

Women's Role in Post-Independence Zambian Politics

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the participation of Zambian women in politics by comparing the Second and Third Republics. A comparison of the two political periods illustrates that democratization and political liberalization by the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) in Zambia have not radically improved the role of women in politics and may have worsened the political situation of Zambian women.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet article étudie la participation des Zambiennes en politique en comparant la deuxième et la troisième République. La comparaison des deux périodes politiques démontre que la démocratisation et la libéralisation politique par le "Movement for Multiparty Democracy" (MMD) en Zambie n'ont pas encore radicalement amélioré le rôle des femmes en politique et aurait peut-être empiré la situation politique des Zambiennes.

INTRODUCTION

This article analyses the role of women in Zambian politics since the Second Republic. As in most countries women make up the majority (51%) of the Zambian population and consequently, the majority of the electorate. Political parties and politicians in Zambia readily mobilize women for political support, and so, women are more visible in political activities in terms of attending rallies, demonstrating and voting. The degree of women's involvement in politics is reflected in the nature of the policies of the government. Where women occupy a considerable number of policy-making positions in government, there is more likelihood that policies will reflect their interests. Under-representation of women in positions of authority is likely to result in inadequate apportionment of government resources, such as jobs and finances, to them as a group. The United Nations acknowledges the importance of involving women in decision-making in order to promote equality between men and women, provide opportunities for realization of their potential, and formulate appropriate policies for the fulfilment of the goals of development, especially on issues which affect them (Graham and Jordan, 1980).

This article analyses the under-representation of women in Zambian politics by

asking the following questions: How and why are women under-represented in politics?; what is women's response to their under-representation?; what has been government's response to women's pressure for equality in politics?; and what constrains their political participation? The answers are in two major parts, under the headings: "Women as Political Actors " and the "Hindrances to Participation " in Zambian politics.

The political role of women will be analysed in two periods of Zambian history. First is the One Party Participatory Democracy era from 1972 to 1991, also known as the Second Republic, when Zambia was ruled by President Kaunda and his party, the United National Independence Party (UNIP), with no opposition parties. The second period under study is the multi-party of the Third Republic, which began in 1991 and continues today. President Chiluba and his party, the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD), are in power with more than 30 opposition parties.

WOMEN AS POLITICAL ACTORS: THE GENDER SITUATION IN AFRICA, NORTH AMERICA AND WESTERN EUROPE

In every country of the world, women suffer from subordination to men. However, the form and nature of subordination in Africa differs

from that of North America and Western Europe. Similarly, women of all nations are under-represented in national positions of political decision-making, thereby limiting their influence on policies which affect them (Fort et al, 1994). However, women in industrialized democracies like Britain, Canada, Norway, Sweden and the USA play a more active political role when they run for office and win seats in national politics; become heads of state; or bring women's issues to the forefront of the political agenda (Wilson, 1996). There are more women in the legislature in North America and Western Europe than in Africa. In 1996, for example, Sweden, Norway and Finland had the highest number of parliamentary seats held by women as a percentage of the total at 40%, 39% and 34% respectively, while Canada had 19%, the USA 11%, Italy 10% and Britain 8% (United Nations Development Programme -UNDP, 1997). Canada had a woman prime minister, Kim Campbell, in 1993 (Wilson 1996: 70-71), and Britain had Margaret Thatcher in the 1980s, while there has never been a woman chief executive in Africa. The state in Sweden has been most supportive of the women's cause as it has advocated equality between men and women since the 1960s, has formulated "policies supportive of working parents," and passed legislation banning sex discrimination in employment in 1980 (Fort et al, 1994: 144). This means that women in North America and Western Europe have been significantly integrated into politics and gender differences in national politics have been narrowed because of the fight for women's rights by the women's movement, because of women's higher education and because of changing attitudes to women's role, while their counterparts in Africa are yet to participate in politics in any significant way.

In general, women in Africa and developing countries share common experiences of subjugation to men in all spheres of life, due to patriarchal culture. Thus, for example, the women's vote has been manipulated and mobilized by men through political parties to elevate themselves to power at the expense of women. McFadden's (1990/91) analysis of women in Botswana found that men have used women's votes to acquire power positions.

Analysing representation of women in decision-making positions, Parpart and Staudt (1989: 8) observed that "women occupy minute numbers of decision-making in all African states," both democratic and non-democratic. In 1996, there were 24% women in the legislature in South Africa, with 15% for Zimbabwe, 11% for Zambia and 10% for Botswana (UNDP, 1997). There are even fewer women in executive positions, such as cabinet ministers. "Half of the states in Africa have no women in the cabinet at all" (Parpart and Staudt, 1989:8). Botswana, for example, currently has one woman Minister (of Education) out of a total of 10. The 1990s have not seen a radical improvement in women's political position in Africa in spite of democratization.

African women have not passively accepted their disadvantaged political situation. According to Gordon (1992), one option open to women has been to form organizations to collectively pressure for change through articulation for their needs, demands and problems. The 1970s experienced an increase in the number of women's organizations, especially after 1975, International Women's Year. It was during this period that international organizations and donor agencies "began to promote women's groups in the hopes of improving women's economic, political and social positions" (Gordon, 1992: 213). However, women's organizations have had limited success in the promotion of gender equality in the political arena.

Most of the African states have adopted some mechanisms to redress gender inequality in politics through adoption of gender sensitive policies and special machinery for women. Such approaches were adopted partly as a result of local and international pressure to include women in the overall process of development (Gordon, 1992). Policies include provision for maternity leave, equal employment opportunities and equal property rights (Afshar, 1996). There were also suggested policies to improve women's access to land, capital, technology, training and other productive resources (Gordon, 1992). African governments, including Cameroon, the Gambia, Botswana, Lesotho, Zambia and Zimbabwe, created special Women's Units, Bureaus, Ministries or Committees to deal

with women's issues (Gordon, 1992). Furthermore, Afshar (1996) has observed that many political parties in Africa, especially one-party regimes, formed women's wings. Gordon (1992: 214) argued that some African states, like Tanzania, adopted another approach of "expanding women's political participation in government" by setting aside ten seats in the legislature for women.

Afshar (1987: 3) notes that the problem is that African governments "do not have coherent policies about women, nor do they usually have structural facilities for coordinating their decisions." Furthermore, institutions, like Bureaus, have not brought more women into positions of authority because such institutions are primarily there to control women's participation and to mobilize women's support and votes rather than to work for the advancement of women (Afshar, 1996). Gordon (1992) argues that the problem with Women's Bureaus is that they have not been given adequate power and financial resources to effectively carry out their functions. She argues further that Bureaus, as government organs, "cannot be highly critical of government policies and push for radical change" (Gordon, 1992: 214). Thus, "the greatest problem is that women and women's groups do not challenge the fundamental gender role that subordinate them to males and extol the sexual division of labour that gives wealth and power primarily to men" (Gordon, 1992:213). This, according to Gordon (1992), is partly attributed to the control of women's organizations by educated middle class women who accept views held in both Africa and West that a woman's place is in the home.

However, political analysts are optimistic about the future prospects for women in spite of the ineffectiveness of women's organizations in overcoming gender inequalities in politics. Gordon (1992: 214) observes that women's organisations are "expanding women's consciousness and building self-confidence and leadership skills that will be necessary for bolder and more effective political activism in the future."

WOMEN IN POLITICS IN ZAMBIA'S POST-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD

Under-representation of women in

decision-making has its origins in the pre-colonial, through the colonial to the post-independence period. Political independence meant that all citizens became enfranchised. This allowed women to engage in several political activities. Women's impact in the political arena is felt through the exercise of their voting power. Although election results are not desegregated on a gender basis, it is assumed that women make up the larger number of voters since they constitute the majority of the population and are easily mobilized. Presidential and parliamentary elections in Zambia allow the electorate, women (and men) as voters, to contribute to the popularity and legitimization of male leaders.

Although women constitute the majority of voters, there are only a few women in positions of authority, as leading members of government for both elected and appointed positions. This is mainly because few women candidates are adopted by parties which are dominated by males, and few women win parliamentary seats. For example, after the elections in 1973, 1978 and 1983, females made up three percent while males constituted 97% of all elected MPs. There was a slight improvement in 1988 when females accounted for five percent of all elected MPs. The data in Table 1 show that the role of women as parliamentary candidates and MPs is marginal as few were selected as candidates by UNIP, and on average, less than half of those who stood in elections were successful. Similarly, in the Third Republic, females made up five percent of all elected MPs after the 1991 elections. Therefore, political liberalization following the 1991 elections has been no cure for women's under-representation in parliament. The 1996 elections saw an increase in the number of women candidates who won parliamentary seats to a total of 16, or 11% of all elected MPs.

There has been a change in the type of women who contest parliamentary elections. In the Second Republic, women who contested parliamentary elections typically had poor education, while those who did so in the 1991 elections under the MMD were very educated (including university graduates), professional, salaried and of a business class (Ferguson et al., 1995). The same trend of educated women

contestants continued in the 1996 general elections. However, a breakdown of the 16 women MPs by tribe shows the predominance of Bemba speakers, numbering eight (50%), followed by five (31%) Lozi speakers, two (13%) Nyanja speakers and one (6%) Tonga speaker. This distribution also represents the major tribes of Zambia in politics, just as in the previous Kaunda government. Therefore, one can assume that such women would be primarily guided by tribal considerations and the interests of their constituencies rather than representation of gender interests in government. This assumption is strengthened by the fact that women's issues and gender equality have never been part of the political debate during electoral campaigns by either the women candidates or the MMD party. However, there is a strong belief among women in government that "women bore the major responsibility for articulating these (*women's*) interests in debates and policy formation" as "... men were not likely to do so" (Ferguson et al, 1995: 19). Furthermore, at the local level, there has been no equal power sharing between men and women as there were more male Mayors (22) than female (one), and more male Councillors (1,113) than female (16) in 1994 (Republic of Zambia, 1995: 19).

Political appointments to decision-making positions in government have not helped women to achieve parity with the men because tribal rather than gender balancing has been the underlying determinant of political appointments. This mirrored the dominance of Bemba males in politics and raised the question of whether women appointed on such a basis would promote gender interests rather than tribal ones. The most glaring fact about the few women who were in authority in the Second Republic is that only a handful were found in important leadership positions such as Minister.

The trend in the dominance of males in parliamentary and ministerial positions continues into the Third Republic. Therefore, a liberalized political atmosphere associated with democratization does not mean more representation and participation in decision-making by females. President Chiluba, like his predecessor, has not utilized his power of nomination of MPs to increase

the number of women to the National Assembly as he nominated only one woman MP as opposed to three men in 1991. Similarly, after the 1991 elections, President Chiluba appointed no woman Cabinet Minister and only four women Deputy Ministers. This was worse than the situation under the Kaunda government, which had one woman in the Cabinet. However, after the cabinet reshuffle of April 1993 and pressure from women's organizations on President Chiluba to increase the number of women in government, the women Deputy Ministers were elevated to full ministerial posts. This brought to two the number of women Cabinet Ministers out of a total of 23 Ministers, and one woman Deputy Minister out of a total of 32. The third woman Minister was forced to resign in January 1994 due to her alleged involvement in drug trafficking, a charge from which she was subsequently exonerated. In addition, there were five women Permanent Secretaries and three women in charge of foreign missions credited to Germany, France and Kenya. The closure of the Zambian Embassy in France in 1994 reduced the number of females in the foreign service to two. However, women are still under-represented in decision-making structures in the MMD government and administration, thus perpetuating the traditional dominance of men in positions of authority (see Table 2). In addition, like Kaunda before him, President Chiluba's appointment of women to cabinet and foreign missions reflected tribal preferences, although the President claims to be oblivious to tribal balancing, with women drawn from each of the major tribes dominant in politics, e.g. four Bembas, two Lozis and one Tonga by 1994.

Women fared worse in the appointments to the cabinet following the 1996 general elections. Only one woman Minister and four Deputy Ministers were appointed. Again, of the five women, three (60%) are Bemba speakers, one (20%) is a Lozi and one (20%) a Tonga, another reflection of Bemba dominance in national politics. Five women permanent secretaries have retained their positions. In addition, after the 1996 elections, President Chiluba appointed four men and no women to parliamentary seats.

Even in the party structure, very few

women were found at top positions in UNIP and the MMD and they were mostly confined to the women's wing of both parties. Therefore, the under-representation of women in government might help to explain why both governments failed to create opportunities for women to be leaders, design and implement policy on women, establish a special machinery for women, or apportion adequate resources to meet their needs. It seems to make no substantial difference to women's political status whether the government is socialist (UNIP with its ideology of Humanism) or liberal (MMD) because in both regimes they have remained under-represented. Zambia, therefore, fits in neatly with Fattouh's (1989: 48) and MacKinnon's (1989: 170) conclusions that "State power ... is male power."

WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS AS POLITICAL PRESSURE GROUPS

The marginalization of women in politics and lack of an explicit national policy on women galvanized women into action to redress the political inequality by forming women's organizations (Gordon, 1992). However, women's organizations have had limited success in the promotion of gender equality in the political arena partly due to party policy during UNIP rule, and partly due to resistance by the male leadership in both the UNIP and the MMD. For example, the Women's League, formed in 1975, was created by the male leadership of UNIP primarily to mobilize and politically educate women, to support male politicians without challenging the predominance of males in decision-making structures of the party and government. The League's proposal for a Ministry of Women's Affairs, for example, was rejected by the Cabinet. Instead, the Cabinet formed the Women's Unit, situated in the National Commission for Development Planning (NCDP), in 1984 (Munachonga, 1989: 136).

In 1985, the League's request for the establishment of a special women's commission to identify laws which discriminate against women on the basis of sex, and their demand for 50-50 representation in parliament and the Central Committee (the supreme policy-making organ) of UNIP were spurned by the male leadership of the

party. In 1986, only two of the five ad-hoc committees of the Women's Affairs Committee of the Central Committee were headed by women. Instead of allowing the League to address women's issues, UNIP confined it to non-political issues (Geisler, 1987: 48, 59). The League's constrained role and its acceptance of the traditional role of women as wives and mothers prevented it from pushing for a higher number of women in positions of authority. However, the League was useful for lobbying government and the party to promote the interests of its members, for example, by issuing petty traders with trading licences (Geisler, 1987:46, 57). Even though few League members were appointed to government parties, their membership did provide a springboard for their advancement in other authority positions. The Zambia Association for Research and Development (ZARD) has not had much success in lobbying government for more women in positions of authority, either. Formed in 1984, ZARD is a non-political organization of educated and professional women, whose interests were not adequately catered to by the Women's League of UNIP. Its two major objectives are to conduct research on women, and liaise with policy makers (ZARD, 1996). Thus, it is geared to the advancement of the position and interests of women through gender equality in party and government posts, employment opportunities, access to economic resources and improvement of the general welfare of women. ZARD's success has been evident in numerous publications designed to provide data on and publicize the socioeconomic situation of women, covering law, housing, education, inheritance, and political participation. ZARD's ability to conduct research and publish its work and hold conferences is largely due to the financial assistance from international donor agencies like the Norwegian Agency for International Development (NORAD), the Royal Netherlands Embassy, and the UNDP.

ZARD's efforts at promoting gender equality are best understood as a collective effort with other women-focused NGOs. For example, together with other women's NGOs, ZARD lobbied the UNIP government to ratify the United Nation's Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women in June 1985

(ZARD, 1994: 12.) Additionally, it was due to heavy lobbying of MPs by ZARD, the Women's Non Governmental Organization Coordinating Committee (NGOCC) and other women's NGOs that the redrafted bill on Wills and Inheritance became law to provide widows with legal rights to property (ZARD, 1996: 63-64). Therefore, in spite of the accusations that ZARD is elitist in orientation, it has tried to promote the general interests of women from different social backgrounds.

Under UNIP, ZARD's efforts had limited success primarily because gender issues had not been a priority to the UNIP leadership. This did not deter ZARD and other women's NGOs. They have continued with their struggle for gender equality into the post-1991 regime. The Third Republic has witnessed greater activity by women's NGOs partly due to the liberalized political atmosphere allowing for freedom to form associations, and partly due to women's greater awareness and determination to promote gender equality in all spheres of life in spite of the resistance from the male leadership. Thus, by 1994, there were 34 women's NGOs devoted to the promotion of women's issues compared to 17 in 1985 (ZARD, 1994: 15). But again, as in the past regime, the success of women's NGOs is conditioned by the paternalistic state they are challenging, which has to be willing to meet their demands.

In addition, the National Women's Lobby, formed in 1991 during the transition to multi-party politics, exerts pressure on government together with other organizations like ZARD and NGOCC. Its main objectives are to lobby government for an equal sharing of power between men and women; to support women candidates, regardless of party affiliation, by pledging financial assistance and skills training; to mobilize women voters to rally behind women candidates; and to reorient attitudes of the general public towards women (*The Weekly Post*, 22-28 January 1993). In 1995, the Women's Lobby made submissions for equal rights for women to the Constitutional Review Commission responsible for drafting the Constitution. Despite the fact that the 1996 Constitution provides for "equal worth of men and women in their rights to participate..." (Government of Zambia, 1996:637),

the provision for "succession to property and assets" remains a contentious issue and women's interests are still inadequately addressed.

Efforts by women's NGOs to lobby and pressure the MMD government have proved to have a very limited effect. For example, after the 1991 elections, President Chiluba failed to appoint a woman to the Cabinet, to the amazement of the women's NGOs. Consequently, "a broadly based NGO Petition was presented to the President at the State House" (ZARD, 1994:9). Six months later in a Cabinet reshuffle, three women were promoted to Ministers in a Cabinet of 23, a very small victory for women's NGOs. Furthermore, efforts of women's NGOs from 1992 through 1994 to pressure the MMD government to adopt a national policy and machinery for advancement of women have been futile (ZARD, 1994: 16-17). Whereas external funding for reports, conferences and seminars have helped women's NGOs to address non-political issues, the same is not true in the case of political issues, e.g. in increasing the number of women in positions of authority, gender policy and machinery for women.

GOVERNMENT GENDER POLICY

Lack of government policy explains the absence of legislation and concerted efforts to raise, substantially, the number of women in the legislature and ministerial posts. Instead, the Zambian government has somewhat responded to pressure from women's NGOs and international donors for gender equality, and has taken initiatives to forestall further criticisms in a different manner. Government's response can be analysed at three levels: overall national policy on women; policy on women in development; and sectorial policies targeted at women. Regarding a national policy on women, neither the UNIP nor the MMD government has had an explicit government policy on women targeted at promoting gender equality in all spheres of life - political, legal, administrative, social and economic. However, there is an implicit government policy on women which dates back to 1985 and continues under the MMD government. This implicit policy restricts itself to reforms of some laws which overtly discriminate against

women in areas of employment, age of retirement, widows' inheritance, personal income tax, right to citizenship for foreign spouses and protection of women against discrimination on the basis of sex (ZARD, 1994: 20-21). However, such legal reforms have not ended gender discrimination, but merely ameliorated the situation of women.

At the second level is government policy on women in development. The previous UNIP government had a policy on Women in Development (WID) which the MMD government conveniently failed to inherit in 1991. Under the UNIP government, Chapter 25 of the Fourth National Development Plan (FNDP) focused on WIDE (Republic of Zambia, 1989: 441). The liberalized economic policy of the MMD government since 1991 meant abandonment of centralized planning, a big step backward for women's development. However, the MMD inherited the WID Department which has been reduced to collecting data on the situation of women.

Lastly, lack of an explicit national policy on gender also meant the lack of a gender-based approach at sectoral and provincial levels. At least under the UNIP government, the FNDP provided for sectorial planning for women in all sectors and fields of the economy. Each ministry, department and unit (e.g. Provincial Planning Units) had to have objectives, strategies and investment programmes for implementation (Republic of Zambia, 1989: 443). All this fell away with the coming to power of the MMD. In its place is a decentralized, selective approach by each ministry and province. For example, the gender-based policy formulated by the Ministry of Education and Luapula Provincial Planning Unit was heavily influenced by donor agencies funding programmes there (ZARD, 1994: 14). However, donor funding has had little impact on gender equality or government policy on gender.

The nonexistence of a national policy also means the lack of a national machinery devoted to gender issues in the MMD government. At least under the UNIP government there existed a national machinery, the Women's Affairs Committee, which was responsible for presenting and promoting women's issues to the party and government (Party

and Government of the Republic of Zambia, 1985; ZARD, 1994:15). Unfortunately, the Women's Affairs Committee failed to lobby the party and government for equal sharing of power between men and women, and it was influential only in securing maternity leave for working women, a very limited impact, although of benefit to working mothers. In early 1997, President Chiluba appointed a permanent secretary for women's affairs, perhaps a sign of some change in government attitude towards women's issues.

HINDRANCES TO WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION

Several factors, acting simultaneously and reinforcing each other, prevent women's effective participation in the political process. These include the following:

Patriarchal Culture

Gender relations are products of male dominance over females based on patriarchal culture. Parpart (1989:9) argues that it is the ideology of patriarchy which constrains women's political role. The dominance of males over females in all spheres of life, both private (e.g. family) and public (e.g. politics and workplace) demonstrates the powerlessness and oppression of women (Little, 1994: 24). Dominance by males is reinforced by Zambian cultural values and customs which stress the father and husband as "heads" or power holders in the family, with women subservient to them, as well as gender role specialization. Both females and males have been socialized into, and most accept, their assigned roles (Little, 1994: 20). Therefore, socialization of women away from politics partly explains their under-representation in decision-making (Whitworth, 1994: 76). The diffusion of western culture in Zambia since colonialism has widened the scope of male dominance beyond the family into what Walby (1990) calls "public patriarchy," opening up opportunities for women beyond the home but at the same time fostering discrimination against them on the basis of sex, thereby encouraging gender inequalities. Another explanation is that it is not so much the socialization but sex discrimination that explains

women's under-representation, because men refuse to appoint women in decision-making positions (Whitworth, 1994: 76). Indeed, Ferguson et al (1995: 14) indicate that sexual discrimination accounts for the few women in politics in the Third Republic and the few women in leadership positions.

Inadequate political participation by women is explained by patriarchy, socialization and sexual discrimination. These account for two major political features in Zambia. First, the majority of women shun political jobs preferring less conspicuous, less controversial and more "feminine" jobs like nursing and teaching. This is exemplified by the small number of women candidates contesting parliamentary elections since independence. Second, very few women have been appointed to top positions in government and party in the entire independence period because it is generally believed by both women and (especially) men, that politics is a man's domain and that women are not good politicians or leaders (Ferguson et al, 1995: 12).

Lack of Resources

Women's lack of resources is partly explained by patriarchy, rooted in pre-colonial Africa, reinforced in colonial Africa and perpetuated into the post-independence period. Women generally lack resources, especially financial and educational, which would enable them to compete with other candidates, primarily male, in the political arena. Such a situation arises from both the predominant position of the male/husband, and the institution of ownership, especially as associated with capitalism. Both male dominance and economic (class) position determine women's access to resources and power. Marx and Engels (1983) attribute lack of personal independence, oppression, alienation or lack of political power by any individual to lack of control of the means of production as one's economic position determines one's political position. Barrett (1980: 153) argues explicitly that the oppression of women under capitalism should be understood in terms of the linkage between "division of labour at work and in the home."

In the Second Republic, UNIP assisted

candidates, both male and female, with funds for elections, but most parties in the Third Republic do not. Data on sources of financial support for women candidates in the Third Republic indicate that parties are not an important source of financial support with the majority of candidates mobilizing their own funds either from personal income or relatives and friends (Ferguson et al, 1995: 10-11). Financial dependence constrains the use of funds and leaves little room for investment in politics. This might help to explain why there are more divorced or single women than married ones in government (Ferguson et al, 1995: 9), as they are more likely to invest some income in politics or pursue a career in politics.

While all women are subject to male dominance, they do not all suffer from a lack of resources. The majority of women are of the working class and peasantry, and therefore poor. However, there are a few upper and middle class women with high paying jobs and access to economic resources. Therefore, a few have resources to finance elections, but can only enter politics with the help of male relatives. Fatton (1989: 49) describes African politics candidly: "In general, a woman's access to state resources and hence to class power hinges upon her male linkages." This, in effect, means that "Women...lack the political and material autonomy that transforms individuals into full citizens" (Fatton, 1989: 49). Ferguson et al, (1995: 9-10) reveal that the majority of women in the Zambian government had relatives who were active in politics or were chiefs and chieftainesses, who encouraged and financially supported their entry into politics. With such a strong influence of relatives on women's careers in politics, it is difficult for them to promote (women's) interests other than those of their backers. Even if women were free from the influence of their backers, it would be fallacious to assume that women MPs and ministers would represent women's interests because like their male counterparts, they are in power mostly for personal aggrandisement.

Lack of resources is not only confined to individual women participants, but to women's NGOs, who depend heavily on donor agencies for financial and material assistance. Donors in turn

depend on the "goodwill" of the state to allow them to assist individual women candidates and women's NGOs. This means that donors are constrained in their efforts to assist women's NGOs, e.g. sponsor a woman candidate, by the need to maintain cordial relations with the host government lest they are accused of interference in a host country's domestic affairs. This, in turn, demonstrates the restrained role of donor agencies in pushing the Zambian government to create opportunities for more women to attain positions of authority.

Lack of Women's Commitment or Lack of Unity Among Women's NGOs

Divisions symbolized by the existence of numerous organizations advancing specific and divergent, and sometimes similar interests of women; and diversity on membership, with some groups consisting of semi-educated (i.e. the League of UNIP), while others have educated, professional women (e.g. ZARD), have prevented a united stand against the government on the issue of under-representation. In the Second Republic, different activities and orientations of the League and ZARD drove a wedge between them, preventing a coordinated strategy for advancement of women. Similarly, a proliferation of women's NGOs in the Third Republic has fostered diversity with no common political agenda and strategy due to different specializations among Women's Lobby, ZARD, YWCA and Women for Change. The result has been competition as each promotes its own goals, although they have at times coalesced under the umbrella of the NGOCC. More important is the lack of cordial working relationship between women's NGOs and women in government. One wonders how the NGOs expect to influence government policy. Consequently, women's NGOs have been accused of "advancing themselves" (Ferguson et al, 1995: 24-25). Indeed, some women have used women's NGOs (e.g. the Women's Lobby) as a gateway to positions in government, e.g. as a permanent secretary, while some women

have used women's NGOs (e.g. ZARD) to gain access to resources through research funds. With such negative viewpoints, women's NGOs might find it difficult to legitimize their claims, although they have succeeded in publicizing their viewpoints.

CONCLUSION

Under-representation of women in decision-making can be explained by patriarchy, socialization, sexual discrimination and lack of resources such that the few women who constitute part of the power structure since independence have done so at the pleasure of males, hence their marginalization. Strategies of male linkages by individual women, and strategies of petitions, forming women's groups and analysis of women's situation in politics and other aspects of life have not resolved the problem of under-representation.

This, in effect, means that women face great obstacles to their effective participation in politics, and women's NGOs lack political clout to effectively press for equal representation in decision-making and resource allocation. Therefore, there is need for women and women's NGOs, composed primarily of educated, elite or middle and upper class women, to review their strategy in order to raise the consciousness of women about their subordination; mobilize the majority, low class women of workers and peasantry, as voters for women candidates; and collaborate in exerting pressure on male leaders to create more opportunities for women. This actually means that women candidates and women's NGOs have to reorient themselves away from personal and elitist gains to serve all women's interests as the basis of women's unity against male supremacy in politics. However, the challenge to male control of power is not likely to produce significant results in the short term, but might bear fruit in the long run because it is not easy to change a patriarchal culture and eliminate sexual discrimination.

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Table 1
Gender Distribution of Parliamentary Candidates and Seats 1968-1991

Indicators	1968	1973	1978	1983	1988	1991
Total Number of Candidates	181	532	766	759	593	330
Total Number of Female Candidates	6	9	10	17	10	12
Total Number of Male Candidates	175	523	756	742	583	318
Ratio of Male to Female Candidates	1:29	1:58	1:76	1:44	1:58	1:27
Number of Females Elected	3	3	4	4	6	7
Number of Males Elected	102	102	121	121	119	143
Total Number of Elected MPs	105	105	125	125	125	150
Percentage of Female Candidates (of all candidates)	3	2	1	2	2	4
Percentage of Male Candidates (of all candidates)	97	98	99	98	98	96
Percentage of Successful Females	50	33	40	24	60	58
Percentage of Successful Males	58	20	16	16	20	45
Percentage of Females of All Elected MPs	3	3	3	3	5	5
Percentage of Males of All Elected MPs	97	97	97	97	95	95
Ratio of Female to Male MPs	1:34	1:34	1:30	1:30	1:20	1:20

Source: calculated from Republic of Zambia, *Presidential and Parliamentary Election Results* (Lusaka: Government Printer, 1968, 1973, 1978, 1983, 1988, 1991)

Table 2
Gender Distribution of Top Party and Government Posts, 1988, 1991-92, 1994

Year	Gender	Members of Central Committee	Ministers	Ministers of State/ Deputy Ministers	Members of Parliament	Permanent Secretaries	Ambassadors & High Commissioners
1988							
	F	5	2	1	5	3	1
	M	63	16	20	120	31	28
	Total	68	18	21	125	34	29
1991-1992	F	0	0	5	8	5	4
	M	0	23	27	146	30	25
	Total	0	23	32	154	35	29
1994	F	0	2	1	8	5	2
	M	0	21	31	146	30	27
	Total	0	23	32	154	35	29

Source:

Republic of Zambia, *Presidential and Parliamentary Election Results*, Lusaka: Government Printer, 1988, 1991; Party and the Government of the Republic of Zambia, *Zambia's Report to the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace*, held in Nairobi, Kenya, 15-26 July, 1985, see Table 9, page 67