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An Assessment of
Political Party
Systems and Structures
that Marginalise Women





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June 2019

Table of Contents

Abbreviations and Acronyms	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Executive Summary	v
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Background and Country Context	1
1.2 Historical Progression of Women Representation in Elective Decision Making in Zambia	2
1.3 Assessment of political party structures and systems that marginalise women	4
2.0 Methodology	6
2.1 Study Design	6
2.2 Sampling	6
2.3. Data Collection and Analysis	7
2.4. Limitations	9
3.0 Marginalisation of Women In Political Parties	10
3.1 Underlying causes of the marginalization of women in political parties leadership	10
3.2 Political party systems and structures that hinder women from participating in political leadership	16
4.0 Conclusion	26
41 Advocacy issues and recommendations	27
References	28

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACHPR	African Charter on Human and People’s Rights
AU	African Union
BPFA	Beijing Platform for Action
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSO	Central Statistical Office
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
ECZ	Electoral Commission of Zambia
FDD	Forum for Democracy and Development
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GFP	Gender Focal Point
GII	Gender Inequality Index
Hivos	Humanist Institute for Development Cooperation
MGCD	Ministry of Gender and Child Development
MMD	Movement for Multi-Party Democracy
NECs	National Executive Committees
NMCs	National Management Committees
PECs	Provincial Executive Committees
PF	Patriotic Front
PSAf	Panos Institute Southern Africa
SADC	Southern African Development Community
UN	United Nations
UNIP	United National Independence Party
UPND	United Party for National Development
ZNWL	Zambia National Women’s Lobby Group

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Executive Summary

Over the years, there has been global commitment to redress all forms of discrimination including gender imbalances in politics in line with the provisions of international, regional and local instruments. Gender equality and women's political participation and representation at all levels has become a prominent part of politics in Africa and the rest of the world. However, beyond the written commitments, achieving true gender equality requires direct measures to be implemented at all levels including from inside political parties.

In Zambia, despite official statistics showing the population as being dominated by more women than men, women representation in political leadership and decision making is still very low. The gender-based marginalisation of women in Zambian culture has more influence on the ability of women to rise to leadership in political parties than the parties' regulative framework or the gender parity commitments the country has made.

As part of its efforts to address gender inequality in political leadership and decision making has persisted in Zambia, Panos Institute Southern Africa (PSAf) conducted an *Assessment of Political Party Systems and Structures that Marginalise Women*.

The assessment had a broad aim of identifying and interrogating the existing structures and systems within political parties that marginalise women and limit women's opportunities for leadership in political parties in Zambia.

The assessment's specific objectives were:

- i. To identify the underlying causes of the marginalization of women in political parties;
- ii. To explain how political party systems and structures hinder women from participating in political leadership; and
- iii. To make recommendations for increasing women's opportunities for political leadership.

The study sampled five political parties that have had representation in Parliament in the last 10 years, or which previously formed national government. The assessment employed a qualitative approach, and primarily utilised archival and desk research and semi-structured interviews to collect data. Political party official documents like party constitutions, policies, manifestos, electoral rules, regulations and procedures were also examined to determine the extent to which these documents mainstream gender therein. Semi structured interviews were administered to national level political party leaders, provincial level political party leaders, district level political party leaders, former political party leaders, Members of Parliament and Councillors.

The assessment confirmed that participation of women in political party leadership in Zambia is very marginal. The gender disparity in leadership creates difficulties for women to thrive as they compete with men who are already dominating and then also have to deal with the deep-rooted patriarchal beliefs and attitudes that leadership is for men.

For example, an analysis of presidential candidates since Independence in 1964 shows that Zambia has had only two women nominated to stand for election as president. These are: Gwendoline Konie who contested once (in 2002), and Edith Nawakwi who has contested on four occasions in 2008, 2011, 2015 and 2016.

All the parties assessed have principles, practices, laws, rules, guidelines, values and procedures, written and unwritten, that guide the interaction between the different structures or parts that make a political party. The parties also have structures such as National Congress/ Convention or Conference, National Executive Committees, Provincial Executive Committees, District level committees and the Women's League.

There are, however, no specific systems and practices in the party structures designed to marginalise women. The factors preventing women from rising to leadership are not necessarily coded into constitutions and regulations. While political party constitutions fail to categorically articulate a drive towards gender inclusion and parity in leadership, they do not actively write out women either.

The study identified the following as some of the underlying causes of the marginalization of women:

- i. **Cultural Influence:** While political parties control their own systems and structures, they are influenced by culture and tradition which are external to the political parties. The patriarchal culture and tradition that obtains in Zambia is the most important deterrent to female political leadership, resulting in the low or non-adoption of women as candidates to represent political parties in local and national elections. This also causes some women to defer to male influencers (husbands and guardians) when considering entering politics or seeking high office.
- ii. **The Glass Ceiling:** The study confirmed the existence of a “glass ceiling” characterised by some “unwritten rules” or unacknowledged barriers that prevent women from taking up certain positions within political parties. In some cases, the glass ceiling is so thick that some female politicians have been forced to apologise just for harbouring leadership ambitions.
- iii. **Sexual harassment** was highlighted as not only preventing women from rising within their parties, but also discourages others from participating in even the most basic political activities. During adoptions and campaigns women are subjected to obscene

and sexually suggestive remarks, actions or demands by their male colleagues as a precondition for adoption or support as candidates.

- iv. **The tacit power of men:** Some respondents felt that females' rise to power in Zambia was tacitly determined by the significant men in their lives. It was suggested that the women who made it to high political office had remained single or were divorced. It was also suggested that married women in office faced on-going tension in homes where husbands or in-laws suggested that they were neglecting their marital duties when fulfilling inescapable political work like attending late meetings or functions.
- v. **Internal party violence** is also a major deterrent to women pursuing leadership roles. The violence was seen as relatively new but increasingly institutionalised so that party leaders could expect verbal or even physical abuse from cadres. While men may take this in stride and sometimes fight back, women leaders are for the large part unable to function fully in the violent environment.

It is critical that effective strategies are employed to address this continued marginalisation of women in political decision-making process for the betterment of the country. The study, therefore, recommends the formulation and implementation of legislation to compel political parties to institute gender balance, and to give policy making authority to the women's league in their respective parties. The study also identifies opportunities for intensifying efforts to address the cultural mindsets that undermine female leadership, high marginalisation of women in the lower level of political party structures, and institutionalised sexual abuse in political parties.

1.0 Introduction

It has been argued that “democracy involves popular control over decision making and equality between citizens in the exercise of that control”¹. However, in Africa and around the world, gender inequality in political leadership and decision making has persisted. Though situations vary from country to country, there are some universal trends in the barriers and challenges to women’s equal participation and representation in politics.² To this end, democratic stability and growth can only be anchored on the realisation that both gender are active participants in the political and electoral process of any given country. This assessment, therefore, has a broad aim of investigating the existing structures and systems within political parties that marginalise women and limit women’s opportunities for leadership in political parties in Zambia. This assessment further examines political party official documents such as party constitutions, policies, manifestos, electoral rules, regulations and procedures being applied by the five political parties under study in Zambia with a view to determine the extent to which these documents mainstream gender therein. The assessment’s specific objectives are, among others, to identify the underlying causes of marginalisation of women in the political parties’ structures and explaining how political party systems and structures have hindered women from participating in political leadership. The study has also interrogated the role of respective political parties’ in achieving gender equality in political leadership and decision making and further makes recommendations and proposes strategies on how to bridge the identified women participation deficits in decision making positions in political parties. This is because Zambia and other developing democracies have faced one of the fundamental and enduring challenges of continued lack of gender equality in positions of power and decision making in almost all spheres.

1.1 Background and Country Context

There has been global commitment to address all forms of discrimination including gender imbalances in Politics in line with the provisions of international, regional and local instruments. Since the adoption of the Nairobi forward looking strategies on the Advancement of women, gender equality and women’s political participation and representation at all levels has become a prominent part of politics in Africa and the rest of the world. However, beyond the written commitments, achieving true gender equality requires direct measures to be implemented at all levels including from inside political parties.

¹ International IDEA (2013) Inclusive Political Participation and Representation. The role of Regional Organisation, International IDEA, Stockholm, Sweden

² Ibid

According to the Central Statistical Office (CSO) National Population Census for 2010, Zambia's population is estimated at 13, 046,508 and broken down into 49.3 percent (6,454,647) males and 50.7 percent (6,638,019) females. With a population of 50.7% women, the study of women participation in politics in Zambia is a subject that has received a lot of attention of late. As observed by the Zambia National Women's Lobby (ZNWL) (2016), "growth and stability of an effective democracy and good governance" is dependent on the "active participation of women on equal terms with men to achieve equality, sustainable development, peace and democracy". More so that democracy is about the rule of the majority, the marginalisation of the majority women in decision making is a destabilizing effect on democracy. However, unequal opportunities for participation and representation between men and women still exist worldwide. In Zambia, despite the population being dominated by more women than men as per official statistics alluded to above, women representation in political leadership and decision making is still very low.

1.2 Historical Progression of Women Representation in Elective Decision Making in Zambia

Studies such as the ZNWL Gender Audit of 2014 have shown that the participation of women in political party leadership in Zambia is still very marginal. While Zambia adopts an inclusive development discourse, leadership remains a male dominated-arena in terms of numbers of people holding decision-making positions at various levels of society including in political parties. The gender disparity in leadership creates difficulties for women to thrive as they compete with men who are already dominating and then also have to deal with the deep-rooted beliefs and attitudes that leadership is for men. The Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), General Recommendation No. 28 (2010) and the Committee of all forms of Racial Discrimination General Recommendation No. 25 (2000) highlight the right to participate on the basis of equality in public and political life as a central feature in the concept of inclusive democracy.

To this effect, information obtained from the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Historical Archive of Parliamentary Election Results website shows that when Zambia transitioned into a multiparty democracy in 1991, only seven of the 150 elected Members of Parliament were women. This means women constituted only 4.7 percent of elected Members of Parliament. In the next decade, that number steadily grew, and by 2006, the representation of women in Parliament had increased to 14%. In the period between 2006 and 2011, the IPU Historical Archive shows that the number of women elected as Members of Parliament plateaued. For example, in 2011, out of the 158 members of parliament (MPs) elected and nominated by the President in Zambia, only 17 were women, translating to a 10.7% representation. In the Cabinet, constituted after this election, there were only two female ministers out of 28, and only four female deputy ministers out of 18.

The marginalisation of women in political leadership was further highlighted by the Zambia National Women's Lobby (ZNWL) in a 2016 report entitled: A Gender Analysis Report of the 2016 General Elections: Monitoring Elections from a Gender Perspective. Following the August 2016 General Elections, the ZNWL reported that only 135 out of the 1,500 people elected as local government councilors were female. This means women accounted for 9 percent of all elected councilors. The trend was similar in the election of mayors and council chairpersons, where the ZNWL (2016) reported that of the 38 women who contested, only 9 out of the 104 elected mayors or council chairpersons were female, which translates to 8.65 percent. The marginalization has also been evident in the way political parties select their presidential election candidates. An analysis of presidential candidates since Independence in 1964 by Gewald, J.B et al in a book titled One Zambia, Many Histories (2008) shows that Zambia has had only two women nominated to stand for election as president. These are: Gwendoline Konie who contested once (in 2002), and Edith Nawakwi who has contested on four occasions (in 2008, 2011, 2015 and 2016). According to Gewald, J.B et al (2008), a third female presidential aspirant, Inonge Mbikusita Lewanika failed to file her nomination in 2001 after failing to raise the required number of supporters to file her nomination. A list of candidates published on the Electoral Commission of Zambia website shows that in the 2016 general elections, only two out of the nine presidential running mates were women.

From the foregoing, it can be argued that in Zambia, women politicians do not effectively participate fully in political parties decision making structures and are faced with many barriers to entering these positions of power and decision making in their respective political parties. Several studies have revealed that in all the political parties and at several levels of decision making at political parties' structures levels, women are under-represented despite them comprising more than 50% of the national and voting population in Zambia.³ It has been further argued that women's wings or leagues within political parties in Zambia are strategically established to help influence engender political party policies and manifestos within their political parties though they lack capacities to influence hence the suggestions to enhance political parties' women's leagues capacities through capacity building activities to enable them critically devise measures that could bring about fundamental changes and impact in their own political parties in as far as gender mainstreaming is concerned.⁴

Equal participation in leadership for women is one of the key ways of protecting women's human rights and advancing substantive gender equality – ensuring that women's experiences are fully integrated in the socio-political sphere, which directly impacts the socio-economic

³ Machila, M, (2011); The Analysis of Political Parties' Policy Documents from a Gender Perspective: Case Study Report for Zambia. International IDEA, Stockholm, Sweden

⁴ Machila, M, (2011); The Analysis of Political Parties' Policy Documents from a Gender Perspective: Case Study Report for Zambia. International IDEA, Stockholm, Sweden

sphere. The right to participate in leadership is important in empowering individuals and groups in order to end marginalisation and discrimination. In Zambia, therefore, from the time the country returned to multipartyism in the early 1990s, all the political parties have had less than 30%, let alone the 50% women representation target in decision making in their structures set by the 2008 SADC Declaration on Gender and Development.⁵ Therefore, Zambia's general faring with regards to women's participation in decision making in political party and national structures has not been impressive. The statistics in the the National Assembly of Zambia further show that there has since been a marginal increase in the number of female MPs. Of the 169 members of the National Assembly inclusive of the Vice-President, the Speakers and the deputy Speaker in the House as of January 2018, only 32 were female, accounting for 18.7 percent, whereas the 138 male MPs accounted for 81.3 percent. In the Cabinet, out of the 32 members (including the President and Vice President), only 11 were female, accounting for 33.3 percent, while the 22 males accounted for 66.7 percent.

This marginalisation of women in meaningful and effective participation in local political parties' politics challenges Zambia's attainment of inclusive democratic process which is critical to development and poverty reduction. It is critical that effective strategies are employed to address this continued marginalisation of women in the political decision making process for the betterment of the country. Effective strategies can only be arrived at if the causes of this marginalisation are identified. Therefore, it is the aim of investigating the existing structures and systems within political parties that marginalise women and limit women's opportunities for leadership in political parties.

1.3 Assessment of political party structures and systems that marginalise women

In an analysis done by International IDEA (2013) aimed at determining the extent to which policy documents of political parties in 33 countries, Zambia inclusive, in Africa included commitments to promoting gender equality, equal participation and representation of men and women in political leadership, elective positions of power and decision marking, revealed that, though most of these political parties have produced written documents on the rules and procedures for election to leadership and decision making within political parties, gender equality was not adequately integrated in these rules and regulations. The study further revealed that all countries in the analysis, save for South Sudan and Sudan, had acceded to or ratified the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) of 1979 by 2013. Therefore, in its efforts to contribute to the identification of effective strategies, Panos Institute Southern Africa (PSAf) commissioned an assessment

⁵ Machila, M, (2011); The Analysis of Political Parties' Policy Documents from a Gender Perspective: Case Study Report for Zambia. International IDEA, Stockholm, Sweden

of the systems and structures within political parties in Zambia that marginalise women's participation in politics in general, and political party leadership in particular.

1.3.1 Objective of the assessment

The assessment was undertaken with the broad aim of investigating the existing structures and systems within political parties that marginalise women and limit women's opportunities for leadership in political parties.

Specifically, the assessment aimed at:

- i. Identifying the underlying causes of the marginalization of women in political parties;
- ii. Explaining how political party systems and structures hinder women from participating in political leadership; and
- iii. Making recommendations for increasing women's opportunities for political leadership.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Study Design

The study was qualitative and primarily utilised archival and desk research and semi-structured interviews to collect data. The research sought to answer questions on whether there was marginalisation in respondents' political parties, and where marginalisation existed, identify the causes of the marginalisation and make recommendations on how to deal with them.

2.2 Sampling

The site of the study was Lusaka District⁶. Lusaka was chosen because it represents the national character of the selected parties. Some respondents representing areas outside Lusaka such as Members of Parliament and councillors were however telephonically interviewed. Despite Zambia having more than 55 registered political parties, and given that the number is constantly changing, the assessment sample comprised of political parties which have had representation in Parliament in the last 10 years. The United National Independence Party (UNIP) -- although it has not had representation in Parliament in the last two electoral cycles -- was included in the sample to ensure a historical perspective.

On that basis, the political parties sampled for this study are as listed below:

1. Forum for Democracy and Development (FDD)
2. Movement for Multi for Multiparty Democracy (MMD)
3. Patriotic Front (PF)
4. United National Independence Party (UNIP)
5. United Party for National Development (UPND)

⁶ Some respondents, especially councillors and MPs were identified from districts outside Lusaka. This was necessitated by political party inability to make Lusaka officials available for interviews.

⁷ Note that MMD did not participate in the 2016 elections as an independent entity due to internal wrangles and therefore still have the 2011 manifesto.

2.3. Data Collection and Analysis

The study used the following tools for data collection:

- i. **Review of documents:** The following political party legal and policy documents were reviewed:

Party	Documents reviewed	
FDD	Party election manifesto	2005-2016
	Party Constitution	2001-to date
MMD	Party election manifesto	2011-2016
	Party Constitution	1991-todate
PF	Party Constitution	2001-to date
	Party manifesto	2016-2021
UNIP	Party Constitution	1991 to date
	Party manifesto	2016 to date
UPND	Party Constitution	1998-to date
	Party Manifesto	2016-2021

Table 1: List of documents reviewed per political party

- ii. **Semi-structured interviews:** The assessment interviewed selected female and male political leaders within all party structures of the selected parties (appendix 1 and appendix 2, respectively). The sample for the semi-structured interviews was divided

into six categories of respondents sub-divided equally between males and females, as much as was possible given below:

Profile of Respondents	Political Party	No. of Respondents		Total Per Partry	Total per profile
		Female	Male		
National level political party leaders	UNIP	0	0	0	8
	PF	2	1	3	
	UPND	3	1	4	
	MMD	0	0	0	
	FDD	0	1	1	
Provincial level political party leaders	UNIP	0	0	0	2
	PF	1	0	1	
	UPND	0	0	0	
	MMD	0	0	0	
	FDD	1	0	1	
District level political party leaders	UNIP	0	0	0	2
	PF	2	0	2	
	UPND	0	0	0	
	MMD	0	0	0	
	FDD	0	0	0	
Former political party leaders ⁸	UNIP	1	0	1	6
	PF	0	2	2	
	UPND	0	0	0	
	MMD	0	3	3	
	FDD	0	0	0	
Members of Parliament	UNIP	0	0	0	10
	PF	4	3	7	
	UPND	2	1	3	
	MMD	0	0	0	
	FDD	0	0	0	
Councillors	UNIP	0	0	0	10
	PF	2	5	7	
	UPND	3	0	3	
	MMD	0	0	0	
	FDD	0	0	0	

⁸ Two of the respondents were former leaders of at least two political parties.

- iii. **Anecdotal testimonies** of selected former political leaders. Table above shows the number of party and elected officials interviewed diseggregated by gender.

2.4. Limitations

The study faced some limitations, as follows:

1. **Weak institutional memory in political parties:** The sampled political parties had difficulties in providing documentation and other information requested for the study. In some cases, the party secretariats had neither soft nor hard copies of their constitutions nor record of historical and current office bearers.
2. **Lack of clear structures in political parties:** Although on paper all the sampled political parties have well defined positions in their structures, most of the positions provided for were unoccupied. This presented a challenge in finding the most relevant respondents.

3.0 Marginalisation of Women In Political Parties

For the purpose of this study, “marginalisation” was taken to mean the sidelining of women in politics, resulting in the low representation of women in political parties. Marginalisation was also taken to mean the lack of parity between men and women in their exercise of authority within political parties.

To assess the marginalisation of women as defined above, the study examined the following:

- i. Gender balance in party structures and elective office of the selected political parties at various levels - Councillor, Council Chairperson/Mayor, Member of Parliament, President, Party Secretary General and membership to the highest policy making body.
- ii. Comparative analysis of authority commanded by female political leaders compared to their male counterparts.
- iii. Extent to which political party constitutions and policy documentation provide for gender balance in the party.
- iv. Extent to which parties implement and mainstream gender parity guidance from the national Constitution, Gender Act and international protocols that Zambia has domesticated or signed up to.

3.1 Underlying causes of the marginalization of women in political parties

The study set out to assess internal party structures and systems that marginalise women. The interaction with all respondents showed that the internal dynamics were largely driven by external forces. Culture featured prominently as a fundamental force in marginalising women from leadership. While political parties control their own systems and structures, they are influenced by culture and tradition which are external to the political parties.

3.1.1. Cultural Influence

All respondents, male and female, at national and local level, current and retired, indicated that the patriarchal culture and tradition that obtains in Zambia is the most important deterrent to female political leadership. It is critical to note that women almost always consider several cultural factors before they seek political leadership. Culture is also utilised by male power-holders to prevent women from ascending to various political offices. In this study, it was

found that women leadership in political parties is prevented by the following cultural factors:

1. Communities' inherent belief that leadership is a male domain, thereby informing a reluctance to vote for women or to recognise their leadership abilities.
2. A patriarchal mindset so that local party structures that have historically been male dominated has developed resentment for women leaders. This has resulted in the low or non-adoption of women as candidates to represent political parties in local and national elections.
3. The communities' belief that women politicians are required to offer sexual favours to male politicians causes cultural power-holders like husbands and guardians to prevent women from entering politics.
4. The tendency among women to defer to male influencers (husbands and guardians) when considering entering politics or seeking high office.
5. Dominant cultural practices that demand that women should prioritise marriage over personal progression, resulting in most female politicians finding themselves in a conflict between progressing in their political career or prioritising family duties..

While cognisant of the fact that culture, as a hurdle to female progress, is not in any way a novel finding, it is important to note that the above issues were identified by all respondents as most critically preventing women from political leadership. The study found that women who have excelled in political career have had to defy cultural norms with the respondents holding high office describing themselves as “rebels.” Explaining this, one respondent said that from childhood, she had never agreed to be boxed into genderised roles. As a result, when she joined politics she was not going to “settle for the Women’s League.” By this statement, the former leader agreed with the assertion made by current female leader respondents that the Women’s League is a handicap rather than a facilitator of female progress in political leadership. In further unpacking the distinctiveness of women who can make it to top leadership in Zambia, the former leader respondents suggested that women who achieved senior leadership roles in political parties were generally more self-assured than the average Zambian woman and, therefore, able to push open the doors that had been closed against them. The respondents suggested that the educational qualifications and passion that were enough for a man to rise through the political party ranks were not enough for a woman leader. She had to bring what the man brought to the table and then have a lot more determination.

3.1.2 The Glass Ceiling

The study found that one of the biggest hurdles women face is the existence of a “glass ceiling” characterised by some “unwritten rules” or unacknowledged barriers that prevent women from taking up certain positions within political parties. In some cases, the glass ceiling

is so thick that some female politicians have been forced to apologise just for harbouring leadership ambitions.

A testimony of one female respondent in this study is an example of a female who wanted to stand for election as a councilor but was sidelined in preference to a male candidate. The woman explained that she was forced to kneel before the male councilor she had wanted to contest against, and to seek his forgiveness.

In some cases, it was suggested that the women leaders who have risen to top national leadership in political parties had been allowed by men or sacrificed their femininity so that they became manlike.

A unique articulation of the glass ceiling came from female respondents who said they felt their gender prevented them from reaching their full intellectual potential in politics. One such respondent said because she was a woman, she was not expected to be too opinionated or to engage in policy matters. As policy was her interest, she felt frustrated and intellectually suppressed. In a profoundly telling statement of the perceived existence of the glass ceiling, the respondent said: *“If I was a man, I could decide exactly how far I want to go in leadership and would not be in the position I am now. I would be higher because I have the skills, interest and motivation to be a leader.”*

3.1.3. Sexual harassment

The study identified sexual harassment as a major constraint women leaders face in their quest for leadership. This sexual harassment did not only prevent women from rising within their parties, but also discouraged others from participating in even the most basic political activities. The following were some of the ways in which the sexual harassment was done:

- i. **Sex for adoptions:** All the women leaders interviewed indicated that they were aware that most women had at some stage – usually more than once – been subjected to obscene and sexually suggestive remarks, actions or demands by their male colleagues as a precondition for their adoption as candidates for any position. Examples were also given of women who were not adopted simply because they refused to give in to the sexual demands. The statement made by one respondent was “as a woman it is usually not a question of whether you will be propositioned, but rather of how you will refuse the advances but still survive in politics”
- ii. **Sex for logistics:** Sexual harassment also came into play in party logistical support for campaigns, where male officials demanded sex from female leaders before handing over campaign material which are due to the women. Many respondents said that they had, in some elections, been forced to make do without party funded campaign materials

because they were not willing to meet the sexual conditions attached to them. The respondents said this sexual harassment generally disadvantages the female candidates in elections against their male counterparts.

- iii. **Unwanted sexual contact:** Sexual harassment, according to respondents, also comes in the form of unwanted sexual contact. It was reported that men feel that it is their right to touch women's bodies in an unwanted fashion, engage in uninvited sex talk and pass sexual remarks at them.
- iv. **Negative labeling of female politicians:** A view that came through was that even when a female politician had not submitted to the demands for sexual relationships with male power holders, society perceived her as having done so and therefore labeled her as promiscuous. It was reported that the pervasiveness of sexual harassment resulted in women being prevented from entering politics or suffering the penalties of the adage – "perception in its consequences might as well be reality." They explained this as women in politics having to accept that society believed that they had slept with multiple powerful men to guarantee any advancement they made.

Overall on sexual harassment, the study found that the pervasive sexual harassment environment in political parties prevents many capable women from entering politics and therefore significantly reduces the numbers of women available for political leadership.

3.1.4. The tacit power of men

A unique view that was expressed by respondents was that female rise to power in Zambia was tacitly determined by the significant men in their lives. It was suggested that the women who made it to high political office had remained single, or were divorced. Thus women who rose in politics were seen as having too much time on their lives as they had no men to take care of. Married women who held high office for their part were said to have uncharacteristically progressive and supportive husbands and partners. A female respondent who had held high office described how her supportive husband had had to deal with taunts from family and friends describing him as weak and allowing his wife to be sexually available to powerful politicians. At the more pedantic level, it was suggested that married women in office faced on-going tension in homes where husbands or in-laws suggested that they were neglecting their marital duties when fulfilling inescapable political work like attending late meetings or functions. Of this, more than one male politician suggested that while them as men could be away from home for days on end on the campaign trail, this would be unacceptable for their wives. Even if a husband "allowed" it, the wider family would frown on the situation. Overall, the suggestion on this count was that men had a say in whether or not a woman rose in politics, in a way that women did not over the political career of men.

Given the foregoing, the marginalisation of women in political parties structures exists and is very high. Consultations with the respondents further revealed that even though during the 2016 elections, there were more female councilors adopted, it was not an indication of parties progressing towards gender parity in the identification of electoral candidates. The respondents explained the increased numbers of female candidates in the elections as only because of the grade 12 certificate requirement⁹ included in the 2016 amendment of the Republican Constitution for all elected positions. They further said that parties panicked after their favoured (male) candidates were knocked out by the Grade 12 clause. The respondents were of the view that female candidates were readily adopted because there was no time to identify favourable male candidates over the available qualified female candidates.

Political Parties' Election Rules and Procedures vs. Gender Consideration

It seems like all the political parties follow the “First Past the Post” electoral system for party elections especially for lower positions other than that of a party president. For instance, at its party convention in 2011 and 2014, all senior management positions in the PF and presidential candidates in 2011 and 2014 respectively were unopposed and political party cadres barred anyone wishing to stand in those “reserved” positions, a situation which was criticized by the media and civil society organizations. Political parties national conventions are exemplified by high tensions, hostility and media biases as well as personalised attacks towards the “unwanted” contenders for selected positions such as those of the UNPD in 2006, FDD in 2006, MMD in 2016 and 2011 and PF in 2011 and 2014.¹⁰ None of the political parties analyzed had specified gender as criteria for identification, nomination or selection for election into leadership positions in political party structures. Very few women overall have been adopted by political parties save for the position of Womens' Chairperson which has been reserved only for women and few exceptions in some political parties constitution such as FDD. As reflected in the political parties documents' analysis such as constitutions, policies and manifestos, clearly some of these documents loosely mainstream gender equality. It can thus be concluded that all the political parties covered under this study have not demonstrated a political will to mainstream gender equality in their political decision making structures.

However and as observed by Machila (2011:34), “notwithstanding the negative situation with the political party policies and manifestos, the attempt to have gender and women issues reflected in piecemeal manner is somewhat a plus in that it will provide as an entry point to gender mainstreaming” in political parties' structures. In the same analysis, it has argued

⁹ The 2016 amendment to the Republican Constitution set Grade 12 school certificate as a requirement for elective office.

¹⁰ Machila, M, (2011); *The Analysis of Political Parties' Policy Documents from a Gender Perspective: Case Study Report for Zambia*. International IDEA, Stockholm, Sweden

that Women’s leagues in political parties should be encouraged to exist but be capacitated to create gender spaces for women to organise themselves autonomously within political parties legal and administrative frameworks. “Once empowered, the women will identify critical issues of concern to them and speak for themselves and claim their space. The critical mass that will be created will network, build alliances with other actors and advocate for change within the party structures. In that way, they will be able to build female leadership capacities to influence policy and decision-making within the political parties.”

The tables below vindicates the limitation in the political parties’ elections rules and regulations in as far as gender consideration is concerned as reflected in more men adopted than women in major elections. The two tables below show the analyses of women’s performance in 2011 and 2016 General Elections and women performance versus men in 2016 General Elections. In both situations, though there was a marginal increase in the number of women adopted and elected to serve as councilors and members of the National Assembly from 2011 to 2016, women representation in these structures of national governance is still low.

Analysis Of Women’s Performance In 2011 And 2016 General Elections¹²

Position Contested	Number of Women Contestants	Number of Women Winners	% of Women Winners	Number of Women Winners In 2011	% Increase in 2016 vs. 2011
<i>Councilor</i>	427	125	29	85	47
<i>Mayor/Council Chairperson</i>	39	9	24	-	-
<i>Member of Parliament</i>	106	26	25	17	53
<i>President</i>	1	0	0	0	0

11 Machila, M, (2011); The Analysis of Political Parties’ Policy Documents from a Gender Perspective: Case Study Report for Zambia. International IDEA, Stockholm, Sweden

12 Adapted from the ZNWL 2016 General Elections Report

13 The position of elective mayor or chairperson had not yet introduced in the Constitution in 2011

Women vs. Men Performance in 2016 General Elections¹⁴

Elective Position	Total Positions Contestable	Total Contestants	Women Contestants	Men Contestants	Women Elected	Men Elected
<i>Presidential</i>	1	9	1	8	0	1
<i>Member of Parliament</i>	156	651	106	545	26	130
<i>Mayor/Council Chairperson</i>	103	332	39	293	9	94
<i>Councilor</i>	1,624	4,568	427	4,141	125	1,499

3.1.5 Internal Party Violence

Respondents identified internal party violence as a major deterrent to women pursuing leadership roles. The violence was seen as relatively new but increasingly institutionalised so that party leaders could expect verbal or even physical abuse from cadres. While men may take this in stride and sometimes fight back, women leaders are for the large part unable to function fully in the violent environment. The violence also presents itself in the fact that women leaders' private lives are routinely discussed in public, usually as a means of shaming them. A woman wanting to rise to leadership can expect cadres in parties to invade her private life if they happen not to support her quest for higher position. One respondent referred to this as routine gender bullying. She said women politicians had to endure high levels of bullying both internally in the party structures and from the general public. The higher a woman went, the more vicious the bullying as she was seen as rising above her station.

3.2 Political party systems and structures that hinder women from participating in political leadership

For the purposes of this study, political party structures were taken to mean the internal arrangements through which political parties organise their operations. Examples of political structures include key positions, committees or leagues/wings formed to handle aspects of a political party's organisation. These include the National Executive Committees (NECs) or National Management Committee (NMCs), Fundraising committee, adoption committee, legal committee, provincial executive committees, national congress or convention, district committees, branch committees, cells, as well as sub-committees representing specific interests such as the women's league and the youth league.

Further, the study defined political party systems as the principles, practices, laws, rules, guidelines, values and procedures, written and unwritten, that guide the interaction between

the different structures or parts that make a political party. At the time of writing this report, a political party bill was being developed, with provisions that may affect the structures of political parties as discussed in this report. Focusing on the period delimited for this study (2006 to 2016), the study assessed the political party systems and structures that hinder women from participating in political leadership by examining the following:

- i. Gender balance in party structures and elective office, as well as the practices and guidelines that determine the selection of office holders at various levels such as Councillor, Council Chairperson/Mayor, Member of Parliament, President, Party Secretary-General and the Congress, which for most parties is the highest policy making body.
- ii. Distribution of authority between female political leaders and their male counterparts within the different structures of a political party, and the determinants of such distribution of authority.
- iii. Extent to which political party constitutions, policy documentation and guidelines provide for gender balance in the party.

3.2.1 Gender balance in the selection of office holders in party structures

The study examined the gender balance in the structures, practices and guidelines that determine the selection of office holders in political parties. In all the political parties, the following structures were studied:

- i. National Congress/Convention/Conference
- ii. National Executive Committees
- iii. Provincial Executive Committees
- iv. District level committees
- v. The Women's League

3.2.1.1 National Congress/Convention

In all the political parties studied, the National Congress, Convention or Conference is the highest policy and decision-making structure, responsible for determining the policy direction of the party and approving constitutional amendments. This structure comprises representatives from all provincial and district committees of the party. The representation to the convention is predetermined by the party's Constitution.

The convention is generally held once every 5 years (in line with the term of political office) but extra-ordinary conventions can be called in between national elections to deal with party policy and/or constitutional emergencies. The convention also elects candidates for each

party to submit to the national elections. The study examined the gender make-up of the national conventions of each party in the period 2006 to 2016. The following was established:

Party	Status Of Congress/Convention	Political Party		Remarks
		Male	Female	
FDD	Irregular. Convention last held in 2006	731	336	1,067 Convention delegates
MMD	Regular as provided for in the constitution. Two conventions in 2012 and 2016.	1,136	364	1,162 Convention delegates
PF	Two conventions held in 2011 and 2014.	-	-	1,116 (2014) ¹⁶ and 3,500 (2011) ¹⁷ Congress delegates
UNIP	Irregular. No convention since 2001	550	Approx 450	1,000 delegates
UPND	Irregular. No convention since 2006	652	125	Extra Ordinary Convention attendees not supplied; 777 National Convention delegates(2006) ¹⁸

3.2.1.2 National Executive Committees

The National Executive Committee (NEC) is the highest committee of elected leaders in a political party, chaired by the party president. In all the parties assessed, this committee is elected by the National Convention discussed above. The committee manages all operations of the political party. In between conventions, the NEC, and sometimes the party president,

¹⁵ The PF are reluctant to or have not supplied the required information on their last held conventions as far as women participation at these events was concerned.

¹⁶ The delegates for 2014 Extra-ordinary Congress held in Kabwe at Mulungushi Rock of Authority in December, 2014 (Source: Lusaka Times, December 2, 2014, Miles Sampa Voted PF President at Second General Conference” <http://www.lusakavoices.com/2014/12/02/miles-sampa-voted-pf-president-at-second-general-conference-stopped-by-court-injunction/>)

¹⁷ Lusaka Times, July 4, 2011, “Sata goes through unopposed as PF leader, predicts polls date” <https://www.lusakatimes.com/2011/07/04/sata-unopposed-pf-leader-predicts-polls-date/>

¹⁸ Zambian Watchdog, July 16, 2013 “HH tells Sata how he was elected UPND leader, now waits for answers on illegality of Chief Justice”, <https://www.zambianwatchdog.com/hh-tells-sata-how-he-was-elected-upnd-leaders-now-waits-for-answers-on-illegality-of-chief-justice/>

can appoint office holders on behalf of the national convention. The study examined the gender composition of the NECs of the selected parties for each year from 2006 to 2016. The gender make-up of the NECs for each of the parties was as follows:

POLITICAL Party	Political Party		
	Male	Female	Female
FDD	47	13	60
MMD	51	15	66
PF	22	approx. 8	30
UNIP	18	04	22
UPND	35	45	80

Although all national leadership structures in the parties currently have or have had female members, women are grossly marginalized, as shown in the table above.

3.2.1.3. Provincial Executive Committees

Provincial executive committees (PECs) are constituted by provincial assemblies. The provincial assembly is the highest decision-making body at the provincial level, with representation from all districts in a particular province. The PEC is made up of elected officials, and is headed by the provincial chairperson. Most of the parties under study have had no elections in the past 10 years to elect new office bearers. The study examined the gender parity in the membership of the 10 PECs for each of the parties. The figures for the PECs were summed up per party, as shown below:

POLITICAL Party	Gender Parity in PEC (2011-2016) ¹⁹		
	Male	Female	Female
FDD	38	31	69
MMD	100	80	180
PF	40	10	50
UNIP	120	30	150
UPND	231	109	340

¹⁹ Note that all parties have at least women chairpersons in each province. Most of the parties have all PECs chairpersons being men; only FDD has two out of 10 provincial chairpersons being women. For instance, UPND in Southern Province has, in its PEC, the only woman who is also the women provincial chairperson in the province. So at least each party has a minimum of 10 women nationally in their PECs.

3.2.1.4 The Women's League

The Women's League is a structure that exists in all political parties in Zambia. All female members of each party have automatic membership to the women's league. The understood objective of the Women's League is to provide a space for women to participate in politics and empower them for leadership. The Women's League is, therefore, understood to be affirmative in character. However, the respondents were of the opinion that the Women's League was working contrary to its ostensible purpose which is to facilitate women's participation in political party decision making. The following are some of the factors highlighted as negative aspects of the women's league:

- i. **Lack of policy making authority:** Women's Leagues across all political parties do not have policy making power. Even in cases where the issues specifically concern women, they defer to the main structures of the party. This lack of policy making authority presented the Women's League as a substructure which serves to shunt women away from the main policy making structure. Because the women's leagues in all the political parties are not policy making bodies, they have become what respondents variously described as "dancing or cooking clubs". All policy, including gender policy, is discussed and decided on in the main body sometimes in the absence of women.
- ii. **Reinforces cultural gender stereotypes:** The Women's League is also detrimental to women's progress in political parties because it reinforces negative cultural gender stereotypes. As one respondent put it, the relationship of the women's wing to the main policy making body is very reflective of a patriarchal home in which the men (representing the father) make all the decisions consulting the women (the mother) only if they so please. The Women's League for its part implements those decisions while members of the Youth League, representing the children, just do as they are told.
- iii. **Generally not progressive:** As shown in the figure below, most male and female respondents viewed the women's league as a retrogressive structure within political parties. The League was described as encouraging tokenism. One respondent aptly described the Women's League as the "graveyard of female capacity and ambition."

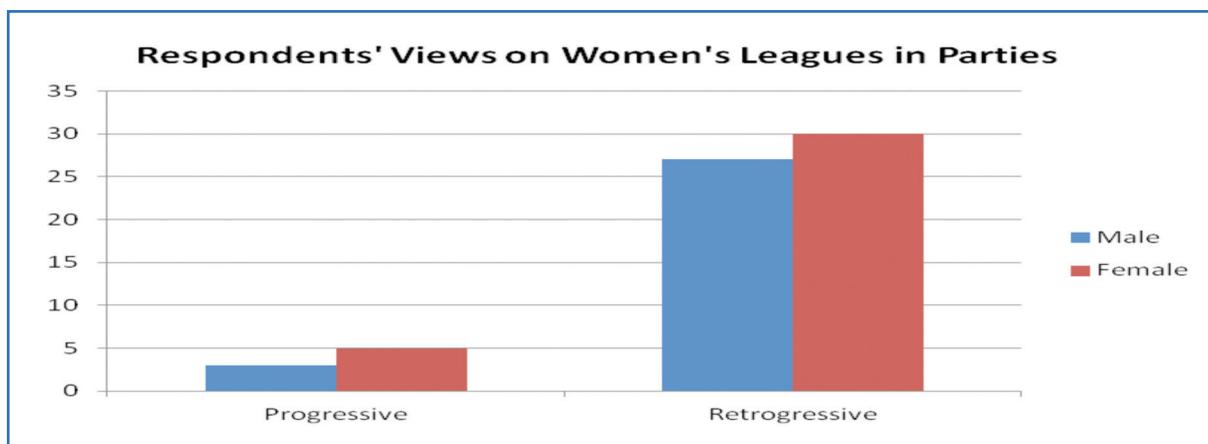


Figure 1: Respondents' views on the Women's League value

3.2.2. Systems and practices that determine gender parity in party structures

As can be seen above, women are grossly marginalised in political party structures. There are no specific systems and practices in the party structures themselves that are designed to marginalise women. However, women's representation in the leadership of political party structures is marginal because of the underlying causes discussed earlier. The structures and systems are gender neutral, although they are not gender sensitive.

3.2.3 Extent to which political party constitutions, policy documentation and guidelines provide for gender balance

The study examined political party constitutions, election manifestos and other party documentation that guide the daily operations of political parties in Zambia. The analysis of this documentation is presented below:

3.2.3.1 Party constitutions and manifestos

The study assessed the following documents per party:

Party	Documents reviewed
FDD	Party election manifesto - 2005-2016 Party Constitution - 2001-to date
MMD	Party election manifesto - 2011-2016 ²⁰ Party Constitution - 1991-todate

²⁰ Note that MMD did not participate in the 2016 elections as an independent entity due to internal wrangles.

Party	Documents reviewed
PF	Party Constitution - 2001-to date Party manifesto - 2016-2021
UNIP	Party Constitution - 1991 to date Party manifesto - 2016-2021
UPND	Party Constitution - 1998-to date Party Manifesto - 2016-2021

3.2.3.2. Assessment of party constitutions provision for gender equality

Party	Issues Identified	Qualification	Discussion
FDD	Engendering of the Constitutional and manifesto language	Positive	The FDD Constitution uses gender sensitive language such as “he” or “she” or “him” or “her” in the text of the constitution. It also opposes divisions based sex as a means to strive for preservation of party unity (Article.2)
	Respecting all international agreements	Positive	The Constitution assures to co-operate, whether in or not in government, with the Organisation of African Unity, other states and people of Africa and other countries and states, to respect all legitimate international agreements Zambia has entered into (Article.2)
MMD	Gender biased language	Negative	The language in the MMD Constitution is gender biased e.g. “Upon admission to membership, <i>“he” shall pay an admission fee</i> (Article 4(4)... <i>upon termination of membership, a person shall relinquish all party positions and responsibility held by virtue of “his” membership...</i> ” (Article 5)
	Pledges to fight sexism & all manner of discrimination	Positive	MMD Constitution in Art. 2 aims at eliminating “ <i>all manner and forms of unjust discrimination and divisive tendencies of sexism...</i> ”
PF	Promotion of equal status	Positive	The PF constitution assigns all members equal status in the preamble and the introductory chapters.
	Gender biased language	Negative	The language in the PF Constitution is gender biased, and overtly assumes the president to be male by routinely referring to the president as “ he ” or “ him ”. For example, Article 52 titled ‘the election of the president of the party’, states “ <i>A candidate shall indicate to the secretary general of the party HIS intention to stand for the office of the president...</i> ”. No effort is made to make the references to persons and officers in the Constitution gender neutral.
	Failure to recognise sexism or gender discrimination as a vice	Negative	The constitution does not list gender inequality or sexism as something to fight against. Article 15 titled “Obligations of a member” under sub section G, which prescribes the ills members should fight against, reads: <i>“It is the obligation of the member of the party to fight against all manifestations of over indulgence tendencies, bourgeois tendencies, tribalism, regionalism, corruption, nepotism, racial discrimination and the exploitation of MAN by MAN”</i>

Party	Issues Identified	Qualification	Discussion
PF	Non-prescription of affirmative action	Negative	The PF Constitution does not create or prescribe any affirmative action in the form of quota systems to ensure equal participation by women and men in PF party politics.
UNIP	Silence on gender equality	Negative	The UNIP Constitution is gender blind, as it does not mention gender equality. The constitution also does not provide for affirmative action in the form of quotas. The only reference to women participation in the party politics is the UNIP women's league which is established as a wing of the party.
UPND	Clear position on gender equity	Positive	The UPND Constitution envisages gender equity allowing for both genders to stand for all positions.
	Provision for affirmative action	Positive	The Constitution provides for affirmative action and a quota of 30% for women leadership within the party. The Constitution also provides, in Article 53, for one of the 4 party Vice Presidents to oversee gender.
	Lack of implementation of constitutional provisions promoting gender equality	Negative	The constitutional provision for one of the vice presidents to be a woman has never been operationalised. At the time of writing the report, the UPND had one vice president, a male. Previously during the period under review, the party had two – instead of four - vice presidents, both male. The party has also not implemented the provision for affirmative action, as evidenced by the fact that the NMC has never reached the 30% minimum representation for women.

The PF and UPND specifically provide for gender equality in their constitutions, while UNIP is silent on gender equality. The PF and UNIP constitutions did not provide for affirmative action to promote gender equality. While the UPND, MMD and FDD had clear provisions for promoting gender equality in structures like the NMC, this at the time of reporting was not being implemented.

3.2.3.3 Assessment of Party Manifestos Provision for Gender Equality

Party	Issues Identified	Qualification	Discussion
FDD	Identification of gender discrimination as a vice	Positive	The manifesto is clear on the removal of all forms of discrimination including gender.
	Acknowledgement of gender equality	Positive	The FDD manifesto identifies that gender refers to both men and women. The manifesto promises to unlock the potential that lies in the women folk and allow them to contribute to the nation's social, political and economic development.
	Commitment to affirmative action	Positive	The FDD manifesto makes a commitment that as a party in government, it would ensure that at a minimum, women occupy 30% of all decision-making positions.

Party	Issues Identified	Qualification	Discussion
MMD	Commitment to gender equality	Positive	The MMD manifesto includes a section on gender and development in which it commits to the principle of equality and equal opportunity for all regardless of gender. The party promises greater participation of women at the highest level.
	Commitment to affirmative action	Positive	The MMD manifesto highlights the party's desire to implement the SADC and African Union treaties on gender participation by increasing the percentage of women in national affairs to 50% as per SADC and African Union respectively. The manifesto also promises to review national legislation that disadvantages women.
PF ²¹	Re-affirms its commitment to gender equality	positive	The PF 2016-2021 manifesto dedicates a section on Women in socio-economic development and gender that explains what the party has done in the past five years such as appointment of women in key decision making positions such as in the Judiciary and key government institutions such Drug Enforcement Commission, et al and reaffirms the party's commitment to gender equality.
	Commitment to domesticate international protocols related to women and gender in development	Positive	The manifesto further highlights attempts by the party to respond to regional and continental gender related issues through the revision of the Gender Policy, the passing of the SADC protocol of 50/50 by Cabinet and the Gender Equity and Equality Bill by Parliament which has since got Presidential assent, et al. The Party, in addition, affirms its desire to continue to domesticate international protocols relating to women and gender in development so as to enhance representation of women in decision making. It elucidates its efforts to introduce appropriate legislation to achieve the Child Code Bill, Marriage Bill, Sexual Abuse Bill, and Divorce Bill.
	Eradicate all forms of gender discrimination	Positive	The party re-affirms its desire to eradicate all forms of discrimination against girls and women including the creation of equal employment opportunities for men and women as demonstrated in its support to the country's co-sponsoring with Canada a United Nations Resolution on ending child marriages; and co-sponsored with Switzerland a United Nations Resolution on stopping the spread of HIV and AIDS by 2030 and the party re-affirms that in the period 2016-2021, it will continue to adopt the greatest number of women as parliamentary candidates as well as at Councillor level to help achieve the 50/50 threshold.

²¹ Patriotic Front (PF) Manifesto (2016-2021) "Women in Socio-Economic Development And Gender", Chapter V Pp.38-39, Lusaka, Zambia.

Party	Issues Identified	Qualification	Discussion
UNIP	Clear pronouncements on gender equality	Positive	The vision of the UNIP Manifesto provides for gender justice: “a fair and just society where men and women have equal opportunity”. It also states that UNIP in government guarantees to fully uphold individual rights and equal rights to all: Women, children, men and people with disability. The manifesto also has a specific section on women and development which states that “UNIP will uphold its policy of positive discrimination for the empowerment of women both economically and socially”.
	Commitment to affirmative action	Positive	UNIP in its manifesto commits to strive for 30% participation of women in Parliament and all appointed positions at a minimum.
UPND	Commitment to reducing inequality	Positive	The UPND 2016 electoral manifesto is centred on a 10-point plan, which expresses commitment to reducing inequality. Points 2 <i>Reducing inequality</i> and 3 <i>Educate and Empower</i> speak directly to the party’s ethos on gender. Specifically, on <i>reducing inequality</i> , the manifesto says: <i>“the party will put in place measures to protect the vulnerable in our society which include women and youth, ensuring they can fully participate in our economy and contribute to their own betterment as well as our national development.”</i> On <i>educate and empower</i> , the manifesto states that <i>“Education is the key to making sure that women have the same opportunities as men. The party promises to ensure equal access to education at the same time tackling difficult issues such as child marriages and pregnancies”.</i>

While all the political party manifestos make some provisions for gender equality, the manifestos are an external communication document. Therefore, all the positive provisions on gender equality have no effect in the internal operations of the party.

4.0 Conclusion

This study had the objective of identifying the factors that marginalise women from leadership in political parties in Zambia. Significantly, and probably predictably, the study has found that gender dynamics within political parties are very much a reflection of the gender ethos of the wider society. The gender marginalisation of women in Zambian culture has more influence on the ability of women to rise to leadership in political parties than the parties' regulative framework or the gender parity commitments the country has made.

The main conclusions of this research are, therefore, that the factors preventing women from rising to leadership are not necessarily coded into constitutions and regulations. While political party constitutions fail to categorically articulate a drive towards gender inclusion and parity in leadership, they do not actively write off women either. For example, while the PF Constitution uses very gender specific language that envisages senior leaders to be male, it does not prevent women from standing for any position. The UPND Constitution has clear provisions that envisage progress towards parity. It is only the UNIP constitution, the oldest of the analysed constitutions, that is silent on female participation in leadership.

What comes out of that regulative situation, therefore, is that it is largely practices rather than regulations that are preventing women from progressing towards gender parity in political party leadership. Further, in failing to provide for affirmative action, political parties have submitted to Zambia's patriarchal traditions that determine that women must submit to men. To defeat that "woman as natural follower" notion, a woman must be prepared to be regarded as either a rebel or someone facilitating the male agenda in the party. We end the conclusion by quoting Moring (2006) who stated:

"Despite the progress made, the task is not complete. Nowhere in the world is there yet a society where women are the complete equals of men...Gender equality affects both men and women, and both are needed to achieve it and to break traditional gender moulds. This is our common quest, from which all - both women and men - will benefit."²²

²² Moring A (2006) *Politics of Gender: A century of Women's Suffrage in Finland*. Otava Publishers, Keuruu, Finland pp6-7.

4.1 Advocacy issues and recommendations

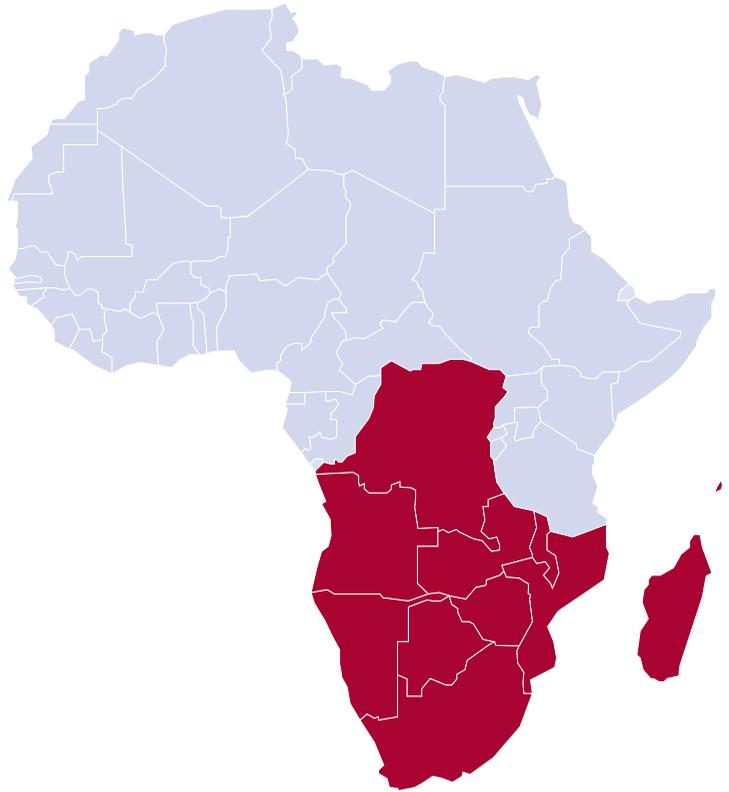
Advocacy Issue	Description	Recommendation
Lack of legislation to compel political parties to institute gender balance	While the Constitution, the Gender Act and international protocols which Zambia has ratified provide for gender equality, there is no specific legislation that compels political parties to do so. As a result, there is no gender parity in political parties.	There is need for subsidiary legislation to compel parties to institute the gender balance directed by the Republican Constitution, Gender Act of 2016 and the international protocols the country has ratified. This will ensure that affirmative action during adoption for elective office is enforced by law.
Lack of policy making authority by the women's league	The women's leagues in all the parties do not have policy making authority	The Women's Leagues across parties should either be abolished or given policy making authority.
Limited efforts to change the cultural mindsets that undermine female leadership	Most of the campaigns to increase women's participation in leadership do not adequately address cultural stereotypes.	Government and non-state actors seeking to promote female leadership must carry out robust campaigns aimed at changing cultural mindset.
High marginalisation of women in the lower level of political party structures	The practices that marginalise women are very contextually determined. Women in the rural areas and lower ranks remain grossly marginalised, while national structures where there are women such as the first female Republican Vice President, Party National Chairpersons and Cabinet ministers are more progressive.	In order to deal with marginalisation of women from political leadership, it is more important to look into practices and representation across the structures including in the lower ranks, than to just count women who have made it to the top. Failure to address marginalisation at the bottom ranks will facilitate window dressing at the top which is then erroneously celebrated as progress.
Institutionalised sexual abuse in political parties	There is very widespread sexual abuse in political parties which is also highly tolerated. There are no mechanisms for redress.	There is need for a strong and sustained evidence-based advocacy against this issue. Influential men and women must courageously call it out.

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4. Machila, M, (2011); The Analysis of Political Parties' Policy Documents from a Gender Perspective: *Case Study Report for Zambia*. International IDEA, Stockholm, Sweden
5. Some respondents, especially councillors and MPs were identified from districts outside Lusaka. This was necessitated by political party inability to make Lusaka officials available for interviews.
6. Note that MMD did not participate in the 2016 elections as an independent entity due to internal wrangles and therefore still have the 2011 manifesto.
7. Two of the respondents were former leaders of at least two political parties
8. The 2016 amendment to the Republican Constitution set grade 12 school certificate as a requirement for elective office.
9. Machila, M, (2011); The Analysis of Political Parties' Policy Documents from a Gender Perspective: *Case Study Report for Zambia*. International IDEA, Stockholm, Sweden
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12. The position of elective mayor or chairperson had not yet introduced in the Constitution in 2011
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14. The PF are reluctant to or have not supplied the required information on their last held conventions as far as women participation at these events was concerned.
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Communication for Empowerment



Vision: A Southern African community that drives its own development