

**THE ROLE OF WOMEN'S ORGANISATIONS IN THE
POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT OF ZAMBIA, 1964-2001: A CASE
STUDY OF THE UNIP WOMEN'S LEAGUE AND THE ZAMBIA
NATIONAL WOMEN'S LOBBY GROUP**

BY

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**A Dissertation submitted to the University of Zambia in Partial
fulfilment for the degree of Master of Arts in History**

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

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2012.**

DECLARATION

I Lubosi Kikamba, declare that this dissertation:

- (a) Represents my own work;
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APPROVAL

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of women's organisations in the political development of Zambia from 1964 to 2001. It focuses on two women's organisations that were active at different historical periods: The UNIP Women's League and the Zambia National Women's Lobby Group. Therefore, the two organisations are viewed according to their different political and historical contexts.

The main argument of this study is that women's organisations were used by Zambian women as an alternative public sphere to participate as collective political actors in order to institutionalise their issues and also pursue their gender equality goals. The study demonstrates that women's organisations contributed to the political development of Zambia between 1964 and 2001. They played a cardinal role in setting up institutions and transforming political structures in order to bring women issues and gender concerns in the public arena. Apart from that, they also acted as important agents in politicising women and the democratisation process after 1991. However, there is still more to be done in order to domesticate and implement international and regional conventions in order for both men and women to be equal partners in all areas of national development.

The study takes a qualitative approach by analysing both primary and secondary sources. However, it greatly utilises primary data from the UNIP Archives and the National Archives of Zambia as well as reports from women's organisations, official Government publications and oral interviews.

DEDICATION

To my late father, Mr. Lastone. E. Kikamba, my mother, Mrs Annie. M. Kikamba, my sisters, brothers, nieces and nephews, and all the women and men who have passionately contributed to the building of our Motherland, Zambia.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AAWC	All Africa Women's Conference
ACHPR	African Charter on Human and People's Rights
ACWF	All-China Women's Federation
ANC	African National Congress
ANIP	African National Independence Party
BCW	Botswana Council of Women
BDP	Botswana Democratic Party
BSAC	British South Africa Company
CBOs	Community based organisations
CCMG	Christian Churches' Monitoring Group
CCZ	Council of Churches in Zambia
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CNU	Caucus for National Unity
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
EFZ	Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia
FEDSAW	Federation of South African Women
FNDP	Fourth National Development Plan
GIDD	Gender in Development Department
GRZ	Government of the Republic of Zambia
HIVOS	Humanist Institute for Co-operation with Developing Countries
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ILO	International Labour Organisation
INESOR	Institute for Economic and Social Research

JUDAI	Jule Development Associates International
MP	Member of Parliament
MMD	Movement for Multiparty Democracy
NANGOF	Namibian Non-Government Organisations' Forum
NAWA	Namibian Women's Association
NCDP	National Commission for Development Planning
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NGOCC	Non-Governmental Organisations' Coordinating Committee/Council
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operation
NRAC	Northern Rhodesia African Congress
NWV	Namibian Women's Voice
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
PAZA	Press Association of Zambia
PAWO	Pan-African Women's Organisation
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SADCC	South African Development Co-ordinating Committee
SAP	Structural Adjustments Programmes
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SPAW	Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women
SWAPO	South West African People's Organisation
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UNFP	United National Freedom Party
UNIP	United National Independence Party

UNPAAERD	UN Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery and Development
UNZA	University of Zambia
UNZASU	University of Zambia Students' Union
UPP	United Progressive Party
WAC	Women's Affairs Committee
WFC	Women for Change
WID	Women in Development
WIDD	Women in Development Department
WIZER	Women in Zambia for Equality and Representation
WIP	Women in Politics
WILSA	Women in Law in Southern Africa
WLDAF	Women in Law and Development in Africa
WNC	Women's National Coalition
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association
ZANC	Zambia African National Congress
ZARD	Zambia Association for Research and Development
ZANLA	Zimbabwe African National Union Liberation Army
ZAW	Zambia Alliance for Women
ZCTU	Zambia Congress of Trade Unions
ZNWLG	Zambia National Women's Lobby Group
ZEMEC	Zambia Elections Monitoring Committee

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Since the nineteenth century, women worldwide have been engaged in a kind of separate institution-building referred to as “creation of alternative public space”.¹ Such institution-building served to promote collective identity and generate alternative discourses, as well as put across women’s interests and exert pressure on mainstream institutions. It was one of the means women used to become collective political players. These included women’s wings of political parties, women’s Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), women’s groups within parliaments, women’s committees in trade unions, women’s units and women’s services.² This study examines the role of women’s organisations in the political development of Zambia from 1964 to 2001. It focuses on two organisations, namely the United National Independence Party (UNIP) Women’s League and the Zambia National Women’s Lobby Group (ZNWLG).

In order to understand the role of these two women’s organisations in Zambia’s political development, it is important to place them within the context of both the worldwide and African women’s movement. In most parts of the world, women were not allowed to take part in politics. However, in the nineteenth century, women in the

¹ M. Sawer, “The Representation of Women in Australia: Meaning and Make Believe”, in K. Ross (ed.), *Women, Politics and Change* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 12.

² Sawer, “The Representation of Women”, p. 12.

United States and Europe became aware of their oppression and embarked on a struggle for freedom and equality. The fight for equal rights with men in all spheres of life marked the beginning of the women's rights movement. In 1848, more than 300 people attended the first Women's Rights Convention at Seneca Falls in New York. At this convention, women talked about their social, civil and religious rights. It was at this conference where the Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions was ratified. The Declaration listed eighteen injuries caused by men on women. These included denial of property rights, coverture in marriage, exclusion from franchise and blocking access to higher education, among other issues.³ As a result of this conference, the taboo against women's participating in public life begun to fall. However, it took some time for women to be granted the right to vote. New Zealand and Australia were the first two countries to grant women the right to vote and stand for elections in 1893 and 1902, respectively. Women in the United States acquired their right to vote in 1920.⁴ In the United Kingdom, only a few women above 30 years were enfranchised in 1918. However, in 1928 all women above 21 years were given the right to vote on the same terms as men.⁵ With this background, women's organisations or groupings became important means which women used to become collective political actors.

In Australia, the Women's Christian Temperance Union was involved in championing the cause of women since the nineteenth century. Subsequently, the Women's Electoral Lobby was established in 1972 in order to exert pressure on parliamentary

³ L.E. Ford, *Women and Politics: The Pursuit of Equality* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co, 2002), pp. 36-38.

⁴ Ford, *Women and Politics*, p. 51.

⁵ M. Sifuniso, "Zambian Women in Politics", in M. Nalumango and M. Sifuniso (eds.), *Women Power in Politics* (Lusaka: ZNWLG, 1998), p. 197.

politics. The organisation yielded a lot of results as more women began to be elected to parliament. The total number of Australian women elected to the Federal, State and territory parliaments rose from fifteen in 1972 to 188 in 2000.⁶

When the Communist Party came to power in China in 1949, it formed a special national women's organisation called the All-China Women's Federation (ACWF). This was among other mass organisations formed at that time to mediate between the party and society. Through this organisation, the Communist Party sought to address issues such as child-marriage, divorce and polygamy, and to promote progressive legislative change for women. It also aimed at organising women for social transformation. Women were mobilised for national programmes such as economic reconstruction, land reform and collectivisation of agriculture, among others.⁷ This was an important factor that facilitated the sudden influx of women into party and government structures.

In Africa, the political-economy of the colonial system had major setbacks on the Africans especially women. Although the colonial system favoured African men with opportunities for employment, education and access to resources, Africans lost their sovereignty to foreigners. This led to the emergence of the African nationalist movements. The independence movements of the 1950s and 1960s in Africa laid the foundation for many women's organisations. It was during this time that many women started participating in modern politics. In the struggle for freedom, women fought side by side with men in Angola, Algeria, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique,

⁶ Sawer, "The Representation of Women", pp. 11-13.

⁷ J. Howell, "Women's Political Participation in China: Struggling to Hold up Half the Sky", in Ross (ed.), *Women, Politics and Change*, p. 45.

Ethiopia and Zimbabwe, among other countries. In Zimbabwe, women comprised 25 per cent of the cadres of the Zimbabwe African National Union Liberation Army (ZANLA).⁸ After the freedom struggle, African women were determined to be fully participating citizens in their new nations. Unfortunately, this was not fully realised. However, the solidarity groups and organisations they evolved became one of the important means they used to put across their interests and concerns in the political arena.

In Ghana, women became politically active during the nationalist movement. The women were very active in anti-colonial protests and demonstrations. After independence in 1957, the women insisted on participating in national affairs. For example, during the First Republic (1960-1966), women were given twelve seats in parliament and a ministerial post.⁹ In order to institutionalise their concerns, Ghanaian women together with women from Egypt, Tanzania and Guinea in 1962 established the All Africa Women's Conference (AAWC) which was later renamed the Pan-African Women's Organisation (PAWO). Before the International Women's Conference in 1975 the Ghanaian women also formed the National Council on Women and Development. The organisation organised women groups from various parts of the country. This organisation after consultation with grassroots women made income generation its top priority. Therefore, it introduced new technologies like the chorker fish smoker and charcoal made from waste cocoa. The women were also engaged in agricultural production and food processing.¹⁰

⁸ M.C. Synder and M. Tadesse, *African Women and Development: A History* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1995), p. 24.

⁹ Synder and Tadesse, *African Women and Development*, p. 28.

¹⁰ Synder and Tadesse, *African Women and Development*, pp. 18-19.

With no experience of an independence struggle, women in Botswana barely featured in political party decision-making after independence in 1966. The role of a women's wing was assumed by a quasi non-governmental women's organisation, the Botswana Council of Women (BCW) formed in 1969. However, this organisation was dominated by the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP). The BCW did not focus much on increasing women's representation in politics. It focused on social issues such as educating women to be good housewives among other things. The two major political parties; that is, BDP and the opposition Botswana National Front (BNF) established women wings in 1987 and 1977 respectively. These party women's wings did not change the situation as they concentrated on activities such as fundraising and party mobilisation.¹¹ In 1985 an organisation called *Emang Basadi* (Stand up Women) was established. *Emang Basadi* started raising the consciousness of women in Botswana to exercise their political and other rights.¹² After 1994 the efforts of *Emang Basadi* began to be complemented by regional women's organisations such as Women in Law in Southern Africa (WILSA) and Women in Law and Development in Africa (WILDAF) which were also involved in greater political action movements for women.¹³ This led to making women in Botswana more knowledgeable of their potential rights and capabilities.

In Namibia during the freedom struggle, the South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO) Women's Council played an important role in mobilising

¹¹ G. Geisler, *Women and the Remaking of Politics in Southern Africa: Negotiating Autonomy, Incorporation and Representation* (Uppsala: The Nordic Africa Institute, 2004), p. 100.

¹² G. Geisler, "'A Second Liberation': Lobbying for Women's Political Representation in Zambia, Botswana and Namibia", *Journal of Southern African Studies* 32, 1 (2006): 76-77.

¹³ K. Datta, E. Alexander and B.A Khan, *Beyond Inequalities: Women in Botswana* (Harare: SARDC, 1998), P. 42-44.

women for the struggle. Organisations with more feminist ideas were also formed. One example was the Namibian Women's Association (NAWA) formed by women members from the Namibia National Front (NNF) after returning from exile in 1987. In April 1991, an umbrella NGO organisation known as the Namibian Non-Government Organisations' Forum (NANGOF) was formed and it had about fifty member organisations which included a number of women's organisations. Another important organisation was the Namibian Women's Voice (NWV) which was founded in 1997. NWV greatly contributed to the formation of the women's movement in Namibia because it consciously organised women around their strategic and practical gender interests for the first time.¹⁴

Women's organisations in South Africa were instrumental in the struggle against apartheid and the transitions to Majority rule in 1994. The African National Congress' Women's League formed in 1943 and the Federation of South African Women (FEDSAW) formed in 1954, played dominant roles in organising women in this phase of history. In addition, the Women's National Coalition (WNC), founded in April 1992, drew up the Women's Charter for effective equality. This organisation was involved in a campaign to reach as many women as possible in order to find out what they needed and wanted from a new government. Due to the works of women's organisations, South Africa in 1994 boasted of 101 women parliamentarians in a 400 member National Assembly. During Apartheid in 1985, only 2.8 percent of parliamentarians were women.¹⁵ Since the adoption of the Women's Charter in February 1994, the different affiliated organisations of WNC were mandated to

¹⁴ Geisler, *Women and the Remaking of Politics*, pp.145-46.

¹⁵ T. Flood, M. Hoosain and N. Primo, *Beyond Inequalities: Women in South Africa* (Harare: SARDC, 1997), p. 26.

pursue new areas of work. These included lobbying and advocacy, frequent interaction between WNC and women parliamentarians, empowering and training of women through education campaign, ensuring women's involvement in the Reconstruction and Development Programme, and building capacity and skills in organisations.¹⁶

In the case of Zambia, mass women's movements also emerged during the struggle for independence. Colonial rule came to Zambia through the British South Africa Company (BSAC). After being given a Royal Charter in 1889, the Company begun its process of occupying the territory the following year. Through the Barotse Treaty of 1890 between Lewanika, the paramount chief of Barotseland and the BSAC, British protection was extended to Northern Rhodesia. The Company initially established the two territories of North-Western Rhodesia and North-Eastern Rhodesia. These two territories were amalgamated in 1911 to form Northern Rhodesia. In 1924, the Company handed over the administration of Northern Rhodesia to the British Colonial Office.¹⁷ The territory was under British colonial rule until 24 October 1964 when it officially gained independence as a new nation called Zambia.

The colonial political system had restricted space for Africans to defend their interests such as the full enjoyment of their civil, political, social and economic rights.¹⁸ This meant that even women's organisations, clubs or associations run by Europeans, which were aimed at improving the lives of African women, were closely monitored

¹⁶ Flood, Hoosain and Primo, *Beyond Inequalities*, pp. 58-59.

¹⁷ D.C. Mulford, *The Northern Rhodesia General Election, 1962* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), p.1.

¹⁸ M.H. Mumba, "Civil Society Activism in Zambia: A Historical Perspective", in F. Mutesa (ed.), *State-Civil Society and Donor Relations in Zambia* (Lusaka: UNZA Press, 2010), p. 1.

by the colonial regime. For example, women's clubs were formed in both urban and rural areas by both European women and missionaries. However, these clubs paid very little attention to political issues or even economic issues like agriculture production and income generation but focused primarily on their roles as mothers and wives. Women were only taught skills such as knitting, cooking, sewing and childcare.¹⁹ Other organisations such as the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), which was established in 1957, were mainly concerned with achieving multi-racial understanding between Europeans and Africans and promoting Christian fellowship.²⁰

Despite these restrictions, Africans were able to establish associations outside the state and other power holders in order to defend their different interests. For example, through the Mwenzo Welfare Association which was formed in 1912, African educated elites such as Donald Siwale, David Kaunda and Peter Sinkala led the first organised struggle against colonial rule. A number of welfare associations sprung up especially in urban areas along the line of rail. Through these associations, Africans were able to speak against a lot injustices brought by colonialism such as the colour bar and hut tax. On 18 May 1946, a Federation of African Societies was formed by Dauti Yamba, a school headmaster and George Kaluwa, a farmer and trader from Mazabuka.²¹ However, women were not active in the welfare associations. For example, in one of the meetings held in Luanshya on 13 April 1948, it was suggested

¹⁹ M. Araki, "Women's Clubs, Associations and other Relations in Southern Zambia: Interactions between Development Interventions and People's Own Strategies", PhD. Thesis. University of East Anglia, 1997, p. 129.

²⁰ A. Touwen-Van Der Kooij, *Social-Economic Development of Women in Zambia, An Analysis of Two Women's Organisations*. University of Groningen, Report for the Dutch Volunteers Organisation (SNV), 1989, p. 45.

²¹ D. C. Mulford, *Zambia: The Politics of Independence, 1957-1964* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 14.

that there was need for women to attend the welfare meetings. It was also suggested that a Female Welfare Officer should be asked to organise African women for welfare meetings so that they could join the men.²² However, in July 1948, the Federation of African Societies was turned into a political party called the Northern Rhodesia African Congress (NRAC) and was led by Godwin Mbikusita Lewanika.²³ In August 1951, NRAC was renamed African National Congress (ANC) with Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula as President.²⁴

In order to involve women in the nationalist movement, the ANC established the ANC Women's Brigade in 1953.²⁵ When UNIP was formed in 1959, it also established its own Women's Brigade.²⁶ The formation of these Brigades was an important innovation in the evolving Zambian nationalism because it started the process of incorporating women in the modern political process. After independence, the UNIP Women's Brigade was an important agent used to politicise women as well as implementing UNIP's social and economic programmes for women. In March 1967, President Kenneth Kaunda introduced the nation's philosophy of Humanism. This philosophy was aimed at establishing a humanist society. The central concern of this society was service of humanity irrespective of race, religion, colour, creed, among other issues related to human division and exploitation.²⁷ President Kaunda

²² NAZ 2/446 Native Welfare Association, Luanshya, 1948.

²³ Mulford, *Zambia*, P. 16.

²⁴ B.J. Phiri, *A Political History of Zambia: From the Colonial Period to the Third Republic, 1890-2006* (Trenton: African World Press Inc, 2006), p. 26.

²⁵ R.S. Nyaywa, "Julia Chikamoneka: The Fearless 'Mad African Girl' ", in M. Nalumango and M. Sifuniso (eds.), *Women Power*, p. 23.

²⁶ I.M.C Manda, "Women and Mass Mobilisation in Nationalist Politics in Colonial Zambia 1951-1964: The Case Study of Lusaka." MA. Dissertation. UNZA, 1992, P. 52.

²⁷ GRZ and UNICEF, *Children and Women in Zambia: A Situation Analysis*, October 1979, p. 25.

also introduced One Party Participatory Democracy in 1973. During the One-Party system, UNIP's supremacy was emphasised in all areas of life. Therefore, the regime organised social organisations in different spheres of society such as women, youth, worker and farmer's organisations, mainly in form of co-operatives and unions in order to ensure that all social forces were under the direct control of the party-state.²⁸

In 1975, the UNIP Women's Brigade was renamed the Women's League. It had its own constitution and its Executive Secretary, who was appointed by the president, automatically became a member of the Central Committee of UNIP.²⁹ The Women's League was given the mandate to address women's issues and problems. In fact, all women's non-governmental organisations were required to be affiliated to it.³⁰ It is important to note that UNIP had three structures, namely the main body, the Women's League and the Youth League. The last two organs looked at the special interests of women and youths which were more likely to have been overlooked by the main body. However, these organs did not have the autonomy to exist and operate independently but were accountable to the main body of UNIP. The Women's League played a very instrumental role through its activities and programmes in trying to achieve the UN's aim of integrating women in development during the UN Decade for Women (1975-1985) whose theme was Equality, Development and Peace. During this Decade, three important world women's conferences were held in Mexico (1975), Copenhagen (1980) and Nairobi (1985).

²⁸ D. Elemu, "The Emergence and Development of Governance and Human Rights Civil Society in Zambia", in Mutesa (ed.), *State-Civil Society*, p. 21.

²⁹ G. Geisler, "Sisters under the Skin: Women and the Women's League in Zambia", *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 25, 1 (1987), p. 45.

³⁰ R. Nyaywa and M. Walubita, "Chibesa Kankasa: The Doyenne of UNIP Women's League", in Nalumango and Sifuniso (eds.), *Women Power*, p. 61.

In 1985, after the Women's World Conference in Nairobi, Kenya, the UN adopted the Forward-Looking Strategies whose goals were equality, development and peace. The goal of equality was to be achieved by the year 2000.³¹ The 1985 conference was attended by 15, 000 delegates of which at least half came from the Third World.³² One of the most important results of the Nairobi Conference was the establishment of the Non-Governmental Organisations' Coordinating Committee (NGOCC) in 1985.³³ The purpose of this organisation was to strengthen and harmonise the functions and activities of women NGOs in the country. It was hoped that the NGOCC would bring more positive impact towards the achievements of the UN development goals through the promotion of cooperation, networking and solidarity on issues affecting women.

The wave of change blowing over the world since the late 1980s and through the early 1990s did not spare the African continent. With the collapse of state communism and power block in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, there were increased calls for successful democratisation. Democracy was not only viewed as a good in itself but also as a good condition for economic development.³⁴ Coincidentally, Zambia was faced with economic problems as well as social and political tensions. Therefore, UNIP under President Kaunda had no choice but to yield to these calls since democracy became a condition to qualify for economic aid from the rich

³¹M.K. Sampa, "The Election of Women to Zambian Parliament: An Analysis of the Under-Representation of Women in the 2001 and 2006 Parliamentary Elections", M.A Dissertation, University of Zambia, Lusaka, 2010, p. 3.

³² C. Bunch, "Feminism", in J. Krieger (ed.), *The Oxford Companion to Politics of the World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 298.

³³ A. Touwen-Van Der Kooij, *Socio-Economic Development in Zambia*, p. 65.

³⁴ E. Wamala, "The Nature, Role and Challenge of Civil Society in Selected African Societies: A Key to Who Belongs?", in W.A. Barbieri; R. Magliola and R. Winslow (eds.), *Civil Society: Who Belongs?* (Washington D.C: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2004), p. 147.

industrialised nations. Therefore, multi-party democracy was reintroduced and elections were scheduled for 31 October 1991.³⁵ Civil society organisations were therefore seen as key players in implementing the reforms required to change developing countries. As a result, many NGOs emerged. Therefore, the UNIP Women's League declined in importance while women's NGOs took over the space it earlier monopolised.³⁶

With the reintroduction of multi-party democracy in 1991, the ZNWLG was formed in July of that year. Through the ZNWLG, women aimed to pressurise the Zambian government to involve women in decision-making, outside the traditional NGOs like Red Cross, YWCA and Girl Guides Association.³⁷ The organisation emerged at a time when there was greater pressure for women's participation in politics in many African countries. Zambian women through the ZNWLG and other women's organisations affiliated to the NGOCC continued working towards the empowerment of women. In 1995, the Fourth World Conference on Women was held in Beijing, China. The Beijing Platform for Action represented a consensus of 180 countries on advancing the status of women and gender equality.³⁸ It was a commonly agreed agenda for change in three basic themes: Equality, Development and Peace as well as twelve critical areas of concern under these themes. As a result, gender issues began to be defined as a "common good". Many women's organisations began to argue that the

³⁵ Mumba, "Civil Society Activism in Zambia", p. 6-7.

³⁶ A. Ferguson; K. Ludwig; B.L. Katundu and I. Manda "Zambian Women in Politics: An Assessment of Changes Resulting from the 1991 Political Transition", MSU Working Paper, 3 September 1995, p. 23.

³⁷ M. Mwafuililwa, "Politics for the Non-Political", in M. Nalumango and M. Sifuniso (eds.), *Women Power in politics*, pp. 220-21.

³⁸ T. Sikoska and N. Kardam, "Introduction", in INSTRAW, *Engendering the Political Agenda: The Role of the State, Women's Organizations and the International Community*. URL <http://www.un-instraw.org/es/biblioteca/gender...political...political.../view-2.html> . Accessed on 20 June, 2010.

attainment of goals which were widely agreed upon like democratisation and human rights, sustainable human development, economic growth could only be achieved with the consideration of women's and gender issues at their core. Consequently, "integrating women in development" was transformed into "gender and development".³⁹

Due to networks and linkages established among women's organisations, a well defined women's movement aimed at empowering women developed in Zambia.⁴⁰ Women's organisations begun to lobby and advocate for the implementation and domestication of both regional and international Conventions and Covenants such as the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) ratified in May 1985, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (April 1984), The African Charter on Human and People's Rights (January 1984), and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Gender and Development Declaration (September 1997), among others. Therefore, it can be argued that women's organisations were one of the key agents that contributed to Zambia's political development.

Political development is defined differently by different scholars. According to Charlesworth, political development is a distinguishable method in analysing government and politics. In some quarters, it is associated with the observations and conclusions concerning the capacity of what until recently have been called

³⁹ T. Sikoska and N. Kardam, "Introduction", in INSTRAW, *Engendering the Political Agenda: The Role of the State, Women's Organizations and the International Community*. URL <http://www.un-instraw.org/es/biblioteca/gender...political...political.../view-2.html> . Accessed on 20 June, 2010.

⁴⁰ M. Munachonga and L. Muyoyeta Commissioned by and Prepared for NGOCC, *Impact Assessment Study Report on Women's NGOs in Zambia*, 1999, p. 43.

“underdeveloped” countries to develop the will and skill to assume new governmental responsibilities and to earn general confidence in the developments. Other writers use the phrase to cover extension of government programmes of well-developed countries such as the industrial nationalisation and social welfare programme of Great Britain.⁴¹ The former will be applied to this study since Zambia falls in that category.

Most scholars of politics have generally adopted the view shared by Lucien. V. Pye concerning the key elements of political development. These elements include, with respect to the whole population, a change from widespread subject status to an increasing number of mass participation, a greater sensitivity to principles of *equality*, and a wider acceptance of universalistic laws. Secondly, with respect to governmental and general systematic performance, political development involves an increase in the *capacity* of the political system to manage public affairs, control controversy, and to cope with popular demands. Lastly, with respect to the organisation of the state, it means greater structural *differentiation*, greater function specificity, and greater integration of all participating institutions and organisations.⁴²

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This study is being informed by the conceptual framework of gender and politics. The concept is adapted from C.H. Enloe who contends that gender and politics is not just about women but about the ways in which relations between women and men share

⁴¹ J.C Charlesworth, “Introduction: Identifiable Approaches to the Study of Politics and Government”, in J.C Charlesworth (ed.), *Contemporary Political Analysis* (New York: The Free Press, 1967), p. 5.

⁴² F.W. Riggs, “Theory of Political Development”, in Charlesworth (ed.), *Contemporary Political Analysis*, p. 329.

public power.⁴³ Gender refers to the social construct by which women and men are ascribed distinct positions and roles in Society.⁴⁴ Power refers to the control over material assets, intellectual resources and ideology.⁴⁵ Scholars have identified a strong link between power and decision-making. Research by Datta, Alexander and Khan show that, in most parts of the world, most societies allocate all the dominant and prestigious positions to men while women are reduced to subordinate positions.⁴⁶ The ideology of patriarchy is one way in which these subordinate and dominant gender relations are justified.

Despite their participation in the fight for independence, very few Zambian women were involved in mainstream politics. This was due to the certain cultural norms and colonial practices that favoured men's involvement in public life. Illiteracy and low levels of education also lowered the chances of most women of entering into formal politics.⁴⁷ Therefore, women's organisations were one of the alternatives of creating a public space for women. It is from this context that women's organisations will be viewed. These organisations served to promote women's collective identity, mobilisation of women to express their interests and to exert pressure on mainstream institutions so as to address their issues.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

⁴³ C.H. Enloe, "Gender and Politics", in J. Krieger (ed.), *The Oxford Companion to Politics of the World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 336.

⁴⁴ Datta, Alexander and Khan, *Beyond Inequalities*, p.15.

⁴⁵ ZNWLG and the Women in Politics Forum, *Zambia Women's Manifesto*, (March 2000), p. 7.

⁴⁶ Datta, Alexander and Khan, *Beyond Inequalities*, p. 15.

⁴⁷ M. Mwafulilwa, "Politics for the Non-Political", in N. Nalumango and M.Sifuniso (eds.), *Women Power in Politics* (Lusaka: National Women's Lobby Group, 1998), p. 219.

The tendency by scholars of focusing on the supportive role of the UNIP Women's League has created a problem of understanding the role of this organisation in Zambia's political development. This organisation has been projected as an organisation that existed to only serve the interests of men in UNIP. Works on the ZNWLG mainly focus on the role of this organisation in increasing the number of women in parliament during elections. The lack of visibility of women in formal politics coupled with little research into women's organisations as political actors, has contributed to the misconception that women's organisations have not contributed to Zambia's political history. The low number of women in decision-making positions does not mean that women's organisations make no difference in the political arena. There is still insufficient understanding and knowledge about the role played by women's organisations in shaping the political system through developing political structures that were more gender sensitive and that facilitated the representation of women's concerns. Therefore, there is need to examine these two organisations from a historical perspective. Identifying their achievements as well as their shortcomings in the context of their different political environments will provide a balanced view in appreciating their role in Zambia's political development.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study had the following objectives:

1. To examine the changes in women's organisations from 1964-2001.
2. To investigate the working relationships of the women's organisations with other stakeholders in the political system.

3. To assess the influence of women's organisations in developing political structures that were more gender sensitive and that facilitated the representation of women's concerns.

RATIONALE

There are many justifications for this study. Firstly, it will be a contribution to political and gender historiography. Another justification is that there are very few comprehensive studies in Zambia that trace women's organisations from 1964 to 2001. Thirdly, the study will contribute to the world efforts of integrating both men and women in development. By examining and analysing these organisations, the study hopes to show how the influence of women in politics has been evolving overtime. The period 1964 to 2001 has been chosen to give a comparison of how women's organisations worked in the first two governments after independence. Lastly, the topic of women in politics in relation to Zambia has been an area of inquiry for feminist scholars in other social sciences like anthropology, law, women's studies, political science, development studies among others. However, very few historians have written much on this topic.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A lot of literature exploring the role of women in politics worldwide has sprung up. It has been noticed that despite not fully participating in politics at equal terms with men, women in most countries have contributed to politics in their own ways not only as a group but as individuals as well. This can be seen from a number of studies focusing on various countries. Howell's work, for example, focuses on women's political participation in China. She examines the role of the ACWF in China.

According to Howell, state-derived feminism paradoxically both advanced and constrained the position of women in China.⁴⁸ Ward's article focuses on the political roles of Unionist and Loyalist women in contemporary Northern Ireland. In this study, Ward demonstrates that the political role of unionist/loyalist women is more complex than the domestic stereotype such as that of 'tea-making'. The study reveals four main political roles of these women; which are: party representatives, party activists, community representatives, and community activists.⁴⁹ In fact, the other articles in this edited book reveal the influence of women in informal and formal politics. The book covers different countries such as New Zealand, Scotland, Canada, United Kingdom, Iran, Kosovo and Uganda. Although Zambia is not covered, the articles are significant to this study.

Johnson-Odim and Strobel write that particular and comparative research with gender as a central analytical tool has shown that in male-dominant societies, women's activities, values and interactions often formed a muted subculture. This subculture was reinforced by a strong sexual division of labour that resulted in women and men spending most of their time in same-sex groupings and was augmented by ideological formulations or social rules. Women either demanded for this separate space or took advantage of it as a refuge from oppressive features of society. As Johnson-Odim and Strobel states, this social space and the resulting female-controlled institutions

⁴⁸ Howell, "Women's Political Participation in China", pp. 43-44.

⁴⁹ R. Ward, "Invisible Women: The Political Roles of Unionist and Loyalist Women in Contemporary Northern Ireland", in Ross (ed.), *Women, Politics and Change*, p. 167.

provided women with rich opportunities. The most important being the potential for female solidarity.⁵⁰

Silverman's study focuses on women in women's organisations; in particular, the leadership in the National Council of Jewish Women in Canada. She states that women in such organisations viewed power in terms of their collective ability to effect change in the community. This form of action was seen as their human responsibility. According to Silverman, women's groups provide a historian with a setting in which to connect gender with power. In these organisations, people interact, are invested in one another, and negotiate with one another in order to achieve their goals. Therefore, leadership in women's organisations tends to be a process of collective effort rather than the efforts of one person who leads others. Silverman argues that, scholars should not perceive women in women's organisations and their views on power as being affected by the politics around them but as makers of political history. Therefore, women deserve a place in history that historians have to rewrite in order to include women's presence.⁵¹ This study provides important data on women's organisations.

Geisler's journal article looks at the achievements of South African women in terms of representation in parliament and their new challenges. She states that the high level of females in parliament is based on a long history of women's struggles against

⁵⁰ C. Johnson-Odim and M. Strobel, "Introduction", in C. Johnson-Odim and M. Strobel (eds.), *Restoring Women to History* (Indiana: Organisation of American Historians, 1990), p. 18.

⁵¹ E.L. Silverman, "Women in Women's Organisations: Power or Pouvoir? A Case Study of Leadership in the National Council of Jewish Women in Canada", in H. L. Radtke and H.J. Stam (eds.), *Power/Gender: Social Relations in Theory and Practice* (London: SAGE Publications, 1994), pp.270-271.

apartheid and equality in the African National Congress (ANC). The effect has been a political representation that is grounded in the experience of united women's movement in the transition to majority rule and a firm policy agreement towards equality in the ANC. This enabled women politicians to include gender equality goals within government discourse. However, this success has come with its challenges since the women's movement has lost its strong leaders to government.⁵² Thus, this has created another struggle for South African women. This study has important information on women and politics.

The study by Datta, Alexander and Khan looks at the experience of Women in Botswana in the social, economic and political spheres. The study shows that since 1994 *Emang Basadi*, a women's NGO in Botswana, has been raising the consciousness of women in rural and urban areas to exercise voting and other political rights. Other groups like the Women in Law in Southern Africa (WILSA) and Women in Law and Development in Africa (WILDAF) are also involved in greater political action movements for women. This has helped women in Botswana become more knowledgeable of their potential rights and capabilities.⁵³ Flood, Hoosain and Primo's work examines the role of South African women in the social, economic and political spheres. This work has information on the contribution of South Africa women in politics. It also identifies some women organisations that have been active in the political arena. These organisations include ANC Women's League, FEDSAW and WNC among others.⁵⁴ These works are important sources to this study.

⁵² G. Geisler, "Parliament is Another Terrain of Struggle: Women, Men and Politics in South Africa," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 38, 4 (2000): 605.

⁵³ Datta, Alexander and Khan, *Beyond Inequalities*, pp.42-44.

⁵⁴ Flood, Hoosain and Primo, *Beyond Inequalities*, p. 26.

Research on the involvement of Zambian women in modern politics was pioneered by western feminist anthropologists. As Ahmed argues, feminist anthropologists were not particularly interested in developing a new tool for understanding African history, but were debating the question of the universality of female oppression.⁵⁵ This is a very important point to consider when analysing the early writings on women in politics. Schuster, an anthropologist, in her PhD thesis only mentions three issues the UNIP Women's Brigade was involved in. These included political opposition, life crisis situations (diseases and death) and the importance of family life. She argues that the Brigade only championed the cause of old-fashioned mothers supporting traditional ways of life less than that of young educated women or elites.⁵⁶ Although her study focuses on the young educated women of Lusaka and concentrates on the limitations of the UNIP Women's Brigade, it offers significant information for this research.

Schuster's other study entitled "Constraints and Opportunities in Political Participation: The Case of Zambian Women" also concentrates on the negative side of the UNIP Women's Brigade. She argues that members of the UNIP Women's Brigade and individual women politicians did very little to serve the interest of female citizens. Therefore, most women viewed politics as a male domain.⁵⁷ Despite this, the work is a vital source of information for women involvement in politics in the first decade after independence

⁵⁵ C.C. Ahmed "Before Eve was Eve: 2200 Years of Gendered History in East-Central Africa", PhD Thesis. University of California, 1996, p. 4.

⁵⁶ I.M. G. Schuster, "Lusaka's Young Women: Adaptation to Change", PhD. Thesis. University of Sussex, 1976, pp. 240-249.

⁵⁷ I. Schuster, "Constraints and Opportunities in Political Participation: The Case of Zambia", *Geneva-Afrique* 21, 2 (1983), pp. 22-28.

Gisela Geisler has written extensively on Zambian women and politics. Her work entitled “Sisters under the Skin: Women and the Women’s League in Zambia” focused more on the shortcomings of the UNIP Women’s League than its achievements. Her argument is that the Women’s League has never endeavoured to be the mass organisation of Zambian women it purported to be.⁵⁸ This makes it difficult for scholars to identify any positive contributions made by the League in shaping the political system of Zambia.

Geisler’s article entitled “Troubled Sisters: Women and Politics in Southern Africa: Case Studies from Zambia, Zimbabwe and Botswana” is another important work for our study. The study examines the limitations women politicians experience in the main domain of party politics and government. It also examines the nature and reasons for divisions between women politicians and members of the women’s movement. She argues that women’s wings in Africa have contributed in reinforcing public/private as male/female dichotomies. She also argues that the politicisation of NGO women is mainly concerned with gaining more direct influence on government policy making, rather than with simply getting more women into politics for the sake of democracy and social justice. To Geisler, the target of women’s lobbies has been an increase in representation in cabinet and parliament rather than in political parties.⁵⁹ In her book *Women and the Remaking of Politics in Southern Africa*, Geisler examines the success and problems of African women in their quest for political representation. The work takes a comparative view of Southern Africa, with a focus

⁵⁸ G. Geisler, “Sisters under the Skin: Women and the Women’s League in Zambia”, *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 25, 1 (1987), pp. 43-45.

⁵⁹ G. Geisler, “Troubled Sisterhood: Women and Politics in Southern Africa, Case Studies from Zambia, Zimbabwe and Botswana”, in *African Affairs* 94, 377 (1995): pp. 576-577.

on Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Additional material on Kenya, Mozambique and Tanzania is also included.⁶⁰ These works are vital sources for our study.

Geisler's other work looks at the efforts of women's movements in Zambia, Botswana and Namibia in promoting women's participation in formal politics as a way of pursuing their specific demands. She looks at the failures of women's movements in one-party states like Zambia and Zimbabwe in building fruitful alliances with women in political party movements. Geisler also compares the strategies and varying experiences and successes of Lobby groups in Zambia, Botswana and Namibia. She argues that to achieve more equitable gender legislation, women in politics and the women's movement should form an alliance that directly target political parties.⁶¹ However, her work offers more information on the National Women's Lobby Group than the UNIP Women's League.

Ferguson and others offer information on women's participation in politics in Zambia from the pre-colonial period. However, they are mainly informed by feminist writers like Schuster and Geisler. The work also provides an assessment of changes resulting from the 1991 political transition until 1995 in terms of women's political participation. The study assesses the gains made by women involved in both formal

⁶⁰ G. Geisler, *Women and the Remaking of Politics*, pp. 15-16.

⁶¹ G. Geisler, "'A Second Liberation': Lobbying for Women's Political Participation in Zambia, Botswana and Namibia", *Journal of Southern African Studies* 32, 1 (2006), p. 71-76.

and informal politics.⁶² However, this study does not offer information for the period after 1995.

Some historians have also written on women and politics. Manda's MA dissertation is one of the works that examined the contribution of women to Zambian politics. It focuses on women mobilisation in nationalist politics in colonial Zambia from 1951 to 1964. The study also briefly examines the gender representation of men and women in decision-making shortly after independence.⁶³ Therefore, her study is a very important source.

Phiri's study analyses the contribution made by the Zambia National Women's Lobby Group in increasing the number of women in decision-making positions. He argues that despite the few gains in the number of seats in parliament by women, more has to be done to fully increase their participation in formal politics.⁶⁴ However, the work mainly focuses on the role of the Women's Lobby in the 2001 tripartite elections.

The study by Krishna and Mulenga is a very significant source because it gives a comparative view of the contribution of Zambian and Indian women to the struggle for independence in their respective nations. The authors argue that without women participation in the struggle for independence, both the histories of India and Zambia

⁶² A. Ferguson; K. Ludwig; B.L. Katundu and I. Manda "Zambian Women in Politics: An Assessment of Changes Resulting from the 1991 Political Transition", MSU Working Paper, 3 September 1995, p. 4-29

⁶³ I.M.C. Manda, "Women and Mass Mobilisation in Nationalist Politics in Colonial Zambia: The Case Study of Lusaka. M.A. Dissertation, University of Zambia, 1992, pp. 69-75.

⁶⁴ B.J. Phiri, "Gender and Politics: The Zambia National Women's Lobby Group in the 2001 Tripartite Elections", in J. Geward, M. Hinfelaar and G. Macola (eds.), *One Zambia Many Histories: Towards a History of Post-Colonial Zambia* (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2008), pp. 273-274.

would have been different and their men would have not achieved much on their own. However, the work does not examine the role of both Indian and Zambian women in the post-colonial period.⁶⁵ Our study will help fill this gap.

Gender activists have also written on women's participation in politics. Mwafuililwa's chapter in *Women Power in Politics* edited by Nalumango and Sifuniso explains the contributions and the challenges of the Zambia National Women's Lobby Group in promoting the involvement of women in formal politics. However, the study only focuses on the period from 1991 to 1997.⁶⁶ The other chapters in this edited book provide information on women's political contribution from the pre-colonial to the post-colonial period. The writers in the other chapters, however, mainly focus on individual women politicians. Another important work is by Crehan. The study examines the gendered nature of political participation in North-western Zambia in the late 1980s. Crehan argues that gender played a role in making women marginal players in formal politics.⁶⁷ However, the work does not examine women's contribution to the political system since the transition to a multi-party democratic system.

Munalula's study is written from a legal perspective. It analyses gender equality in Zambia. She states that the UNIP Women's League preached women's continued

⁶⁵ K. Krishna and F.E. Mulenga, "The Contribution of Zambian and Indian Women to the Struggle for Freedom: A Legend of Courage and Compassion", URL <http://www.ssn.flinders.edu.au/global/afsaap/conference/2004proceedings/krishna.PDF>. Accessed on 18 June, 2010.

⁶⁶ Mwafuililwa, "Politics for the Non-Political", in Nalumango and Sifuniso (eds.), *Women Power*, pp. 219-234.

⁶⁷ K. Crehan, "The Rules of the Game: The Political Location of Women in North-Western Zambia", J. Hyslop (ed.), *African Democracy in the Era of Globalisation* (Witwatersrand: Witwatersrand University Press, 1999), pp. 140-149.

subordination to male kin and their honourable places as mothers and wives.⁶⁸ Although she also cites a few contributions made by the League in politics, her study mainly focuses on the legal development in relation to gender. This work is also important to our study. Araki's PhD thesis focuses on Women's club, associations and other relations in Southern Province of Zambia. He examines interactions between development interventions and people's own strategies. Although his main focus is on women's clubs and associations in Southern Province, the study also offers brief information on women's political participation before and just after independence. Araki explains that although women's participation in formal politics was lower than that of men, they also contributed positively to the political system.⁶⁹

Chibule's dissertation examines the role of two community and rural development NGOs in Zambia; the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA).⁷⁰ Although this study does not focus on the role played by these organisations in politics, it provides important data on the relationship between women's organisations and the state. Chibule argues that the relationship between the YWCA and the state can be described as one of tolerance and hostility. According to her, this is because the YWCA is engaged in human rights projects that are unpopular to most African governments.⁷¹

⁶⁸ M.M. Munalula, "Gender Equality in Zambia: Towards a Theory of 'Living Law'", M.A. Dissertation. Institute of Social Studies, the Hague, 1993, p. 3.

⁶⁹ M. Araki, "Women's Clubs", pp. 120-130.

⁷⁰ P.C. Chibule, "The Role of the Community and Rural Development NGOs in Zambia: The Case of YMCA and YWCA", M.Phil Degree, University of Bergen, 2001, p. 3.

⁷¹ Chibule, "The Role of the Community and Rural Development NGOs in Zambia", p. 89.

Gretchen Bauer's article explains how women in Eastern and Southern Africa are using gender-based electoral quotas to take a "fast track" to equal legislative representation. According to Bauer, as of mid-2006, countries like Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles and South Africa where the gender-based electoral quota was used, women occupied 25 to nearly 50 per cent seats in parliament.⁷² The study noted that in countries such as Zambia where the quota system was not used, women's representation in parliament was below the world average of 17 per cent.⁷³ Bauer states that the use of quotas across Africa reflects a renewed interest in formal politics and political institutions among African women's movements.⁷⁴

Sampa's Masters dissertation focuses on the election of women to the Zambian parliament. She analyses the under-representation of women in the 2001 and 2006 parliamentary elections.⁷⁵ The study found that Zambian women continue to lag behind in politics and face difficulties to access parliament. The study shows that out of 1, 298 parliamentary candidates in the 2001 elections, only 204 were women. Of these 197 were adopted by their political parties while seven stood as independents and only nineteen were elected to parliament. In 2006, out of 691 parliamentary candidates, ninety-four were women. Of these twenty-seven stood as independents while sixty-seven stood on political party tickets. Only twenty-two women were

⁷² G. Bauer, "Taking the Fast Track to Parliament: Comparing Electoral Gender Quota in Eastern and Southern Africa", in M. Ndulo and M. Grieco (eds.), *Power, Gender and Social Change* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009), p. 10.

⁷³ Bauer, "Taking the Fast Track to Parliament", p. 10.

⁷⁴ Bauer, "Taking the Fast Track to Parliament", p. 8.

⁷⁵ Sampa, "The Election of Women", p. iv.

elected to parliament.⁷⁶ The study also shows that, Zambia failed to reach the 1997 Southern African Development Community (SADC) declaration of reaching 30 per cent minimum representation of women in parliament. However, Sampa's study does not focus on the role of women's organisations in Zambia's political development.

Other scholars like Chabatama have written on Zambian political history.⁷⁷ Chabatama's study is a narrative of the untold story of experiences of Zambians in a One Party State. He investigates the socio-economic and political impact of the One Party experiment on ordinary Zambians. However, he does not acknowledge any contribution made by the UNIP Women's League to the political system during this period.

Phiri's work, *A Political History of Zambia*, examines Zambian politics from the colonial period to the Third Republic.⁷⁸ The work by Mwanakatwe examines the end of UNIP rule under President Kaunda and the reintroduction of multi-party politics in Zambia.⁷⁹ However, all these works do not examine the role of women's organisations in Zambian politics.

Other works focus on civil society as a theoretical tool. Wamala's work discusses the nature, role and challenge of civil society in African countries from the pre-colonial to

⁷⁶ Sampa, "The Election of Women", p. iv.

⁷⁷ C.M. Chabatama, "The Untold Story: Experiences of Zambians in One a Party State", in Y.A.Chondoka, B.J. Phiri and C.M Chabatama (eds.), *Zambia: Forty Years after Independence, 1964-2004* (Lusaka: History Department UNZA, 2007), pp. 41-51.

⁷⁸ Phiri, *A Political History of Zambia*, pp. 131-227.

⁷⁹ J.M. Mwanakatwe, *End of Kaunda Era* (Lusaka: Multimedia Zambia, 1994), pp. 36-254.

post-colonial period.⁸⁰ Although the work does not discuss Zambian women's NGOs, the work is important in terms of conceptualising the nature of civil society organisations in the African context. Bourough's study analyses the state, development and civil society in Algeria. He argues that the concept of civil society is important in the study of non-western societies because it clearly puts emphasis on the role of organised individuals in the life of their society, outside the predetermined official norms which at times can be abusive, tyrannical or conflictual in character, affecting negatively a normal course of development. According to Bourough's theory, in a course of the development of a particular society, the state attempts to extend its control in social and economic life. As a result, this subordinates civil society. However, a particular crisis may limit the capacity of the state to continue implementing development projects and delivering social services. Therefore, the weakness of the state leads to the re-emergence or revival of civil society institutions to overcome state control and to play a vital role in the course of change.⁸¹

State-Civil Society and Donor Relations in Zambia edited by Fred Mutesa contains works focusing on civil society in Zambia. For example, Mumba's work takes a historical overview of the development of Zambian civil society from the colonial to the post-colonial period. The work gives a clear insight of the kind of political environment under which civil society organisations operated until the year 2008.⁸² The other work by Elemu discusses the emergence and development of governance

⁸⁰ Wamala, "The Nature, Role and Challenge of Civil Society", pp. 138-151.

⁸¹ C. Barough, "The State, Development, Civil Society: The Case of Algeria", in G.F. McLean (ed.), *Civil Society and Social Reconstruction* (Washington D.C: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2004), p. 117.

⁸² Mumba, "Civil Society Activism in Zambia", pp. 1-14.

and human rights civil society in Zambia.⁸³ Elemu's study is very helpful in understanding the background of women's organisations like the Zambia National Women's Lobby Group. However, none of the articles in this books extensively cover women's organisations.

From the literature reviewed, it can be seen that there has not been an extensive study on the role of women's organisations in the political development of Zambia. Women's organisations should not only be viewed as being affected by the political system around them but also as makers of political history. This study attempts to take an objective approach by examining both the limitations and achievements of the UNIP Women's League and the ZNWLG in the period 1964 to 2001. Thus, it will examine these organisations according to their different political and historical contexts in order to appreciate their contribution in the political system.

METHODOLOGY

This study took a qualitative approach. Since the study focused on examining the role of women's organisations in Zambia's political development, emphasis in analysis was on qualitative rather than quantitative changes. The data for this study was collected from various sources. Preliminary research was done at the University of Zambia (UNZA) main library, Faith and Encounter Centre (FENZA) library and the Institute for Economic and Social Research (INESOR). Here secondary data was collected. Research was also conducted at the National Archives of Zambia (NAZ), UNIP Archives, ZNWLG, Zambia Association for Research and Development (ZARD), NGOCC and the National Assembly of Zambia library. Here primary data

⁸³ Elemu, "The Emergence and Development of Governance", pp. 19-39.

such as reports, correspondence, newsletters, newspapers, parliamentary debates and other official publications were consulted. Oral interviews were finally conducted in order to verify certain information in secondary sources and also for new unrecorded information.

CHAPTER TWO

THE BEGINNINGS OF WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN MODERN POLITICS, 1953-1974

Introduction

This chapter aims to establish a background of women's participation in modern politics in Zambia. It demonstrates that the foundation of women's political activities in post-independent Zambia can be traced to the period of the nationalist movements up to 1974, a year before the Zambian government began to seriously address women's issues through the Women's League. The chapter begins by giving an overview of women's political participation in the nationalist movement. It was during this time that many women were politicised and entered the realm of modern politics. They took advantage of this foundation and continued participating in politics after independence mainly through the UNIP Women's Brigade. The main argument of this chapter is that the Women's Brigade and individual women politicians not only served party interests but worked and spoke for the interest of other female citizens as well. However, more could have been achieved had these women been more firm in demanding for women's rights and equal participation in politics. The chapter also demonstrates that the role of the Women's Brigade was more complex than the supportive stereotype perpetuated by some scholars.

An Overview of Women's Political Participation in the Nationalist Movement

Studies have shown that women's political participation in present day Zambia goes back as far as the pre-colonial period. In most matrilineal societies such as the Lozi and Bemba, women held important leadership positions. With the coming of colonial rule, a gap was created between women and men in terms of access to employment,

education and political participation.⁸⁴ During the colonial period, colonial officials equated “male” with “breadwinner”. Women, on the other hand, were visualised in terms of the Victorian image of what a “lady” should be. Women’s role in society was seen to be limited to nurturing and conserving society, while men were engaged in economic and political activities. To make matters worse, anthropologists and other researchers did little to change this biased view because they were also inclined to despise women’s productivity.⁸⁵ Thus, the colonial system introduced technologies to men and recruited men for wage employment which often took them off the farm. In addition, men were favoured in opportunities for education and access to resources such as land. This resulted in reduced leadership potential for women.

However, women’s participation in modern politics can be traced to the time of the nationalist movement in Northern Rhodesia. It was during this time that the ANC and later the UNIP Women’s Brigades were born. The ANC led by Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula was the first African party to establish a Women’s Brigade in 1953. The ANC Women’s Brigade became the avenue through which women were mobilised to carry out different political activities planned by ANC.⁸⁶ However, when a group led by Kenneth David Kaunda broke away from the ANC on 26 October 1958 to form the Zambia African National Congress (ZANC), many members of the ANC Women’s Brigade left to join the new ZANC.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ Schuster, “Constraints and Opportunities”, p. 10-15.

⁸⁵ Synder and Tadesse, *African Women and Development*, p. 22.

⁸⁶ R.S. Nyaywa, “Julia Chikamoneka”, p. 23.

⁸⁷ Manda, “Women and Mass Mobilisation”, p. 47.

Mwanakatwe states that the formation of ZANC marked a turning point in the political history of Northern Rhodesia. This is because the political destiny of the Africans was entrusted to radicals who were determined to achieve the goal of “one man, one vote” in a short period of time. The leaders of ZANC were determined to use any means possible to achieve this goal in a non-violent manner. For Northern Rhodesia to secede from the Central African Federation and also achieve self-governing status, the leaders believed that the nationalist movement had to be well organised and highly disciplined. In addition, it also had to be led by men and women who were willing to make sacrifices for the love of their country.⁸⁸ Although the membership of ZANC begun to grow at a fast rate, it did not last long because the Colonial Government banned it as soon as it was formed.

Following the banning of ZANC in March 1959 and the imprisonment of its leaders, a new political party called African National Independence Party (ANIP) was formed to succeed ZANC. Paul Kalichini was elected president but shortly handed over power to Mainza Chona. ANIP merged with Dixion Konkola’s United National Freedom Party (UNFP) to form the United National Independence Party (UNIP). Kenneth Kaunda was unanimously elected president of UNIP in January 1960.⁸⁹ UNIP also established a Women’s Brigade in its structure.⁹⁰ The formation of the Women’s Brigades by the ANC and later UNIP was an important innovation in the evolving Zambian nationalism because it started the process of incorporating women in the modern political process.

⁸⁸ J.M. Mwanakatwe, *End of Kaunda Era* (Lusaka: Multimedia Zambia, 1994), p. 28.

⁸⁹ A. Roberts, *A History of Zambia* (London: Heinemann, 1976), p. 220.

⁹⁰ Manda, “Women and Mass Mobilisation”, p. 52.

Historians like Manda have highlighted the crucial role played by women in the Nationalist Movement through both the ANC and UNIP Women's Brigades. Manda argues that the ANC Women's Brigade greatly contributed to the campaign against the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland between 1951 and 1958. This was through mobilisation of the masses for the party, raising of funds and participation in boycotts and demonstrations.⁹¹ She also credits the UNIP Women's Brigade by arguing that it was the women's and youth wings that were mainly involved in the mobilisation of the masses and also ensured the success of UNIP.⁹² Many women in the country took part in the felling of trees to block the roads so as to stop soldiers and the police from arresting men engaged in sabotage in different areas.⁹³ During the *Chachacha* campaign, which occurred especially, between July and October 1961, men showed civil disobedience by burning their *situpas* (passes) while women burned their *imichato* (marriage certificates) to show their resentment and displeasure of the Pass Laws.⁹⁴ Mrs. Jemima Namumba Banda who joined UNIP as a youth during the Freedom Struggle narrated that, "the fight for independence brought the women out of the kitchen."⁹⁵

In Lusaka, the Women's Brigade staged half-naked demonstrations at the Lusaka Airport in 1960 on the arrival of the Colonial Secretary, Mr. Ian Macleod, when he came to hold negotiations concerning the 15-15-15 Constitution. The women were led by Julia Chikamoneka popularly known as Mama UNIP and Emeriya Saidi. The two

⁹¹ Manda, "Women and Mass Mobilisation", p. 35.

⁹² Manda, "Women and Mass Mobilisation", p. 52.

⁹³ UNIP 11/2/3 Republic of Zambia, Report on the Development of the Status of Zambian Women, 1974, p. 3.

⁹⁴ Nyaywa, "Julia Chikamoneka", p. 29.

⁹⁵ Interview with Mrs Jemima Namumba Banda, 10 February 2011.

women courageously confronted Mr Mcleod and Sir Evelyn Hone, the Governor of Northern Rhodesia with placards reading, “UNIP says Kaunda Knows Democracy and Hone Means Nazism. Support Kaunda with One Man One Vote”. About 3,000 Africans mainly UNIP and ANC demonstrators carried placards which read “Freedom now... Freedom before October 1960”.⁹⁶ Similar demonstrations occurred at Ndola Airport when Reginald Maudling (Macleod’s successor) came on the same mission in 1962. They sat and lay on the road making the Colonial Secretary take 4 hours to cover a distance of 65 kilometres from the airport.⁹⁷ In addition, women played a crucial role in the dissemination of information, the provision of shelter and meeting place for political activities as well cooking for food male politicians.⁹⁸ They also boycotted shops which served Africans only through windows. As President Kaunda stated:

Zambian men who were in the thick of the independence struggle received constant and invaluable help and inspiration from our womenfolk. Without the crucial role which women played in our crusade against colonialism, the struggle would have been longer and tougher for us. Their political awareness and foresight, as well as their sense of justice which had been outraged by colonial oppression made them committed revolutionaries.⁹⁹

It is clear that the roles and responsibilities women undertook during the freedom struggle had a great influence in terms of shaping their place in the future political arena. Since women mainly adopted supportive roles during the freedom struggle, participation in mainstream politics did not occupy centre stage in their political outlook. They were more preoccupied with the issue of freedom and overlooked the

⁹⁶ *African Eagle*, 29 March 1960, pp. 1; 12.

⁹⁷ UNIP 11/2/3 Republic of Zambia, Report on the Development of the Status of Zambian Women, 1974, p. 3.

⁹⁸ Interview with Mrs B.C Kankasa, Lusaka, 9 November 2010.

⁹⁹ UNIP 11/2/4 Report for the First Women’s Brigade Conference, 27-29 September 1974, p. 23.

importance of gender equality in mainstream politics which was not very popular among African women at that time. Perhaps this can be attributed to the colonial education and the culture that socialised males and females differently. Studies have shown that ideas and beliefs about education for men and women go back as far as the pre-colonial period. Manda observes that, girls in pre-colonial Zambia received a kind of education that prepared them for their future roles as wives and mothers. Boys on the other hand were exposed to wider crafts such as fishing, hunting, fighting and building. Furthermore, boys were expected to attend public meetings to help them keep abreast with current events.¹⁰⁰

Araki observes that during the colonial period, European women, especially missionaries had the tendency of organising women into clubs both in rural and urban areas. These clubs paid very little attention to political issues or even economic issues like agriculture production and income generation. They focused primarily on women's roles as mothers and wives. Thus, they were only taught skills such as knitting, cooking, sewing and childcare.¹⁰¹ This affected men and women in different ways in terms of their status in society. No wonder even at the political level, African political parties, that is, the ANC and UNIP had women wings. In fact, the issue of nationalist movements having women's wings is a phenomenon that was noticed in most African countries that experienced colonial rule.¹⁰² These are important factors to consider in understanding the earliest crop of women politicians in both pre-independent and post-independent Zambia.

¹⁰⁰ Manda, "Women and Mass Mobilisation", p. 5.

¹⁰¹ Araki, "Women's Clubs", p. 129.

¹⁰² Geisler, *Women and the Remaking of Politics*, pp. 39-63.

The UNIP Women's Brigade in Post-Colonial Zambia, 1964-1974

At independence, Zambia had a new constitution that was formulated in line with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948.¹⁰³ Therefore, both men and women were given the right to participate in the political affairs of the country. The UNIP Women's Brigade continued existing as a dominant political wing under UNIP. Its first Director was Mukwae Nakatindi Yeta Nganga. In 1967, she lost her position during the UNIP General Conference and Party Elections to Maria Nankolongo.¹⁰⁴ Mrs Nankolongo was succeeded by Mrs Chibesa. B. Kankasa who was appointed Executive Secretary by President Kaunda in 1971. After two years, Mrs Kankasa was elected Member of the Central Committee which was the highest decision making body in Zambia. She maintained her position until 1986 when she was elected Member of the Central Committee for Eastern province.¹⁰⁵

Feminist scholars, such as Schuster, have condemned the Brigade for being fundamentally conservative. The argument has been that, despite women fighting for independence and gaining the right to vote at the same time with men, the Brigade did very little to challenge male leaders to increase the number of women in decision-making positions. Instead it mainly focused on economic and moral issues.¹⁰⁶ Geisler argues that, Brigade Women did not seek political power for themselves but rather

¹⁰³ A. W. Chanda, "Zambia: A Case Study in Human Rights in Commonwealth Africa", PhD Thesis, Yale University, 1992, p. 19.

¹⁰⁴ M.S. Walubita, "Nakatindi Yeta Nganga: She Opened the Door for Women", in Nalumango and Sifuniso (eds.), *Women Power in Politics*, p. 52.

¹⁰⁵ Interview with Mrs B.C Kankasa, Lusaka, 9 November 2010.

¹⁰⁶ Schuster, "Constraints and Opportunities in Political Participation", p. 19.

helped men achieve it.¹⁰⁷ This is mainly because they did not seek or demand for equal participation at all political level.

However, it is important to evaluate the Brigade from its political-historical context. At this time most women joined politics as mothers hoping to liberate themselves and their children from colonial rule and not primarily to challenge the existing gender relations.¹⁰⁸ In fact, at international level the framework of integrating women in development was given much attention during the UN Decade for Women (1975-1985). It was in the later 1980s that the international women's movement begun to look at the link between women and developmental issues in the context of the relationships between women and men embedded in the social relations of gender. Gender analysis and training become popular concepts and practice in national and international development agencies in the early 1990s.¹⁰⁹ This is why early women politicians seemed to have been very loyal to their male leaders.

The issue of educational attainment also needs to be considered. The few women who were appointed to leadership positions in government had to be very outstanding in terms of educational level. They were mainly former Chipembi graduates. Schuster notes that most of the female elites who attended Chipembi Girls Secondary School formed an old girl network comparable to an old boy network found in many countries.¹¹⁰ These include women like Dr Mutumba Mainga Bull, Gwendoline Konie

¹⁰⁷ Geisler, *Women and the Remaking of Politics*, p. 89.

¹⁰⁸ UNIP 11/2/3 Republic of Zambia, Report on the Development of the Status of Zambian Women, 1974, pp. 2-3.

¹⁰⁹ Synder and Tadesse, *African Women and Development*, p. 14.

¹¹⁰ Schuster, "Constraints and Opportunities in Political Participation", pp. 23; 31.

and Lombe Chibesakunda, among others. Arguably, therefore, educational achievement was an important factor in appointing women to leadership positions in government.

The Women's Brigade prioritised the improvement of women's social and economic status. In her letter to all the Women Regional Secretaries of the Brigade in 1969, the Brigade Director emphasised the need for women to participate in economic activities such as the formation of poultry cooperatives and farming and social activities like netball, dancing, and clubs, among others. The Director also urged women to compete with men in the field of employment but did not emphasise on women's political participation.¹¹¹ This tendency by the Women's Brigade is what makes some feminist scholars argue that the Brigade contributed to the low representation of women in formal politics. However, the Women's Brigade leaders justify their social and economic programmes. Mrs Esnart Mushiba who was the Women's Regional Secretary for Chipata from 1964 to 1974 described the works of the UNIP Women's Brigade as follows:

We used to visit sections and branches to educate people on party programmes. I used to tour districts to encourage women to form co-operatives and clubs. The problem that time was that money was difficult to flow as compared to today. There was less funding from donors. We did not just focus on politics but also wanted to empower women economically and socially. We were working in conjunction with Community Development Officers to initiate development in urban and rural areas. Women could not eat politics. However, we did encourage women to take part in politics.¹¹²

All this was done in order to help reduce the gap that existed between men and women in terms of their social and economic status.

¹¹¹ UNIP 11/1/2 Correspondence- Women's League Director to All Women's Regional Secretaries, 1 April 1964.

¹¹² Interview with Mrs Esnart Mushiba, Lusaka, 9 November 2010.

Zambian women faced many social and economic problems such as poverty and deprivation of their rights to better employment conditions, among other things. Thus, programmes to improve their lives had to be initiated. This approach taken by Zambian women was not only peculiar to Zambia. In Ghana, for example, the National Council on Women and Development in the 1970s organised women groups in the country and put income generation on top of its agenda. Thus, women were engaged in agricultural production and food processing.¹¹³

Brigade Women also perceived themselves as custodians of culture. In 1971, the women in Mkushi were preoccupied with the issues of teaching young women traditional customs, such as childcare and how to look after the home, price-checking to fight profiteering in shops and markets and forming women clubs.¹¹⁴ During a two-day women's seminar held at Saint Francis College near Kitwe from 14-15 August 1971, the Brigade urged government to employ traditional advisors at boarding schools to teach young people a sense of responsibility. In addition, the women also urged the government to prohibit women from drinking in bars and taverns and encourage them to drink at home.¹¹⁵ It is because of these issues that the UNIP Women's Brigade is condemned for preventing the progress of Zambian women in terms of their political and legal status. However, it is significant to note that African women at this time could not embrace everything that western feminism advocated for most of them had not been exposed to the international women's movement.

¹¹³ Synder and Tadesse, *African Women*, pp. 18-19.

¹¹⁴ *Times of Zambia*, 22 June 1971, p. 2.

¹¹⁵ *Times of Zambia*, 16 August 1971, p. 1.

It can be argued that being an organisation under UNIP, some of the Brigade's activities were meant to discourage political opposition so as to help maintain UNIP in power. It is because of this that Schuster argues that the Women's Brigade only represented party interests which did not serve the interest of all female citizens.¹¹⁶ Phiri in his PhD Thesis points out that, after independence in October 1964, UNIP was preoccupied with the struggle to maintain its political dominance under a constitution designed to guarantee liberal democracy. This desire for political dominance coincided with UNIP's search for national unity, seen as a vital condition for nation-building. This resulted into the declaration of the One-Party state in 1972 which introduced the Second Republic.¹¹⁷ It is for this reason that when Simon Mwansa Kapwepwe resigned as vice-President of Zambia in August 1971 to form the United Progressive Party (UPP), the Brigade showed massive support for President Kaunda and UNIP.

This can be seen from the many protests and demonstrations they organised. Half-naked demonstrators in Kalulushi demanded the arrest of Mr Kapwepwe and other UPP leaders on 27 August 1971. In Chingola, more than 2, 000 demonstrators marched to the Chingola Governor's office, waving placards in support of President Kaunda. The women also demanded that Mr. Kapwepwe be restricted to Chilubi Island. Markets, shops, taverns and bars were deserted in Kabwe on 27 August 1971, as people rushed to join more than 3, 000 UNIP supporters demonstrating against

¹¹⁶ Schuster, "Constraints and Opportunities", pp. 24-27.

¹¹⁷ B.J. Phiri, "The Capricorn Africa Society: A Study of Liberal Politics in Northern Rhodesia/Zambia, 1949-1972" PhD Thesis Dalhousie University (Halifax Nova Scotia), September, 1991, p. 230.

UPP.¹¹⁸ On 29 August 1971, thousands of UNIP supporters turned out in Lusaka. UNIP women fell on the ground in agony as a symbol of terror that awaited Zambia unless subversive elements were checked.¹¹⁹

Later, on 5 September, 1971 several thousands people demonstrated in front of State House demanding the ban of UPP and the restriction of its leaders. The huge crowd was led by UNIP Director for Women, Mrs Kankasa and Lusaka Governor, Mr Justin Kabwe. This demonstration was spearheaded by Copperbelt Women's Brigade who had traveled through the night in twelve buses and declared a hunger strike when they reached Lusaka until their mission was accomplished. Many women wept openly and were stripped to the waist. Some were dressed in sacks as a symbol for mourning.¹²⁰ The women were assured that their weeping was not in vain by President Kaunda when he told them that the Government would take decisive action against the UPP. He also told them that he and the Central Committee were prepared to defend the Zambian revolution and would not allow the country "to go to the dogs."¹²¹

Mrs. Kankasa justified these demonstrations by saying, "when UPP was born, some of us said no. Democracy allows everyone to stand but not to bring confusion. Women said no to UPP."¹²² However, some scholars see the decline of the Women's Brigade's autonomy and radicalism as having begun two years before independence. By independence, the organisation was under the control of men. Allen and Geisler argue that the decline of women's autonomy and radicalism coincided with the shift

¹¹⁸ *Times of Zambia*, 28 August 1971, p. 1.

¹¹⁹ *Times of Zambia*, 30 August 1971, p. 7.

¹²⁰ *Times of Zambia*, 6 September 1971, p. 1.

¹²¹ *Times of Zambia*, 6 September 1971, p. 1.

¹²² Interview with Mrs B.C Kankasa, Lusaka, 9 November 2010.

in UNIP from a more militant nationalist movement led by disenfranchised young members to a political party that built its support on patronage and clientalism. They further argue that, the Brigade became more and more a body for abusing opposition supporters in moments of legal opposition and for disciplining women voters.¹²³ Schuster observed that, the Brigade adopted the images of angry mother and UNIP supporter, the stern moralist, and the defender of the political status quo.¹²⁴

Nevertheless, in February 1972, President Kaunda appointed the Chona Commission whose aim was to suggest ways on how to change from multi-party politics to a one party system. Subsequently, on 13 December 1972 President Kaunda and UNIP introduced One Party Participatory Democracy in Zambia. All opposition parties such as UPP and United Party (UP) were banned. The signing of the Choma Declaration between Nkumbula and Kaunda led to the absorption of Nkumbula's ANC into UNIP.¹²⁵ Consequently, UNIP became the only legal party and begun to control government and all aspects of Zambian life.

It is important to note that the introduction of one-party states was a phenomenon that was noticed in most new African states such as Ghana, Tanzania, Ivory Coast and Guinea. According to Thompson, many Africans and Africanists in the West welcomed these changes and justifications given by African leaders.¹²⁶ Most of them agreed that there was no reason that democracy in Africa should imitate Western multi-party competition, especially considering the fact that this pluralist form of

¹²³ Geisler, *Women and the Remaking of Politics*, p. 89.

¹²⁴ Schuster, "Lusaka's Young Women", p. 241.

¹²⁵ Chabatama, "The Untold Story", p. 45.

¹²⁶ A. Thompson, *An Introduction to African Politics* (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 102-103.

democracy had no historical roots on the African continent. Besides most of these governments that imposed these one-party states enjoyed massive support from the electorate. Furthermore, it was thought that for African political institutions to reflect African needs rather than the pluralist ideals inherited from the colonial powers, it was important for African governments to prioritise economic development. Newly independent states needed strong leadership to bring about modernisation unlike the 'short-termist' policies and resource bargaining that multi-party competition encouraged. Therefore, as Thompson argued, unity, lack of opposition, tradition and the importance of economic development as justifications that were put forward to introduce one-party states are arguments that deserve respect even today.¹²⁷

Despite the negative images that scholars like Schuster and Geisler have given the Brigade, there are definitely positive contributions it made to the political as well the social and economic spheres of Zambia during that time. Although the administrative structure of the Brigade was more effective during the Liberation Struggle and became a bit dislocated after independence, its existence in many parts of the country gave it the potential to be an important agent of not only social and economic but political transformation as well.¹²⁸ This can be seen from the many works it did in various parts of the country. For example, due to the works of the Women's Brigade, Southern Province in 1966 had 150 women's clubs. Some of these clubs had membership with over 150 women. Club leaders went for leadership training courses at the Community Development Centre in Monze.¹²⁹ Through these clubs women met

¹²⁷ Thompson, *An Introduction to African Politics*, p. 103

¹²⁸ UNIP 11/2/4 Vol 1 First Women's Brigade Conference, Held at Mulungushi Hall, Lusaka, 27-29 September 1974, pp. 24-25.

¹²⁹ UNIP/11/1/29 Correspondence 1964-66- Women's League (Gwembe Region), 21 June 1966.

and exchanged different views concerning their problems. About thirty-five women's clubs were formed by 1967 in Kabompo district by the UNIP Women Regional Secretary.¹³⁰ Women's clubs provided an important channel through which the Women's Brigade could reach rural women in order to explain UNIP's political ideals as well as social and economic programmes. Thus, women were introduced to the new post-colonial political system.

In 1967, the Women's Brigade in Ndola was instrumental in teaching women decimal currency and in promoting mass literacy as a whole. This was important as there were more illiterate women compared to men. According to the 1969 census, the total number of illiterate people in Zambia between the ages of fifteen and sixty was 1, 128, 119 of which 403, 059 were males and 725, 060 were females.¹³¹ The women also moved in various branches to help introduce Zambian Humanism, an ideology spearheaded by President Kaunda.¹³² By July 1971, the Women's Brigade in Mkushi had established eighteen women's poultry and domestic clubs for mothers and young women.¹³³ It is also important to note that the philosophy of Humanism also had a huge bearing on politics at this time. The principle of Humanism demanded that society should be organised in such a way that there was no exploitation of man by man and that all its members were given equal opportunity irrespective of colour,

¹³⁰ UNIP/11/1/54 Correspondence 1967-68- Women's League (Kabompo Region). Progress Report November, 1967.

¹³¹ ZARD, Women's Rights in Zambia: Proceedings of the Second National Women's Rights Conference held at Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation, Kitwe, 22-24 March 1985, p. 8.

¹³² UNIP 11/1/55 Women Brigade Reports 1967-68. Ndola Region Report, 30 November 1967, p. 1.

¹³³ *Times of Zambia*, 22 June 1971, p. 2.

ethnicity, origin, creed and sex.¹³⁴ This philosophy in a way delayed women from demanding for more space in the mainstream political arena. They were made to believe that in terms of opportunities, they were equal with men in all walks of life.¹³⁵ Nevertheless, through the mobilisation of women at grassroots level, the Brigade was a significant agent in politicising women.

Brigade women who rose to national leadership positions contributed in their own way in serving the nation. At the same time, they also spoke for other women to be given an opportunity to serve in the political arena. The first Zambian Cabinet only consisted of men.¹³⁶ In the first National Assembly between 1964 and 1968, there were only five female members of parliament against sixty-five males.¹³⁷ Malina Chilila, for instance, as Member of Parliament strongly condemned the low representation of women in politics. During the debate for the Constitution (Amendment No. 20 Bill) in 1966, Ms Chilila complained that there was no provision in the Bill stating that the number of women should not be less than five.¹³⁸ In 1972, Monica Chintu who was the only elected female Member of Parliament and a dedicated UNIP Brigade member spoke against the low representation of women in key positions in both UNIP and government.¹³⁹

¹³⁴ UNIP 11/2/4 Vol 1 First Women's Brigade Conference, Held at Mulungushi Hall, Lusaka, 27-29 September, 1974, p. 27.

¹³⁵ UNIP 11/2/4 Vol 1, First Women's Brigade Conference, Held at Mulungushi Hall, Lusaka, 27-29 September, 1974, p. 27.

¹³⁶ Nyaywa, "Julia Chikamoneka" in Nalumango and Sifuniso (eds.), *Women Power in Politics*, p.30

¹³⁷ Debates of the First Session of the First National Assembly, 14th-18th December, 1964, Vol 1.

¹³⁸ Debates of the Third Session (Resumed) of the First National Assembly 20th July-23rd September, 1966 Volume 7, p. 271.

¹³⁹ R. Mpuku, "Women's Lib Reaches Mbala", in *Zambia Daily Mail*, 14 March 1972, p. 3.

In fact, the Women's Brigade provided a good training ground for future women leaders. A number of women who were elected to Parliament or appointed to other decision making positions rose through the ranks of the Brigade before they occupied their positions. Monica Chintu is a good example. Others include Esnart Mushiba, who was UNIP Women's Regional Secretary for Chipata from 1964 to 1974, and later appointed District Governor for Chipata in 1988.¹⁴⁰ Another was Mrs Esther M. Chande who between 1959 and 1976 held positions in UNIP as branch and constituency chairperson and was later appointed Women's Regional Secretary for Ndola Urban in 1976 and as Member of Parliament for Ndola Central in 1983.¹⁴¹ This is contrary to Manda's argument that most conspicuous leaders of the Women's Brigade were not promoted to any leadership position outside the Brigade after independence.¹⁴²

However, much could have been achieved had the Women's Brigade been more firm in demanding for women's rights and equal participation in politics. For example, at the first National Women's Rights Conference held at Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation in Kitwe from 20-24 November 1970, the major focus was the traditional role of women in the home.¹⁴³ Therefore, the recommendations passed at this conference were inspired by the insecurity rapid social change brought to family life and sexual ethics in Zambia.¹⁴⁴ It was believed that women's rights and equality did not mean overthrowing male authority but safeguarding the position of the wife and

¹⁴⁰ Interview with Mrs Esnart Mushiba, Lusaka, 9 November 2010.

¹⁴¹ *Sunday Times of Zambia*, 12 May 1985, p.4.

¹⁴² Manda, "Women and Mass Mobilisation", p. 74.

¹⁴³ ZARD, *Women's Rights in Zambia*, p .v.

¹⁴⁴ ZARD, *Women's Rights in Zambia*, p. 24.

mother who served the husband and the nation as well. It is for this reason that for many years after this conference, women seemed not to have made headways in attaining equal rights with men. Thirty far-reaching recommendations were made at this conference. Despite being presented to relevant authorities, only one was taken up by the government through the Ministry of Legal Affairs. This was the call for the unification of the Law of Succession and Inheritance, based on provisions from both Customary and Statutory Law.¹⁴⁵

In July 1967, Princess Nakatindi Yeta Nganga, who was Director of the Women's Brigade called for the formation of a national women's organisation in Zambia. This organisation was to be organised by women themselves not government. By coordinating the various women's organisations, the organisation would help women express themselves and take action at national levels, guard the interest of all women, and seek their advancement and development through social and economic programmes.¹⁴⁶ It can be argued that this idea was to some extent achieved when the First Women's Brigade Conference was held in 1974.

The conference was held at Mulungushi Hall (now Mulungushi International Conference Centre) in Lusaka from 27-29 September 1974. It was here where the objectives of the Women's Brigade were adopted. The women also discussed the Programme of Action for the Zambian women, the structure of the Women's Brigade and elected office bearers for the Brigade's executive committee. The aim of the conference was to make women assume more control of the Brigade. This was an important step considering the fact that it was perceived by many as being an all men

¹⁴⁵ ZARD, *Women's Rights in Zambia*, p. v.

¹⁴⁶ UNIP 11/1/23 Correspondence 1967- Women's League, 11 July 1967.

affair because of the influence from men.¹⁴⁷ It was agreed that the Women's Brigade would play an instructive role in the mobilisation of the womenfolk and up-bringing of the children in accordance with the objective of the revolution. Women were to be encouraged to achieve the highest degree of involvement in supporting the activities of UNIP and implement its principles and the philosophy of Humanism. The women agreed to improve relations with other women's organisations and where possible and necessary give them guidance and get them affiliated to the party. The Women's Brigade agreed to encourage women to take active part in national affairs and promote the spirit of self-reliance, among other things.¹⁴⁸

The other importance of this conference was the establishment of the Women's Brigade hierarchy. It was resolved that the hierarchy would be as follows: the General Conference, the National Women's Council, the Executive Committee, and the Regional Committees.¹⁴⁹ This structure continued existing even when the Brigade was transformed into the Women's League. Four members were elected to the Executive Committee. These were Mrs. Christine Walubita as Executive Secretary (Freedom House), Mrs Veronica Mumba for Publicity, Mrs Lister Chula, Treasurer, and Mrs Monica Chintu, vice-Secretary.¹⁵⁰ In 1975, the UNIP Women's Brigade was given permanent representation on the UNIP Central Committee which was the ruling body of UNIP and its government. The Brigade also changed its name to the UNIP

¹⁴⁷ *Zambia Daily Mail*, 30 September 1974, p. 4.

¹⁴⁸ UNIP 11/2/4 Vol 1 First Women's Brigade Conference, Held at Mulungushi Hall, Lusaka, 27-29 September 1974, pp. 4-5.

¹⁴⁹ UNIP 11/2/4 Vol 1 First Women's Brigade Conference, Held at Mulungushi Hall, Lusaka, 27-29 September 1974, pp. 11.

¹⁵⁰ UNIP 11/2/4 Vol 1 First Women's Brigade Conference, Held at Mulungushi Hall, 27-29 September 1974, p. 15.

Women's League.¹⁵¹ This marked a turning point in terms of institutionalising women issues and concerns in the history of Zambia.

Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to establish a background to women's participation in modern politics. It has been demonstrated that the foundation of women's political activities in post-independent Zambia can be traced to the period of the nationalist movements up to 1974, a year before the Zambian government began addressing women's issues through the Women's League. The chapter started by giving an overview of women's political participation in the fight for independence. It was argued that during the fight for independence women through the ANC and UNIP Women's Brigades were politicised and entered the realm of modern politics. They took advantage of this foundation and continued participating in politics mainly through the UNIP Women's Brigade after independence. The chapter argued that the UNIP Women's Brigade and individual women politicians not only served party interests but worked and spoke for the interest of other women as well. However, more could have been achieved had the Brigade been more firm in demanding for women's rights and equal participation in politics. It has also been demonstrated that the role of the Women's Brigade was more complex than the supportive stereotype perpetuated by some scholars for decades.

¹⁵¹ Araki, "Women's Clubs", p. 121.

CHAPTER THREE

THE ROLE OF THE UNIP WOMEN'S LEAGUE IN ZAMBIAN POLITICS, 1975-2001

Introduction

The main aim of this chapter is to examine the role of the UNIP Women's League in Zambian politics from 1975 to 2001. The chapter illustrates the major themes informing the League's political participation. It argues that between 1975 and 1991, the League's activities and programmes were mainly informed by the themes of the UN Decade for Women (1975-1985), which were Equality, Development and Peace. However, with the coming of the new political environment of plural democracy in 1991, the Women's League became less influential. It also demonstrates that through its Programmes of Action of 1975-1985 and 1985-1995, the League achieved a number of successes. These, among others things, included the establishment of the Women's Council, Women's Affairs sub-committee under the UNIP Central Committee, and the Women's Unit at the National Commission for Development Planning (NCDP) in 1983. Other achievements included the formation of the National Commission for Rural Planning, and the inclusion of a chapter on women in the Fourth National Development Plan (1987-1993). Despite being in opposition after 1991, the League contributed to the setting up of the Women in Politics (WIP) Forum and the drafting of the Women's Manifesto in 2000 together with other women's organisations.

The Women's League and the UN Decade for Women, 1975-1985

The UN International Women's Year came at a time when important changes were made in the Women's Brigade during its First Women's Brigade Conference of September, 1974 as explained in the previous chapter. A shift was seen in terms of how government addressed women's issues after 1975. When launching the International Women's Year on 21 February 1975, President Kenneth Kaunda directed all women's organisations to mobilise their efforts under the leadership of the Women's Brigade, the party (UNIP) and government. This was for the promotion of the image of women in the world which had previously been dominated by men.¹⁵²

The President also informed the nation that the days where women's duties were considered to be in the kitchen were long gone. He acknowledged the cardinal role of women worldwide in mastering and solving complex international issues as well as national problems.¹⁵³ This led to a realisation by Zambian women that their role was not a simple one as many people believed. They realised that the strength of the nation mainly depended on them as mothers, wives and workers. Furthermore, the women also realised that their multiple role and function in the country placed them in a better position to serve the nation of Zambia and indeed humanity as a whole.¹⁵⁴

As a result, the Women's Brigade was renamed the Women's League. It was given its own constitution and its executive secretary, who was appointed by the President

¹⁵² UNIP 11/2/16 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, p. 5.

¹⁵³ UNIP 11/2/16 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, p. 5.

¹⁵⁴ UNIP 11/2/10 Vol 2 GRZ, The Five Year Progress Report to the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Held in Copenhagen, Denmark, 14-30 July 1980, p. 2.

automatically, became a member of the Central Committee. The Women's League existed at section, ward, district, provincial and national level. Its hierarchy was as follows: the General Conference, which was the supreme policy-making organ of the women's League, the National Council, the National Executive Committee, the Provincial Conference, the Provincial Committee, District Conference, District Executive Committee, Ward Council, Ward Executive Committee, Section Council and Section Executive Committee.¹⁵⁵

The Women's League was given power to authorise the establishment of women's organisations in the country.¹⁵⁶ However, it should be noted that it was not a completely autonomous organisation run by women themselves. UNIP still had influence in the running of this organisation. The President appointed the Women's League's Executive Secretary and during the Women's League's provincial conferences he had the power to appoint the chairperson.¹⁵⁷ Only those who were UNIP members could hold positions in the Women's League at district, provincial and national level. This is despite the fact that other women's organisations that were affiliated to it like the Home Economics Association of Zambia or YWCA were not politically inclined. In addition, all the League's activities and programmes had to pass through the UNIP Central Committee for approval.¹⁵⁸ Therefore, much as the Women's League propelled some women into leadership position in the party or state, the influence from the party-state contributed in marking the boundaries to which women could advance.

¹⁵⁵ UNIP, *The Constitution of the Women's League*, pp. 7-15.

¹⁵⁶ UNIP, *The Constitution of the Women's League*, pp. 2-3.

¹⁵⁷ UNIP, *The Constitution of the Women's League*, p. 11.

¹⁵⁸ UNIP, *The Constitution of the Women's League*, p. 5.

Nevertheless, the Women's League's efforts of integrating women in development during the UN Decade for Women cannot be overlooked. The First World Women's Conference was held from 19 June-2 July 1975. The theme of the conference was Equality, Development and Peace. Miss Petronella Kawandami, who was the member of the UNIP Central Committee for Youth Affairs and Mrs Veronica Mumba who was an executive member of the Women's League were chosen to represent Zambia at this conference.¹⁵⁹ The UN urged governments to generate data on the status of women. Governments were also pushed to establish national machineries to promote women's integration in development.¹⁶⁰ Bunch observes that, even if there was conflict between Third World and Western women, especially over what "women's issues" were, the Mexico Conference provided a common ground for women to learn from each other.¹⁶¹

By recommendation of the Mexico Conference, the UN General Assembly proclaimed 1976-1985 the UN World Decade for Women. The Decade launched a new era in global efforts to promote the advancement of women by opening a worldwide dialogue on gender equality. Due to this Conference, the UN General Assembly on 18 December 1979 adopted the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).¹⁶² Ford contends that prior to CEDAW, there was no convention that comprehensively addressed women's rights within political, economic, social, cultural and family life.¹⁶³ The significance of CEDAW was that it established an international standard for women's equality.

¹⁵⁹ Interview with Mrs B.C Kankasa, Lusaka, 9 November 2010.

¹⁶⁰ Araki, "Women's Clubs", p. 121.

¹⁶¹ Bunch, "Feminism", p. 298.

¹⁶² Interview with Mrs B.C Kankasa, Lusaka, 9 November 2011.

¹⁶³ Ford, *Women and Politics*, p. 161.

After the Mexican Conference, Zambian women met in Lusaka on 20 January 1976 to set up a standing committee that drew up a programme of action for the UN Decade for Women. Members from all walks of life were elected and later appointed to serve on the Committee led by Hon. Bessie Chibesa Kankasa, MCC. These women included Mrs. Christina Walubita (Executive Secretary, Freedom House) as chairperson, Miss. Dorothy Kapantha (District Governor), vice-chairperson, Mrs. Mercy Siame (Zambia Women Alliance), secretary, Mrs. Betty Chilunga (Ministry of Education), vice-secretary, Miss. Rose.K. Mateu (Local Government), publicity secretary, Mrs. Monica.N. Chintu, MP (Vice Executive Secretary, Freedom House) and Mrs. Veronica Mumba (Publicity Executive Secretary, Freedom House).

Others included Mrs. Lister Chula (Executive Treasurer, Freedom House), Miss Mary Bwalanda (Women Regional Secretary, Lusaka Urban), Senior Chieftainess Elizabeth Mulenje Nkomenshya (Member of Parliament), Mrs. T.C. Mwendwe (Helen Kaunda Nursery School), Mrs. P.M. Phiri (Ministry of Education), Mrs. M. Imakando (Community Development), Mrs Gladys. N.M Mutukwa (Legal Affairs), Mrs. A.B. Mwaka (Rural Development), Mrs. Sophie Masaninga (YWCA), and Mrs. Alice Mumbuna (Ministry of Education). Mrs Victoria Nyika and Mrs. Margaret.M. Mutambo were later called to replace some members who were unable to serve on the committee.¹⁶⁴ The Standing Committee met once a week and eventually produced the report.

¹⁶⁴ GRZ, Programme of Action for the United Nations Decade for Women, 1975-1985 (1976), p. 3; Interview with Mrs Betty Chilunga, Lusaka, 10 February 2011.

The Programme of Action (1975-1985) addressed important issues with the aim of achieving the UN's aim of integrating women in development and also suggested some solutions. The areas of focus under development were leadership training, literacy, inequality of access to facilities and the economic independence of women, employment, health and culture. The document also addressed the issues that prevented equality between men and women. These included the ill-treatment of women in marriages, polygamy and other issues that lowered the status of women through both the customary and statutory law, issuance of national registration cards to women, and women's rights. The significant role of women in national security and peace was also emphasised in the Programme of Action.¹⁶⁵

To achieve these targets, the education and culture, economic and development, health and legal sub-committees were also established. In addition, a Women's Council was established. It consisted of five executive members from Freedom House, namely, the National Executive Secretary of the Women's League, who was the Executive Chairperson of the Women Executive and four members who were elected by the General Conference of the Women's League. There were also two representatives from the affiliated women's organisations and a woman from the following government departments: education, health, culture, labour and social service, rural development, foreign affairs and Attorney-General's Chambers.¹⁶⁶ It must be mentioned that the UNIP Women's League and the Women's Council accepted the leadership of the Central Committee of UNIP established under the leadership of the local units at corresponding levels. A steering-committee which

¹⁶⁵ GRZ, Programme of Action for the United Nations Decade for Women, 1975-1985 (1976), pp. 7-34.

¹⁶⁶ GRZ, Programme of Action for the United Nations Decade for Women, 1975-1985 (1976), p. 37-39.

made important decisions that needed attention in between council meetings was also set up. This committee studied specific issues and made recommendations to the Council. The National Secretariat headed by the Women's League National Executive Secretary served the Council and its committees. Some units were set up at the National Secretariat. These were the administrative, information, counselling, research and regional units.¹⁶⁷

Therefore, the Women's League was faced with a critical task of implementing its first Programme of Action (1975-1985). As a way of encouraging women's participation in political affairs, the Women's League played a crucial role in mobilising women throughout the country for the registration of voters in readiness for the Presidential and General Election campaigns in 1978. Women throughout the country were taught how to cast their votes properly in order to have more women voters. This was very important as the National Voters' Register showed that Zambia had more women voters. The women also moved from district to district to examine the political situation and help solve the problems found during the period of registration.¹⁶⁸ This idea that the formal right to vote would lead to better policy outcomes for women was common in other African countries as well. It is for this reason that scholars like Hassim observe that, women's organisations on the left, since the 1980s, questioned this idea. This is because it did not increase women's political power to any significant degree.¹⁶⁹ Nevertheless, the efforts made by the Zambian

¹⁶⁷ GRZ, Programme of Action for the United Nations Decade for Women, 1975-1985 (1976), p. 41.

¹⁶⁸ UNIP, Annual Report for the Year 1978 by the Secretary-General of the Party Hon. M.M. Chona, SC, MCC Presented to the National Council Meeting on 9 October 1979, p. 33.

¹⁶⁹ S. Hassim, "Representation, Participation and Democratic Effectiveness: Feminist Challenges to Representative Democracy in South Africa", in A.M. Goetz

women in nation-building, were acknowledged by President Kaunda on 7 March 1978 when he paid respect to them by delivering a message in respect of the Women's Day which would fall on 8 March.¹⁷⁰ On this day, Zambian women would join the rest of the women across the world in celebrating the day.

The Women's League carried out different activities in many parts of the country. For example, it greatly contributed to the efficiency in the running and existence of UNIP in the Copperbelt. It was also instrumental in maximising the YES vote for President Kaunda in the 1978 Presidential and General Elections. On 5 August 1978, the League in the Copperbelt held the first ever Provincial Conference at Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation. The theme of the conference was the reviewing of the involvement of women in the national duties as well as the interpretation of the party programmes which included in that year the campaign for the support of President Kaunda.¹⁷¹

In Eastern Province, the Women's League was engaged in moulding of bricks for self-help projects and was also very active in its other programmed activities.¹⁷² By 1983, the Women's League had contributed immensely in setting up poultry and farming projects throughout the country. It also spearheaded the formation of

and S. Hassim (eds.), *No Shortcut to Power: African Women in Politics and Policy Making* (London: Zed Books, 2003), p. 82.

¹⁷⁰ UNIP, Annual Report for the Year 1978 by the Secretary-General of the Party Hon. M.M. Chona, SC, MCC Presented to the National Council Meeting on 9 October 1979, p. 33.

¹⁷¹ UNIP Copperbelt Province, Copperbelt Provincial Council Report for 14th National Council held from 8-12 October 1979, pp. 14-15.

¹⁷² UNIP, Eastern Province 1979 Annual Report to the National Council Meeting Held from 8 -12 October 1979, p. 4.

Marketeers' Co-operative Societies across the nation.¹⁷³ All this was aimed at making Zambian women part and parcel of the development process.

At the Second Women's League Conference held from 16-20 December, 1979, the Women's League constitution, membership card and a paper on the International Year of Child were approved. In addition, six women were elected to the League's Executive Committee. These were Christina Mwangala Walubita as Secretary for Administration, Lister Chula as Treasurer, Veronica Mumba, Secretary for Publicity, Nancy Namwako, Secretary for Social Affairs, and Betty Chilunga as Secretary for Economic and Development Affairs. Mary Kazunga, from YWCA and Dorah Mumba from the Home Economics Association of Zambia were also nominated to serve in the Executive Committee.¹⁷⁴ In their resolutions the women at this conference identified six critical areas that needed national attention. These were peace, equality, development, health, transport and the International Year of the Child.¹⁷⁵

In appreciating the role played by women in politics and national efforts of Zambia generally, the UNIP National Council in 1979 resolved to create a department of Women's Affairs under an appropriate ministry to deal specifically with women's development programmes.¹⁷⁶ Initially, the Women's League recommended to the

¹⁷³ UNIP, Annual Report for the Year 1983 by the Secretary-General of Party Hon. H. Mulemba, MCC Presented to the 19th National Council Meeting on 10 December 1984, p. 46.

¹⁷⁴ UNIP 11/2/10 Vol 2 GRZ, The Five Year Progress Report to the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Held in Copenhagen, Denmark, 14-30 July 1980, p. 32.

¹⁷⁵ UNIP 11/2/10 Vol 2 GRZ, The Five Year Progress Report to the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Held in Copenhagen, Denmark, 14-30 July 1980, pp. 34-37.

¹⁷⁶ UNIP, Resolutions of the 14th National Council of the United National Independence Party, Held at Mulungushi Hall, Lusaka, 8-12 October 1979, p. 13.

Cabinet that the Ministry of Women should be created. However, this idea was rejected on the grounds that the creation of such a ministry would violate the policy of Humanism, which called for the creation of an egalitarian society with equal opportunities for all. Thus, the Women's League suggested the creation of a post of Women's Co-ordinator, and eventually the National Commission for Rural Planning was formed within the UNIP Women's League. This Commission had a cross-section of membership of representatives from the Party, government, NGOs and parastatals.¹⁷⁷ In 1983, the National Commission for Development Planning (NCDP) under the Ministry of Finance created a post of National Women's Co-ordinator of Women's Projects. The first person to hold this post was Dorothy Muntamba.¹⁷⁸ The National Women's Co-ordinator had to oversee the formulation and implementation of women's projects.¹⁷⁹ Later in 1985, a Women's Unit was set up at NCDP.¹⁸⁰ The major aims of this unit were to co-ordinate and plan the implementation of Women in Development (WID) programmes.¹⁸¹ This meant that the issues to do with the advancement of women were no longer coordinated by the Women's League.

The Women's League played an important role in mobilising and organising women. As a way of complementing its works, the Women's Affairs Committee (WAC) was established in 1983 as an advisory policy-making body. The WAC became a new sub-committee under the UNIP Central Committee. This was due to an amendment to the party constitution following the ninth UNIP General Conference held in August 1983. Therefore, the Women's League ceased operating under the Political and Legal

¹⁷⁷ S. Hurlich, *Women in Zambia*, Rural Science and Technology Institute, Report for Canadian International Development Agency, June 1986, p. 26.

¹⁷⁸ Interview with Betty Chilunga, Lusaka, 9 November 2010.

¹⁷⁹ Araki, "Women's Clubs", p. 122.

¹⁸⁰ GRZ, *National Gender Policy*, March (2000), p. 43.

¹⁸¹ Interview with Betty Chilunga, Lusaka, 10 February 2011.

Affairs Committee of UNIP.¹⁸² The same year, President Kaunda appointed Hon B.C. Kankasa as chairperson of the Women's Affairs Committee.¹⁸³ The committee formulated policies for social development of women and children, worked out ways and means of instilling in female citizens a sense of responsibility towards their work, families, party and country. It also ensured that the Women's League was properly and effectively organised and had committed and enlightened leadership, and worked out policies and co-ordinated activities, functions, and programmes of various women's organisations within and outside Zambia.¹⁸⁴

In other words, the WAC was designated as the national machinery of women's issues. The Committee comprised of permanent secretaries from ministries with departments or sections dealing with women issues, such as the Ministry of Labour and Social Services, Cooperatives, Agriculture and Water Development, Health and General Education, Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning. In addition, the Committee included representatives of some women non-governmental organisations.¹⁸⁵ The creation of the WAC meant that women had a voice at the highest political level. In fact, its chairperson was also the National Executive Secretary of the Women's League. The Women's Affairs Committee presented a proposal to the Party (UNIP) and Government to upgrade the Women in Development Unit as an independent department, so that the Women's League

¹⁸² UNIP, Annual Report for the Year 1983 by the Secretary-General of Party Hon. H. Mulemba, MCC Presented to the 19th National Council Meeting on 10 December 1984, p. 45.

¹⁸³ UNIP, Annual Report for the Year 1983 by the Secretary-General of Party Hon. H. Mulemba, MCC Presented to the 19th National Council Meeting on 10 December 1984, p. 45.

¹⁸⁴ UNIP, The Constitution of United National Independence Party. Supplement to the Republic of Zambia Government Gazette, 23 September 1983, p. 22.

¹⁸⁵ Araki, "Women's Clubs", p. 122.

together with the Women's Department could plan, implement, monitor and evaluate programmes effectively.¹⁸⁶ Later, the Women's Unit was upgraded to the Women in Development Department (WIDD) in 1990.¹⁸⁷ WIDD was given the task of coordinating, monitoring and evaluating the implementation of gender related development policies, projects and programmes.¹⁸⁸

It is also important to note that the Women's League led by Mrs. Kankasa was represented at the Second World Women's Conference held in Copenhagen, Denmark from 14-30 July 1980. The theme of the conference was "Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace." It focused on the growing disparity between rights secured by women and their ability to exercise these rights in society. Therefore, it identified a great discrepancy between the application of women rights in education, employment opportunities and health care. This conference led to the formulation of the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the UN Decade for Women. The Programme of Action identified key factors which hindered the advancement of women's rights which included the lack of political will, insufficient resources and gender gap in decision-making. It was at this conference where Mrs. Kankasa signed CEDAW on behalf of Zambia.¹⁸⁹ Suffice to say, the Report released at the end of this conference was the first UN document to address the issue of domestic violence as a separate entity. Further, the Copenhagen Conference also highlighted the broader meaning behind the concept of equality. In the past, equality of women was only viewed from the legal perspective. However, it also begun to be

¹⁸⁶ UNIP, Five Year Report for UNIP Women's League, 1984-1988, p. 53.

¹⁸⁷ United Nations Combined Third and Fourth CEDAW Report for Zambia, 19 August 1999, p. 8.

¹⁸⁸ GRZ, National Gender Policy March 2000, p. 43.

¹⁸⁹ Interview with Mrs B.C Kankasa, Lusaka, 9 November 2010.

viewed as a prerequisite for sustainable peace and development. This led to the release of a Declaration on the Participation of Women in Promoting International Peace and Co-operation by the UN General Assembly on 3 December 1982.¹⁹⁰

The Women's League also participated in the Second National Women's Rights Conference held at Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation, Kitwe from 22-24 March 1985. The conference was co-organised by ZARD and Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation. Unlike the first conference that focused on the traditional role of women in the home, this conference focused on the position of women outside their homes. The objectives of the conference were: To provide a forum for exchange of ideas and experiences amongst the participants on legal rights of women in Zambia, examine the progress the Zambian women made during the UN Decade for Women, identify ways and means of removing obstacles which continued to prevent the progress of women, and prepare for the World Women's Conference to mark the end of the UN Decade for Women (1976-1985) to be held in Nairobi Kenya in July 1985. The discussions centred on four major themes, which were, human rights, employment and economic development, education and training, and health and nutrition.¹⁹¹

The recommendations made at the Second Women's Rights Conference in 1985 showed a shift in the vision of women in that broad issues which included the production capacity of women were addressed. From the sixty-four recommendations that were passed, thirty had to do with improving the production capacity of women.¹⁹² They covered the area of economic contribution under the subheadings of:

¹⁹⁰ Interview with Mrs B.C Kankasa, Lusaka, 9 November 2010.

¹⁹¹ ZARD, *Women's Rights in Zambia*, pp. v-vi.

¹⁹² ZARD, *Women's Rights in Zambia*, pp. 13-23.

rural women, urban women, women and the media, women and research, and women in South African Development Co-ordinating Committee (SADCC). To ensure that the recommendations were implemented, the women came up with instruments in order to facilitate continued struggle for the identified areas. The first instrument was to set up a task force whose responsibility was to work hand in hand with the Women's League so as to ensure that all recommendations were duly considered and implemented.

The taskforce was instructed to identify discriminatory laws in order to bring them to the attention of the authorities to facilitate the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), when ratified. The taskforce was expected to report to all the participants of the conference within six months, through the mass media or a newsletter, which it did.¹⁹³ The other instrument established by recommendation sixty-four was the endorsement of the continued existence of an NGO Co-ordinating Committee (NGOCC) that would be dealing with women's issues after the end of the Decade for Women in 1985.¹⁹⁴ After the UN Decade for Women, the NGOCC was formed in July 1985.¹⁹⁵ NGOCC became the main link between NGOs and Government.

¹⁹³ "Keynote Speech: 2001- More Women in Politics" by Gwendoline Konie in ZNWLG, Report on the National Conference to Establish the Women in Politics Forum and Adopt the Zambia Women's Manifesto, Held at Mulungushi International Conference Centre, 26-27 March 2001, p. 11.

¹⁹⁴ ZARD, Women's Rights in Zambia, p. 23.

¹⁹⁵ NGOCC, Programmes of Document. 1 January 1998- 31 December 2000, p. 3.

Five years after signing CEDAW, the Zambian Government ratified it on 21 June 1985.¹⁹⁶ The Convention contained the International Bill of Rights for Women. Due to CEDAW, Zambian women were no longer classified as minors but as legal persons capable of borrowing money from banks. In addition, they became eligible to acquire loans and housing provided by their employers, among other things.¹⁹⁷ The other achievement in the area of equality during this decade was the ratification of International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention on Maternal Protection.¹⁹⁸ Zambia ratified this Convention on 23 October 1979.¹⁹⁹ As a result of this convention, the Employment (Amendment) Act was assented on 20 August 1982. Through this law, female employees were granted fourteen weeks paid maternity leave as long as they provided proof of medical certificate signed by a registered medical practitioner. The law also prohibited the termination of employment for reasons connected with pregnancy, that is, within six months after delivery.²⁰⁰

However, not much was done to reduce the gender inequalities at all political levels. Figures presented to the 1985 Nairobi Conference show that Zambian women lagged behind in terms of leadership positions in national decision-making positions. From 1974 to 1978, there was only one woman cabinet minister in each year. Between 1982 and 1985, Zambia did not have any female Cabinet Minister. From 1973 to 1982, the UNIP Central Committee only had three women. Between 1974 and 1985, the highest number in terms of female members of parliaments was five in 1975. Women

¹⁹⁶ GRZ, National Gender Policy, March (2000), p. 27.

¹⁹⁷ Nyaywa and Walubita, "Chibesa Kankasa", p. 62.

¹⁹⁸ UNIP 11/2/16 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, p. 80.

¹⁹⁹ ILO, "Convention No. C103", URL <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/ratifce.pl?c103>. Accessed on 23 December 2010.

²⁰⁰ GRZ, Gazette Supplement Acts, Vol xviii, 1982, pp. 161-62.

seemed to have only performed well as District Women's League Chairpersons between 1974 and 1985 as their lowest number was forty-seven in 1979, for the rest of the years they were between fifty and fifty-nine.²⁰¹ This shows that women only held many positions within the Women's League as compared to other offices of national decision-making.

This does not mean that the Women's League did not bring out the issue of women representation in politics. At the First Zambia Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) Women's Conference held at the President's Citizenship College, Kabwe in April 1983, Mrs Kankasa urged women to start planning a strategy that would ensure a fifty-fifty representation between men and women in parliament. She also suggested that women should come up with a strategy that would capture women who were willing to contest the elections.²⁰² However, many women, especially educated women, who could have contributed to national politics, avoided direct involvement in Zambian politics. The few educated women who had gone as far as university level like Mrs Mutumba Bull, Mrs Lily Monze, Justice Lombe Chibesakunda and Gwendoline Konie, among others, mainly joined the political system as political appointees.²⁰³

Most educated women viewed politics as a "dirty game". They also feared that those who entered politics risked getting removed from the political positions anytime. Further, they avoided joining the Women's League because they thought they stood

²⁰¹ UNIP 11/2/16 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, p. 67.

²⁰² Zambia Daily Mail, 11 April 1983, p. 1.

²⁰³ T. Musuku "Is UNIP for Elite Women?", in *Sunday Times of Zambia*, 28 July 1985, p. 6.

little chance against the uneducated who enjoyed unqualified support from the rank and file of UNIP.²⁰⁴ Therefore, they opted to pursue their professional careers. This is despite the calls by UNIP that educated women should not be missing in all spheres of national development, much more in politics.

This lack of interests in politics by educated women can be traced to the beginnings of women's participation in modern politics. The majority of Zambian women who actively participated in the struggle for independence were those with no higher education or had not even been to school. Although there few educated women, they were well secured and decided to remain employed as opposed to becoming active UNIP militants. This is because they felt less oppressed as compared to illiterate women. From its inception in 1959, UNIP followed an open membership policy that attracted a wide spectrum of Zambian society in its hierarchy.²⁰⁵ However, most educated and progressive women seemed not to have supported this open membership policy. In spite of this, it can be argued that in a way, the UN Decade for Women exposed some educated women to the political sphere. This is because the Women's League was able to work with women from different professions, the business world and other women's organisations in the three main committees; namely Equality, Development and Peace committees.²⁰⁶

In the area of peace, the Women's League participated in international, regional and national workshops and conferences. These included those involved with preparation

²⁰⁴ T. Musuku "Is UNIP for Elite Women?", p. 6.

²⁰⁵ T. Musuku "Is UNIP for Elite Women?", p. 6.

²⁰⁶ UNIP 11/2/10 Vol 2 GRZ, The Five Year Progress Report to the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Held in Copenhagen, Denmark, 14-30 July 1980, pp. 96-97.

for the Nairobi, African regional conferences, workshops, seminars and so on. The Decade saw Zambian women actively participating in the issues which were part of the Southern Africa Regional dilemma such as the apartheid system and the liberation wars in Namibia and South Africa.²⁰⁷ All this can be said to have widened the scope of the League's network in terms of addressing women issues in the country. Membership in the Women's League towards the end of the UN Decade rose steadily. In 1983, it had a total membership of 159, 422. The number rose to 189, 523 in 1984. By 1985, membership stood at 243, 771.²⁰⁸ In 1985 about 1, 900 women's clubs with a total membership of 20, 000 were affiliated to the League.²⁰⁹

It is also important to note that there were challenges faced by the Women's League in achieving the UN objectives of equality, development and peace in the five areas of human endeavour- political, economic, social and cultural, scientific and technological, and defence and security. One major challenge was the world economic recession which coincided with the Decade. The recession negatively affected the Zambian economy. This meant that the poor economy contributed to the slow progress made in the field of development.²¹⁰ This also in the long run affected the political structures of the Zambian One Party State, which will be explained later. Despite these challenges the Women's League can be said to have contributed in

²⁰⁷ UNIP 11/2/16 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, p. 4.

²⁰⁸ UNIP, Five Year Report for the Women's League, 1984-1988, p. 21.

²⁰⁹ UNIP 11/2/16 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, p. 44.

²¹⁰ UNIP 11/2/16 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, p. 80.

bringing women issues and concerns on the policy agenda during the UN Decade for Women.

The Women's League after the UN Decade for Women, 1986-1991

After the UN Decade, the Women's League realised that there was still more work to be done to improve the welfare of women. In its national policies for the Decade 1985-1995, the UNIP Government recognised the importance of the Women's League in encouraging greater participation of women in development. The Party aimed to enhance the role of the Women's League in developing political awareness amongst women. Apart from this political role, the Party's other goal was to reduce illiteracy and involve women in primary health care, vocational training and participation in social organisations. Aware of the problems affecting Zambian women, UNIP promised to continue protecting women from discrimination and also facilitate the exercise of their constitutional rights. The Party also hoped that the Women's League would help in building strong Zambian homes as a pivot for Zambia's development.²¹¹ These national policies were aimed at ushering in a new phase for the building of Humanism in Zambia.

Therefore, during this period, the Women's League embarked on the task of improving the lives of its members through politicisation and training and encouraging women to participate directly in productive ventures. This was made possible by the League's collaborating efforts with government ministries, NGOs and international agencies.²¹² The 1985 Nairobi Conference helped Zambia to review and

²¹¹ UNIP, The National Policies for the Decade 1985-1995: Aims and Objectives of the Third Phase of the Party Programme, p. 36.

²¹² UNIP, Five Year Report for the Women's League, 1984-1988, p. 3.

appraise women's achievements. Thus, after the conference, the League together with other co-operating partners like women's NGOs, church and the Women in Development Unit at NCDP were tasked to work towards the inclusion of the women in development chapter in the Fourth National Development of 1989-1993.²¹³ This shows that the Women's League was able to establish critical linkages with the above stakeholders in order to better the lives of Zambian women.

In 1985, the Women's League drew up a Programme of Action for 1985-1995. This Programme of Action was divided into the five main areas of human endeavour.²¹⁴ This Programme of Action was significant in drawing up the Women's Affairs Committee Programme of Action for 1987-1995. The Nairobi Conference resulted into the adoption of the Forward Looking Strategies (FLS) with strong recommendations for Governments to seriously implement the strategies. The Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies focused on national gender machinery as a strategy to help influence the participation of women in national affairs.²¹⁵ Thus, the WAC formed a taskforce comprising officials from the party, Government and the NGOs to merge the Forward Looking Strategies and the Women's League Programme of Action for easy implementation. The Task Force worked around three documents, the Arusha Strategies, the UN Forward Looking Strategies and the UNIP Women's League Programme of Action. The documents were studied under the three International Sub-Themes of Equality, Peace and Development since they were related to the five areas of human endeavour emphasised in the League's Programme of Action 1985-1995. This culminated into the Programme of Action (1987-95) for

²¹³ UNIP, Five Year Report for the Women's League, 1984-1988, p. 52.

²¹⁴ UNIP, Five Year Report for the Women's League, 1984-1988, p. 3.

²¹⁵ Geisler, *Women and the Remaking of Politics*, p.12.

the Implementation of the Arusha Strategies, Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies and the UNIP Women's League Programme of Action.

The taskforce had an important mandate of recommending ways of spreading gender concerns throughout institutions to counteract the marginalisation of both men and women (gender mainstreaming). Therefore, one of its most important recommendations in the Programme of Action (1987-1995) was that every Ministry should be assigned an officer in order to incorporate women's issues into sectoral plans and to feed the proposed women's department with information on women.²¹⁶ It is because of this that the Women's Unit at NCDP was upgraded to WIDD as earlier explained. The document also addressed other issues like factors that reinforced sex-stereotypes and inequality in social participation, equality in political participation and decision-making and other issues in relation to development and peace.²¹⁷

The Programme of Action (1987-1995) also reduced the gulf between Government and civil society since NGOs were also involved in its formulation. In fact, the document recognised the significance of NGOs as partners in development. Touwen-Van Der Kooij confirms that, a good relationship existed between the NGOCC and the Women's Affairs Committee and the Women's League. She also states that the NGOCC even took part in the formulation of the Programme of Action 1987-1995. It

²¹⁶ UNIP 11/2/20 Programme of Action 1987-95 for the Implementation of the Arusha Strategies, Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies and the UNIP Women's League Programme of Action, August 1987, p. 14.

²¹⁷ UNIP 11/2/20 Programme of Action 1987-95 for the Implementation of the Arusha Strategies, Nairobi Forwarding Looking Strategies and the UNIP Women's League Programme of Action, August 1987, p. 22- 42.

is important to note that representatives of the Women's League and of the Women's Advisory Committee attended NGOCC meetings.²¹⁸

It is for this reason that for the first time in the history of Zambia, a chapter on women in development was included in the Fourth National Development Plan (1989-1993). The focus on women in development in this Plan was in line with the national, regional and international strategies, plans and programmes such as the UNIP Women's League Programme of Action (1987-1995), the Arusha and Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women Beyond the United Nations Decade for Women to the Year 2000, the UN Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery and Development (UNPAAERD 1986-90), and the CEDAW.²¹⁹ The chapter addressed various issues from women in politics to women in agriculture, health, education, commerce and industry, science and technology and so on. Although the FNDP was an ambitious effort to increase the full participation of women in development throughout the country, its approach considered women in isolation. This is because it did not look at the relations between sexes which enforced gender imbalances in society. In other words, women's development was seen in terms of women's club under the Community Development Department

However, the political atmosphere at the turn of the 1990s made it impossible for the Women's League to continue with its national programmes. Dramatic political changes were brought to Africa in the last decade of the twentieth century. The continent, to quote President Thabo Mbeki, was experiencing a political

²¹⁸ Touwen-Van Der Kooij, *Socio-Economic Development in Zambia*, p. 71.

²¹⁹ GRZ, *Fourth National Development Plan 1989-1993 Vol 2*. Office of the President. National Commission for Development Planning, Lusaka, January, 1989, p. 441.

'renaissance'.²²⁰ There was a sudden change from one-party systems to multi-party democracy in many African states. Zambia too was not spared by this new wave of democratisation. The country reverted to a multiparty system in 1991. This is because the One Party state system established in 1972 by President Kaunda failed to respond to the socio-economic and political needs of majority Zambians.²²¹ Constitutional amendments were made allowing the return to multi-party democracy. A new party called the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) led by former President of the Zambia Congress of Trade Union (ZCTU), Fredrick J.T Chiluba, overwhelmingly won the October 1991 general elections and formed the new government.

The Women's League in a Multi-Party Political System, 1992-2001

After the 1991 Presidential and General Elections, the Women's League became less influential. This is because the new political environment created space for civil society organisations to do most of the activities it previously monopolised. It is for this reason that Touwen, Heath, Myoyeta and Mudenda state that, during the One-Party State, NGOs were tolerated but not encouraged. They observe that, the Zambian government on the basis of its humanist-socialist policies never considered seriously the role of NGOs in society.²²²

The Women's League stopped holding its own elections, National Council and Congress. It also started meeting together with other wings of UNIP at the party's

²²⁰ Thompson, *An Introduction to African Politics*, p. 215.

²²¹ Y.A. Chondoka, B.J. Phiri and C.M. Chabatama, "Introduction", in Y.A. Chondoka, B.J. Phiri and C.M. Chabatama (eds.), *Zambia: Forty Years After Independence, 1964-2004* (Lusaka: UNZA Department of History, 2007), p. 1.

²²² A. Touwen, A. Heath, H. Myoyeta and G. Mudenda, *Feasibility Study to Evaluate the Training Needs of NGOs in Zambia*, NORAD, December 1993, pp. 5-6.

National Congress due insufficient finances.²²³ Moreover, due to the change in government, the Fourth National Development Plan was suspended and replaced with Policy Framework Papers, which were practically gender-blind.²²⁴ This meant that the role of Women's League in the new political environment had to change. However, it continued operating as a women's wing under UNIP. Mrs Mary Fulano served as National Women's Secretary until 1999. She was succeeded the same year by Mrs Mellian. S. Akuffo, who acted as National Secretary from 1999 to 2000 until she was formally elected in 2000.²²⁵

The Women's League continued working with other institutions and NGOs like the ZNWLG and NGOCC in championing the cause for women. It also continued participating in International Women's Week activities through both national and local events. Apart from that, it worked with women's wings of other political parties. The Women's League also organised workshops in leadership skills and also recruited female candidates for local and parliamentary elections.²²⁶

Furthermore, the Women's League was represented at the National Symposium on Millenium 2000 Leadership Challenges for Women organised by the ZNWLG in July 1999. This symposium resulted into the formulation of strategies for enhancing women's participation in the 2001 national elections and beyond.²²⁷ The Women's League also contributed to the formation of the Women in Politics (WIP) Forum

²²³ Interview with Mrs. Beatrice Moonga Kayuni, Lusaka 19 October 2010.

²²⁴ JUDAI Consultants for ZNWLG, Report on Evaluation of Zambia National Women's Lobby Group December, 2002, p. 20.

²²⁵ Interview with Mrs. Beatrice Moonga Kayuni, Lusaka, 19 October 2010.

²²⁶ Interview with Mrs. Beatrice Moonga Kayuni, Lusaka, 19 October 2010.

²²⁷ Zambia National Women's Lobby Group, Report of the Proceedings of the National Symposium on Millenium 2000 Leadership Challenges for Women held at UNZA School of Veterinary Medicine, 1 -3 July 1999, pp. 1-4; 55-59.

through its National Secretary Mrs M.S. Akuffo, who served in the National WIP Committee.²²⁸ The WIP Forum led to the drafting of the Women's Manifesto in 2000.²²⁹ All these issues will be discussed further in the next chapter.

Conclusion

This chapter examined the role of the UNIP Women's League in Zambian politics from 1975 to 2001. The chapter illustrated the major themes that informed the League's political participation. It was argued that between 1975 and 1991, the League's activities and programmes were mainly informed by the themes of the UN Decade for Women (1975-1985), which were Equality, Development and Peace. With the coming of the new political environment of plural democracy in 1991, the Women's League became less influential. The chapter also demonstrated that through its Programmes of Action of 1975-1985 and 1985-1995, the League achieved a number of successes. These among others things included the establishment of the Women's Council, Women's Affairs sub-committee under the UNIP Central Committee and the Women's Unit at the National Commission for Development Planning (NCDP) in 1983. Other achievements included the formation of the National Commission for Rural Planning and the inclusion of a chapter on women in the Fourth National Development Plan (1987-1993). It has also been demonstrated that after 1991, the League contributed to the setting up of the Women in Politics (WIP) Forum and the drafting of the Women's Manifesto in 2000 together with other women's organisations.

²²⁸ ZNWLG, *Lobby News* January-June 2004 Issue No. 05, p. 13.

²²⁹ ZNWLG, Report on the National Conference to Establish the Women in Politics Forum, p. 4.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE ROLE OF THE ZAMBIA NATIONAL WOMEN'S LOBBY GROUP IN ZAMBIAN POLITICS, 1991-2001

Introduction

This chapter analyses the role of the ZNWLG in Zambian politics from 1991 to 2001. It argues that the ZNWLG played a significant role in the democratisation process of the country. The main argument is that despite not attaining its major goal of gender equality in national decision-making, the organisation brought qualitative changes in the political system. Its contributions to the political system included among other things the institutionalisation of women's issues on the policy agenda at both political party and government level, setting up critical linkages with important stakeholders so as to promote women in decision-making positions, educating and sensitising the public on gender issues, creation of the Women in Politics Forum, production of the Women's Manifesto, strengthening the women's movement through initiatives like M2000 and the production of the Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women (SPAW) and the National Gender Policy. The chapter begins by explaining the idea behind the formation of the ZNWLG. There after, it reviews the role of the ZNWLG in Zambian politics in two periods: 1991-1996 and 1997-2001, respectively. This is because the scope of its activities and strategies differed in these two periods.

Formation of the Zambia National Women's Lobby Group

The idea to form the ZNWLG came at a time in the history of Zambia when the country was changing from a One Party to a Multi-party State in 1991. Following a constitutional amendment that called for a return to multi-party elections to be held in

October that year, a new political climate of openness and reform championed by the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) emerged. This encouraged many Zambian educated women to seek greater and more equitable political participation.²³⁰

In July 1991, about 100 women came together to assess the interventions being implemented to increase the number of women in national decision making.²³¹ This meeting was organised on 24 July of that year by the YWCA in conjunction with non-governmental women's organisations at their offices in Lusaka. The idea to hold this meeting was borne from the realisation that women's participation in national politics had been minimal and needed to be improved.²³² This is despite the fact that Zambia signed important conventions aimed at discouraging the marginalisation and discrimination of women in national affairs like CEDAW. Among some of the women's organisations represented at the meeting included Zambia Alliance for Women (ZAW), Zambia Media Women's Association, Women's Rights Committee, ZARD, YWCA and the Business and Professional Women's Association.²³³ It must be mentioned that there were representatives from the Christian churches and political parties as well.²³⁴ During the meeting, it became apparent that there was no institution to design and implement interventions to do with the role and participation of women

²³⁰ G. Geisler, "Troubled Sisterhood", p. 559.

²³¹ ZNWLK, Report on Increasing Women's Participation in Local Government, January-December, 1998, p. 1.

²³² *Zambia Daily Mail* 22 July 1991, p. 1.

²³³ *Zambia Daily Mail* 22 July 1991, p. 1.

²³⁴ B.L. Katundu, "Interest Groups and the Democratisation Process", Paper Presented at the IAS End of the Year Workshop on the First Year of Zambia's Third Republic: Democratisation under Scrutiny held at Zambezi Lodge, 16-18 April 1993, p. 12.

in decision-making.²³⁵ Therefore, it was unanimously agreed that there was a serious need to form a group that would pressurise the Zambian government to involve women in decision-making outside the traditional NGOs like Girl Guides Association, YWCA or Red Cross.²³⁶ As a result, the ZNWLG was formed.

With the formation of this organisation, women in Zambia formalised the fight for their participation in political affairs and became one of the forces that vigorously campaigned for a return to a democratic system of government.²³⁷ An interim committee to spearhead the operations of the Lobby was elected. Some of these members included Laurah Harrison, the interim-Chairperson, Lillian Mushota, Daisy Ng'ambi, Tlisi Himunyanga, Dorothy Mulwila (all lawyers), Rose Nyaywa (Journalist), Rose Mulumo, Marble Luo Mung'omba and Christine Ng'ambi.²³⁸ The composition of this committee shows that professional women in Zambia who had opted out of politics decided to take advantage of the political climate to engage themselves in politics. Geisler acknowledges Maxine Molyneux's argument that in the 1990s, there was a re-conceptualisation of women's interests and goals in many African states. According to Molyneux, women's citizenship also came to depend on "the attainment of social as well as civil and political rights and upon gaining institutional power".²³⁹

²³⁵ ZNWLG, Report on Increasing Women's Participation in Local Government, January-December, 1998, p. 1.

²³⁶ Mwafuililwa, "Politics for the Non-Political", in Nalumango and Sifuniso (eds.), *Women Power in Politics*, p. 221.

²³⁷ ZNWLG, Report on Increasing Women's Participation in Local Government, January-December, 1998, p. 1.

²³⁸ *Zambia Daily Mail* 22 July 1991, p. 1.

²³⁹ Geisler, *Women and the Remaking of Politics*, p. 143.

After its formation in 1991, it was reported that the main objective of the ZNWLG was to help increase women's participation in politics and decision-making level to at least 30 per cent on average.²⁴⁰ Although women at this time constituted well over 51 percent of the population, they seemed invisible at national political level. Before the October 1991 elections, there were only three women serving in the Central Committee, which was equivalent to cabinet at that time. In parliament, women only had seven out of the 150 seats.²⁴¹ Therefore, the ZNWLG was to act as a non-partisan pressure group committed to equal participation of women in decision-making at all spheres and levels by challenging discriminatory laws, systems and institutions. This was going to be done through advocacy, lobbying, civic education and the facilitation of women's entry into decision-making.²⁴²

The motto of the ZNWLG was "WIZER" which stood for Women in Zambia for Equality and Representation.²⁴³ The organisation was led by a ten-member Executive Board elected at the General Assembly every two years. It had a Secretariat based in Lusaka which was run by the Executive Director, Programme Officers and Administrative staff. Provincial offices in Western Province (Mongu), Copperbelt (Kitwe) and Eastern Province (Chipata) were established and were run by Provincial Programme Officers. To incorporate the grassroots women into decision-making, the ZNWLG set up Chapters in all the nine provinces of Zambia. Membership was open to all women, girls and gender-sensitive men committed to fight for the equal representation of women in decision-making at all levels and in all spheres.

²⁴⁰ *Zambia Daily Mail* 22 July 1991, p. 1.

²⁴¹ ZNWLG, Report on Increasing Women's Participation in Local Government, January-December, 1998, p. 1.

²⁴² Mwafuililwa, "Politics for the Non-Political", pp. 221-222.

²⁴³ Katundu, "Interest Groups and the Democratisation Process", p. 12.

The Role of the Zambia National Women’s Lobby Group in Zambian Politics, 1991-1996

From the time it was formed, the ZNWLG was active in promoting women’s rights. As a result, it triggered negative reactions from a cross section of the people. Women from both UNIP and the MMD refused to align themselves with Ms. Laurah Harrison and her group.²⁴⁴ In fact, when the group was formed, the UNIP Women’s League demonstrated against it. To the surprise of many political observers even the women section of the newly formed MMD through its chairperson of the Women in Development Committee attacked the Lobby. Princess Nakatindi Wina on 27 July 1991 publicly declared on national television that: “Either you belong to UNIP under Mary Fulano or the MMD under Princess Nakatindi.”²⁴⁵ This clearly shows that at this time people had not yet known the importance of democratic practices and only thought of women wings of political parties as the only avenue to advocate for the advancement of women. Some members of the public even confused the ZNWLG for a political party.²⁴⁶

Inspite of this, the ZNWLG did not relent and remained committed in order to fulfil its goals. Before the 31 October 1991 elections, it organised a women’s rally at the

²⁴⁴ “Is Lobby Group Non-Partisan” Letter by Guston Chola in *Times of Zambia*, 24 March 1992, p. 6.

²⁴⁵ Katundu, “Interest Groups and the Democratisation Process”, p. 13.

²⁴⁶ “Is Lobby Group Non-Partisan” Letter by Guston Chola in *Times of Zambia* 24 March 1991, p. 6.

Pope Square in Lusaka. It also embarked on a mobilising and training of election monitors under the Zambia Elections Monitoring Committee (ZEMEC).²⁴⁷ It is important to know that ZEMEC was a collaborative effort of a number of civil society organisations. Six weeks before the general elections, the three mother church bodies, namely the Zambia Episcopal Conference (ZEC), the Council of Churches in Zambia (CCZ), and the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia (EFZ), met at the Catholic Secretariat on 19 September to review the political situation of the coming elections. This meeting led to the formation of the Christian Churches' Monitoring Group (CCMG). Later, five other organisations, namely the University of Zambia Students Union (UNZASU), NGOCC, Law Association of Zambia (LAZ), Press Association of Zambia (PAZA), and the ZNWLG joined CCMG to form ZEMEC. As an umbrella body, the main objective of ZEMEC was to ensure that the October 1991 elections and any other elections were free and fair.²⁴⁸

The ZNWLG encouraged as many women as possible to contest the Presidential and General Elections through awareness campaigns in the communities.²⁴⁹ Apart from that, it also gave direct support to women aspiring candidates in form of funds, material, campaigning and so on.²⁵⁰ However, only ten females compared to 140 males were elected to Parliament in these elections.²⁵¹ Despite the small number, it was the highest number reached since independence in 1964.

²⁴⁷ Katundu, "Interest Groups and the Democratisation Process", p. 13.

²⁴⁸ Mumba, "Civil Society Activism in Zambia", pp. 6-7.

²⁴⁹ ZNWLG, Report on Increasing Women's Participation in Local Government, January-December, 1998, p. 3.

²⁵⁰ JUDAI Consultants for ZNWLG, Report on Evaluation of Zambia National Women's Lobby Group, December 2002, p. 61.

²⁵¹ ZNWLG, Research Report on Political Parties' Adoption in Relation to the Adoption of Women, May-October, 2003, p.12.

Following the October 1991 elections won by the MMD, President F.T.J. Chiluba announced a Cabinet composed entirely of men. This was worse compared to the previous UNIP government that had one female Cabinet member. The President only appointed five female Deputy Ministers.²⁵² This contradicted the MMD's manifesto that promised affirmative action to end discrimination against women. This caused a stir among the women's movement, and a broadly based NGO Petition was presented to President Chiluba at State House. The women drew up a list of about 200 women which included their qualifications and expertise. The aim was to show the President many capable women he could have appointed to decision-making positions in case he did not have the necessary information.²⁵³ After six months a Cabinet reshuffle was made and two women were appointed to a Cabinet of twenty-three members.²⁵⁴ The women's movement was also sure the three women appointed as ambassador in 1992 were a result of their lobbying.²⁵⁵ To the ZNWLG and the whole women's movement in Zambia, President Chiluba had "denied them the Hour". This is because during the campaign period towards the 31 October 1991 elections, women were promised equal opportunities with men if the war to remove Dr. Kenneth Kaunda out of power was won.²⁵⁶

Unfortunately, the ZNWLG did not find favour in the President. In April 1992, President Chiluba criticised the ZNWLG and the Caucus for National Unity (CNU) for diverting national attention from key national issues. The president wondered how

²⁵² B. Mwale, "Equality Push a Foul Cry", in *Times of Zambia*, 20 March 1992, p. 4.

²⁵³ I.Mbikusita-Lewanika, "Facing the Challenges of Politics", in Nalumango and Sifuniso (eds.), *Women Power in Politics*, p. 158.

²⁵⁴ NGOCC, NGO-Shadow Report- The Situation of Women in Zambia: During the Period 1985-1994, p. 9.

²⁵⁵ Mbikusita-Lewanika, "Facing the Challenges", p. 158.

²⁵⁶ B. Mwale, "Equality Push a Foul Cry", p. 4.

these groups which only emerged in the Third Republic could call themselves democrats when they failed to exist because of fear in the previous UNIP Government.²⁵⁷ The CNU was an internal MMD pressure group that was demanding for the immediate revocation of political appointments in the Cabinet, civil service, parastatals and Foreign Service. It also called for the dismissal of ministers who had abused the trust and authority of their offices. After a meeting on 7 March 1991, the CNU came up with eleven resolutions. One of these resolutions demanded that the participation of women to decision-making especially in high offices be institutionalised on equitable basis to that of men.²⁵⁸ This clearly shows that the demands of the ZNWLG and other women's organisations were well understood by some politicians.

The ZNWLG was simply following the principles of plural democracy. According to Janda and others, in a plural democracy, government operates through competing interest groups. In this model, democracy exists when many plural organisations operate separate from the government, press their interests on the government or even challenge the government. As opposed to majoritarian thinking, pluralist theory shifts the focus of democratic government from the mass electorate to organised groups.²⁵⁹ However, being a young democracy, it was difficult for this system to flourish from the onset in Zambia.

It is important to acknowledge the efforts of the ZNWLG and other women's organisations in starting negotiations aimed at upgrading the Women in Development

²⁵⁷ *Times of Zambia*, 13 April 1992, p. 1.

²⁵⁸ Mwale, "Equality Push a Foul Cry", p. 4.

²⁵⁹ K. Janda; J.M. Berry; J. Goldman and K.W. Hula. *The Challenge of Democracy* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co, 2004), pp. 22-23.

Unit at NCDP. After the October 1991 elections, the ZNWLG with the WID Advisor met President Chiluba to discuss the creation of administrative machinery for women's development within his office. This was to be headed by a female minister at policy level in order to enable women articulate their concerns and promote gender awareness in other structures. A list from various sectors was submitted to the President for consideration. Later, two meetings were held. The first was held in November and was coordinated by NGOCC, the ZNWLG, YWCA and WID at NCDP. On 27 March 1992, the third meeting was held with President Chiluba. The proposed structure for a bureau was finalised and ready for submission to the President on 27 August 1992.²⁶⁰

Although the government did not immediately yield to these proposals and no meeting followed after this due to misunderstandings between the two parties, changes in the national machinery dealing with women were later noticed. In June 1996, the MMD government upgraded the WIDD to the Gender in Development Division (GIDD) at Cabinet Office.²⁶¹ The aim of GIDD was to ensure that the national development process was gender responsive. Although GIDD was under the Office of the President and headed by a Permanent Secretary unlike in the initial proposal, the persistent lobbying of the ZNWLG and other women's organisations cannot be overlooked in this development.

The ZNWLG also played a crucial role in the 1992 Local Government elections. These elections were held under the new Local Government Act of 1991 which replaced the Local Administration Act of 1980. The 1980 Act was established by the

²⁶⁰ Mwafuililwa, "Politics for the Non-Political", p. 225.

²⁶¹ GRZ, National Gender Policy March 2000, p. 43.

UNIP government and was used to strengthen the power of the ruling party at local level. This resulted into a highly centralised government structure which tightly constrained the effectiveness and authority of local government making it for the most part a tool for patronage political relations.²⁶² The Lobby toured rural areas to sensitise women on the importance of voting for fellow women during the local government elections.²⁶³ Furthermore, workshops were conducted which led to an increase in women's participation in the 1992 Local government elections.²⁶⁴ Eighty-eight women stood as candidates out of which twenty-six were elected as councillors.²⁶⁵ It is also vital to note that some of earlier participants of the Lobby's training of trainers local government workshop later become Deputy Mayors of the two largest towns in Zambia. These were Sylvia Masebo for Lusaka and Eva Sanderson for Kitwe.²⁶⁶

In addition, the ZNWLG was instrumental in the 1996 Presidential and General elections. This was during the chairmanship of Ms Gladys Mutukwa (1993-1997) who succeeded Ms Harrison. Since it had grown to provincial levels, workshops on the Role of Women in Politics were conducted in all provincial centres. These workshops were aimed at encouraging women to take part in politics as voters as well as candidates. In order to financially help women who were aspiring for political office, a Campaign Fund was set up in 1996. This was an issue that was discussed in most of its workshops. The lack of financial resources, next to the public image of women as

²⁶² Ferguson, Ludwig, Katundu and Manda, "Zambian Women in Politics", pp.5-6.

²⁶³ Mwale, "Equality Push a Foul Cry", p. 4.

²⁶⁴ ZNWLG, Report on Increasing Women's Participation in Local Government, January-December, 1998, p. 3.

²⁶⁵ ZNWLG, Report on Increasing Women's Participation in Local Government, January-December, 1998, p. 17.

²⁶⁶ Mwafuililwa, "Politics for the Non-Political", p. 226.

leaders, was identified as a number one hindrance for women candidates.²⁶⁷ Due to the efforts of the ZNWLG, the figure for female parliamentary candidates rose from fourteen in 1991 to sixty in 1996.²⁶⁸ Although the number of elected female MPs rose from ten to sixteen, women were far much behind compared to 134 males in Parliament.²⁶⁹ Jennifer Chumba Chibamba, who was an office assistant at the ZNWLG secretariat, participated in the 1996 campaigns. According to her, she was asked to join the team that covered the area between Mazabuka and Lusaka. She narrated that during this time most women thought that politics was only for men. However, due to the sensitisation programme by the ZNWLG, many women were encouraged to go to different political parties to be adopted.²⁷⁰ Therefore, this explains the increase in the number of female parliamentary candidates in 1996.

Between 1993 and 1994, the ZNWLG embarked on a programme of educating women on their constitutional rights and encouraged them to make their submissions to the Constitutional Review Commission (CRC).²⁷¹ This was important considering that only four of the twenty-four member Mwanakatwe CRC were females.²⁷² Together with other NGOs, the ZNWLG made up a committee of six people that travelled around the nation to lobby for the inclusion of women's rights in the new constitution. The major areas that the Committee included were affirmative action, discrimination, enforcement mechanisms, violence against women and effective

²⁶⁷ ZNWLG, Lobby News October 1996 Issue No. 3, p. 1.

²⁶⁸ Mwafulilwa, "Politics for the Non-Political", p. 227.

²⁶⁹ ZNWLG. Research Report on Political Parties' Adoption in Relation to the Adoption of Women, May-October, 2003, p.12.

²⁷⁰ Interview with Jennifer Chumba Chibamba, Lusaka, 7 February 2011.

²⁷¹ ZNWLG, Report on Increasing Women's Participation in Local Government, January-December, 1998, p. 3.

²⁷² Ferguson, Ludwig, Katundu and Manda "Zambian Women in Politics", p. 7.

implementation of CEDAW. When the draft constitution was tabled in parliament, it was decided that submissions under women's rights must be presented under the Bill of Rights, which would need a referendum to be conducted.²⁷³ However, this did not happen. Although the new Constitution was passed, the women's movement continued to argue that the Constitution still allowed discrimination, especially in customary law.²⁷⁴ It is for this reason that the ZNWLG in 1996 spearheaded the production of the Women's Right Charter aimed at advancing the Human Rights of women in Zambia.²⁷⁵

The vigour of the ZNWLG within this short period of time can be attributed to both local and international support, exposure and networks it established. Locally, it was part of a vibrant women's movement which emerged with the coming of multiparty politics. Thus, it was able to work with other different women's organisations like the NGOCC, and YWCA to improve the condition of women in the country. It also had multiple donor-funding which included among others the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), MS-Zambia, Netherlands embassy, Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operation (NORAD) and the Swedish embassy.²⁷⁶ After the October 1991 elections some members of the ZNWLG were sponsored by the USA Embassy for a one-month Training of Trainers course in the United States of

²⁷³ Mwafuililwa, "Politics for the Non-Political", p. 229.

²⁷⁴ NGOCC, NGO Beijing +5 Shadow Report for Zambia (1995-1999): Reviewing Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 1999, p. 8.

²⁷⁵ ZNWLG, Zambia Women's Manifesto, 2000, p. 3.

²⁷⁶ JUDAI Consultants for ZNWLG, Report on Evaluation of Zambia National Women's Lobby Group, December 2002, pp. 37-38.

America. Some of the issues covered by the course included lobbying and advocacy, public speaking, media relations and assertiveness.²⁷⁷

The ZNWLG organised two sub-regional conferences on the Role of Women in Politics in December of 1995. In 1996 it organised a workshop on Global Women in Politics aimed at looking at strategies required to increase women's participation in politics at global level. Some of the participants came as far as Asia, Latin America, Europe and other African countries.²⁷⁸ It must also be mentioned that the ZNWLG was represented at the Fourth World Conference for Women held in Beijing, China in September 1995.²⁷⁹ The Beijing Platform for Action (PFA) which was drawn at this conference identified twelve critical areas that prevented the advancement of women. Governments were also challenged to come up with national policies on gender. However, the Zambian government identified five priority areas which were: Education, Women and Poverty, Health, the Girl-Child and Decision-making. The five national priority areas were highlighted in the Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women (SPAW) 1996-2000. SPAW was a document that spelled out key actions to be taken by Government and NGOs to advance the status of women in the period 1996-2002.²⁸⁰ The ZNWLG contributed to the production of SPAW and the Draft National Gender Policy in 1996.²⁸¹ Therefore, it can be argued that within five years of existence, the Lobby played a cardinal role in changing the nature of politics in Zambia.

²⁷⁷ Mwafuililwa, "Politics for the Non-Political", p. 225.

²⁷⁸ ZNWLG, Report on Increasing Women's Participation in Local Government, January-December, 1998, p. 4.

²⁷⁹ Mwafuililwa, "Politics for the Non-Political", p. 227.

²⁸⁰ NGOCC, NGO Beijing +5 Shadow Report for Zambia (1995-1999), p. 7.

²⁸¹ JUDAI Consultants, Report on Evaluation of Zambia National Women's Lobby Group, December 2002, p. 62.

The Role of the Zambia National Women’s Lobby Group in Zambian Politics, 1997-2001

Having established itself in the new political dispensation, the ZNWLG during this period decided to widen its scope of activities as well as its strategies in order to make the political system accessible to both men and women. In 1997, it hosted a sub-regional conference on “International Covenants on Women and Children” in Lusaka.²⁸² This was very important considering the low representation of women in decision-making despite Zambia signing vital Conventions. During the course of 1998, the ZNWLG increased its scope of activities to increase women’s participation through training and public awareness on the importance of involving women in decision-making in readiness for the local government elections. This was because of support from a number of donor agencies like the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), OXFAM/NOVIB, NORAD, and the Global Fund for Women. Some of the other activities included organising planning meetings for provincial chapters, monitor the electoral process, campaign activities in the media, training workshops of candidates, holding meetings with political parties, providing material support and mobilising resources for women candidates especially in Lusaka, Copperbelt, and Central Province.

²⁸² ZNWLG, Report of Proceedings of the National Symposium on Millennium 2000 Leadership Challenges for Women, Held at UNZA School of Veterinary Medicine, 1-3 July 1999, p. 1.

As a result of all this effort, a total of 257 women contested the 1998 Local Government Elections out of which eighty were elected as councillors. This was an increase of 207.8 per cent compared to the 1992 elections where twenty-six out of eighty-eight candidates were elected.²⁸³ It is for this reason that in its seven years of existence that the ZNWLG was designated by the NGOCC as the lead NGO on women's participation in politics and decision-making levels.²⁸⁴

As an organisation that contributed to the drafting of the National Gender Policy, the ZNWLG was among the women's NGOs that advocated for its adoption. A number of women NGOs submitted their reports to the Women, Children and Youth Parliamentary sub-committee in 1999. These organisations included Women for Change (WFC), WILDAF, Zambia Nurses Association and the ZNWLG. All their submission made reference to the need for the adoption of the Gender policy and generated a lot of debate in parliament.²⁸⁵ In December 1999, the Parliamentary Committee on Legal Affairs, Governance, Human Rights and Gender Matters in its report noticed that despite Zambia being a signatory to international policies on gender not much was done to implement and domesticate them. Therefore, it recommended that through GIDD, government quickly domesticate and implement international policies on gender.²⁸⁶

²⁸³ ZNWLG, Report on Increasing Women's Participation in Local in Government, January-December, 1998, p. 17.

²⁸⁴ ZNWLG, Report on Increasing Women's Participation in Local in Government, January-December, 1998, p. 2.

²⁸⁵ NGOCC, Annual Report 1999, p. 17.

²⁸⁶ Official Verbatim Report of the Parliamentary Debates of the Third Session (Resumed) of the Eighth National Assembly. 9th November-9th December, 1999, p. 745.

To some parliamentarians, it was surprising that Zambia did not adopt the National Gender Policy when it was an initiator of gender recognition in the sub-region. By this time other countries that Zambia had sold the idea to had already adopted their national gender policy. It was for this reason that some MPs called for the adoption of the National Gender Policy so that issues of gender could be addressed.²⁸⁷ However, for some MPs the issue of gender was received with mixed feelings. For example, Mr. Ngulube (MP for Lundazi) in his contribution stated that: "...I wish to advise and warn the Zambian women because they have taken this gender business as an excuse not to look after their homes." He went on to say: "Members in the National Women's Lobby Group should concentrate on consolidating their homes. In stead they have resorted to pulling private parts of the men."²⁸⁸ For some like Mr. David Shimonde (Mwembeshi) the call by women for the government to give them 30 per cent in government was unfair. The women had to fight with men so that they could enter government. In addition, he viewed NGOs in the country as being politically motivated by the opposition. He urged NGOs to appreciate the laws that the MMD had put in place in the country.²⁸⁹

The National Gender Policy was an important document. Once adopted, the government would use the policy as a guide and a constant reference point in meeting

²⁸⁷ Official Verbatim Report of the Parliamentary Debates of the Third Session (Resumed) of the Eighth National Assembly. 9th November-9th December, 1999, pp. 740-41.

²⁸⁸ Official Verbatim Report of the Parliamentary Debates of the Third Session (Resumed) of the Eighth National Assembly. 9th November-9th December, 1999, pp. 752-53.

²⁸⁹ Official Verbatim Report of the Parliamentary Debates of the Third Session (Resumed) of the Eighth National Assembly. 9th November-9th December, 1999, pp. 770-72.

the goals for the advancement of women.²⁹⁰ The Policy was an offshoot of the Beijing Platform for Action. However, the government was hesitant to adopt it. This can be seen from the words of Mr. Michael .C. Sata who was the Minister without Portofolio. In reaction to the calls for the adoption of the Policy, he said, “Government will not be gullible to implement the policy. But it will develop its own local programme which is people-driven to suit the aspirations of the country.”²⁹¹ As a result, the NGOCC encouraged its members to hold demonstrations throughout the country. In Lusaka, a total of fifty women and men picketed outside the Cabinet Office. In Kabwe, women demanded a meeting with the Minister for the Central Province. A demonstration was held through ZCTU in the Copperbelt. In the Western Province, the women were not given a police permit, hence they prepared and aired a statement. Permission was also denied in the Southern Province. This was timely as the government was preparing for the Sixth African Regional Conference on Women held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in November 1999. The basis of governments report on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action was challenged when the SPAW 1996-2000 was never adopted and therefore implemented in principle. In addition, 4, 500 copies of Fact sheets were produced by the NGOCC and distributed to its members who in turn distributed them to policy makers in different line ministerial departments in order to lobby for the adoption of the Gender Policy.²⁹²

Pressure to adopt the National Gender Policy also came from the donor community like Norway who withdrew its support until the Policy was approved by Cabinet.²⁹³

²⁹⁰ M. Fumbelo, “Where is our Gender Policy?”, in ZNWLG, *Lobby News* December 1999 Issue No. 2, p.1.

²⁹¹ Fumbelo, “Where is our Gender Policy?”, p.2.

²⁹² NGOCC, Annual Report 1999, pp. 17-18.

²⁹³ Geisler, *Women and the Remaking of Politics*, p. 164.

Eventually, the National Gender Policy was adopted on 6 March, 2000.²⁹⁴ The policy took cognisance of the following United Nations Conferences and Conventions: the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women, 1979, World Summit for Children, 1990, Convention on the Rights of the Child, 6 December 1991, UN Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro, 1992, World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, 1993, International Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo, 1994, World Summit for Social Development held in Copenhagen, 1995, Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing, 1995, and the Second UN Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) held in Istanbul, Turkey, 1996.²⁹⁵ It also took cognisance of the African Charter on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR) adopted by members of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in Nairobi in June, 1981 and the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development signed by Heads of State and Government in Blantyre, 1997. In the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development, all Member States committed themselves to promote equality through equal representation of both men and women in decision making positions with a 30 per cent target share of women in political and decision making positions by the year 2005.²⁹⁶

The Zambian Government acknowledged that gender issues and concerns cut across all areas of development and involved multiple institutions and sectors. Therefore, it promised to streamline the institutional framework for gender mainstreaming in order to ensure speedy and effective implementation, co-ordination, monitoring and

²⁹⁴ NGOCC, Annual Report, 2000, p. 14.

²⁹⁵ GRZ, National Gender Policy, March 2000, p. 3.

²⁹⁶ GRZ, National Gender Policy, March 2000, p. 4.

evaluation of the National Gender Policy.²⁹⁷ Consequently, GIDD at Cabinet Office became responsible for co-ordinating the implementation of the National Gender Policy, facilitate research and resource mobilisation for the implementation of gender and development programmes. The division was also charged with the responsibility of liaising and networking at national, regional and international level. It was also responsible for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of policies and programmes to ensure gender responsiveness. Furthermore, GIDD was to establish a Management Information System on gender and development.

The National Gender Policy also called for a Consultative Forum comprised of major stakeholders and serviced by GIDD. The Consultative Forum would: advise GIDD on emerging gender issues, ensure that policies being implemented were gender sensitive, and also give advice on any other issues connected or incidental to gender and development. At sectoral level, line ministries were to mainstream gender into their respective policies, programmes and budgets. In addition, each ministry would establish a Gender Focal Point suitably positioned to facilitate this process. At provincial level, there was to be a Gender Co-ordination Point to facilitate the implementation of the Policy. The Gender Co-ordinating Point was to be positioned within the provincial administrative structure of Government. The last level was the district. This was to be the main focus of implementation of the Gender Policy. It was stated that a Gender Focal Point would be established. The District Gender Focal Point was to be linked to GIDD through the Provincial Gender Co-ordinating Point.

²⁹⁷ GRZ, National Gender Policy, March 2000, pp. 66-67.

The adoption of the Gender Policy stimulated the women's movement to quickly start planning for its implementation. As Munachongo and Muyoyeta observed in their study, the membership, operations and linkages of the NGOCC reflected a significant or positive impact. This is because the women NGOs stopped looking at themselves as separate entities but as a women's movement. They developed a common agenda, that is, fighting for women's "empowerment" as a tool.²⁹⁸ In order to implement the National Gender Policy, the NGOCC and the wider women's movement found it imperative to systematically plan and advocate for a further action programme called "Support to the Mobilisation of Women's Empowerment-Movement 2000". The overall objective of M2000 was to strengthen NGOCC for the purpose of mobilising women and other strategic allies into a critical mass in order to contribute to the achievement of gender equality and equity in all areas of national development from the year 2000 and beyond.²⁹⁹ The role of the ZNWLG in M2000 needs to be appreciated because it chaired the M2000 sub-programme on Decision-making and Community Participation which involved other NGOCC affiliate members.³⁰⁰

In its quest to involve men in gender issues the ZNWLG in November 2000 launched the Men's Network Project. The purpose of this project was to spearhead the involvement of men in the promotion of equal participation of men and women in decision-making.³⁰¹ This was a good idea in terms of creating alliances with men.

²⁹⁸ M. Munachonga and L. Muyoyeta Commissioned by and Prepared for NGOCC, Impact Assessment Study Report on Women's NGOs in Zambia, 1999, p. 43.

²⁹⁹ MTN and Associate, Draft Report on the Assessment of the Impact of M2000 Project March 2007, p. 8.

³⁰⁰ JUDAI Consultants for ZNWLG, Report on Evaluation of Zambia National Women's Lobby Group, December 2002, p. 7.

³⁰¹ ZNWLG-Men's Network Project, Report on the Gender and Elections Workshop, Held at Mumana Pleasure Resort, 4-9 October 2001, p. 1.

However, the Men's Network seemed not to have a clear definition in terms of its role. It seemed to be a parallel and not a complementary structure of the Lobby.³⁰² Nevertheless, this was a good step taken by the ZNWLG because it started the process of integrating men in their programmes and activities making it more gender-sensitive.

Another important project that needs mention where the ZNWLG played an important role was the project called "Women in Public Life". This project was jointly coordinated by NGOCC and the Active Learning Centre of Scotland from November 1996 to 2003. The project brought together different women's organisations like YWCA, WFC, and Women's Committee of the ZCTU, among others.³⁰³ Mrs. Merebi. N. Mushibwe who represented the Women's Committee of ZCTU stated that this project covered the whole country. Each organisation was utilised according to its area of focus. Different communities were taught about good governance, democracy and gender. Mrs. Mushibwe also narrated that chiefs and men were involved in discussing the issue of socialisation of men and women. In addition, both men and women were educated on workers' rights. When it came to politics and women's participation, the ZNWLG was used to educate and sensitise the public.³⁰⁴ This project was important to a nation where the issue of gender was seen as an important aspect of development. It was in Chibombo where the project did incredibly well in terms of male participation. The men in Chibombo enthusiastically welcomed the projected and shared good ideas.³⁰⁵

³⁰² JUDAI Consultants for ZNWLG, Report on Evaluation of Zambia National Women's Lobby Group, December 2002, p. 54.

³⁰³ Interview with Merebi.N. Mushibwe, Lusaka, 14 February 2011.

³⁰⁴ Interview with Merebi.N. Mushibwe, Lusaka, 14 February 2011.

³⁰⁵ Interview with Merebi.N. Mushibwe, Lusaka, 14 February 2011.

As Zambia was entering the second millennium in 1999, the situation of Zambian women in decision-making was not impressive. Although 52 per cent of the population were women, only sixteen out of a 158 MPs were women (barely 10 per cent), eighty out of 1, 300 councillors in local government were women (6 per cent), only two women served in a cabinet of twenty-five, and two out of eight Supreme Court Judges were women. This scenario was repeated in other key decision-making positions in both the private and public sectors.³⁰⁶ Consequently, the ZNWLG decided to hold its first ever national symposium, on the theme: “Millennium 2000: Leadership Challenges for Women-Changing the Face of Politics in Zambia”. The symposium aimed at critically analysing the performance of women in political decision-making since the formation of the ZNWLG in 1991 with a focus on the next national elections in the year 2001. Over 150 participants attended the symposium and among these included women who had previously held or were currently holding decision-making positions, women who had unsuccessfully or successfully contested local or parliamentary elections and so on. Nine political parties were also represented at this symposium as well as NGOs, government departments, partners from the donor community and the press.³⁰⁷

On 23 May 2000, the chairperson of the ZNWLG launched the opinion poll results of a survey sponsored by the British Council and conducted by the Zambia Opinion

³⁰⁶ ZNWLG, Report of Proceedings of the National Symposium on Millennium 2000 Leadership Challenges for Women, Held at UNZA School of Veterinary Medicine, 1-3 July 1999, p. 3.

³⁰⁷ ZNWLG, Report of Proceedings of the National Symposium on Millennium 2000 Leadership Challenges for Women, Held at UNZA School of Veterinary Medicine 1-3 July 1999, p. 4.

Research Organisation (ZORO). The survey results showed that there was an assumption that since women were the majority among the electorate, they turned out in larger numbers than men to vote. However, there was still a high voter apathy and lack of political interest especially among women. For example, during the 1998 local government elections only 26.1 per cent of the registered voters voted. This represented 13.5 per cent of eligible voters.³⁰⁸ The survey results also showed that the likely position that people would prefer to vote for women was local government positions although Eastern and Northern Provinces preferred male councillors. However, for the position of MP, Lusaka, Copperbelt and Southern recorded a preference for women. Northern Province indicated an equal preference while the rest of the provinces preferred male MPs. Some factors that influenced voters were also identified. The results of the question revealed that 36.6 percent voted based on party promises, 32.9 per cent on the personality of a candidate while 22.5 per cent considered the academic profile of a candidate.³⁰⁹ Most importantly, the survey indicated that people preferred to vote for a candidate who resided in the local area followed by past experience and performance.

In order to fulfil the objectives of the 1999 symposium an idea to form a Women in Politics (WIP) Forum emerged. The ZNWLG together with eight political parties (Agenda for Zambia, UNIP, MMD, Zambia Republican Party, Social Democratic Party, National Citizens Coalition, United Party for National Development and Liberal Progressive Front), decided to set up a permanent WIP Forum which would address issues that affected women. A Women's Manifesto was also drawn up to pave

³⁰⁸ ZNWLG, Women's Participation in Politics in Zambia: Launch of Opinion Poll Results. Speech by Lizzie Michelo, Chairperson, 23 May 2000, p. 2

³⁰⁹ ZNWLG, Women's Participation in Politics in Zambia: Launch of Opinion Poll Results. Speech by Lizzie Michelo, Chairperson, 23 May 2000, p. 3.

the way for women in politics.³¹⁰ Therefore, a national conference to establish the WIP Forum and adopt the Women's Manifesto was held in Lusaka at the Mulungushi Conference Centre from 26-27 March 2001. The theme of the conference was "More Women in Politics". The conference was seen as part of an exploratory journey of women in Zambia which began with the Women Rights in Zambia conferences held in November 1970, March 1985, and March 1991, respectively.³¹¹

The establishment of the WIP Forum and the adoption of the Women's Manifesto were an important milestone in the Zambian political process. The objectives of the WIP Forum were: to develop strategies that would seek to emphasise within political parties consistency in achieving equal distribution of power, identify strategies of how women could influence politics and development, build capacity of women to understand and influence decision-making in policy formulation and implementation, create a culture of tolerance and peace building within and across party lines, ensure the retention of women in politics through affirmative action, and to create a campaign fund for women.³¹² The WIP Forum contributed in building solidarity among women from different political parties and also led to the high increase of the number of women aspiring for political office. The Women's Manifesto was a non-partisan document that sought to uphold the principle of equality evidenced by Zambia's ratification of international, regional and national conventions and policies. Notable among these were: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the

³¹⁰ ZNWLG, Report on the National Conference to Establish the Women in Politics Forum and Adopt the Zambia Women's Manifesto, Held at Mulungushi Conference Centre, 26 -27 March 2001, p. 4.

³¹¹ ZNWLG, Report on the National Conference to Establish the Women in Politics Forum and Adopt the Zambia Women's Manifesto, Held at Mulungushi Conference Centre, 26 -27 March 2001, p.4.

³¹² ZNWLG and WIP Forum, Zambia Women's Manifesto, p. 4.

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the African Charter on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action for the Advancement of Women, the Cairo ICPD Programme of Action, the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action on Human Rights, the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development and parts of the Zambian Constitution.³¹³

Women's organisations through their umbrella organisation (NGOCC) also played an important role in defending democracy when they participated in the Oasis Forum. This was a group that was formed in February 2001 in order to oppose the constitutional proposals to allow President Chiluba to stand for a third term in Office. The Forum united the efforts of women's organisations, the statutory Law Association of Zambia and the three main church mother bodies. This was important as the women's movement enlarged its networks with other organisations. As stated by Gould, the Oasis Forum represented "an unparalleled alliance of Zambia's mainstream civic leadership."³¹⁴ This was because nothing like this had ever happened within Zambia's civil society which was, to use Gould's words, "prone to competitiveness and divisiveness."³¹⁵

The Women's Movement through the entire membership of NGOCC, the ZNWLG and the WIP Forum and other organisations also gave support to female candidates in the 2001 Tripartite Elections.³¹⁶ The Women's Movement organised campaign teams,

³¹³ ZNWLG and WIP Forum, *Zambia Women's Manifesto*, p. 4.

³¹⁴ J. Gould, "Subsidiary Sovereignty and the Constitution of Political Space in Zambia", in Gewald, Hinfelaar and Macola (eds.), *One Zambia, Many Histories*, p. 282.

³¹⁵ Gould, "Subsidiary Sovereignty", p. 282.

³¹⁶ M.M. Bull, "The Political Process in Zambia, 2001; Gender Dimension of Multiparty Politics: Kabwe By-Elections, August 2002 and 2001 and 2002 Election

sourced bicycles, and distributed NGO *Chitenge* cloth materials, caps and posters to all female candidates through their various parties.³¹⁷ Therefore, it did not come as a surprise that for the first time in the history of Zambia, two women contested as Presidential candidates. The two women, Gwendoline Konie and Dr. Inonge Mbikusita-Lewanika were among the ten candidates who contested for the 27 December 2001 elections. In this election Ms Konie polled 10, 253 votes while Dr. Mbikusita-Lewanika polled 9, 882 votes, coming eighth and ninth respectively.³¹⁸

Although this was not very good, it was a good start for country that had not envisioned women to stand as presidents. Women did not also fair well in the parliamentary elections. Out of 198 who stood as MPs only nineteen were elected. This meant women held 12.7 per cent of the total seats in Parliament while men had 87.3 per cent (131 seats) representation in Parliament.³¹⁹ Following the December 2001 Tripartite Elections, the new President of Zambia, Levy Patrick Mwanawasa of the MMD, appointed his cabinet on 7 January 2002. He only appointed three female cabinet ministers out of twenty cabinet ministers. In addition, three females out of thirty-four Deputy Ministers were appointed.³²⁰ This was despite the effort made by the ZNWLG and the entire women's movement to have as much women in decision-making as possible. Therefore, it is plausible to argue that this reflected a lack of

Postmortem”, A Collaborative Research Project between INESOR Zambia, Chr. Michelsen Institute (MCI) Norway and Nordic Consulting Group (NCG), June 2002, p. 23.

³¹⁷ M.M. Bull, “Gender Dimensions of Multiparty Politics: Elections 2001 in Zambia”, A Collaborative Research Project between INESOR Zambia, Chr. Michelsen Institute (MCI) Norway and Nordic Consulting Group (NCG), June 2002, p. 6.

³¹⁸ J. Kaira-Chibuta, “Two Women Make History Vying for Presidency”, in Lobby News October-December 2001 Issue No. 3, p. 3.

³¹⁹ J. Kaira-Chibuta, “Nineteen Women Win the Race to Manda Hill”, in Lobby News October-December 2001 Issue No. 3, p. 1.

³²⁰ Bull, “Gender Dimensions”, p. 4.

political will to domesticate the SADC Gender and Development Declaration which the country had signed in 1997.

Even at political party level most parties in Zambia did not have strong policies that could help facilitate the access of many women to decision-making positions. In a study conducted by the Women's Lobby, it was found that, among the Zambian political parties, only three parties stated the gender-based electoral quotas in their constitutions on the representation of women in their political leadership. These were the United Party for National Development (30 per cent), Social Democratic Party (35/65 ratio) and National Citizen Coalition (50 per cent). The other political parties only incorporated gender equity statements in their policy documents, the manifestos and constitutions regarding the welfare of women.³²¹ This was an indication that a lot had to be done in the area of gender equality in politics.

However, it can be argued that the ZNWLG made significant changes in Zambian politics. In fact, its influence even extended to other Southern African countries. It is important to note that the ZNWLG helped Botswana and South Africa to come up with women lobbies and was also invited by Zimbabwe for the same reason.³²²

Conclusion

This chapter analysed the role of the ZNWLG in Zambian politics from 1991 and 2001. This period was reviewed under two phases: 1991-1996 and 1997-2001, respectively. The chapter began by explaining the idea behind the formation of the ZNWLG and then examined its role in Zambian politics from 1991 to 1996.

³²¹ ZNWLG, Research Report on Political Parties' Adoption in Relation to the Adoption of Women, May-October, 2003, p. 9.

³²² JUDAI Consultants, Report on Evaluation of Zambia National Women's Lobby Group, December 2002, p. 52.

Thereafter, it examined the role of ZNWLG in Zambian politics from 1997 to 2001. It has been demonstrated that the major objective of the ZNWLG was to promote equality between men and women in terms of representation in all decision-making positions. During its early stage (1991-1996), the ZNWLG focused on establishing itself in the new democratic dispensation. Therefore, its activities were not very broad. However, after 1997 it widened the scope of its activities and strategies. The chapter argued that the ZNWLG played a significant role in the democratisation process of the country.

The main argument was that despite not attaining its major goal of gender equality in national decision-making, it brought qualitative changes in the political system. This was because of its contributions to the political system which included among others: the institutionalisation of women's issues on the policy agenda at both political party and government level, setting up critical linkages with important stakeholders so as to promote women in decision-making positions, educating and sensitising the public on gender issues, creation of the Women in Politics Forum, production of the Women's Manifesto, strengthening the women's movement through initiatives like M2000 and the production of the National Gender Policy and the Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women (SPAW), among others. Above all, the influence of the ZNWLG was extended to other Southern African countries like South Africa and Botswana where the concept of women's lobbies was also introduced. Despite all these efforts, the Zambian Government did not do much to complement the efforts of the ZNWLG. This can be seen by its failure of implementing the SADC Gender Declaration of 1997.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to examine the role of women's organisations in the political development of Zambia from 1964 to 2001. It focused on two women's organisations that were active at different historical periods: The UNIP Women's League and the Zambia National Women's Lobby Group. The two organisations were viewed according to their different political and historical contexts. The study had three objectives. The first was to examine the changes in the women's organisations from 1964 to 2001. Secondly, it aimed at investigating the working relationships of women's organisations with other stakeholders in the political system. The last objective was to assess the influence of women's organisations in developing political structures that were more gender sensitive and that facilitated the representation of women's concerns.

The main argument of this study was that women's organisations were used by Zambian women as an alternative public sphere to participate as collective political actors in order to institutionalise their issues and also pursue their gender equality goals. The study demonstrated that women's organisations contributed to the political development of Zambia between 1964 and 2001. They played a cardinal role in setting up institutions and transforming political structures in order to bring women issues and gender concerns in the public arena. Apart from that, they also acted as important agents in politicising women and the democratisation process after 1991. However, there is still more to be done in order to domesticate and implement international and regional conventions in order for both men and women to be equal partners in all areas of national development.

At independence, Zambia had a new constitution that was formulated in line with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948. The civil and political rights provided that everyone had the right to take part in the government of the country, directly or through freely elected representatives. Chapter two has demonstrated the critical role played by both the ANC and UNIP Women's Brigade in the fight for independence. However, although women attained the right to vote at the same time as men, they still faced a lot of obstacles that affected their potential to participate in public life or national affairs. It is for this reason that Parpart argues that, "decolonisation was essentially a transfer of power from one group of men to another."³²³ There are many factors attributed to the perpetration of this colonial legacy. Araki gives four factors that contributed to low participation of women in public life in post-colonial Zambia. Limited access to education led to high rate of female illiteracy. In addition, the educational framework pushed women into traditional fields like domestic science, health care and so on. Secondly, limited economic opportunities for women since few women held important economic positions. The other factor was the gender division of labour and insufficient time. Women faced a challenge of coping with family responsibilities and political life. Lastly, the belief that women should primarily be mothers and wives prevented many women from entering the political arena.³²⁴

Nevertheless, the solidarity groups and organisations women evolved became important components of post-colonial Zambia. However, the debate among scholars

³²³ J. Parpart, "Women and the State in Africa", in D. Rothchild and N. Chazan (eds.), *The Precarious Balance: State and Society in Africa* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1988), p. 225.

³²⁴ Araki, "Women's Clubs", p. 121.

has been on the approach used by the women's organisations in achieving equality between women and men in all spheres of life. This has led to a situation in academia where the contributions made by women's organisations to the political system have been ignored. Women's organisations emerged at different historical periods. As a result, this shaped their outlook and focus on politics and national affairs differently. The UNIP Women's League which had its origins in the time of the nationalist movement conceptualised women's issues in a different way compared to women's organisations that later emerged in the 1990s, which was a period of democratisation in many African states. As it has been shown in chapter three, the goal of the international community in the 1970s and 1980s was to integrate women in development. This coincided with Zambia's endeavour of national building. Therefore, the Women's League played an important role in the process of national building especially in the areas dealing with women and children.

The UN Decade for Women whose themes were Equality, Development and Peace also had great influence in shaping the type of politics practised by the Women's League. The Women's League could not only focus on one area of fighting for the equality between women and men in decision-making positions but aimed at integrating women in development by concentrating on the five areas of human endeavour: political, economic, social and cultural, scientific and technological, and defence and security. It is important to appreciate the Women's League's advocacy for the ratification of the ILO Convention on Maternal Protection in 1979 and CEDAW in 1985 by the Zambian Government.

The contribution of the Women's League in the institutionalisation of women's issues and setting up of structures aimed at addressing women issues also needs appreciation. For instance, the Women's Council which brought together other women's organisations and professional and businesswomen from all walks of life in 1976 was the first of its kind in Zambia. Due to this, Council women were able to prepare the Programmes of Action of 1975-1985 and 1985-1995. The Women's Affairs Committee was also established as an advisory policy-making body in order to complement the works of the Women's League. In addition, the Women's Unit was set up in 1985 at NCDP. This was upgraded to WIDD in 1990 and later to GIDD in June 1996. In the area of rural development, the Women's League played a critical role in the formation of the National Commission for Rural Planning. This led to a creation of women's co-operatives and clubs. A chapter on women in the Fourth National Development Plan (1987-1993) was included with contribution from the Women's League and other co-operating partners such as women's NGOs, the church and the WID Unit at NCDP. Despite not taking a radical approach in spearheading the fight for women's empowerment especially in the area of decision-making, the Women's League's contribution to the Zambia political system cannot be ignored.

The wave of democratisation in the 1990s changed the direction of politics in Africa and the world at large. As Walby argues, while the proportion of parliamentary seats held by women is not in itself an important indicator of women's representation in politics, "it is an important factor in reflections of gender equity and development."³²⁵ However, since many Zambian women were marginalised in the political arena, NGOs were seen as alternative forces to champion the cause for women. By the 1990s

³²⁵ S. Walby, "Gender, Globalisation and Democracy", in *Gender and Development* 8, 1 (2000): 20.

many women NGOs with different objectives existed. The old ones formed before the reintroduction of the multiparty politics in 1991 include among others YWCA, Catholic Women's League which focused on helping poor women, NGOCC which was a co-ordinating organisation for all NGOs and ZARD, whose aim was to promote women's development through research. Some like WILSA, WILDAF, WFC and the ZNWLG emerged in the multiparty dispensation.

As explained in chapter four, women's wings declined in importance in the 1990s while old women's organisations expanded their functions to include emphasis on women's rights and civic education. The new organisations that emerged focused on women's rights and increased political participation. The Fourth World Women's Conference held in Beijing in 1995 also contributed to this. Many women's organisations begun to argue that the attainment of goals which were widely agreed upon like democratisation and human rights, sustainable human development, economic growth could only be achieved with the consideration of women's and gender issues at their core.

The ZNWLG became a recognised women's organisation focusing on women's participation in decision-making. The major argument of most women's organisations at this time was that, although women constituted well over 51 percent of the population, they seemed invisible at national political level. Therefore, the ZNWLG focused on women's attempt to enter Parliament in larger numbers than before and also for women to occupy decision-making positions in both the public and private sector. As Phiri states, the focus on more women in Parliament was as a result of the realisation that since Parliament controlled finances, women were only able to

influence decisions if they were involved in large numbers.³²⁶ The ZNWLG undertook programmes in order to sensitise women and men as well as Government and political leaders about the need and significance of the equal representation and participation of women in decision-making at all levels. It also carried out training programmes for potential female political candidates as well as advocacy campaigns in order to inform the public about the negative effects of gender imbalance on development.

The study has demonstrated that within a period of 10 years the ZNWLG was able to establish critical linkages with important stakeholders such as the NGOCC and its affiliate members, government institutions, political parties, traditional leaders, donors, human rights NGOs among others. The influence of the ZNWLG was not only felt in Zambia but also extended to other Southern African countries such as Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe. However, the period of review for this study shows that a lot has to be done for gender equality in decision-making position to be a reality. For example, in 2001, nineteen females were elected to a Parliament of 150 seats. Zambia ratified important International Covenants such CEDAW (21 June 1985), International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (10 April 1984), the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (19 January 1984) and the SADC Gender and Development Declaration. On top of that the country also adopted its National Gender Policy on 6 March 2000. Therefore, a lot has to be done in terms of domesticating and implementing the above international and regional conventions and covenants.

³²⁶ Phiri, "Gender and Politics", p. 261.

This study has shown that of all the political parties that took part in the 2001 Tripartite Elections only three parties stated the gender-based electoral quotas in their constitutions on the representation of women in their political leadership. These were the United Party for National Development (30 per cent), Social Democratic Party (35/65 ratio) and National Citizen Coalition (50 per cent). The other political parties only incorporated gender equity statements in their policy documents, the manifestos and constitutions regarding the welfare of women. This is an indication that Zambia has a long way to go as far as accepting that women and men are equal partners in the governance of the country.

Although Women's organisations have provided an important avenue for women to take part in national politics, there is need to encourage more women in decision-making. A study by Bauer show that, it was only in Scandinavia where decades of socio-economic development and changes in cultural attitude eventually allowed large numbers of women to enter the national legislature. Elsewhere around the world, a variety of gender-based electoral quotas to gender their parliaments, sometimes "overnight" (in one election) is being used.³²⁷ Bauer's study shows the importance of two types of quota systems used. In some Southern Africa countries party-based gender quotas were used while some East African countries reserved seats for women in national legislatures. As a result of using electoral gender quotas, Rwanda in 2003 had the highest number of women in parliament (48.8 per cent) than any country in world. This was a big achievement as Rwanda in 1988 only had 17.1 per cent women in parliament. Tanzania in 1990 only had 11.2 per cent of women in parliament.

³²⁷ G. Bauer, "Taking the Fast Track to Parliament", p. 8.

However, this rose in October 1995 and October 2000 to 16.4 per cent and 22.2 per cent, respectively. By December 2005, the number rose to 30.4 per cent.

In June 1993, Burundi only had 9.9 per cent women in Parliament. However, the number had risen to 30.5 per cent by July 2005. Uganda who in 1980 only had 0.7 per cent women in parliament also used gender based quotas. Consequently, the figures rose to 18.1 per cent in 1996, 24.6 per cent in 2001 and to 27.6 per cent in 2005. Mozambique in 1994 had 25.2 per cent women parliamentarians. The number rose to 30 per cent in 1999. By December 2004, the figure rose to 34.8 per cent. In Namibia, women had 12.5 per cent seats in Parliament. The number in 1999 rose to 25 per cent and remained constant at 25 per cent in 2004. South Africa is also another special case. In April, 1994, 25 per cent of MPs were women. In 1999 the number rose to 30 per cent. By April 2004 the figure had risen to 32.8 per cent.³²⁸

As highlighted in the Women's Manifesto, Zambian female voters and candidates face many problems because the playing field is not levelled.³²⁹ For example, women face difficulties in accessing National Registration Cards and Voters Cards. Not much is done to explain the complex electoral process in a way that would be understood by illiterate voters especially women. The First-Past-the-Post-System plays an important role in ensuring women's participation. Unfortunately, this has not been the case especially during elections. In addition, the interpretation of the Electoral Act and the Electoral Code of Conduct by Key Players has not been effective. This has subjected female voters and candidates to extreme humiliation and intimidation.³³⁰ All these are

³²⁸ Bauer, "Taking the Fast Track to Parliament", p. 22.

³²⁹ ZNWLG and WIP Forum, Zambia Women's Manifesto, p. 7.

³³⁰ ZNWLG and WIP Forum, Zambia Women's Manifesto, p. 7.

issues that need to be addressed in the political system if equal partnership in development between men and women is to be attained.

Women's organisation alone cannot bring about the desired results in the area of gender equality in governance. This is because they operate in a cultural environment that has not completely embraced the role of gender in development. On top of that, these organisations also face organisational challenges. In a study to evaluate the ZNWLG conducted by Jule Development Associates International (JUDAI) Consultants in 2002, it was observed that although the ZNWLG had established critical linkages with the NGOCC and its affiliate members, government institutions, political parties, traditional leaders, some development and human rights NGOs, and donors, it still faced some challenges. For example, governmental officials sometimes viewed it as a political party. The ZNWLG was also heavily dependent on donor funding. In 2002 most donors except the Humanist Institute for Co-operation with Developing Countries (HIVOS), NORAD and Swedish Embassy decided to withhold their funding until a review of the organisation was concluded. This placed it in a very vulnerable position financially. In addition, although it worked with community based organisations (CBOs), it did not have Provincial Programme Officers in most provinces and districts but relied mainly on volunteer members to implement programmes and activities.³³¹ This clearly shows that women's organisations still need constant support from all stakeholders if they are to make greater contributions to the development of the nation.

³³¹ JUDAI Consultants for ZNWLG, Report on Evaluation of Zambia National Women's Lobby Group, December 2002, pp. 50-51.

Despite the challenges encountered, Zambian Women's organisations played an important role in the institutionalisation of women issues. They also played a cardinal role in shaping the Zambian political system by developing political structures that were more gender sensitive and that facilitated the representation of women's concerns. A case study of the UNIP Women's League and the ZNWLG has shown that. The vision of the Zambian Government as stated in the National Gender Policy is to achieve full participation of both women and men in the development process at all levels in order to ensure sustainable development and attainment of equality and equity between the sexes. Therefore, women's organisation are an important aspect not only in political but in social and economic development as well.

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