WOMEN

IN TOP MANAGEMENT IN

KENYA

BY

DR. MARIA NZOMO

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BY:

Dr. Maria Nzomo
Institute of Diplomacy
and International Studies
University of Nairobi
Kenya.

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(i) ABBREVIATIONS

1.	AAPAM	African Association For Public Administration and Management
2.	KANU	Kenya African National Union
3.	DP	Democratic Party
4.	FORD-K	Forum for the Restoration of Democracy Kenya
5.	FORD-A	Forum for the Restoration of Democracy Asili
6.	KNC	Kenya National Congress
7.	KSC	Kenya Social Congress
8.	IPK	Islamic Party of Kenya
9.	ILO	International Labour Organization
10.	WHO	World Health Organization
11.	P.S.C.	Public Service Commission
12.	Y.W.C.A.	Young Women Christian Association
13.	CPA	Certified Public Accountants
14.	KTDA	Kenya Tea Development Authority
15.	KWFT	Kenya Women Finance Trust
16.	C.I.D.	Criminal Investigation Department
17.	N.E.M.U.	National Election Monitoring Unit
18.	N.C.S.W.	National Commission on the Status of Women
19.	FEMNET	African Women Communication Network
20.	KBPWC	Kenya Business And Professional Women's Club
21.	GAD	Gender and Development
22.	UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
23.	I.A.S.	Institute of African Studies
24.	P.S	Permanent Secretary
25.	ACP	Assistant Commissioner of Police
26.	D.O.	Divisional Officer
27.	D.C.	District Commissioner
28.	M.P.	Member of Parliament
29.	K.B.C.	Kenya Broadcasting Corporation

1.0 WOMEN IN TOP MANAGEMENT IN KENYA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The study set out to determine and analyse the factors that hinder or facilitate women's advancement to top management positions in Kenya. The study also attempted to identify strategies that could be employed to facilitate women's advancement in decision making in general and top management positions in particular. The strategies are presented in the form of recommendations in this report.

The study identified five major factors that determine women's advancement to top management: (i) Socio-Cultural and Corporate culture (ii) Education and training (iii) Institutional and Policy Framework (iv) Legal Framework and (v) Women's Movement and Networking.

Sixty women occupying various public decision-making positions in Kenya were interviewed, but only about 15 were found to have attained top management positions. Research findings revealed that in both the public and private sector, women formed only about 21% of all employees. In the public sector the majority of female employees, up to 75%, are clustered in low ranking, low paying and gender stereotyped, jobs; about 15% in middle management and only about 9-10% in senior, but not necessarily top management positions. In fact, the findings of this study show that there are no women at the very top of management sector, namely, in Job Group Category S and T.

The findings of this study revealed that the **socio-cultural** factor is the major **determinant of women's** failure to advance to top management. Other factors in order of their importance were: **education and training, women's movement and networking, legal and policy framework** respectively.

The study has therefore underscored as a matter of strategy, the urgent need to establish programmes, combining gender sensitization,legal awareness raising and civil education of both women and men, with a view to eradicating retrogressive socio-cultural attitudes and values, as well as democratising the Kenyan society.

The study has also underscored the importance of women's self-empowerment through their own organisations and through more effective networking that cuts across class, political and socio-economic divides. The weak link between women in top management and women at other levels of

employment, within and outside voluntary organisations, was identified as an important area that requires rectification; in order to improve the performance of women top managers and their capacity to influence change for and on behalf of other women.

1.1 RESEARCH PROBLEM

Since Boserup (1970) came up with the seminal work that comprehensively documented the numerous and vital roles women play in the process of development, many other macro and micro studies have been conducted to reaffirm this position. The issue is no longer whether or not women play indispensable reproductive and productive roles. The attention has shifted to more pertinent issues and questions that seek to find solutions to the following problems:

(i) Women continue to be overworked while many men are underworked.

(ii) Women receive minimal or no enumeration or recognition for their labour, especially domestic and agricultural labour.

iii) Women continue to be marginalised in decision-making, and especially at top management levels.

The first two issues have been adequately addressed in various studies and researches.[1]

The third issue has so far been under-researched. The fact that women are not represented in the power centers of society where critical public decisions are made on issues of social, economic and political development for which women are the major implementers, consumers and bearers of the social costs of

[1]. Bay, Edna (ed.) Women and Work in Africa. Boulder. Westview. 1982.; Beneria, Lourde, & Gita Sen, "Accumulation, Reproduction, and Women's Role in Economic Development" Signs. 7,2:279-298 de, Beavouir, The Second Sex New York. Vintage Books. 1974.; Hafkin, Nancy and Edna Bay, Women in Africa: Studies in Social and Economic Change, Stanford. Stanford University Press, 1976.; Obbo, Christine, African Women: Their Struggle for Economic Independence London. Zad Press, 1980.; Stitcher, S. and Parpart, J. (eds). Patriarchy and Class:African Women in the Home and the Workforce. Boulder. Westview, 1988. and their, Women Employment and the Family in the International Division of Labour. MacMillan. London. 1990; Maria Rosa Cutruefelli, Women of Africa: Roots of Oppression Zed Press. London. 1983.

implementation, raises great concern. This is especially true of the Structural Adjustment Program, (SAP) packaged by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank. Whereas women do not participate as top decision makers in the boardroom negotiations between these financial institutions and African governments, it is the women who have borne the major burden (social costs) of adjustment in all African countries (Nzomo, 1992 (b)). In other words, despite women's exclusion from strategic public decision making fora, they are subsequently expected to bear the burden of implementing decisions in which they were not consulted, or allowed to participate in.

The problem for this research therefore is cast within the framework articulated in the AAPAM project proposal, but with focus on the Kenyan case. The study therefore seeks to answer the following questions:

(i) Why is there such a tremendous disparity between women's active participation in development activities and their lack of participation in high level decision-making?

(ii) Why is there a paucity of women in top management positions in Kenya, despite a significant increase in women with high level education in recent years?.

(iii) What are the constraints towards and within management, and what are viable strategies for overcoming barriers to women's career advancement and climb to top management posts?

2.0 JUSTIFICATION OF STUDY

Any society that claims to be fair, democratic, representative, and efficient, must of necessity include women in decision-making in appropriate numbers. It should also make them visible and encourage their participation at policy and management levels. Yet, despite the existence of several international conventions on the status of women and United Nations's heavy emphasis on the need for women's participation in decision-making roles in government, parliament, political parties and public administration, available information clearly shows that women are still few in number and marginalised in most countries.

With regard to the African continent in general and Kenya in particular, the issue of limited access and participation of women in decision-making roles and top management positions is compounded by African cultures which like

many other cultures in the world are still imbued by the ethos of patriarchy. In a nutshell then, the fact that few women are to be found in top management positions in Africa, is a situation that in itself warrants an inquiry into the reasons and causes as well as possible measures that will redress the present status quo. Furthermore, it is our contention that there exists a lacunae of knowledge and research on the issue. The scanty literature available on women in top management positions in Africa equally leads to scanty information on the actual position of women in different African countries. It does not furnish the reader with any substantive data as to the policies affecting women's advancement in management and the barriers therein. In other words, insofar as Africa is concerned, very little in-depth research and analysis on the subject matter has been conducted.

In Kenya, while a few researchers have in the 1990s began to document women's participation in public life, such documentation is not comprehensive and often does not focus on women in top management alone. In our view the information gained through this research, will prove invaluable to both scholars and policy-makers in designing more progressive development and management programmes and policies aimed at ensuring equal participation for women.

3.0 SCOPE OF STUDY

The scope of this study covers the major issues outlined under the research problem. The focus is on women in top management in Kenya. In the context of this research, women in top management is broadly defined to mean those women who occupy the highest position in any public or private sector organization or institution. In other words, the top manager is conceived as that individual who exercises the ultimate authority and decision-making power in a given establishment. This definition also assumes that the rise to top management position has been a function of other people's decisions and policies. Women who have risen to the top through self-employment are therefore not covered by this definition. Despite this definition, this study does cover some women who are strictly speaking not occupying top management positions but were found to be the highest ranking decision-makers in their organizations or useful respondents in key aspects of this research. It was necessary to include the latter not only because the women at the very top of management were found to be too few, but due to the fact that it was important to know from them the barriers that had blocked their way to the top. Appendix 1 provides lists of the various

categories of the women managers that comprise the sample for this study.

4.0 OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

1. The major focus of this research project is to identify, determine and analyze the main factors that obstruct the advancement and mobility of women to top management positions. In addition, the study will examine policies, organizations, opportunities, affirmative actions, and strategies that may enhance women's presence, participation and equality in top management positions in Kenya.
2. Towards this end, the study emphasises the role of public policy and institutional environment in advancing or constraining upward mobility of women in top management positions in Kenya. This also includes examination of the existing laws, with a view to discerning gender discrimination that may discourage and even block women from meaningful participation in top management positions.
3. The study also aims at examining the extent to which the socio-cultural environment enhances or hampers women's advancement to the top. In this context, factors relevant to prevailing socio-cultural values and the overall socialization process are examined, with a view to identifying the social costs incurred by women in the process of attaining top positions in management.
4. The research aims at generating data on personal attributes of women who have made it to the top. Profiles of such successful women will be used to identify constraints encountered by these women in their career advancement, the strategies employed to overcome these constraints, and factors that enabled them to get to the top.
5. The study examines the extent to which women are represented in top management and how effectively they participate in decision-making.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

Arising from the above five broad objectives, the following are the specific objectives:

1. To identify the critical factors that constrain women's career advancement and their increased participation in top management positions, and explore

prospects for gender equity and strategies for change.

2. To establish the strengths and weaknesses of Kenyan government policies and programmes which influence the career advancement of women in top management positions with a view to formulating support strategies to facilitate the increase in number of women at top management levels and to create support systems that can ensure the continued success of women at those levels.
3. To identify organizational policies needing improvement and suggest strategies that can address constraints women face at individual and institutional levels and in the context of societal values.
4. To examine and determine the extent to which education and training opportunities pertaining to the advancement of women in top management positions in Kenya are in place; and the inherent weaknesses of such opportunities and programmes.
5. To identify and assess crucial factors which can enhance women's participation in top management and to present successful strategies and affirmative action if any.
6. To highlight the achievements of those women who have made it to top management positions so that they serve as role models for other women who are aspiring to these levels
7. To examine the extent to which successful women in top management are effective or ineffective and the constraints they face in their top management roles.
8. To examine the extent to which women top management serve as mentors or models for other women in junior positions.
9. To examine the extent to which women top managers interact with each other and other women in order to overcome their individual isolation and share information.

5.0 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is broadly speaking, guided by a feminist perspective. Although the meaning of the term feminism is continuously contested, it is generally accepted that the feminist perspective looks at the many similarities between the genders and concludes that women and men have equal potential for individual development. Differences in the realization of that potential, therefore must result from externally imposed constraints and from the influence of social

institutions and values. The feminist perspective holds the view that as long as society prescribes gender roles and social penalties for those who deviate from them, no meaningful choice exists for members of either gender. The feminist perspective therefore challenges such roles and social penalties and seeks to understand their origins and manifestations, with the view of gaining the wisdom to dismantle them and create a just society. Hence, feminist literature contains volumes that explain the origins of women's subordination to men, patriarchy the gendered division of labour. (e.g Maria Mies (1991); Marilyn French (1992); Susan Bazilli (1992); Mohanty et.al (1991); and Minh-ha (1989)).

Feminism challenges the social, political, economic and cultural ideologies which legitimize and sustain the subordination of women in a holistic manner. Feminism argues that one can never attain equality and freedom within a social system that is not fundamentally just and democratic. The feminist perspective therefore argues that African women are the most exploited, the poorest, and the most susceptible to sickness and fatigue. All these are due to the inequities in the social system and also due to African women subordination to a patriarchal order. This patriarchal supremacy is expressed in a diverse range of cultural and traditional norms and practices.

As with other theoretical approaches, the feminist method has attracted a lot of debate around its utility and relevance in the study and analysis of gender relations and hierarchies. Most of the debates have been of an ideological nature and have revolved around both the interpretation of the concept of feminism and its application. On the whole feminists of various ideological persuasions take different labels such as **radical feminists; socialist feminists, Marxist feminists, liberal feminists** and even **third world** and **Western feminism. (Maria mies; 1991, p.12 and Mohanty et.al;1991).** The explanatory value of the labelling approach and hence of the various strands of feminism arising therefrom, is limited, as it tries to fit the "women question" into already existing theoretical and political framework - which in themselves have limited explanatory value regarding the gender question - e.g Marxist theory, dependency theory, political economy approach and so on. The point to be underscored here therefore is that, the nature of the "Women question" is such that it cannot be simply added to analysis of class or other inequalities in society.

The feminist perspective as used in this study does not uphold the simplistic view of gender relations that sees the entire male gender as the enemy and the female gender as the victim (**Mampela Ramphele,** 1990; **Wendy kaminer,**

October 1993; and **Naomi Wolf**,1993). Rather, the perspective locates the roots of gender inequities in patriarchal and capitalist ideologies and within structures of society. All this results in an unequal and gendered division of labour in private and public life, which determines and limits choices and opportunities of women to participate fully and effectively in public decision-making capacities.

In seeking to redress the past gender imbalances in power relations, the feminist perspective as used here emphasizes the need for equitable sharing of power, resources, opportunities between men and women rather than transfer of these from one to the other. The concept feminism in this study is used without a specific ideological label and is broadly conceived as an awareness of patriarchal control, exploitation and oppression at all levels, of exploitation of women's labour, time and sexuality, in the family, at the place of work, and in society in general. This concept also includes action by women and men to transform these patriarchal structures.

In the context of this study therefore, the major argument advanced through the feminist perspective is that the paucity of women in top management, the constraints they face both towards and at the top, is largely a function of patriarchal and capitalist structures. These do institutionalize gender hierarchies, promote gender inequities, and obstruct women's advancement in public life. The retrogressive socio-cultural values and attitudes that are so oppressive to women, are some of the manifestations of patriarchy.

6.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

The master AAPAM project proposal attempted a fairly comprehensive literature review as at August 1991. I do not intent to review this literature again here but rather to make some broad remarks on the state of the literature in Kenya since the said proposal was prepared.

A lot has been written on the women question in Kenya, especially since the country returned to a multi-party political system following the repeal of section 2A of the Kenya constitution in December 1991. However, most of the gender research and writings that have been undertaken have not focussed specifically on women in top management, but have been concerned more with what role Kenyan women can and should play in the new multi-party democratization era (Kabira, Oduol and Nzomo eds; 1993).

Only two research pieces have attempted a survey and analysis of women in key public decision making positions (**Nzomo** 1991 and Likimani 1992).

However, even these two pieces have not specifically focussed on women in top management but rather on a broad spectrum of women operating at various levels of management and public decision-making positions. In view of this and because most of the extant literature on Kenya relevant to this study form part of the data analysis in subsequent sections, we have found it unnecessary to review it at this stage.

7.0 METHODOLOGY

The methods used in this study are both quantitative and qualitative. At the quantitative level, structured questionnaires were administered to 15 women in senior and top management. Attempts to administer 25 questionnaires as previously planned, proved futile, as many of the women managers were too busy to spare even 30 minutes, which was the minimum time required to have a full questionnaire administered to them. Leaving questionnaires with them to fill them at their own time proved equally futile, as they just forgot or lost them among their piles of paperwork. The more effective method of gathering data, especially profile data, was through informal interviews. Such interviews were conducted impromptly, wherever this researcher managed to find any of the women managers. Informal interviews were also conducted with about 45 women in middle grade to senior (but not top) management positions to find out their views on women in top management and the reasons why they themselves had not attained top management positions. In addition, up to 10 men in senior management positions were also interviewed with a view to finding out their views regarding women in top management, especially the constraints they face towards and at the top. The rest of the data was gathered from official government documents and secondary library sources, including books, magazines and newspapers. Also, observational data proved a useful supplement to questionnaire and interview data.

8.0 BACKGROUND CONTEXT

The situation of women in top management in Kenya, as elsewhere in Africa, has to be understood within the total context of the structures and processes of Kenya as a geographical and juridical entity; as well as a social, economic and political unit. Some of these basic facts about Kenya are therefore briefly

summarized below:

8.1 GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

The Republic of Kenya is located on the Indian Ocean seaboard. It covers a total area of 582,646 square kilometers of which 13,396 square kilometers is water surface. There is a land surface area of 596,250 square kilometers. Kenya has a coastline of approximately 402 kilometers and a territory of sea extending for 320 kms offshore. Kenya extends between 4 degrees n and 4 degrees 20'S. The country is situated on the Equator, and it lies between 24 and 43 degrees East Meridians. It's neighbours are Tanzania to the South, Uganda to the West, Sudan and Ethiopia to the North, while Somalia borders Kenya to the East.

Kenya has a marked topography and climate variation that make it a beautiful and diverse area in Eastern Africa. These varied topography and climatic conditions have made it a well-known tourist attraction. At the turn of the century during European expansionism, Kenya's climate and topography made it a prime prey of British settlers. Thus, setting Kenya on a historical path comparable in Africa to that of Zimbabwe and South Africa.

8.2 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Kenya's population growth rate is the highest in the world, about 4.0% (World Bank, 1986). Despite the non-release of the 1989 census statistics by the government, Kenya's population is unofficially estimated to be 28 million by 1994. It is projected to rise to at least 35 million by the year 2,000, even if both fertility and mortality are held constant (**Kiriro and Juma** eds. 1989:12). At least 52% of the population is female and 48% male. The rapid population growth has been influenced by the improvement on the macro health services which has been reflected in notable decline in infant and child mortality. Higher fertility rates are a result of the low rate of childlessness and sterility in the population. The crude death rates have also declined steadily from 20 per 1,000 in 1982 to 12 per 1,000 in 1986. Infant mortality has also declined from 119 deaths per thousand births in 1969 to 76 in 1989. Life expectancy has been increasing from 49 years in 1969 to 54 years in 1979 and 57 years by 1983.

8.3 SOCIAL-CULTURAL CONTEXT

Kenya is a multi-ethnic (about 45 ethnic groups) plural society. The inhabitants comprise not only of indigenous black Africans, who are the majority, but also of other racial groups including Asians, Arabs and Caucasians.

Socio-culturally, the most dominant gender ideology is patriarchy, on the basis of which social relations in general and gender relations in particular are structured and practiced. In all Kenyan ethnic communities, customary laws determine gender relations in marriages and divorce, inheritance, property ownership, custody of children, sexual division of labour, decision making, widowhood, and so on.

Customary laws being based on patriarchy do not consider women's personal rights, interests, and concerns as an important consideration in gender relations. The woman is basically the property of her spouse when married, and of her father and male relatives if unmarried. For many ethnic groups in Kenya, customary law permitted wife beating as a form of discipline and circumcision of women was widely practiced as a form of controlling women's sexuality. In certain Kenyan communities, widows are still "inherited" by the brother or close male member of the dead husband's clan, as a way of controlling their sexuality and perpetuating patriarchy. In other words, the view of women as sexual objects of men is still very strong in the psyche of many men. This is why perhaps some Kenyan men still do not yet take seriously the heinous crime or rape which is increasing very rapidly. Such men see rape as a form of sexual control of a man over a woman, rather than as a gross violation of a woman's human rights. Among some ethnic communities in Kenya, there were also certain traditional practices that denied women the right to eat certain nutritious food that were reserved for men.

In regard to women's freedom of movement, association, and assembly, women still operate under the heavy weight of socio - cultural beliefs that impinge on these freedoms. For example, in urban areas, a woman not accompanied by a man may be denied access or service in a hotel. If spotted walking alone at night, the police may arrest an innocent woman and charge her with loitering with the intention of engaging in prostitution.

In general, socio-cultural structures and practices of Kenya, which are in place, are archaic and oppressive to women in many respects and need drastic overhaul along with the eradication of the entire patriarchal ideology.

8.4 ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT

Kenya has no valuable mineral resources and hence is primarily an agrarian economy. The country is highly dependent on a narrow range of agricultural commodities, such as tea, coffee, pyrethrum and horticultural products, to earn foreign exchange. Agriculture accounts for nearly 70% of national employment, 50% of export earnings and 30% of GDP. Tourism is the second major foreign exchange earner after cash crops. The country depends on only a small section of its land for most of its agricultural production; only 18% of the land is arable, the rest being arid and semi-arid. This arable land supports nearly all the major cash crops and 80% of the population. For the first decade of Kenya's post- independence existence, 1963 to 1973, the economic performance was reasonably good, when judged by the capitalist yardstick of gross GNP and GDP statistics. However, the warped nature of capitalist development in Kenya had already been detected by critical analysts who had sent signals to policy makers, of the need to change the colonially inherited social, economic and political structures, if meaningful development was to occur (**C. Leys**:1975 and **ILO**:1972). The growing inequities along both class and gender lines were already beginning to be glaring by the early 1970s but were ignored, especially since the country enjoyed enormous good faith and patronage from western donor institutions and states.

While women supply most of the labour for both food and marketable agricultural production, most of them do not own land, equipment and or the products for which they supply labour. Because of socio-cultural, historical and legal frameworks, the position of women in relation to property ownership has continued to deteriorate over the 30 years since Kenya achieved independence in 1963. In particular, women are at significant disadvantage regarding wage employment. Their share of total wage employment increased slightly from 17.5% in 1981 to 19.7% in 1985 and 21.2% in 1987 **(Kiriro and Juma,** 1989:20-21). Furthermore, despite the fact that up to 60% of the households are either *de jure* or *de facto* female headed, all major decisions continue to be made by absentee male heads or live-in husbands or other male relatives who make little or no contribution to the family income or welfare.

Kenya's economic growth began to decline after 1973, following the oil crisis and fall of international prices for commodity crops and rising costs for manufactured goods. This, plus local economic mismanagement pushed Kenya to accept the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank imposed

Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) by the beginning of the 1980s, as a conditionality for further economic assistance. Kenya was one of the first African countries to accept the SAP package, which inter- alia demanded that the government drastically cut-back on social expenditure and subsidies in key sectors such as health, employment, education and food. As result of these cut - backs and removal of subsidies the impact of SAP on the "vulnerable" groups generally such as the poor, but more specifically the women, the children and the disabled, has been extremely harsh and unbearable. Several studies now exist that have documented among other things, the detrimental impact of SAP on the female gender because of the central roles they play in the productive and reproductive sectors of the economy and society (Nzomo:1992(b); NCSW:1993).

In the sector of environment, one observes that, despite government's efforts in the post colonial era to create institutions and programmes, as well as sensitize and mobilize the public for environmental conservation and management, the natural and human environment continues to deteriorate. Part of the problem has been that development policy planning in the past had failed to address the major target group in environmental planning and implementation - the women of Kenya. Several studies have now been conducted to document the central role women have, since time immemorial, played as environmental managers in Kenya (Khasiani:1992; Kiriro and Juma:1989) and the greater contribution they could make in environmental management, if provided with a conducive and enabling atmosphere.

8.5. FORMAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

In the colonial era, women were not encouraged to attain formal education and if they were, it was just enough education to acquire basic literacy and knowledge for enhancing their assumed role of motherhood and wifehood. In other words, it was education for domestication. In the post colonial era, greater emphasis was laid on education for both girls and boys. In this connection, the number of primary schools had more than doubled between 1963 - 1987. Total enrolment increased more than five-fold while gender imbalances reduced considerably over time in primary school enrolment. However, due to the fact that there was no fundamental change in the underlying socio-culture attitudes, values regarding gender roles, and the sexist curricula that were already in place, primary school enrolment of girls continued to lag behind that of boys; although

the gender gap started closing towards the end of the 1980s, reaching the peak of 49.3% female enrolment by 1992 (Economic Survey 1993).

To account for low girls enrolment and high attrition rates in primary schools, many studies have identified inter-alia, negative societal attitudes towards educated women, early marriages for girls, withdrawal of girls from school to help in family chores and mistrust of school discipline (Obura: 1991 Gachukia: 1993 and Nzomo: 1987). Thus, while the gender enrolment gap was closing at primary school level, it continued to be wide at the university level. For example, in the 1992-1993 academic year, the first year undergraduate enrolment in all public universities comprised of only 27.2 % females, and even that figure was an improvement on the previous academic years.

Although the national enrollment at primary school level was 95% by 1990 and the adult literacy rate had risen to 60%, these national statistics conceal significant disparities based on regional, economic and gender lines. For example, the Kenya Literacy Survey (1988) carried out in 30 rural districts in Kenya, revealed serious disparities by gender in the rate of illiteracy which stood at 38% for males and 62% for females (Gachukia, :1993). Kenya had set for itself the goal of attaining universal primary education and eradication of illiteracy by 50% by the year 2000. This is just few years away, and it seems unlikely this goal will have been achieved by then. The prevailing economic situation, and especially SAP which have introduced educational cost sharing, are forcing poor parents to revert to the system of choosing which children to send to school, with the predictable outcome in favour of boys.

For the female gender therefore, it does not seem likely that they will be able to fully participate equally with men in educational advancement, until certain fundamental obstacles are eliminated which include: low social status, low valuation attached to their education, heavy workload and multiple responsibilities.

8.6. BASIC POLITICAL FACTS

Kenya attained formal political independence on 12th December, 1963 and became a Republic in 1964. Kenya has since operated a presidential system of government with the president as the Chief Executive, who along with cabinet ministers appointed from among the elected or nominated Members of Parliament (MPs), form the executive arm of government. The other two arms of government are: the Judiciary and the Legislature. Constitutionally, there is

supposed to be a separation of powers between the three branches of government. But in practice, the Executive has tended to usurp the powers of the other two branches especially during the previous era of single party political system.

Kenya was a *de jure* multi-party state but a *de facto* one party state for the years 1963 - 1982. In mid 1982, the Kenyan constitution was changed by introducing a new section to the constitution - section 2A - which henceforth made Kenya a *de jure* one party state. Kenya African National Union (KANU) which is the party that has ruled Kenya since independence, quite early adopted the inherited capitalist ideology of development which is well presented in a government white paper which carried a rather misleading title: Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965 on African Socialism and Planning in Kenya. During the late President Jomo Kenyatta's rule, the guiding development philosophy was termed HARAMBEE ("Lets Pull Together") and during Moi's regime the philosophy was renamed NYAYO ("Footsteps" of late president Kenyatta), comprising of "Peace, Love and Unity". Kenya's development path and ideological leanings, even in foreign affairs have been consistent with the adopted ideology.

Administratively, Kenya has maintained the inherited colonial machinery of governance through the provincial and local government authorities, whose powers often supersede those of elected Members of Parliament (MPs). The internal Security, the police, paramilitary police and the armed forces are directly answerable to the chief executive - the president - and hence cannot easily be controlled or regulated by the MPs. The security forces, especially the police, are feared rather than seen as people's protectors, due to their reputation of brutalizing and harassing ordinary citizens, especially women.

After many years of popular political struggles against single party dictatorships of both, the late president Kenyatta (1963-1978) and the current president Moi (1978-1991), the unpopular section 2A of the constitution was repealed in December 1992; thus paving the way for the first *de jure* and *de facto* multi-party political system. The first multi-party elections were held on 29th December, 1992, and were contested by eight political parties. KANU again "won" the elections and the majority of seats in parliament. Documentation provided by election observers clearly shows that the 1992 elections were heavily rigged in favour of KANU. Indeed, the numerous electoral malpractices led many election observers to conclude that the December 1992 Elections in Kenya were not free and fair (NEMU: 1993 and NCSW:1993).

For the first time in Kenya's post-colonial political history, 250 women contested the 1992 elections as candidates; about 200 for civic seats and up to 50 for parliamentary seats. Despite enormous obstacles faced by women candidates through the electoral process, 45 won civic seats and 6 women won parliamentary seats. This is the highest number of women ever in Kenya's parliament. In the previous sixth parliament, for example, there were only 2 women out of 200 members.

Kenya's elected members of parliament represent 188 constituencies (electoral districts) in the country. Another 12 MPs are nominated members - who are presidential appointees - giving a total of 200 MPs. In the current 7th parliament, all the nominated members are men, chosen from among the political loyalists of the ruling party-KANU, seven of whom had contested the 1992 elections and lost.

Although multi-party elections were held and Kenya has a multi-party representation in parliament, the Kenyan society has only moved one small step on the road to true democracy. Indeed, for all practical purposes, the Kenyan government still acts and behaves as if the country is still a single party state. The ruling party KANU has so far resisted demands for even the minimum political and constitutional reforms to allow for meaningful multi-party democracy to operate. The new opposition parties on the other hand, are still too weak and divided to pose any effective challenge to the ruling party. Parliament continues to be a talking shop, where no substantive legislations can be passed because of the hostility between the ruling party on the one hand, and the opposition on the other. And yet, neither of the two sides commands the necessary majority to change or amend the constitution. The ruling party has 113 seats and the opposition together controls 87 seats. It requires 130 votes to amend the constitution.

8.7. THE INSTITUTIONAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

Throughout the 1960s and early 1970s, the Kenyan government acted and behaved as if the gender question as a policy issue was of no relevance to Kenya. National Development plans and other major policy documents were completely oblivious of the critical role women of Kenya play in the national political economy. Despite the glaring discriminations against women and their marginalisation in terms of access to resources, opportunities and participation in the public decision making capacities, the government continued to vehemently

deny that such discrimination existed (Republic of Kenya, 1975).

During the ten years of the United Nations Women's Decade (1975-1985), the Kenya government adopted a Women in Development (WID) policy position, created and/or promoted national machineries to develop and coordinate programmes for women. This was in compliance with the 1975 UN resolution that demanded of all members states to make changes and introduce policies and programmes geared towards accelerated advancement of women, by creating specific national machineries to serve women and strengthening existing organizations. A Women's Bureau was therefore created in 1976 as a department of the Ministry of Culture and Social Services, whose major role was to facilitate the formation of new women's groups and organisations and coordinate their activities.

Research done to evaluate the performance of both new and old women's organizations up to 1991, reveal that they had not succeeded in empowering women (Nzomo:1989 and 1992). Government interference in their activities, cooptation of top women group leaders, and the social welfare orientation of these organizations, conspired to make them toothless bulldogs. Gender based discriminations against Kenyan women in almost every aspect of life remained rampant throughout the women's decade and beyond. Discriminatory laws and socio-cultural practices remained in place and unchallenged, as already noted.

However, it would be wrong to cast Kenyan women as completely powerless and helpless victims of discriminatory laws and policies. At both the individual and collective levels, women of Kenya have been struggling against the structural and attitudinal obstacles placed by society in the way of their advancement. Thus, despite the failure to develop a cohesive and strong women's movement, women have stumbled along and managed to utilize the few political spaces and opportunities available to them to advance their status.

In general however, it can safely be stated that for the last 30 years of Kenya's post-colonial political history, the policy environment has largely been gender insensitive, in part because of lack of gender awareness but also because of the autocracy of the political system and the deep rooted patriarchal structures that characterize Kenyan society. Indeed, Kenyan political leaders still do not believe in affirmative action on the gender question or on any other issue. Rather, they believe in patronage and the politics of rewarding loyalists and strategically placed clients, punishing the perceived enemies of the status quo, and demanding full compliance from everybody else. The majority of women are

neither regarded as strategically placed nor are they perceived as direct threats to the regime.

8.8 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

At the international level, Kenya is a signatory to all the major instruments on human rights including : The Universal Declaration of Human Rights; The International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); The African Charter on Human and People's Rights; and the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies.

Notwithstanding this plethora of textual protection of human rights, there has been no accompanying move as spelt-out in these conventions to promote, implement or observe what Kenya had bound itself to do. No steps have been taken to incorporate these instruments into municipal law. Indeed, the Kenyan constitution presents a major bottleneck in the realization of women's human rights. Whereas the constitution dedicates a full chapter to the protection of fundamental human rights and freedoms of the individual, irrespective of race, tribe, place of origin, residence or other connection, political opinion, colour, creed or gender, the succeeding section (82) that provides against discrimination does not provide against discrimination on the basis of gender. The effect of this constitutional failure to explicitly outlaw discrimination on the basis of gender, means that differential treatment on grounds of gender is not considered to be discrimination in law. Furthermore, section (82) also contains other provisions that virtually eliminate the freedom from discrimination. These provisions are to the effect that the provisions protecting one against discrimination are not applicable in personal and customary law. For this reason, as already noted in the section on socio-cultural practices, customary laws, which are based on patriarchy and ideology of subordination of women to men, reign supreme.

There are other laws in the Kenyan constitution which also have the effect of discriminating against women. These include the 1975 Employment Act, the 1981 Succession Act and the Registered Land Act, amongst others. The Kenya constitution does not provide adequate provisions for Violence Against Women - which is rapidly becoming the most common form of violation of women's human rights. Firstly, the penal code does not treat violence against women separately except with reference to offenses such as rape, defilement and incest. Notably, the Kenyan penal code treats rape as a more serious offence, with life imprisonment as maximum sentence, than defilement and makes no provision for

battery. However in the past, rape offenders have generally received extremely lenient punishment, in part because the code does not provide for a specific minimum punishment sentence for rapists. Furthermore, the Matrimonial Causes Act which attempts to consolidate causes of action arising from marriage, makes no provision for rape within a marriage, nor does it criminalize or provide other alternative remedies to wife battery, widow inheritance and childhood marriages.

Reproductive rights of women is another most neglected aspect of the laws of Kenya. This area includes the issues of female circumcision, abortion, sterilization, contraception, maternity leave, rape, Aids and medical malpractices.

9.0 RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

As noted earlier, the data presented here is based on formal and informal interviews, questionnaire analysis, library research and official documentary data. The analysis is divided into several categories:

9.1. The Status of Women in Top Management in Kenya.
9.2. Major factors constraining women's advancement and performance in top management
9.3 Socio-cultural Factors and Corporate Culture
9.4 Education and Training.
9.5 Institutional and Policy Framework
9.6 Legal Framework
9.7 Women's Movement and Networking.

9.1. The Status Of Women In Top Management: A Survey

This study carried out a thorough investigation into the actual number of women in top management. The search revealed that, there are indeed very few women in Kenya who qualify to be termed as being the top of management in the organizations and institutions where they work. Indeed, this study was able to identify only 15 women who can be said to be at the top (or close enough) of management in their respective organizations (see Appendix 1). However, of the total 60 or so women who were interviewed or had their personal profiles compiled, at least 80% of them have served at various periods in one or several senior management capacities in different public institutions. The top

management position has somehow eluded most of them. A good example is that of Mary Owuor who is one of only 3 women police officers in Kenya who has thus far attained the rank of Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP), which is two ranks below the top position of Commissioner of Police. This is a woman with impeccable credentials, (see her profile in appendix 2) but somehow she seems to have reached the invisible glass-ceiling beyond which she may never be able to penetrate.

Comparatively speaking, the public sector was found to have more women at the top of management than the private sector. Thus, of the 15 top women identified in this study, only 6 are employed in the private sector. Most women in private sector management capacities were found clustered in middle management positions, mainly as Public Relations and Marketing Managers of various multinational firms based in Kenya. Significantly, we only found one women holding the position of Financial Controller Manager. The study found many women at the top of management in the private sector, but all of who are self employed entrepreneurs, who are running their own businesses. Due to that, as shown in **Table 1 below**, and unlike what is commonly assumed that most women are employed in the public sector, this study found out that the private sector competes well with the public sector as an employer of labour.

This then puts the public sector share of female labour force participation almost at par with that of the private sector. Women in both the government controlled public sector as well as the private sector are concentrated in low paying, low skilled stereotyped and labour intensive jobs. A casual examination of **Table 2** which shows wage employment by sector and sex, indicates that women are concentrated in the agricultural and services sector.

Table 1: Female Participation In The Labour Force: 1970 to 1989.

YEAR	Female Participation As % of Total			
	Private Sector	Public Sector	Self-Employment	Total**
1970	14.2%	14.5%	14.55	14.4%*
1975	14.7%	17.5%	16.8	16.3%
1983	17.2%	18.4%	29.4%	29.4%
1984	17.85	19.6%	30.8%	30.8%
1985	18.5%	20.7%	35%	35%
1986	18.3%	22.5%	38.6%	38.6%
1987	21.5%	22.1%	36%	36%
1988	22.6%	21.6%	37%	37%
1989	21.2%	20.9%	36.3%	36%

Source: Economic Surveys, Urban Labour force Survey, and Women's Bureau.: 1992

Table 3 Below clearly shows that by 1991 not only did women account for a mere 20% of the total employees in the public sector, they were also concentrated in the lower cadres (Job group A to G, which range from messengers, clerks, copy typists and secretaries). Starting from Job Group H, which is the typical university graduate entry point, the number of women begin to decline rapidly, so that at the top level of management (Job Group S and T), there are no women at all.

Table 2: Public Sector Wage Employment By Industry And Gender 1991 - 1992 ('000)

INDUSTRY	1985		1986		1987		1988		1989		1990	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Agriculture and Forestry	82.1	17.9	80.4	19.6	66.5	23.5	77.0	23.0	75.6	24.4	76.3	23.7
Mining and Quarrying	97.9	2.1	98.2	1.8	97.7	2.3.	82.9	17.1	82.4	17.1	81.4	18.6
Manufacturing			89.7	10.3	89.8	10.2	89.5	10.5	90.1	9.9	89.3	10.7
Electricity and Water	90.1	9.9	91.8	8.2	91.1	8.9	84.8	15.2	85.7	14.3	85.9	14.1
Building and Construction	92.1	7.9	94.4	5.6	94.5	5.5	94.0	6.0	94.1	5.9	94.3	5.7
Trade, Restaurants and Hotels	97.4	2.6	83.5	16.5	83.9	16.1	83.8	16.2	85.0	15.0	83.5	16.5
Transport and Communications			87.7	12.3	87.8	12.2	87.6	12.4	88.6	11.4	86.0	14.0
Finance, Insurance Real Estate	79.4	20.6										
and Business Services	84.9	15.9	80.0	20.0	78.4	21.6	78.7	21.3	79.4	20.6	78.4	21.6
Public Administration			79.6	20.4	79.7	20.3	79.0	21.0	78.4	21.6	78.7	21.3
Education Services			69.9	30.1	69.8	30.2	69.8	30.2	71.4	28.6	69.9	30.1
Domestic Services	76.6	23.4	71.1	28.9	71.1	28.9	71.7	28.3	72.1	27.9	71.9	28.1
Other Services	74.8	25.2	65.2	34.8	65.6	34.4	65.3	34.7	67.2	32.8	67.4	32.6
	67.5	32.5										
	71.6	28.4										
	61.4	38.6										
Total	77.5	22.5	79.6	20.4	78.8	21.2	78.7	21.3	79.1	20.9	78.7	21.3

Source: Population and Human Resource Development Planning in Kenya, MMDE, 1991

Table 3: Distribution of Employment by Job Group

Job Group	Cumulative			% Female
	Male	Female	Total	
A	41,477	12,060	53,537	22.3
B	9,235	2,815	12,050	23.4
C	18,257	6,004	24,261	24.6
D	24,885	10,547	35,342	29.6
E	15,122	3,318	8,440	18.0
F	62,470	14,296	76,266	18.4
G	18,247	4,575	22,844	20.1
H	9,931	2,344	12,275	19.1
I	5,460	823	5,283	15.6
J	5,032	916	5,948	15.4
K	2,748	472	3,220	14.7
L	1,203	163	1,356	12.0
M	603	47	650	7.2
N	280	15	295	5.1
O	140	6	140	4.1
P	78	5	83	6.0
Q	17	0	17	0.0
R	4	0	0	0.0
	215,191	58,336	273,527	

Source: Directorate of Personnel Management, 1991.

As a matter of fact, if one had to stick strictly to the gender distribution of employees by Job Group, one could easily conclude that there are no women at all at the top of management in the public sector in Kenya. Indeed following this logic, it could be argued that some of the women we have identified as top managers, such as the Lady Judges of the High Court, may be said to be slightly below top, as the real top brass in the judiciary are the Chief Justice and the Attorney General, both of whom have always been men. Be that as it may, it is abundantly clear from tables 1, 2 and 3 that women are marginalized in top management positions of the public sector. When one examines the various sub-sectors of the public sector, this reality becomes even more evident and glaring.

In the political arena, women's participation in decision making has always been minimal and has certainly never been at the top policy making (management) levels. During the first six years of Kenya's independence (1963-1969), there was no female representative in the national legislature. As Table 4 Below clearly indicates, it was not until November, 1969 that the first woman elected MP joined Kenya's National Assembly, along, with one other woman who was nominated MP. Between 1969-1974, of the total elected members of parliament, women formed 0.5 per cent and 8 per cent of the nominated members. Except for the period 1974-1979, when women's representation improved slightly, the general trend has been one of women's marginalisation in political decision making at the national level. In all the years shown in Table 4, men constituted over 96% of elected members. By 1991, out of 200 elected and nominated members of parliament, there were only two elected women MPs. Only one of them sat on the front bench, as an Assistant Minister for Culture and Social Services, along with 69 men Assistant Ministers. Since 1974, when the first women was appointed to the front bench, the position of Assistant Minister is the highest position a woman has ever held in Kenya's National Assembly. There has never been more than one woman holding this post at any one time. More significantly, the one women Assistant Minister has consistently been appointed to serve in the "soft" Ministry of Culture and Social Services. In connection with the ruling (KANU) party hierarchy, women had even more difficulty participating at the national executive level; except for the lone woman, who has since 1989, held the position of Director of Women and Youth Affairs at the ruling party secretariat. The rest of women members are mere rank-and-file members or officials of the powerless Women's Wings.

Table 4. NUMBER OF MEMBERS OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY BY GENDER AND YEAR OF ELECTION

YEAR OF ELECTION	ELECTED MEMBERS				NOMINATED MEMBERS			
	MALE		FEMALE		MALE		FEMALE	
	NO	%	NO	%	NO	%	NO	%
1969	154	99.4	1	0.7	11	91.7	1	8.3
1974	152	96.8	5	3.2	10	83.3	2	16.7
1979	155	98.1	3	1.9	11	91.7	1	18.2
1983	157	99.4	1	0.6	9	81.8	2	18.2
1988	186	98.9	2	1.1	10	100.0	0	0.0
1992	182	96.8	6	3.2	12	100.0	0	0.0

Source: Supervisor of Elections, Attorney General's Chamber

Women's participation in politics and decision-making at the local levels has over the last 30 years, remained very low, both quantitatively and qualitatively. To-date, there have only been two women who rose to the top management position in the local authority structure - the position of Mayor. And this was nearly 20 years ago.

Currently, despite the restoration of multi-party politics in December 1991, there is no woman Mayor for any of the numerous civic authorities in the country. However, the December 1992 multi-party general elections did result in the election of fifty women Councilors - the highest number ever in post-independent Kenya. Table 5 below shows that the current 50 women Councilors translate into 2.7% of the total Councilors elected in December 1992 elections, throughout the country.

Table 5: ELECTED COUNCILLORS BY GENDER, 1992.

AUTHORITY	NUMBER OF COUNCILS	MALES	FEMALES	TOTAL	% FEMALE
County Councils	45	1,005	24	1,028	2.3
Urban Councils	27	165	2	167	1.2
Municipal Councils	34	339	15	354	4.2
City Councils	1	51	4	55	7.3
Town Councils	31	228	5	231	2.2
Total	138	1,786	50	1,836	2.7

Source: Kenya Gazette, Nairobi, 18 February 1993 Volume XCU, No.13

In the security and armed forces sector, women have never risen to high levels of the military hierarchy, such as the position of commander of any of the three branches. Similarly, no woman has ever risen even to the level of Deputy Commissioner of Police. Three women thus far hold the position of an Assistant Commissioner of Police which is two ranks from the top. In the powerful **state run provincial administration**, most women in this sector occupy the relatively powerless position of Divisional Officer (D.O.), a position straddled between the powerful position of the local Chiefs and sub-chiefs who are invariably all men and the District Commissioners (D.C.s), and Provincial Commissioners (PCs) who have always been men. Indeed, in the entire civil service, women in senior decision-making capacities comprise only about 9% of the total to date.

In the **Judiciary**, as already noted, the highest decision making position a woman has ever held is the position of Judge of the High Court. The top management position in this institution is that of the Chief Justice. Furthermore, none of the women high court judges are members of the court of Appeal - the highest court in Kenya - despite there being some vacant positions. The four women high court judges were appointed between 1982 and 1992. As shown in **Table 6** below, women constituted less than 18% of total establishment in the judicial service during the period 1985-1989. At any event, the majority of

women in the judiciary were in Resident Magistrate, Acting Resident Magistrate and Professional District Magistrate II categories.

In the bureaucracy, the majority of women, as already shown in **Table 3**, do not hold top Management positions. Many senior women in government ministries and departments are in the middle management levels, as Senior Assistant Secretaries and under Secretaries. Very few have risen to the position of Deputy Permanent (Principal) Secretary and only two so far have risen to the position of Permanent Secretary, which is the top **administrative** post in any government ministry, in Kenya, although Ministers are the overall **political** heads of ministries. As already noted, in 1986, President Moi appointed seven women as top Managers of seven government controlled parastatal bodies. However, many of them have since been relieved of their duties for a variety of reasons, and have not been deployed elsewhere at the same or equivalent high positions.

In the education sector, we found that although many women are employed in this sector, they do not hold key decision-making positions, except in the junior educational institutions, mainly nursery to high schools, where it is common to find women heading the schools. The power and influence at this level, however, is limited to the day-to-day administration of school affairs but the more important management decisions are made by the schools board of governors whose head may not be the school head. Beyond high school, our search for women top managers was not successful. We found out, for example, that in all the public universities in Kenya, there was not a single woman who held what would be viewed as a top management post - that of the Vice-Chancellor. There are no women Deputy Vice-Chancellors, although each university has two positions for Deputy Vice-Chancellors. The highest management position held by only one woman is that of Principal of one of the constituent colleges of the university of Nairobi. A few women have at various times been appointed as Chairpersons of their teaching departments. But this position is hierarchically much lower than that of Deans or Principals of colleges. This absence of women in top management academic positions exists, despite many women now holding Doctors of Philosophy in various academic disciplines and some having teaching experiences of up to 20 - 25 years

In the health sector, women are concentrated in the nursing sector. Whereas the top management position of Chief Nursing Officer has always been held by a woman, the management of the broader medical institution (into which nursing falls) has never had any significant female representation. For example,

the position of the Chief Medical Officer of Health has never been occupied by a woman. And yet, the number of qualified women medical doctors has been increasing over the last 30 years, with some of them being highly qualified and experienced in their specific medical fields.

In both the electronic and the print media, which are so crucial for influencing public opinion and shaping peoples attitudes and values, we found that women were nearly absent or few in management capacities. Within the state owned television and Radio - The Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC)- there has never been a woman in a top management position. The majority of women are newscasters, or simply holding junior administrative positions as secretaries, typists, messengers and so on. In the print media the situation was not much better. As related to the three major dailies - **The Nation, Standard** and **Kenya Times**, only the **Standard** currently has a woman in a top management position. Ms. Esther Kamweru is the Managing Editor of the **Sunday Standard** - a position that has taken her very hard work to achieve and is challenging to manage (For more details, see her profile in the Appendices's section). In the most widely read national newspaper- **The Nation**, there is no single woman in a senior management position. Out of 31 management positions in the **Nation's Newspapers,** only one junior management position - of an Assistant News Editor - is held by a woman. Indeed, in the entire Kenya newspaper establishment, there are only 15 women out of a total labour force of 96 persons **(Daily nation December 24, 1993:4)**

Table: 6 JUDICIAL SERVICE ESTABLISHMENT BY GENDER 1985 AND 1989.

RANK	1985				1989			
	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	(%) FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	(%) FEMALE
Chief Justice	1	0	1	0.0	1	0	1	0.0
High Court Judges	28	1	29	6.7	36	2	38	5.3
Chief Magistrate	1	0	1	0.0	1	0	1	0.0
Senior Resident	13	1	14	7.1	19	2	21	9.5
Magistrate Resident	21	16	37	43.2	23	16	39	41.0
Magistrate	26	2	28	7.1	27	3	30	10.0
Acting Resident	23	11	34	32.4	34	25	59	42.4
Magistrate	19	0	19	0.0	19	0	19	0.0
District Magistrate II	40	0	40	0.0	48	0	48	0.0
District Magistrate I	16	1	17	5.9	21	3	24	12.5
District Magistrate II	9	0	9	0.0	9	0	9	0.0
District Magistrate III								
Kadhis (inci. Chief Kadhi)								
Total	197	33	230	14.3	238	51	289	17.6

Source: Judicial Service Commission

9.2 MAJOR FACTORS CONSTRAINING WOMEN'S ACCESS AND ADVANCEMENT TO TOP MANAGEMENT

In the section of this report, we have noted the paucity of women in top management in Kenya. In this section we seek to analyse the major barriers as identified above, that have constrained their participation in top management and high level decision-making positions.

9.2.1 SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS AND CORPORATION CULTURE

The most important constraint identified in almost all the literature and all the interviews conducted for this study, is the socio-cultural beliefs and myths, which inform the socialization process and the gendered education and training most men and women are exposed to from childhood. The sex stereotypes and gender segregation in employment and allocation of roles in private and public life are primarily a product of the early socialization process and the indoctrination of the societal environment. Thus for example, women's hang-ups and lack of confidence in their ability to competently execute public leadership roles, arise from this socialization for subordination. As noted in an earlier section, socio-culturally the most dominant gender ideology is patriarchy, on the basis of which social relations in general and gender relations in particular are structured and practiced.

Indeed all the women I talked to in preparing this study unanimously agreed that the socio-cultural factor in its various forms, is the most stubborn barrier to women's advancement to top management and public life in general. Among the major obstacles cited as barriers to women's advancement to top management position included:- (1) negative retrogressive parental attitudes and actions toward their female children which largely reflects on the parent's own socialization and (ii) negative attitudes by employers who refrain from hiring women, let alone promoting them to positions of influence in a managerial capacity, or other high status jobs. Most of the public and private sector employers this author talked to, denied any discriminative policies or practices in their institution.

But information gathered from interviews with the target women showed that, in general, for women to be promoted, they have to prove themselves well beyond the normal standards before they can be considered. For example, an examination of the sample of profiles of senior women managers presented as appendices to this report has clearly shown that every one of these women had

to be best to attain her current position, and the struggle against socio-cultural barriers remains a permanent feature of her professional life. The profile of Mrs. Mary Owuor is a good case in point. The combination of the myths and beliefs associated with customary and religious faith can also act as a major block to a women's advancement. In this connection, the Islamic faith, as depicted in this study through the profile of mrs. Fatuma Jeneby, illustrated this point.

At the economic level, customary practices that trample on women's economic rights, whether in regard to access to credit facilities and loans or decision-making and ownership of domestic and other properties, was cited as a major constraint to women's economic advancement. This was related to the customary belief that men are by tradition and by nature, the heads of their authority; and that anything which challenges this arrangement is not correct and should therefore be thwarted. This patriarchal ideology of male control and exercise of power and authority over women in the private economic domain, is reproduced in public management. Indeed **14** of the **15** women to whom the appended Questionnaire was administered, answered in the affirmative the question: "Do men in management fear sharing power with women?" In a sense, the respondents were referring to the close interplay between socio-cultural beliefs and the male dominated corporate culture.

Another aspect of the socio-cultural constraint to women's participation in high level decision-making takes the form of multiple roles. African socio-cultural traditions tend to assume that women's public roles are secondary and are just an additional activity to their "primary" (domestic) roles. (Stitcher and Parpart, 1990; A. Imam, et al 1985; Boserup.,1970 and B.J. Dorsey et al, 1989). Even where support services exist, they do not alter existing unequal gender division of labour. In other words, socio-cultural attitudes die hard. In this case, given the existing gender division of labour, there are no easy solutions for a woman who wants to succeed in her career:

> Most working women must juggle marriage and career, and the supportive husband who facilitates his wife's job advancement is a rarity. Many women are discouraged from even trying" *(Keller,1989:18-23).*

The most significant finding from the Kenya case study on this issue of multiple roles is that the majority of women at the top seem to have accepted the unequal gender division of labour. All the 15 women interviewed through

questionnaires, took it as given that they must combine domestic and professional roles. For them, therefore, the successful women top manager is one who has mastered the art of "Juggling" (called by some "setting priorities and balancing roles"). Only one woman mentioned the role of a supportive spouse, as a way out of this barrier. This type of coping mechanism has led many women, to neglect involvement in political affairs and the women's movement. The author's observation has been that, because of the multiple roles Kenyan women play, the majority of those who participate in politics or gender activism are either single women (without husband care) or married but with grown up children.

For the majority of Kenyan women, the drudgery and time consuming nature of survival, makes participation in high profile public life unrealistic. According to a woman MP, Phoebo Asiyo;

> Kenyan women spend nine million hours collectively everyday in search of water alone. Just imagine what good they could do to this country if they were freed from the task by having safer water closer to home. (**Society** August 30, 1993:25):

Social-cultural factors clearly play a particularly crucial role in excluding women from participating in political decision-making capacities. Duverger summarises this constraint appropriately:

> If the majority of women are little attracted to political careers, it is because everything tends to turn them away from them, if they allow politics to remain essentially a man's business, it is because everything is conducive to this belief:-tradition, family life, education, religion and literature --- The small part played by women in politics merely reflects and results from the secondary place to which they are assigned by the customs and attitudes of our society and which their education and training tend to make them accept as the natural order of things. (**Duverger**: 1975:129 and 130).

In Kenya, as already noted the arena of political decision-making is the one sector where women's complete absence in top management is most glaring. In this regard, one is inclined to agree with a Kenyan scholar who has repeatedly pointed out that "Kenya has an extremely backward political culture" (Muigai: 1993:32). In my view, this political backwardness is especially manifest in gender relations, where patriarchal political dominance is very strong in Kenya. The evidence is clear. For nearly 31 years of post-colonial rule, there has never been a single women who has held a full cabinet position in the Kenyan government. Except for the current seventh parliament which has 6 women MPs, previous

parliaments had an average of 2 women representatives out of 200 MPs, and the highest position a woman has ever held in that legislative body is an assistant minister of culture and social services - and currently public works.

The experience of the 1992 general elections in Kenya showed that many of the women candidates who did not win the elections were victims of a male dominated political party machine, and retrogressive socio-cultural attitudes, that combined to treat women as second class candidates who could easily be sacrificed in favour of male candidates (Nzomo and Kibwana eds. 1993 (b) 97-116). At best, women were expected to be highly courageous and self-confident and to prove to be better than men in order to gain even a small measure of acceptability (see the profiles of Phoebe Asiyo, Rose Waruhiu, Fatuma Jeneby and Agnes Ndetei in the Appendices Section). At worst, women candidates and their supporters were intimidated, harassed, subjected to extremely humiliating forms of abuse, and in some cases, even raped. Summarizing an assessment of the outcome of the Kenyan electoral political contest of December 1992, this writer noted inter-alia that:

> The bottom line therefore is that the present (male) political leadership (in Kenya) inspite of its populist rhetoric, wants to keep women out of the political arena, as it is not prepared to share power with women (Nzomo 1993:(a))

This author has also noted in an earlier study (Nzomo: 1987) that in addition to male hostility and unwillingness to share power with women, the female socialization process does not generally prepare them for "cut-throat" politics, and leadership generally, as Prof. Wangari Maathai so eloquently explained in an interview (see her personal profile in the appendices section of this report). One other constraint noted was that women candidates are unlikely to be wealthy in their own right, given the patriarchal property ownership and employment hindrances. Consequently, women may be unable to display the same kind and levels of aggressiveness and patronage as fellow male candidates (Nzomo 1987:123).

Despite the socio-cultural constraints identified above, some women have already begun to adopt liberative strategies out of this quagmire. For example, one of the observations made in the course of this study was that of the increasing phenomena of single motherhood, as a strategy for women who find marriage an obstacle to the advancement of their careers. A Kenyan woman, who is a company executive, explained in an interview that she had reached an age where she was ready for a child but she did not want to be encumbered with marriage:

"I wanted to get ahead with my career and men are sometimes very intolerant when it comes to ambitious women." **(Sunday Nation, 1993).**

9.2.2 EDUCATION AND TRAINING

In addition to the attitudinal dimensions arising from socio-cultural engineering, lack of access to adequate **quality** and **quantity** of formal education in itself acts as a major barrier to a woman's advancement in public life. Research has shown that the more education a woman has, the more likely she is to be employed (**Smock**: 1977). Moreover, women's occupational advancement is more closely linked to their educational attainment than it is for men. Men use their educational credentials for entry into jobs and then rely on job-related experience for advancement. For women however, formal credentials remain critical throughout their working lives (**Freeman**: 1984:238)).

For Kenya, as for other African countries, a major problem for women seems to be that many of them do not attain adequate **quantity** and **quality** of education to compete effectively for job opportunities with men. A combination of high drop-out rates (mainly due to pregnancies), parental attitudes and sexist curricula that encourage female students towards domestic oriented art subjects instead of science and technical based subjects, marginalises women out of an increasingly technical job market. The root of the problem lies in part with the colonially inherited structure of education which contains institutionalized structural bias in the formal educational system, which ensures that the amount and type of education made accessible to the majority of women is inappropriate and/or inadequate for participating or occupying hegemonic positions in public life. The gender stereotyped structure of education in Kenya, to some extent, explains the paucity of women in senior public and private sector management and their virtual absence in some top decision making positions.

In Kenya over the last 30 years, there has undoubtedly been some progressive changes in the field of education, in respect to the quantity and quality of education and training female children have access to. First, the gender gap in the number of children enrolling at primary school level had almost closed by 1992, as apparent from **Table 7** below. Second, the new 8-4-8 curriculum introduced in the last 1980s, also has the advantage of removing gender discrimination in the subjects taught, although not sexism in the actual content of the curricula and school textbooks (Obura: 1985). The above notwithstanding, there has consistently been higher attrition rates for girls than

boys (due to inter-alia; pregnancies, early marriages, parental financial constraints etc), with the result that gender disparities become quite apparent by the time of entry into secondary school. Fewer females than males therefore make it to high school as **Table 8** on Secondary School Enrollment by form and gender shows. In 1992 females formed 42.9% of total enrollment into secondary school. This was lower by 6.4 percentage points as compared with that of primary school. At the University level, the percentage of women in relation to men drops dramatically. Thus for example in 1992-1993 academic year, the female first year enrollment in all the four public universities in Kenya was only 27.2%. The majority of the women that enrolled at university continue to specialize in the traditional non-technical subjects (see **Table 8**). The few women in senior and top management positions in Kenya all have attained high level education. This in itself demonstrates the importance of such education for women's career advancement.

Table: 7 PRIMARY SCHOOL ENROLMENT BY STANDARD, 1989 - 1992

CLASS	1989		1990		1991		1992*	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Standard 1 " "	482.2	457.3	484.6	457.2	476.2	447.8	479.6	453.1
Standard 2 " "	424.1	397.3	411.4	389.4	409.3	384.9	423.8	399.4
Standard 3 " "	385.3	363.6	382.6	364.2	390.9	369.3	393.0	374.0
Standard 4 " "	351.3	334.0	358.4	344.1	360.9	353.6	376.4	366.8
Standard 5 " "	312.9	305.5	313.5	305.1	322.5	317.8	330.0	329.4
Standard 6 " "	290.6	285.8	292.1	286.5	302.6	302.2	299.1	299.2
Standard 7 " "	295.5	289.4	313.3	305.4	327.4	309.7	309.9	302.7
Standard 8 " "	224.1	190.5	210.4	174.1	207.3	173.7	195.0	198.8
Total "	2,766.0	2,623.3	2,766.3	2,626.0	2,787.1	2,659.0	2,806.8	2,723.4
GRAND TOTAL	5,389.3		5,392.2		5,456.1		5,530.2	

*Provisional.

Source: Republic of Kenya: Economic Survey. 1993 - 185

FROM	1988		1989		1990		1991		1992	
	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE
FORM 1	99,822	73,783	97,725	69,023	96,079	74,992	95,511	76,126	93,729	65,069
FORM 2	92,166	67,245	93,866	65,109	91,482	69,615	89,181	70,651	93,476	78,519
FORM 3	91,491	63,833	85,471	58,955	83,334	60,172	82,749	64,139	86,260	67,471
FORM 4	"	"	84,655	54,346	82,800	59,987	78,347	57,457	81,616	55,305
FORM 5	17,705	9,305	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
FORM 6	16,817	6,325	21,416	10,167	"	"	"	"	"	"
TOTAL	318,001	222,191	383,135	257,600	353,695	264,766	345,788	268,373	355,079	266,364
GRAND TOTAL		540,192		640,735		618,461		614,161		621,443

Source: Republic of Kenya: Economic Survey 1993:186

Table: 9 **FIRST YEAR UNDER GRADUATE ENROLMENT IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES, 1992/92-1992/93**

COURSE	1991/92			1992/93*		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Agriculture	635	179	814	248	110	358**
Agriculture	60	6	66	50	5	55
Arts	1,467	426	1,893	1,440	584	2,024
B.Ed. (Arts)	1,932	723	2,655	1,913	851	2,764
B.Ed.	3	106	109	1	98	99
(Home Economic)	390	22	412	380	33	413
Engineering ******	120	25	145	129	19	148
Medecine						
Total	4,607	1,487	6,094	4,616	1,700	5,861

*** Includes Civil, Mechanical, Electrical; Agricultural and building Construction.

Source: Republic of Kenya: Economic Survey 1993-1987

The study found out that 13 out of 15 women to whom questionnaires were administered, had attained first degrees from reputable universities. Six of them held PhD degrees in various academic disciplines. Two of them without university degrees, had pursued further professional training after finishing high schools and had been awarded diplomas in their areas of professionalism. Indeed, the majority of the 60 or so women interviewed (formally and informally) for this study, had at least a first university degree and a number of them, especially the university professors, also held PhD degrees in their respective academic fields.

All the women interviewed ranked the educational factor second in importance after the socio-cultural factor, as a major determinant of women's professional advancement and a major explanation for women's low representation in key decision-making positions.

9.2.3 INSTITUTIONAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

As explained in the introductory background on this subject, the Kenyan government has never demonstrated anything beyond lip service to the gender question. Like all other issues that the government does not view as being of strategic importance to the survival of the political regime, the gender question and in particular women, has been historically recognized, patronized. manipulated and wooed, as befits political expedience at any given period.

This lack of interest in the gender question is demonstrated at the institutional, and policy framework levels as well as at the level of praxis. At the institutional level, the **Women's Bureau**, which is the government's national machinery for coordinating and dispensing supportive services and resources to all women's organizations in the country, is a small department in one of the least important (and highly under-funded) government ministries - Ministry of Culture and Social Services, which also caters for matters of youth, sports and cultural affairs. Apart from the low status of its location, the Bureau is also highly underfunded and its activities tightly controlled by government, making it impossible for it to serve as a vehicle for women's empowerment.

A further demonstration of government's lack of interest in the women question can be observed in its financial allocation to women's programmes as a percentage of total expenditure on national development. This allocation has always been a token sum. For instance, between 1978 and 1982, the government allocated to women programmes the equivalent of 0.1% of total government expenditure for that period. Government grants to women's groups dropped significantly from 3.3 million Kenyan shillings in 1986, to 2.6 million in 1987 (Nzomo: 1989:15 and Economic Survey. 1988:155). By 1991, the token government contribution further dropped to about half a million (Ksh.522,000) Kenyan shillings and then dropped drastically by about 60.5%, to less than a quarter million (Kshs.206,000) Kenyan shillings by 1992. The number of assisted groups also fell by 43.3% (Economic Survey 1992:194). The government has never demonstrated active interest in women group activities except on occasions

when women were deemed to be out of line by involving themselves in matters deemed political (Nzomo:1987:124) or on occasions when government support was politically expedient; for example, during the July 1985 World Conference to close the UN Decade for women whose venue was Nairobi, and during the 1992 General Elections year.

There have been repeated calls over the years for a comprehensive and systematic Gender and Development (GAD) policy. So far, the government has resisted the development of such a GAD blue print and has only partially responded to the demands for mainstreaming gender concerns in the current Five Year National Development Plan for 1994-1999. This limited response has come as a result of consistent pressure and lobbying of women's groups and organizations, especially since the return of pluralism in the country in December 1991.

Our survey of the curricula, research activities and attitudes towards gender studies at the then four public universities in the country, revealed that : (i) Gender as an academic discipline has not yet been institutionalized into the university's teaching and research programs. In this regard, we found that, for example, at the university of Nairobi, which is the oldest and largest of the public universities, only the Institute of African Studies (I.A.S.), and to a smaller extent the Department of Sociology, had a few courses on gender in its teaching syllabus. The two women teaching the two courses on gender at I.A.S. complained of how they have to keep defending and justifying to their male colleagues the need to retain these gender courses. Needless to say, there is no Gender or Women Studies Programme at the University of Nairobi. The writer's attempts to introduce gender related courses in both the Department of Government and currently the Institute of Diplomacy and International Studies, has in the past been received with much hostility and resistance by the University management. The general hostility within the academic institutional environment to gender studies, is also reflected in the condescending attitude with which gender research is viewed by the male dominated university management, when it comes to academic promotions. In this regard, several academic women, whose C.V.s contain too many gender based research publications, have been passed-over in promotions. The argument being used is that gender research is merely a hobby women engage in and cannot therefore be treated as serious scientific research work. Only Egerton University has allowed a Women Studies Centre to exist. This Centre is still at an incipient stage, having been set up only about one year ago.

In respect to the praxis, the most notable fact is lack of government affirmative action (positive discrimination), in favour of women in recognition of the historical disadvantaged position of women in relation to men, in terms of access, and opportunities necessary for effective and equitable participation and exercise of rights and responsibilities in public life. The best the government has done thus far is the appointment of about 10 women between 1986-1987 to key public decision-making positions. Many welcomed the appointments, but in my view, these were not affirmative action appointments; they were part and parcel of the political culture of Kenya discussed earlier; of rewarding friends and punishing perceived political enemies. In this case, the women of Kenya had done the country proud by successfully hosting the 1985 Women's Decade Conference. They, therefore, deserved a little reward which came in the form of the 1986 appointments. Furthermore, corruption in government owned parastatals was at the time getting out of control and some corporations were running bankrupt. It was therefore an opportune time to bring in women to "sweep clean" (same way women clean their homes) the mess of corruption. So corrupt men were replaced with "professional cleaners". After several years of cleaning, some of these women have already been relieved of their jobs.

On the other hand, there are many instances one could give to demonstrate that the Kenyan government has not in any significant way extended affirmative action to women in public life. The very fact there are now many highly qualified and competent women serving in junior positions in both the public and the private sector is in itself a manifestation of this fact. A classic example where affirmative action was necessary but was denied is the 1993 presidential appointments for the twelve nominated positions in parliament. Although the KANU manifesto clearly stated that most of the nominated positions in parliament would be allocated to women, when KANU won the elections, not even one token woman was appointed to the nominated seats. Apparently in the view of the President, women had already served their purpose-voting -and hence could easily be dispensed with until the next general elections.

Another significant example is that of the 1993 Presidential awards and commendations. In awarding medals of honour, the government displayed tokenism rather than recognition or affirmative action towards women. "If only we could find a few honorable women"- this is the message the President of Kenya seemed to be conveying in his 1993 awards in commemoration of the country's Independence Day. The president conferred awards and honours to

those he believed as deserving to be commended for having distinguished themselves in service and leadership in public life. The awards given were of several categories and are ranked in **Table 10** below according to their order of importance.

9.2.4 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

In theory, the majority of African countries provide for equality between women and men, but in some countries, such as Kenya, their constitutions do not outlaw discrimination on the basis of gender. Furthermore, in some cases, even when the law provides for desirable benefits for women and girls, the traditional attitudes and social-cultural practices continue to deny them their basic human rights. The simultaneous existence and application of customary, religious and statutory laws leads to confusion, especially within the framework of family law:-marriage, divorce and separation, custody and maintenance of children and so on. This has resulted, in the case of Kenya, in a situation where these different legal systems are habitually manipulated with the effect of discriminating against and creating barriers to women's advancement in the professions.

Some of the existing laws that clearly discriminate against women in the area of employment and act as a hindrance to their career advancement, are contained in Kenya, in the now outdated **Employment Act** (1975), which until 1992, denied married women housing allowance on the assumption that married women are dependents and are housed by their husbands. The Act also restricts the majority of women from working at night and as construction workers and other jobs considered "dangerous" for them.

Table: 10 THE GENDER DISTRIBUTION OF RECIPIENTS PRESIDENTIAL AWARDS IN 1993

	AWARD	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
1.	2nd Class Elder of Order of the Golden Heart	10	0	10
2.	3rd Class Moran of the Order of the Golden Heart	5	0	5
3.	Fist Class Order of the Burning Spear	10	1	11
4.	2nd Class Order of the Burning Spear	34	0	34
5.	3rd Class Moran of the Order of the Burning Spear	42	1	43
6.	Distinguished Service Medal	49	0	49
7.	Order of the Grand Warrior of Kenya	98	3	101
8.	Silver Star of Kenya	78	5	83
9.	Head of State Commendation	73	5	78
	Total	399	15	414

Source: Compiled by author from Daily Nation; December 15,1993

There is also the **Vagrancy Act** which restricts the movement of women at night and is frequently used to harass innocent women. Although such women may be moving to or from a night job, it is often assumed that they are loitering for the purpose of prostitution.

The paucity of women legislators in Kenya and elsewhere in Africa, can in part be attributed to the fact the Kenyan legislative framework has no provision for affirmative action or proportional representation in decision-making positions.

Such provision would take into account the rights of disadvantaged groups and minorities to adequate representation, as a short term stop gap measure, until the historical disadvantage has been corrected.

As shown in the earlier background section on the Legal Framework, the fundamental source of discrimination against women in Kenya arises from section 82 of the Kenyan constitution which by failing to outlaw discrimination on the basis of sex, in a sense legitimizes the discriminations contained in other sections of the Kenyan constitution. Furthermore, this omission has the effect of according legitimacy to the existing political and social customs and practices that discriminate against women.

The above notwithstanding, we also found from the interviews and the perusal of legal documents, that it was very difficult to discern any blatant flouting of labour laws by employers which could be construed or viewed as discrimination on the basis of gender. However many of the women we talked to, especially those stagnated in junior and middle management positions, complained of being discriminated against and of being passed-over on promotions, often as a form of punishment, for inter-alia, taking maternity leave, which is sometimes without pay or even taking time off to attend to sick children.

In the final analysis however, even the most gender sensitive legal framework may not advance the status of women in Kenya, until the retrogressive socio-cultural attitudes and values are eradicated. Indeed, research has shown that both employer preferences and prejudices as well as female socialization, which orient them towards certain jobs have contributed more than the legal structures, to the sex stereotyping of jobs and the slow advancement of women in the public sector. One study on women in Kenya labour market argues in this respect that:

> In their pre-employment behaviour, that is, in their training and job-application tendencies, as well as in their on-the-job performance, women betrayed their socialization into low-skilled, low-status and low-paying jobs. Job sex discrimination was therefore, deeply embedded in the cultural and social processes, and was not merely an employer aberration which could be easily rectified with the introduction of an appropriate legal regime. (Zeleza:88)

The study thus concludes that, while existing discriminatory laws serve as an important obstacle to women's advancement in the public sector, it has often been the case that, even in cases where discriminatory laws had been amended,

socio-cultural practices continue to undermine women's advancement:

> Although many existing laws that discriminated against women in employment were gradually amended, discrimination against women in the labour market continued, for the latter was not isolated from the cultural practices and social processes that not only made sexual inequality normative but also reproduced it on a daily basis and in all walks of life. This is to suggest that, while changes in the legal regime are important in removing discrimination against women, transformation of cultural values, processes of socialization and modes of economic production are even more fundamental. (Zeleza:88)

9.2.5 WOMEN'S MOVEMENT AND NETWORKKING

In most of the literature on feminism and women's empowerment, one of the observations often made is that women's exclusion from male dominated professional networks and information channels acts as a major barrier to their career advancement. One of the main strategies that has been suggested to overcome this barrier is the need for women to establish their own network in sharing and gathering of information and in strengthening their organizations. The latter should serve as training fora and recruitment organs for capable women who can participate in high level decision-making. The argument being that, unless there is a minimum "critical mass" of women in high level decision-making positions, women will not succeed in making fundamental change on matters of gender equity (**Nzomo**:1991). To that extent then, the necessity of a strong women's movement cannot be overemphasized. Women need to act as "watch dogs" of society to monitor implementation of gender equity policies. Complete reliance on the good-will of policy makers and employers, many of whom are men, may bring some reforms but not fundamental changes. Women need to support and work for each other to overcome systematic discriminations.

In Kenya, perhaps because of the existence of an autocratic and gender insensitive political system, the women's movement had remained extremely weak and fragile throughout the 28 years of independence prior to return to multi-partyism in December 1991. Prior to that date, despite their having numerous women's groups numbering 23,000 by 1988, Kenya women lacked an empowering cohesive women's movement. What they had were small socio-

welfare groups divided in their goals and objectives and highly vulnerable to government interference, especially the cooptation of top women group leaders. One of the largest national women's organization - **Maendeleo ya Wanawake** went as far as consummating a political marriage with the ruling party KANU-thus jeopardizing its non-governmental status and autonomy.

No significant networking existed and no joint action for gender sensitive changes. Indeed, one of the major manifestations of the Structural weakness of the Kenya women's movement has been its complete failure to challenge and seek the eradication of the numerous gender based discriminations against women in almost every aspect of life on such matters as: inheritance, marriage and divorce, custody and maintenance of children, employment terms and conditions of service, violence against women and so on. However, since the return to multi-partyism in Kenya, the women's movement has undergone some positive changes. Women are now appreciating the need for a united approach in lobbying the government for changes in discriminatory laws and practices. They have also began to formulate long term strategies for strengthening the women's movement and their empowerment in general. In particular, women demonstrated a rare sense of unity of purpose through two national women's conventions and during the 1992 general elections, as they engaged in political activism aimed at women's political empowerment. The six women who won parliamentary seats in the current 7th Parliament and the 50 women councillors in local authorities, are largely a result of that united effort of 1992.

The mobilization of women from the grassroots to the national level and the close unity of purpose and solidarity that overcome class, ethnic and racial barriers during 1992, strongly suggests that a women's movement is finally taking root in Kenya. Indeed, many in the Kenya women's movement are no longer afraid to say that they are seeking equality with men and that they are rejecting the second class citizen status accorded to them by a gender oppressive society. Some efforts in this regard have been made to address issues relating to the legal status of women, education, health, access and control of resources, as well as decision-making roles.

However, the activities of many women's organizations still remain at welfare levels and hence do not adequately address the basic causes of women's oppression. Many of them still shy away from addressing women's rights, for example, in relation to reproductive health, personal lives, and even life within the family. Hence issues of abortion, male responsibility in family planning, gender division of labour in the household and so on are avoided. It is as if many women are not yet ready to accept that the **personal is also**

political. These ambivalence and contradictions between the personal/private and the public was commonly observed among the women interviewed for this study. As noted earlier, the women interviewed seemed unwilling to question the patriarchal ideology that assigns all reproductive roles to women. They were more anxious to discuss ways of coping with these assigned roles.

Networking is the weakest link in the women's movement in Kenya. Women in top management positions are generally still removed from the larger women's network and movement and have not yet developed their own network. Some of these women top managers find more affinity with fellow male top managers than with other women. Consequently, they have completely internalized the dominant male corporate culture, as all their professional interactions take place in the context of that culture. Indeed some top women managers have become more committed defenders than men of the status quo that oppresses fellow women. A good case in point can be derived from remarks made by the first woman Permanent Secretary (PS) in Kenya - Mrs. Margaret Githinji, who is the PS in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. Officially opening a Kenya women's national seminar on "Post-Election Women's Agenda: Forward Looking Strategies" Mrs. Githinji stated inter-alia:

> It is rather sad that much of the progress made by the government to integrate Women in our public life goes unreported. We in Kenya are proud of many achievements in all spheres of life-- we were the first in electing a woman Mayor to run the affairs of the City of Nairobi. *This was before the rather loud campaign for feminist rights*. This was not a token gesture but a commitment to uplift the status of women in public life-- A lot of us would like to seriously and loudly appreciate what the KANU government has done to improve the welfare of women in Kenya. **(Nzomo**: 1993 (a) :85 **Emphasis Added).**

10.0 STRATEGIES FOR WOMEN'S ADVANCEMENT IN TOP MANAGEMENT: SOME RECOMMENDATIONS

There are many barriers women in Kenya will have to overcome before they can become a critical mass in top management. This study has clearly shown that reliance on government action, its benevolence and good faith, may

not prove very useful in attaining women's empowerment. Women must therefore first and foremost find autonomous channels of empowering themselves which are independent of government. It is only if women have attained a certain amount of self-empowerment that they can be in a position to negotiate with government and society and influence changes at the legislative and policy levels. Kenyan women may, for example, need to take the initiative in transforming socio-cultural attitudes and values that obstruct their advancement.

There is need for women to empower themselves and each other not only with functional literacy but quality education that is geared towards capacity and skills, building for leadership and management roles. Hence, the recommendations made below regarding action that should be taken by government are made with the understanding that the women, as individuals, groups and organisations, with the support of other human rights groups in the civil society, would lobby and put pressure on the government to take the necessary action. The following then are some of the strategies/actions that need to be taken to advance women's status in management:

10.1. Given the influence and power of social-cultural attitudes and customary practices in perpetuating negative aspects of gender power relations and acting as a major barrier to African women's advancement, the Kenya government and non-governmental organizations should adopt deliberate measures aimed at eliminating negative attitudes and social practices. Gender sensitization and awareness raising programmes should be set up, and included in all school curricula. Key non-governmental organizations such as the media, religious organizations, and women's organizations, should play an active role in public training and nation-wide dissemination of relevant gender information. Towards this end, comprehensive civic, gender and legal education programmes should be undertaken by government and civil society organizations to change retrogressive societal attitudes and values towards women and sensitize women on their rights.

10.2. Women's organizations should play a leading role in creating public awareness of gender issues and the merits of gender equity as well as push for changes in discriminatory laws and practices that obstruct women's advancement. Women's organizations should especially endeavour to participate in imparting education and knowledge that is empowering, and that can build women's capacity for public life and leadership roles.

10.3. Recognising that the Kenyan women's movement is still weak, there is need as a matter of strategy, to strengthen the movement in order to effectively serve as a viable lobbying forum for gender based issues. There is urgent need

to strengthen networks and the building of consensus between women of different social, economic, professional, political and social backgrounds. The women in top management need to be sensitized and to be encouraged to participate in the women's movement.

10.4. The Kenya government should comprehensively review the constitution with the objective of explicitly outlawing all forms of discrimination on the basis of gender. Government should also review all the country's laws and the implementing machineries, with the view of making them gender sensitive in statement, intention and practice. In particular, government should adopt political, legislative and development policies aimed at eliminating all gender disparity and discrimination in all sectors and levels.

10.5. Given the prevailing conflict, confusion and manipulation occasioned by the simultaneous existence of customary, religious and statutory laws, government should review all overlapping laws, with the view of harmonization of such laws, but especially those that affect the status of women.

10.6 Recognising the existing gender disparities in public and private sector employment, government and private sector employers should exercise affirmative action, by instituting measures to deliberately promote and increase the number of women in the sector, especially in executive, managerial and other key decision-making levels.

10.7 Given the historic disadvantage in the educational situation of women and girls in scientific and technical fields, the Kenya government should review the 8-4-4 educational programme already in place, with a view of removing gender stereotypes in school textbooks , curricula, and so on in order to increase the participation and performance of females in these subjects. This would in turn enhance their employability and upward mobility to top management positions in the public sector.

10.8 Public and private sector employers should utilize and promote measures for guaranteeing equity and fairness in accessing top women employment opportunities, including the adoption of quotas as appropriate. In addition, employers should regularly review the terms of service for women in the public and private sectors to ensure that women enjoy equal rights with men in employment including promotions, equal pay for equal work, maternity leave with pay, housing and medical allowances.

10.9 Given the heavy responsibilities and workload accompanying the multiple roles of women in their reproductive and productive roles, support systems should

be promoted by employers and civil society organizations for female workers, by encouraging the increased establishment of day-care centres, maternal and child health services conveniently placed and operated. Part time employment and flexible working hours should be encouraged, to provide additional support for these multiple roles.

10.10 Given the inadequacy of gender disaggregated data on women's status in Kenya academic and training institutions should support and create adequate facilities; as well as support comprehensive research and data collection to ensure the disaggregation by gender of all development data. Such support should include the setting up of gender Studies Programmes at each of the public Universities in the country, as well as positive recognition and support of those scholars engaged in gender based research.

10.11 Recognising the family related constraints facing women wishing to pursue higher education and professional training, there is need for gender sensitization programmes targeted specifically at the household level, with a view to developing supportive family structures that would encourage women to participate in high level education and professional training necessary for top management.

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11. APPENDICES

: Appendix I: List of Kenyan Women in Senior Decision-making Positions.

: Appendix II: Selected Profiles of Women in Senior Decision-making positions.

: Appendix III: Questionnaire.

APPENDIX I

A. KENYAN WOMEN HOLDING KEY PUBLIC DECISION-MAKING POSITIONS

	NAME	PROFESSION & ORGANIZATION
*1.	MS. MARGARET KENYATTA	1ST WOMAN MAYOR - CITY OF NAIROBI AND CURRENTLY ONLY WOMAN MEMBER OF KENYA'S ELECTORAL COMMISSION
*2.	JULIA OJIAMBO	DIRECTOR, YOUTH AND WOMEN AFFAIRS, KANU SECRETARIAT
*3.	DR. EDDAH GACHUKIA	FORMERLY SENIOR LECTURER, UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI AND CHAIR, FEMNET, CURRENTLY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, F.A.W.E.
*4.	MRS. EUNICE KIERENI	FORMER CHIEF NURSING OFFICER, CURRENTLY CONSULTANT, W.H.O.
*5.	MRS. BETH MUGO	POLITICIAN/ENTREPRENEUR AND PAST CHAIR, KBPW
*6	MRS. TABITHA SEII	POLITICIAN - NATIONAL COORDINATOR OF WOMEN AFFAIRS DP OF KENYA
*7.	MRS. ROSE WARUHIU	EX.MP/DIRECTOR, DEMOCRATIC FOUNDATION, DEPUTY ORGANISING SECRETARY, DP

8.	MRS. FRANCESCA M. OTETE	COMMISSIONER, P.S.C. NAIROBI
*9.	MRS. LOUISA OWITI	NATIONAL SECRETARY, YWCA, NAIROBI
10.	MRS. MAGGIE GONA	NATIONAL CHAIR, YWCA, KENYA
** 11.	MRS. MARY OKELLO	PAST CHAIR KWFT & VICE-PRESIDENT WORLD BANKING, CURRENTLY DIRECTOR MAKINI SCHOOL, NAIROBI
*12.	DR. FLORENCE MANGUYU	PRESIDENT, MEDICAL WOMEN INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION
*13.	DR. JENNIFER RIRIA OUKO	MANAGING DIRECTOR, KENYA WOMEN FINANCE TRUST
14.	ANNE WAMBAA	IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIR, NAIROBI INTERNATIONAL SHOW.
*15.	PROF. LUCIA OMONDI	DEPARTMENTAL CHAIR, UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
*16.	PROF. FLORIDA KARANI	COLLEGE PRINCIPAL, UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
*17.	PROF. WANGARI MAATHAI	NATIONAL COORDINATOR, GREENBELTH MOVEMENT
18.	EVENLYN MUNGAI	EDITOR, PRESENCE MAGAZINE

*19.	MRS. OERI	CHAIR, WOMEN'S BUREAU
*20.	MS. GRACE GITHU	ADVOCATE AND CHAIR, FIDA
*21.	MRS. FATMA JENEBY	POLITICIAN - KNC OF KENYA
*22.	MS. MARIE ORIE ROGO	POLITICIAN FORD-K
*23.	BETTY TETT	POLITICIAN - DP OF KENYA
*24.	MRS. GRACE OGOT	POLITICIAN - KANU
*25.	MARERE M. WAMWACHA	POLITICIAN - DP OF KENYA
*26.	GRACE WAKULIMA MWEA	POLITICIAN - DP OF KENYA
*27.	WAMBUI OTIENO	POLITICIAN - FORD-K
*28.	JANE KIANO	PAST CHAIR, MYWO
*29.	WILKISTA ONSANDO	CURRENTLY CHAIR, MYWO
*30.	MARGARET WEVETI MUGENI	POLITICIAN - FORD-K
*31.	LYDIA W. KIMANI	POLITICIAN - KANU
*32.	KEZIA KENYANJUI	BUSINESSWOMAN
*33.	MRS. ANNE G. MUNGAI	FILM DIRECTOR, NAIROBI
**34.	NARGIS WARIS	MANAGING DIRECTOR, COMPUTRAIN
35.	MS. JANE GATHOGO	CHEMICAL ENGINEER - ONE OF ONLY 3 WOMEN IN KENYA MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS.

36.	MARY OWOUR	ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER OF POLICE
37.	MRS. MARTHA MUGAMBI	CHAIR KBPWC & MANAGING DIRECTOR BATHAMU AGENCIES, EXPORTERS and IMPORTERS.
**38.	MRS. MWORIA	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - FAMILY PLANNING SECTOR
**39.	CATHERINE GATHOGO	DIRECTOR, KELTAN KRAFF
**40.	GRACE WAKHUNGU	GENERAL MANAGER - KENYA RE-ASSURANCE
**41.	SERAPHINA KATHURIMA	MANAGER, STANBANK
**42.	JANE GITAO	MANAGING DIRECTOR-NORTH/SOUTH TRAVEL
43.	MRS. KATHERINE KIRUIRA,	UNDERSECRETARY - TREASURY
**44.	MRS. ALICE NABWERA	MANAGING DIRECTOR - JOMO KENYATTA FOUNDATION
**45.	MRS. SUSAN RODRIGUES	FINANCIAL CONTROLLER - NAIROBI SAFARI CLUB
46.	LEAH KIPKORIR	MANAGING DIRECTOR, KIE
47.	YVONE MULI	NATIONAL COMMISSIONER, KENYA GIRL GUIDES

	ASSOCIATION
*48. PHOEBE ASIYO	POLITICIAN -FORD-K
*49. BEATRICE NYAGA	POLITICIAN - KANU
**50. JUSTICE EFFIE OWOUR	JUDGE OF THE HIGH COURT OF KENYA
*51. AGNES NDETEI	POLITICIAN - VICE-CHAIRPERSON, DP OF KENYA
*52. MARTHA WANGARI KARUA	LAWYER/MP AND NATIONAL SECRETARY LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL, DP AFFAIRS, DP OF KENYA
*53. WINFRED NYIVA MWENDWA	MP (KANU) and ASSISTANT MINISTER, MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS
54. MRS. ANNE WAMBAA	PAST CHAIRPERSON-AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY OF KENYA, NAIROBI BRANCH
**55. JUSTICE JOYCE ALOUCH	JUDGE OF THE HIGH COURT OF KENYA
*56. JUSTICE MARY ANG'AWA	JUDGE OF THE HIGH COURT OF KENYA
*57. JUSTICE ROSELYN NAMBUYE	JUDGE OF THE HIGH COURT OF KENYA
*58. MRS. ESTHER KAMWERU	MANAGING EDITOR - SUNDAY STANDARD

**59. H.E. PAMELA MBOYA	KENYA'S PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE, HABITAT
**60. MS. SALLY KOSGEI	PERMANENT SECRETARY FOREIGN AFFAIRS & INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION, FORMER HIGH COMMISSIONER, UK
**61. MRS. MARGARET GITHINJI	PERMANENT SECRETARY - MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
*62. MRS. BELLA ADHOLA-MIGOT	GENERAL MANAGER JOHNSON & JOHNSONS COMPANY
*63. KATHINI MALOBA-CAINES	SECRETARY GENERAL - KSC.

* **Interviewed *without* Questionnaire.**
** **Interviewed *with* Questionnaire.**

B. WOMEN IN TOP MANAGEMENT - PUBLIC SECTOR

	NAME	POSITION
1.	JUSTICE EFFIE OWOUR	JUDGE OF THE HIGH COURT OF KENYA
2.	JUSTICE JOYCE ALOUCH	JUDGE OF THE HIGH COURT OF KENYA
3.	JUSTICE MARY ANG'AWA	JUDGE OF THE HIGH COURT OF KENYA
4.	JUSTICE ROSELYN NAMBUYE	JUDGE OF THE HIGH COURT OF KENYA
5.	H. E. PAMELA MBOYA	KENYA'S PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE -HABITAT
6.	MS. SALLY KOSGEI	PERMANENT SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION
7.	MRS. MARGARET GITHINJI	PERMANENT SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
8.	MRS. ALICE NABWERA	MANAGING DIRECTOR, JOMO KENYATTA FOUNDATION
9.	LEAH KIPRORIR	MANAGING DIRECTOR, KENYA INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

C. WOMEN IN TOP MANAGEMENT - PRIVATE SECTOR

	NAME	POSITION
1.	GRACE WAKHUNGU	GENERAL MANAGER-KENYA REASSURANCE
2.	ESTHER KAMWERU	MANAGING EDITOR-SUNDAY STANDARD NEWSPAPER
3.	MRS. BELLA ADHOLA-MIGOT	GENERAL MANAGER-JOHNSON & JOHNSON CO.
4.	MRS. SUSAN RODRIGUES	FINANCE CONTROLLER-NAIROBI SAFARI CLUB
5.	MRS. MARY OKELLO	DIRECTOR, MAKINI PRIVATE SCHOOL, NAIROBI
6.	NARGIS WARIS	MANAGING EDITOR, COMPUTRAIN.

APPENDIX II:

PROFILE # 1.

MARY OWUOR: TOP WOMAN IN THE KENYA POLICE FORCE

She is currently one of the three top police officers in Kenya. She is an Assistant Commissioner of Police. She is also the Deputy Commandant at the Criminal Investigations Department's Training School. Owuor has a wealth of experience from both the training school and the positions of responsibility she has held.

Owuor always stuck to the principle of *giving the best*. In fact, at Kiganjo Police Training College which she entered as an Inspector, she was the best all round Cadet. Years later, she was ranked first at the CID Training School and she won the best student award.

According to Mary, her decision to enter the Police Force was "an answer to a calling". She just wanted to be a cop and worked hard to achieve her goal. When she first attempted to venture into the male dominated Police Force, her father discouraged her as he had wanted her to be a teacher. However, she knew what she wanted to do with her life and she went for it.

Mary is not only Assistant Commissioner of Police, but a mother who has proved that women too can be as good and as tough as men. As Mary herself explained, the conventional belief about Kenya Police is that women hardly make an impact and they are only token statistics that add beauty to the Force. Few Kenyans appreciate the role of Kenyan Police Women as equals to their male counterparts. On the contrary, they view feminity as a limitation to the rigorous nature of Police work and would rather see them doing "soft duties like sitting behind a Police desk recording crimes." Mary is incensed by the chauvinism behind such beliefs. "At Kiganjo, the women do the same vigorous training as the men", she says. And yet men continue to argue that "a woman cannot be entrusted with serious responsibilities because she always gets pregnant". In her view, a woman has a right to have a family and should not be chided for it.

Born in 1946, Mary went to Highlands Girls' and Ng'iya Girls Secondary School here in Kenya, where she did her "A" levels before joining the Police Force. In 1971 she began the Criminal Investigation work which she describes as "challenging, risky, thrilling and sometimes dangerous." The thrill is in trying to uncover thefts, forgeries and all manner of crime. The Criminal Investigator,

like the vulture, must be extremely patient, bidding time and waiting to pounce at the right moment. In her assessment, her achievement and that of other women counterparts have come through sheer hard work and determination. She, however, has to constantly work particularly hard to chip away at the stereotypical comments that surround her "performance".

PROFILE # 2

MS ESTHER KAMWERU - MANAGING EDITOR, SUNDAY STANDARD

Esther Kamweru was born 38 years ago, her initial ambition was to become a librarian. After joining the university she discovered that librarianship was only offered as a diploma and she wanted a degree. She, therefore, enrolled for a degree in Journalism in Mass Communications. She was later to become the first woman in Kenya to break through the ranks of the male dominated profession of Journalism, by becoming the first woman Managing Editor of one of the three National newspapers-The Sunday Standard.

Esther, a single parent of two children, explains that, in order to manage to combine the demanding job of a Managing Editor with that of motherhood, she has had to learn to maintain a balance between her job and personal life. However, she admits that sometimes the job is too demanding and taxing and juggling becomes difficult. For example, during the month of December when other families are celebrating the Christmas season, she has to be at work at the expense of the family. Furthermore, single motherhood means full time double responsibility.

She attributes her advancement to top management in her profession to dedication, hard work, and endurance. In this regard, she pointed out that many women journalists become impatient and leave the profession prematurely. She notes that most women had quit the newspapers due to frustrations, including being passed over on promotions. In her view, If they had persevered, they would have probably risen up to positions of media management eventually.

PROFILE # 3

KATHINI MALOBA - CAINES-SECRETARY GENERAL, KENYA SOCIAL CONGRESS (KSC)

Kathini, the only woman secretary-general of a political party in Kenya, is said to have done her party proud. This is the way she describes her role as a Secretary General: "As a secretary-general, you are the mirror of your party, you tell the people what the party is all about". It is the responsibility of the secretary-general to advance and market the party to the people. And as a chief executive, you map out how the party is going to grow. For that to happen, the party has to have a vision and a long-term programme to ensure it does not lose its direction. It is the Secretary General's responsibility to keep alert and know what is happening in the country and brief the party members, thus acting as a feeler for the party, identifying what is going on externally and internally: "You see, you do not work in isolation. You need to know exactly what other people are thinking, saying and doing."

Her work therefore calls for extensive travelling. It is during such travels that she identifies other parties in other parts of the world with similar ideas, principles and objectives. "We grow as we share ideas with them" she says. Asked what principles the KSC stands for, she says it seriously subscribes to social democracy and should it ever be in charge of the country, it would want to see a Kenya where every citizen will live in freedom, peace and security. A situation where social interest will prevail and actually supersede material interest. What kind of training or skills would she say a secretary-general of a party needs to have? In her view, there is no specific training for that, but one needs to have a background in public administration and a certain level of awareness in politics".

Kathini, initially trained for nursing and worked at Machakos Provincial Hospital. She then decided to change her career and studied Accounts. She did her CPA and worked for Kenya Tea Development Authority (KTDA). It is while there that she began organizing the tea workers who were not unionized into a trade union. She then became a chief steward for the Kenya Plantation and Agricultural Workers union in 1979, a position she held up to 1981. In the course of her unionist movement activities she acquired some training in labour relations and gender issues at Ruskin College, U.K, and Cornell University USA.

Married with a 23 year-old-son, Kathini is also a consultant with the International Labour Organization (ILO) on rural workers organization and education. When she joined the international trade union movement in 1985, she first worked at the International Trade Secretariat as a project co-ordinator of the International Federation of Plantation and Agricultural Allied Workers. After one year, she was appointed the regional co-ordinator for the whole of Africa. She worked in that capacity until she retired in December 1991, to engage in active politics.

Kathini, was one of the women involved in organizing the Kenyan end of the UN Women's Decade Conference in Nairobi in 1985. She is greatly concerned about men's negative attitudes towards women in this country. A great believer in gender equity, and hence she strongly suggests that both men and women need to be sensitized on the issue of gender equity, social justice and democracy.

PROFILE 4 #

PHOEBE ASIYO-FORD-K MP. FOR KARACHUONYO CONSTITUENCY

She is the 60-year-old daughter of a village pastor, who first trained as a primary school teacher and then as a community development officer. Asiyo was the first Kenyan woman to head the Maendeleo ya Wanawake Organisation. However, much of her life has been spent working as a community officer. In 1962, she become the highest ranking women in Kenya's police force upon her appointment as assistant superintendent in charge of prisons. She took advanced studies in social welfare and prison administration at Wakefield College in the UK. Upon her return, she was promoted to superintendent. Earlier, while working with the Nairobi City Council, she assisted destitute women and children living in the city's slums. Trained in home economics, she taught the women child nutrition care in the various destitute and homecraft training centers she pioneered. In 1970 she became the Chief executive of the Child Welfare Society of Kenya, before beginning her career in politics in the mind 1970s, by becoming MP for Karachuonyo constituency.

Since her political defeat in the 1988 elections, Mrs. Asiyo has been closely involved in women's development programmes. She was appointed to the UN Economic Commission for Africa as a consultant on women's development in Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Zambia, Lesotho and Tanzania. In August 1988, the Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, appointed her Goodwill Ambassador for the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), which was charged with pioneering new approaches to women's participation in national planning and supporting innovative grassroots actions in developing countries. The Fund was created to provide direct support for women's projects. Asiyo's special mandate was to raise funds for the organization.

She is unequivocal on the need to ensure broader representation of women: "Women must be in public office", she asserts, "and be part of the high level decision-making bodies. What I am advocating is not that women be just leaders but equal partners with men in development-men and women working together". Asiyo has a lot of experience working with women as a disadvantaged group. She served for three years as a member of the UN Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. "When women are

able to participate equally and intelligently in the planning and implementation of projects in their communities, we can now talk of tangible development. Men and women must work together to end the injustices and poverty which plague our communities. Women therefore, need tangible support - such as in obtaining credit from financial institutions for their income generating projects."

(Interview: November 1992)

PROFILE # 5

TABITHA SEII, DP PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATE KERIO SOUTH CONSTITUENCY
1992 GENERAL ELECTIONS

She has been described as a modern-day "David" who, like the biblical shepherd boy, has gone to battle against an awesome foe, the "Goliath" of Kerio South- Mr. Nicholas Baiwott. Tabitha Seii has even been called a Kenyan Joan of Arc-an unlikely candidate for opposition leadership in the heart of "KANU land". But like the little French maid turned militant, this high-minded mother of five felt duty bound and determined to introduce multi-party politics to Kerio South and to bring radical change to the region:

> It's actually a liberation struggle that we are waging in Kerio South!. We are fighting to liberate our people from the worst forms of oppression that one can find in Kenya today-from poverty, ignorance and cultural deprivation so severe that in certain parts of Kerio South, people still wear skins and live as did our ancestors centuries ago.

She sees her role in this liberation struggle as one analogous with that of the biblical good samaritan: "It's as if one were seeing a wounded man along the side of the road and had to decide-do you give him all the help you can? Or do you simply ignore him and pass him by?" The wounded man in this case are the people of her constituency. And the one who has had to choose whether to help or not is Mrs Seii herself.

Playing the part of a liberator is something which comes naturally to Mrs. Seii, having been brought up by a mother who taught her never to shy away from challenges, but rather to accept them no matter how formidable they might appear. The people suggest. "It is people who are dirty or Clean," she said politics is just like any other profession. It's only that politics involves representing people and looking after their interests."

Apart from the obstructiveness of the incumbent Kerio South MP, Tabitha's other constraints in the 1992 elections, were financial and low levels of civic and gender awareness among voters. Efforts to campaign on the Democratic Party ticket in a predominant KANU stronghold in the 1992 general elections therefore proved impossible. Although she did not make it to parliament, Tabitha is still a very active member of her party holding the position of National Coordinator for Women Affairs.

(Interview, November 1992)

PROFILE # 6

AGNES NDETEI-MP FOR KIBWEZI CONSTITUENCY AND VICE CHAIR, DP

A combination of factors contributed to her decision to enter politics in 1988. The most immediate was the poor leadership of her constituency derived from the previous Kibwezi MPs who she felt had a particularly bad attitude towards women. "I felt women deserved better treatment and more respect, particularly as they are the ones who elect the politicians everywhere in Kenya."

Feeling that there was so much more that could and should be done to assist women, Ndetei took on that challenge five years ago, and has indeed, launched a wide range of development projects in the last five years. "But not all of them are finished, and she has many more projects, particularly focusing on women, which are in the pipeline."

Her life has been hectic in the last five years, especially since she is also a mother of four, the youngest a day scholar, two in boarding high schools and the oldest boy at the University of Nairobi. Ndetei expects the next five years in parliament to be easier to handle as she has already established fabulous grassroots contacts in the constituency and knows how to effectively utilize the local networks" to achieve short and long-term plans". Her children are also older now and more able to fend for themselves and play a supportive role for mum. Her oldest son for example was a tremendous asset to her in the 1992 general elections, and served as her chief campaign.

But without doubt, Agnes believes that the one person who has contributed most to her success in politics has been her husband Wilson. It was he who first suggested that she take on the task of giving good leadership to Kibwezi constituents. He is one of those really unusual men who has consistently helped his wife handle her "multiple roles" - as wife, mother, and public figure.

PROFILE # 7

MRS FATUMA JENEBY-PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATE FOR KNC PARTY, 1992 GENERAL ELECTIONS.

She tells a moving, sad but a very real story of a women's tribulations in the Islamic world. She narrates the resistance the female sex faces from a religion (Islam) and a community which has institutionalized the subjugation of women. She restates the typical statement from the men from her community:

"It's impossible for a woman to lead men. it's against the holy scriptures (the Holy Koran) for a woman to be above men,". And of course the same men do not fail to remind her that, the designated place for a woman is in the kitchen, minding the children and taking care of her husband's needs. She explains that in her Islamic community, it is very strange if not an outright abomination for a woman to show any form of ambition, not to talk of vying for a seat in the National Assembly. It's inconceivable for a woman to raise her voice or even talk in the presence of men. Her place is to sit, listen and only talk when she is talked to. Follow the orders of her "master" to the letter without question. "Naturally, the Koran just like all other spiritual documents of ages past, bestows on the man the position of head of the family unit. This, by extension, makes the man the leader and generator of all ideas. In short, the ultimate authority in society is the man.

It is very interesting to note that in certain spheres of life, the Koran equates the decision of two women to that of one man. A binding decision can only be reached by not less than two woman. This is just but the tip of the iceberg, she explains.

Islam was therefore the most fundamental handicap 44 year old Fatuma Bakari Jeneby had to contend with in her fight for the Mvita parliamentary seat in Mombasa District in the 1992 general elections. She was the Kenya National Congress (KNC) nominee for the seat but she lost to the flamboyant and politically astute Mombasa Kanu branch chairman, Shariff Nassir, who was the incumbent.

With Islam to contend with on the one hand, the line-up of male chauvinist contenders in the race for the Mvita seat was enough to scare away

Jeneby was not deterred in her ambitions. Her will-power and determination to bring about change kept her going on with her campaign for women's right to participate in political decision- making positions. Jeneby kept reminding the men that the very wife of the prophet Mohammed, Hadija, was a leader in her own right. According to Jeneby, Hadija was a successful businesswoman before she married the 25-year-old prophet at her prime age of 40 years. For her, a woman does not make it in business, and in fact in all other aspects of life, without having some sort of insight into leadership. Jeneby gives yet another example of Ms. Banazir Bhutto, Prime Minister of the Islamic state of Pakistan, whom she observes has successfully led on Islamic state. Given this history of Islamic women's leadership, she rhetorically asks: "Why can't I be an MP, what are these men scared of?"

Jeneby claims that in her search for a political party, following her defection from the then split up FORD, she was turned down by the Islamic led IPK party of Kenya on account of her gender, which she found hardly surprising given the fundamentalist orientation of that party. She however cautions against such practice of discriminating against and obstructing Kenyan women from the forefront of national politics under the guise of fundamentalism or any other socio-cultural excuses. Jeneby strongly believes that women are and can be as competent as men, and hopes to sensitize Muslim women so that they too can do more than just being housewives responding to the whims of their husbands. She sees herself as a role model for other Muslim women to follow with a view to liberating themselves politically and socially.

As well as fighting for the rights of women, Mrs. Jeneby intends to try and make a difference in the unemployment plight of the Muslim youths who see envisions as the hope for the future, and hence the need to gender sensitize them and give them a proper grounding in civic education.

PROFILE #8

ROSE W. WARUHIU-DEMOCRATIC PARTY (DP) OF KENYA

Rose Waruhiu is without doubt a woman of sharp intellect. A look at her past contributions in Parliament when she was a Nominated MP between 1983 and 1988 confirms this. It bears out her liberal approach to issues and her result-oriented leadership. Perhaps her presence in the Seventh Parliament would have made a great difference. Waruhiu was the last woman to be nominated to Parliament in the last 6th parliament: "may be I did a bad job, perhaps that is why the President has not nominated any other woman to Parliament after me". Talking about her experience as a nominated MP in the sixth parliament Waruhiu observes: "Being in Parliament", she says,"means performing well. It means showing commitment and responsibility: I got into trouble when I made a comment on the 8-4-4 system. I had hardly been there for six months. But I still believe I was very misunderstood."

For close to 20 years, Waruhiu has been very active in women's affairs. From 1974 to 1975, she was the Chairperson of the Kenya Association of University Women. Thereafter, she served as the Vice-Chairperson of the National Council of Women of Kenya (NCWK). Rose is the daughter of the first African District Officer, Muranga District. She says she belongs to the first generation of grandchildren of Christian families, and her paternal and maternal grandparents went to school and so did her parents. Her father went up to high school. Her uncle went to Makerere University College. Waruhiu was one of the first two girls in her village to go to school at the age of five, and attended Primary School between 1952 and 1959, and High School Between 1959 and 1966. Her leadership started in High School, where she served as a prefect and later as the school's deputy head girl between 1964-1966. "We were 600 girls at Kenya High School and only 10 per cent were Africans," she recalls. She says that her belief in merit and fair play began at Kenya High School. She remembers a book entitled **The Rise of Meritocracy** which her headmistress presented to her and which she read and re-read. From Kenya High School, she proceeded to Makerere University College in 1966, where she was an active student involved in a number of student bodies including the Kenya Students Organization. In 1969, she graduated with a BA degree in Economics, and got married the same year. She is a mother.

Her first employer was the Central Bank of Kenya in the economic research department but she quit the job for another at the registrar's department of the University of Nairobi where she rose to the position of Senior Assistant Registrar. She quit the university in 1979 to join Deloitte Haskins as a management consultant. This, to her, was more challenging than the university job. "At the university, I was a boss. Here I was working on issues. You sat at the desk and finished tasks," she says.

Between 1983 and 1988, she was a member of a joint Assembly of African, Caribbean, Pacific and European Community (ACP/EEC) Consultative Assembly in Bujumbura, Burundi. As Kenya's rapporteur on the ACP-EEC Working Group on Women, she led a delegation to the Lome IV negotiations. Waruhiu was also a member of the Kenya delegation to the United Nations Decade of Women.

Before she joined opposition politics in 1992, she was Kiambu Kanu branch treasurer. Explaining why she joined DP she states: "Other parties were not ready to welcome educated women. So I joined the party which, according to its manifesto, was to give some leverage to women."

Real issues for Kenyan women, she observes, are national in character and scope. They include clean water, agricultural training, primary health-care facilities, basic education and functional literacy. She says that women should be understood as integral to the whole development process and should therefore play a role in development. Women's struggle, she says, is a social struggle to give women power to take control over their own development. "Power will not be given to us. We have to fight for it." she says. Waruhiu says that women will still have to hit the 33 per cent target in Parliament to make a difference. "Women want more representation in Parliament. Women want dignity," "The village woman needs more help to reduce her burden. She is tired of the long journey to fetch water. She wants a hospital nearby. She needs projects to generate income. Women need equality in political decision-making. Women need to be empowered. They need more confidence and more economic power. Every woman needs a sound financial base". Waruhiu says the 30-year struggle to get women to occupy high positions has not ended. "We want more women in politics. We want to encourage our women in Parliament to address all issues, including the economy because they are people's MPs. They have to work double. They have to work very hard because they represent all women."

(Interview, November 1992)

PROFILE #9

PROFESSOR WANGARI MAATHAI: AN ACADEMICIAN TURNED ENVIRONMENTALIST AND HUMAN RIGHTS.

Professor Wangari Maathai is well known nationally and internationally for her contribution to the environmental conservation and human rights struggle. For that, Maathai who is the national Coordinator of the Greenbelt Movement has won many International Awards. It was Prof. Wangari who was the first Kenyan woman to single-handedly lock horns with a political system that had become 'sacred'; a system that never condoned criticism or challenge no matter how mild or innocuous.

Her unrelenting opposition to the plan to build a 60 storey monolith at Uhuru Park in Nairobi, her unstoppable campaign proved to Kenyans her unswerving commitment to the restoration of good management in public affairs in Kenya. She argued that Uhuru Park belonged to the people. When Wangari and her supporters restored it to the people, she began a fray that would initiate her into the politics of pluralism. Wangari has since remained in the frontline as the KANU establishment's leading critic. Prof. Maathai earned more laurels when she joined the fasting mothers of political prisoners at what became known as the Freedom Corner. Her support for the suffering mothers identified her as a woman of many faces. Her own brutalization by the police instead of breaking her resolve emboldened her. When the police broke into her house after an alleged coup rumour in mid-1992, she subjected the police to several days of stand-off. Her courage endeared her to those who believe in freedom of the individual. Later, during the first year of multi-partyism, she remained in the frontline, as the force behind the crusade to reconcile feuding opposition parties through Middle Ground Group- (MGG). She did not succeed but she can now afford to tell the opposition parties: "I told you so".

Although she did not declare her interest in an constituency seat, Kenyan women proposed her as a presidential candidate in the 1992 general elections, in recognition of her leadership abilities. She is a woman of high academic standing, as she holds a PhD in Veterinary Anatomy and was the first woman at the University of Nairobi to be appointed Chairperson of a University Department and the first to qualify for the position of Associate Professor.

The following are some extracts from Wangari Maathai's views on

Leadership:-

___"If you think there is no leadership now, I can tell you there was no leadership then either (25 years ago when she returned from USA). I thing that the African woman has to provide leadership for herself by identifying what she really wants, what her priorities are. I don't think she has been able to identify what her priorities are ---------- None in our society is prepared to lead especially in our generation".___

___"We grew up seeing position of leadership through favour. To get those favours, you have to be obedient, submissive and unquestioning, stooge or a bootlicker. So we did not develop a culture which seeks and identifies ability".

___"We have a society which does not prepare its people for leadership. It prepares its people only for following ____ perhaps its because it is a world where we are expected to follow".

___"I think those of us who became leaders did not learn how to prepare the next generation for leadership.___We are almost afraid of leadership. We run away from leadership and we actually identify leadership with negative ambition and so we do not admire leaders. We admire followers and bootlickers. Those are the people who get into positions, who are appointed. That is why **Maendeleo ya Wanawake Organization** cannot provide leadership. You don't have leaders there, you have followers, opportunists, people who are there only because they can benefit".

___"I am called a controversial person in this country because I try to provide leadership. I get encouraged by my convictions because I know I am right and eventually people come to follow".

___"Our leaders tell us that the sky is the limit, but I was shocked to find there were other limits, for example gender can be your limit, marriage and culture can be your limit ___ including education, can be turned against you and be used as a limit".

___"In my divorce case, ____ I was actually setting a precedent over how women should be treated ___ To my amazement women did not come to my side. If anything they went to the side of the man who was tormenting me. __ I understood it in the sense that I know that what I was doing was stepping forward and women don't want to step forward and lead".

The following are some of Maathai's view of Women's Status and Rights:

___"Quite often, in the name of women, I tried to protect the rights of women that's why sometimes people say I am working on human rights of women. But I have never really taken the women's rights agenda".

____"The role of a woman has hardly changed, she has remained a food provider, she has now been given an extra role of being a lone home manager in the absence of her husband, either physically or psychologically. The man may be there, but he is really not there".

On the failure of President Moi to even appoint one woman to fill in the 12 nominated positions in the Kenyan 7th Parliament, Maathai's reaction was: "The lack of appointment of women was not surprising because the political system that nominated only men is not right. It is a KANU government. It does not represent 60% of the voters. What can save women now is only a government of national unity".

Appendix III:

WOMEN IN TOP MANAGEMENT IN KENYA: A QUESTIONNAIRE

A. BACKGROUND DATA: PERSONAL PROFILE

1. Education

1.1 Primary ..... Year .....
1.2 Secondary ..... Year .....
1.3 University:

Year ..... Bachelors .....
Year ..... Masters .....
Year ..... PhD .....
Year ..... Other .....

1.4 Other training ..... Year .....

2. Marital and family, status

2.1 Married/Single .....
2.2 Husband's occupation .....
2.3 Number of children .....
2.4 Ages of children .....

3. Parents Background

3.1 Parents Family size (no. of children) .....
3.2 Mother's Education .....
3.3 Father's Education .....
3.4 Parent's occupation .....
3.5 Single/polygamous home .....
3.6 Religious Affiliation .....

4. Political Participation of Self

4.1 An ordinary Party member .....
4.2 An executive member (specify position) .....
4.3 A political activist .....

B. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT STYLES

5. Which Leadership styles do you prefer?:

5.1 Single decision after consultation .....
5.2 Single decision but responsibility lies on the leader .....
5.3 Collective decision by leaders who matter .....
5.4 Collective decision after consulting all levels of Management (lower, middle and top ranks) .....
5.5 Other .....

C. UPWARD MOBILITY

6.1 What is your opinion about employees who stagnate in one position for too long? .....
6.2 What factors should determine promotions?
6.2.1. Merit .....
6.2.2. Affirmative action to promote women .....
6.3.3. Both .....
6.4.4. Other .....

D. ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND TRAINING

7.1 State whether training programmes in your institution and other institutions you are familiar with only emphasise gender insensitive development of specific skills or whether they have injection of a gender dimension .....

7.2 What in your view are the policies which facilitate or limit women's access to higher education and training?
(i) ..... (ii) .....
(iii) ..... (iv) .....
(v) ..... (vi) .....

7.3 State the various government training programmes that you are aware of that are specifically designed to assist women in professional/career development?

(i) .....
(ii) .....
(iii) .....

E. FACTORS INFLUENCING EMPLOYMENT AND ADVANCEMENT TO TOP POSITIONS

8.1 Are there any specific policies you are aware of which facilitate or limit women's access to certain segments of the labour market, particularly in the public and private sectors?

(i) No .....
(ii) Yes (specify) .....
(iii) Don't Know .....

8.2 What are the explanations for the low representation of women in higher level positions, specifically those in which women should participate in decision making concerning national development?

(i) .....
(ii) .....
(iii) .....

8.3 Are there any discriminative policies which limit women's mobility between and within levels of organizations, especially into managerial positions?

(i) Yes (specify) .....
(ii) No .....
(iii) Don't know .....

8.4 In your view, how do women achieve top positions?

(i) merit .....
(ii) political backing .....
(iii) family background .....
(iv) women's networking .....
(v) Other .....

8.5 What are the strategies of survival at the top?

(i) job performance .....
(ii) leadership qualities/abilities .....
(iii) political backing .....
(iv) re-training etc .....
(v) Other .....

8.6 What contribution have you made or intend to make to promote policies and programmes which are gender sensitive?

(i) .....
(ii) .....
(iii) .....

F. EMPLOYMENT LAWS, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

9.1 What are your views on the policies, relating to women's employment rights in regard to access and opportunities of employment, support services etc?

(i) .....
(ii) .....

9.2 State what you consider to be the most important employment policies which might have a negative impact on women's employment?

(i) work hours .....
(ii) leaves .....
(iii) housing .....
(iv) medical cover .....
(v) pension cover .....
(vi) other .....

9.3 What are the elements of the structure and organization of the civil service system, that might have inbuilt barriers to women's advancement?

(i) .....
(ii) .....
(iii) .....

9.4 In your view, is there any gender discrimination in general rules and regulations for the public and private sectors, (e.g. like Standing Orders, General Orders, the administration of policies governing recruitment, examination, training, rotations, achievements and career development)?

(i) Yes (specify) .....
(ii) No .....

9.5 In your view, is there any gender discrimination in the pay structure or wage and salary scales, (as reflected in the information from Treasury, or Finance Ministry, etc)?

(i) Yes (specify) .....
(ii) No .....
(iii) Don't know .....

9.6 In your view, is there any gender discrimination in statutes, rules and regulation governing contracting for professional consulting services and the degree to which women consultants have access to this business?

(i) Yes (specify) .....
(ii) No .....
(iii) Don't know .....

G. THE INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

10.1 What is your assessment of the general attitude of the Kenyan state towards the career advancement of women?

(i) Positive .....
(ii) Negative .....
(iii) Neutral .....
(iv) Other .....

10.2 Please enumerate and specify the type of women specific policy interventions the Kenya government has made since independence

(i) .....
(ii) .....
(iii) .....
(iv) Don't know.....

10.3 What is your assessment about the level of Kenyan government commitment to implementing laws and policies that could advance the status of women? .....

10.4 What contradictory policies and laws exist in the statute books which make for their manipulation to oppress women?

(i) .....
(ii) .....
(iii) .....

(iv) Don't know .....

10.5 Do you know of any policies which encourage the establishment and policy participation of associations of women civil servants, lawyers, educators, business entrepreneurs etc?

(i) Yes (specify) .....
(ii) No .....
(iii) Don't know .....

10.6 Do National Tertiary institutions have a women's studies programme?
(i) Yes .....
(ii) No .....
(iii) Don't know .....

10.7 Do national tertiary institutions encourage gender research among the academic staff?

(i) Yes .....
(ii) No .....
(iii) Don't know .....

10.8 Does the Government encourage women's NGOs throughout the country by providing them with material support and autonomy to organize and set women in development agenda that can be integrated in national development plans and policies?

(i) Yes .....
(ii) No .....
(iii) Don't know .....

10.9 Is there a systematic national policy on women and development?

(i) Yes .....
(ii) No .....
(iii) Don't know .....

10.10 Is there a national agency responsible for monitoring and evaluating policies and programmes related to gender issues?

(i) No .....
(ii) Yes .....
(iii) Don't know .....

10.11 Does the Kenyan government sponsor national meetings on the subject of policies for advancing women's status?

(i) Often .....
(ii) Occasionally .....
(iii) Rarely .....
(iv) Never .....
(v) Don't know .....

10.12 Does the government organize networking or clearing house efforts for sharing information on women's issues?

(i) Often .....
(ii) Occasionally .....
(iii) Rarely .....
(iv) Never .....
(v) Don't know .....

10.13 Do you know of any ways the government encourages local international development agencies to take an interest in women's issues?

(i) Yes .....
(ii) No .....
(iii) Don't know .....

10.16 Does the Kenyan government participate in international meetings and belong to associations concerned with women in public life?

(i) Yes (specify) .....
(ii) No .....

(iii) Don't know .....

H. SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS & CORPORATE CULTURE

11.1 To what extent do you feel that the male domination of institutional environment is in hospitable to women thereby making them ineffective?

(i) Large extent .....
(ii) Medium extent .....
(iii) Small extent .....
(iv) No extent .....

11.2 In what ways do the various managerial behaviour models (i.e. aggressiveness, decisiveness, competition, etc) create barriers for or enhance women's advancement to top management? How do they affect their success after attaining this top position?
.....
.....
.....

11.3 What are the socio-cultural factors in your view that facilitate or limit the advancement of women?

(i) .....
(ii) .....
(iii) .....

11.4 In what ways is the cultural stereotyped ideology of women as the weaker sex, a major barrier to the advancement of women?
.....
.....
.....

11.5 In your view, do men "fear" sharing power with women? If so, state how this affects women's career advancement?
.....
.....

11.6 What personality traits facilitate or hinder the advancement and performance of women to top management?

(i) .....
(ii) .....
(iii) .....

11.7 How do multiple roles affect your performance in the home as a caretaker and the work place as a top manager?

(i) Positively
(ii) Negatively
(iii) No impact.