDC
Muisa	Daniel	Chimanimani RDC	Manicaland		Male	ZANU-PF	
Mujere	Danisa	Tongogara RDC	Midlands	Female		ZANU-PF	
Munemo	Spiwe	Kadoma	Mashonaland West	Female			MDC-T
Munengu	David	Chimanimani RDC	Manicaland		Male		MDC
Munjoma	Carolyn	Chimanimani RDC	Manicaland	Female			MDC
Munokori	Tsitsi	Mutoko RDC	Mashonaland East	Female		ZANU-PF	
Musagwiza	Pumulani	City of Harare	Harare		Male		MDC-T
Mushayavanhu	Pinias Rabson	Ruwa	Mashonaland East		Male		MDC-T
Mushipe	Pardon	Zvishavane	Midlands		Male		MDC-T
Muzeya	Nolica	Zvimba	Mashonaland West	Female		ZANU-PF	
Ndhlovu	Lazarus	Ruwa	Mashonaland East	Female			MDC-T
Ndhlovu	Sitembile	Kadoma	Mashonaland West	Female			MDC
Ndlovu	Sithembisile	Bubi RDC	Matebeleland North	Female		ZANU-PF	
Nerutanga	Solomon	Norton	Mashonaland West		Male		MDC-T
Nhorido	Patience	Ngezi	Mashonaland West	Female			MDC
Nkomazana	Villiot	Bubi RDC	Matebeleland North		Male	ZANU-PF	
Nkomo	Sithokozile	Bubi RDC	Matebeleland North	Female		ZANU-PF	
Nyamukondiwa	Action	Kadoma	Mashonaland West		Male		MDC-T
Nyoni	Lettinah	Tongogara RDC	Midlands	Female		ZANU-PF	
Radzokota	Whisper	Makoni RDC	Manicaland	Female			MDC-T
Shelton	Mary	Umguza RDC	Matebeleland North	Female		ZANU-PF	
Taruvinga	Ruvarashe	Tongogara RDC	Midlands	Female		ZANU-PF	
Tobaiwa	Shadreck	Kwekwe CC	Midlands		Male		MDC-T
Tomu	Beauty	Zvimba	Mashonaland West	Female		ZANU-PF	
Tsuro	Wonder James	Gweru CC	Midlands		Male		MDC-T
U	Lorraine	Chitungwiza	Harare	Female			MDC-T
Zhou	Alluwis	Zvishavane	Midlands		Male		MDC
Zinyemba	Albert	Norton	Mashonaland West		Male		MDC-T
Zinyemba	Enita M	Norton	Mashonaland West	Female			MDC-T

Annex B

List of Interviews -Administration

Timothy Marango (CEO) and Elijah Mugebe (Council Chairperson) - Chimanimani RDC (13 January 2010)

Annette Breda (GFP) - Masvingo City Council (14 January 2010)

Adolf Gusha (Town Clerk) - Masvingo City Council (15 January 2010)

Mavis Mandoreva (Assistant Admin Officer) - Zvishavane Town Council (18 January 2010)

Alan Chaparadza (Acting Town Secretary) - Zvishavane Town Council (18 January 2010)

Mecer Dhliwayo (Acting CEO) - Tongogara RDC (19 January 2010)

Daniel Matewu (Town Clerk) - Gweru CC (21 January 2010)

Unity Jayi (GFP) - Gweru CC (21 January 2010)

Lucia Mkhandla (GFP, Council Chamber Secretary) - Kwe Kwe CC (22 January 2010)

Audrey Manyemwe (GFP) - Bulawayo CC (25 January 2010)

Middleton Nyoni (Town Clerk) - Bulawayo CC (25 January 2010)

Linda Sibanda (GFP) - Umguza RDC (27 January 2010)

Collen Moyo (CEO) - Umguza RDC (27 January 2010)

Patso Mlilo (CEO) - Bubi RDC (28 January 2010)

Stulile Ndlovy (GFP) - Bubi RDC (28 January 2010)

Fabiola Gozho (GFP) - Bindura Municipality

Japhet Kabanga (Town Clerk) - Bindura Municipality

Malvern Dondo (Town Clerk) - Kadoma City Council

Foustina Zhou (GFP) - Kadoma City Council

Edward Pise (CEO) - Makoni RDC

Mr Z Nhisza (Acting CEO) - Mutoko RDC

Julieth Makombe (Town Secretary) - Ruwa Local Town Board

Shacky Siyamayambo (CEO) - Zvimba RDC

Annex C

Women and men councillors per council

Province	Local Authority	Women	Men	Total	% women
BULAWAYO					
City	Bulawayo	4	25	29	13.8%
Rural District	Bulawayo/Umguza	5	14	19	26.3%
HARARE					
City	Harare	5	40	45	11.1%
Municipal	Chitungwiza	4	21	25	16.0%
Rural District	Manyame	5	16	21	23.8%
MANICALAND					
City	Mutare	2	17	19	10.5%
Town	Rusape	2	8	10	20.0%
Town	Chipinge	1	7	8	12.5%
Rural District	Makoni	8	30	38	21.1%
Rural District	Buhera	0	33	33	0.0%
Rural District	Chimanimani	3	20	23	13.0%
Rural District	Chipinge	3	27	30	10.0%
Rural District	Mutare	2	33	35	5.7%
Rural District	Mutasa	7	24	31	22.6%
Rural District	Nyanga	6	24	30	20.0%
MASHONALAND EAST					
Municipal	Marondera	1	11	12	8.3%
Local Board	Ruwa	1	8	9	11.1%
Local Board	Epworth	1	6	7	14.3%
Rural District	Marondera	5	18	23	21.7%
Rural District	Mutoko	7	22	29	24.1%
Rural District	Chikomba	4	26	30	13.3%
Rural District	Goromonzi	3	22	25	12.0%
Rural District	Hwedza	4	10	14	28.6%
Rural District	Mudzi	4	14	18	22.2%
Rural District	Murehwa	7	23	30	23.3%
Rural District	Uzumba-Maramba	5	12	17	29.4%
MASHONALAND WEST					
City	Kadoma	4	13	17	23.5%
Municipal	Chegutu	1	11	12	8.3%
Municipal	Kariba	3	6	9	33.3%
Municipal	Chinhoyi	1	14	15	6.7%
Town Council	Karoi	3	7	10	30.0%
Town Council	Norton	7	6	13	53.8%
Local Board	Chirundu	No elected council			
Rural District	Zvimba	8	33	41	19.5%
Rural District	Makonde	4	15	19	21.1%
Rural District	Chegutu	10	19	29	34.5%
Rural District	Kadoma/Sanyati	5	13	18	27.8%
Rural District	Nyami Nyami/Kariba	0	12	12	0.0%
Rural District	Kadoma/Ngezi /Mhondoro	3	11	14	21.4%
Rural District	Hurungwe	4	22	26	15.4%
MASHONALAND CENTRAL					
Municipal	Bindura	3	11	14	21.4%

Province	Local Authority	Women	Men	Total	% women
Rural District	Bindura	4	17	21	19.0%
Rural District	Guruve	4	20	24	16.7%
Rural District	Mazowe	7	28	35	20.0%
Rural District	Muzarabani	5	21	26	19.2%
Rural District	Rushinga	4	21	25	16.0%
Rural District	Pfura/Mt Darwin	3	36	39	7.7%
Rural District	Chaminuka/Shamva	7	22	29	24.1%
Rural District	Mbire	4	13	17	23.5%
MASVINGO					
Municipal	Masvingo	2	11	13	15.4%
Town	Chiredzi	2	7	9	22.2%
Rural District	Chiredzi	2	30	32	6.3%
Rural District	Bikita	3	28	31	9.7%
Rural District	Chivi	4	27	31	12.9%
Rural District	Gutu	9	37	46	19.6%
Rural District	Masvingo/Nemanwa	10	32	42	23.8%
Rural District	Mwenezi	3	14	17	17.6%
Rural District	Zaka	3	30	33	9.1%
MATEBELELAND NORTH					
Municipal	Victoria Falls	1	10	11	9.1%
Local Board	Hwange	1	14	15	6.7%
Rural District	Bubi	9	16	25	36.0%
Rural District	Binga	0	25	25	0.0%
Rural District	Hwange	4	16	20	20.0%
Rural District	Kusile	5	23	28	17.9%
Rural District	Nkayi	3	27	30	10.0%
Rural District	Lupane	6	17	23	26.1%
Rural District	Tsholotsho	1	20	21	4.8%
MATEBELELAND SOUTH					
Municipal	Gwanda	1	8	9	11.1%
Town	Plumtree	1	5	6	16.7%
Town	Beitbridge	1	5	6	16.7%
Rural District	Gwanda	2	22	24	8.3%
Rural District	Bulilimangwe	3	18	21	14.3%
Rural District	Beitbridge	3	13	16	18.8%
Rural District	Mangwe	6	11	17	35.3%
Rural District	Insiza	2	21	23	8.7%
Rural District	Matobo	4	20	24	16.7%
Rural District	Umzingwane	3	17	20	15.0%
MIDLANDS					
City	Gweru	2	16	18	11.1%
City	Kwe Kwe	4	10	14	28.6%
Municipal	Redcliff	2	7	9	22.2%
Town	Shurugwi	4	9	13	30.8%
Town	Zvishavane	0	10	10	0.0%
Town	Gokwe	2	4	6	33.3%
Rural District	Gokwe North	11	25	36	30.6%
Rural District	Gokwe South	8	25	33	24.2%
Rural District	Kwe Kwe/Zibagwe	10	23	33	30.3%
Rural District	Chirumanzu	6	19	25	24.0%
Rural District	Gweru / Vungu	6	13	19	31.6%
Rural District	Mberengwa	12	25	37	32.4%
Rural District	Zvishavane/Runde	7	12	19	36.8%
Rural District	Shurugwi/Tongogara	12	12	24	50.0%
TOTAL		**373**	**1616**	**1989**	**18.8%**

Source: GL, 2010

Annex D

Representation of women on council committees

Council	Members of committees				Chairperson			
	Women	Men	Total	% women	Women	Men	Total	% women
Umguza Rural Council	10	19	29	34%	3	3	6	**50.0%**
Harare City	5	54	59	8%	0	4	4	0.0%
Chitungwiza Municipal	7	40	47	15%	0	7	7	0.0%
Chipinge Town	4	15	19	21%	1	4	5	20.0%
Mutare City	2	40	42	5%	1	6	7	14.3%
Mutare Rural	4	36	40	10%	0	6	6	0.0%
Rusape Town	3	16	19	16%	0	5	5	0.0%
Makoni Rural	7	16	23	30%	1	3	4	25.0%
Nyanga Rural	7	19	26	27%	0	5	5	0.0%
Chimanimani Rural	2	18	20	10%	0	5	5	0.0%
Marondera Municipal	0	31	31	0%	0	5	5	0.0%
Epworth Local Board	1	9	10	10%	0	3	3	0.0%
Ruwa Local Board	3	26	29	10%	2	3	5	40.0%
Mutoko Rural	6	19	25	24%	1	4	5	20.0%
Murehwa Rural	11	27	38	29%	2	5	7	28.6%
Murondera Rural	6	23	29	21%	1	4	5	20.0%
Mudzi Rural	4	26	30	13%	2	2	4	**50.0%**
Chikomba Rural	4	27	31	13%	0	6	6	0.0%
Kadoma City	10	27	37	27%	1	3	4	25.0%
Kadoma/Ngezi Rural	8	22	30	27%	1	5	6	16.7%
Kadoma/Sanyati Rural	7	27	34	21%	2	4	6	33.3%
Chinhoyi Municipal	3	44	47	6%	1	7	8	12.5%
Chegutu Municipal	1	18	19	5%	1	3	4	25.0%
Kariba Municipal	14	21	35	40%	0	6	6	0.0%
Karoi Town	4	12	16	25%	1	2	3	33.3%
Norton Town	5	12	17	29%	1	2	3	33.3%
Makonde Rural	5	17	22	23%	0	6	6	0.0%
Zvimba Rural	5	27	32	16%	2	4	6	33.3%
Hurungwe Rural	6	30	36	17%	0	5	5	0.0%
Chegutu Rural	7	12	19	37%	1	3	4	25.0%
Pfura/Mt Darwin Rural	17	23	40	43%	4	1	5	**80.0%**
Bindura Municipal	9	32	41	22%	2	4	6	33.3%
Bindura Rural	2	33	35	6%	1	4	5	20.0%
Mbire Rural	6	21	27	22%	1	3	4	25.0%
Mazowe Rural	13	36	49	27%	1	5	6	16.7%
Muzarabani Rural	6	19	25	24%	1	4	5	20.0%
Chaminuka/Shamva Rural	11	28	39	28%	0	6	6	0.0%
Rushinga Rural	6	18	24	25%	0	5	5	0.0%
Masvingo City	3	15	18	17%	0	5	5	0.0%
Chiredzi Town	4	13	17	24%	1	3	4	25.0%
Masvingo/Nemanwa Rural	10	34	44	23%	2	4	6	33.3%
Zaka Rural	2	25	27	7%	0	4	4	0.0%
Bikita Rural	3	28	31	10%	2	4	6	33.3%
Gutu Rural	8	34	42	19%	1	5	6	16.7%
Tsholotsho Rural	3	26	29	10%	1	4	5	20.0%
Victoria Falls Municipal	3	31	34	9%	1	6	7	14.3%

Council	Members of committees				Chairperson			
	Women	Men	Total	% women	Women	Men	Total	% women
Hwange Local Board	1	16	17	6%	1	3	4	25.0%
Bubi Rural	11	15	26	42%	2	3	5	40.0%
Hwange Rural	4	13	17	24%	1	4	5	20.0%
Binga Rural	0	41	41	0%	0	7	7	0.0%
Lupane Town	5	20	25	20%	1	4	5	20.0%
Kusile rural	5	19	24	21%	1	2	3	33.3%
Beit Bridge Town	3	13	16	19%	3	1	4	**75.0%**
Gwanda Municipal	2	25	27	7%	0	6	6	0.0%
Gwanda Rural	4	27	31	13%	1	5	6	16.7%
Matobo Rural	9	23	32	28%	1	5	6	16.7%
Bulilimangwe Rural	4	21	25	16%	1	4	5	20.0%
Insiza Rural	5	26	31	16%	1	5	6	16.7%
Beit Bridge Rural	10	21	31	32%	2	4	6	33.3%
Gokwe Town	4	13	17	24%	2	3	5	40.0%
Gweru City	4	41	45	9%	1	4	5	20.0%
Kwe Kwe City	8	13	24	33%	0	5	5	0.0%
Zvishavane/Runde Rural	11	22	33	33%	2	3	5	40.0%
Shurugwi Town	4	14	18	22%	1	3	4	25.0%
Redcliff Municipal	9	21	30	30%	0	5	5	0.0%
Gokwe North Rural	13	29	42	31%	2	5	7	28.6%
Vungu/Gweru Rural	11	20	31	35%	2	4	6	33.3%
Zibagwe/Kwe Kwe Rural	12	27	39	31%	1	5	6	16.7%
Mberengwa Rural	12	24	36	33%	0	5	5	0.0%
Chirumanzu Rural	8	22	30	27%	1	4	5	20.0%
Shurugwi/Tongogara Rural	10	10	20	**50%**	2	2	4	**50.0%**
TOTAL	**436**	**1682**	**2121**	**21%**	**72**	**298**	**370**	**19.5%**

Source: Information collected from councils during the research November 2009 - February 2010

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GENDER AND GOVERNANCE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

Key targets in the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development



Article 5: Affirmative action

- State parties should put in place affirmative action measures in order to eliminate all barriers that prevent women from participating meaningfully in all spheres of life and create a conducive environment for such participation.

Article 12: Representation

- By 2015, at least 50 percent of decision-making positions in the public and private sectors should be held by women.
- Any measures taken (to increase representation), legislative or otherwise, should be accompanied by public awareness campaigns which show the importance of the equal representation and participation of women and men in decision-making and that this is integral to, democracy, good governance and citizen participation.

Article 13: Participation

- State parties should put in place policies, strategies and programmes to ensure equal participation of women and men in decision-making.

"Resentment is due to lack of understanding of gender policies and the need to conscientise and educate the masses. I have a daughter and she needs a platform where she can say my father smoothed things for me and has empowered the girl child from providing her with educational to business opportunities. I say: *2015: Yes we can! Yes we can! The time is now!*".

- Councillor Phumulani Musagwiza, City of Harare





(From left to right) Melania Mandeya, Josephine Ncube, Colleen Lowe Morna, Cllr Benadett Chipembere, Cllr Pamela Mutari, Cllr Patricia Mwale, Cllr Tracey Ndoro, Cllr Holly Dzuda, Lucy Mkandhla, (Front) Priscilla Maposa

gender links

UKaid from the Department for International Development

Danida

Association of Rural District Councils

Est. 1901 Esto Perpetua

www.genderlinks.org.za