

WHERE ARE ALL THE WOMEN?

GENDER IN THE 2011 ZAMBIA LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTION



Kabwe Council, Zambia - Photo by Colleen Lowe Morna

http://gemcommunity.genderlinks.org.za/gallery/main.php?g2_itemId=19667&g2_imageViewsIndex=1



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks and appreciation goes to the following people who participated in interviews as part of the research for this report:

Alfred Sakwiya, Decentralisation Secretariat

Crispin Akufuna, Electoral Commission of Zambia;

McDonald Chipenzi, Foundation for Democratic Process;

Victor Mbumwae, Gender in Development Directorate;

Maurice Mbolela, Local Government Association of Zambia;

Aselly Mwanza and Nelson Banda, Zambia National Women's Lobby;

Bridget Kalaba, Non-Governmental Coordinating Council;

Dorothy Phiri, MMD; and

Tatenda Magune-Mboko for assistance with sex disaggregation of election results.

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	2
Acronyms	4
Executive Summary	5
Background	6
Gender and democratic governance in SADC	9
Gender and local government elections	17
Conclusions	21

ACRONYMS

ADC	Area Development Committees
COE	Centres of Excellence
FODEP	Foundation for a Democratic Process
FPTP	First past the Post
GIDD	Gender in Development Directorate
LGAZ	Local Government Association of Zambia
MLGH	Ministry of Local Government and Housing
MMD	Movement for Multi-Party Democracy
MMP	Mixed Member Proportional
NGOCC	Non-Governmental Coordinating Council
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
PF	Patriotic Front
PR	Proportional Representation
UPND	United Party for National Development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Rachel Mwelwa, Deputy Mayor Kabwe Council, Zambia - Photo by Colleen Lowe Morna

http://gemcommunity.genderlinks.org.za/gallery/main.php?q2_itemId=19637&q2_imageViewsIndex=1

Women in Zambia comprise less than 10% of elected local government officials. This result is not a good sign for democracy or, diversity in democracy. Women won only 6.1% of the local government election in 2011, a 1.2% decrease from the previous election in 2006. This is a concern for the country's ability to achieve certain key objectives such as the SADC Gender and Development Protocol target of equal representation in all decision-making positions by 2015.

The 2011 result raises concerns about the quality and fairness of local service delivery. If only 85 women out of 1382 people are contributing to the day-to-day decisions made by local authorities, it is clear that the demands

and priorities of women will not be well represented. Women in Zambia must urgently be enabled to participate in local governance structures and access the resources therein, through a quota system instituted through a legally binding document.

Though they ushered in a new regime, the 2011 tripartite elections in Zambia were particularly intense and characterised by political party floor crossing, incidents of intra party violence and intimidation of electoral candidates. It was a particularly bad election for women and many of them pulled out of the running because of the atmosphere of fear.

The new party coming in to govern, the Patriotic Front (PF), did not show much of an inclination towards supporting women's participation. Out of the 528 local government seats won by PF, only 44 of these were by women. While many women aspired to contest the elections, very few were adopted by their parties.

The Zambian National Women's Lobby (ZNWL) has begun to record and document the stories of women who participated in the 2011 tripartite elections. This is a necessary step to maintain the momentum for women who aspired to participate, especially at the local government level.

Many activities to build women's capacity and empower them have been undertaken and the results are evident. However Zambia must ultimately institute a quota system or reserved seats in order to get the women in. Results from Lesotho's 2011 local government elections demonstrated that a system of reserved seats for women works. There are many lessons to be learnt from the Lesotho example.

The 2011 results made it clear that Zambia would miss the 50/50 mark for 2015. It is now time for civil society and other relevant state institutions to lobby and advocate for the domestication of the SADC Protocol in order that the efforts of civil society over the years may be tested and show cased.

BACKGROUND

Local Governance in Zambia

Key facts: Zambia Local Government

- Zambia is a unitary state where the President is both head of state and head of government.
- The Country has a two-tier governance structure made up of central and local government.
- There are 9 provinces each governed by a Deputy Minister appointed by the President.
- There are 72 local councils within the Provinces.
- Article 109 of the Constitution enshrines local governance and local democracy within the Local Government and Local Government Elections Acts.
- The Ministry of Local Government and Housing (MLGH) led by the Minister of Local Government and Housing is empowered to administer the Act.
- There are **4 City Councils**.
- There are **14 Municipal (Urban) Councils**.
- There **54 District (Rural) Councils**.
- Local authorities operate under a single tier structure with all having the same responsibilities.
- In 2004 tenure of Local Councillors was changed from 3 years to 5 in order for local government elections to coincide with presidential and parliamentary elections.
- Local Councillors are elected through a FPTP system; mayors are not directly elected by the public.
- There is a single local government association – Local Government Association of Zambia (LGAZ).
- The Decentralisation policy was introduced in 2002 “to set up sub-district structures and clearly defined roles” for local authorities, provincial and central government.
- Under Decentralisation councils will have more powers, resources and autonomy over resources.
- Decentralisation Secretariat within the MLGH oversees, co-ordinates and implements the devolution plan.

Zambia held tri-partite elections on 20 September 2011. These elections were held in a particularly tense atmosphere where reported incidents of violence and intimidation were high. There were also numerous accusations of bribery and corruption as well as the mudslinging amongst political opponents common during election time. The run up to the poll was also characterised by electoral candidates crossing the floor to change parties, especially where individuals had not been adopted by their original party. Some candidates chose to stand as independents where they had not been adopted by their parties or fielded as candidates in hostile constituencies. This was particularly the case for female candidates who attempted to stand for both parliamentary and local government elections in 2011. Zambia holds all three elections under a First Past the Post system. This *winner-takes-all* form of contestation in a political environment such as the 2011 Zambian one achieves very few benefits for women let alone democracy.

The Local Government structure in Zambia is well established and is comprised of city councils, municipal or urban councils and district or rural councils.

City Councils comprise the larger councils with populations averaging 511,000 people. Lusaka City is the largest City Council with the largest number of residents in the region of 1,100,000 people.



Zambia Local Government Organisational Structure

Municipal or Urban Councils are the next largest grouping and refer to a relatively large urbanised area with an average population of 168,640 people. Over 50% of the population live in urban areas.

District or Rural Councils are the smallest sized local authorities with population sizes in the region of 112,199 people. They are located in the rural parts of the country.

The Gender in Development Directorate (GIDD) has assigned several Gender focal persons to work with councils in the various Districts of the country.

Zambia's Electoral System

There are two main types of electoral system, *Proportional Representation* (PR) or the "party list system". In this system citizens vote for parties that are allocated seats in parliament according to the percentage of vote they receive. Individual candidates are awarded a seat in office according to where they are placed on the party list. In an *Open List* system, voters determine where candidates are placed on the list. In a *Closed List* system, the party determines where candidates are placed; this is usually based on democratic nomination processes within the party.

The second system is the constituency or *First Past the Post* (FPTP) system, citizens vote for both the party and the candidate who represents the party in a geographically defined constituency. Thus a party can garner a significant percentage of the votes, but still have no representative in parliament. This system is also referred to as a *winner-takes-all* system and perhaps not the most ideal for consolidating democracy or ensuring women have a place at the table.

In Zambia elections are conducted on an FPTP or *winner-takes-all* basis whereby the number of seats won is determined by the party with the majority of votes. Furthermore there is no quota or system of reserved seats for women. Women and men compete on the same platform "from different vantage points"¹. Outcomes of elections show that women's chances of entering politics are limited more so in a situation like 2011 elections where the electorate voted for a party opposed to individuals. A quota for women in decision-making was mooted in the currently dormant Constitution making process.

¹ Gender and Local Government in Zambia (2007).

There has been limited discussion on altering the electoral system. In 2005 an Electoral Reforms Technical Committee was tasked with researching and proposing a new system. The Committee recommended a version of the Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) system – practised in Lesotho². The MMP is a dual ballot system that allows a voter to cast two ballots – constituency vote and a party vote. Constituency representation in the National Assembly is determined by the constituency vote while the party vote compensates parties that have won few to no constituency seats. The party vote is used to select candidates from a party list to make up for seats a party would have been entitled to had constituency seats been allocated on a proportional basis³.

While it is difficult to predict whether the electoral system will change in the near future, the change in regime does offer some hope for increased numbers of women in decision making. The turn over from one party to another may well signal commitment to inclusion of women at every level of governance in Zambia. The newly elected President Michael Sata has shown signs of an intention to include women. Though female appointments to the initial Cabinet were disappointing there have since been some key appointments such as Heads of: Anti-Corruption Commission, Police Service, the Electoral Commission and the Drug Enforcement sectors.

² Ibid.

³ Matlosa, K. 2007. "Lesotho" in Cawthra. G., du Pisani, A and Omari, A (eds) *Security and Democracy in Southern Africa*.

GENDER AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE IN SADC

As a sub-region, the Southern African Development Community has made it explicit that the region's definition of democratic governance includes equal representation of women and men in all positions of decision making. The table below outlines articles 5, 12 and 13 of the SADC Gender and Development Protocol. The three articles all refer to provisions that outline the need for gender parity in all decision making positions by the year 2015.

Table 1: SADC Protocol Governance Provisions

ARTICLE	TARGET AREA	PROVISION - 2015
5	Full and meaningful participation in all spheres of life	Affirmative action measures with particular reference to women with the aim of eliminating all barriers which prevent them from participating.
12	Women in decision making positions	At least fifty per cent of decision making positions in public and private sectors are held by women; affirmative action measures in effect.
	Equal representation and democracy	Laws and policies are accompanied by public awareness campaigns to demonstrate link between equal representation participation of men and women to democracy, good governance and citizen participation.
13	Participation in electoral processes	Laws and policies put in place to enable women to have equal opportunities with men to participate in electoral processes.
	Ensuring and enabling participation	Policies, strategies and programmes for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building women's capacity to effectively participate – leadership, gender sensitivity and mentoring. • Support structures for women in decision making. • Establish and strengthen structures to enhance gender mainstreaming. • Addressing discriminatory attitudes and norms in decision making structures.
	Men's inclusion	Gender training and community mobilisation to include men at all levels.

Source: Gender Links compiled from the SADC Gender and Development Protocol

Zambia and SADC Obligations

Zambia has made very little progress against the above governance targets of the Protocol. The primary challenge being that although the country has ratified the Protocol there is yet to be any progress in terms of domesticating and implementing the obligations. The 2011 SADC Protocol Barometer for the first time used the Southern African Gender Development Index (SGDI) to demonstrate how much progress SADC countries were making against key indicators similar to the Protocol targets. The SGDI assigned an overall ranking to countries

based on performance against key indicators as well as assigning specific scores per sector, for instance governance.

Zambia's SGDI ranking and scores demonstrate that there is still some work to be done in order for the country to make significant achievements in the area of gender equality. Zambia has an overall score of 58 (out of 100) and ranks 10th out of 15 SADC countries. In the area of governance the country scores 24 on the SGDI and is 11th in the region. The low representation of women at parliamentary and local governance levels is a key contributing factor. In addition to the SGDI citizens in the country were asked to score their country's progress against SADC targets. Again Zambia scores poorly with a mere 41 out of 100.

Zambia has also acceded to various other normative frameworks such as:

- The Convention on Discrimination against Women (CEDAW);
- African Charter on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR); and
- African Union Declaration on 50% representation of women in all positions of decision-making.

The National Gender Policy of 2000 gives a mandate to the Gender in Development Directorate to attend to issues of gender equality in decision making and women's representation.

Women's participation in Zambia

Women's participation in local government elections is generally low and has been over the last two elections despite the fact that women constitute close to 50% of the electorate; they have done over the last two elections yet participation remains fixed at about 15%. In 2006

out of a total of 3,9 million registered voters, women constituted 2,1 million (47.98%)⁴. In 2011 the Electoral Commission of Zambia confirmed a total of 2,590,821 women voters out of an electorate of 5,167,154 (50.1%)⁵.

"Women do not participate because the campaign process is difficult; it is bruising!" Crispin Akufuna

Several challenges to women's participation persist. They include:

- Sufficient and robust party support;
- Culture, patriarchy and attitudes;
- Identity and conflict;
- Financial resources; and
- The role of the media and its portrayal of women.

Prospects for parity in the future

With women's representation at 6.1% at local, it is clear that Zambia has missed the 2015 mark by far. The question posed to respondents in the interview process of this report was, where to from here for Zambia given that the last chance to achieve parity before 2015 had come and gone? Most responded that they had great hope for the future. Despite the extremely difficult electoral terrain and political environment, sentiments were that there had been such major advances where building the technical capacities and competencies of women were concerned. It would only be a matter of time until these were drawn into

⁴ Wonani, 2010. "Zambia" in Gender Links (ed), *This Seat is Taken*

⁵ Electoral Commission of Zambia, 2011. *Public Notice: 2011 - Local Government Election results.*

governance. Even challenges such as culture, attitudes and beliefs were slowly shifting and changing and these could be moulded in the future towards support for women in politics.

Getting Zambia closer to the SADC Protocol mark

“Zambia is good at ratifying but not at domestication” – Bridget Kalaba

Interviews with relevant stakeholders in Zambia revealed that the quickest and surest solution to women’s representation in the country would be domesticating the SADC Gender and Development Protocol. Necessary actions to ensure this are:

- A unified position by civil society on the need for a quota/ reservation system;
- Lobbying and advocating relevant state institutions for domestication by civil society organisations;
- Revival of the constitutional reform process and prioritising a system of reservation for women in governance; and
- Compelling political parties to comply with regional targets.

Key Institutions for Local Government, Elections and Gender Equality

Local government election results reveal that Zambia is lagging far behind in terms of gaining gender parity. Interviews revealed that there are many efforts that are being undertaken to prepare women for election campaigns and political office. These efforts are however fraught with many challenges. This section looks at several key state and non-state institutions responsible for local government, electoral and gender concerns to examine their contribution to gender equality and SADC provisions in Zambia.



Morris Mbolela - LGAZ, Zambia Gender Justice and Local Government Summit Awards - Photo by Colleen Lowe Morna

http://gemcommunity.genderlinks.org.za/gallery/main.php?g2_itemId=19793

Table 2: Key Institutions for Local Government, Elections and Gender Equality (GE)

INSTITUTION/ ORGANISATION	OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY	ROLE/ Direct link to GE	CONTRIBUTION IN ELECTIONS	COMMENTS/ CHALLENGES
<p>Gender Development Directorate – GIDD in</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To coordinate gender mainstreaming activities across the country amongst implementing partners (e.g. MLGH). To ensure policies, programmes and activities towards gender equality are consistent with the National Gender policy. To raise general awareness amongst the public. GIDD does not directly implement activities and has no specific mandate for activities with MLGH. 	<p>Yes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaging political parties to ensure women’s participation. Augment efforts to empower women by NGOs working with these target groups e.g. NGOCC and ZNWL. GIDD would only target local government through advocacy and communication initiatives of the Gender and Communications department. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Zambian political system is based on a notion that women do not have an equal share. There are no specifically inhibiting laws but there are simultaneously no enabling laws to ensure women are represented and this has contributed to mind-set that women cannot access the political space.
<p>Decentralisation Secretariat – MLGH</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To coordinate and oversee devolution of powers from central government to local government in Zambia. Ensuring a healthy local government system that enshrines equal participation of all Zambians. Ensure empowerment of 	<p>No</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raising women from “below” within the sub-district level in order to build their capacities and skills in articulating service delivery related affairs. Decentralisation Secretariat was not directly involved in the local government election. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is need to focus on enabling women to participate initially at the “coal face” of service delivery through Area Development Committees. Women are ordinarily and daily active in areas such as: water, sanitation, agricultural, health and early education activities.

INSTITUTION/ ORGANISATION	OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY	ROLE/ Direct link to GE	CONTRIBUTION IN ELECTIONS	COMMENTS/ CHALLENGES
	<p>all individuals (especially women) at the sub-district level where service delivery takes place through Area Development Committees (ADCs) currently running on a pilot basis in three provinces.</p>			
Electoral Commission of Zambia - ECZ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversee elections and ensure they are conducted in a free and fair manner. • Ensure the electorate are able to exercise their right to vote, including special interest groups. • Responsible for election related publicity including encouraging political parties to include women. 	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During 2011 elections, collaborated with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on various programmes to encourage women to participate – this included a number of activities with community based organisations, churches etc. • On-going work with civil society on women’s participation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are more women voters than men voters. • A good number of women applied to stand as electoral candidates but they were not adopted by their parties. • There is need for a legal framework that ensures sufficient numbers of women stand for political office.
Foundation for a Democratic Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for monitoring elections on behalf of civil society and ensure that they are credible and participatory. • Instituting school chapters to encourage students to run for positions of leadership 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness raising of local government elections at the local level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs need to be more proactive and ensure women candidates are fielded in ‘safe’ areas.

INSTITUTION/ ORGANISATION	OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY	ROLE/ Direct link to GE	CONTRIBUTION IN ELECTIONS	COMMENTS/ CHALLENGES
	<p>from a young age – encourage young women to participate on these 'safer' platforms.</p>			
<p>Local Government Association of Zambia - LGAZ</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To address issues of empowerment and capacity building related to local authorities. Enable women to hold positions at local government level (through various empowerment activities). 	<p>Yes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sensitisation and capacity building for councillors and management personnel (female and male) in local authorities on equal participation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of women is ultimately decided at a political level and this contributed to the low levels of women in local government and those that participated in the elections. Electorate does not view local government elections as important because Councillors are still seen as volunteers.
<p>Non-governmental Organisation - NGOCC</p>	<p>109 organisations across Zambia dealing with gender.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure women occupy key positions in decision making. Conduct awareness and sensitisation on the roles of women in leadership. Sensitising politicians on getting women into positions (with particular 	<p>Yes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numerous training for women across the country in preparation for electoral campaigns and political office. Worked with political parties to prioritise parties adopting women to stand as electoral candidates. Provided small grants to organisations working with women for political participation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NGOCC did not work as extensively with women at the grassroots and local government level as they did with women running for parliament.

INSTITUTION/ ORGANISATION	OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY	ROLE/ Direct link to GE	CONTRIBUTION IN ELECTIONS	COMMENTS/ CHALLENGES
	<p>focus on women at the grassroots level).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy on domestication of relevant gender equality normative frameworks. 			
<p>Zambia National Women's Lobby - ZNWL</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct activities that will lead to equal representation of women and men in all decision making positions in Zambia. • Operationalise various normative frameworks and ensure Zambia meets relevant requirements that pertain to gender representation. 	<p>Yes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trained over 300 aspirant women politicians for 2011 elections. • Key training focus areas: leadership, media, campaigning and advocacy. • Compiled data base of women aspirants in 72 ZNWL chapters country wide. • Worked with political parties to assist women aspirants in the campaign process as well as to ensure they are adopted. • Conducted election monitoring of from a gender perspective e.g. security situation at polling stations for elderly women, expectant mothers and young people (women). • Gather relevant data during elections and use it to create conducive environment for women. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-election analysis reveals little correlation between those women trained and those that were elected. • The lobby did a great deal of work but political parties did not honour agreements to adopt women.

Table 3: Local Government 2011 Election Results

PARTY/INDEPENDENT	TOTAL NO OF SEATS WON PER PARTY	FEMALE (SEATS WON PER PARTY)	% FEMALE OF PARTY SEATS	MALE (SEATS WON PER PARTY)	% MALE OF PARTY SEATS
ADD	13	0	0	13	100
FDD	3	0	0	3	100
INDEPENDENT	31	2	6.5	29	93.5
MMD	547	24	4.4	523	95.6
NMP	1	0	0	1	100
PF	528	44	8.3	484	91.7
UPND	259	15	5.8	246	95
TOTAL	1382	85	6.2	1299	93.8

Source: Compiled by Gender Links from data collected from Electoral Commission of Zambia and Zambia Women's Lobby (March 2012).

Table 4: Local Government 2011 Election Results - % Female per party of total votes

PARTY/INDEPENDENT	TOTAL NO OF SEATS WON PER PARTY	FEMALE (SEATS WON PER PARTY)	% FEMALE PER PARTY OF TOTAL SEATS
ADD	13	0	0
FDD	3	0	0
INDEPENDENT	31	2	0.1
MMD	547	24	1.7
NMP	1	0	0
PF	528	44	3.2
UPND	259	15	1.1
TOTAL	1382	85	6.1

GENDER IN THE 2011 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

A Gendered Description of the Results

Tables 3 and 4 above reflect the results of the 2011 local government elections in Zambia. Table 3 is the overall results, disaggregated for sex and is arranged to show the percentage of seats won per party per sex. Table 4 reflects the proportion of women's seats per party as a percentage of the total number of people elected into local government.

2006 and 2011 Election Results – Women's Representation		
	2006	2011
Parl	15%	11.2%
Local Govt	7.3%	6.1%

There were a total of 1382 people elected on a FPTP basis. Candidates were selected from 7 parties with Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD) – 547, Patriotic Front (PF) - 528, and United Party for National Development (UPND) – 274 obtaining the highest number of votes respectively. 31 Independent candidates were successful.

Out of the 1382

successful candidates, 85 were women. The party with the highest number of women is the PF with 44 women. PF women represent 51.8% of the women in local government. However PF women only represent 8.3% of their party in local government and 3.2% of the total elected.



Women sitting outside council buildings, Kabwe Council Zambia - Photo by Colleen Lowe Morna

MMD comes in at second place, with women having won 24 of the 85 seats (28.2%) that went to women. Women in the party won 4.4% of the party total and 1.7% of the total elected. The United Party for National Development (UPND) saw 15 women elected to represent their party at local government level; 17.6% of the total women elected. This in turn represented 5.8% of the party total and 1.1% of the overall elected population.

2 Independent women candidates out of a total 31 were successful. This accounted for a mere 2.4% of the total women candidates, 6.5% of the Independent seats and less than 1% of the total elected councillors.

In total women won 6.1% of the total.

Why this dismal performance?

There was a slight decrease – from 7.3% to 6.1% - in the proportion of women in local government between the 2006 and 2011 elections. Parliamentary election results also attest to a decrease from 15% to 11.2% in 2011. The single digit proportions described above demonstrate that within political parties there is still a great deal of work to be done. Women are barely close to occupying 10% of their party space within local government. Moreover there was a shift in voting patterns in the 2011 election. The Zambian electorate were determined for a change of regime and voted the opposition party into power. Parties intent on getting into power did not pay any regard to gender equality obligations.

"The numbers of women are decided at a political party level and this has contributed to the low numbers of women in local government in Zambia." Morris Mbolela

The following table offers some discussion of factors that prevail in Zambia that prevent achieving equal representation of women and men in decision-making. These factors were raised by respondents during the research phase when asked why Zambia’s performance where women were concerned was so low. During the interview process, GL met with personnel from ZNWL that had conducted a post-election retreat for women politicians that did not make it. Some of the comments mentioned below are augmented with the insight of the participants on their electoral experiences obtained from the ZNWL report of the event.

Table 5: Challenges that persist for women in politics

CHALLENGES	COMMENT
Party Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parties did not adopt women candidates to stand for election. • There were many complaints of bribery and corruption required of women in order to guarantee adoption as candidates. • Men considered as more of a guaranteed win and coupled with a desire to win seats at all costs, women automatically excluded. • If adopted, women could be placed in hostile constituencies and unfamiliar communities where they had no connection to the issues and concerns there. • Floor crossings and women stood as independent candidates in the aftermath of men being considered the better candidate.
Culture, patriarchy & beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beliefs and attitudes that women have no place in governance and decision making persist in Zambia and other SADC countries. During campaign process women were subjected to reminders of this and the negative sentiments were more regularly and freely expressed at the local government level. • NGOs have done a great deal of work to address culture and beliefs. GL through the COE process has worked with several councils on issues related to gender mainstreaming in local authorities and as a result has gender champions (men) that are actively working on changing mind-sets in Zambia on women in decision-making.
Identity, conflict & violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues of women’s identity and how they are recognised both within and outside of party structures are related to the culture, beliefs and attitude that prevail in a society. • The extent to which a woman candidate spoke a local language was used to call the authenticity of identity and therefore representation into question⁶. • Women politicians were scared off from running because of the threat of violence. The lead up to the election was fraught with reports of election violence amongst parties. Examples were given of women’s party adoption interview processes being disrupted by jeering groups of people. This raises key concerns of the safety and security of women candidates during elections. • Numerous women were subjected to character assassination whereby their roles as upstanding citizens, respectable wives and mothers were called into question. The media also had a significant role to play in the way women aspirants were perceived by the public.

⁶ Zambia National Women’s Lobby, 2011. Reinvigorating the Passion: Report on Women’s Political Participation.

CHALLENGES	COMMENT
Financial constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were little to no funds for women's election campaigns. Funds would be provided for the campaign process only to cover the amounts of personal funds used for the campaign through to the end of the campaigns that were generally unsuccessful. • Bi-lateral donors and various funders had financial resources available to support activities for preparing women candidates for elections and public office. Grants would be released on confirmation of the numbers of women adopted by parties so as to ensure there were women running. Most of the ground work of electoral candidates required financial support in order to guarantee party adoption. It would seem funders, civil society organisations and political parties were working at cross purposes. • In the future civil society will request a greater proportion of funds that can be accessed quickly in order to work with aspirant candidates and ensure they are adopted by their parties or well recognised in their constituencies as Independent candidates.
Media portrayal of women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Much work has been done with media houses in Zambia to enable journalists to conduct more gender sensitive reporting, for example the GL Centres of Excellence (COE) for Gender Mainstreaming in the Media. • Media houses contribute to the character assassination of women political aspirants with more devastating effects on them than their male counterparts. • Women, especially at the local level, are intimidated by and wary of the potential repercussions of a possible negative media campaign. • While NGOs continue to train women on working with the media, it is necessary to intensify efforts at the local level and forge partnerships with relevant media houses.
Capacity building efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender and women's organisations, state institutions and international organisations engage in a large number of activities to encourage and prepare women for participating in local governance. • There are many very good capacity building and empowerment programmes being implemented in Zambia. • Unfortunately many activities are confined to the election period leaving little time to fully address the requisite areas. • Civil society and other institutions that offer capacity building must implement more sustained efforts between election cycles to ensure women are able and ready when elections come. • In the absence of legal framework and reserved seats for women, the onus is on civil society and institutions such as ECZ to keep the issue of women's adoption on the agenda of political parties during the 5 years where there are no elections.

“There are many women leaders but social structures and attitudes that prevent women from being elected persist in society. We need a quota for women!” Bridget Kalaba

Making a quota/

“the corruption was so rampant and could be compared to an auction where the highest bidder got the prize” – Participant of ZNWL Post-election Retreat

case for reserved

"Maybe it's a moment where we can consider a system with a level of experimentation and room to adjust it if it doesn't work" Victor Mbumwae

seats

The characteristics of women politicians

The women that attended ZNWL and NGOCC Retreat were asked to give descriptions of themselves in relation to the work that they do. Many of the descriptions gave reasons why women should be given a deliberate opportunity

to participate in governance. Some of these descriptions include:

- Women that are engaged in social development and community building;
- Women with strength as social mobilisers and mobilising members for their parties;
- Women of strength, character and integrity in their communities;
- Women who are seasoned diplomats;
- Women who are well recognised in their communities and constituencies; and
- Women who are entrepreneurs.

These descriptions demonstrate that there are many women leaders that exist in communities and local councils across Zambia. Civil society organisations such as NGOCC, ZNWL, LGAZ and GL have done a great deal of work to ensure there is gender awareness across society. The continued outcomes of local government (and other) elections demonstrate that in spite of all these efforts, the country's electoral system, failure to domesticate the SADC Protocol and parties to embrace gender equality, there will be little hope of ever attaining parity. There is urgent need for a quota for women in local governance or a system of reserved seats for women.

What use would a quota be and what could it change?

Regional and continental obligations stipulate 50/50 representation of women and men in all decision making positions. The kind of quota required for gender equality to prevail in Zambian local governance demands a mixed system where seats are reserved for women within the constituencies on a PR basis. In addition political parties must have quotas within the parties to ensure there are women to contest for the reserved seats. Lesotho's 2011 local government election demonstrated that reserved seats for women on a PR basis have worked extremely well to ensure the stipulated targets are met.

A quota or system of reserving seats would enable women to also contest against men in an open FPTP system. The former ruling party in Lesotho, Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD) has an internal 30% party quota meant that women stood a good chance of significant wins in the FPTP vote. Women candidates from LCD have 32% overall representation within local government. In addition they claimed 44.1% of their parties overall wins.

Zambia is required to meet regional obligations and instituting a system of reserving seats for women would move the country quickly towards that goal. Internal party quotas and reserving seats for women would also mean that the various and numerous efforts of capacity building and empowerment would have an opportunity to be tested and put to use as women would be allowed access to the necessary platforms. Issues of safety and security, protecting women from abuse and character assassination would also be minimised as parties would be compelled to field women candidates in constituencies where they are guaranteed to perform well and win. Seat reservations and quotas would ultimately enable women to demonstrate their unique leadership skills and have their say in the pertinent issues of local service delivery on a day-to-day basis.

Obtaining a quota

The foundations for obtaining a quota for women in decision-making already exists through the Constitutional Reform process. Various institutions have already proposed that 30% of seats in local authorities should be reserved for women. This could work for Zambia as it has worked in Lesotho. Proposals in the Draft Constitution in 2010 were to institute a 30% quota for women, youth and people with disabilities in an MMP and PR system. In addition 40 seats in Parliament would be reserved for women at National level and some form of PR at the local level. There is urgent need for a detailed legal framework that can guide all the necessary organisations and institutions to implement. Given that most countries in the region are having their last elections before 2015 in the next 2 years, it is also necessary to build momentum through a regional campaign.



Women in Kabwe Council cleaning the Market place, Kabwe Zambia - Photo by Colleen Lowe Morna

http://gemcommunity.genderlinks.org.za/gallery/main.php?g2_itemId=19613&g2_imageViewsIndex=1



CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The future of gender and local government elections

The advent of a new party in power in Zambia is promising. It signals new possibilities and commitment to domesticating and turning into national law, various normative frameworks that would enable the country to stand by its obligations. Organisations such as the Lobby and NGOCC are well placed to take strategic advantage of this opportunity and ensure that when the Constitutional process is revived they are well ahead of the game and have positioned the Women’s Movement to direct conversation on a quota.

These civil society organisations and other state institutions like ECZ and GIDD must also take advantage of on-going interaction and dialogue with political parties to keep them sensitised and exercised on their need for instituting quotas in their parties. There is a need to strengthen work at the local level but avoid reinventing the wheel in doing so. The numerous capacity building endeavours of the Gender and Women’s Movement must be documented and the data gathered to influence any future policy making initiatives.

The most important component of the future of gender and local government elections is sustained work with the women that have been part of various activities in the past. The extent to which the stories of aspiring women politicians have been captured is uncertain. ZNWL have done some of this and the organisation has plans to strengthen this component of their work. In looking to the future it is important to consider the role of young women. Interviews with some women in political parties show that there is a new crop of empowered and talented women who will stay the course until they have achieved their dream; these women need mentorship.

Sentiments, attitudes, patriarchal notions and culture are the hardest to change, more so at the local levels. While it is true to say there is a need for social regeneration in the society there are slow and steady social changes that point to women being viewed as equal partners.

Table 6: Recommendations to achieve gender parity in local governance

ACTION AREA	RECOMMENDATION
Civil society – political party engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous work with political parties and secure commitments for them to field women. • NGOCC and ZNWL are doing this work on an on-going basis, more focus on women within parties to support fellow women and internal processes that ensure women are firstly on adoption committees and secondly are adopted.
Strengthen ECZ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the Commission to address electoral irregularities at the local levels for example monitoring the distribution of party materials. • While gender mainstreaming is not a direct mandate of the ECZ, there is a need to build a stronger gender component in their work through closer synergies with appropriate institutions. • Begin work with interest groups earlier in the process. • Ensure adoption processes are more transparent and inclusive within parties.
Civic education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustained awareness raising for rural communities on voter rights and secrecy of individual vote. There was a

	strong “Your vote is your secret” or “Don’t <i>Kubeba</i> ” campaign, but still fear of one’s vote being discovered can be the disadvantage of women candidates especially.
Quota/ reserved seats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce quotas / reserved seats at both party and local council level for women. • Prioritise domestication of SADC and regional quotas. • Use the constitutional process to ensure legal framework is developed for a quota for women. • Learn from other successful examples in the region.
Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training for women candidates to make use of media and new technologies in their campaigns where possible. • Training for journalists and media practitioners on more gender sensitive reporting that promotes women.
Campaign Fund for women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a campaign fund for women aspirants⁷.

The recommendations above are mostly responses to the question “what would you say is the future of gender parity in local government in Zambia?” All the interview respondents were confident that it is a matter of time until Zambia introduces a quota or reserved seats for women in governance (local government). Many efforts have been made to build the capacities of women in the country at all levels to ensure they are able to participate in a contest for public office. What remains is the right political environment and legal framework to ensure this takes place.

⁷ Ibid.

SOURCES CONSULTED

Ballington, J., 2004. *The Implementation of Quotas: African Experiences* – Quota Report Series. EISA, International IDEA and SADC Parliamentary Forum.

Gender Links, 2007. *Gender and Local Government in Zambia*.

Local Government Association of Zimbabwe, 2007. *The status of women in Local Government in Zambia*.

Lowe Morna, C and Mbadlanyana, N., 2011. *Gender in the 2011 South African Local Government Elections*, Gender Links [<http://www.genderlinks.org.za/article/gender-in-the-2011-south-african-local-government-elections-2011-05-17>].

United Nations Development Programme, 2011. *Empowering Women for Stronger Political Parties: A good practices guide to promote women's political participation*, National Democratic Institute for International Affairs.

Wonani, C., 2010. *Zambia* in Gender Links (ed), "This Seat is Taken, Elections and the Under-Representation of Women in Seven Southern African Countries".

Women in Local Government Standing Committee of LGAZ, 2004. *Women in Local Government Policy Paper*.

Annex A: List of interviewees

ORGANISATION	NAME OF INTERVIEWEE	DESIGNATION	DATE OF INTERVIEW
Decentralisation Secretariat	Alfred Sakwiya	Director	9 March 2012
Electoral Commission of Zambia	Crispin Akufuna	Public Relations Manager	6 March 2012
Foundation for Democratic Process	McDonald Chipenzi	Executive Director	9 March 2012
Gender in Development Directorate	Victor Mbumwae	Specialist Gender and Communications Directorate	6 March 2012
Local Government Association of Zambia	Maurice Mbolela	Executive Secretary	9 March 2012
Zambia National Women's Lobby	Aselly Mwanza	Head of Programmes	7 March 2012
	Nelson Banda	Information and Network Officer	
Non-Governmental Coordinating Council	Bridget Kalaba	Director (Interim)	6 March 2012
Movement for Multi-Party Democracy	Dorothy Phiri	Provincial Chair Lady – Eastern Province	9 March 2012