

WOMEN IN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP IN KENYA

PRESENTED BY

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Introduction

- Discrimination contributes to women's marginalized role in political processes.
- Women's participation in political-decision making processes contributes to shaping a development framework that can transform their lives.
- Equality can lead to greater social – political and economic justice.

Facts and Figures

- Women make up half of the world's population; they are not a minority group!
- Women perform two-thirds of the world's work and produce 50% of all food, but earn only 10% of world income and own only 1% of world property!
- Women are estimated to account for almost two-thirds of the 1.4 billion people globally who live in extreme poverty.

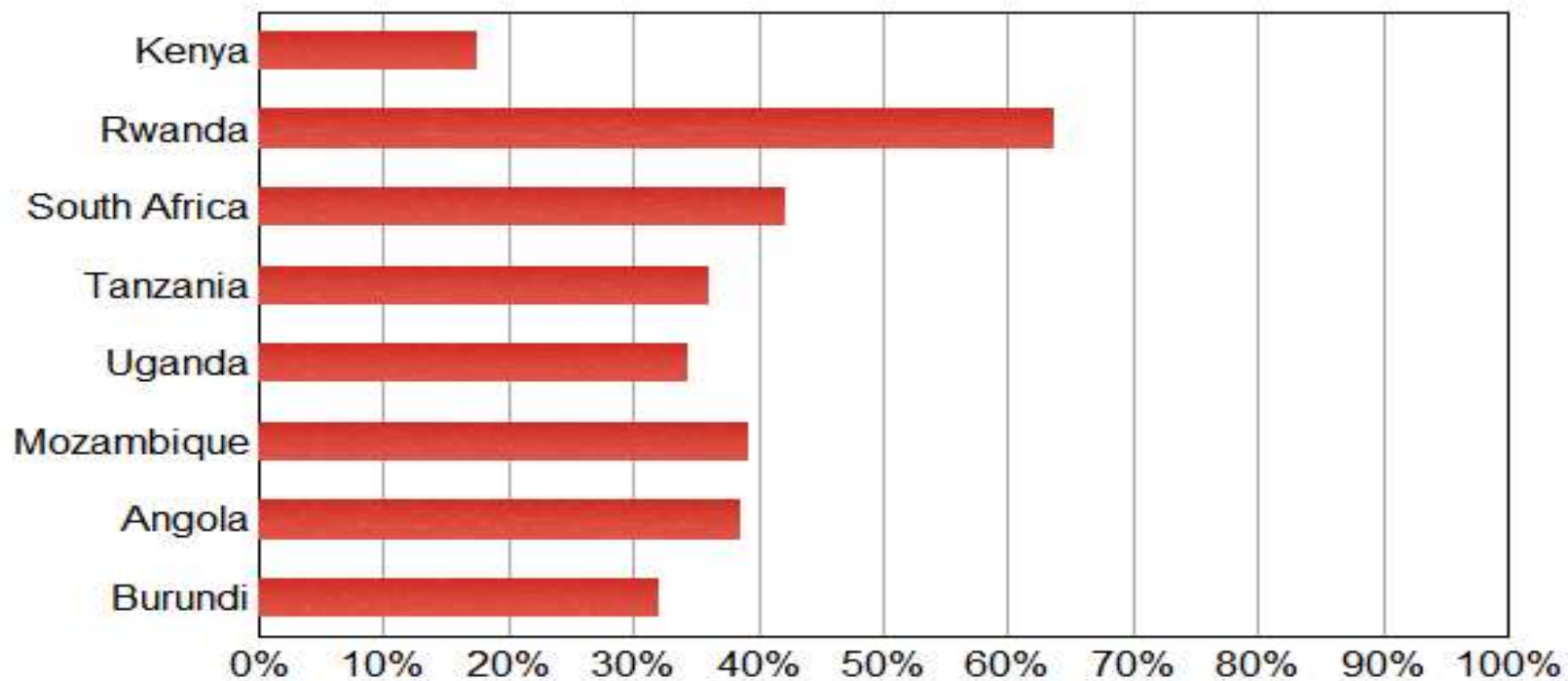
GLOBAL POLITICAL WOMEN REPRESENTATION IN POLITICS

- Only **one in five** parliamentarians is a woman.
- Women's hold just **17%** of ministerial positions around the world.
- Only **13** of **193** heads of government are women.
- Women account for only **20%** of elected councillors; and hold mayoral positions in only **10** of the world's 195 capital cities.
- Based on these trends, women will not be equally represented in parliaments until **2065**, and will not make up half the world's leaders until **2134**.

WOMEN'S POLITICAL REPRESENTATION IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ACROSS AFRICA

Women's Political Representation

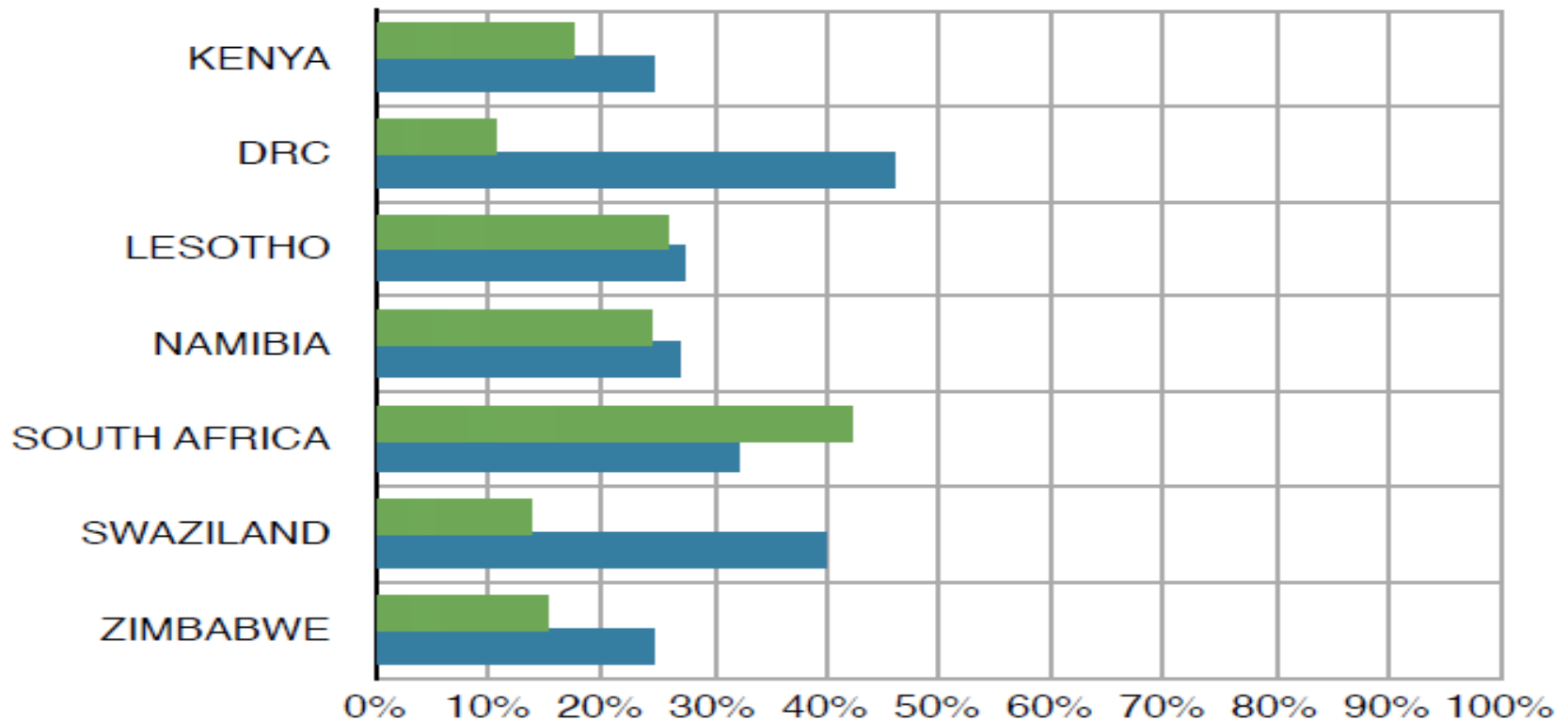
Statistics as of 2013



PERCENTAGES OF WOMEN IN THE UPPER & LOWER HOUSE

■ Lower House ■ Upper House

Percentages of Women in the Upper & Lower Houses



In Kenya the National Assembly = the upper house and the senate = the lower house

KENYAN PERSPECTIVE

- The Constitution of Kenya 2010 has provided hope for women since its promulgation on 27th August 2010.
- It allows for the possibility to strengthen the women's movement.
- Not much has changed though.

Challenges Facing Kenyan Women Politicians

- Male-oriented political parties;
- Biased selection and nomination processes;
- Lack of internal democracy;
- Undemocratic membership recruitment; and
- Absence of substantive elections in leader's recruitment

Challenges Facing Kenyan Women Politicians

- Unresponsive judicial system – see for instance, *In the Matter of the Principle of Gender Representation in the National Assembly and the Senate* [2012] eKLR (Supreme Court: Advisory Opinion Application No. 2 of 2012).
- The Court in this matter ruled that the principle could only be implemented progressively. This was a major blow to women
- Social, cultural, economic and religious barriers.

WOMEN REPRESENTATION IN KENYAN PARLIAMENT

- The National Assembly has a total of 349 members out of which only 61 are women (17.5%).
- The Senate has a total of 68 members out of which 18 are women (24.7%).
- This brings the total to only 79 women in Parliament as compared to men who make up 338 of the representation (19%).

Commendable Initiatives

- **Kenya Women Parliamentary Association (KEWOPA).**
 - founded in 2001 in response to the need to increase the number of women parliamentarians
 - Works very closely with FIDA-Kenya on issues affecting women and children
 - FIDA-Kenya actively involved in capacity building for KEWOPA members to influence gender sensitive laws

Commendable Initiatives

- KEWOPA initiated and successfully lobbied for the following:
- the Children's Act of 2002;
- the Sexual Offences Act of 2006;
- the Counter Trafficking in Persons Act of 2010;
- the review of the Employment Act, No. 11 of 2007, which led to the increase in maternity leave to four months;
- the Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation Act, 2011

Commendable Initiatives

- **National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC).**
 - The NGEC is the main watchdog body to coordinate, monitor and ensure compliance to & implementation of women and gender related provisions in the 2010 Constitution.

Looking ahead - Opportunities

- Promote principles of equality and non-discrimination;
- Concrete targets to increase women's participation and influence in political and public life;
 - **Increase women's representation and participation in formal politics and decision making;**
 - **Increase proactive support for women's participation and leadership.**
 - **Tackle barriers to women's participation and influence.**

Looking ahead – Opportunities (Cont.)

- Getting the balance right when tracking change;
- Address structural factors that perpetuate crisis, inequality, insecurity and human rights violations.
- Develop law and policies with the full participation and leadership of women; and
- Ensure strong mechanisms for accountability within countries and at the international level.

CONCLUSION

- Political participation is an important step for individual women along pathways towards greater influence in public life.
- Women should be treated as active partners in development rather than passive beneficiaries of aid.
- Enabling frameworks must contain mechanisms that enable women, to hold leaders to account for progress.



END

THANK YOU!