Power, Gender
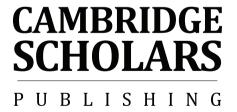# and Social Change in Africa

Power, Gender
and Social Change in Africa

Edited by

Muna Ndulo and Margaret Grieco

CAMBRIDGE
SCHOLARS

P U B L I S H I N G

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FOREWORD

Adrien K. Wing

The problems facing African women in the twenty-first century are daunting. As has been the case for centuries, they continue to be suppressed in reactionary patriarchal cultures that limit their ability to thrive in both the public and private sectors. The global economic crisis is only the latest in the phenomena that disproportionally affect them. The burdens are enormous. As the Chinese proverb says: "women hold up more than half the sky."[1] I have termed the culmination of the denial of women's rights in all spheres "spirit injury," which envisions physical, psychological, spiritual, and cultural harm.[2] The effects can be "as devastating, as costly, and as physically obliterating as robbery or assault."[3] Symptoms of spirit injury, which can occur on an individual or group level, include "defilement, silence, denial, shame, guilt, fear, blaming the victim, violence, self-destructive behaviors, acute despair/emotional death, emasculation, trespass, and pollution."[4] Even when progressive international and national laws are drafted and policies are developed, little actually penetrates into the day-to-day lives of women.

The Cornell University Institute for African Development has contributed to our understanding of the issues affecting African women in the new millennium by producing this important collection. I was delighted to be the keynote speaker at the event that generated the chapters of this book—the April, 2006 conference on Power, Gender, and Social Change in Africa. Institute Director and volume editor Muna Ndulo and co-editor Margaret Grieco must be congratulated for gathering the distinguished group of multidisciplinary authors, who have written pieces that carefully excavate the myriad complexities of African women's lives. The coverage of the book is both broad and deep, including political participation, academe, law, health, education, culture, and economic empowerment.

I regard the problems concerning African women's issues as intersectional and multidimensional in nature.[5] In other words, the matters intertwine and cannot be regarded in isolation. Moreover, the issues are not additive in scope, but multiplicative. For example, underdevelopment is not a singular concern, but reflective of the overlap of educational,

health, economic, and environmental factors. The contributions to this book are impressive because taken together, they educate us about the interwoven nature of oppression.

Detailing the impoverished status of African women's existence can be extraordinarily depressing. Many of us in the global north often regard African women with profound pity, sometimes bordering on condescension. We may slip into essentializing the women as global victims with little to no agency.

We forget that wonderful South African saying which is also the name of a modern play, "You strike the woman, you strike the rock."[6] Despite daunting circumstances, many African women exemplify strength and power. The first female President, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia, has joined the boys' club of leaders. Courageous human rights advocate Unity Dow augmented the all-male ranks of the Botswana Supreme Court. Baleka Mbete was South African Speaker of the National Assembly. Annonciata Mukamugema of Rwanda has played a leadership role with AVEGA, the widow's network in a country still coping with the ravaging effects of the 1994 genocide. She has been given the African Women of Empowerment Project Award. Navanethen Pillay of South Africa has been appointed the United Nations High Commissioner of Human Rights. In Nigeria, Safiya Husseini and Amina Lawal dared challenge an Islamic law that would have resulted in their stoning for being pregnant outside of wedlock. Mamphela Ramphele, who began her career as an anti-apartheid activist, has been a managing director of the World Bank and Vice Chancellor of the University of Cape Town. As a result of her path-breaking environmental rights activism, Wangari Maathai became the first African woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize. There are undoubtedly countless unknown women who are on the forefront of implementing societal change in their own communities.

If we listen to African women's voices and needs as portrayed directly and indirectly in this book, we can gain information suitable to working together *with* them, rather than merely on their behalf. "Spirit warming" can replace spirit injury as we strive for a brighter future for Africa and the rest of the world.

If we respect the knowledge gleaned from the text of each author, we may be able to learn some lessons applicable for western society as well. For example, the U.S. has much to learn from the South African experience described in Professor Andrews' chapter *Imagine All the Women: Power, Gender and Transformative Possibilities of the South*

African Constitution. Perhaps one day, the U.S. will have an equality clause that includes gender and sexual orientation as South Africa does.[7] The South African equality clause also covers race, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, color, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth.[8] Maybe the U.S. could aim, as South Africa does, to provide substantive justice, not merely procedural justice.

In my own work, I have illustrated how Africa has made a critical contribution to the development of women's rights[9] by devising the Women's Protocol[10] of the African Charter on Human and People's Rights.[11] The Banjul Charter's protocol is the first regional treaty devoted specifically to women's rights. It is the first covenant to explicitly mention abortion, and to call for the legal prohibition of female genital surgery. Thus, Africans did not limit themselves to the contours of what other treaties had already said. They have pushed the envelope in ways that may show a path for other parts of the world.

In reviewing the major challenges confronting African women, this book gives us cause for hope in the twenty-first century. A progressive agenda for social change can be culled from the contributions—an agenda that represents the need for multifaceted solutions for the multifaceted problems.

More African women must have the opportunity to become nation-builders as well as world-builders. Those women who are already doing so, such as those mentioned above, need to become more well-known on the global stage. Educational levels for females must approach international standards to enable girls and women to fully participate in all arenas.

On the constitutional level, I have been deeply honored to work with the founding mothers of two African countries—South Africa and Rwanda. Electoral quota systems discussed herein are one way to jump-start the kind of participation in the legislative sector that is needed to implement even the best constitution. Putting women in governmental positions in all three branches is a necessary piece of the development puzzle.

Additionally, more women must become involved outside the government sector in *both* women's rights advocacy and in gender and development planning. Customary norms that impede women, such as the inability to own or inherit land, coupled with polygamy and low marriage ages, must be tackled to permit participation in the private sector. While microfinance projects are important, more women must reap the benefits

of national agribusiness and natural resources development. Why should women receive $500 loans, while men receive and often mismanage 5 million to 5 billion?

A vibrant academic sector for women can create the space for theorizing about Africa's problems and solutions in ways that are not possible in other areas. Internet resources can make massive collections of data available in Burundi. Videoconferencing can connect Iowa City to Harare. More opportunities for academic exchanges, rather than one way brain drain are essential to enhance the creation of future lecturers and the ongoing support of beleaguered professors.

None of the accomplishments in other areas are possible if health care for women is not prioritized, whether it be prenatal visits or pap smears. HIV rates cannot come down unless the ability to say no to unprotected sex is culturally and personally possible. Gender-based violence cannot be reduced unless every culture around the world combats cultural norms and teaches that violence is not an acceptable way to deal with loved ones. Just as you would not want someone to hurt your mother or sister, so you should not hurt someone else's mother or sister.

Any ambitious agenda for social change cannot advance the cause of women's rights unless men are as involved as women in that struggle. Women's issues cannot afford to be tokenized or ghettoized. It will take male Presidents, legislators, business people, doctors, farmers, and activists to work alongside women to craft and implement the solutions addressed and implied by this book. It will take husbands and fathers as well as wives and mothers to talk to their sons and daughters about gender-based violence. It will take men and women to value the birth of female children as much as that of male children.

Finally, great perseverance will be required to advance women beyond token numbers in all the sectors mentioned in this volume. It will not happen to the degree that we would like in most of our lifetimes. Problems of patriarchy and misogyny have existed for centuries. Victory cannot be judged by arrival at some preset finish line, but in the quality of the journey to get there. We must pace ourselves for a marathon, not a sprint. Nelson Mandela has an autobiography entitled "The struggle is my Life." The battle for gender justice must be part of all of our lives, whether in Africa or America. "Power, Gender and Social Change in Africa" makes a vital contribution to that struggle.

Notes

Many thanks to Professor Muna Ndulo for inviting me to do the keynote for the conference. Also, thanks to my research assistant Peter Nadimi for his help with this foreword.

[1] See Anna Han, "Women Holding Up more than Half the Sky," in *Global Critical Race Feminism: An International Reader,* 392 (Adrien Katherine Wing ed., NYU Press 2000).

[2] See Adrien Katherine Wing, "Women's Rights and Africa's Evolving Landscape: The Women's Protocol of the Banjul Charter," in *Africa: Mapping New Boundaries in International Law* 13 (Jeremy Levitt ed., Hart 2008).

[3] See Patricia Williams, "Spirit-Murdering the Messenger: The Discourse of Finger-Pointing as the Law's Response to Racism," 42 U. *Miami L. Rev.* 127, 129 (1987).

[4] See Adrien Katherine Wing & Richard Johnson, The Promise of the Post-Genocide Constitution: Healing Rwandan Spirit Injuries, 7 Mich. J. Race & L. 247, 289 (2002).

[5] See Adrien Katherine Wing, *Introduction to Global Critical Race Feminism: An International Reader* 1 (Adrien Katherine Wing ed., NYU Press 2000).

[6] See Strike the Rock Foundation, available at:

 http://striketherock.isat.co.za/Index_files/page0001.htm.

[7] See Adrien Katherine Wing and Samuel Nielson, "An Agenda for the Obama Administration on Gender Equality: Lessons from Abroad," 107 *Mich. L. Rev.* First Impressions 124 (2009), available at: http://www.michiganlawreview.org/first impressions/vol107/wing&nielson.pdf; Adrien Katherine Wing, "Race Across Boundaries: the South African Constitution Role Models for the U.S.," 24 *Harvard Blackletter J.* 73 (2008); Adrien Katherine Wing, "The Fifth Anniversary of the South African Constitution: a Role Model on Sexual Orientation," 26 *Vermont L. Rev.* 821 (2002).

[8] South African Const. art. 9 (1996).

[9] Wing, supra note 2.

[10] See Protocol to the *African Charter on Human and People's Rights* on the Rights of Women in Africa (11 July 2003), http://www.africa-union.org/home/ Welcome.htm.

[11] See African Charter on Human and People's Rights (adopted 27 June 1981, entered into force 21 October 1986), OAU Doc CAB/LEG/67/3/rev.5 (1982) 21ILM 58.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ACRONYMS

AAWORD	Association of African Women for Research and Development
ABC	AIDS prevention strategy: A=Abstinence; B=Be Faithful; C= Condoms
ACB	Anti-Corruption Bureau
AFWE	African Federation of Women Entrepreneurs
AIDS	Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
ANC	African National Congress
ASCA	Accumulating Savings and Credit Associations
ASA	African Studies Association
AWID	Association for Women's Rights in Development
BAOBAB	Organization for women's human rights in Nigeria
BDP	Botswana Democratic Party
BFA	Black Feminist Anthropology
CAR	Central African Republic
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
CEDPA	Center for Development and Population Activities
CEELI	Central European And Eurasian Law Initiative
CPA	Community Property Association
CSW	Commercial sex worker
DAWN	Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era
DHS	Demographic and Health Surveys
DTS	Development and Training Systems
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EISA	European Institute for Sustainable Development in Agriculture
FGM/FC	Female genital mutilation / female cutting
FIDA	Federation of Women Lawyers Kenya
FMRA	World Forum on Agrarian Reform
FTPT	First past the post (electoral system)
GAD	Gender and Development
GAWE	Ghanaian Association of Women Entrepreneurs
GDA	Gender and Development Approaches
GDI	Gender-related Development Index of UNDP
GEE	Generalized estimating equation
GEM	Gender Empowerment Index
GLTF	Gender Land Task Force

GWIP	Global Women in Politics
GWS Africa	Gender and Women's Studies for Africa's Transformation Project
HBE	Home-based Enterprises
HDI	Human Development Index of UNDP
HIV	Juman immunodeficiency virus
HPI	Human Poverty Index of UNDP
HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach
HRW	Human Rights Watch
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ICG	International Crisis Group
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
IDW	Internally Displaced Women
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
IFI	International Financial Institutions
IPPF	International Planned Parenthood Federation
JEM	Justice Equality Movement
MDG	Millenium Development Goals
MDICP	Malawi Diffusion and Ideational Change Project
MMR	Maternal Mortality Rate
MP	Members of Parliament
MSF	Médecins sans frontiers
MST	Landless People's Movement
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGAE	New Generation of African Entrepreneurs
NGO	Non-government organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
PR	Proportional Representation
PRDs	Pregnancy-related dropouts
ROSCA	Informal Rotating Savings and Credit Associations
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAEN	South Africa Enterprise Network

SAP	Structural Adjustment Program
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SID	Society for International Development
SLA	Sudan Liberation Army
SME	Small to Medium Enterprise
SOE	State-owned Enterprise
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
TFNs	transnational feminist networks
TWLA	Tanzania Women Lawyers Association
UDF	United Democratic Front (political party, Malawi)
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNFPA	United National Population Fund
UNHCR	UN High Commission for Refugees
UNRISD	UN Research Institute for Social Development
UOA	Ukimwi Orphans Assistance
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
UWEL	Uganda Women Entrepreneurs Ltd.
WID	Women in Development
WAD	Women and Development
WAEN	West Africa Enterprise Network
WiLDAF	Women in Law and Development in Africa
WLRI	Women's Legal Rights Initiative
WLSA	Women and Law in Southern Africa
WLUML	Women Living Under Muslim Laws
WTO	World Trade Organization

INTRODUCTION: POWER, GENDER AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN AFRICA

Muna Ndulo and Margaret Grieco

The importance of recognizing the significance of gender in assessing power relationships and access to resources—including education, wage-based employment, mental and physical health, health care, adequate nutrition, and housing—cannot be overemphasized. According to a recent World Bank report, Engendering Development through Gender Equality in Rights, Resources, and Voice,[1] careful attention must be given in several critical areas.

Central to this discussion is the fact that enormous disparities exist between men and women in basic rights, access to resources, and the power to determine the future in Africa and around the globe. Understanding and accounting for the links among gender, public policy and development outcomes can improve the effectiveness of policy formulation and development. It has been well documented that poverty—especially extreme poverty all over the world—is a very serious and complex issue and that gender is one of its most critical dimensions.

A review of progress since the 1985 Nairobi UN World Conference on Women highlights areas of particular urgency that stand out as priorities for action. The 1995 Beijing UN World Conference—Beijing Plus Five—and the Millennium Development Goals again highlight gender as both a central and critical component to the alleviation of poverty.

In providing for the lack of policy options on critical issues facing societies and the world, the Institute for African Development and Cornell are greatly influenced by the Land Grant University philosophy, where service is a priority. This book proceeds on the assumption that academia matters when it comes to knowledge and analytical skills in addressing societal problems. Issues such as the ones dealt with in this book recognize the importance of gender in assessing power relationships, access to resources, wage-based employment, mental and physical health, and adequate nutrition or housing.

The importance and timeliness of the issues addressed in this book in the context of today's world are not debatable. A number of conventions and declarations have been adopted over the years to deal with such issues: the Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women,[2] the 1993 International Conference on Human Rights in Vienna[3]

where the mantra, "Women's Rights are Human Rights," was coined; the Nairobi Conference; the Fourth World on Women in Beijing and the Millennium Development Goals (2000), to name a few. Many countries have adopted progressive domestic legal frameworks. Yet women's rights are flouted and women remain the majority of the poor, the unemployed, and the dispossessed.

Since their adoption the Millennium Development Goals (or MDGs) have taken center stage in the development discourse. Progress in every sector is measured against the eight world targets to reduce poverty and hunger, disease, child mortality, maternal mortality; HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases while promoting gender equality, education, and sustainable development. The interconnected world we live in demands a standard set of measures to keep us focused on the common goals of humanity.

It is now 2009, twenty-four years after the Nairobi Conference, fourteen years after the Beijing Conference and well over half-way to the target date for reaching the Millennium Development Goals. In relation to the goal of promoting gender equality, the score card does not look good. The Secretary-General in his report to the 2006 Commission on the Status of Women pointed out that "in no country in the world has women's full de jure and de facto equality been achieved."[4] A Gender Links Publication,[5] "Missing the Mark? Audit of the Southern African Development Community's Declaration on Gender and Development: Women in Decision-Making" has observed that laws, systems and services for addressing gender violence are inadequate. New forms of gender violence, such as human trafficking, are on the rise. HIV/AIDS, the pandemic which more than any other has preyed on the gender disparities in Africa, is negatively impacting on positive gains made. The current food and financial crisis is exacerbating an already critical situation. In most countries poverty is on the rise and increasingly it has a feminine face. While there has been some progress in raising awareness and challenging gender stereotypes in the media and popular culture, as well as in engaging men as partners, the battle to change the mind-set is still far from won. The number one lesson learned is that there is a propensity on the part of leaders to sign declarations and commitments without any intention or plan for delivering on these promises. As a result the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of gender policies, programs and activities continue to elude those charged with the responsibility of accounting to the public as the gap between policy and practice widens.

The failure to make progress is apparent not only within countries but in the international system as well. At a conference on UN reform and

human rights, Stephen Lewis, the UN Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Africa, lamented on how the multilateral system is disgorging a high-level panel of fifteen people to look at the redesign of all those areas of the United Nations system which so significantly address the lives of women, yet only three members of the panel are women.[6] He remarked that when he read the composition of the High Level Panel, the natural instinct was to throw up one's hands in dismay and ask: "When will things ever change? What do you have to do to get multilateralism to embrace even the simplest element of gender equality: the element called parity?" He said he was reminded by extension of the Commission on Africa appointed by the British Prime Minister Tony Blair, with three women among seventeen men.[7] He observed that it was no coincidence to find the weakest part of the Commission's report was the way it dealt with—or more accurately failed to deal with—the women of Africa.

On the question of strategies to be employed in the achievement of gender equality, as Kofi Annan has observed in the report "In Larger Freedom: towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All,"[8] "The world must advance the causes of security, development and human rights together, otherwise none will succeed. Humanity will not enjoy security without development; it will not enjoy development without security; and it will not enjoy either without respect for human rights." In other words, gender equality is intrinsic to security and development. Unless women are able to exercise their human rights freely in societies in which they live, true development will not take place. As a leading South African NGO, Gender Links has observed that many processes are in place which aim at targets, measures and practical indicators. Some of these processes were in place before the MDGs, and what is particularly important about these global efforts is the increasing emphasis placed on women's rights being at the core of any strategy to achieve equality between women and men, in other words, prioritizing the strategic over the practical. Thus, for example, it is pointless to talk about women's empowerment when women do not have access to land, property and credit. Similarly, there is little point in talking about ABC in relation to AIDS when women do not have the choice to abstain.

This book contains chapters from an interdisciplinary group of scholars, including sociologists, economists, political scientists, anthropologists, historians and others to discuss these important issues. The chapters of the book include analysis of strategic gender initiatives, case studies, research, and policies as well as conceptual and theoretical pieces. Chapter one addresses promoting gender equality and women's participation in parliament and political efficacy; chapter two looks at

mobilization and activism and gender mainstreaming. Chapter three, while taking a case study perspective, discusses political leadership and social transformation. Chapter four examines gender and its importance in the development process by looking at the economic roots of African women's political participation; Chapter five revisits the issue of mobilization by looking at it through scholarship and gender studies. Chapter six continues the debate on mobilization and scholarship. Chapters seven and eight take on the issue of health and gender by looking at maternal mortality and transport, and women's vulnerability and risk of AIDS infection. Chapters nine and ten address the issue of education by looking at Islam and gender inequality in education and access and representation in higher education. Chapters eleven and twelve examine gender, human rights, customary law and the impact of traditional values on gender relations. Women face some of the greatest challenges in the labor and production sectors. Chapters thirteen and fourteen focus on land rights and agricultural sustainability and women's contributions. The final chapter, fifteen, looks at how conflict and its attendant effects—displacement and violence—impact on women.

This book will have achieved its purpose if through its discussion of the challenges, achievements and lessons learned in efforts to attain gender equality it contributes to research, informs teaching and activism, and encourages the exchange of ideas, resources and recorded experiences as well as sharing theoretical models and best practices for engaging the issues of power, gender and social change in Africa and around the world.

Notes

[1] Engendering Development through Gender Equality in Rights, Resource, and Voice. Mason, Andrew D., King, Elizabeth M., 2001/01/31. Report # 21776, Volume 1.

[2] Convention for the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, adopted by the UN General Assembly 1979.

[3] 1993 World Conference on Human Rights, June 14–15, 1993, Vienna, Austria.

[4] Secretary General's Report, 2006, Commission on the Status of Women, UN Division for the Advancement of Women.

[5] Gender Links. http://www.genderlinks.org.za

[6] http://www.choike.org/nuevo_eng/informes/5439.html

[7] In early 2004, the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, established the Commission for Africa. The 17 members of the Commission published their report "Our Common Interest" in March 2005.

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[8] 'In Larger Freedom': Towards Development, Security and Human Rights For All. *UN Publications,* July 25, 2005.

PART I

GENDER MAINSTREAMING, POLITICS, AND
PARTICIPATION

CHAPTER ONE
TAKING THE FAST TRACK TO PARLIAMENT:

Comparing Electoral Gender Quotas in Eastern and Southern Africa

Gretchen Bauer

Introduction

During the past fifteen years large numbers of women have entered parliaments in several east and southern African countries. As of mid-2006 Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Seychelles all had national legislatures that included from 25 to nearly 50 percent women, placing them in the top 30 nations worldwide in terms of numbers of women in national legislatures. This is far above the African regional and world averages of about 17 percent women in a single or lower house of parliament (www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm). This development is part of a global trend whereby women are using gender-based electoral quotas to take a "fast track" to equal legislative representation (Dahlerup and Freidenvall 2005). Rather than following the example of Scandinavia, where decades of socio-economic development and changes in cultural attitude finally allowed large numbers of women to enter the national legislature, women around the world are using a variety of gender-based electoral quotas to gender their parliaments, sometimes 'overnight' (in one election).[1]

Several Asian, European and Latin American countries have utilized gender-based electoral quotas with similar success, though nowhere in the world has the rate of increase in women's representation matched that of Africa (Dahlerup and Freidenvall 2005, 33; Tripp 2004, 72). The increased use of quotas across Africa reflects a renewed interest in formal politics and political institutions among African women's movements. Shireen Hassim and Sheila Meintjes (2005, 4) argue that efforts to break down the barriers to women's equal political participation "signal that there is room for women's agency to shape politics, and that formal political rights are an important precondition for advancing equitable social policies" for

women. Bringing African women into national legislatures in significant numbers is one part of this effort.

A few recent studies have examined this phenomenon of increasing numbers of women in several African parliaments. Three of these comparative studies identify a similar set of factors accounting for the rise in women's legislative presence. Gretchen Bauer and Hannah E. Britton (2006a), in the introduction to a book based on dozens of interviews with women members of parliament (MPs) in five countries, find that these success stories share common characteristics. All have experienced a political transition following a period of prolonged conflict in the past twenty years (civil war, liberation struggle, genocide, guerilla insurgency). These conflicts—and the roles women played in them at home and abroad—contributed to an available cadre of capable women candidates to stand for public office. Moreover, during the political transitions in the post-conflict period, women activists and their organizations inserted themselves into the processes of crafting new constitutions and drafting new laws that provided the legal foundations and political frameworks for the institutions and mechanisms to bring more women into political office (namely, the use of certain types of electoral systems and gender quotas). Critical to this process were national women's movements and organizations and the pressure they exerted on (usually dominant) political parties to adopt the strategies and mechanisms that led to women's increased representation. Finally, a global women's movement, to which many African women were exposed in the course of conflict (and to which they contributed substantially in a variety of international forums such as the United Nations conferences on women), has also played a significant role.

International IDEA's (Ballington 2004a) study of women's increased electoral representation across Africa draws many of the same conclusions. In the final chapter, Ballington identifies the use of specific electoral systems and quotas, the strength and cohesion of national women's movements, pressure exerted by international women's movements and organizations, and the strategic use of windows of political opportunity as the factors giving rise to women's increased political representation in Africa in the 1990s and 2000s. A Gender Links survey of six southern African countries ties women's increased representation to a proportional representation (PR) electoral system and party-based gender quotas or reserved seats for women. Moreover, the survey also finds that the countries with the highest proportion of women in politics have recently emerged from struggle or conflict situations, or

have ruling parties with social democratic inclinations, or both (Morna 2004b).[2]

Clearly, gender-based electoral quotas are key to increasing women's legislative representation with the factors cited in the studies above determining *whether or not* quotas will be adopted—and *what types* of quotas will be adopted. For purposes of comparison, it is interesting to note that the percentages of women in national parliaments in several Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries that do not utilize quotas are merely at or well below the African (and world) average for single or lower houses of parliament: Mauritius' parliament is composed of 17.1 percent women, Zimbabwe's of 16.7 percent (since 2005), Botswana's of 11.1 percent, and Malawi's of 13.9 percent (since 2004). Women comprise 10.8 percent of Swaziland's parliament (since 2003), 11.7 percent of Lesotho's (since 2002), and 12.7 percent of Zambia's (since 2001) (see www.ipu.org). (Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo are still in transition; Angola is yet to schedule parliamentary elections and the DRC has just held them.) This poor showing is despite a declaration signed by all SADC heads of state in 1997 committing themselves and their countries to 30 percent women in positions of political power and decision-making by 2005 (with a clear emphasis on national legislatures). The four countries that met or nearly met the SADC target (included among the six below) all use some kind of voluntary party-based quota or special seats.

The six countries discussed in this chapter more or less conform to the trajectory described in the studies above, with one interesting difference.[3] The three southern African cases have all increased the number of women MPs using a PR electoral system and voluntary political party-based quotas. The three east African cases have utilized a mix of electoral systems and mandatory 'special' or 'reserved' seats for women. Indeed, gender-based electoral quotas may take different forms. In Africa they have largely been of two kinds: reserved or appointed seats intended to determine at least a minimum number of seats to be held by women, or measures adopted voluntarily by political parties aimed at influencing the number of women candidates (Tripp 2004, 73).[4] While the former are nearly always legal quotas, the latter may be voluntary or mandatory. The remainder of this chapter elaborates the two regionally-based alternatives and discusses their implications for women's political empowerment and social and economic advancement.

The Southern African Cases: Mozambique, Namibia and South Africa

Mozambique, Namibia and South Africa all emerged from conflict situations in the early 1990s—Mozambique from decades of civil war, Namibia from decades of war for political independence, and South Africa from decades of struggle for a democratic and non-racial South Africa.[5] In all three cases women were part and parcel of the conflicts (Urdang 1989, Becker 1995, Britton 2005). In the latter two cases thousands of women spent decades in exile, in some cases fighting alongside male counterparts as armed combatants, in other cases gaining critical skills and experience at schools and universities abroad. Upon their return many of these women, well versed in feminist theory and praxis from experience overseas and well aware of the pitfalls of national independence from experience elsewhere in Africa, joined forces with women at home to press for new gender dispensations in the post-conflict period, including a formal role for women in the political process (Seidman 1995). In Namibia a small number of women members of the Constituent Assembly played a key role in shaping Namibia's gender-progressive constitution, and one woman MP was largely responsible for the adoption of a gender quota for local elections shortly after independence (Bauer 2006, 100-101). In South Africa women activists and exiles came together in the early 1990s to form a national women's organization, develop a national plan of action and ultimately influence the unfolding constitutional negotiations such that South Africa too has one of the most gender-progressive constitutions in the world today (Britton 2006, 64-65). In Mozambique too, women fought alongside male counterparts both from without (in exile) and within the rebel movement (Morna 2004b, 53). In Mozambique in the early 1990s women began to organize themselves into many new groups with the express purpose of educating women voters at the grassroots level to participate effectively in all phases of the electoral process (Abreu 2004b, 62).

With independence in Namibia, democratic rule in South Africa and an end to war and transition to multiparty politics in Mozambique, PR electoral systems were adopted in all three countries for national legislative elections. In South Africa this was done with the recognition that PR systems are more favorable to women (though there were other reasons as well for adopting the system).[6] While there is no evidence that women's electoral outcomes figured into the choice of a PR system at the national level in Namibia, the decision in 2002 to retain a PR system for local legislative elections was made in part on the argument that PR

systems favor women (Britton 2006, 65-66; Bauer 2006, 91). In South Africa and Mozambique, meanwhile, the two ruling parties—the African National Congress (ANC) and the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (Frelimo) respectively—adopted 30 percent quotas for their candidate lists for National Assembly elections, the ANC before the 1994 election and Frelimo at its sixth party congress in 1992 (Myakayaka-Manzini 2004; Abreu 2004b). Subsequently, both parties committed themselves to the equal distribution of women's names (every third name a woman's) throughout their candidate lists (Myakayaka 2004; Disney 2006). Colleen Lowe Morna (2004, 62) argues that internal struggles to secure the ANC's 30 percent quota have been "a key mobilizing tool for women, and a critical component of transforming the attitudes of men within the party." In Namibia, meanwhile, women's organizations have exerted considerable pressure on political parties since before the 1999 election. Like South Africa, Namibia has an active 50/50 campaign, and a 50/50 bill has been drafted and presented to parliament. Still, political parties have not formally adopted gender quotas, though for the last two elections most candidate lists have been at or close to 30 percent women. But women's names have not always been well distributed throughout party lists with the result that women's representation in the National Assembly has stagnated at 25 percent.

The East African Cases: Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda

Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda have also experienced transitions in the past two decades. Uganda was first, with the National Resistance Movement (NRM) wresting power from the last in a series of dictatorial and military regimes in 1986. Tanzania followed a more peaceful path to political transition with amendments to its constitution in 1992 that proscribed a one-party political system and commenced the transition to a multiparty political system. Rwanda's transition came on the heels of an aborted democratic opening, war, and the genocide of up to one million people. In these cases too, it has been argued, women's enhanced participation in the political process in the post-conflict and post-transition period stems in part from their participation in the conflicts. In Uganda, with already-existing contacts in the NRM, women activists in the late 1980s were invited by the new president to identify women leaders for leadership positions in government (Tripp 2006, 112). Sylvia Tamale (1999) argues that President Yoweri Museveni was receptive to women's increased participation in politics in part because of their participation in the armed struggle that brought him and his movement to power. In Rwanda, women were prominent among the civil society activists who