

Introduction

This collection of studies of the work being undertaken by women's organizations and progressive organizations in Kenya aims to identify a few of the many examples of projects of promoting gender equality and the advancement of women.

Women's organizations have flourished in Kenya given the context of a thriving civil society. Furthermore, international world conferences on women have most importantly positioned women's organizations as key stakeholders with their governments in acting on women's concerns. In Kenya, it is also women's organizations that have encouraged governments to adopt gender equality policies and national plans.

The case studies in this report show the extent and range of gender work by 14 women's organizations and Non-governmental organizations responding to the structural, political and cultural barriers that women continue to face. The study illuminates how these non-governmental organizations position themselves to innovate and address a whole spectrum of challenges that include:

- The persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women; and the inequalities in economic structures and policies, and access to resources.
- Violence against women.
- Inequalities and unequal access to education.
- Inequalities and unequal access to health care and inadequacies in services.
- Disabling affects of armed conflict and civil strife on women.
- Inequality between women and men in sharing of power and decision making at all levels.
- Insufficient support to mechanisms that promote the advancement of women.
- Persistent discrimination against and the violation of the rights of the girl child.
- Challenges to safeguarding the natural environment.
- Inadequate protection and promotion of the human rights of women.

The diversity and range of responses contained in this report show what is involved in the hard work to bring about changes with the objective of securing both the strategic interests of women as well as the providing for the practical needs of women. With the later forming the bulk of interventions. Women's organizations are giving voice to women's concerns besides providing services, and reaching women and communities that are often not availed of adequate support by government.

While women's organizations are perceived as a vehicle for social change, they are often challenged in terms of sustained financial, human and material resources undermining their ability to influence political and economic agendas. Thus the work of genuinely empowering women and transforming relations of power remains largely unsupported. Nevertheless, the language of gender equality and the demand to advance women's rights continues to firmly move forward. Resources and support continues to be needed to facilitate the efforts of the women and men working for transformed gender relations.

Dr. Jacinta Muteshi



Background

The contributions and level of involvement of women, their civil society organizations and progressive non-government organizations in the quest for gender equality and women's empowerment has been vigorous and ongoing in Kenya for several decades. Women's organizations have been identified as the key stakeholders in achieving the Beijing Platform for Action often working alone but increasingly in collaboration with other progressive non-governmental organizations and governments to advance the status of women. Women's organizations as a significant space for "the articulation of women's needs, and the application of women's solutions"¹ are therefore the important focus of this study. The recent, March 2005, 10th review of the Beijing Platform for Action and Kenya's upcoming CEDAW reporting therefore makes it timely and relevant to bring a systematic recognition and reflection on the gender work underway in Kenya especially by women's organizations.

The **Heinrich Böll Foundation** has commissioned this study:

- To document in a holistic and integrated way the role of non-governmental actors, especially women's organizations to realize the twelve critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform For Action.
- To promote gender equality in projects and programmes through best practices and lessons learnt and to share these lessons and strategies with organizations and institutions involved in promoting gender equality and the advancement of women.

The following study specifically maps selected examples of gender equality work by non-governmental and women's organizations that have become well recognized and respected in Kenya with regard to specific areas of influence that advances women's rights.

By sharing elements of good practice that organizations have self-selected as supportive of successful outcomes the intent of the study is to:

- Develop a way forward in partnership with key national level actors that will promote and inform the work that the Heinrich Böll Foundation, will undertake, to support activities within organizations promoting gender equality and the advancement of women.

¹ Siobhan Riordan, 2002. "Put your money where your mouth is! The need for public investment in women's organizations," Gender in the 21st Century. Caroline Sweetman, ed. Oxfam Focus on Gender. Oxford, UK. p. 64

- Serve to inform and share experiences with other partner countries in the region. This project was conceived as the first stage of a Heinrich Böll Foundation review process in which the Foundation sought knowledge to add value, ensure relevance and inform their work in Kenya.

On completion of the study a forum was created for Women's NGOs, United Nations and other international and national organizations, and private sector actors to participate in a seminar to promote and incorporate an expanded critical reflection of the above documented lessons of the work. The report was refined and finalized through collaborative discussions

Design and Scope of the Study

Efforts to press forward on promoting positive actions that correct historical patterns of discrimination as well as emerging concerns have provided several lessons for exemplifying those actions that help advance women's rights and gender equality. This study seeks to identify and share more widely organizations' self selected examples of best practices and lessons learnt utilizing criteria that can positively be shown to promote and sustain good practices in advancing women's rights. For example:

1. Practices lead to change that contributes to gender equality and equity.
2. Practices break new ground or provide new examples of forms of action in gender equality work.
3. Practices make visible and measurable changes in gender relations, or the gender balance, or women's girls' options and opportunities.
4. Practices create an enabling environment for gender concerns.

In this study, 14 women's organizations and progressive non-governmental organizations undertaking gender equality work were purposively targeted for review. Selecting organizations was a function of time and resources available for the study. The selected organizations were those characterized as National NGOs signifying that they either had offices in several of the country's provinces or district and their activities had national reach in order to understand and capture the diversity of the work being undertaken. The organizations selected were therefore those able to do all of the following:

- Work with organizations such as CBOs (Community Based Organizations) at the grassroots who either have direct links with the women or; they themselves work to directly support women from these very communities.

- Given their high profile, they are well placed and able to influence national policy and engage with government as informed by their activities at the grassroots and thus better located to contribute to the goals set out under the BPFA.
- Have the ability to absorb funds from donors given their size and level of activity and were therefore more often funded to fulfill their mandates with regard to gender equality work.
- Act as a conduit for funding to those organizations at the grassroots who in-turn is best able to carry out the activities that help to empower and advance women.
- Have the capacity and resources to document their activities and thus monitor their actions.

The two exceptions to the national NGOs included in this study is the Young Women's Leadership Institute (YWLI) and Coalition for Peace in Africa (COPA). YWLI became part of this study in the recognition that "there will continue to be a vacuum created in the women's movement, whereby younger women will not have the necessary skills and experience to actively and informatively contribute"² unless recognized and mentored to do so. COPA is a membership organization supporting community organizations to address conflict through out Africa. Thus the work on peace-building initiatives by women included in this report captures local community-based initiatives that were supported by COPA.

The study preparation began with the consultant facilitating a consultative stakeholders' workshop to share the concept of the study. This was followed by a desk study that involved identification of what information was already available on the issues under discussion, and what information gaps needed to be filled. The study was developed to capture how organizations are responding to the immense need for support coming from women in a climate of inadequate policies, human, financial and material resources for gender equality work. Each of the NGOs in the study self selected a maximum of three of their own projects that they perceived as highlighting their best practices and success addressing the Platform for Action and/or CEDAW. Field visits were conducted with each organisation. Interviews were carried out with programme staff.

² Morale Ogundipe-Leslie, 1998. "Conceptualizing Gender in Africa." Akina mama wa Afrika Report. The African Women's Leadership Institute. January 31st - February 14th 1998, Entebbe, Uganda.

Several open-ended questions broadly captured below guided the discussions with the study participants:

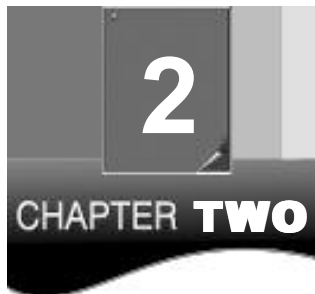
- Who is doing what, what is the source of their resources and where are their activities targeted (by region, age group, social profile and sector)?
- What is the nature of the activities? What - if any - documentation by CSOs/NGOs.
- What have been the outcomes, effects, consequences of the interventions with regard to the above mentioned activities?
- What have been the challenges of implementing the above mentioned activities?
- What are key lessons that can be identified?

The consultant conducted analysis of the field data reports with feedback to Heinrich Böll Foundation. This analysis and reflection by the consultant was presented to the Stakeholders in a workshop seminar for feedback on findings, interpretations, critical reflection on:

- How organizations think about gender equality work and women's empowerment.
- Organizing, strategizing and actions undertaken to further gender equality work.

Following the feedback session from the various stakeholders, the consultant incorporated the suggestions and produced the final report for publishing.

To capture more fully the context in which gender equality work is being organized and implemented, two articles have been sourced and incorporated into this study. The first article by Jane Kiragu points to the historical strength of the women's movement in Kenya; offering insights into the vibrancy of women's leadership as well as the cleavages that have challenged collective actions. The second article by Betty Maina brings attention to the role the Kenya government has played that will enable or constrain opportunities and options for advancing gender equality work.



The Context of Gender Work

The momentum and pressure to challenge and change the structures and relationships that perpetuate women's subordination can be traced to women's well developed networks and organizations that not only prioritize local, national and international agendas for gender equality but also include their involvement in articulating coherent common positions on gender equality issue; their participation in educating their governments and the public on issues of concern to women; and their direct provision of services and support to women and children. At the same time the global call to advance gender equality and women's empowerment has brought focus, strong recognition and collaborative actions in addressing gender concerns.

Peggy Antrobus (2004) has outlined how critical and crucial have been the links that exist between the actions on the part of women organizing locally and the interventions at the international level. The United Nations has played an especially important role in bringing attention to issues that determined the context of women's organizing in the countries of the South (Antrobus, 2004: 34).

Specifically, it is the strengthening over time of the membership by the countries of the south in the United Nations that helped raise issues of women's rights and brought diverse women into the UN system; raising their role and status. The United Nations has provided a forum that enables women to recognize and share the commonality of their experiences; positioning them to articulate a global women's rights movement and shared platforms for action that inform local work.

International obligations and commitments³

If gender equality work, particularly at the present time, is in many ways a response to developments in the international arena it is useful to track these activities in the international environment. For the goal of gender equality is an integral part of international obligations and agreements that is increasingly reflected in the way women have identified the problems they face, the mechanisms sought to address gender concerns and the projects that are designed in response. In the last three decades Kenyan women's activism has been informed by a series of national, regional and global discussions that have influenced and nurtured an environment that sustains and supports gender work.

³ Peggy Antrobus. 2004. *The Global Women's Movement*. Zed Books Ltd, London and New York.

♦ ***The UN Decade for Women 1975-85***

The first key global women's conference held in Mexico City in 1975 launched the Women's Decade (1976-85), bringing unprecedented attention to issues of concern for women around the world. The significance of that decade designation was that in the same year the General Assembly set out three goals that would come to guide the work for the advancement of women and inform intergovernmental discussions from 1975 up to the Beijing Conference in 1995. The three goals included Equality, Development and Peace; their validity assured by their successive reviews at each world conference for women. The goals called for actions "to promote equality between women and men, to ensure the full integration of women in the total development effort and to increase women's contributions to the strengthening of world peace".⁴ It is during the Decade for Women that:

- Themes on Equality, Development and Peace emerge and frame gender equality work up to the present.
- Spaces opened up for women to gain knowledge and learn from each other.
- Links clarified between women's reality and larger social, political, economic, and cultural structures.
- Links between local, global and collaborative projects emerge and are clarified.
- There is a validation and encouragement of research among activists and activism among researchers.
- Women are transformed into a political constituency.
- The role of women's NGOs became clearer and increasingly took a lead role.
- There is a strengthening of the sense of the women's movement as an international movement.

It was also during this period that the most significant legal instrument known as the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) was established and accepted by the world's governments as the Bill of Rights for women coming into effect in 1981. Those States that endorsed CEDAW, and Kenya has ratified CEDAW, are required to implement corrective measures to eliminate discrimination against women and to report on their progress.

⁴ United Nations "Report of the World Conference to view and appraise the achievements of the United Nations Decade for women: Equality, Development and Peace. New York, 1986.

◆ ***The Nairobi Conference: 1985***

At the end of the Women's Decade a key global conference was called and held in Nairobi in 1985. The invitation to hold the Women's world conference was made by the Government of Kenya. For Kenyan women hosting the world conference would heighten the visibility on women's issues in Kenya and on the continent. As the first international women's conference on African soil, it presented an opportunity for the new forms of organizing that would more clearly and for the first time be informed by the agendas of women from the South. The experiences and understanding of women's concerns that were sought and gained during the Women's Decade were documented to inform the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies (NFLS) that were the outcome of the Nairobi Conference. At the center of the NFLS was the call for equality, peace and development as guiding the work of women, organizations and their governments. Its significance has been:

- Women from the south would come to have increasing visibility and leadership in the women's movement.
- Clearer analysis of social economic, political and cultural issues by NGOs and women's organizations.
- Feminism was seen as politics and central to organizing.
- Emphasis on women's leadership.
- Definition of women's issues expands to include: macro-economic policy, environment, human rights, population, poverty, employment, habitats, food, and trade concerns.

◆ ***The 4th World Conference, Beijing: 1995***

To further strengthen the work of improving the status of women and building once again upon the wealth of understanding from the intervening years, a fourth women's global conference was called in Beijing in September 1995. The BPFA would reaffirm a commitment to advancing the goals of equality, development and peace as set out in NFLS. The Beijing meeting also went further and developed concrete steps and processes and outlined the nature and delivery of government's specific commitments to women captured as **12 critical areas of concern**:

- Women and Poverty
- Education and Training of Women
- Women and Health

- Violence against Women
- Women and Armed Conflict
- Women and the Economy
- Women in Power and Decision-making
- Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women
- Human Rights and Women
- Women and the Media
- Women and the Environment
- The Girl-Child.

Kenya, as a signatory to BPFA, must fulfil her obligations to women with the BPFA acting as the crucial point of reference and guide. The Beijing Platform for Action also serves as a:

- Showcase for the international women's movement.
- Recognition of women as important political actors.
- Re-definition and redesign of women's agendas to facilitate accountability and provide credible solutions for gender equality and women's empowerment.

Many of these international conferences⁵ and their Plans of Action have underscored the inherent dignity of women and men; the importance of advancing the human rights of all women and men; and the centrality of gender equality, if the life conditions for social justice for humanity are to be realized. At the present moment the commitments and resources being mobilized for the Millennium Development Goals initiative⁶ are also seen as harnessable for the actions being called for by CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action.

⁵ By 1986, at the end of the International women's decade, the activities of Maendeleo ya Wanawake began to be increasingly co-opted by the state; until 1992 when with the introduction of multi-party politics the organization was delinked from the ruling party returning to its civil society status. However the organization remained politically engaged.

⁶ The Kenya Women's Political Caucus was made up of 43 women's organizations as well as individuals and the 6 women members of parliament.

The Kenya Context

Although international agreements provide blueprints for action on a very wide range of issues for countries such as Kenya, it is important to recognize that locally there has been activism and planned interventions that precede these key international obligations. Kenya has a vibrant civil society as evidenced by the existence of progressive civil society organizations, women's organizations and individuals showing the way towards influencing and nurturing an environment that will support and sustain gender equality work and social justice on the continent.

Among the first important women's organizations in Kenya was the Maendaleo ya Wanawake organization, the largest women's organization in Kenya, that by independence was already playing an important role, especially with regard to economic empowerment for women, given their ability to reach out across rural Kenya. At the end of the women's decade in 1985, Maendaleo ya Wanawake had 300,000 members countrywide.⁷ The Kenya women's movement got a strong new impetus in 1998 with the creation of the Kenya Women's Political Caucus, a coalition of women's organizations⁸ coming together with the aim to further mobilize women to articulate their concerns and carry out advocacy in support of the Equality Bill. Also as a coordinating network, the Kenya Women's Political Caucus had played an instrumental role in ensuring that women would be represented as commissioners and delegates in the 2001 constitutional review processes.

Kenyan women, individually and in numerous organizations and associations, continue to speak to gender concerns across all sectors. Notables among them are the newer organizations included in this study as well as others not included here but also having a key presence for example, the Education Center for Women and Democracy and the Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development among others. In addition, since 2004, under the new NARC government, national machinery, the National Commission on Gender and Development and governmental bodies such as the Department of Gender have been created to help formulate policies and carry out measures to eliminate gender discrimination.

⁷ By 1986, at the end of the International women's decade, the activities of Maendaleo ya Wanawake began to be increasingly co-opted by the state; until 1992 when with the introduction of multi-party politics the organization was delinked from the ruling party returning to its civil society status. However the organization remained politically engaged.

⁸ The Kenya Women's Political Caucus was made up of 43 women's organizations as well as individuals and the 6 women members of parliament.

It is however, Civil Society Organizations, especially women led organizations, that have over the years carried the burden of gender work in Kenya; and they include NGOs, CBOs, Women's groups, Faith Based organizations, and Professional Associations. They may work individually or be part of networks or coalitions. Organizations with a vision on gender are considered women's organizations, but there are also organizations whose core mandates are not on gender issues but provide targeted or limited attention to gender issues within their organizations. There are also organizations that will focus on gender concerns when called upon to enter into a strategic role or alliance around time-based broad constituency issue-driven campaigns for example working with the poor, or HIV/AIDS or constitutional review concerns. Lately there is an emergent men's movement, for example, "Men for Equality with Women," avenues within formal organized religions and one constituency based men's activism that has begun internal dialogues that could eventually engage with the Kenyan's women movement in ways that will be both inclusionary and transformational. It is now to the directed efforts by local organizations in Kenya that we turn to.



Is there a Women's Movement?

by Jane Kiragu

The key to building lasting movements or coalitions is having a well formulated common agenda and accepting to stick to it to the end!! The absence of a gender support structure to propel women's visibility in terms of their concerns, inclusion in policy design as well as their representation in decision making spaces may be viewed as a result of the failure to sustain a Kenyan women's movement.

The Kenyan women's movement has had a long history. This paper seeks to highlight some of the impressions that the movement has made, however it cannot be said to capture a complete history neither has it made full in-depth analysis of movement building, rather it presents some of what I consider to be remarkable experiences that have shaped the women's movement in the country.

The women's movement, like all movements, is inspired by the intolerance to oppression. Kenyan women's lives are marked with a wide range of oppression and discrimination at the social relational levels, in the work place, in institutions of learning as well as the policy and legal terrain. This has resulted to increased activism around critical aspects of women's lives that "speak to" the discrimination and oppression of women; illustrated by the vast number of civil society organizations wide mandates as the study documents.

The oldest women's organization; Maendeleo ya Wanawake Organisations (MYWO) was formed in 1952 with branches countrywide. MYWO was established as a welfare organization whose focus was initially strengthening women's capacity to generate income and manage their households as a means of alleviating poverty and creating a better environment and quality of life. MYWO at its inception did not concern itself with challenging the patriarchy, rather it sought to find ways and means through which women would weave around the imbalance of power to improve the quality of their lives and that of their households. Today, it still remains the largest grassroots organization in Kenya. If one wishes to mobilize Kenyan women, this still remains the strongest mobilization unit for women.

After Kenya attained independence, the National Council for Women in Kenya (NCWK) was established as a national umbrella membership organization in 1964. The purpose of the NCWK was to strengthen and unite women's organizations in Kenya. NCWK was a coordinating agency for women's organizing at the local, national, regional and international levels. The organization was also the NGO

focal point in Kenya for activities and mobilization to prepare for the Beijing Conference in 1995.

Following the 1985 women's convention held in Nairobi and popularly known as the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies (NFLS) some vibrancy was injected into the women's movement. It is this conference that inspired Kenyan women to establish organizations that would challenge the power structural arrangements of society, by empowering women to know their rights and seek effective ways and means of protecting, promoting them and their realization for the women's constituency. As a result, the birth of several organizations was witnessed including the International Federation of Women Lawyers-Kenya chapter (as it was then known) and the League of Kenya Women Voters. The theme of the conference challenged the "welfare" approach and focused on equality and development.

The events leading to the political pluralism in the 1990's contributed significantly to the emergence of women's organizations that specifically identified that there was a direct causal relationship with respect to the conditions of women's lives and the manner in which societal relations are structured and organized; patriarchy or male dominance. The clamour for democracy introduced key concepts with respect to accountability, participation and inclusion of peoples voices and concerns as well as respect for the rule of law- thus expansion of space and inclusion of women as part and parcel of democratic culture begun to take shape. The women's movement was gradually utilizing human rights frameworks as well as demanding that normative standards set out in international declarations and conventions to which Kenya was a party to, should be translated at the domestic scene. These standards were drawn mainly from the United Declaration of Human and Peoples Rights (UDHR) 1948 and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) 1981.

In a connected way, the women's international conferences have to some extent "***breathed life***" to the movement. After the Beijing conference in 1985, the movement regained more vigour and significant improvements in the lives of women can be attributed to the works of women's organizations during this period. During this period, Kenyan women have witnessed a change of approach in seeking innovative ways of confronting patriarchy. The activism work has ranged from advocacy and lobbying activities, community mobilization and awareness of women's rights, public interest litigation, engaging government

ministries particularly with respect to national budgeting and resource allocations. The stories and experiences illustrated in the research demonstrate in more depth how women's organizations have re-engineered the movement in Kenya.

The Kenyan women's movement however has not sufficiently devised a coherent and all encompassing strategy to anchor activism on women's rights on a continuous basis. This is because it has been bedeviled with challenges – these challenges however are not lost opportunities, rather they are useful for reflection, growth and gaining maturity. In this paper, I will focus on one noble initiative that demonstrates the power that lies in unity of purpose and how opportunities to consolidate a Kenyan women's movement have been lost. This is the story of women organizing for political recognition and representation through the coalition of women's organizations.

In April 1997, the Kenya Women's Political Caucus was born at the foyer of Parliament by women's activists following the defeat of Hon Phoebe Asiyo motion presented to Parliament on 23rd April 1997 to advance gender equity through affirmative action in national policy. Kenyan women from diverse parts of the country were angered and infuriated by the derogatory manner in which the male dominated Parliament dismissed the motion. The Asiyo motion called for affirmative legislative action to set aside 30% of all parliamentary positions for women to ensure the creation of a critical mass that will lead to ensuring gender equity at all levels of Kenyan society. The comments made on the floor reflected myriad positions on the line that divide the Kenyan society on the issue of women's empowerment from; the hostile and rigid positions of paternalistic traditionalists that would seek to ensure that the public sphere remains the preserve of male privilege. The recognition that women's empowerment through affirmative action parallels that of the African Kenyan immediately after independence and often evident also was the mistaken position that women's gender equity is not party policy.

The Kenya Women Political Caucus was a loose coalition of women's organizations whose main objective was to enhance women's access to political power and its slogan "Women United for Political Change" saw the Caucus attain secure tremendous successes. The Caucus members had resolved that despite the defeat of the motion they would produce a draft "Affirmative Action Bill" to support yet another motion in Parliament. The resolve and determination of the Caucus members saw the draft bill produced by August 1997. Within six months

after its formation and as a result of the efforts and commitment by members of the Caucus, the "Women's Eyes on the Budget" was issued. This was the first organized women's lobbying initiative to engender the budget - it sought to bring to the attention of government that national resource allocation and expenditure was blind to the women constituency and thus hindering their potential for development. In the run-up to the 1997 General election, Kenyan women were able to galvanise support towards securing gains at the minimum electoral reforms by the Inter Parties Parliament Group (IPPG). Hon. Martha Karua was a member of the IPPG and through her efforts women were able to secure the expansion of discrimination in the constitution to extend to "discrimination on the basis of sex".

The Caucus made significant gains through its participation and lobbying for the Constitution of Kenya Review Commission Act. In the period May to October 1998, the Caucus made concerted efforts to ensure that the principle of affirmative action for women was included at all levels of the review process. Initial efforts by the Caucus was to have a fifty percent representation of women on the Commission, though the final outcome of Safari Park talks was the allocation of a minimum of 8 out of 25 seats to the commission to women. Initially, the "women" seats were distributed amongst political parties, religious bodies and non-governmental organizations. Women organizations were only allocated the nomination of 1 seat. However, the Caucus led a protest and petitioned the drafting committee to recognize that women are not only a vital part of the Kenyan populace but also one of the largest constituencies and stakeholders in the process itself. As a result of intensive lobbying and to the discomfort of many male headed stakeholders, 8 seats were allocated to the women as follows; 5 of these seats would be nominees of the Women's Political Caucus, 1 seat would be a nominee of the National Council of NGOs and 2 nominees from the political parties and that 1 of the 5 "women" seats would go to a woman with disability. During the lobbying, it was also agreed that the representation at the National Constitutional Conference would have to comply with the at least one-third principle. This was indeed no mean achievement and ultimately resulted to at least one third of the members of the commission being women under law. As at this stage, Kenyan women had been able to influence the implementation of the affirmative action spirit, despite the motions loss in Parliament.

The growing national presence and power of the Caucus was gradually causing anxiety amongst male leaders who identified the organized nature of women

would result to "infiltration" to traditionally male preserve. The women's movement was united in purpose and was "banking" successes. It is my assertion that it was the success of the caucus that was largely responsible for its subsequent split – clearly illustrating the paradox of success! Immediately after the CKRC Act 1997 was published, the Caucus embarked on the process of identifying nominees to fill the 8 women seats at the Commission and thus begun the process of disintegration. With insufficient consensus developed, the 5 names submitted to the Attorney General were challenged in court in January 1999, in a suit filed by Orie-Rogo Manduli, Margaret Jepkoech Kamar, Rukia Ahmed Mohammed Subow, Rahab Muiu, Lillian Wakiya Mwaura, Mery Mwambiri and Tabitha Seii. The applicants were seeking an order to prohibit the Attorney General from receiving the names of persons nominated by Kenya Women Political Caucus, under Section 4 of the CKRC Act acrimonious spirit. The applicants representing MYWO, NCWK, Education Centre for Women in Democracy and Sports Women and Administrators challenged the Caucus' capacity to nominate the women as they argued that they had ignored its member organizations and as well as representation from certain provinces. In his ruling, Justice Anganyanya observed that *"women meetings held on 14th December and 22nd December 1998, mandated the Caucus to coordinate nominations of 5 women representatives and that MYWO and ECWD were represented at such meetings. ...That the Caucus selected the credentials committee to receive nominations from various organizations, consider and vet them then shortlist those qualified for interviews. On the credentials committee was none other than the Chairperson of Maendeleo ya Wanawake, Mrs. Ziporrah Kittony...From the submissions made before me, the main issue of concern of the applicants was the lack of regional consideration..but the Act did not envisage this otherwise it would have provided for 8 women nominees to represent provinces...."*.. The nominations of Hon. Phoebe Asiyo and Alice Yano representing Maendeleo ya Wanawake, Nancy Baraza representing the Federation of Women Lawyers in Kenya, Abida Ali representing the Muslim Sisters network, Dr Wanjiku Kabira representing Collaborative Centre for Gender and Governance and Salome Muigai representing National Council for Women in Kenya were upheld.

The acrimonious nature of the case and the energy spent resulted to the weakening of this powerful women's lobby group. The political caucus was unable to organize its lobbying amongst political parties to ensure women were nominated to the Commission and thus lost a great opportunity. In addition, the Chairperson and

the convenor of the Caucus were now in the Commission resulting to a vacuum being created in its leadership. During this period, interim measures resulted to Hon. Charity Ngilu assuming the position of co-chair of the Caucus.

The dynamics of managing the new leadership arrangement were not sufficiently supported by any internal mechanisms and internal tensions slowly begun to emerge. There were voices that questioned how the credentials committee conducted its nomination process, others who felt that the presence of a co-chair was an effort to unseat the chairperson, others who felt that the caucus would acquire an "elite" status through exclusion of rural based community based organizations and thus benefit a certain "political class" of women. Efforts to re-consolidate the lobby were unsuccessful as trust was waning amongst members and several felt bruised most likely due to their inability to secure nominations to the Commission. Upon reflection, these tensions were activated by what I will call "patriarchal networking and regrouping". Thus far, Kenyan women were beginning to make solid entrance to "male spaces", their unity was likely to result to a changed political face of Kenya; where women would secure political power and visibility. This was not welcomed by a large male constituency who continue to dominate this scene and flourish in the glory of political power and influence. Clearly the tensions and internal conflicts could not be directly linked to the substantive reasons for establishment of the caucus. The objective of the Caucus was to gain political power and this was happening, the diversionary tactics infused, resulted to extreme energy and emotional stress being expended in the operational aspects and not on the larger goal of realizing its objectives.

There are several lessons to be learnt from the story of the unified women's political lobby which demonstrated how unified efforts can secure sizable gains for women's empowerment. While not enough, these were indeed great products of the movement and have contributed significantly to expanded public and political space for women – thus these activities made a solid mark towards shifting patriarchal behaviour.

Firstly, women organizing should be seen within the larger context of confronting and to patriarchy; male dominance in the public sphere is a reality, thus organizing for initiatives that challenge the status quo requires we remain acutely aware of "backlash". It is important for women organizing to continuously keep abreast of how the male network will infiltrate and cause splinters within the movement. This requires continuous assessments of the political, social and economic

environment that will inform initiatives and provide it with proactive strategies to quell male insurgencies.

Secondly, women-organizing, has to clearly stipulate and develop broad based consensus on why initiatives are being undertaken. A common understanding that the work of women seeking public space will result to a few members of the movement being "beneficiaries" through the efforts of the movement should be celebrated and not perceived as selfish. The advocacy for women's leadership should be viewed as incremental, we shall not witness a large influx of women into public space overnight! This requires a changed frame of analysis that speaks to the movement soberly, "following this lobbying, amongst us, one or two shall move to the public space". This conversation is important because it enables us to establish a spirit of solidarity and sisterhood that will advance and secure the gains of a women's movement.

In addition, it enables the movement to put in place accountability measures as well as support mechanisms for those who secure the public space. Thus, selfishness and greed are ingredients that cannot and should not encumber the women's movement, causing us to be continuously alert, detect its shadow, and respond decisively. Thirdly, women organizing should emerge from its 'social arrangement' face and adopt a private sector approach to attaining its dividends and profits. Whilst feminist values call for inclusion and different styles of leadership, the movement must attain a focused face to secure women's empowerment and liberation assertively. It cannot be a feeble voice that points out to discrimination awaiting "male salvation", rather it must be a confident assertive voice that states that it is unacceptable and intolerable to proceed as a nation while a large populace of women continue to live in poverty, continue to be discriminated, continue to be excluded in public arena as well as in the allocation of national resources and where they continue to be violated and abused due to their being women. With this approach, women's organizations will be developing management frameworks that are able to respond to both external and more particularly internal conflicts with much ease. This would result to a flourishing enterprise that will secure the rightful place for Kenyan women, enabling them to exploit their full potential and live secure and flourish lives without oppression.



Organizing and Acting for Change

Kenya as noted above has a long history of activism with regard to addressing the issues and concerns of women. Furthermore, it is women's NGOs, Civil Society Organizations and NGOs that have been instrumental in addressing the goals of BPFA. In this study, the specific Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) targeted for review were those characterized as National NGOs signifying that they either had offices in several of the country's provinces or their activities to advance gender equality had national reach.

Organizations and Civil Society Organizations in the Study

- *African Women and Child Feature Service*
- *Centre for Rights Education and Awareness*
- *Coalition for Peace in Africa*
- *Coalition on Violence Against Women*
- *Family Planning Association of Kenya*
- *Federation of Women Lawyers: FIDA-Kenya*
- *Forum of African Women Educationalists- Kenya Chapter*
- *Green Belt Movement*
- *Kenya Human Rights Commission*
- *Kenya Women's Finance Trust*
- *League of Kenya Women Voters*
- *Maendeleo ya Wanawake*
- *National Council of Women of Kenya*
- *Young Women's Leadership Institute*

Range and focus of gender equality work

In implementing the Platform for Action Kenya women's NGOs have favored the language of gender with the term gender understood as referring to women and men's roles, responsibilities, and access to and control over resources. To focus on gender is to take gender concerns into account when designing and implementing projects. Within such conceptualization Kenyan NGOs addressing gender concerns have placed the emphasis on women especially in operational terms but with the intent to plan intervention in a way that addresses systemic inequality.

Reviewing the implementation of the BPFA by Kenyan women's civil society organizations, progressive civil society organizations and government it is clear

that there have been actions in many areas especially, health, education, violence against women, economic empowerment, political participation and the media. There are however areas of the BPFA such as women and armed conflict that are relatively recent areas of organized work for Kenya women's organization that remains to be well documented. The following section will highlight the range and focus of the activism and the implementation of the BPFA among women's organizations and national NGOs.⁹

Women, Poverty and the Economy

In Kenya, most of the working poor are in the informal economy, and they are overwhelmingly women. Therefore, although women worldwide are growing presence in labour markets, many women are in the precarious work of the informal sector and unless efforts are made to address women's economic security poverty will not be eliminated nor gender equality achieved. Alleviating poverty requires the creation of policies and legal frameworks that enable representation, visibility and support especially for the working poor. This means that the poor who work in the informal sector need to be positioned to access opportunities, assets, skills and markets that enable participation.

In Kenya it has been demonstrated that in the formal sector of employment women have made significant gains with regard to their increased participation and remuneration laws that protect them. On the other hand, women's work in the informal sector remains unaccounted for in the national economy; and there remains inadequate or many cases no laws that would eliminate all forms of discriminations against women's economic advancement such as unhindered rights to resources and land. The majority of Kenyan women have become the primary producers of subsistence for families. Many women are working to produce food, in farm activities, craft production and engage in informal trade with regard to these productive activities. The introduction of EPZ in Kenya has also meant that women have begun to provide the bulk of its labour under challenging working conditions. Furthermore, the productive and reproductive work burden on women has increased tenfold with the new demand for care work arising with the HIV/AIDs epidemic.

⁹ Fuller description of the projects and their best practices selected for this study is found in Appendix 1.

Women's income generating poultry activities: Limuru

Women report that the money is not the greatest success, rather that KWFT has “cleaned” them referring to the fact that their increased economic well-being has permitted them to acquire such basics as shoes for their feet, soap to wash with and proper clothes to wear. Further to the material changes, the women say that now that they have an income, they also have a “voice” and can make decisions in conjunction with their husbands. They also have more economic clout. For example, market women have been able to pool their funding together and purchase a lorry-load of maize and thus negotiate a better rate on the produce as opposed to buying small quantities at higher prices as they were forced to do in the past.

Kenya Women's Finance Trust

In general, tremendous challenges remain especially for poor women. Women organizations continue to bring attention to economic justice for women to end poverty and enable sustainable livelihoods. In Kenya, it is women and women's organizations that have been at the forefront of setting up institutions to advance credit finance to women. A key example, the Kenya Women's Finance Trust (KWFT) was founded in 1981 to enable and support the entrepreneurial activities of women given the failure of the formal banking system in meeting the financial needs of women, especially poor, low-income and vulnerable women. Currently, KWFT works with 100,000 women through sixty-four centers countrywide. The method of lending is to individuals who are part of a group whose members act as guarantor for outstanding loans. Repayment rates are very high, averaging 95-97% as the group is responsible for ensuring that each installment is either met by the individual member or else the group raises the money itself.

The reality of women's empowerment at household and community level must begin to be measured and their reproductive work quantified to recognize its positive effects on national development. Kenya is obligated under CEDAW and BPFA to take measures that guarantee women's rights and access to economic resources necessary to reduce poverty. Women's organizations have responded by providing much needed skills and resources to eradicate poverty among women and their families. However, the interventions of NGOs such as KWFT have also illuminated the magnitude of the challenges, and call upon the government to provide the needed infrastructures; trade/market/labour policies and practices conducive to women, and laws and administrative processes that guarantee women's rights in public and private economic life.

Women and girls programme

Noting that “poverty and inequality between women and men are the major driving forces of the [AIDS] pandemic in Africa” (Maathai 2005) of the Green Belt Movement (GBM) notes that her organization’s contribution has been to level the playing field by ensuring that women do not resort to selling sex and risk contracting HIV/AIDS in a desperate attempt to acquire a measure of income. GBM has promoted small-scale commercial initiatives such as bee keeping, baking and food processing. Food preservation methods are also taught as a way of improving food security. The GBM programme operates an innovative revolving fund scheme whereby each participating group receives forty thousand shillings in the form of equipment for their particular IGA (ovens, baking sheets, beehives etc.). The repayment is not monetary but rather the group agrees to plant trees. Once the saplings are determined to be able to survive then the debt is considered redeemed.

Green Belt Movement

The economic survival of women and their communities are increasingly challenged by HIV/AIDS. The effects of HIV/AIDS on women and communities includes spending increasing amounts of their time and limited resources on its tragic and costly outcomes; including, funerals, escalating numbers of orphans that need care, as well as the care of those afflicted by the pandemic and women having fewer resources or time.

Women and Peace Building

An environment of peace promotes and protects human rights and is an important element for the advancement of women. Armed and other types of conflicts have become a reality affecting many women and men worldwide. Such conflicts present gross and systematic violations, especially for women, children, the elderly and disabled. In Kenya, the communities of North Eastern Kenya have been especially vulnerable and affected by armed and violent conflict. These situations of localized-armed conflict are complex and long standing having their origins in the instability of surrounding countries that cause population displacements; environmental degradation and depletion of resources; drought; continuing colonial electoral boundaries; and unresponsive land policies. For communities that are nomadic and pastoral the result has been clashes over pasture land, grazing rights, water access, livestock watering styles, inadequate sources of income and high levels of poverty. Feelings of marginalization, high unemployment in the towns and

the availability of arms among these communities further complicates these dynamics.

For the districts of Kenya's North Eastern province these continuous experiences of violent conflicts have sparked rapes, which further fuel the armed conflicts given the intended clan humiliation, killings, mutilations, and maiming of women as a tool of armed conflict, thus escalating the conflicts. Such crimes against women destroy the very "social fabric of the society"¹⁰ and have been a wake up call for women."¹¹ Women have traditionally had a very limited role in decision-making, yet it is from the communities in Mandera, Wajir, Marsabit districts that the significant role of women in conflict resolution and peace keeping has been made most evident in Kenya.

Working with men, the military, elders, youth, religious leaders, the business community and district officers the women of North Eastern province have become the "hub" around which peace efforts are being coordinated and sustained through community based conflict management and peace building structures. The women in these communities see themselves as best placed and crucial to the efforts of conflict resolution because they bring particular experiences, skills, strengths and knowledge that include; women's multi-tasking abilities, their marriages across different clans that creates networks and supercede ethnic differences, and women's reproductive tasks that demand coordinating the needs of many, and holding together families and communities.¹² It is such strengths that women of Wajir, Marsabit and Mandera have contributed to fostering a culture of peace.

Community Based Conflict Management and Peace Building in North Eastern Province

- Women's refusal of victim-hood and becoming agents for peace in their communities.
- Space and voice for women created to engage in peace-processes.
- Women mobilized to negotiate cease-fire in Mandera and inform communities of cease-fire.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Dekka Ibrahim Abdi. Coalition for Peace in Africa (COPA) Policy and Learning Advisor. Personal communication, February 10th 2006.

¹² Ibid.

- Women's local organizations provided with support to mitigate impact of violence on women.
- A woman's initiative expanded to include elders, youth, religious leaders creating the district Peace Committee structures in Wajir.
- Communities mobilized to resolve sustainable peace. Communities contributed resources and structures for peace-building to be meaningful.
- Government and religious leaders now invite women leaders to peace negotiation processes in Marsabit, Mandera and Wajir.
- Women become avenue of communication between government and community in Mandera.
- Traditional and modern peace building techniques utilized for effective conflict resolution.
- Peace Education Network (PEN) established in schools in Wajir to enhance gender equality values, and a culture of peace and peer mediation.
- Conflict resolution and peace-building responses designed to be multi-level and inclusive of local, national and regional involvement given the complex causes of modern armed conflicts thus contributing to safety of women in Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia.

Communication with Dakka Ibrahim Abdi - February, 10th 2006

Violence against Women

Violence against women remains a severe problem worldwide. Although data on all the forms of violence in both public and private life against women in Kenya remains inadequate; mounting awareness building campaigns and actions towards legislative reforms by local women and their organizations has brought increasing visibility to violence against women. However, no laws exist in Kenya that specifically address violence against women thus in 2005, the Sexual Offences Bill was tabled in Parliament and now awaits the creation of law.

Some of the organizations in Kenya raising visibility on the issue of violence against women include, African Women and Child Feature Services; Center for Rights Education and Awareness (CREAW) and the Coalition on Violence Against Women (COVAW) among many others.

Outreach and Training Programme

- Working within its core mandate of promoting women's rights, COVAW outreach and training programmes in schools and at community levels with both women and men, has helped break the silence on violence against women by getting communities to address stigma, come out and speak on issues that were not considered public such as wife beating, rape and other forms of violence considered taboo.
- Opening up discussions on violence against women ensured that it is recognized as a human rights issue.
- Groups and institutions that were not involved in VAW issues were brought aboard. This includes traditional institutions such as the councils of elders. This has opened up discussions and dialogue on alternatives to 'traditions' and other accepted forms of mistreatment of women and girls.

Coalition on Violence against Women

Making gender based violence visible within armed conflict and showing the interconnectedness between gender based violence and HIV/AIDS, are also some of the key interventions being carried out by women's organizations and Networks. Furthermore, it is women's organizations that have brought attention to communities that are often ignored in national development efforts thus helping to highlight the structural violence that sustains poverty, gender inequalities and gender based violence.

The high presence of illicit arms in Kenya's North Eastern province by cattle rustlers has seen increased incidences of sexual violence and HIV/AIDS. In 1997 African Women and Child Feature Services (AWC) took 15 journalists from several print and electronic media houses to cover the under-reported insecurity situation. At a workshop, the community challenged the media about the lack of reporting on the rape of women.

Media Encounter Report

The use of women's media to address gender based violence:

- Lent visibility to the North Eastern community's issues at the national level while also demonstrating the universality of issues (e.g. insecurity) for all Kenyans.
- Provided the women, children and community leaders a forum at which to explain to the media how they would like their issues to be reported.
- Highlighted the negative effects of insecurity on women's reproductive health.
- Sensitized journalists on how to report gender issues.
- This initiative led to a simultaneous small arms campaign by several media houses and resulted in the government making policies on disarmament.

African Women and Child Feature Service

Reclaiming public spaces for women to ensure safety for women and advance women's options and possibilities to claim their very basic right to bodily integrity is another fundamental contribution by women's organizations.

A public consciousness raising in the city of Nairobi has revealed the pervasiveness of rape and the omissions on the part of the State in securing safe urban spaces for women citizens.

Christine Chinkin has noted "violence against women is not random, accidental or a private matter; but structural. It is both a manifestation of the power imbalance between men and women, and a social mechanism which forces women into continuing subordination."¹³

Presenting sexual violence as a matter of National responsibility, and a reminder to public officials that Kenya has legal obligations to eliminate such violence under CEDAW and the BPFA means the work of CREAM is very important. Several types of support measures demanding tremendous amounts of resources that include training of officials and service providers, and the provision of medical and counseling services require the strengthening of collaborative endeavour among women's organizations to lobby government to fully address the needs and concerns of Kenyan women.

¹³ Christine Chinkin. 1995. *Violence against women: the international legal response*, in Caroline Sweetman ed. Women and Rights. Oxfam, UK. pp. 23-28.

Rape Red Spot Campaign

- Partnership with the Nairobi City Council ensured that adequate street lighting, cleaning up and painting for those marked areas was provided.
- CREAM and NCC worked out a strategy to increase activities in the marked area around Globe Cinema round-about to ensure that there were always people in the area and to avoid isolation.
- CREAM worked with the Kenya Police to ensure there were increased police patrols in the areas identified.
- Messages on the Rape Red spot Campaign continued to be placed at different spots of the city.
- CREAM won the Mayor's Achievers Award in 2004 for their efforts towards making the city safer for women. They were also selected to participate in the upcoming Afro-City Conference to be hosted by Nairobi in 2006.
- NCC nominated CREAM to work with them to examine the city by-laws in an effort to engender them.

Center for Rights Education and Awareness

Women in Power and Decision-making

Equality in political decision making performs a leverage function without which it is highly unlikely that a real integration of the equality dimension in government policy making is feasible. ... women's equal participation in political life plays a pivotal role in the general process of the advancement of women. Women's equal participation in decision-making is not only a demand for justice or democracy but can be seen as a necessary condition for women's interests to be taken into account. (BPFA: Paragraph: 181).

Promoting women's political participation; Strengthening women's links to political parties; pressuring for electoral reform to enhance women's representation; and demanding minimum constitutional requirements for women's participation in public office through affirmative actions has seen women's representation in a wide area of decision making increase.

The number of women candidates for political office increased dramatically in the 1990s in Kenya. Several favourable conditions account for women's increased visibility in the political arena. The introduction of multi-party politics, movements for democratisation and human rights undertaken by local civil society and women's organisations and the donor funds to local NGOs supporting women's political activism have played a significant role in encouraging Kenyan women to seek elective office. However, women's representation in senior public service remains low and women's participation in political parties is still constrained by resources and patriarchal attitudes. Many women remain unsuccessful in their bid for elective office often constrained by the patronage networks of politics and inadequate resources. Thus in the late 1990s, the National Council of Women of Kenya was actively involved in designing and implementing programmes aimed at empowering women intellectually, socially, politically and economically to seek elective office and for women to play a role and get involved in decision making structures to enhance equality in development.

National Civic Education Programme (NCEP) and the Engendering the Political Processes Programme

A programme was designed to address the low levels of women's participation in leadership, national debate and decision-making positions at all levels which was widely recognized as a fundamental constraint to equitable national development, the advancement of women and the achievement of gender equality.

- More women felt encouraged and took up the challenge to run for civic seats in their wards; there were also more women that succeeded in taking up civic seats after the election in 2002.
- The activities carried out in these programs contributed to Honorable Beth Mugo, Charity Ngilu and Martha Karua being re-elected back to Parliament in the year 2002. The NCWK specifically carried out civic education in the constituencies represented by the three members of parliament

National Council of Women of Kenya

The League of Kenya Women Voters (LKWV) has made important contributions towards strengthening women access to political office. LKWV worked in a number of electoral constituencies from 1992 – 2002 helping identify women leaders, and providing mentoring and support to them to vie for elective positions in local authorities and the national assembly.

Initiative for Enhanced Participation of Women in Democratic Development 1999-2004

- **“The Voter Education Project** produced from October to December 2002 enhanced women’s participation in the General elections ... Women role models and veteran women political leaders were given an opportunity to talk about their experience in leadership and encourage other women who had shown interest in vying during the General elections.” The League received letters from men voicing greater appreciation of women’s leadership as well as their own enhanced civic awareness.
- **Deepening Democracy Through Political Accountability: A gender perspective.** A project aimed at increasing the effectiveness of women members of parliament through visibility, active local level engagement and citizen’s participation at the constituency level. The project created Democracy Forums at the constituency level providing elected women members of parliament and their constituents an opportunity for dialogue thereby promoting democracy, accountability and good governance. The activities were undertaken in 10 women-led constituencies with the intent to support women’s performance during the upcoming 2007 national elections. The project has exposed women’s marginalization and under-representation in leadership and decision-making in Kenya and importantly has furthered the ideals of CEDAW and BPFA in directing focus on strengthening women’s political participation.

League of Kenya Women Voters

Human Rights and Women

The full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and freedoms by women is fundamental for the advancement of women. To achieve policy and legal changes to protect and advance women’s rights, governments not only made commitments to BPFA but also ratified conventions such as CEDAW. Kenya has ratified CEDAW without reservations. However, it has not fully incorporated CEDAW’s provisions into national laws thus discriminatory laws remain in place in Kenya. A Task force that included women, reviewed laws related to women and produced its findings and recommendation in 1993 but it is only recently in 2005 that working in partnership with women’s NGOs and Statutory National Commissions dealing with law and gender that government has re-established gender-responsive law reform.

Overall, much of the work undertaken to date on women's human rights involving pro-women legislation and engagement with cultural practices for the realization of women's rights has been by women's NGOs. FIDA-Kenya success stories with *Gender Responsive Training of the Provincial Administration; Legal Aid Programmes and Women's Rights Monitoring and Advocacy Programme work with the Police*, highlight the breadth of efforts by a woman's organization to enhance actions towards implementing the provisions of BPFA and CEDAW. Working with the police and provincial administration has strengthened the capacities and knowledge of these infrastructures creating an enabling environment that is necessary to realize women's rights. Integrating gender perspectives into the work of these public institutions ensures that women have access to protection from discrimination through these public institutions.

Legal Aid Programme

- The establishment of family courts.
- Creation of children's court following enactment of 2002 Children's Act.
- Parliamentary Committee includes FGM in Children's Act.
- Women trained in self-representation. FIDA reports that in Mombasa, the programme has been very successful with three out of every four cases in which women have represented themselves being won by the women.
- Women report increased confidence levels and a sense of being truly empowered, which benefits them in other areas of their lives.

FIDA-Kenya

The BPFA notes that, *"In addressing the enjoyment of human rights, governments and other actors should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programmes so that, before decisions are taken, an analysis's is made of the effects on women and men, respectively."*¹⁴

The Kenya Human Rights Commission-KHRC was the first civil society organization to develop an organizational gender policy in Kenya given its mandate to promote and protect human rights. An important contribution has been its visible policy of mainstreaming gender perspectives to promote women's economic rights and workers rights in general in large agro-business enterprises. The implications for gender work are immense for to recognize women's rights we must first change the institutional norms and practices that underwrite male privilege within organizations and work environments.

¹⁴ The BPFA: Paragraph 229.

Although KHRC does not consider itself as a part of the women's movement, its human rights focus calls it to focus on gender considerations across all its community programmes. For women's continued marginalization is a violation of women's human rights and sustainable development requires women's equal participation. By asserting women's rights to participate in the development of their communities and by monitoring their inclusion on community committees, KHRC is enforcing the civil, political and socio-economic rights of women for all three are indivisible from one another. For NGOs with a human rights agenda, but whose roots are not in the women's movements, it is increasingly imperative that they be in dialogue with women's associations and organizations if the linkages between women's economic participation, decision-making within the home, and wider political participation"¹⁵ are to be understood in ways that inform empowerment for women.

Gender Mainstreaming

- KHRC has paternity leave for its staff.
- KHRC programmes demand that women have to be included in all initiatives and the committees formed by the communities must have a certain number of women; at least 30%. Through this, there is a growing understanding of the importance of the inclusion of women in programmes and activities.
- To ensure that women are represented in decision making bodies, KHRC reports provide for gender desegregation data.
- Gender perspectives and mainstreaming has helped ensure that the human rights concerns of internally displaced women are recognized and addressed.
- At a national level, KHRC monitors the participation of communities in the constitutional review process and other community-based committees and/or community funds such as the Constituency Development Fund (CDF). This is to ensure that gender issues are considered and that women participate in these community level committees. KHRC also monitors the numbers of women involved compared to that of men in these committees and at what level women participate or what roles they play in these committees.
- KHRC has a Gender Action Team (GAT) that addresses issues of staff capacity building on gender. There is a gender consultant at the organization that coaches GAT and staff on gender work. Staff have also received training on gender.
- During KHRC internal capacity building training, there is effort to ensure a male trainer undertakes the sessions on gender thus promoting gender work as a responsibility of both women and men.

Kenya Human Rights Commission

¹⁵ Caroline Sweetman, 1995. *Editorial. Women and Rights*, Oxfam: UK. p. 2-7

Successful engagements between civil society and government are occurring at a time when government is increasingly moving to initiate the necessary legal and structural reforms that are needed to promote equality. The language of law has offered opportunities for women who are seeking to be a presence and to have voice in determining the development of the legal instruments that will assert and protect women's rights. Several policies and legislative reforms that will have a direct impact on women await to be facilitated into becoming law include the Family Protection Bill, the Sexual Offences Bill, the HIV/AIDS Bill, the Equality Bill and the National Hospital Insurance Bill.

Women and the Media

In Kenya, more women are becoming involved in careers in communications. However, few have attained positions at the decision-making level or serve on governing boards and bodies that influence media policy. More women have enhanced their skills, knowledge and access to media and the evidence is shown by women's media organizations that have provided greater utilization of diverse media for reflection, education and awareness creation about women's human rights and social justice. Media such as radio and television discussions, films and videos made by Kenyan women are reaching a wider audience raising gender concerns. Access for women to media that has been accomplished to date through women's NGOs has ensured that their expertise and gender perspectives influence public discourses on a variety of public and private issues that have been recent subjects for Kenya media, such as; gender-based violence, HIV/AIDS, and disarmament.

An important contribution by the African Women & Child Feature Service (AWC) that illuminates how their work brings focus on gender and development issues is the *Train media to carry development stories project*. Achieved by training various institutions, such as the Nairobi University's School of Journalism; Kenya Institute of Mass Communication as well as training sub-editors and senior women journalists, with the latter expanded since 2004 to include monthly meetings. Collaborative media work between AWC and Women's organizations has begun to strengthen women's participation in democratic processes especially during national election periods.

Train media to carry development stories project.

Work with media organizations such as:

- The Nation Media Group in 2001 aimed at encouraging them to cover the International Women's Day, has led to wide media coverage on "Breaking the Silence-End the Domestic Violence Campaign," a one year campaign as part of AWC's advocacy programme.
- The Nation Newspaper that helped start a weekly section in the Wednesday paper that looks at issues within the Family.

African Women & Child Feature Service

The Beijing Platform for Action calls on governments to work actively to promote women's rights and an integral strategy for doing so is creating public awareness of women's human rights through media. However, most of the media visibility and attention generated has primarily been the work of female journalists and women's civil society who have been very proactive in utilizing media campaigns as stipulated in the Platform for Action.

Education for women and insuring equality for the girl child

Kenya has implemented a policy of education for all and is seeking to meet its commitments to provide free primary education for all. However, a quantitative increase of women and the girl child in education does not necessarily translate into gender equality or the end of gender discrimination in education. For within Kenyan educational institutions barriers of access, inadequate facilities, the institutional culture of schooling, the pervasiveness of sexual harassment and the reproductive roles on the girl child and women continue to constrain their full access and success within education.

In implementing education for all in Kenya some important strategies are in place. For example, the Ministry of Education has a gender-dis-segregated database regarding women and girls' education and curriculum and text books are becoming more gender-sensitive. While young women who become pregnant are re-admitted into school. Thus women's organizations with a focus on education such as FAWE or the girl Child find a policy environment that sustains their activities for example, the marriage of school going girls is now punishable by law and steps have been taken to promote resources for the poor and marginalized groups.

Intervention: Demonstrative Interventions

One of FAWE's strategic objectives is to influence replication and mainstreaming of best practices. Through what have come to be known as demonstrative interventions, FAWE selects a school with boarding facilities, and depending on the needs within the school environment, the school becomes a centre of excellence. That is, a school that is girl-friendly. Building a center of excellence involves community mobilization for support. The focus is especially on marginalized areas such as arid and semi arid parts of the country such as Kajiado and Narok.

- One of the strategies that FAWE has been undertaking is to scale up successful interventions to ensure that a higher number of girls are reached. As a first step towards ensuring that a high number of girls are reached, the interventions are identified and documented. This is done with the aim that the interventions such as having Centres of Excellence, the Empowerment of girls, Peer Counseling and HIV/AIDS, Addressing sexual maturation Issues and School Re-entry for Adolescent mothers, can be taken up by policy makers and other stakeholders.
- FAWE has established different clubs in schools such as Gender, Peer educators and Tuseme clubs. The Tuseme clubs specifically train girls to speak out for themselves and train teachers as facilitators of the clubs. The aim is to get girls to run the clubs and address issues affecting them and in relation to their rights as their own issues as they emerge. They discuss and encourage each other on issues related to puberty and growing up, and what to do in case one faces any kind of human rights violation.
- Where centers of excellence have been created or through its other programmes, teachers are more sensitive and responsive in addressing issues affecting girls in school where FAWE has had interventions. There is willingness on the part of the teachers involved to be more understanding in addressing concerns of girls in relation to their growth and development and experiences of the same.

Forum for Women Educationalists- Kenya Chapter

Given its knowledge of the disadvantaged position of the girl-child FAWE Kenya is positioned to work with policy makers, planners and administrators. FAWE is currently working towards the pursuance of the Education for All (EFA) gender goal by influencing education policy, demonstrative interventions on girls' education, advocacy and replication of best practices in promotion of the education of girls by documenting best practices.¹⁶

¹⁶ FAWE Kenya-UNICEF KCO Brochure, UNGEI in Kenya 'Enhancing Partnership in Promotion of Girls' Education.

Women and Health

The BPFA urges for the delivery of health care to all to ensure equal benefit to women and men and additional measures as required to address the reproductive health rights of women. There are differences in access to quality affordable health care especially for poor and rural women. Furthermore, although there is government commitment to specifically address maternal care health cultural and religious practices present many obstacles to achieving reproductive health; for example, access to family planning, abortion also remains illegal and unsafe abortions continue to polarize society and be un-addressed. With regard to HIV/AIDS, services are being availed to all women, girls, sex workers, and transgender individuals. Although no law exists to protect people living with HIV/AIDS an HIV bill exists advocating for free treatment and non-discrimination of people living with HIV/AIDS. However, at the same time the increasing burden of care that falls upon women as result of the HIV/AIDS pandemic remains un-addressed.

Maternal Child Health / Family Planning (MCH/FP)

MYWO started MCH/FP activities in 1979 on a pilot basis the programme has since expanded to several districts.

- *To improve quality of MCH/FP services*
- *To improve access of MCH/FP services*
- *Increase number of women attending antenatal clinics*
- *Enhance Post - Natal Care*
- *Improve antenatal and delivery services.*

In 1995 the programme integrated HIV/AIDS/STI activities. This was included in the activities of community-based workers, they were trained and they started doing awareness work. HIV/AIDS programs target the youth, orphans and widows. The youth component of this programme focuses on prevention and abstinence. Some of the activities include mobilizing the youth and their parents, creating forums for both to interact, training of youth as peer educators and the participation of youth in income generation activities. Youth friendly VCT centers have also been opened in two slum areas.

Collaborations with the government through the different ministries has ensured sustained efforts for MYWO programme.

Maendeleo ya Wanawake Organization

Gender based discriminations frequently pose a threat to the health and well being of women and the girl-child and the solutions include urgent actions with regard to the implementation of laws and policies and the allocation of resources that will

promote and ensure rights to sexual and productive health. The involvement of government, the private sector and NGOs have been essential to enhancing the provision of health services to local communities. At the same time increasing the ability of women's organizations to participate in addressing the health concerns of their communities through building new skills, knowledge and confidence empowers women to be better able to protect their own health and advocate for institutional and policy changes that support their rights to health.

Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women

The 1st UN world conference on women in Mexico (1975) established the concept and importance of National Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women-NMAW. The General Assembly(1999) and the Commission on the Status of Women-CSW at several international meetings in (1999, 2000 and 2005) reaffirmed that NMAW were "catalysts" for promoting gender equality, gender mainstreaming, and monitoring implementation of BPFA. Such mechanisms when established by governments are intended to promote and support achievement of gender equality and State commitments to global processes.

Kenya has since 2004 established a Ministry of Gender, which is coupled with several other activities such as social services, culture, and sports. The women's bureau within the Ministry was upgraded in status to a department. A National Commission on Gender and Development (NCGD) was also established in December 2004, a multi-stakeholder body, with the mandate to promote gender mainstreaming as policy for government institutions and the incorporation of gender perspectives into all areas of development.

Key challenges faced include inadequate resources, need for capacity with regard to understanding of gender issues, gender equality, and the transformative implications of mainstreaming beyond merely raising numbers of women or incorporating women into the malestream. Success will depend on the vertical extension of mechanisms to co-ordinate gender and women's issues into provincial, location, district structures; and the horizontal extension into various line ministries through the establishment of gender divisions in line ministries facilitated by national machinery such as the gender department and NCGD.

Current interventions:

Integrating gender perspectives into legislation, public policies, and programmes is underway. For example, a National gender policy that is now sessional paper No. 5, has been developed and is awaiting legislative enactment. There is on going work on

gender responsive legal reform and sensitization of sectoral line ministries. NCGD is has also collaborated with diverse stakeholders on the periodic reporting of BPFA and CEDAW; such documents will provide useful information for policy dialogue and the development of interventions.

Key roles of national machinery:

The NCGD will be an important mechanism for co-ordinating gender and women's issues in response to both BPFA and CEDAW. To strengthen the work of the NCGD several factors must exist or be initiated:

- *Building capacity of staff* of national machinery and sectoral ministries.
- *Improving data collection* and support for gender-related research with the Central Bureau of Statistics and other research institutions to inform policies and programmes.
- *The existence of political will* - so that the work of national machinery for gender be taken seriously; and collaboration with other parts of government will be sustained otherwise everything related to gender and women will be left to the national machinery and this works against mainstreaming gender.
- *Mobilizing the support* of wide-ranging constituencies. The strength of the women's movement in Kenya is what national machinery can draw upon, success will also depend on mobilizing wide public support.
- *Funding availed from government* for work of national machinery at national level, provincial levels and local levels and within particular ministries.
- *Development of synergies* by defining collaborating relationship between national machinery and other statutory bodies will enable coherence and co-ordinated efforts that is so crucial for gender equality work.

Women and the Environment

Women are highly dependent on the natural environment for many of the productive and reproductive activities they undertake. Women are therefore most affected by environmental problems, thus their involvement in environmental management has seen positive developments in the protection of the environment.

Kenyan's Peace Nobel Prize winner, Professor Wangari Maathai has over several years made the case for reaching women collectively at the community level for managing and safeguarding the natural environment through her Green Belt Movement. Such community level engagement has provided women with unprecedented opportunities for public participation and for leadership

development. Professor Maathai shared her experiences of how the simple action of planting trees has positioned women as having agency and thus challenging political exclusion; social inequality; cultural identity and economic dependency.

Best Practices:

When women plant trees in their communities in response to addressing shared and understood environmental concerns, then these women are environmental decision-makers and perceived as acting for the whole community. When women plant trees knowledgeably they are taking on a new role of being “foresters”, a role normally and only held by government officers the majority of whom are men. The activity of planting trees is not perceived by local communities as women’s work, rather the various activities required for tree planting incorporate both women and men thereby encouraging a view of interdependence between women and men and the power of collectivity for social change. Tree planting activities had become linked to education for food security activities. Professor Maathai explained that she has seen women who participated in tree planting and its attendant activities of managing nurseries, planning and implementing community projects with regard to water and food security, and working with government foresters become empowered and eventually seek leadership positions in school committees, churches and local councils. Furthermore, local people were becoming more aware given evidence that bird life and small animals were returning when they planted more trees.

Conversation with Professor Maathai, January 16th 2006

Women have an essential role in the development of sustainable consumption and production of natural resources. The Green Belt Movement has helped illuminate how local communities might begin to proceed with regard to initiating environmental security. The significant lessons are that there is a need to first raise awareness on the necessity to address environmental security; second, empower communities and women to manage their natural environment and third, establish nurseries that will support or start reforestation in the local community.

Young Women

The BPFA, Global Framework notes that:

Special measures must be taken to ensure that young women have the life skills necessary for the active and effective participation in all levels of social, political, and economic leadership. ...A commitment to inspiring a new generation of women and men to work together for a more just society (paragraph 40).

Young women share with all women the 12 critical areas of concern within the Beijing Platform for Action, however no reference is made within the BPFA of young women as a category of women with specific issues and concern. Young Women's Leadership Institute (YWLI) thus seeks to address this silence; to have a space that will allow for young women to voice their concerns through intergenerational dialogues. YWLI's main focus is the promotion of young women within the women's movement in support of a strong all-inclusive woman's movement; recognizing that there is strength in the diversity of women. The gains for women's rights and within the women's movement can only be immense when new generation of young women begin to participate.

A key effort of the part of YWLI is seeking to establish mentoring relationships. Especially useful is mentoring that recognizes the value that each party brings to the relationship. Young women note that there are lessons to be borrowed from women in West Africa and Southern Africa where a stronger sense of sisterhood has been more strongly articulated and over a longer period of time.



Role of Government in the Advancement of Women in Kenya

by Betty Nyambura Maina

The challenges of implementing the international commitments on gender equality and empowerment of women and gender democracy demonstrate the great importance of ensuring an enabling environment. According to the report of the 49th session of the Commission on the status of Women, "...An enabling environment may be interpreted as a set of interrelated and interdependent systemic conditions such as policies, laws, institutional mechanisms, resources, etc., which facilitate the promotion of gender equality. An enabling environment would thus influence the capacity of women to be involved, participate actively and benefit from development processes in a sustained and effective manner. It would also contribute to the elimination of women's discrimination and exclusion, increase their access to decision-making, their control over resources such as land and economic assets, and fully recognize their contributions as actors in the economy and other areas of public life..."¹⁷

Governments represented at the 5th Global conference for women recognised and dedicated themselves towards addressing the unique challenges that women face and highlighted the importance of designing and implementing, with the full participation of women, development policies and programmes that would promote, enhance and sustain the advancement of women and guarantee their full participation, their dignity and the respect of women's human rights. Governments therefore set before themselves the responsibility of creating that enabling framework that would ensure that the gender inequalities that were so glaringly evident would be systemically addressed and that women would have equal opportunities for guaranteeing better outcomes for their well-being.¹⁸

The effective role of government in providing an enabling framework for the advancement of women, in African countries Kenya being a classic example is influenced by a number of factors that cannot be ignored in any discourse targeting development. Poverty continues to be a big challenge in Africa, structural reforms initially aimed at addressing the efficiency of governments only succeeded in exacerbating the very conditions of deprivation and neglect that should have been improved through efficient state functioning. The end of the cold war and the subsequent global political architecture that emerged had far reaching effects in the workings of the state and the decision making powers of the government.

¹⁷ "Enhancing Participation of Women in Development through an Enabling Environment for Achieving Gender Equality and the Advancement of Women" Expert Group Meeting, Bangkok, Thailand, 8 - 11 November 2005

¹⁸ Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 1995

Global forces of trade in goods and capital have continued to take pre-eminence in government's prioritisation of social and economic development. Of further consideration is the role of development partners in the whole milieu.

The Beijing +5 report explicitly recognises that globalisation has adversely affected the lives of women and increased inequality, especially in developing countries. Together with structural adjustment programmes, the high costs of external debt services and the declining terms of international trade, the policies and processes of globalisation have increased gender inequalities and reduced the resources available to tackle these problems. Though this is not the intended focus of the paper, there is need to keep the bigger global picture in mind when trying to assess progress and challenges in the advancement of women, and in analysing Government's contribution and its impact in creating this enabling framework for women in Kenya.

Focus on Kenya

1. Development policy framework

Kenya's current policy priorities are spelled out in the Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and employment Creation (2003-2007). These are classified into 4 areas namely:

1. Poverty reduction
2. Strengthening the institutions of governance
3. Rehabilitation and expansion of physical infrastructure
4. Investment in human capital¹⁹

This document provides the guiding policy framework for the states obligation to stimulating economic development and general well being of the country. The Policy was guided by the eminent challenges identified as a receding economy characterised by low investment, high unemployment rates, bad governance and a sense of apathy among the citizens. The document recognises that gender is a consideration that should be made in terms of policy actualisation. To facilitate actualisation of the strategy, the Government drew the investment plan for implementation of the Economic Recovery Strategy. This 2nd document presents a

¹⁹ Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation 2003-2007

results oriented programme plan of government priorities for the implementation of the Medium term objectives of the ERS. To improve equity and address poverty, the programme focuses on universal primary education, improved access to basic health facilities, increased productive capacity in agriculture, increased investment in arid and semi-arid areas and upgrading the living conditions of the urban poor. From the forgoing though it is clearly recognised that Gender is a key variable in assessing poverty indicators, the macro-economic assessment is done in gender neutral terms, a serious set-back in understanding and responding to gender dimensions of poverty and development.²⁰

Other documents that are key policy documents and that guide government expenditure are: the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (2000-2003), the National Poverty Eradication Plan 1999-2015 and the National Development Plan (2002-2008). NPEP is a long term poverty reduction strategy to reduce poverty by 50% by 2015. It recognised the multi-dimensional nature of poverty and had a goal of narrowing the geographical and gender disparities in poverty. NPEP noted the need to enact legislation to remove barriers to women's advancement. The PRSP 2000-2003 is a short term strategy to implement the NPEP in a series of three year plans. What was most positive about the initial PRSP was that it was developed through a broad consultative process, of which women played a key role. It could be said that it was as a result of this that the PRSP noted that women in Kenya face discrimination before law and suffer from lack of legal protection, notably in their rights and control over resources. The Government therefore committed to review and release the National Gender Policy and set in motion necessary steps to implement its recommendations. The objective of this Policy was to guide mainstreaming of gender in all areas of development.²¹ The finalisation of this policy paper has been greatly overdrawn considering its importance; as a result government's reflection of gender in policy and programmes is still lacking a concrete guiding framework. The National Development Plan emphasises growth and social provisioning for poverty reduction. These are key in enhancing Government's role in creating the necessary enabling environment for women's advancement. The document indicates that all programmes and policies identified in the plan will be engendered to enhance efficiency in the utilisation of resources.

²⁰ Investment Programme for the Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation 2004

²¹ Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper 2000-2003

Recognition of gender in policy and planning is a good sign; however the actual test of commitment lies in the resource allocation for achievement of these objectives. The MTEF budget process was designed to achieving just that, linking policy to planning and budgeting. This was aimed at achieving a more effective use of resources and to direct resources towards implementation of policy priorities.

The National Policy on Gender and Development was approved by the Cabinet in 2000 and is now in the Sessional Paper stage, awaiting cabinet approval before it is operationalised. The overall objective of the policy is to facilitate the mainstreaming of the needs and concerns of men and women in all areas in the development process in the country. The areas identified are the economy, poverty, law, education and training, health and population, the media, political participation and decision making, policy implementation framework and resource mobilization.

2 Gender disaggregated data

Understanding poverty as has been stated earlier needs proper data. A poverty analysis and research unit has been established at the Central Bureau of Statistics. This has mainly concentrated on poverty mapping, taking into consideration regional variations, and is yet to undertake desegregation based on gender. However, CBS has been undertaking measures aimed at disaggregating data in various sectors among them being: reflecting data on women's contribution to GDP into national accounts and it has also developed gender monographs in education, housing including data on HIV/AIDs which is also collected and analysed in terms of gender²². Further to this it has developed monitoring and evaluation indicators for the MDGs. These indicators give better precision in the assessment of progress towards the achievement of the MDGs. However, according to the MDGs report by the mission, the monitoring and evaluation capacity for the implementation of gender equality is rated as fair. This illustrates that there is an inadequate systematic information based review and re-planning, an indication that there is still a great deal that needs to be done.

²² GOK review report on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action 2004

3 Enhancing opportunities for economic actualisation

The Government has stated its commitment to reversing the economic decline, mismanagement, contraction in per capita income and numbers living below the poverty line. The Economic Recovery Strategy (ERS) for Wealth and Employment Creation, 2003 - 2007, is the blue print towards achieving this end.

In it is a recovery outline centered on a re-energized private sector activity and investment and specifically Micro, Small and Medium Sized Enterprise (MSME) development, feature prominently in the Government's strategy for raising incomes and employment.²³

The Kenya 2003 Economic Survey indicated that employment in the informal sector increased from 3.7 million employees in 1999 to 5.1 million in 2002, while the formal sector increased only from 1.74 million to 1.76 million over the same period.²⁴ This however, does not necessarily reflect growth and high productivity of the enterprise itself as the number of informal sector companies grew largely because of the depressed formal economy and underemployment in the formal sector.

The Government's objectives, policies and strategy for MSME development are spelt out in three policy and strategy documents. The ERSWEC and the Investment Programme translate the Government's mandate into a prioritised programme of action for the next five years and emphasises the importance of the micro and small enterprise sector in job creation. This programme indicates that Government will invest in providing targeted credit to Agriculture and SMEs. Women being the majority in SMEs are likely to benefit from this initiative. The third document is the Sessional Paper on Development of Small and Micro Enterprises for Wealth and Employment Creation (Draft 2004), this outlays the policy framework and government vision for the sector's development. It is in this framework that the MSMEs Competitiveness Project has been articulated. This project seeks to increase productivity and employment in MSMEs sector. This is by strengthening financial and non-financial markets to meet the demand of MSMEs, strengthening institutional support for employable skills and business Management and reducing critical investment constraints on MSMEs.

²³ "Support for growth oriented women entrepreneurs in Kenya" by Stevenson, L. and St-onge, A. A report of the African development Bank 2005

²⁴ Economic Survey 2003

Specifically the project seeks to:

(a) Enhance Access to Finance:

This is aimed at deepening and expanding the reach of financial services and products that are available to MSMEs, including new risk capital instruments. This will be achieved through performance based matching grants to assist a range of Financial institutions build capacity to provide financial services to different segments of the MSME sector.

(b) Strengthening Enterprise Skills and Market Linkages:

This addresses market failures that limit the ability of MSMEs to obtain the necessary skills and business services to exploit opportunities. It integrates a set of complementary and mutually reinforcing activities to support a wide range of enterprise needs, including a value-chain based sub sector matching grant fund, tools for business schools to better train managers, business plan competition to catalyze innovation and entrepreneurship, and restructuring of the national levy scheme to ensure sustainability of firm-level training.

(c) Improving the Business Environment:

This aims at reducing cost of compliance with business regulations for the formal sector thus creating incentives for informal MSMEs to graduate to higher levels of formality, and thus facilitate their access to resources for growth. This component will assist the Government in implementing the simplified taxation regime for micro and small businesses and in reducing the cost of starting a business through a one-stop shop approach.

These strategies have the potential of improving the performance of micro and small scale enterprises where majority of the women are engaged. Another complementary feature has been the government's decision to liberalise telecommunications and media. This has had far reaching effects in terms of enhancing access to these services by women especially who are mostly engaged in the medium-small enterprises. Access to business information and opportunities to communicate are more enhanced though a great deal of direct action is still required.

4 Health

It is recognised that health is a critical indicator for human development. The Government in all its national development policy statements has reiterated the

need to invest in health for all as a key component of fighting poverty and reducing inequalities in Kenya. The achievement of good health is critical in enhancing the productive capacity of people and enhances efficiency of use of resources.

The policy document guiding the health sector is the Strategic Health Policy Framework 1994, which saw the development of the Kenya National Health sector Reform Programme 1997-2001. The objectives of this was to ensure reduction of morbidity, mortality and fertility rates, promotion of primary health care and widening the access to health care services. The reform programme also decentralised management of health care facilities, which was aimed at improving service provision by the facilities.²⁵

The government formulated the Sessional paper no. 4 of 1997 on AIDS in Kenya to provide the policy framework for the prevention and control of AIDS. In 1999 the pandemic was declared a national disaster when the HIV/AIDS strategic plan (2000 – 2005) was formulated. According to the plan it is aimed at reducing the prevalence by 20%-30% among women aged 15-24 and among pregnant women and an increase in access to care and support for the people infected and affected.

Government's expenditure in the health sector has been on the increase, allocations in the fiscal year 2002/2003 amounted to Ksh. 15 billion. Within this budget there has been an expansion into preventive rather than curative measures, for example the mosquito subsidisation of mosquito nets to address the prevalence of Malaria, the establishment of the Kenya expanded Programme on Immunisation²⁶, and the reintroduction of public health services and dispensaries at the local council level. However, the per capita expenditure for Kenya on health is about USD 6.2 a figure that is way below the WHO stipulation of USD 34. This therefore has the compounded effect of increasing the burden of health care provision on women, who are the primary care givers.

5 Education

Education is a key determinant of improved wellbeing of a society. Studies have revealed that in instances of improved education of women, there has been a negative relationship between increased education levels and other key human development indicators such as child mortality, maternal mortality, household nutrition and more directly household incomes. Investing in girl's

²⁵ WHO report on Kenya 2004

²⁶ Government of Kenya report for the world Summit on Sustainable Development Rio+10 (2002)

opportunities for education and addressing systemic and other challenges that hinder their access and completion rates is an efficient economic decision.

The Master Plan on Education and Training of 1997-2010 spells out government's commitment for providing equal education opportunities to both girls and boys without any form of discrimination. The introduction of free primary education in 2003, has further strengthened this coupled with the making mandatory for all parents to send their children of school going age to school failure to which they were liable for prosecution. This has seen marked improvement in the enrolment of both boys and girls in primary school.

The Government, over the years, has increased its budgetary allocation to education as well as introducing a Constituency Bursary Fund for efficient facilitation of education at the grassroots level. The free primary education policy instituted in 2003, has gone a long way in increasing enrolment rates for girls and boys, though it has experienced immense challenges.

The Gender Unit was created in the Ministry of Education in 1995 as recommended during the symposium on Girls Education in 1994. The Gender unit is the focal point for handling gender matters in education and the day to day work is handled by the Unit Secretariat. The Unit operates and networks with other Ministries within the Government, NGOs, community leaders and individuals interested in matters concerning girls education. All officers in the Gender Unit underwent training on the principles of Gender and Development and as a result have adequate skills to deal with gender issues in education including strategic programme planning.

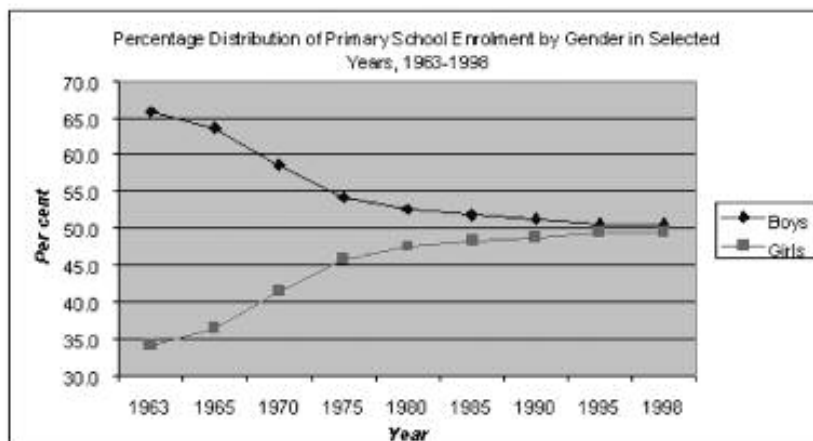
The Ministry, in collaboration with UNICEF, initiated the Girl Child programme whose main objective was to close the gender gaps in education. It undertook gender sensitisation activities for top, middle and grassroots Ministry of Education personnel and also began to move to communities. Teachers have also been sensitised to make them gender responsive to the special needs of the "girl and boy" child learners.²⁷

One of the great achievements of the Ministry of Education is the establishment of a Data bank in the Planning Departments, with easily accessible gender desegregated data. As a result, significant empirical and analytical knowledge

²⁷ EFA country assessment report 2000, UNICEF

and information has been generated on the status of girls' education. Gender desegregated data are collected annually for monitoring of gender disparity.

The Ministry of Education initiated in 1996 a follow up study to establish guidelines on the readmission of teenage mothers back to school and has advised school administrators to assist in the readmission process. This has been accepted as one way of reducing the high drop out rate among school girls.



Adopted from: The EFA Country Assessment report, 2000 by UNCIEF

At the beginning of 1990, the percentage of boys to girls' enrolment at primary school level nationally was 51.3% and that of girls 48.7%. By 1998, the percentages were almost at par at 50.6% for boys 49.4% for girls.

At Secondary level (at 1990) the percentage of boys to that of girls was 57.2% and 42.8% respectively. By 1998, the percentage change was 53.3% for boys and 46.7% for girls. Hence, it can be noted that there has been an improvement in girls' enrolment as compared to the boys at secondary level.

Non-formal and Special Education

The government has put in place measures for providing of basic education for nomadic and pastoralist communities: Children are gathered together in the manyattas (Kraals) for teaching purposes. Both teachers and children migrate together with community/family as and when geographical conditions dictate.

These efforts are going some way in facilitating access to education for nomadic communities and particularly for girls.

The integration approach for special education programme in regular programme, is facilitating the reduction of stigma concerning disability and as such facilitating increased integration of the handicapped into society. There have been demonstrated improvements in the enrolment rates for women among the various categories of disability.

Adult literacy

The Government had laid some emphasis on adult and continuing education towards the achievement of education for all. These have included deliberate efforts to reduce adult literacy, with a specific target on women, and the launching of the post-literacy programme which involved a detailed post-literacy curriculum including English, Kiswahili, Mathematics, Agriculture as core subjects and Environment and Health, Business Management, Civics and Social Ethics, Applied Science and Technology as elective subjects. There has been a decline in the number of persons enrolling in adult literacy classes. From the table below, it is demonstrable that the percentage of women compared to men that have enrolled in adult literacy classes is substantially higher.

Enrolment in Adult Literacy Classes

Year	Male	Female	Total	% Female
1980	32,698	105,458	138,154	76.3
1991	34,709	104,867	139,576	75.1
1992	25,425	84,049	109,474	76.8
1993	26,027	81,271	107,298	75.7
1994	26,595	87,684	114,279	76.7
1995	27,572	88,479	116,051	76.2
1996	26,612	89,029	115,641	77.0
1997	28,139	73,215	101,354	72.2
1998	26,180	74,081	100,261	73.9

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, Economic Survey, various issues

6. Environment

The government passed the Environment and Management and Coordination Act 2000, the act paved way for the establishment of the National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA), charged with the management and policy direction targeting the environment. It is also the body charged with legal enforcement of environmental law, including guiding and implementing requirements of environmental Impact Assessments before licensing of development projects and programmes.

The law also provided for a public complaints committee, where communities or individuals are able to lodge complaints they may have regarding and environmental issue in their locality. One progressive feature of the environmental Management and Coordination act is that it gave Loci Standi to members of a community to lodge a complaint or file a case if they detect environmental mismanagement in their locality. Women being most affected by environmental degradation, therefore have an opportunity to lodge complaints and get a hearing.

7. Appointments to public office

The number of women in Parliament rose to 18 in 2003. Out of the total nominated MPs 41.7% were women.

Women Ambassadors/High Commissioners increased to 7, District Commissioners increased to 3, 8 Permanent Secretaries and Deputy Secretaries increased to 19.

8. Governance, Law and Order

Enhancing the legal framework for the Advancement of women

The government in 1993, appointed a task force to review laws relating to Kenyan women in Kenya. The taskforce report:

- Recommended a review of the constitution to recognise full-scale equality between women and men, on matters such as citizenship, and personal choice in issues linked to customary practises.
- Recommended the elimination of practises, traditions, policies and laws which violate women's rights and are in conflict with rights and duties under international laws that Kenya as a state had ratified.

- Recommended the enactment of a Domestic Violence Act
- Recommended the development of appropriate legal protection and the establishment of a family court system to give an atmosphere of privacy attending the resolution of disputes bearing implications for family stability.
- Recommended affirmative action policies in the mode of public office recruitment, working conditions, education, training and in information and media, under both law and policy, to redress the deeply rooted disadvantages in the domain of governance.
- Recommended the implementation of strategies that train, employ and include women in the development and management of economic programmes.
- Recommended sufficient mechanisms be established to oversee, coordinate and monitor the implementation of legal and policy recommendations and strategies and the establishment of a national Gender and Development Council as a corporate body to work with the Attorney General's Office and the Kenya Law Reform Commission to ensure amendment and development of laws and regulations aimed at removing the sources of gender inequality.

In response to these recommendations, the government has undertaken the following:

- The National Commission on Gender and Development Act 2003 was passed and became operational in January 2004. Following this, the National Commission on Gender and Development was constituted in 2004 and launched in 2005. The Commission was established to coordinate, implement and facilitate gender mainstreaming in national development and advise the government on all gender issues.
- The passing of the Children's Act 2001, gives effect to the principles in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.
- A family court division was established at the high court and is fully operational.
- Through the Ministry of Labour and Manpower Development, a comprehensive draft employment policy document mainstreaming women in employment planning and discouraging child labour.

Governance Justice Law and Order Sector reform programme

GJLOS is a reform minded initiative led by the Government of Kenya to give its citizens better governance, justice, law and order. It is a programme that seeks to end corruption, slow and inept government services, and enhance professionalism in the civil service. It brings together everyone that has a stake in transforming Kenya into a better place, not just for our children, and our children's children but for all of us.

GJLOS is a multi-sectoral programme which brings together 32 government agencies and several semi-autonomous government agencies, non-governmental organizations and development partners. This is a framework for the achievement of fair, accessible, timely and responsive legal and judicial systems.²⁸

Legal Sector Reform

Legal Sector Reforms supported by the project aim at providing a framework for the achievement of a fair, accessible, timely and responsive legal and judicial system by enhancing the operational efficiency of legal sector institutions. The project supported consultancies, staff training and procurement of Computer equipment.

So far recording of court proceedings on a pilot basis in five courts has been undertaken to modernize recording, archiving and retrieval of proceedings for faster dispensation of justice. In addition the National Council for Law reporting has been undertaking compilation of what is being known as "Kenya Law Reports" this initiative has even gone a step further into posting these reports online. The initiative is aimed at enhancing access of information and knowledge of law to the public. For women this will go a long way in improving tracking of cases and particularly facilitate public interest litigation.

Police Reforms

The Kenya Police force is in the process of carrying out an ambitious police reforms Programme. The Kenya Police reform strategy 2003-2007 envisions a world class, professional police force.

The main areas that the police has sought to improve in include: Community policing, culture and attitude seminars, child protection and gender desks.

The Government has also embarked on Community Policing Program

²⁸ GJLOS Reform update issue No. 1 October 2005

Community Policing

Community policing is a new approach to security where police and community work together to solve crime and enhance safety in a given area, which could be a residential or business place. The focus is on devising joint solutions to policing matters. Whereas it is hardly a new approach, for it has been used in developed countries, its acceptance in Kenya marks a radical shift from the traditional police-based to service-based approach to addressing security issues. The underlying philosophy is that people deserve and have a right to real say in policing in exchange for their involvement and support. This will have positive impact for women in communities where gender targeted crime takes place mostly. As a result of the initiative there is evolving a culture of trust between the police and the public.

Police Gender Desks and child protection units

Some police officers have undergone gender training and training on children issues. Though the number is modest, this is a step that should be built on to further enhance police sensitivity to gender issues. In addition, there has been the establishment of a special division in police to deal with Gender based violence, a move that is moving domestic violence from being a private issue to a public issue of concern.

9. Budgetary measures targeting consumer goods

The budget process has been one way that Government is able to control the quality of life that people can enjoy. Budgeting has 2 aspects to it, the revenue side and the expenditure side. Much of the focus of our attention throughout assessing the various sectors has been on the expenditure side. However governments can take measures that seek to redress the specific challenges of a social sector in terms of their consumption patterns. In the 2004/05 and the 2005/06 budget estimates, the Minister of Finance declared a zero rating of certain consumer goods including: Liquid Petroleum Gas, Sanitary pads, maize flour, Milk and cream and Illuminating kerosene. In addition, the Value Added Tax was reduced to 16%. The zero rating of these essential commodities is aimed at reducing consumer prices, therefore making them more affordable. In addition, the reduction in VAT reduces the price of commodities across a wider range of products. A move that has direct impact on increasing the purchasing power of women.

Conclusion

Though the efforts of Government in addressing gender inequality and the quality of life of Kenyans seem to be numerous, the real impact of these initiatives is still very low. This could be attributed to various factors among them the fact some of the reform programmes are still in their infant stage and as such real progress cannot be yet realised. On another note, we could attribute the lack of substantial progress as being related to the fact that though initiatives are specified on paper their implementation is on a very small scale, with minimal or no budgetary allocations and lacking in strategic planning and management.

Many of the efforts highlighted above may have no explicit gender agenda, but they implicitly contribute to creating an enabling framework for the advancement of women. As was mentioned in the introductory section, the goal for the advancement of women requires Governments to facilitate an enabling environment for its realisation. In addition, it should also be noted that much of the successes of the above mentioned initiatives have been as a result of collaborations between Civil Society and Government, a partnership which when well harnessed has far reaching positive effects.



Reflecting on the Best Practices

At the conclusion of the 49th session of the UN Conference on the status of women, Beijing+10, (2005) Kenya with other world governments reaffirmed commitment to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Progressive women organizations had been at the forefront of ensuring that women's rights and gender equality continue to be on the agenda of national governments. UN member states reaffirming the political declaration agreed that it would require the full implementation of the BPFA for internationally agreed development goals to be achieved. A new challenge for women's organizations is to ensure that the commitments in the BPFA and in CEDAW are promoted in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The current targets and goals of the MDGs, as the new developmental framework, have not comprehensively reflected the key issues for women that are in the BPFA such as; political participation, violence, and reproductive health rights. Given that the MDGs have been agreed upon by governments and are receiving tremendous resources, it is essential that women direct their activism at MDGs and key policy makers to strengthen MDG targets and indicators in ways that promote the Beijing goals.

Obtaining better outcomes for women is increasingly and severely being challenged by new realities such as HIV/AIDS with women at its center as a result of sexual violence, unequal power relations, or gender discrimination. At the same time the burden of care, with little or no support, arising out of the HIV/AIDS pandemic has fallen on women. Women's NGOs working in this area have begun to highlight the needed responses that not only require taking into account the needs of women but also incorporating men in any interventions that seeks to contain HIV/AIDS; this work requires support.

Reflecting on the work shared in this study by non-governmental organizations, several complex challenges present themselves:

- Tensions arise from seeking to define the nature of one's work with feminism still a contested term for articulating the work of local women's NGOs. Although some organizations perceive their actions as feminists many continue to resist this language as alien, yet the strategies many of them employ suggest a feminist vision. The work for the Kenya women's movement will be to develop a shared language of communicating what is it we want to do, where we want to work, how we want to work and why we want to work the way we do. There is need for analytical work, and shared conceptual clarity with regard to feminism, gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment. A connected area of unease notes Florence Butegwa, has been a "tendency within the movement, for a complete

separation between those working on theoretical basis and their claims and the activists. This has led to very committed activists within the movement with very little knowledge of the theoretical basis of their work.”²⁹

- Under-investment in Gender and Development approaches (GAD). Gender based inequalities in terms of control and access to assets and resources continue to hinder women’s ability to escape poverty, further constraining the potential of their local communities. The work of gender equality and the advancement of women is therefore inherently political work in so far as it seeks to disrupt taken for granted social arrangements that sustain imbalances and inequalities in work, resources, rights and entitlements. Moreover, an important aspect of gender work is that it has cross-sectoral implications. For example, supporting women’s entrepreneurship may require interventions in other sectors such as infrastructure, educational access and law reform. Furthermore, many interventions simultaneously address both strategic and practical gender concerns, e.g. targeting women for access to resources may not only empower them with regard to men but also the wider community.
- There are obstacles to consistent, holistic, long-term gender work through developing and ensuring reliable; sufficient; long-term resources for gender work. On the whole, many of the women’s and non-governmental organizations in this study depend on donor funding. They shared the challenges of unreliable and insufficient funding. Women’s NGOs are also faced with funding structures that are often short-term yet changing gender relations is long term work. Wilson and Taylor advocate “mechanisms for a more inclusive negotiated decision-making process around funding policy [as] essential if we are to strike a balance between donor’s wishes and communities needs.”³⁰ For securing an enabling environment for gender work, gender equality and the advancement of women will continue to require the development of relationships with international financial institutions, the United Nations and donors.
- Macro-policies emphasis on economic growth re-enforce women in development (WID) approaches and efficiency often to the detriment of the strategic needs of women, and increased work burden for women. In the current Kenyan environment where social services are increasingly being privatized, in response to neo-liberal global policies, the work of women’s

²⁹ Florence Bulegwa, *Reflections on the African Women’s Movement, 1975-1997. Taking the African Women’s Movement into the 21st Century*, Report of the First AWU Programme, February 22nd -March 14th 1997, Kampala, Uganda.

³⁰ John Wilson and Dan Taylor (no date) *Financing Development Practice: How can we start to make the difference that makes the difference*”

organizations consequently continues to focus on responding to the costs of privatization policies upon the poor and vulnerable many of whom at the present time will be women. Overwhelmingly, projects targeting women are addressing their welfare concerns with regards to health, education, income generation, and access to basic services. Noeleen Heyzer argues what is urgently needed are responses that begin with "building the capacity of women, governments and institutions to make the link between gender and economic policy decisions, including women's work in the unpaid care economy, the analysis and formulation of national and local budgets and the collection of gender disaggregated data and statistics."³¹

- Mechanisms of accountability to women constituents remain inadequate or absent. Several of the organizations in this study were women's NGOs and as a consequence have gender-sensitive provisions in the structures of their work that are contributing to women's empowerment in the workplace and as public agents with regard to their organizational mandates. However, an important challenge for women's organizations is getting their institutional practices right for women; with the objective of promoting "accountability to women... by identifying the organizational and political conditions under which economic and political gains for women... might be achieved".³² The question here is are women's NGOs accountable to their women constituents, and if so, what mechanisms are actually in place for doing so, or are they primarily and only accounting to those who fund them.
- Insufficient institutionalization of non-governmental organizations to ensure sustainability by building, and retaining institutional memory, and the technical and managerial capacity to innovate and scale up. The current context of reform in Kenya has availed new opportunities to bring gender equality on the public agenda as well as seen the increased movement of gender and human rights activists away from NGOs into public sector work. A new concern was thus being expressed by several of the organizations in this study that have recently seen changes to their leadership, with the attendant challenges of transition. Fore-grounded by these changes is the shared weakness among many Kenya NGOs of insufficient institutionalization of their processes given the high dependence on one, usually charismatic, individual and often a founder leader whose departure

³¹ Noeleen Heyzer. 13th January 2004. *Women's Participation and Leadership: Vital to Democratic Governance*. Summit on the Americas, Monterey, Mexico, p.3.

³² Anee Marie Goetz, (ed). *Getting Institutions Right for Women in Development*. London/New York: Zed Books. 1997. p.2.

subsequently creates uncertainty and unpredictability. Institutionalizing mechanisms that would inform the norms, structures and practices of women's NGOs and at the same time are responsive to new problems and challenges is very much needed to alert us to the fact that such organizational sites need to have "egalitarian value-driven cultures"³³ that promotes organizational sustainability.

- Differentiation emerges in the women's movement and among organizations framed around class and ethnicity, rural vs. urban, formal sector vs. informal sector, elite vs. non elite, all highlighting the complexity of defining women's concerns yet requiring new negotiations given the shared interest of ameliorating inequalities and transforming gender norms. Furthermore, the human rights movement and the women's movement in Kenya have tended to see their work as occupying different spheres of struggles. The reason for this disconnect has frequently sprung from the fact that the leadership of NGOs carrying out gender equality work is primarily women while NGOs engaged in human rights work have dominantly been led by men. And generally, neither group has traditionally sought to bridge the gap in ways that strengthens each other's work to further the understanding that "women's rights are human rights."
- Inadequate support for engendering the political agenda in the legislative, judicial and executive systems of governance for the advancement of women. Recent constitutional review activities provided a new impetus for the formulation of a women's agenda and a push for women's political representation as a way to initiate a transformatory agenda for Kenya. Women's rights advocates are in agreement that given the pervasive and differential treatment of women, consensus building will be necessary to advance women's interests for social justice. The task for gender justice advocates in Kenya will lie in strengthening collective efforts and the knowledge base that provides understanding and conceptualization of the work they do in a context of globalizing and national forces and relationships. What Kenyan women want is an "engendered political agenda" manifest in the legislative, judicial, and executive systems of governance; with a public sector incorporating mechanism, processes and institutions through which citizens, specifically women, can articulate their interests, mediate their differences and exercise their rights and obligations".³⁴ The Kenya

³³ Ibid p.9

³⁴ INSTRAW. *Engendering the Political Agenda: The Role of the State, Women's organizations and the International Community*. San Domingo: INSTRAW. 2000. p.3

government's recent establishment of the National Commission on Gender and Development are steps in the right direction in establishing national mechanisms for advancing national policies and international and regional commitments for the advancement of women and gender equality. By working strategically and collaboratively, such national mechanisms, women's and human rights organizations if well resourced can impact on the policies and programmes of the Kenya government.

The work of organizations in this study and gender equality advocates, shows that they will remain a crucial force in ensuring that gender issues do not get sidelined or become invisible. Clearly, women's NGOs continue to pick up the slack where gender equality and women concerns are not given attention. For even though gender advocates have now spent years talking about women's rights and working for the advancement of women, gender justice has not fully become a priority for policy makers. Thus, in recent years, the organizations in this study are increasingly focusing on mainstreaming gender justice into the political discourses of Kenya with the view to strengthen women's participation in governance. However, the transformative potential of gender-responsive practices emerges where there is:

- Affirmation of women's *agency*, that women will define their concerns and that they will have their capabilities strengthened to find solutions and intervene.
- Support mechanisms for a more *inclusive negotiated decision-making* process around funding policies for gender work.
- Espousal of *gender equality and women's empowerment* as matters of social justice and thus explicit objectives in NGO programming and development assistance.
- Requirement that women be able to ensure that power holders at all levels can be held to *account to women*.
- Recognition of gender equality work as *praxis*, requiring both *politics and technical work*.
- *Passion* for and in the work.

Lastly, the successes of women's organizations and progressive organizations are becoming progressively more apparent where they are establishing partnerships and coalitions with other stakeholders and government institutions. The importance of such collaborations is that gender concerns can be prioritized, and that as women's and human rights organizations, they are particularly well placed to recognize and respond to the needs of women for constituency building and forging a vision for the women of Kenya.



Overview of best practices promoting Gender Equality and the advancement of Kenyan Women

African Women & Child Feature Service. (AWC)

The African Women and Child Feature Service was founded in 1994 with the goal of presenting the views of women and children in the mainstream Media. AWC's vision is of Africa as a continent that understands and embraces gender equality as the cornerstone for development; while its mission is to promote equal gender development through the media and research.

AWC began as a small newspaper focusing on gender and media for development. It has dealt with topics as diverse as resource allocation, cultural restrictions among others. AWC works both in Kenya and the wider region in particular on policy advocacy, training, and especially, content development in the context of gender awareness. While AWC perceives the media as a very patriarchal sphere AWC recognizes the strategic importance of utilizing media as an instrument for promoting gender equality.

Since 1998, AWC coordinates the Editors' Guild and Media Industry Steering Committee (MISC) which it uses as an entry point to try and influence policy around gender coverage. The result has been that editors have agreed to develop guidelines on how to cover gender issues and elections, and to highlight issues related to gender violence.³⁵ AWC along with the South African based Gender Links and Inter Press Service (Zimbabwe) produces the GEM newspaper which "advocates the fair representation of women and increased coverage of gender issues in Africa's mainstream media." In addition, an AWC documentary "Mending the Ribbon" encourages men to look at emerging issues around HIV/AIDS from a gender perspective.

Success Stories

1. Media Encounter: Isiolo (North Eastern Kenya) Media Encounter

Objective

To create opportunities for interested journalists to immerse themselves in issues of concern to Kenyan communities and to discuss these issues with the communities themselves.³⁶ The aim of the project is to enable communities, especially women, to be heard within any national debate and the current constitutional processes thus fostering women's empowerment in Kenya.

³⁵ http://www.gppac.org/documents/Media_book_nieuw/p2_9_kenya.htm

³⁶ http://www.AWCFS.org/advocacy_lobbying.html

Strategies

To lobby and advocate for issues that affect community from a gender perspective using the media, AWC Features has over the years used the 'Media Encounter' whereby the media goes to the community and tries to understand a particular issue as it affects the different members of a community. The issues are then captured and reported simultaneously in all media houses as a way to bring about policy change. AWC has adopted this strategy in an attempt to combat 'statement journalism' that is devoid of depth or analysis and often takes the views of only the men thereby ignoring women and the ordinary people's views. It is also an attempt to report on development issues as well as the positive things taking place within a community.

The devastating effects of illicit arms in North Eastern part of Kenya where cattle rustlers were using small arms to terrorize women prompted AWC Features to organize a media encounter to link the menace of small arms to reproductive health problems such as sexual violence and HIV/AIDS. (AWC Media Encounter report, July 2005) Thus, in 1997 AWC took 15 journalists from several print and electronic media houses to cover the under-reported insecurity situation in North Eastern Kenya. At a workshop, the community challenged the media about the lack of reporting on the rape of women.

Best Practices

Through the media encounter, AWC Features achieved the following:

- Lent visibility to the North Eastern community's issues at the national level while also demonstrating the universality of issues (e.g. insecurity) for all Kenyans³⁷.
- Provided the women, children and community leaders a forum at which to explain to the media how they would like their issues to be reported.
- Highlighted the negative effects of insecurity on women's reproductive health.
- Helped influence policy at the highest level.

³⁷ AWC conducted another community media encounter in a poor neighbourhood of Nairobi, Kariobangi. "We were able to talk to local leaders and the area chief on the situation of insecurity. They were able to link the Isiolo saga with what is happening in the area. Again the media carried the 'bang style journalism' and the President visited the area and promised better security for the people" *Media Encounter report, AWC July 2005*.

- Sensitized journalists on how to report gender issues.
- Spurred the media houses into mainstreaming gender.
- This initiative led to a simultaneous small arms campaign by several media houses (“bang-style journalism”) and resulted in the government making policies on disarmament and an amnesty was instituted.

2. Communicating Development:³⁸ Using the media to highlight gender issues around HIV/AIDS research on vaccine (Majengo Commercial Sex Workers)

In 2001, AWC broke a story on the patenting of an anti-HIV vaccine development process by British scientists from Oxford University who failed, in an “oversight”, to recognize the contributions of their Kenyan partners. The vaccine had been developed by studying the immune system of Commercial Sex Workers (CSW) operating in Kenya’s Majengo slums who had not been infected by HIV/AIDS despite engaging in unprotected multiple-partner sex. While the British scientists agreed to redress their “oversight” in an MoU with the Kenyan scientists to guide the research, the position of the CSWs was not addressed. As things stood, the CSWs were to have no stake in the proceeds from the patent despite their immense contribution. This prompted AWC to start a spirited campaign highlighting the violation of these women’s rights to adequate compensation thereby generating public debate on the matter. In private conversations, AWC also exerted pressure on the scientists, constantly questioning the plight of the women. Eventually, the scientists started to respond to the queries being raised, and some of the issues were captured in a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding.

Best Practices

- Although the commercial sex workers are not mentioned as co-partners in the patent, the MoU clearly states that a share of the proceeds from the vaccine that goes to the patent holders should also go to the CSW. Scientists in the Kenyan Aids Vaccine Initiative are supposed to ensure that this happens.
- Prompted discussions on the implications of patent laws on those participating in research and the government’s role in protecting its citizens’ rights.

³⁸ The theme *Communicating Development* using a gender perspective looks at the “implication of information on development” (African Women & Child Feature Service Annual Report 2003-2004)

- Although, it has since transpired that the vaccine results were not successful, if in the future the scientists build on their knowledge and create another product, then the CSWs will be able to lodge a claim to the proceeds from it.

3. Train media to carry development stories

Objective

To refocus media to bring attention to the development issues and concerns that are often framed within the everyday opinions and statements of political leaders.

Strategies

African Women & Child Feature Service conducts training of institutions, such as the Nairobi University's School of Journalism; Kenya Institute of Mass Communication as well as training sub-editors and senior women journalists, with the latter expanded since 2004 to include monthly meetings.

Best Practices

- Work with media organizations such as the Nation Media Group in 2001 aimed at encouraging them to cover the International Women's Day, has led to the media coverage on "*Breaking the Silence - End the Domestic Violence Campaign*," a one year campaign as part of AWC's advocacy programme. In addition, the Nation has started a weekly section in the Wednesday paper that looks at issues within the Family.

Implementing Partners

AWC is wholly dependent on donor funding and receives grants from a variety of donors.

Activity	Donors and Partners
Training and Production of Training Materials	Fredrich Ebert Foundation (FES), Norwegian Church Aid (NCA), UNICEF
Lobby and Advocacy	Ford Foundation, ³⁹ Heinrich Böll Foundation, UNICEF, UNIFEM

³⁹ AWC has undertaken a two-year project, Influencing National Policy on Women's Reproductive Health through the media sponsored by Ford Foundation. This project aims to enable journalists and other media practitioners to develop, for publication and transmission, in-depth news reports that will impact on the national policies of Kenya. They will also address the situation of women as a national priority with regard to reproductive health and rights http://www.gppac.org/documents/Media_book_nieuw/p2_9_kenya.htm

Content Creation	UN HABITAT, Netherlands Embassy, Ford Foundation, NORAD, Heinrich Böll Foundation, UNICEF, African Biotechnology Stakeholders Forum
Policy and Research	Netherlands Embassy, PATH, PANOS Institute - London, UNESCO, UNIFEM, Global Women in Politics Programme (G-WIP), HIVOS, The Finish Embassy
Organisational Capacity Building	Global Fund for Women

Source: *Annual Report 2003-2004*

Between 1993 and 1996, AWC raised funds by selling articles to media houses in keeping with its roots as a feature service focusing on gender issues. The period beginning 1995 to 2003 brought about increased funding for AWC's project work.⁴⁰

Challenges

- Increasingly, resources are going to government rather than CSOs given that the new development focus is on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).⁴¹
- The Media as a cultural institution often mirrors society sustaining patriarchal practices in its perspectives, discourses and decision-making frameworks.
- Funding is a challenge, particularly as AWC is fully dependent upon donor funding. This has hindered its ability to retain staff and plan long term initiatives.

Lessons Learnt

- The need for partnerships to create synergy and reduce duplication of activities and projects.
- The absence of women and children's voices in the media was directly linked to the absence of women in leadership roles in media houses.
- It is difficult for women and certain marginalized communities to access the media and thus the media has to be taken to them.

⁴⁰ African Women & Child Feature Service, *Annual Report, 2003-2004*.

⁴¹ 189 member states of the United Nations undertook to advance a vision of improving the condition of humanity in the areas of development and poverty eradication, peace and security, protection of the environment, human rights and democracy.

Coalition on Violence against Women (COVAW)

The core mandate of COVAW is to work towards the promotion of women's human rights. It envisions a society that is free from all forms of violence against women. (COVAW Annual Report, 2001-2002). One of the goals⁴² of COVAW includes facilitating the collective work of individuals and organizations that want to eradicate violence.

The Coalition on Violence Against Women is a national human rights organization. It was founded in 1995 as a result of a workshop that sought to strengthen the networking capacities of women's organizations in Kenya. It is also in this workshop that the issue of violence against women was identified as a serious violation of women's rights. For those present at the workshop, it also meant that there was need for concerted efforts to address violence against women. Although the establishment of COVAW occurred in the same year as the Beijing conference, COVAW's conception was unrelated to BPFA conference.

Success Stories

1. Outreach and Training Programme

Objective

To raise awareness on women rights to members of the public.

Strategies

16 Days of Activism – this is marked every year to drum up issues of violence against women (VAW) through public forums, workshops for the public and law enforcement agents, and processions. 16 Days of Activism is a global campaign marked annually from November 25th to December 10th. November 25th is the International Day on ending Violence against Women whereas 10th December is the International Human Rights Day. The main aim of the campaign and the link between the two dates is the recognition that violence against women is a human rights issue and women's rights as human rights.

Through the outreach programme COVAW has worked in schools and at community levels with both women and men. The school outreach programme

⁴² Recognizing that COVAW was founded with the goal of bringing together organizations and individual doing work around violence against women and the changes that the organization has undergone is an important lesson in Coalition and movement building. The functions of a coalition if not clearly articulated may present a conflict of interest for the different member organizations of the coalition.

is in Nairobi and Kisii. Activities in schools include having discussions on women's rights issues, school essay competitions and participation in various calendar events such as the International Women's Day and 16 Days of Activism.

Awareness and training of Human Rights issues for communities has been done with groups in Mombasa and Taita Taveta. COVAW organizes for community meetings at the village level with assistance from the Provincial administration. These are open forums where discussions are facilitated on women's rights, issues affecting women in the specific area and what efforts communities are making to address them. Training of Law Enforcement Agents such as the Police, Chiefs and service providers such as medical personnel, has also been done to ensure that they understand issues related to handling of cases of violence against women.

In Mombasa, COVAW undertook capacity building for Sauti ya Wanawake to enable them to address incidents of VAW in their community. Sauti ya Wanawake is a community based group of women, whose membership is spread in different parts of the Coast Province. COVAW has also identified Laikipia and Kajiado districts to expand **similar** outreach initiatives. A survey has already been carried out in the area to map out the VAW issues. The issues in Laikipia and Kajiado were not similar to issues in Mombasa and Taita Taveta thus different approaches were applied. In Laikipia, COVAW addressed rape cases linked to British Soldiers; while in Kajiado district the concern for the community was female genital mutilation (FGM).

International Women's Day presents opportunity for COVAW to celebrate the successes of women who have made contributions towards the achievement of the rights of women and girls. Each year, COVAW recognizes the efforts of grassroots women; who are often not visible within the Kenya women's movement. This way, communities realize that human rights are also about the recognition of the efforts of the marginalized. COVAW initiated the first women's human rights award in 2002.

Best Practices

- COVAW has succeeded in breaking the silence on violence against women. This has been achieved by getting communities to address stigma, come out and speak on issues that were not considered public such as wife beating, rape and other forms of violence considered taboo to talk about.

- The outcome of these efforts is the de-stigmatization of speaking against violence against women, which is a gradual process. For instance, labels such as divorcees and home breakers that were used to belittle COVAW and others dealing with violence against women are not used as often as they used to be used.
- Opening up discussions on violence against women (VAW) ensured that VAW is recognized as a human rights issue. The outcome has been more people having discussions and raising interest and awareness on VAW issues.
- Groups and institutions that were not involved in VAW issues were brought aboard. This includes traditional institutions such as the councils of elders. This has opened up discussions and dialogue on alternatives to 'traditions' and other accepted forms of mistreatment of women and girls.

Implementing Partners

COVAW's work in Mombasa is a collaborative effort with Action Aid Kenya. Ford Foundation, Christian Aid, and CIDA-GESP fund the Outreach in schools. Rockefeller Foundation previously funded the programme. Actionaid and UNIFEM have previously funded activities for International Women's Day.

2. Policy and legislative reform

Objective

To be part of the processes to review and amend the Criminal Law Amendment Bill.

Strategies

COVAW staff gave their input on amending the criminal law and took part in lobbying and advocacy for recognition of defilement (of minors) as a serious crime – as rape. Lobbying members of parliament was also done so that perpetrators of rape would receive a punishment of maximum life sentences. Meetings were organized and held with different women's rights organizations to discuss issues to be addressed within the Criminal Law Amendment Bill. This process and the changes to be incorporated needed support from different Parliamentarians. Meetings were held with members of parliament. This included different members of COVAW having specific meetings with specific members of parliament to lobby them for support.

Best Practices

- The age definition of a child and the age of consent for sex was upgraded to 16 years. This was a big milestone in fighting rape and defilement. Previously, the punishment for defilement of minors was less (up to 14 years maximum sentence) whereas rape was life imprisonment. (In both defilement and rape judges rarely, if ever, sentence to the maximum). The possible differences in sentencing gave the impression that defilement was a lesser crime. Raising the age of consent for sex from 14 to 16 years was meant to improve protection of children with regard to matters related to whether or not they were consenting as independent/autonomous persons in a sexual relationship.
- A coalition of organizations working on women's and children's rights came together, bringing their resources to work on one common issue; in an area of critical concern to women; gender based violence.

Implementing Partners

Organizations doing women's rights work came together to work on the Criminal Amendment Bill. This process happened without external donor funds. Organizations that participated in this process included COVAW, Centre for the Education and Rehabilitation of Abused Women (CREAW), Child Rights Advisory Documentation and Legal Centre (CRADLE), FIDA, among others.

3. Public interest litigation

Objective

Ensuring protection of women's rights by litigating cases that advance women's rights.

Strategies

COVAW plays the role of watchdog on prosecution of cases of violence against women. As a way to offer legal aid, COVAW offers assistance by attending court, watching brief in criminal matters in cases where clients have pressed charges, and lobbying the police to effect arrest and ensuring they prefer charges.⁴³ For instance, there are times when evidence given in court is tampered with such as the wrong presentation of age of a perpetrator. This has been done in certain instances to indicate that the perpetrator of the violence is a minor so as to influence

⁴³ COVAW Annual Report, 2002-2003

judgement. COVAW has been able to intervene in such instances. This process has included engaging with the police and prosecution. All of which have helped address some gaps in law in relation to VAW, where cases have not received the serious attention of the police and other law enforcement agents.

Best Practices

- COVAW has helped in drafting of court papers for women clients in civil matters in cases where clients wanted custody of their children, maintenance, separation or divorce.

Implementing Partners

Heinrich Böll Foundation (HBF) funds the public interest litigation project.

Challenges

- Access to law and justice remains a challenge for women and girls because existing legal frameworks and the processes of prosecution are not conducive to ensuring the promotion and protection of women's legal rights.
- Although efforts have been made to rid the judiciary of corruption, corruption remains in the judicial system. Files get lost or disappear before the cases are heard frustrating the prosecution of gender based violence.
- There are gaps in the law, which create the burden of proof on the woman in rape and domestic violence cases.
- Domestic violence is considered assault, its gender-based nature not recognized. Also not recognized by the judicial and criminal justice system are other forms of gender-based violence such as psychological and emotional abuse.
- Coalition building is not easy. The experiences COVAW had in bringing together different organizations to voice women's rights issues addressing VAW, as a coalition was unsustainable. Instead organizations found themselves in competition with each other over leadership, resources and responsibilities. Eventually all the organizations within COVAW broke away leaving COVAW to reinvent itself as an organizational entity rather than a network of organizations addressing VAW.
- A strong women's movement needed for lobbying and advocacy on women rights issues is seen as lacking. A strong women's movement is seen as needed to make sure that we are moving in one direction and pushing for legislative frameworks in one strong voice. There are weaknesses within the women's movement that will need to be addressed. All organizations

do not always unite when there are controversial women's rights issues being challenged.

- Donor funding is never sufficient for sustained interventions. The lifespan of interventions do not always ensure that communities internalize the issues and are ready to sustain the efforts that are started by civil society organizations.
- Interventions or approaches need to move beyond engaging with opinion leaders and others and beyond breaking the silence, and begin to focus on breaking the cycle of violence. Approaches on community organizing also need to be clearly thought out. The challenge is how to re-think strategies in coalition with other CSOs to map out new effective strategies.
- Organizations working in certain regions are completely overwhelmed by the demand and the diverse needs they have to address; whereas some regions remain marginalized because they are unreachable.
- Getting the government to take up the issue of security for all women and girls remains a great challenge. Even when violence has occurred, getting help for the survivors and ensuring their safety and security remains unmet.
- The outreach programs for the youth in schools are geared towards making interventions in the socialization process of young people. However, targeting students alone is not enough since their socialization in school is also influenced by teachers, who may not necessarily be gender-sensitive.

Lessons Learned

- The greatest lesson of COVAW as a coalition is the power of working together; being supportive of what others are doing and the synergetic relationship that can be developed in moving women's rights forward.⁴⁴
- Dealing with clients on a one-to-one basis is very effective but it has tended to create a dependency-syndrome.
- On completion of a campaign it has not been easy to sustain energy among coalition members. Thus there is a need to see coalitions as effective when they are issue and time bound.
- To successfully address the strategic concerns of women, it is necessary to first meet their basic and practical needs.

⁴⁴ COVAW was initiated as a coalition of organizations and individuals and it is no longer a coalition. It underwent its own growth and developed into an organization implementing its own programs. This led to coalition members breaking off. There is an opportunity lost here in relation to strength in numbers. There was an opportunity to have a strong group all working towards ending violence against women- all under one coalition.

Centre for Rights Education and Awareness (CREAW)

CREAW's vision is to be the clearing house on women's human rights in Africa through local, regional and global networks; with a mission to eradicate violence against women and expand the space for empowerment of women. CREAW is in the process of changing its name to Centre for Rights Education and Awareness. This is being done to emphasize the advancement of women through education and awareness of their human rights. CREAW also recognizes societal negative referencing of women who have been subjected to violence as 'abused' thus the decision to change its name to avoid the use of the same.

Success Stories

1. Rape Red Spot Campaign

Objective

To mark certain areas in Nairobi city as violence prone and avert women from being victims of rape. The purpose of the campaign is to reclaim the city for women.

Strategies

Marking of certain spots in Nairobi as unsafe for women was informed by baseline surveys from other organizations, that indicated the city areas where most rapes occur. CREAW initiated the *Rape Red Spot Campaign* as a way to take up a more proactive strategy in dealing with rape. It is a Campaign that created awareness on rape and what needs to be done to prevent rape and at the same time identified and publicly declared certain areas as rape-prone zones.

CREAW designed some Information, Education and Communication (IEC) and media tools to generate discussion on rape; to break the silence on rape by using controversial messages that would open up discussion. The Campaign slogan was 'Beware of Human Dogs' and used the color red in its messages and all the materials produced. The color red was symbolic and was used to appeal to the power of vision. Being 'bloody' the color red is associated with danger and for this campaign it was also associated with the blood shed through rape.

CREAW worked with United Nations-Habitat and other organizations working on women's rights to identify the areas to be marked. The Campaign had a media

component that highlighted issues of rape and the spots that had been marked. It also organized for protests marches in different parts of the city including the particular spots marked. The Makaburini, Globe Cinema round-about and Serena bus stop in Nairobi were marked as "Rape Red Spots" to warn the public.

Best Practices

- Partnership with the Nairobi City Council (NCC) ensured that adequate street lighting for those marked areas was provided. NCC planning ensured that cleaning of the city included special attention to the marked spots such as cleaning up and painting three pedestrian tunnels at the Globe Cinema round-about.
- CREAW and NCC worked out a strategy to increase activities in the Globe Cinema round-about to ensure that there were always people in the area and to avoid isolation. The area was turned into a mata tu/ bus terminus for mata tu number 44 operating in the city.
- CREAW worked with the Kenya Police to ensure that security was beefed up in those areas; there were increased police patrols in the areas identified.
- Messages on the *Rape Red spot Campaign* continued to be placed at different spots of the city and along major highways in the country even after the one year campaign was over. CREAW and NCC have placed messages on dustbins on different highways in Nairobi.
- CREAW won the Mayor's Achievers Award in 2004 for their efforts towards making the city safer for women. They were also selected to participate in the upcoming Afro-City Conference to be hosted by Nairobi in 2006.
- NCC nominated CREAW to work with them to examine the city by-laws in an effort to engender them.

Implementing Partners:

Funded by CIDA-GESP for one year.

2. Sexual Offences Bill

Objective

To lobby for legal reform with regard to sexual offences.

Strategies

CREAW collaborated with other organizations dealing with Children rights and

Women's rights to address concerns within the Sexual Offences Bill that had been pending in Parliament since the 1980's. CREAW was one of the organizations in the Juvenile Justice Task force and had worked closely with the Attorney General's office in seeking amendments to this bill. The Task force presented their proposals for amendment to the Attorney General to have it introduced to Parliament but the bill was rejected. The Task Force turned to work with women Parliamentarians and eventually Hon. Njoki Ndung'u introduced the Bill in Parliament as a Private members' Bill in 2005.

Best Practices

- The Bill is intended to change the definition of rape and include boys and men as potential rape victims.
- The Bill ensures that sentencing of perpetrators is not only punitive but also corrective.
- It expands the definition of rape to include emotional and other form of sexual violence that are not penetrative.

Implementing Partners

CREAW worked with the Law Reform Commission, Kenya Human Rights Commission, CRADLE, Attorney General's Chambers and Hon. Njoki Ndung'u. Plans are underway to work with Christian Aid to develop lobby materials on the same.

3. Community Awareness Programme

Objective

To raise awareness on women's rights and provide free legal advice to the urban poor living in slum areas.

Strategies

This programme specifically targeted the urban poor in slums of Nairobi because there are assumptions that being in Nairobi, they are knowledgeable and thus not many organizations focus on them. CREAW worked with the youth in creating awareness of socialization processes that entrench gender stereotypes. CREAW also organized for free legal aid clinic in forums in Kibera, Mathare, Kawangware and Kasarani. Public education on different women's rights issues was carried out with a special focus on preventing rape.

CREAW also organized for legal awareness forums in the town of Nakuru and plans to expand to Meru and Samburu districts. In future, CREAW will work in partnership with organizations in Uganda, Tanzania, South Africa, and the United Kingdom in a programme to address “bride price” and its implications for sexual violence.

Best Practices

- Community awareness was intended to address the prevention of rape and other forms of abuse and violence towards women and girls.
- Legal awareness and assistance was provided to the urban poor.

Implementing partners:

For community awareness, CREAW worked with Action Aid Kenya and Christian Aid.

Challenges

- There is need for continuity of efforts to ensure sustained results. Funding on a short term basis does not ensure that this happens. In the case of the Rape Red Spot Campaign, the Police had an undertaking to have a police post in the identified areas; while the NCC had wanted to improve the environment and garbage collection in the Uhuru Park area but these initiatives lacked funding and were not implemented.
- Funding limitations did not allow for media to be used, thus awareness creation efforts were not sustained or expanded into areas such as the workplace and the home.
- The efforts could not be replicated in other cities due to lack of resources.

Lessons learned

- Sexual violence often goes unreported in the workplace. It is important to ensure that initiatives capture sexual violence in the workplace and ensure that necessary actions are taken to address sexual harassment issues.
- It is possible for some sustained efforts to happen without donor funding such as the collaborative work of women’s and other civil society organizations in relation to the Sexual Offences Bill.

Family Planning Association of Kenya (FPAK)

Family Planning Association of Kenya is an affiliate of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF). The organization provides a variety of health service related to family-care including reproductive health, Anti-retroviral (ARVs), well-baby and mother clinics, minor surgery, malaria testing and pharmacies to name a few. FPAK is a membership organization with 65 centers countrywide. Seventy-five percent of its projects are youth (10-24 years) focused.

The organization highlights gender as a key area of concern in their work and gender mainstreaming informs their work. For example, there are organizational stipulations on gender composition including a provision for equal numbers of women and men on the FPAK board with allowances for more women than men but not the converse. The attempt at gender balance extends to activities such as conferences where representation must equal shared between women and men. Within the senior management profile, there was concern that the top 3 positions had gone to men but it was reconciled by the fact that the professional criteria stipulated for the positions had been met. However, the issue is currently under discussion with respect to how to respond in the future to similar cases concerning balancing professional and gender criteria.

While gender is a cross-cutting theme, FPAK was quick to underscore that gender does not only mean women and girls and that men's and boys needs must also be addressed even if only strategically to ensure their participation. Thus there is a Youth Action Movement bringing a focus on the boy-child.

Success Stories

1. Options Project for Women's Empowerment 1994-1998⁴⁵

Objective

To improve the status of women by increasing their capability and capacity in decision making on matters relating to their reproductive health.

Strategies

The Strategy title given to the project is: "Advocate for gender equity and enhancement of socio-economic status of women to enable them to exercise

⁴⁵ The Options Project was started in 1991 and implemented for two years. Between 1992 –1993 no activities were implemented due to lack of funds. In 1994, the project was revived with funds from IPPF *Combating Female Genital Mutilation in Nyambene District – Kenya: A Project of Family Planning Association of Kenya (FPAK) in Collaboration with Plan International Kenya (Eastern Province, FPAK 2000)*, p. 4

control of their reproductive health.” The implementation of the project involved various activities that included: Information, Education and Communication (IEC) and Advocacy Activities; Counselling; and Family Life Education (FLE) workshops; Non-mutilating Right of Passage and a Graduation ceremony. All these actions were aimed at influencing community members to abandon female circumcision and early marriage, and promote the status of the girl child.⁴⁶ Boys and young men were also targeted for the training to enable them to agree not to use circumcision as a criteria for determining the marriageability of girls.

One of the projects under the Options Project focused on FGM in a community in Nyambene district⁴⁷ in the Meru region near Mt. Kenya. The strategy used was to form a Project Advisory Committee composed of the opinion leaders⁴⁸ including the Council of Elders, who act as gate-keepers and wield great influence over their communities. The project included the recruitment and training of Volunteer Community Gender Educators (VCGEs) key to the IEC activities on the consequences of FGM in girls, early marriage, teenage pregnancy and HIV/AIDS/ STIs as well as the importance of education for girls. They also conducted counselling of the girls and other community members as needed⁴⁹. VCGEs are purportedly still carrying out their activities to date.

Working with the media, the project developed a television spot which was pre-tested on policy-makers and was aimed at sensitising opinion leaders on the dangers of FGM and early marriage. In addition, 14 reports (10 on FGM and 4 on early marriage) highlighting the activities of the project were published in the local newspapers.

⁴⁶ . <http://www.fpak.org/circ1.html>

⁴⁷ A baseline survey in 1991 showed that Nyambene had one of the highest rates of FGM in Kenya.

⁴⁸ Educators, chiefs, religious and women leaders, representatives from development committees and government ministries were some of the other leaders included in the PAC. *Combating Female Genital Mutilation in Nyambene District – Kenya: A Project of Family Planning Association of Kenya (FPAK) in Collaboration with Plan International Kenya (Eastern Province)* FPAK 2000, p. 5

⁴⁹ In one case a husband who had chased away his wife for using family planning methods was counselled to allow her back home and to be more understanding of her reproductive health needs by letting her rest before having more children. FPAK, 2003. *Annual Report*, p.93

There were several positive outcomes with this intervention:

- FPAK's project report states a 13.4%⁵⁰ decline in the FGM prevalence rate in the project location since the baseline survey.⁵¹
- 97.2% of the female respondents (up from 53.3% during 1994 baseline survey) stated they would not circumcise their daughters in the future.⁵²
- 72% of the respondents saw the project as being theirs (ownership).⁵³
- One of the visible outcomes were girls in brightly coloured t-shirts inscribed with the words "SAY NO TO FGM".
- Women circumcisors were also targeted for the training to teach them about the negative effects of FGM in an effort to try to get them to stop the practice.
- Most of the leaders were convinced to encourage the girls in the community to undergo alternative rites of passage.
- Male youths challenged their parents to stop circumcising their future wives which was forcing them as young men to seek for girls outside their district who had not undergone circumcision.

Best Practices

- "As a result of the activities of this project, there has been a lower incidence of FGM reported in the district and ostracism for girls who refuse to undergo the ritual is no longer evident. In addition, some parents are openly opposed to their girls receiving the 'cut', which was unheard of in the past. Cases of people who have earned a living from circumcising girls "downing their tools" to preoccupy themselves with other economic activities have been reported in the recent past."⁵⁴

⁵⁰ According to the FPAK, its program contributed to a 13 percent decline in the prevalence of FGM in Meru North District. However, in 2002, girls sought refuge at the Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (CHRD) in Eldoret to escape undergoing FGM. They were among a group of 350 girls who had participated in an alternative rite of passage in 2001 and were being threatened by family members with FGM. CHRD secured a court injunction against the girls' parents preventing them from forcing the girls to undergo FGM. Country Reports on Human Rights Practices – 2003, Released on February 25, 2004 http://us.politinfo.com/Information/Human_Rights/country_report_2003_023.html

⁵¹ *Combating Female Genital Mutilation in Nyambene District – Kenya: A Project of Family Planning Association of Kenya (FPAK) in Collaboration with Plan International Kenya (Eastern Province, FPAK 2000, p. 12*

⁵² Ibid

⁵³ Ibid p. 13

⁵⁴ <http://www.fpak.org/circ1.html>

Implementing Partners:

The project fell under a government initiative on FGM and the National Council for Population and Development (NCPD) under the Ministry of Health convened stakeholder meetings to chart the way forward for implementation. FPAK with funding from IPPF was one of several implementers with funding from various sources.⁵⁵ Other partners recognised by FPAK for their contributions include: African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF); Maendeleo Ya Wanawake Organisation (MYWO); Programmed for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH); Kenya Association for Professional Counsellors; National Council of Churches of Kenya; Ministry of Health; United Nations Children's Fund; Ministry of Information and Broadcasting; Action Aid; and Ministry of Education.

Within Nyambene district, PLAN international was also working on an FGM related activity in terms of funding, for example, circumcisors were provided an alternate form of income when given a grade cow as an income generating initiative. It was important to have this kind of partnership take place in that the partners had the same goal to reduce FGM practice through diverse interventions.

2. Combating early childhood marriages in Kilifi

Objective

This initiative was also part of the above Options Project; it thus shared the same objective to improve the status of women by increasing their capability and capacity in decision making on matters relating to their reproductive health.

Strategies

The Options Project under the Early Marriage component targeted 3,500 community members in Kilifi⁵⁶ District on the Kenyan coast. It was decided early on that this FPAK project would be implemented with the collaboration of the provincial administration. In some cases, parents as well as husbands were taken to court to face charges the result of which was a visible lesson to the community of the gravity of early child marriages.

⁵⁵ . <http://www.fpak.org/circ1.html>

⁵⁶ Family Planning Association of Kenya, 2003. *Annual Report*, pp. 91- 102.

There were several positive outcomes with this intervention:⁵⁷

- 61% of the community felt the project was their own and was well supported by the community.
- Early marriage in Kilifi has been reduced by 24.7% since 1994.
- 98% of the respondents see early marriage as adversely affecting education and career prospects for girls.
- Girls have resumed school even after pregnancy or early marriage thus acting as role models and showing those girls as still capable of pursuing education after such an event.

Best Practices

- Girls were rescued from early marriage and some taken back to schools.⁵⁸ It was important to work with the provincial administration whose Chief happened to have been a woman and was instrumental in making the project a success. For example, the WAA Rescue Centre in Kwale, Coast Province, created by FPAK in 2001 has enabled girls escape extreme circumstances, such as, forced marriage and allowing them a second chance in life.
- The Kwale Centre provides formal education and the girls' upbringing is supervised by caretakers. The girls are also allowed to visit their families.
- The focus on the youth has resulted in the 5 youth centres in 5 towns across the country. FPAK offers a variety of youth-focused programmes including the provision of: peer educators for youth in slum areas; VCT Counsellors; school youth clubs; free condoms for sexually-active youth; treatment as needed. Fees from cost recovery centres are ploughed into the youth projects as these typically do not generate income. FPAK participates in all government meetings and has been a key contributor to the government health policy such as Adolescent Reproductive Health.

Implementing Partners

FPAK's funding has come primarily from IPPF.

⁵⁷ "In Kilifi, one girl was rescued from early marriage and taken back to school....", FPAK 2003. *Annual Report*, p. 92

⁵⁸ FPAK Annual Report 2003, p. 104

Challenges

- *The FGM project*: some community leaders were not won over to eradicate FGM therefore work still remains to be done. In addition some members of the community have begun to carry out FGM under the cover of darkness to avoid detection.⁵⁹ Parents are not willing to pursue cases with the authorities unless they receive compensation.
- *Funding constraints*: donors tend to be “seasonal” in that they change their funding support according to what suits them. Lack of funding has meant that FPAK is unable to undertake new FGM activities.
- *Donor funding shift*: The current donor focus on working with the NARC government means that CSOs are constrained for donor resources to accomplish a great deal and FPAK thus sees a need for government support to accomplish many of their activities.
- *Local partners contribution not recognized*: International organizations conducting research locally often fail to mention local participating institutions input, as well as neglecting to disseminate the results of the studies to the local partner.
- *Organization name no longer reflective*: The organizations name “Family Planning” does not adequately describe the depth of services it offers and there is currently discussions around changing its name to be more representative of the holistic health role it plays.

Lessons Learnt

- The FGM project in Nyamebene showed that grassroots advocacy can put pressure on “...leaders to speak out against FGM and create policies that will help eliminate it.”⁶⁰
- It is important to involve young people in projects to ensure continuity and in effect sustainability, of the newly created beliefs and ideas into the future as social transformation is a slow process.⁶¹
- Future efforts aimed at eradicating FGM should focus on girls that are directly affected and boys as potential husbands. In addition, finding alternate income sources for circumcisors will help in eradicating the practice.⁶²

⁵⁹ Combating Female Genital Mutilation in Nyamebene District – Kenya: A Project of Family Planning Association of Kenya (FPAK) in Collaboration with Plan International Kenya (Eastern Province, FPAK 2000, p. 22

⁶⁰ Ibid

⁶¹ Ibid

⁶² Ibid

- Difficulty in discussing sexuality, particularly women's sexuality, inhibits the leaders abilities to address FGM. This project created opportunities to discuss both sexuality and reproductive health rights.⁶³
- Poverty is the underlying reason why parents marry off girls early or circumcise them to make them ready for marriage.⁶⁴
- For collaboration to work effectively, partnering organizations must have clearly defined, separate roles and not be in competition for either resources or people.
- Publications are expensive to produce so one organization cannot bear the overhead costs singly and give away materials for free. FPAK has allowed other organizations to share in re-printing costs in order to provide them access to the materials.
- Working with the government/ local administration can help improve the results of planned interventions.

⁶³ FPAK Annual Report 2003, p. 103

⁶⁴ http://www.fidakenya.org/ab_aboutus.htm

Federation of Women Lawyers - FIDA (Kenya)

FIDA-Kenya began its operations in 1985 following the 3rd UN Conference on Women held in Nairobi. FIDA is "...committed to the creation of a society that is free of all forms of discrimination against women..." using four main teams the organization works towards its vision and mission; Legal Aid Team, Women's Rights Monitoring and Advocacy, the Strategic Leadership Team and the Finance and Administration team.⁶⁵

Success Stories

1. Women's Rights Monitoring and Advocacy Programme⁶⁶: Work with the Police

Objective

The focus of the Rights Team is to create awareness on gender and legal rights at community level as well as improve the legislative and policy framework for women's rights.⁶⁷

Strategies:

A poster campaign at police stations across the country begun in 1994, aimed at informing women about their rights with regard to domestic violence. Ten years later it has yielded remarkable changes around gender sensitivity within the police force. Previously, FIDA's clients had been reporting that the police were insensitive and that they treated claimants as if they were responsible for their plight⁶⁸. As such, FIDA's relationship with the police had been very antagonistic. Training of the police started in 1996 at the main police training school in Kenya, Kiganjo Police

Time Line of Police Training

- 1994:** Launch of poster campaign on domestic violence
- 1996:** Start of police training in Kiganjo.
- 1999:** Begin developing the training curriculum.
- 2001:** Training curriculum is completed.
- 2004:** Training curriculum is launched.
- 2004:** First time that recruiting of female police officers conducted by women.

⁶⁵ FIDA's various reports track and document gender disaggregated data including database on women's right violations among others. Since 1996 FIDA has been producing annual reports on the legal status of Kenyan women.

⁶⁶ (FIDA 2004 Work Plan).

⁶⁷ It may be important to note that while FIDA has seen improvements, there are still reports of police insensitivity.

⁶⁸ A story carried by the East African Standard reported the Police Commissioner to have said that "...as part of their training, officers would also be taught human, children's and gender rights". (http://www.eastandard.net/hm_news/news.php?articleid=24311, Sunday July 3, 2005)

Training College. Some of the topics covered include: gender; succession; property rights; violence against women. Since then, in what could be termed an acknowledgement of FIDA's success, credibility and leadership in this arena other law enforcing agencies - the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), GSU and the military - also invited FIDA to conduct similar training for their staff.

In a joint effort between FIDA and the police, a gender and human rights training curriculum was developed in 1999 to ensure that gender training would become institutionalized. A fact-finding mission to South Africa provided interesting learning points for working with the police. The curriculum was completed in 2001 and launched four years later in 2004. Currently, the Kenya Institute of Education (KIE) is working with FIDA to develop teaching aids. Meanwhile, FIDA continues to be an active participant in the process making monthly trips to Kiganjo because along with the teaching aids, the testing schemes have not yet been developed for the gender training.

Role of Gender Sections at Police Stations

Gender sections at police stations would incorporate specific services such as: counselling; forensics; first aid/medical treatment; hotlines; ambulance and private spaces. One of the goals is to have government shelters for women needing protection.

A memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was developed with the police in 2003, clearly laying out the benefits that each party accrues as well as outputs to be achieved and within what timeframe. The MOU would serve to institutionalise the relationship with FIDA and the agreed upon goals so that it is not subject to the whims of those at the helm⁶⁹.

Further significant interventions with the police included the piloting of a gender desk in 2002 in Mombasa; Kilimani police station in Nairobi and in Kisumu; with the addition of a children's desk in Kisumu. Under the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs' Governance, Justice, Law and Order Sector (GJLOS) Reform Program, FIDA is trying to push for gender desks at all police stations and gender sensitive training for police officers responsible for receiving complaints.

⁶⁹ Work with provincial administration is particularly important as FIDA's 2002 Annual Report indicates that most respondents (48%) in a study on human rights violations report to the chief or local administration first, whereas only 15.5% reported to the police.

Best Practices

- Gender and Gender-Based Violence training is now fully incorporated into the regular training of new recruits who pass through Kiganjo as well as officers being upgraded to new ranks.
- FIDA's lobbying for an increase in the number of police women in the force resulted in the use of female officers to recruit women, beginning in 2004. Consequently, the November 2004 graduation ceremony saw the largest number of new women recruits to date.
- Lawenforcers feel better equipped to handle gender and human rights violations.
- Change of attitude noted as police whom have undergone training state they will now treat domestic violence as a crime, not a private family affair. Women are less afraid of reporting their cases.
- Police and chiefs are now referring cases of survivors of gender based violence to FIDA.

Implementation Partners

SIDA, UNDP, USAID, UNFPA, UNIFEM, British Council, Action Aid and European Union

2. Gender Responsive Training of the provincial administration

Objective

Work with the provincial administration⁷⁰ to incorporate women's rights, gender and gender-violence awareness into their handling of cases in order to help change patriarchal attitudes that work against women.

Strategies

Training first started in Western Kenya in August 2001, where the existing Provincial Commissioner (PC) was open to the idea resulting in the training of 30 Chiefs. While training of Chiefs in Mombasa began in 2004. As part of the training of

⁷⁰ Sodomy of boys was seen as presenting a serious issue for local communities in Mombasa and a different set of challenges in dealing with it. Cultural and traditional practices limit women's movements as well as men's roles. Therefore, women cannot for instance go out alone to see the area chief to report the molestation of their children. Conversely, it is uncomfortable and thus difficult for men to report to a chief that their sons have been sexually violated. Despite the cultural obstacles, there have been success stories. Men in Mombasa have been arrested on charges of sodomy and face 5-7 year imprisonment terms following 5 cases that were highlighted and justice sought by women from the community

Chiefs, FIDA provides fact sheets on gender-based violence. After the initial training, FIDA continued to review the chiefs on a bi-annual basis as well as receiving quarterly reports from them. The reports record data such as the number of cases received,⁷¹ as well as the number of referrals to FIDA Kenya that the Chiefs make.

Best Practices

- Success has not always been easy or quick to come by. In 2001, the Provincial Commissioner (PC) for Nyanza was not open to the training, but four years later, there has been an agreement for FIDA to begin the training as of June 27, 2005. The government has now also requested FIDA to develop a curriculum for training Chiefs. All this is a reflection of the credibility that FIDA believes it has along with the current political will to make the needed changes.
- Currently, the Kenya government and processes such as the GJLOS⁷² actively seek FIDA's help. FIDA focuses on remaining consistent in its efforts and non-partisan in its approach.
- When women report cases to Chiefs they are no longer coerced into returning to their husbands.
- Chiefs may act as witnesses for the women when cases go to court.
- A testimonial video by Chiefs on how FIDA training has changed how they deal with women.
- Chiefs now often encourage women to go on their own without fear to report cases.

Implementing Partners:

UNFPA and USAID.

3. Legal Aid Programme

FIDA's three offices located in Kisumu, Mombasa and Nairobi provide legal services, operate clinics, outreach programmes and open days. FIDA has a pro-bono lawyer's scheme, which enables greater reach for its services and is especially

⁷¹ FIDA is also pursuing sector reform/ access to justice through its participation with GJLOS: The Governance, Justice, Law and Order Sector Reform Programme is a Kenya Government led programme as part of its economic recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment, 2003-2007. GJLOS was launched in November 2003 and will be implemented over 5 years until 2009. Its intend is to reform and strengthen sector institutions for efficient, accountable and transparent administration of justice.

⁷² An important programme run by FIDA in the last twenty years targets poor women to provide them with quality legal aid. The lawyers receive a token of KShs 5000/- (USD 65) for every completed case to help alleviate some of their basic costs.

pertinent for cases taking place outside of Nairobi.⁷³ An important programme run by FIDA in the last twenty years targets poor women to provide them with quality legal aid. The lawyers receive a token of KShs 5000/- (USD 65) for every completed case to help alleviate some of their basic costs.

Legal Aid Objectives

- To operate legal aid clinics in Nairobi, Kisumu and Mombasa.
- To undertake selected public interest litigation.
- To increase the number of women who are aware of their rights.
- To create a pool of women adequately trained to represent themselves in court.
- To set up an effective referral system with counselling services, relevant government departments and pro-bono lawyers.
- To enhance women's readiness to claim their legal rights.

Source: (www.fidakenya.org)

Strategies

Self-representation: Given a shortfall in the number of lawyers needed to provide legal representation, FIDA' has devised an innovative programme which trains women on how to represent themselves in court. In addition to filing the cases on behalf of the women, FIDA also prepares these women for their self-representation cases. A training manual that has proved very popular has been developed along with a Training of Trainers course with further training conducted by women who have undergone the course. FIDA reports that in Mombasa, this has been a very successful programme with three out of every four cases in which women have represented themselves being won by the women.

Until 2003, women were expected to pay filing fees for their court cases with FIDA providing free legal services. Since 1999, FIDA has processed 62,351 women and represented 7,500 cases mainly on matrimonial issues as well as child custody and maintenance; sexual harassment in the workplace; job discrimination due to pregnancy; succession; and land. While traditionally, many communities in Kenya gave custody of children to the father, following the Children's Act in 2002, priority is now given to mothers.

⁷³ FIDA was one of the key organizations involved in the drafting of *Domestic Violence and Family Protection Bill*, which has been tabled but not yet passed by parliament.

Best Practices

- FIDA involved in establishment of family courts.⁷⁴
- Helped create children's court following enactment of 2002 Children's Act.
- Lobbied Parliamentary Committee for FGM to be included in Children's Act.
- Trained women in self-representation. FIDA reports that in Mombasa, the programme has been very successful with three out of every four cases in which women have represented themselves being won by the women.
- Women report increased confidence levels and a sense of being truly empowered, which benefits them in other areas of their lives.

Implementation partners:

HBf funded training on public litigation, Urgent action Fund, Finnish Embassy, Embassy of Norway, Australian High Commission, CORDAID, Inter-Church Organisation for Development Cooperation (ICCO), Ford Foundation, Department of International Development (DFID), Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

Challenges

- Some challenges exist in mainstreaming the police initiative as currently only policewomen sit at the desks and male officers do not participate. In addition, the training has not been as comprehensive as needed for this type of critical undertaking.
- FIDA's move to train Chiefs in Nairobi slums in 2003 faced a set of new challenges: that of convincing donors that violence exists in urban areas. Thus the first step was to train Community Based Monitors (CBMs) to report violence on a monthly basis as proof that it was also prevalent outside of the customary or rural areas.
- The Chiefs are supposed to furnish FIDA with reports on violence against women, however, basic challenges such as a lack of paper on which to draft the reports has meant that FIDA also has to provide the files and paper.

⁷⁴ The strategic importance and credibility of FIDA's work enables it to have a high donor visibility and the corresponding support. In its 2004 Plan, FIDA recognizes its dependence on donor funding and the need to demonstrate its accountability to donors and keep them informed of its work. As a result, the organization has institutionalized the occurrence of bi-annual donor round-tables in addition to the numerous (16 roundtables held in 2003) meetings with its funding agencies over the course of a year. (Discussions with FIDA Staff, June 24th 2005)

- Accessing resources remains the biggest challenge for their legal aid programmes.

Lessons Learnt

- Competing priorities within government means that political will does not ensure the actualisation of joint activities [Police Work].
- Document parameters of engagement to avoid conflicts with partners [Coalitions and Partnerships].
- Employ a strategy to manage coalitions and networks [Coalitions and Partnerships].
- Coalitions with diverse expertise can help build capacity and improve credibility [Coalitions and Partnerships].
- Need to manage clients' expectations as to what FIDA can achieve and in what time frame to avoid disappointment [Legal Aid].
- Need to increase resources to handle the burgeoning demand for legal aid e.g. use of interns [Legal Aid]⁷⁵.
- Partnership with government is important to ensure sustainability of outcomes i.e. to secure the gains made for women's rights, but organizational independence must be maintained.
- The strategic importance and credibility of FIDA's work enables it to have a high donor visibility and the corresponding support. In its 2004 Plan, FIDA recognizes its dependence on donor funding and the need to demonstrate its accountability to donors and keep them informed of its work. As a result, the organization has institutionalized the occurrence of bi-annual donor round-tables in addition to the numerous (sixteen in 2003) meetings with its funding agencies over the course of a year.

⁷⁵ FAWA News, Volume 11, Number 3, August-September 2003

Forum for Women Educationalists (FAWE)-Kenya Chapter

The Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) is a pan-African non-governmental organization founded in 1992. FAWE Kenya Chapter is one of the 33 National Chapters established in different countries in the continent in order to achieve the main goal. The Kenyan Chapter was initiated in 1996. FAWE's mission is to work at continental, national and local levels, together with its partners to create positive societal attitudes, policies and practices that promote equity for girls in terms of access, retention, performance and quality by transforming the educational systems in Africa.⁷⁶ It is envisioned that gender disparities in education will be significantly reduced and more girls will have access to schooling, complete their studies and perform well at all levels. The main goal of the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) is to increase access, improve retention and enhance the quality of education for girls and women in Africa.

Success Stories

1. Demonstrative Interventions

Objective⁷⁷

To address gender gaps in the education sector.

One of FAWE's strategic objectives is to influence replication and mainstreaming of best practices⁷⁸.

Strategies

Through what have come to be known as demonstrative interventions, FAWE selects a school with boarding facilities and depending on the needs within the school environment. The school becomes a centre of excellence. That is, a school that is girl-friendly. Building a center of excellence involves community mobilization for support. The focus is especially on marginalized areas such as arid and semi arid parts of the country such as Kajiado and Narok.

⁷⁶ Addressing Sexual Maturation in Relation to Education of Girls (Uganda), Booklet No.5; Best Practices in Girls' Education in Africa.

⁷⁷ FAWE, Booklet No. 5, *Addressing Sexual Maturation Issues in Relation to Education of Girls; Best Practices in Girls' Education in Africa*.

⁷⁸ Professor Wangari Mathai headed The National Council of Women in Kenya until 1987.

One of the strategies that FAWE has been undertaking is to scale up successful interventions to ensure that a higher number of girls are reached. As a first step towards ensuring that a high number of girls are reached, the interventions are identified and documented. This is done with the aim that the interventions such as having Centres of Excellence, the Empowerment of girls, Peer Counseling and HIV/AIDS, Addressing sexual maturation Issues and School Re-entry for Adolescent mothers, can be taken up by policy makers and other stakeholders.

With regard to the interventions mentioned, FAWE has documented them as their best practices with the aim of disseminating them to education policy makers and mainstreaming these interventions into **National** education plans and programmes.

Best Practices

- One of the best practices for FAWE is the establishment of a center of excellence such as the one at the A.I.C Kajiado girls' boarding primary school. A center of excellence, usually a girls' school, is one where all facilities and systems are set to be girl-friendly.
- FAWE is in the process of replicating the success at A.I.C Kajiado in a new area, in Meru.
- FAWE has established different clubs in schools such as Gender, Peer educators and Tuseme clubs. The Tuseme clubs specifically train girls to speak out for themselves and train teachers as facilitators of the clubs. The aim is to get girls to run the clubs and address issues affecting them and in relation to their rights as their own issues as they emerge. They discuss and encourage each other on issues related to puberty and growing up, and what to do in case one faces any kind of human rights violation.
- Where centers of excellence have been created or through its other programs, teachers are more sensitive and responsive in addressing issues affecting girls in school where FAWE has had interventions. There is willingness on the part of the teachers involved to be more understanding in addressing concerns of girls in relation to their growth and development and experiences of the same.

Implementing Partners

The Centers of Excellence and documentation of information on the same has been funded by FAWE Africa Regional Office.

2. Provision of bursaries

Objective

To address and reduce the school drop out rate of girls due to lack of resources.

Strategies

FAWE has been providing bursaries to needy girls so as to ensure retention in school and address the problem of drop out of girls in secondary schools. This includes provision of some social support such as transport and pocket money for the girls. Through this programme, mentorship is an important strategy to bringing girls together as peers and having mentors talk to them. Mentoring addresses life skills issues such as assertiveness, negotiation skills, self-esteem, confidence building, coping with emotions, critical thinking, problem solving, creative thinking and coping with stress and empathy⁷⁹.

Best Practices

- This programme supports close to 300 girls in different schools drawn from different districts in Kenya.
- This programme targets girls in slum areas and marginalized regions of the country.
- The kind of support given is for a full cycle of secondary education to ensure completion of secondary education. It also ensures that girls are not only retained in school but that they attain the highest level in secondary school education.

Implementing Partners

Provision of bursaries has been possible with support from USAID, the FAWE Africa Regional Office and individuals who are committed to issues of the girl child.

3. The management of sexual maturation and hygienic menstruation practices

Objective

The main aim is to improve the management of sexual maturation among primary school girls. This was initiated specifically to raise awareness of sexual maturation

⁷⁹ The Green Belt Movement Kenya works in 19 districts in seven priority areas across Kenya, that include; Mt. Kenya and Aberdare region, high potential western highlands, highly cultivated marginal areas, sparsely cultivated marginal areas, Lake Victoria catchment, coast region, and Nairobi region. Source: *Annual Report 2003*.

issues among stakeholders, improve water and sanitation in rural primary schools and to advocate for affordable sanitary towels. The stakeholders targeted included pupils, teachers, school administrators, parents, and local leaders, government officials in the Ministry of Education Science and Technology and Parliamentarians. These stakeholders had the potential for creating a favourable environment for the sexual maturation for girls.

Strategies

Research has shown that menses is a major barrier to girls' education. Most people never see that link between the commencement of menses, the experiences of it and how those experiences can affect the education of a girl. Through this programme, awareness on issues of sexual maturation and menstruation is done among girls and boys, teachers, stakeholders and policy makers. As part of sexual maturation, the focus is on the changes being experienced differently by girls and boys during adolescence in recognition of the negative impact on girls and boys. For example, the self-esteem of adolescence is affected by how their issues are handled.

Best Practices

- Several individuals and women's organizations including FAWE were involved in lobbying to have the prices for sanitary pads reduced. FAWE sees its educational interventions aided by the women's campaign for zero-rating of pads in Kenya.
- FAWE also designed a re-usable prototype pad and through the sexual maturation and hygienic menstruation intervention, advises girls in schools on how to use it. The pads are made from locally available materials. Girls are given a FAWE pack that contains a set of six re-usable pads. This initiative was a response to the realization that girls stay away from school during their menses since they cannot afford or have access to sanitary pads.
- The interventions on sexual maturation management which include studies to uncover the myths, taboos and practices on sexual maturation, the setting up of teen clubs and raising awareness about sexual maturation issues among primary school girls have had a great impact on girls' education. Some schools have come up with their own initiatives such as instituting cleanliness awards for girls.
- There are more schools ensuring that there is proper sanitation for girls in schools. A good example is a day school in Bondo that has built bathrooms

for girls. Through these efforts, the government too recognizes the need to allocate some funds for the provision of water and sanitation in schools, through the Free Primary Education funds.

Implementing Partners

FAWE has been working in partnership with the Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MoEST) in most of their interventions in Kenya. The documentation of the Sexual Maturation intervention has been funded by the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Rockefeller Foundation. CARE-Kenya has occasionally funded community mobilization of the girls programme.

Challenges

- Giving bursaries for girls' education up to completion of their secondary school education raises the question of "What next?" There is no plan or intervention to follow up on with what the girls do after they leave secondary schools.
- Support from policy makers on issues affecting the education of girls is not always forthcoming. Even where there is support it takes long for them to act. Most policy makers did not see the link between the performance of girls in school and their menstruation periods and were reluctant to support the reduction of prices for sanitary pads. FAWE has helped by illuminating these links.
- Resource mobilization is a great challenge; resources are never enough to reach out to as many girls and schools in need. There is a big demand for bursaries and the need is growing bigger with the challenges posed by HIV/AIDS. HIV/AIDS is creating a big need to expand on HIV awareness in schools.
- FAWE has developed some strategic alliance with the MoEST but it has been a slow process for implementation of some of the policies that encourage enrolment, retention, performance and attainment levels for girls. For instance, not fully realized is the policy on re-admission of girls after pregnancy while still in school. There is a circular to that effect with all the guidelines but it has not been widely shared and circulated even among girls and communities.

Lessons learned

- Working with the government can help women NGOs in addressing their concerns. Due to the kind of relationship that FAWE has developed with the government, MOEST has taken up the FAWE best practices and incorporated

them in the Ministry National Action Plan that outlines what needs to be done to improve the education of girls in Kenya. Most notable, is that the Action Plan outlines a strategy to ensure gender mainstreaming of the Plan.

- Dialogue with policy makers needs to be continuous to sustain efforts.
- Myths and traditions about sexual maturation are strongly adhered to by women and girls. There is need to break the silence on matters of sexuality and more specifically on sexual maturation with information and knowledge that is enabling for girls education.
- It is not possible to see the tangible results of certain interventions such as the management of sexual maturation in a short time. Behavior change requires time and concerted efforts so as to yield significant and sustainable impact.

The Green Belt Movement (GBM)

The National Council of Women in Kenya founded the Green Belt Movement in 1977 under the leadership of Professor Wangari Maathai.⁸⁰ At its formation, the Green Belt Movement first sought to address the threats of desertification. However, the GBM has seen its concerns with regard to environmental matters broaden to be located within larger public concerns regarding income generation for women, skill building for women, and addressing the political policies and practices that pose threats to the environments and thus livelihoods of communities.

The Green Belt Movement sees its mission as mobilizing community consciousness for self-determination, equity, improved livelihood securities and environmental conservation –using tree planting as an entry point⁸¹.

Success Stories

The Green Belt Movement has worked to ensure the sustainability of Kenya's natural resource base utilizing interventions that are presented separately here but in reality are holistic in so far as the aim is to ensure a sense of ownership of those natural resources among communities. The organization uses tree planting to address sustainable development in a holistic manner.

1. Tree Planting on Public Land 1997⁸²

Holistic interventions through tree planting are thus being encouraged as a means to simultaneously address the diverse and various needs of women. Thus women are educated to plant trees which preserves the environment; eases their work load because dried rivers start to flow again closer to their homes reducing time spent collecting water; and gives them a source of income so that their poverty is reduced.

⁸⁰ Since 1997 GBM embraced a major policy shift concentrating on protecting public lands, rather than the previous focus on private lands. Public lands include school and church yards, important catchment areas such as the Aberdares as well as other public forests and lands.

⁸¹ In one incident, a girl who had been sexually violated by a teacher had her family home burnt in retaliation for her mother having pressed charges against the teacher. Having failed to have the police handle the issue and lacking legal representation the mother lost her court case against the alleged perpetrator. GBM then enlisted FIDA's help in a case that is still on-going. In addition GBM also found the family temporary shelter, gave the mother work within GBM and placed the three children in schools. In another incident a girl was brought by an aunt to Nairobi and placed in a brothel. The girl was able to escape to GBM who then returned her to her parental home. While these are individual stories, they help illustrate the breadth of GBM's involvement at a variety of levels with the communities in which they work

⁸² <http://www.wangarimaathai.com>

Strategies

The focus is on planting indigenous and fruit trees as a way to restore biodiversity and retain rich top soils that would otherwise get flushed downstream. The tree planting community groups receive a token fee for each planted tree that survives. GBM also encourages the use of indigenous seeds which the networks collect from the forest and are then taught how to germinate them. Successful seeds are also shared with other GBM members in different parts of the country. As of 2003, there were over 100,000 women forming 6,000 groups organized into 600 networks countrywide.

Partnerships with the local administration is important to GBM's work. In new project locales, GBM works with local leaders to mobilize the community to attend a public civic and environmental seminar. Interested individuals are then encouraged to form groups and register with the social services. GBM does not have offices for their coordinators in the districts where they work and thus the staff sometimes looks to good relationships with government officials in order to access office resources.

2. The Women and Girls programme

While the primary vehicle for GBM's work has always been women, the Movement nevertheless created a new programming theme in 2003 simply entitled *Women and Girls*. The primary aim of this programme is to provide women and girls with knowledge on matters that affect their reproductive and sexual health including HIV/AIDS; provide sources of income and improve their dietary intake using indigenous food sources.

Strategies

A major aspect of the programme is the income generating activity (IGA) designed to generate sufficient money for the women to meet their basic needs including the education of their children. Given "...how poverty and inequality between women and men are the major driving forces of the [AIDS] pandemic in Africa" (Maathai 2005). GBM tries to level the playing field by ensuring that women do not resort to selling sex and risk contracting HIV/AIDS in a desperate attempt to acquire a measure of income. Thus IGA promotes small-scale commercial initiatives such as bee keeping, baking and food processing. Food preservation methods are also taught as a way of improving food security. The programme operates an innovative revolving fund scheme whereby each participating group

receives forty thousand shillings in the form of equipment for their particular IGA (ovens, baking sheets, beehives etc.). The repayment is not monetary but rather the group agrees to plant trees. Once the saplings are determined to be able to survive then the debt is considered redeemed.

Best Practices

- *Environmental Leadership*: Prof. Wangari Maathai has won numerous international and local awards for her leadership, community and environmental contributions culminating with the coveted Nobel Peace Prize in 2005, awarded for the first time to an environmentalist.
- *Advocacy*: The Green Belt Movement has demonstrated time and again the power of informed protests in demanding environmental accountability, democratic governance, and women's empowerment. Acrimonious encounters with the past government ended in landmark successes for GBM and all Kenyans with the preservation of important green spaces in Nairobi (Uhuru Park, Jevanjee Gardens and Karura Forest).
- *Food Security*: an important component of GBM's work. Its strategies encourage women to plant fruit trees, they are also taught organic methods and kitchen planting as a way to improve food sources for their own consumption with an emphasis on indigenous foods.
- *Water harvesting*: In dry-land areas, GBM has a water harvesting programme which encourages groups to build sand dams into which rain water is collected as a reserve for the dry season. Tree nurseries are then built around the dams.
- *Increased water supplies*: When it comes to tree planting, over 30 million trees have been planted since the organization began. The Aberdare forest range on the Nyeri side, which by 1999 showed signs of severe denudation now, has good tree-cover. The upside of this has been improved water with the reappearance of streams that had long been thought "dead". The community seeing the changes is no longer resistant to GBM initiatives.
- *Sustainability*: A focus on trees and the environment guarantees a long-term vision that promises to be sustainable. Trees have been used to improve women's livelihoods both in the short and long-term at the same time teaching them leadership skills in the propagation and management of tree nurseries. GBM's work with schools endeavours to build a culture of environmentalism to the youth to assure a sustainable future.

- *Civic and environmental Education*: Intended to raise awareness of environmental care and enhance values that support sustainable environments led to women representatives from each tree planting group to be trained over a 3-4 day period on topics such as rights and governance and linking it to grabbing of public lands. The women then go back and share their newly acquired knowledge to their groups in what essentially acts as a training of trainers programme.
- *Government partnership*: The relationship with the NARC government has greatly facilitated the work of the GBM women's network. In some cases, the forestry department not only allocates key areas for tree planting but also provides transport for taking the seedlings into the forest.
- *Bursaries*: This relatively new initiative programme seeks to provide secondary school education to bright but needy girls whose mothers are part of the women's groups. The girls are also taken through an empowerment course to teach them life skills including information on HIV/AIDS. The groups themselves identify the girls and the parents are given a target of 5,000 seedlings to be planted over the course of the girl's 4 year education. Currently, only two girls have been sponsored by the programme and its success cannot be established at this point.⁸³
- *Empowering Women*: In an interview, Professor and Maathai eloquently explained how her work has empowered women is captured in the following passage:

"I placed my faith in the rural women of Kenya from the very beginning, and they have been key to the success of the Green Belt Movement. Through this very hands-on method of growing and planting trees, women have seen that they have real choices about whether they are going to sustain and restore the environment or destroy it. In the process of education that takes place when someone joins the Green Belt Movement, women have become aware that planting trees or fighting to save forests from being chopped down is part of a larger mission to create a society that respects democracy, decency, adherence to the rule of law, human rights, and the rights of women. Women also take on leadership roles, running nurseries, working with foresters, planning and implementing community-based projects for water harvesting and food security. All of these experiences contribute to their developing more confidence in themselves and more power over the direction of their lives."⁸⁴

⁸³ Professor Wangari Maathai, Oslo, December 10, 2004 Nobel Lecture

⁸⁴ Kenya Human Rights Commission, Strategic Plan, 2004-2008.

Implementing Partners

Major funding (approximately 45 million shillings) was provided for three years by Comic Relief for the *Women and Girl's programme*.

Challenges

- The GBM had since the late 1980s found itself in confrontation with the State as it challenged public institutional practices that sustained gender inequalities and/or policies that posed threats to the environment. The change of government in 2002 has now led to a climate of support and partnership for their activities. Nonetheless, challenges remain with regard to policies dealing with the protection of forestland, the eviction of forest dwellers, and existing land policies that pose threats to existing forestlands.
- *HIV/AIDS*: The Green Belt Movement's tree planting goals as an entry point into communities are increasingly hindered by a "litany of woes."⁸⁵ HIV/AIDS effects on communities includes spending increasing amounts of their time and limited resources on its tragic and costly outcomes including funerals, escalating numbers of orphans that need care as well as care of those afflicted by the pandemic. Women have fewer resources or time available for planting trees. While GBM has responded with IGA and other support mechanisms, the escalation of HIV/AIDS and the movements limited resource base keeps it as an enduring challenge. The Bursary fund, which currently supports 21 girls, does not have sufficient funding to handle all the needs presented by communities.
- *Finding women environmental managers*: Difficulties remain in certain areas as women are rarely at the forefront of environmental management, thus a recent employment drive to engage foresters resulted in only one woman applicant. Foresters are in-charge of each district and supported by field facilitators. There is currently a substantial male bias in the number of foresters employed by GBM. GBM coordinators are supposed to be resources for the different communities and as such are trained in nursery management but also in all of the other programmes including HIV/AIDS.
- *Funding constraints*: Although the women groups' production costs per seedling is 65 shilling (USD 0.80) GBM can only compensate the group at five shillings (USD 0.06) per seedling because it lacks the financial resources.

⁸⁵ KHRC works in parts of Eastern, Western, Northeastern, North Rift, Coast and South Rift provinces of Kenya.

However, the investment is deemed to meet both immediate and long-term needs for the women and their families.

- *Men and Boys ignored:* Some GBM staff voice concern that donors do not support programmes targeting men and yet boys and men are also vulnerable and besides they ask, “Who will marry the girls?”

Lessons Learnt

- An increase in Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT) centers and mobile VCT facilities in particular in the rural areas where GBM is present could help curb the spreading of the pandemic if people were to know their HIV status.
- The reason that indigenous food crops are no longer cultivated and utilized amongst farmers practicing modern agriculture is that seeds, stocks and skills for propagation are fast disappearing. GBM is trying to change this through seminars where farmers are encouraged to bring their indigenous food crops for sharing.

The Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC)

The KHRC is a national non-governmental organization founded in 1992. It is KHRC's belief that human rights and democratic practices must be adequately rooted in communities so as to secure human rights for all women and men.⁸⁶ The vision for KHRC is a Kenya that protects and promotes human rights and democratic values. KHRC seeks to protect, promote and enhance the enjoyment of all human rights for all people.⁸⁷

KHRC has a renewed focus on gender equality work within the organization and its programmes. This is based on the following reasons:

- KHRC interventions with regard to gender equality have occurred partly in response to the global shift towards gender mainstreaming. The focus on rights-based approaches to programming and given that women constitute over 50% of the Kenyan population created a further impetus.
- Having the long term experience of working on human rights concerns in the country, and working at community level KHRC has been strategically positioned to advocate change to improve the status of Kenyan women.

Success Stories

1. Gender Mainstreaming

Objective

To develop programme staff skills in gender mainstreaming and to set up mechanisms for ensuring gender responsiveness in all programme and project stages.

Strategies

To promote gender equity by mainstreaming gender in all its programmes, KHRC has initiated changes in policies, strategies and activities.

KHRC has a Gender Action Team (GAT) and a Gender policy to guide how KHRC personnel relate to one another and how KHRC plans its work with communities.

⁸⁶ KHRC embarked on addressing gender concerns within flower farms due to these reasons:

- The problem of sexual harassment in flower farms
- The lack of a gender policy and recognition of sexual harassment as a violation of human rights.
- Gender stereotypes and discrimination that women undergo has not enabled women to enjoy their rights fully, considering the role they play in the productive sector.

⁸⁷ A key reason for this change was "... because of relatively high numbers of non-performing loans and general mismanagement, the Trust performed poorly. By 1990 operations had mostly stopped and donor confidence had eroded. *Kenya Women Finance Trust : case study of a micro-finance scheme* www-wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDS_IBank_Servlet?pcont=details&id=000094946_00102111464438

The use of a monitoring kit ensures that gender perspectives are part of all KHRC initiatives with communities. Most of KHRC work with communities is geared towards empowering communities to understand their human rights and the policies impacting on those issues, so that communities are empowered to respond to the policies themselves.

KHRC gender policy guides gender equality responsiveness within the organization and informs relationships with its partners.

KHRC uses both Gender and Development (GAD) alongside Women in Development (WID) approaches in their work depending on the situation that they are dealing with. There is a focus on WID approaches given the marginalization of women within most structures of society. The involvement of women and their participation in human rights activities is therefore an important aspect of KHRC interventions. Thus KHRC looks at how women are involved and at what levels of decision-making, the responses of both women and men towards gender work, and the capacity of women to participate in community human rights programmes and where necessary identifies training needs for communities to ensure women's participation. KHRC has also been monitoring the local governance structures at the community level so as to examine how gender perspectives have been taken into consideration. They have specifically been working with a group of widows in Siaya district and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) Network.

In response to GAD approaches, all KHRC interventions seek to take into account the differing needs of women and men. This focus on gender first began internally, eventually extending into its relationships with communities and partners.

Best Practices

- KHRC has paternity leave for its staff.
- KHRC programmes demand that women have to be included in all initiatives and the committees formed by the communities must have a certain number of women; at least 30%. Through this work, there is a growing understanding of the importance of the inclusion of women in programmes and activities.
- To ensure that women are represented in decision making bodies, KHRC reports provide for gender desegregation data.
- Gender perspectives and mainstreaming has helped ensure that the human rights concerns of internally displaced women are recognized and addressed.
- At a national level, KHRC monitors the participation of communities in the constitutional review process and other community-based committees and/

or community funds such as the Constituency Development Fund (CDF). This is to ensure that gender issues are considered and that women participate in these community level committees. KHRC also monitors the numbers of women involved compared to that of men in these committees and at what level women participate or what roles they play in these committees.

- KHRC has a Gender Action Team (GAT) that addresses issues of staff capacity building on gender. There is a gender consultant at the organization that coaches GAT and staff on gender work. Staff have also received training on gender.
- During KHRC internal capacity building training, there is effort to ensure a male trainer undertakes the sessions on gender thus promoting gender work as a responsibility of both women and men.

2. Flower Farms Project

Objectives

To address sexual harassment in flower farms and expand the definition of human rights violations to be inclusive of violations towards women.

Strategies

KHRC worked with two major flower farm companies in the country; Sher Agencies and the Oserian flower farms. All flower farms have codes of conduct and are monitored through auditing. Although the codes require that they give a detailed audit report, flower farms would always omit issues related to sexual harassment and did not consider issues affecting women. This meant that reports indicated that sexual harassment was non-existent in the flower farms. Sexual harassment had not been recognized as a violation of labour practices. Through the work of KHRC, sexual harassment was defined to include all or any acts of indignity towards women working in flower farms. Part of this work included developing a system of accountability that will recognize violations of women's rights.⁸⁸

⁸⁸ "Since 1991 KWFT has received financial support in the form of grants and subsidized loans from several donors that include; Ford Foundation, K-REP, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Belgian-Survival Fund, Barclays Bank of Kenya, Kenya Gatsby Charitable Trust, the Netherlands Ministry for Development Cooperation, United Nations Development Program (UNDP), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and Overseas Development Agency (ODE). With their support, the KWFT portfolio has expanded from a total outstanding loan value of nearly KShs 1.5 million in 1992 to about KShs 33 million in 1996." www-wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDS_IBank_Servlet?pcont=details&eid=000094946_00102111464438

Best practices

- Given its gender policy, the management of KHRC has been supportive of the flower farms project and helped to see it implemented effectively.
- The recognition of sexual harassment as a human rights violation within the flower farms.
- Case studies carried out in partnership with Sher Agencies led to work towards the development of a gender equity policy. As a result, Sher Agencies has zero-tolerance to sexual harassment in their flower farms. This is reflected in their audit reports.
- KHRC has also launched a draft gender policy for work places to be used by companies. This will especially be useful within the Export Processing Zones (EPZs). This draft policy is anchored on gender work as human rights work as opposed to viewing the two as separate concerns independent of each other.
- Gender equity committees have been formed in the flower farms to assist in addressing violations towards women. It is through the recommendations of such committees that a gender equity policy is being developed.

Implementing Partners

NOVIB has funded this project.

3. The Schools Project

Objectives

To address governance and human rights issues in schools by promoting a culture of human rights and positive gender relations among young people.

Strategies

KHRC has partnered with different schools in the country to work on interventions to deal with governance issues in schools. This has been done through formation of school clubs; there are at least 25 school clubs in different parts of the country, including the most marginalized areas. The Human Rights School clubs give an opportunity to students to organize themselves to address human rights concerns affecting them and the school environment. They have regular meetings to discuss issues and have advocacy activities from time to time depending on issues affecting them in their contexts. They also participate in international human

rights events such as the International Human Rights Day, which is marked on 10th December every year. This gives them an opportunity to participate in forums that have a global focus on human rights concerns. Through this project students and teachers have been trained on human rights. Teachers have also been trained as trainers. This has enabled ownership and monitoring of the school clubs by the schools.

Best practices

- All the trainings within the school project have a gender perspective and address gender as a human rights issue.
- Gender balance is emphasized in all school clubs although most club members are girls. Most schools participating in the schools project are girls' schools; this was not by design, they were more receptive to the idea of having human rights clubs for students.

Implementing Partners

KHRC partners with Trocaire on the Schools Project.

Challenges

- Initially, there was not much support from CSO peer organizations for the gender work being undertaken by KHRC. Most organizations expressed that KHRC was getting into an area that is not its mandate.
- There was a lot of resistance from companies and especially the flower farms when the project in the flower farms was first initiated.
- Internally, some officers at KHRC were not well equipped to address gender work. This is continually addressed through the GAT and capacity building for staff.
- Most people's understanding of human rights is limited and does not always appreciate the broad nature of human rights to include gender.
- Parents do not always appreciate human rights issues in relation to obligations and responsibilities that both children and parents have.
- The Schools Project requires constant monitoring but human resources to do so are limited given that the schools are spread out in different parts of the country.

- Not all school administrations were positive and receptive to the Schools Project. Educating school-going youths on human rights was interpreted negatively to imply that they were going to be difficult to manage as it was seen as a way to incite them against the school administration.

Lessons learned

- Organizations that engage in gender work should always start with a positive gender script for themselves. This means that gender work is not seen as 'just work' but a way of life in the organization. In this way it will be easy to translate such efforts into work with communities and partners outside the organization.
- The approaches that organizations use to introduce gender perspectives into human rights must be sensitive to the cultures of the people they work with.
- National culture and receptiveness towards women's rights as human rights is still very resistant. This has at times led to the isolation of organizations dealing with women's rights such as the Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) Kenya. Organizations doing human rights work need to work in solidarity with organizations focusing on women's issues to strengthen each other's work and give support where an organization may be facing resistance to women's rights.
- KHRC believes that people working within the organization have to internalize human rights and live by example as reflected in organizational relationships if they are to make an impact at the community level.

Kenya Women's Finance Trust (KWFT)

Kenya Women's Finance Trust was founded in 1981 and by 1992 reorganized itself to re-start activities⁸⁹ in ways that would be sustainable and effective in enabling and supporting the entrepreneurial activities of the women it serves. The failure of the formal banking system in meeting the financial needs of women, especially poor, low-income and vulnerable women led to the creation of KWFT. KWFT is an NGO whose mission is to advance and promote the direct participation of economically active women in viable businesses to improve their economic and social status, by providing sustainable financial and non-financial services to women in the Kenya economy. The institution places a high value on its own financial probity.

Success Stories

Objective

KWFT focuses on providing financial and non-financial options to economically active women to help them improve their economic and social status.

Strategies

KWFT's operating funds are currently borrowed from local banks and not the result of donor funding⁹⁰. As a consequence, there is a certain level of cost-consciousness and where other organizations with donor funding may not recover costs, KWFT charges set fees for activities such as exposure visits, internships, staff consultations and documentation provision. It has a brochure dedicated to these activities and their cost structure under its "Visitors Programme".

Currently, KWFT works with 100,000 women through sixty-four centers countrywide. The method of lending is to individuals who are part of a group whose members act as guarantor for outstanding loans. Repayment rates are very high, averaging 95-97% as the group is responsible for ensuring that each installment is either met by the individual member or else the group raises the money itself. Not unlike other MFIs the money is loaned to start a first business as a certain amount of business knowledge is deemed necessary. With low margins MFIs cannot afford to have low repayment rates of 80% or less as this would wipe them out.

⁸⁹ A department of the Ministry of Gender, Sports, Social Services and Culture.

⁹⁰ World Bank study, 1997. *Kenya Women Finance Trust : case study of a micro-finance scheme* www-wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDS_IBank_Servlet?pcont=details&id=000094946_00102111464438

Within a group, 60 per cent of the members will benefit from the first loan and the other 40% will also receive credit so that the group as a whole has a staggered repayment schedule. KWFT staff meets with clients on a monthly, sometimes weekly basis as a form of supervision to ensure their clients have no problems and are on track for servicing their loans. The small loans and the limited 3-month repayment period on initial loans helps reduce risk to both the lender and borrower. It also builds the confidence of those who have been able to repay it while weeding out those that are uncomfortable with the level of responsibility needed to service a loan.

Kenya's tradition of women's self-help groups that stems from the immediate post-independence period has made the formation of groups a natural occurrence (unlike in India with the Grameen Bank model where group formation was something that had to be introduced to women). Thus when KWFT enters a community, it works with existing community groups or encourages economically active individual women to register with the department of social services⁹¹ in order to be eligible to receive funding for their economic activities.

Best Practices

- Individual success stories abound, such as the ex-teacher who received five thousand shillings in 1999 to operate a sewing machine. Later retiring from teaching in the year 2000, she is now the owner of 6-7 sewing machines, employs over 12 individuals while servicing a loan of over eight hundred thousand shillings to be paid back over a two-year period. In addition, she has casual workers as sales and marketing people for the accessories and clothing materials she supplies. "[KWFT] has developed a reputation among Kenyan women, especially rural women, as a reliable and quick source of credit... The most significant non-economic impacts of KWFT are: creating credit awareness, developing a businesslike attitude, and reducing fear of banks and loans among KWFT clients."⁹²

⁹¹ KWFT is quick to point out that there are also failed loans with dire and sometimes tragic consequences for the borrowers to whom the due process of the law is applied.

⁹² USAID believes that the partnership between the Kenya Women Finance Trust and the donor community — USAID, the British DFID, Ford Foundation and others — has been a very productive one in developing the necessary capacity. Among other things, the launching of the Trust wide-area networking and website today is an example of investment in institutional capacity.

- Some of the important success stories are reflected in comments from groups such as the women in Limuru running a poultry project. These women report that the money is not the greatest success, rather that KWFT has “cleaned” them referring to the fact that their increased economic well-being has permitted them to acquire such basics as shoes for their feet, soap to wash with and proper clothes to wear. Further to the material changes, the women say that now that they have an income, they also have a “voice” and can make decisions in conjunction with their husbands. They also have more economic clout. For example, market women have been able to pool their funding together and purchase a lorry-load of maize, and thus negotiate a better rate on the produce as opposed buying small quantities at higher prices as they were forced to do in the past.
- Some women groups have also managed to invest in properties upon which they have built rental houses which provide them with a more sustainable form of long term income. Another women's group having started out borrowing 20 thousand shillings now has a 4.7 million loan with a business that brings in containers of goods from Dubai. Their business has allowed them to save 1 million shillings towards buying a property⁹³.
- Even though the programme only lends to women exclusively, oft times the women who have husbands may put the money towards a family business in which the husband is actively involved.
- KWFT clients have utilized their loans to enable their children to dress better, eat three meals a day and go to school.
- Independent incomes have led to other forms of empowerment for women beyond the household such as freedom of movement. An example given is the annual general meeting, which brings together women members from all around the country. For some of these women, it is not only their first time in Nairobi, it is also the only time that their husbands will allow them to spend a night away from home because KWFT is considered an important initiative.

⁹³ KWFT explains that the cost of lending a small loan of 10,000 shillings is the same as lending 10 million shillings but the cost of servicing (literacy needed for completing forms; lessons on managing money or investing in a business) is much higher on a small loan.

- As a group, women also state that they see themselves more able to have a say in matters that affect their lives; for example they feel more able to challenge a local chief with regard to some community decisions.
- The women's groups also provide for good social support systems for family or market matters.

Implementing Partners

KWFT sees itself as having a certain level of autonomy in its decision-making given its financial independence from donors. During the restructuring in 1992/3, KWFT received funding partly as grants and partly loans. However, a major expansion drive in 1998 could not be supported by the donors and KWFT resorted to the commercial banks.

KWFT explains that, over the years, there has been a decrease in donor interest in micro-finance institutions (MFIs) with urgings to MFIs to source revolving funds from commercial banks. In addition, the size of operating funds needed by KWFT with 1.3 billion shillings currently loaned out far exceeds the normal maximum of 30 million shillings that donors would be able to fund. Donors appear to be moving more into institutional building with funding for wide-area networks and website for KWFT so as to "...allow the Trust to offer financial services to more entrepreneurs and to strength the Trust's management and monitoring and reporting system that should help reduce its transaction costs, become more efficient and productive and eventually improve its capacity to link to the banking sector".⁹⁴

Challenges

- *Working exclusively with women:* Initially, KWFT found it difficult to convince the communities of their mandate to only work with the women. The men perceived it as a way to make women into prostitutes or to encourage them to leave their men. The local administration also felt KWFT's presence was a challenge to local authorities but since KWFT has demonstrated a non-partisan

⁹⁴ The League has worked in a number of districts in Kenya among them Taita Taveta, Laikipia, Makueni, Nairobi, Kirinyaga, Embu, Maragua, Kisii, Nyamira, Migori, Bondo, Kisumu, Busia, Narok, Turkana, Kiambu and Kajiado. At the moment out reach activities are in Bondo, Suba, Muranga, Meru South, Bungoma, Garissa, Turkana, Nairobi, Nyamira, Embu, Maragua, Kirinyaga, Laikipia and Migori under various projects that include economic empowerment, monitoring democratic reforms, entrenching women's concerns in the political parties and strengthening women's ability for political participation.

approach, they too have slowly come to accept KWFT. Even within Muslim communities, KWFT has come to be accepted in its work with women.

- *Methods of measuring success:* In measuring success, the monitors of KWFT only seek measurable economic increases such as instead of selling 2 bags of potatoes, women that have accessed KWFT loans should be selling multiple times that amount i.e. 6 bags or more. The monitors do not take into account the social or family changes, the reality of women's empowerment at household and community level, as they are not part of their quantifiable measures.
- *Fraud:* Credit schemes face risks. In some areas there are higher incidences of fraud, and in others it has been difficult to verify the integrity of borrowers. KWFT notes that there are variances in behaviour with regard to borrowing and repayment from region to region as well between urban and rural women. Rural women have been found to repay their loan even if it is after several years and they have defaulted. Fraud was seen as not limited to the clientele but also from within KWFT itself.
- *High cost of client loans:* There are consequences to KWFT borrowing from banks in that loans to its women clients are often at or above market rates. This said, KWFT qualifies this statement adding that some of the banks other costs such as ledger fees, do not apply to MFIs and thus if the total costs were calculated, the MFI loan may be less expensive than commercial bank loans. The high-costs of borrowing KWFT loans are also due in part the door-to-door service they provided their clients along with the business counselling and training clients receive.
- *Inability to accept deposits:* Under current financial rules, only banks are allowed to hold client deposits. KWFT thus continues to lobby the government to allow it to take in deposits which would enhance their financial base and provide more funds for them to loan out while lowering the cost of loans to their clients. However, the Bill that would change this has been sitting in government for five years now. KWFT stresses the importance of savings as they are crucial to a country's development as a whole and help forestall emergencies. KWFT encourages women not to spend their capital (kept under the proverbial mattress) on emergencies, as they need this money for their economic activities. KWFT recommends that women should borrow the money and use the income from their continuing business to repay the loans so as to avoid falling prey to destitution. If MFIs were able to take deposits from their clients, then these

same clients could more easily borrow money against these deposits and thus mitigate recurring financial shocks such as start-of-the-year school expenses or unexpected funeral expenses.

- *Inadequate client business development activities:* Lack of adequate funding has also meant that client business development activities (such as training in business management and technical skills and research on client needs) are unsatisfactorily performed. Given the low skill level of the typical KWFT client, it takes approximately 3-4 months of education before a client can be extended credit.
- *HIV/AIDS:* Increasingly, MFIs are seeing demands for credit from non-traditional segments: elderly people looking after orphans from the scourge of HIV/AIDS. While the elderly engage in economic activities such as market trading in order to earn a living to take care of their grandchildren, they represent a higher risk to KWFT. They are also a high cost client given their typically low-level loans with correspondingly higher costs of service for the MFI⁹⁵. While this is a market segment that they would not normally address, the reality of the wide-spread impact of HIV/AIDS on the Kenyan society, has meant that they must begin to do so.

Lessons learnt

- Having worked with many women over many years, KWFT has shown that women are highly capable and only need to be given opportunities not hand-outs.
- As a successful MFI, KWFT realizes that it is both possible to be profitable and reach out to a multitude of clients by maintaining high professional standards as an organization and having in place good management information systems.
- There are certain advantages to borrowing from local commercial banks such as it enables KWFT to calculate its costs and plan its operations with the costs clearly determined thus ensuring a certain level of financial discipline that may not be enforced with funding from donors. As things stand, KWFT has no outstanding debts and is a viable, floating organization.
- Financial independence from donors has certain advantages in terms of control over KWFT's programme goals and methods of operation. For

⁹⁵ League of Kenya Women Voters, 2005 *Final report to UNDP*

example, any donor wanting to participate in KWFT activities would first be subject to a due diligence to establish the costs of the relationship such as donor reporting and account operating requirements. In addition, capacity building initiatives have been seen to have hidden costs in terms of the financial packages allocated expatriate consultants living costs which take up a substantial percentage of the donor funds. Donors have home country obligations that require them to use their home country consultants and therefore local consultants whose daily rates may be at the international level end up being cheaper as they do not also require the living costs overheads. In addition, the international consultants undergo learning curves that add to their value but is often not recognized or acknowledged as the hidden costs to the host organization.

- A previous evaluation of KWFT argued that KWFT had in effect rendered financial responsibility for children's upkeep to women. KWFT's response is that the women have essentially had no choices in the past when they had to watch their children die but now women have a way to access funding that allows them to sustain their children. Additionally, in response to the criticism that KWFT had burdened women with credit, KWFT argues that there is a market with a willing buyer and willing seller.

League of Kenya Women Voters (LKVV)

LKVV started operations in 1992. The Mission of the League of Kenya Women Voters is to work together with others to promote women's active, free and equal participation in politics and public affairs through the electoral process as voters and leaders.⁹⁶

Success Stories

1. Initiative for Enhanced Participation of Women in Democratic Development 1999-2004

Objective

The objective is to change attitudes and practices hindering women's progress in decision making and democratic process by empowering women with the information necessary to assert their rights and participate effectively in democratic governance.

Strategies

The key strategy in the implementation of the project was provision of information to women. This was meant to enhance women's legal and human rights, civic awareness; build women's self-confidence; and stimulate dialogue on issues of women's representation in decision-making. Using radio, the League disseminated gender sensitive civic education to five million people every week for a period of five and a half years. The main activities were as follows:

- **Development and dissemination of a gender sensitive education curriculum through production and dissemination of a gender sensitive civic education radio programme.** Content included information on women's legal and human rights, the constitutional, political, economic and social status of women. To both promote listener-ship and as a kind of monitoring exercise of listener interest and comprehension, quizzes were conducted and prizes given out to the winners. Monitoring was also done at the field level. In addition, 41 radio listening groups were created across the country. These groups met once a week to listen to tapes of the radio programmes and provide feedback on the topics covered. Gender equality in participation and leadership of the groups was prioritized. A total of 132 weekly 15-minute radio educational programmes were produced and aired on national Radio (KBC) during the project implementation period.

⁹⁶ This project is funded by the Norwegian Embassy in Nairobi.

- **Development of a Civic Education Curriculum to enhance the quality and relevance of civic education programmes for women in Kenya.** Initial desk review by the League of existing civic education models, followed by a meeting of 21 representatives from key organizations led to the development of the curriculum which was then disseminated to over 1000 Civic education providers.
- **Build Institutional capacity of LKWV through recruitment of volunteers, acquisition of equipment and setting up of an Audio-visual studio.** This activity resulted in the recruitment of several United Nations Volunteers (UNV): the five Field UNV addressed gender and were instrumental in mobilizing women and disseminating information at the grassroots; the three National UNVs enhanced the communication and financial management systems. The project also facilitated the establishment of the Audio-visual recording studio at the League secretariat.
- Dissemination of a newsletter and establishment of an electronic information bureau to create a forum of exchange and dissemination of information among women and other stakeholders. "The resource center facilitated development of training materials in gender, human rights and general civic education; and access to information in publications, audio and video tapes on gender issues both in Kenya and elsewhere. It led to documentation of key achievements in women's empowerment. The League and other institutions in stimulating debate, lobbying and advocating for women empowerment have used information generated through the resource center. The resource center managed through a catalogue, index and computerized databank helped the League to build relevant research agenda and documentation to support women leadership and provided information necessary to improve women capacity, which in turn enhanced women's public approval and visibility. The resource center is equipped with over 2000 books and publications, audio and videotapes with various titles on gender issues."⁹⁷
- The newsletter, *Leaguetaalk*, produced 5 quarterly issues that dealt with topical issues and was distributed through formal groups in rural areas, libraries and other channels. It was a tool for sharing information on the participation of women in democratic development.

⁹⁷ The project, carried out public hearings, 4 nation-wide radio programmes, and 3 radio listening groups in: Taveta, Kisumu and Rongai. Targeted were women MPs, the electorate (both men and women), councillors, opinion leaders, representatives of NGOs and CBOs, members of development committees at constituency level and media professionals.

Best Practices

- Highlighted gaps in content and methodologies of carrying out civic education towards creating a new curriculum.
- Helped harmonize the delivery of civic education in Kenya.
- Feedback from the radio listening group sessions and letters received, indicated that there was demand for knowledge on women's empowerment.
- "The Voter Education Programmes produced from October to December 2002 enhanced women's participation in the General elections ... Women role models and veteran women political leaders were given an opportunity to talk about their experience in leadership and encourage other women who had shown interest in vying during the General elections" (Final Report).
- The League received letters from men voicing greater appreciation of women's leadership as well as their own enhanced civic awareness.
- Building on this **Initiative for Enhanced Participation of Women in Democratic Development**; LKVV initiated a project from September 2004 to May 2005 known as *The Deepening Democracy Through Political Accountability: A gender perspective*.⁹⁸ The project aimed at increasing the effectiveness of women members of parliament through visibility, active local level engagement and citizen's participation at the constituency level. The project created Democracy Forums at the constituency level providing elected women members of parliament and their constituents an opportunity for dialogue thereby promoting democracy, accountability and good governance. The activities were undertaken in 10 women-led constituencies with the intent to support women's performance during the upcoming 2007 national elections. The project has exposed women's marginalization and under-representation in leadership and decision-making in Kenya and importantly has furthered the ideals of CEDAW and BPFA in directing focus on strengthening women's political participation.⁹⁹

⁹⁸ League of Kenya Women Voters, 2005 *Final report to UNDP*.

⁹⁹ The League of Kenya Women Voters, 2005, *The National Facilitation Initiative in Taïta Taveta District, Final Report*.

Lessons Learnt

- Of the many organizations carrying out civic education, the actual civic education content was limited, and gender was missing in the materials.
- Use of the Kiswahili language and a national broadcaster (KBC) enabled rural women listeners, regardless of literacy levels, to get information at a time that was convenient (8pm) and in a language that was accessible to them.
- The use of popular media was a unique tool for delivering civic education.
- Given the sensitivity of gender issues, it takes time to change attitudes using a multi-faceted approach.
- The methodology of delivering civic education should be assessed for effectiveness in reaching the grassroots. The use of radio has shown great potential in doing this.
- All partners involved in a project need to be briefed appropriately at the beginning of a project in order to clarify regulations, procedures and each other's expectations. This would help in creating synergies and minimizing delays in implementation.

Implementing Partners

DFID, USAID, CIDA, and SIDA. Collaboratively working with; The Kenya Women's Political Caucus, Kenya Women's Political Alliance, Maendeleo Ya Wanawake Organization; The Catholic Justice and Peace Commission, SWAN, The collaborative Center for Gender and Development and The Electoral Commission of Kenya. The League also worked closely with the Women's Bureau, Ministry of Culture and Social Services, FIDA-Kenya, Alwan Communications, and Women and Law in East Africa.¹⁰⁰

Challenges

- Delays in setting up the studio disrupted production efficiencies forcing the League to rely on outside studios.
- An attempt to include the government in the programme's operation led to serious delays and necessitated reverting to the original methods of operation.
- The short-term contracts of the UNV staff disrupted programmes at the grassroots.

¹⁰⁰ "...in areas such as human resources and development sector; physical infrastructure and information technology; agriculture and rural development; trade, tourism and industry; and public administration, security, law and order." The League of Kenya Women Voters, 2005 *The National Facilitation Initiative in Taita Taveta District, Final Report*,.

- Insufficient or delayed funding led to certain outcomes: interruption of the newsletter after only five productions; limited field monitoring trips; interruption of radio programmes and possible loss of listener-ship.
- Inadequate collaboration between partners.

Audio-Visual Studio

Mission: The studio shall facilitate strengthening of gender awareness, respect and protection of women rights. The League identified the creation of the studio as being key to its 2002-2008 Strategic Plan in order to gain visibility, credibility and facilitate cost-effective information creation and sharing for itself and other organizations.

Strategies:

The studio will be used for:

- Advocating for good governance, and free, active and equal participation of women in all positions of decision making in Kenya;
- nurture and build capacity of women for leadership and decision-making; and enhance visibility of women leaders;
- publicize and disseminate leadership achievement by women to ensure public demand for gender responsiveness; thus provide a platform for women to engage with their leaders, the government and other institutions on issues of concern to women;
- Serve as a platform for LKWV to work with other likeminded organizations to influence the adoption of gender sensitive legislation and policies through this unique venture.¹⁰¹

Implementing Partners

The LKWV worked in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to establish the digital audiovisual studio at its secretariat. The studio was officially handed over to the League by UNDP on March 2005.

¹⁰¹ "...[women] have not been able to clearly articulate the objectives of these instruments nor the critical areas contained therein. This has been attributed to the fact that the training sessions were few and therefore not sufficient for them to fully understand the above instruments. NFI Final Report

2. National Facilitation Initiative

Objective:

The League sought to promote understanding of how the BPFA and CEDAW protocols relate to governance, economy, security, education, HIV/Aids, and the elimination of violence against women at the grassroots level. The League also sought to dispel un-supportive attitudes on the part of policy makers and communities towards the Beijing Platform for Action and other women's rights instruments.¹⁰²

Strategies

In order to achieve its objectives, the League adopted the following strategies:

- (1). Strengthening linkages, information sharing and networking for accelerated implementation of CEDAW and BPFA;
- (2). To build the capacity of partners to implement and advocate for BPFA and CEDAW; and
- (3). To support documentation of the Kenya's progress in implementation of BPFA and CEDAW as input into the Dakar and Beijing +10 review process. The specific activities were as follows:
 - **Training and dissemination workshops for gender mainstreaming.** The purpose of the training was to enhance the understanding of for policy makers on BPFA and CEDAW, review gender gaps in district policy priorities and develop a coordinated district level gender action plan¹⁰³. Workshop participants came from key government district departments, the Provincial Administration, the District Development Committee (DDC), women groups and women¹⁰⁴ leaders. Using the League's membership network, twelve women were trained as Gender Advocates to enable them to monitor and report effectively on the implementation of development projects in the area. A Gender Technical Team was created during the training session to: ensure participation and ownership of the Gender Resource Centre;

¹⁰² The 1999 Population and Housing Census, Central Bureau of statistics (CBS), The Ministry of Planning and National Development, The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), 2000 Report by CBS, Electoral Commission of Kenya Reports, 2003, The Socio-Economic and Political Profiles of Kenya's Districts, Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA Kenya), 2002 and the District Statistics Office - Taita Taveta. The databases have among others gender-desegregated statistics on areas such as Leadership and Decision-making, Health, Trade, Tourism and Industry, Education, Demography, Economy, Agriculture, Environment etc. This information has been analysed and packaged. The League of Kenya Women Voters, 2004. *The National Facilitation Initiative in Taita Taveta District, Final Report.*

¹⁰³ The League of Kenya Women Voters, 2005, *The National Facilitation Initiative in Taita Taveta District, Final Report.*

¹⁰⁴ Mr. Dickson Makuba, the Taita Taveta District Development Officer.

engender the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP); develop criteria for projects to be supported; and advise the Community Gender Liaison officer.

- Establishment of ICT-supported Information Resource Centre with computers, books, newspapers and the recruiting of a Community Gender liaison officer. This was set up in the District Information and Documentation Centre. Thirty women from various women groups, most of whom had twelve years of formal education were trained over 12-month period on how to use computers. Part of the idea was to take advantage of the then recently introduced post office Internet surfing initiative.
- **Gender forums and community sensitization.** The project officer in conjunction with the trained gender advocates organized these forums. Four gender forums aimed at increasing awareness on the gender action plan while highlighting the barriers to women's participation in development, were carried out in four divisions in collaboration with the District Development Officer and the District Social Development officer. 131 people in the community were reached. The Community Gender liaison officer as part of the Gender Technical Support team, has been advising the government departments on gender mainstreaming.
- **Research and setup of Gender District Relevant Resource Database.** This gender desegregated database was to provide information for the Dakar and Beijing + 10 review meetings on the progress made by Kenya towards attaining BPFA and CEDAW goals. ...[it shows] clear gender-gaps in the 12 critical areas of BPFA and CEDAW. In addition, the database could be used as a tool for individuals and organisations interested in defining relevant development activities for the community. Information for the database was gathered from secondary sources¹⁰⁷ and supplemented by interviews with key informants.

Best Practices¹⁰⁶

- The Gender training workshops have increased gender awareness in the community and enhanced skills for the policy makers to mainstream women's concerns in district development plans. "We are now giving more jobs to women in construction of feeder roads and food for work." ¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ Susan Mutungi, the Taita Taveta District Social Development Officer.

¹⁰⁶ The DO Mwatate [division], a woman, confessed that men have a negative attitude towards her and question her ability as a DO based on her sex.

¹⁰⁷ The League of Kenya Women Voters, 2005 The National Facilitation Initiative in Taita Taveta District, Final Report.

- The Gender Resource Centre has enhanced the capacity of local women in the use of new technologies, especially accessing [development and market] information through the Internet.
- Gender forums and community sensitization have enabled the community to accept representation of women in all local development committees... as the government has made it a policy for all the committees to have at least 1/3 women... However, the participation of women in these committees is wanting.
- A Gender Technical Team was setup, whose terms of reference include ensuring participation and ownership of the Gender Resource Centre and engendering of the PRSP; developing a criteria for projects to be supported; and advising the Community Gender Liaison officer.
- Policy makers including the DDO, DSDO, District Officers and other organizations have on several occasions included the League in community activities – forums that have been used to create gender awareness.

Challenges

- "...[There are still] negative sentiments about Beijing Platform for Action among government officers in the District. ...need to create awareness on BPFA at the grassroots level...to realize changes on the ground."¹⁰⁸
- The participation of women in development committees is still wanting, a situation that has been attributed to negative attitudes¹⁰⁹ towards women leadership within the male dominated committees and lack of confidence and capacity by the women.
- It was found that the women still faced hurdles in getting information due to heavy workloads, inadequate education and ICT skills, costs (surfing, travel to center) among others. The resource center is now managed by the District Development Office (DDO).

¹⁰⁸ The project started in 2002 with the assistance of League members in the districts. Project districts are Makueni, Bondo, Maragua, Kirinyaga, Narok and Laikipia. The organisation plan to add three more districts to this number. Each district has a maximum of twenty paralegals trained in basic human rights issues, paralegalism, volunteering, succession and family matters, criminal process, dispute resolution and basic counselling.

¹⁰⁹ Maendeleo ya Wanawake Organization Profile- an unpublished Document that is a Compilation of Information about MYWO; it offers a quick reference to what MYWO does.

Lessons Learnt

- Gender analyses of sector allocations at the district level will assist in engendering the national budget and realization of women's rights.
- Poor leadership skills has meant that women leaders who have information do not necessarily share it with their groups who would thus benefit from capacity building.

Implementing Partners

This two-year project received funding from CIDA and was implemented by the League in collaboration with UNIFEM and GoK between 2002 and 2004. Gender advocates to assist with the coordination were trained in collaboration with TTAP/DANIDA. The League has collaborated with other organizations including COVAW, Education Centre for Women in Democracy (ECWD) and Ministry of Health (MoH) and agreed to collaborate in collating gender desegregated [information] and analyzing the implementation of the BPFA and CEDAW activities in the district.¹¹⁰

3. Governance and Human Rights

Objective

This project aimed at empowering women to access justice and seek legal redress by creating awareness on human and legal rights, provide paralegal counseling and services through Community based counselors. The project also aimed to provide paralegal support to administrators of justice at the local level in order to improve the "supply-side" of rights. This is through a network of paralegal volunteers.

Strategy

- KVV ran the *Paralegal Programme* in which they trained 20 paralegals, mostly retired people who would have time to volunteer.¹¹¹ The paralegals are provided with transport and a monthly subsistence of 7,000 shillings. The trained paralegals provide information to the communities on a range of issues such as land rights, inheritance laws as well as basic legal aid. Some examples of interventions: a young girl enabled to return to school

¹¹⁰ National Council of Women of Kenya, 5 Year Strategic Plan, 2004-2008

¹¹¹ Mwelekeo Magazine January-February 1995.

with the League paying her fees (Narok). A woman suffering domestic violence was helped to leave her marriage and was successful in being allocated property and the children (Meru).

Best Practices

- The trained women give legal aid to their communities.
- The impact has been that human rights violations at community level are highlighted and channeled to their respective domains in an endeavor to seek redress. This has reduced crime rate and more specifically, crimes perpetrated on women.
- Paralegals have been able to mitigate in some cases and this has helped reduce gross violations with impunity.
- Community members have been mobilized and are working together with an endeavor to foster development. Paralegals have been working closely with the LKWV as well as other CSO and CBO's and this has strengthened the network for lobbying purposes and synergy for addressing women issues.
- The work of paralegals has reduced the referral burden on the League, and the organization can now engage elsewhere.
- The League is a member of PASUNE. This is a network of paralegal training organizations seeking to streamline human rights training in Kenya. Using this collaboration, the league is developing a gender sensitive curriculum for paralegals and a self-representation manual to be used at the grassroots.
- The League also introduced a round-robin activity for the paralegals, "Shilawa" programme in an effort to bring about economic empowerment.

Maendeleo ya Wanawake Organization (MYWO)

Maendeleo ya Wanawake Organization was formed in 1952. It is a non-profit grassroots women's organization with branches all over the country. In each district of Kenya, MYWO has a field worker who coordinates the day to day activities of the organization. It operates through committees at the sub-location, Location, Division and District Branches. MYWO has years of experience in management of development projects in the areas of family planning, elimination of harmful traditional practices, nutrition, energy and environment, girl child education, civic education and leadership development. MYWO's mission is to work towards a society in which equality, peace, justice and unity prevail. MYWO believes in uplifting and empowering women as a means of alleviating poverty and creating a better environment and quality of life for all.¹¹²

Success Stories

1. Maternal Child Health / Family Planning (MCH/FP) Objectives

- To improve quality of MCH/FP services.
- To improve access of MCH/FP services.
- Increase number of women attending antenatal clinics.
- Enhance Post - Natal Care.
- Improve antenatal and delivery services.

Strategies

MYWO started MCH/FP activities in 1979 on a pilot basis in Emuhaya and Kandara divisions in Kakamega and Murang'a districts respectively. In 1982, the programme started distributing contraceptives in five districts – Kakamega, South Nyanza, Murang'a, Kirinyaga and Bungoma. This was done through community-based workers. The programme later expanded to Siaya and Nandi. In 1995, the programme integrated HIV/AIDS/STI activities. This was included in the activities of community-based workers, they were trained and they started doing awareness work. HIV/AIDS programmes target the youth, orphans and widows. The youth component of this programme focuses on prevention and abstinence. Some of the activities include mobilizing the youth and their parents, creating forums for both to interact, training of youth as peer educators and the participation of youth

¹¹² Aili Mari Tripp "Regional Networking as Transnational Feminism: African Experiences" *Feminist Africa* Issue 4, p. 7

in income generation activities. Two youth friendly VCT centres were opened in Korogocho and Lunga Lungu.

The MCH/FP activities are on-going in ten districts; Kirinyaga, Machakos, Kakamega, Embu, Murang'a, Kitui, Nandi, South Nyanza, Siaya and Bungoma. Main activities are addressing reproductive health, home-based care and information, education and communication (IEC).

At the village level, Maendeleo has volunteers or community distributors who visit women at home to give them information on contraception or provide pills. The volunteers are not paid but they charge a fee of two shillings (2/-) for each packet of contraceptive pills distributed. The volunteers move from house to house so that the women do not have to travel to the health centres or hospitals for this service. However, for the initial consultation, they have to visit the hospital. They also do so when they develop complications and have been referred for a check up by their health facility. Injective methods of contraception also require women to attend a health facility.

Best Practices

- Working in collaboration with the government has ensured that this programme is sustained without external donor funds for a long time.
- The integration of other reproductive health issues in addressing contraception issues.

Implementing Partners

MYWO works closely with the Ministry of Health on this programme since it does not have funds to do it alone. In 1982, MYWO was funded by USAID through Pathfinder International; this funding period ended in June 2000. Later, the programme was funded by NORAD up to the early 1990s and taken over by CEDPA up to 1995. The National AIDS Control Council (NACC) funds the HIV/AIDS component at the district level. The HIV/AIDS component is implemented in partnership with other organizations. The Kenya AIDS NGO Consortium has funded the youth component of the HIV/AIDS programme. KANGO also funds MYWO for the HIV/AIDS programme.

2. Girl Child Education

Objectives

To reduce girls drop outs from school to 10% from 60% by year 2007 in ten Districts.

- To increase number of girls “reading for life” by 30% by year 2007 in 10 Districts.
- To increase enrolment of girls in Primary Schools Education.
- To increase the number of girls completing Primary and Secondary Schools by 30% by the end of year 2007.
- To improve girls self esteem through education on eradication of harmful traditional practices and provision of counseling.

Strategies

The girl-child education project was launched in April 1998 in five districts: Kuria, Kilifi, Bungoma, Koibatek and Nairobi within the Kibera, Mukuru and Mathare slums. These districts were selected due to challenges they face with poverty levels, early marriage and FGM.

The girl-child education program initiated income generation activities for 61 schools in total.

Communities in the districts were involved in selection of the schools through a process of participatory planning and action.

Committees, composed by the community and comprising of parents and opinion leaders of the area, were created to work with the schools. The school head teacher acts as secretary of the committee.

As part of the program, issues of sexuality for girls are addressed in relation to puberty and adolescence. Interventions involve counselling, training of role models, peer counselling among students, training of teachers on counselling and self esteem development for girls.

Main activities in this project include advocacy on girls’ education and provision of conducive environment for continuation of girls in schools, establishment of girls clubs, identifying and working with role models. Every year, MYWO selects a needy girl and pays her school fees from whichever year of her schooling up to when she completes her secondary school education.

Under this program MYWO has established clubs in the schools where they work and have also produced videotape on the girl child concerns. These clubs

are for girls in schools and are aimed at providing counselling, while at the same time working on the development of self-esteem among girls and initiation of income generating activities.

Together with the National Book Council, MYWO holds reading tents for both girls and boys as a way to encourage the development of a reading culture. The reading tent is held in different districts in collaboration with the City Council in Nairobi and MoEST in the districts outside Nairobi.

Best Practices

- MYWO has a membership drawn from all the districts in Kenya. This is structured from the sub-location, location, and division to district levels. Using the committees right from the grassroots and at the sub-location to the highest level in the country enables MYWO receive the facts and work within the realities facing community members.
- Payments from membership have sustained most of the girl child education initiatives for MYWO.

Implementing Partners

The girl child education is funded by the Academy for Education and Development (AED) through the John Hopkins Foundation. The payment of school fees though is not funded and depends on the fees kitty that MYWO established through its membership fees.

3. FGM – Advocacy Strategy for the Eradication of Female Genital Mutilation in Kenya

Objective

To accelerate the elimination of FGM through community education.

Strategies

MYWO initiated programmes to address FGM in 1991; first in Meru and Kisii districts and later expanded into Samburu, Narok and Nandi districts. MYWO was the first organization to implement the alternative rite of passage (ARP) which has been successfully replicated by other organizations in other parts of the country as an intervention to stop FGM. This is initiation of girls into adulthood without the genital cutting that traditionally forms part of the initiation ceremonies of FGM. With ARP girls are brought together for 2 weeks in a ceremony that is marked

with educating girls on various life skills. The ceremony includes sessions with counsellors who educate them on what is expected of them as they grow up thus fulfilling an important aspect of these traditional ceremonies. Sessions also focus on building girls' self esteem and confidence. This is meant to help them deal with ridicule and stigma in their communities for not being circumcised. Parents, relatives and other community members including leaders are usually invited to witness the last day of the initiation where the girls are showered with all kinds of gifts.

MYWO has been implementing community education to accelerate the elimination of FGM as a barrier to women's rights in health and advancement. In 1991, MYWO carried out a survey on harmful traditional practices that affect the health of women and children. This research was carried out in Kisii, Meru, Narok and Samburu. Based on the findings of the study, MYWO designed IEC interventions suitable for each of the districts.

Best Practices

- Using the alternative rite of passage to address FGM's helped promote positive aspects of good cultural practices and sensitized communities on human rights.
- The ARP also encouraged the formation of parents and youth support groups.

Implementing Partners

The Ford Foundation and Program for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH) funded the eradication of FGM programme.

Challenges

- Lack of funding has been the biggest challenge for the organization although it has continued to survive without funds from external donors.
- Addressing FGM issues is very sensitive and communities are not so receptive to initiatives that address FGM which are an important part of cultural practices. FGM is linked to sexuality issues for women and girls and this is not an open subject in communities practicing FGM. MYWO faced community hostility and resistance in breaking the traditional barriers to address harmful traditional practices.
- Lack of documentation of the work that MYWO does and publicity on the same has in the past led to a mis-representation of what MYWO is all about and why it exists.

Lessons learned:

- The MCH programme has been running without donor funding since the year 2000. Thus, it is possible to run some projects without donor funds for as long as an organization is already in strategic relationships with other organizations or institutions. Thus, it is collaborations with the government through the different ministries that ensures sustained efforts.
- MYWO has its own building- the Maendeleo House, which is an investment that has sustained the organization through renting out office space. This together with membership fees generates income for the organization.

National Council of Women of Kenya (NCWK)

NCWK is a national umbrella membership organization founded in 1964. The purpose of the establishment of the NCWK was to strengthen and unite women's organizations in Kenya. NCWK's vision is to become the prime national women council in Africa, resolutely liberating and empowering Kenyan women and girls to attain economic, social and political equality; to be well informed; to have access to basic services and achieve maximum representation at all decision making levels as a channel to the advancement of the status of women, enhancement of dignity and quality of life. NCWK further seeks to empower and strengthen its member organizations to contribute effectively to the development of women of Kenya.¹¹³

The organization was also the NGO focal point in Kenya for activities and mobilization to prepare for the Beijing Conference in 1995. As part of the preparations, the council of NCWK was involved in processes at the East African and continental levels to draw up the critical areas of concern for African women. Furthermore, NCWK fundraised through various activities to enable women to attend the forum.¹¹⁴ NCWK organized workshops and forums to sensitize women on what the conference was all about.¹¹⁵

Success Stories

1. District Dissemination forums

Objective

District Dissemination forums were organized to disseminate the Beijing Platform for Action.

Strategies

NCWK organized for district dissemination forums in order for women at the community level to understand the BPFA. The forums were also meant to give an opportunity to the women to organize themselves to address some of the issues raised at their local level. There was a lack of support from the leadership

¹¹³ Charmaine Pereira, *Locating Gender and Women's Studies in Nigeria: What Trajectories for the future?*. Paper presented at 10th General Assembly of CODESRIA, "Africa in the New Millennium" 8th -12th December 2002, Kampala, Uganda.

¹¹⁴ Aili Mari Tripp "Regional Networking as Transnational Feminism: African Experiences" *Feminist Africa* Issue 4, p.1

¹¹⁵ Noeleen Heyzer. 13th January 2004. *Women's Participation and Leadership: Vital to Democratic Governance*. Summit on the Americas, Monterey, Mexico, p.3.

of the country with regard to the BPFA.(see the Challenges). NCWK lobbied for support through the Office of the President (OP), so as to carry out the forums in different districts.

During the period to mark Beijing +5, Women 2000: Special session of the General Assembly on gender equality, development and peace for the 21st century held in New York in June 2000 (5 years after the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995.) NCWK had forums in all provinces to review the impact of the Beijing Platform for Action. They used the issues that were emerging to encourage women to take up political leadership so as to be able to address the issues that were arising. These forums were also intended to be a means to press for women's representation and to take the government to task over its broken promises to women. The findings from the provincial forums were used to compile the national report that was finally integrated into a Regional report presented in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. This report was finally presented at the Commission on Status of Women meeting in New York at Beijing +5 forum.

Best Practices

- In 1997, NCWK opened its membership for district women. Initially, membership of district women was only through organizations. The change would allow women to be members through their women groups at the district level. This allowed for greater participation of women in NCWK and ensured a wider reach of women.
- The outcome of the district dissemination forums and the Engendering the Political Process programme was that there was an increase in women's leadership positions at different levels.

Implementing Partner

District Dissemination forums were implemented through the NCWK community-based organizations and funded by the Ford Foundation.

2. National Civic Education Programme (NCEP) and the Engendering the Political Processes Programme (EPPP)

This programme was designed to address the low levels of women's participation in leadership, national debate and decision-making positions at all levels which was widely recognized as a fundamental constraint to equitable national development, the advancement of women and the achievement of gender equality.

Objective

Engender governance and political party policies, structures and legislation and increase women representation in decision making structures at all levels.

Strategies

NCWK participated in both NCEP and EPPP programmes from 2000 to 2001. They specifically implemented the programmes in constituencies where women had expressed their interest in vying for both parliamentary and civic positions. Activities carried out under the NCEP and EPPP programmes included training for women leaders to impart leadership skills.

NCWK has been doing Civic Education for more than 10 years with the aim of empowering grassroots women and women on leadership.

Best Practices

- More women took up the challenge to run for civic seats in their wards; there were also more women that succeeded in taking up civic seats after the elections in 2002.
- The activities carried out in these programmes contributed to Honourable Beth Mugo, Charity Ngilu and Martha Karua being re-elected back to Parliament in the year 2002. The NCWK specifically carried out civic education in the constituencies represented by the three members of parliament; Dagoretti, Kitui Central and Gichugu respectively. This has been documented through articles in various Mwelekeo Magazines.

Implementing Partners

NCEP was funded by DFID, Royal Embassies of Netherlands, Denmark and Sweden, Canadian High Commission Norwegian Embassy, Finish Embassy, Austrian Embassy, European Commission USAID. EPPP was funded by DFID Kenya, CIDA-GESP, CIDA – CSDDP the Royal Embassies of the Netherlands, Denmark and Sweden and UNIFEM.

3. Women's Health Project

Objective

To influence policy change and legislation in support of the girl child.

Strategies

NCWK has in the past organized workshops to educate communities on issues related to female genital mutilation (FGM) and early marriage. This work has been done in Kajiado where the FGM prevalence is 80-90 % and Kirinyaga where prevalence is 40%. The community education and awareness on harmful traditional practices focused on the health effects that the practice of FGM and early marriage has on girls.

Posters with messages on stopping FGM and Early marriage of girls have been developed and have been used to educate communities in the districts where NCWK works. The posters have also been shared with other organizations in different parts of the country. NCWK also produced posters on gender and governance with emphasis on the promotion of women in leadership and decision-making positions. These posters have been and continue to be used as part of community education materials and for purposes of information dissemination in different forums.

Best Practices

- Dissemination of information from the districts which was later compiled into a national report that was integrated into a regional report in Addis Ababa that was later presented in the Beijing +5 session which adopted a Political Declaration and outcome document entitled “further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.”
- Lobbying the ministry of Home affairs for the enactment of the Children’s Act.
- Sensitization of communities to stop early marriage and the practice of FGM.
- Creation of awareness on policies and laws on the girl child and issues affecting girls. Part of this included training of trainers and teachers to support girls.

Implementing partners

United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; Austrian Embassy and the Finnish Embassy.

Challenges

- A hostile environment developed towards the Beijing conference soon after the return of the Kenyan conference participants. The Beijing messages were distorted and lacked political good will for dissemination at the grassroots.

- NCWK has experienced internal leadership wrangles for some time and has lacked external support from some women NGOs. However NCWK has resolutely set about the task of rebuilding, refocusing and revitalizing the organization.
- When NCWK was carrying out civic education, they experienced resistance in some districts. This explains why the district forums were not initiated in all districts. Baringo is one such district since it was the former President's home district and constituency. Although there was resistance in Nyanza, work went on in Bungoma, Western province. In some areas such as North Eastern, there were no resources to enable the council to work there.

Lessons learned

- The involvement of boys and men was important in gaining support from communities. An example is working with male opinion leaders in addressing leadership issues for women.
- It is important to have programmes that are geared towards addressing early socialization on gender issues. Such programmes can ensure that stereotypes that entrench the marginalization and subordination of women and girls are addressed at an early age.
- Cultural sensitivity with regard to project interventions is important in ensuring support from the communities and for community ownership of initiatives.

Young Women's Leadership Institute (YWLI)

YWLI is a trust registered in 2002 in Kenya. YWLI was formed by a group of young women who had attended the Africa Women Leadership Institute (AWLI) organized by Akina Mama wa Afrika (AMwA) held in Uganda in 1998. During this Leadership training AMwA "saw it fit to identify the active involvement and participation of younger generations of African women in building and strengthening of women's NGOs" (Morale Ogundipe-Leslie, 1998). YWLI sees the women's movement as an opportunity for the advancement of young women and as a platform through which diverse issues affecting women of all generations can be addressed. Young women feel left out of the current women's movement and see the need for more effort from women towards attracting young women into the movement.

The young women participating in this study shared the following recommendations:

- YWLI needs to share their training framework with other organizations through building the capacities of those organizations that have expressed that they are seeking to programme for the issues of young women. YWLI uses the AMwA Leadership training framework.
- More intergenerational dialogue as a way to address the generational tensions within the women's movement. This will help build an all-inclusive women's movement.
- Begin a dialogue on movement building so as to develop a manifesto for the women's movement. This should be done with the purpose of collectively defining the political agenda for the women's movement in Kenya and the strategies to use.

Success Story

1. Creating space for young women's participation in the women's movement

Objective

To empower young women aged 18-35 years to participate in public affairs and decision-making.

Strategies

YWLI provides a forum for young women to share their visions and views on different development issues. The institute also builds young women as leaders through capacity building on leadership related areas. It also serves as a forum for

intergenerational dialogue, information sharing as well as mainstreaming the young women into the women's movement. YWLI has three focus areas; capacity building, information sharing and networking. Other programmes for young women have focused on their reproductive health and HIV/AIDS concerns.

Best Practice

- Breaking New Ground in creating space for young women to voice their views, share their visions for the women's movement and their opinions on the different development issues affecting them.
- YWLI focuses on networking and information sharing; areas that are imperative for the advancement of young women and their participation in different areas of development.

Challenges

- The Kenyan women's movement has not been very accommodating for young women nor has it provided the space to have issues specifically affecting young women addressed or discussed within the broader movement. Developing strategies that will enable linkages is work that remains to be done.
- Some of the key obstacles to young women's participation in public affairs and decisions making are linked to sexual harassment, rape or fear of rape and other forms of sexual violence.
- Young women see themselves as a part of the women's movement and many are increasingly involved in programme work with women's NGOs and the wider human rights movement. However, many young women see much of their current involvement as often limited to volunteership and internships and rarely are they involved in decision-making processes within women's organizations.
- Funding for young women's project initiatives have faced challenges that young women perceive as the 'invisible discrimination' of age.

Implementing Partners

The resources that helped launch YWLI have come from the African Women Development Fund (AWDF), the Global Fund for Women, Mama Cash and the Humanist Institute for Cooperation with Developing Countries (HIVOS). YWLI is also implementing the Gender and Governance Program (GGP) in partnership with various youth and women's organization that is funded by a basket fund through Action Aid Kenya.

Conclusion

The growing strength of the non-governmental sector, particularly women's organizations and feminist groups, has become a driving force for change. Non-governmental organizations have played an important advocacy role in advancing legislation or the mechanisms to ensure the promotion of women. They have become catalysts for new approaches to development. Many governments have increasingly recognized the important role that non-governmental organizations play and the importance of working with them for progress. Women, through non-governmental organizations, have participated in and strongly influenced community, national, regional and global forums and international debates. (BPFA, Global Framework. Paragraph: 26).

Kenya has a long history of activism with regard to addressing the issues and concerns of women. The first formally documented attempt to create dialogue around redefining women's roles was held soon after independence in April 1964.¹¹⁶ Kenyan women have since continued to mobilize and expand the public space for their activism since then; receiving further impetus for their work from regional and global linkages and support. The interventions shared in this study suggest that Kenyan NGOs especially women's NGOs have lessons to share that are promising and may help programme managers apply best practices to their programme needs based on the experiences of one or more organizations.

The case studies presented have covered a broad range of issues affecting women in Kenya; all focusing on critical areas of concern in the BPFA. These case studies serve as a review and appraisal of the work of national NGOs in facilitating the change mandated by the Beijing agenda and the achievements of the women's movement in Kenya in terms of the BPFA implementation and lessons for continuing future actions to further BPFA. In Kenya, there are clearly several NGOs, women's NGOs and Civil Society Organizations instrumental in bringing about the goals of BPFA. The range and focus of the gender equality work encompasses promoting women's political participation; economic rights for women; "pro-women legislation"; eradicating violence against women; service provision in health, education and finance and ensuring equality for the girl child.

¹¹⁶ John Wilson and Dan Taylor (no date) *Financing Development Practice: How can we start to make the difference that makes the difference*"

Although local women's NGOs have specific areas of focus and tend to be identified with particular interventions as described in these case studies, they nevertheless, find that their work has cross-sectoral implications. Such that activities supporting women's entrepreneurship may require interventions in other sectors such as education and law reform; as one example. Furthermore, many interventions simultaneously address several gender concerns, for example, targeting women may not only empower them with regards to men but also the wider community.

The main lessons that emerge from the experiences shared by the organizations in this study, include the significance of creating public awareness as a strategy to enable understanding of gender issues and the pervasive discrimination that women face. Knowledge has also been a means for empowering women to recognize their own agency and to understand that they have human rights. Specific curriculum and manuals have often been developed targeting specific groups, especially service providers like the police, health providers and peer educators in the efforts to build capacity to facilitate change. Women organizing to work together is also growing as they deal with increasingly complex international, regional and local contexts that intersect with ongoing struggles such as violence against women, political representation, law reform and macro-micro policies. Utilizing alternative media to influence mainstream media is still early work but it has been a crucial strategy for women, keeping them and others informed and aware of their issues. The stories in this study highlight the opportunities present for convergence and synergy among women's NGOs.

In reviewing the case studies, the questions that arise are why and in what ways have the NGOs working on women's and gender issues defined their agendas and priorities in the ways they have. Charmaine Pereira has argued that "how social realities are understood will determine the strategies used to change these realities."¹¹⁷ In Kenya, those currently working on women's rights and gender equality have tended to take a Women in Development (WID), Gender and Development (GAD) and human rights approach. Approaches that are "a product of global dialogue and interaction [but] increasingly shaped by

¹¹⁷ Florence Butegeya, *Reflections on the African Women's Movement, 1975-1997. Taking the African Women's Movement into the 21st Century*, Report of the First AWLI Programme, February 22nd -March 14th 1997, Kampala, Uganda.

the global south;”¹¹⁸ with UN plans of actions and conventions shaping the ideas and practices that inform the gender equality work in Kenya. Framing their arena of work as issues for human rights has enabled a more collective and shared language for developing strategies of work.

The Beijing Platform For Action mandates gender mainstreaming and women’s empowerment. Gender mainstreaming is seen as a tool for analysis of the power differentials and as leading to the development of strategies that lead for social transformation work. Empowerment on the other hand is to achieved through actions such as legislation, and the allocation of resources. The work of gender equality and women’s empowerment is therefore inherently political work in so far as it seeks to disrupt taken for granted social arrangements that sustain imbalances and inequalities in work, resources and rights and entitlements. However, a new challenge for women’s organizations is to ensure that the commitments in the BPFA and in CEDAW are promoted in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The current targets and goals of the MDGs, as the new developmental framework, have not comprehensively reflected the key issues for women that are in the BPFA such as; political participation, violence, and reproductive health rights. Given that the MDGs have been agreed upon by governments and are receiving tremendous resources it is essential that women direct their activism at MDGs and key policy makers to strengthen MDG targets and indicators in ways that promote the Beijing goals.

Overwhelmingly, projects targeting women are addressing their welfare concerns with regard to health, education, income generation, access to basic services. In the current Kenyan environment where social services are increasingly being privatized, the work of women’s organizations and associations will consequently continue to focus on responding to the costs of such privatization policies upon the poor and vulnerable many of whom at the present time will be women. As a result, these organizations will be faced with running projects for service delivery and their operations will depend on donor partnerships. At the same time women’s activism has also been directed at strengthening women’s potential as individual and collective agents.

¹¹⁸ Anee Marie Goetz, (ed). *Getting Institutions Right for Women in Development* London/New York: Zed Books. 1997. p.2.

Although individual Kenyan women and women's NGOs have been at the center of the vibrant activism and promotion of civil society development in Kenya; they have not been alone, rather a whole spectrum of women's associational groupings including community-based and faith-based organizations have played a critical role for women at the grass-root. The efforts and abilities of many of these organized actions have however not been sufficiently harnessed or supported to be the progressive force they can be for women and their communities.

Obtaining better outcomes for women is increasingly and severely now challenged by new realities such as HIV/AIDS with women at its center as a result of sexual violence, unequal power relations, or gender discrimination. At the same time the burden of care arising out of the HIV/AIDS pandemic has fallen on women. Women's NGOs working in this area have begun to highlight that needed responses not only require taking into account the needs of women but also incorporating men in any interventions that seeks to contain HIV/AIDS; this work requires support. Gender based inequalities in terms of control and access to assets and resources also continue to hinder women ability to escape poverty, further constraining the potential of their local communities. Globalization processes have also continued to limit women's options. Noeleen Heyzer offers insights on the urgently needed responses that begin with "building the capacity of women, governments and institutions to make the link between gender and economic policy decisions, including women's work in the unpaid care economy, the analysis and formulation of national and local budgets and the collection of gender disaggregated data and statistics."¹⁹ Heyzer argues that "the stakes for women are high," and women are essential to addressing the global concerns we face, thus ensuring gender equality and women's empowerment requires the support of everyone.

Some women's organizations have sometimes carried out initiatives without turning to donor funding, however, these self supported activities are often invisible or unrecognized with the most likely reason being that since they are not donor funded they do not need to be framed in rigid quantitative terms. On the whole however, many of the women's and non-governmental organizations in this study depend on donor funding. Nevertheless, given the challenges of unreliable funding, insufficient funding, short term funding and a view of

¹⁹ Ibid p.9

development work on the part of partners as aid, a rethinking about good development practices is called for. Wilson and Taylor advocate “mechanisms for a more inclusive negotiated decision-making process around funding policy [as] essential if we are to strike a balance between donor’s wishes and communities needs.”¹²⁰

In Kenya, there have been tensions that emerge in the women’s movement framed around class and ethnicity, rural vs. urban, formal sector vs. informal sector, elite vs. non elite, all highlighting the complexity of defining women’s concerns yet requiring new negotiations given the shared interest of ameliorating inequalities and transforming gender norms. The human rights movement and the women’s movement in Kenya have tended to see their work as occupying different spheres of struggles. The reason for this disconnect has frequently sprung from the fact that NGOs engaged in human rights work have dominantly been led by men while the leadership of NGOs carrying out gender equality work is primarily women. And generally, neither group has traditionally sought to bridge the gap in ways that strengthens each other’s work to further the understanding that “women’s rights are human rights.” A connected area of unease notes Florence Butegwa, has been a “tendency within the movement, for a complete separation between those working on theoretical basis and their claims and the activists. This has led to very committed activists within the movement with very little knowledge of the theoretical basis of their work.”¹²¹ Tensions also arise from seeking to define the nature of one’s work with feminism still a contested term for articulating the work of local women’s NGOs. Although some organizations perceive their actions as feminists many continue to resist this language as alien, yet the strategies many of them employ suggest a feminist vision. The work for the Kenya women’s movement will be to develop a shared language of communicating what is it we want to do, how we want to work and why we want to work the way we do.

Several of the organizations in this study were women’s NGOs and as a consequence have gender-sensitive provisions in the structures of their work that are contributing to women’s empowerment in the workplace and as public agents with regard to their organizational mandates. However, an important

¹²⁰ INSTRAW. *Engendering the Political Agenda: The Role of the State, Women’s organizations and the International Community*. San Domingo: INSTRAW. 2000. p.3

¹²¹ Florence Butegwa, *Reflections on the african Women’s Movement, 1975-1997*. Taking the African women’s movement into the 21st century, Report of the first AWLI Programme, February 22nd- March 14th 1997, Kmpala Uganda

challenge for women's organizations is getting their institutional practices right for women; with the objective of promoting "accountability to women... by identifying the organizational and political conditions under which economic and political gains for women... might be achieved".¹²² The question here is are women's NGOs accountable to their women constituents, and if so, what mechanisms are actually in place for doing so, or are they primarily and only accounting to those who fund them.

The current context of a reforming Kenyan government has availed new opportunities to bring gender equality on the public agenda as well as seen the increased movement of gender and human rights activists away from NGOs into public sector work or new forums of work opportunity. A new concern was thus being expressed by several of the organizations in this study that have recently seen changes to their leadership, with the attendant challenges of transition. Fore-grounded by these changes is the shared weakness among many Kenya NGOs of insufficient institutionalization of their processes given the high dependence on one, usually charismatic, individual and often a founder leader whose departure subsequently creates uncertainty and unpredictability. Institutionalizing mechanisms that would inform the norms, structures and practices of women's NGOs and at the same time are responsive to new problems and challenges is very much needed to alert us to the fact that such organizational sites need to have "egalitarian value-driven cultures"¹²³ that promotes organizational sustainability.

Recent constitutional review activities have provided a new impetus for demands for the formulation of women's agenda and to push for women's political representation as a way to initiate a transformatory agenda for Kenya. Those in the women's movement are in agreement that given the pervasive and differential treatment of women consensus building will be necessary to advance women's interests for social justice. The task for Kenyan women's movement and likeminded NGOs thus lies in strengthening collective efforts and the knowledge base that provides understanding and conceptualization of the work they do in a context of globalizing and transnational forces and relationships. What Kenyan women want is an "engendered political agenda" manifest in the legislative, judicial, and

¹²³ Ibid p.9

¹²⁴ INSTRAW. *Engendering the political Agenda: The role of state, women's organisations and the international Community*. San Domingo: INSTRAW. 2000.p.3

executive systems of governance; with a public sector incorporating mechanism, processes and institutions through which citizens, specifically women, can articulate their interests, mediate their differences and exercise their rights and obligations".¹²⁶ The Kenya government's recent establishment of the National Commission on Gender and Development are steps in the right direction in establishing national mechanisms for advancing national policies and international and regional commitments for the advancement of women and gender equality. By working strategically and collaboratively, such national mechanisms, women's and human rights organizations can impact on the policies and programmes of the Kenya government.

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Biographies

Dr. Jacinta Muteshi

Dr. Jacinta Muteshi holds a PhD from the University of Toronto and a Masters Degree from McGill University, Canada. She is a scholar and Consultant in the field of women's rights. She combines research, teaching and advisory work in the field of gender, culture, development studies and social policy.

Dr. Muteshi has taught locally and abroad at the University of Toronto and McMaster University in Canada; Kenyatta University and United States International University - Nairobi (USIU). As a Consultant and researcher, she has worked with international and national organizations on issues related to legislation and women's rights, gender equity in the workplace, gender mainstreaming for institutional change, women's health, FGC/FGM, violence against women and human rights.

Dr. Muteshi is the chair of the National Commission on Gender and Development. The Commission provides leadership, strategic advice and expertise to government on all issues affecting gender. She therefore participates on several committees such as the Technical Coordinating Committee on the Governance, Justice Law and Order Sector; Consultative Committee for Gender Responsive Legal and Judicial Law Reform; Advisory Consultative Committee on International Human Rights Obligations and the National Steering Committee for National Action Plan on Promotion of Human Rights.

Jane Kiragu

Jane Kiragu, a human rights lawyer with over 15 years experience, is the past Executive Director of the Federation of Women Lawyers in Kenya (FIDA). Ms. Kiragu serves as Commissioner in the Law Reform Commission. She has extensive experience in human rights, lobbying, research, training, facilitation, empowerment, evaluation, operational management and legal work. Ms. Kiragu has undertaken research on women's reproductive rights whose outputs are considered an authority in the African context. Ms. Kiragu has a Bachelors of Law (LL.B) degree from the University of Bristol, UK. And a Postgraduate Certificate, Human Rights Lawyering from Oxford University, UK. She is an advocate of the High Court of Kenya and serves on several regional and international boards. She is currently the acting director of the Urgent Action Fund – Africa.

Betty Nyambura Maina

Betty Maina is the Regional Representative of the Parliamentary Network of the World Bank-East African Chapter. Having obtained a Bachelor of Environmental Science, Planning and Management from the Kenyatta University, she has extensive experience in Environmental Planning, Economic Planning and gender and development. She is currently pursuing a Masters in Economic Policy and Management at the University of Nairobi. Ms. Maina was a member of the Local Project Appraisal Committee of the UNIFEM Violence against Women Trust Fund. She has written widely on water, land and gender and macro-economic linkages.

Persons and Organizations Interviewed

Enid Muthoni
Senior Programme Officer
 Women's Rights Programme (FIDA)

Helen Kwamboka
Programme Officer
 Legal Aid Programme
 Federation of Women Lawyers

Rosemary Kantai
General Manager Programme Operations
 Kenya Women's Finance Trust

Daniel Gichohi
Project Officer
 "Women and Girls" Programme
 The Green Belt Movement

Judy Kimamo,
Project Officer "Environmental Education through Schools"
 Women for Change (WfC) Bursary Program
 The Green Belt Movement

Dr. Linus Ettyang
Deputy Executive Director and Programme Director
 Family Planning Association of Kenya

Rosemary Okello
Executive Director
 Africa Women & Child Feature Service

Irene Oloo
Executive Director
 League of Kenya Women Voters

Isabella Karanja
Chairperson
 National Council of Women of Kenya

Shiphrah Gichaga
National Coordinator
 Forum for Women Educationalists

Joyce Rugara
Program Officer
 Maendeleo ya Wanawake Organization

Cynthia Mugo
Program Officer

 Steve Ouma
Deputy Executive Director
 The Kenya Human Rights Commission

Myra Sidika
Programme Officer

Kathambi Kinoti
Trustee

Nyambura Ngugi,
Participant in YWLI-AWID
 Leadership Institute for Young Women in Kenya
 Young Women Leadership Institute

Ann Njogu
Executive Director
 Centre Rights Education and Awareness (CREAW)

Dekha Ibrahim Abdi
 Coalition for Peace in Africa (COPA)

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Heinrich Böll Foundation

The Heinrich Böll Foundation, affiliated with the Green Party and headquartered in Berlin, is a legally independent political Foundation working in the spirit of intellectual openness. The Foundation's primary objective is to support political education both within Germany and abroad, thus promoting democratic involvement, socio-political activism, and developmental cooperation. Its activities are guided by the fundamental political values of environmental sustainability, gender democracy, solidarity and non-violence.

The Regional Office for East and Horn of Africa

Since 1991, the Heinrich Böll Foundation has been supporting development projects in Ethiopia and Eritrea. In 1999, the Foundation expanded its activities to Somaliland and Djibouti. Since 2001, the Foundation's activities have spread to many countries in the region including Kenya, Sudan and Uganda. We mostly work in cooperation with project partners who focus on raising awareness on ecology, gender democracy, peace and security, democratization and cultural identity.

The overall goal of the Foundation's engagement in this region is promoting democratization for sustainable development. As a result, most of the program activities in the East and Horn of Africa have been in partnerships with non-governmental organizations working in the environmental, gender and the peace and security realms.



NAIROBE +21
NAIROBI PLUS TWENTY ONE

COMMEMORATING THE 3RD UN WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN
DATE: 1985 - 2006

1985

NAIROBI

1995

BEIJING

2006

HOSTED BY



National Commission
on Gender and Development

Nairobi +21

Commemorating the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies for Women

“Gender mainstreaming is about transformation, it is about power relation and it is not an overnight miracle.” Leticia Shahani, the UN Secretary General to the Third UN World Conference on Women in Nairobi.

Background

Twenty one years ago, at the conclusion of the UN decade for women (1975-1985), the first international women’s conference on African soil was held in Nairobi, Kenya. This conference presented an opportunity for new forms of organizing that would more clearly, and for the first time, be informed by the agendas of women from the South.

Dubbed *the Third World Conference on Women*, the Nairobi conference was held on 15 – 26 June 1985. Close to 1,500 official delegates from 150 countries participated in the meeting, with another 15,000 women attending a parallel NGO forum.

This landmark meeting for women in Africa and the rest of the world concluded with the adoption of the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women (NFLS). The goals of NFLS were intended to offer a practical and effective guide for global action to promote peace, development and equality for women.

Broad areas addressed by NFLS:

- The promotion of women to positions of power at every level within all political and legislative bodies in order to achieve parity with men.
- Equality between women and men.
- Women’s autonomy and power relations.
- The establishment in every country of a high level government body to monitor and implement progress towards equality.
- Recognition of women’s unpaid work.
- Equal employment opportunities and equal pay for work of equal value.
- Establishment of flexible working hours to encourage the sharing of child-care and domestic work between parents.

A decade later, the 4th World Conference on Women was held in Beijing to review progress. The conference adopted the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA). The Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies (NFLS) formed the basis for the Beijing conference and through it; women from all over the world were able to strategize and come up with priority areas for addressing

gender equality concerns in society. The 12 critical areas of concern in the Platform for Action for Women's Equality and Empowerment were as follows;

- Women and Poverty
- Education and training of women
- Women in power and decision-making
- Women and armed conflict
- Human rights of women
- Institutional mechanism for the advancement of women
- Women and the economy
- Women and the media
- Women and the environment
- The Girl child.
- Violence against women

What is Nairobi+21?

Two and a half decades later, the National Commission on Gender and Development – a body established as a result of the recommendations arising from NFLS – in collaboration with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and supported by The Ford Foundation, CIDA/GESP, Urgent Action Fund, African Woman and Child Feature Service (AWC), Heinrich Boll Foundation (HBF) and the African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET), will host **Nairobi +21**.

Nairobi +21 is a series of events and activities that have been designed to offer a critical space for reflection on the commitments of the NFLS and Beijing +10. It presents an opportunity for posing several questions regarding achievements so far and what has changed for women especially in the region over the last twenty one years.

Some of the key Questions that form the basis of Reflection include;

- To what extent has the agenda that came out of the Nairobi and Beijing conferences been implemented and with what results?
- How have NFLS and BPFA advanced the course of justice and gender equality, particularly in Africa?
- To what extent have the aspirations and dreams of African women been achieved in the last 21 years?
- How can we strengthen the inter-generational linkages that are fundamental in furthering the debate around gender equality and women's empowerment?
- How can we strengthen gender equality work through the involvement of men and the emerging work around masculinity in the region?

Nairobi+21 Activities

Twenty one years after the Nairobi conference is an appropriate moment to commemorate this historic conference, which was proudly hosted in Kenya.

Major Conference: The key event will be a major conference on 28/7/2006 which is the anniversary of the 3rd World Conference on Women to be hosted by the National Commission on Gender and Development. This event will draw together a wide range of organizations that make up the women's movement in Kenya.

International speakers from Africa and other parts of the world will be present to (a) reflect on what's happened since 1985; (b) facilitate a cross-generational conversation on where the movement to secure gender equality and women's empowerment (c) reflect on the impact of the Nairobi conference on the global women's movement.

The other activities being planned for the rest of the year include:

- **The National Schools Drama Festival:** This captures the voices of young people through drama to articulate gender concerns in our society today. The winners of the Nairobi +21 themed events from the National School Drama Festival will perform at a special event at the Go Down in September 2006.
- **CD-Rom-** archival material on how the Kenyan media has reported gender in line with the NFLS and BPFA to date.
- **Research:** Linking NFLS and Beijing in regard to the following critical areas; (i) Human rights and social justice, (ii) Environment and sustainable development, (iii) Education, (iv) Media, art and culture, (v) Sexuality and reproductive health, (vi) Governance, (vii) Masculinity and (viii) Media analysis on gender trends in the region.
- **Series of Special Gender Forums:** A series of the Heinrich Boll Foundation sponsored gender forums which are meant to create greater awareness on issues related to Nairobi + 21.
- **Six special television features of TAZAMA:** Aimed at educating and informing the youth on issues addressed in the NFLS.
- **A four part AGENDA-KENYA special talk-show series:** Aimed at providing a platform for diverse voices on contemporary issues and debates around gender and development in Kenya
- **A special edition of the CODESRIA-BULLETIN:** Which examines how the intellectual discourse on gender and development issues in Africa has evolved and been shaped by NFLS and the BPFA+10.
- **A special edition of AGENDA** Feminist Media Project which attempts to capture new and pressing issues facing young women in Africa today. It will particularly

consider the contemporary gendered dynamics of economic, political, culture and social strategies, structures and institutions and how they affect the rights of women in society today.

- **Masculinity Film Festival:** Is meant to facilitate and open spaces for increased dialogue on issues of masculinity in society today.

Why Nairobi+21?

In a nutshell, Nairobi+21 hopes to;

- To reinvigorate debate around gender issues on the continent.
- To inform work around gender equality in new ways that continues to be guided by the NFLS and BPFA.
- To capture milestones that will continue to encourage us.
- To hold governments accountable for the obligations they undertook on behalf of women.
- To enable the youth identify with the goals of the NFLS and BPFA.
- To reflect on the partnership between the women's movement, civil society, faith based organizations, governments and donors in promoting social justice for women.

Participating Organisations

