

**GENDER PERSPECTIVES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MDG IN
DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: A CASE STUDY OF KENYA
2001 -2007 //**

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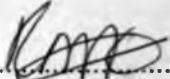
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DECLARATION

This Research project is my original and has not been submitted for a degree at any other university.

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This project has been submitted for examination with my approval as a university supervisor

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Dedication

To my husband : Samuel Sangura Simiyu and our Son Joshua Simiyu for your Love ,Support and Prayers .

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviation

AMWIK	Association Of Media Women In Kenya
BPFA	Beijing Platform For Action
CAF	Constituency Aids Fund
CBF	Constituency Bursary Fund
CDF	Constituency Development Fund
CEDAW	Convention On Elimination Of All Forms Of Discrimination Against Women
CRF	Constituency Road Fund
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
DAWN	Development Alternatives With Women For A New Era
ERS	Economic Recovery Strategy
FGM/C	Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting
GAD	Gender and Development
LATF	Local Authority Transfer Fund
MCH/FP	Maternal Child Health /Family Planning Services
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MTP	Medium Term Plan
NGDP	National Gender And Development Policy
NGO	Non Governmental Organisations
NPEP	National Poverty Eradication Plan
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
SAPS	Structural Adjustment Programs
SRA	Strategy For Revitalizing Agriculture
UGI	Units Of Gender Issues
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund For Women
WAD	Women And Development
WB	World Bank
WID	Women In Development

ABSTRACT

This project concerns itself with the analysis of gender perspectives in the implementation of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in developing countries. For the purposes of depth, the project focuses on Kenya as a case study.

The objectives of the study are four fold: to establish extent to which feminization of poverty has been sustained by gender insensitive practices in Kenya; to assess the extent to which Millennium Development Goal 3 principles have been integrated and mainstreamed in Kenya's national development policies and programs; to examine public awareness about Millennium Development Goal 3 and the extent of their involvement in the advancement of its principles and; to explain the obtaining gaps, challenges and disharmony in the implementation of Millennium Development Goal 3 in Kenya.

The study is guided by feminism theory, which aims not only to understand the nature of inequality but also seeks to promote women rights. The study exposes a number of initiatives by the Kenya government to enhance gender equality. And although some of the initiatives such as the establishment of gender desk in the Ministry of Culture and Social Services as well as the formation of National Gender and Development Policy are old, a more invigorated attempt to address gender inequality and to empower Kenyan women only begun after the UN Declaration of Millennium Goals in September 2000. Likewise, most of the internal gender empowerment initiatives are the result of external influence especially from international feminist movements and exotic modernist ethos.

Like the earlier initiatives, current efforts to implement MDG3 is riddled with many challenges including structural problems, poor coordination between implementing agencies, poor monitoring and evaluation, lack of resources, inadequate commitment on the part of the Kenya

Government, etc all of which limit the possibilities of the smooth realization of Goal 3 in Kenya by 2015. But some positive gains have been made since the 2000 Declaration, which can be used to launch a more vigorous campaign for gender equality and women empowerment.

The study confirms the hypotheses that the external origin of MDG 3 and general lack of commitment among state and non-state actors have affected the program' implementation process in Kenya The study ends by providing some recommendations for improving the situation of women in Kenya.

CHAPTER I

RESEARCH ISSUES IN GENDER EQUITY AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Introduction

This project is about Gender Perspectives in the Implementation of the Millennium Development Goal (MGD) 3 in the Developing Countries. The project singles out Kenya for the purposes of a case study during the period 2001 to 2007.

Indeed, the urgent need to address poverty around the world and the opportunity provided by the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's) coupled with the global partnership, marks the first time the international community has embraced a common set of basic development goals in promoting international and regional development policy.¹ For the first time in the history of the world, a diverse range of players across the globe have agreed on a common platform of priorities for addressing the many faces of extreme poverty, hunger, joblessness, gender inequalities, disease, and environmental decline among others.

The Millennium Declaration signed in September 2000 at the United Nations Millennium Summit, commits members countries to promote gender equality² and the empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to stimulate development that is truly sustainable. Gender equality and women empowerment is

¹ United Nations., *The Millennium Development Report*. New York: ,2005 United Nations.

² Government of Kenya. Ministry of Planning and National development. *The planning Bulletin, Special Issues on the MDG's*, January 2005 Vol2 No.1 pg 13

underlined as important in itself as the third millennium goal, and as a necessary condition for achieving the other goals.³

MDG 3 specifically addresses gender equality and women empowerment and is the subject of this proposal. Goal 3 focuses on women's and girls' historical disadvantage and identifies men and boys as strategic allies in transforming the factors causing disparity. The core of the concept of empowerment lays in the ability of a woman to mould and control her own destiny. This implies that in order to be fully empowered, women must not only have equal capabilities and equal access to resources and opportunities, but must also have the agency to use those rights to make choices and decisions provided through leadership opportunities and participation in political and social institutions.⁴

Gender is a social construct defining differential roles, rights, responsibilities and obligations of men and women.⁵ These social differences have been superimposed on innate biological differences between female and males to create a set of social expectations and to define behavior that are appropriate for women and men and that defines women's and men's social, economic and political power. These power relations have historically favored men and boys, giving them more access to security than women and girls that are important for the enjoyment of social, economic and political power and well being.⁶

Pervasive gender inequality is viewed as lowering the productivity of labor and efficiency of labor allocation in households and the economy, which further intensifies the unequal distribution of resources, and contributes to non monetary aspects of poverty such as lack of security, opportunity and empowerment, and lowers the quality of life for both men and

³ United Nations., *The Millennium Development Report*. New York: .2005 United Nations

⁴ Government of Kenya. *Millennium Development Goals Needs Assessment Report*, Ministry of Planning and National Development. 2006 P.2

⁵ Ibid

⁶ Which is reduced vulnerability to violence and conflict

women. While women and girls bear the largest and most direct costs of these inequalities, the costs cut broadly across society, ultimately hindering development and poverty reduction.

The MDGs process offer key opportunities for mainstreaming gender equality in the broader human development process.⁷ MDGs also provides opportunity to highlight the importance of other international efforts to empower and protect women such as the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) and the significance of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and empowerment of women .

Research Problem

In Kenya, wealth creation and eradication of poverty is one of the core issues that have taken centre stage in national development priorities. Indeed, the government's efforts to address poverty are clearly articulated in the Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth Creation and the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). In its efforts to promote development, the government recognizes the special role played by both men and women in the development process in general especially in poverty reduction.

In the period before the year 2000 when the international community adopted MDGs, only a dismal effort was made in Kenya to analyze the effects of gender inequalities on women in the development process. This is hardly surprising because developing policies in the developing countries were largely gender blind and gender neutral. And as Jahan⁸ affirms, gender blindness in development strategies are derived from gender insensitiveness of dominant development paradigms that were a common characteristic of many developing countries in the early decades after independence.

⁷ United Nations CEDAW Committee. [www.un.org/women watch/Daw/Cedaw](http://www.un.org/women/watch/Daw/Cedaw).

⁸ Selim Jahan. Working Paper No. 5, *Reorienting Development –Engendering employment strategies* IPC, UNDP. February 2005

But since 2002, the Kenya government has been determined in its efforts to streamline gender through the recognition that development initiatives impacts differently on women and men and in turn women and men impact differently on the development process. The main problem that Kenya faces today is therefore, how to create an enabling environment, and to pursue an unflinching commitment to concrete steps needed to eliminate gender inequality.⁹

Following the adoption of MDG in the year 2000 as a global strategy to enhance gender equity and empower women, the Kenya government has made significant efforts to improve the situation of women. But there still obtains some marked challenges which hinder the speedy realization of MDG 3. Studies reveal that the Kenya government has been unable to fully mainstream gender perspectives in the economic analysis and planning and address the structural causes of poverty especially among the womenfolk. Besides, the government is yet to identify adequate resources with which to address the social and economic needs of women.

Culturally, the reality of women's lives has been invisible to men.¹⁰ Indeed, the invisibility of women persists at all levels, from the family to the nation. The traditional gender roles have not changed significantly and Kenyan women are still among the poorest. In sum the Kenyan women and men live in different worlds despite the fact that they share the same space.

All these challenges cast aspersions on the ability of the Kenya government to fulfill MDG3 by 2015 whose objective is primarily to advance the course of gender equality and to empower women. It is against this backdrop that this project sets out to assess the gender perspectives in the Kenya government's implementation of the MDG3 between the year 2001

⁹ Government of Kenya, Gender Mainstreaming into the PRSP: *Advocacy Package for Gender Mainstreaming*. Discussion Paper –Prepared by Gender Department , December 2006

¹⁰ Nussbaum Martha and Jonathan, Gloves eds. *Women, Culture, and Development: Study of Human Capabilities*. Oxford University press, New York ,2000 pg 53

and 2007 as a basis of making empirical predications about its capacity to fulfill its international obligation by 2015.

Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study is to assess the gender perspectives in the implementation of Millennium Development Goals number 3 (MDG3) by the Kenya government and other non-state actors operating within the Kenyan state.

The specific objectives of the study are: -

- To establish extent to which feminization of poverty has been sustained by gender insensitive practices in Kenya.
- To assess the extent to which Millennium Development Goal 3 principles have been integrated and mainstreamed in Kenya's national development policies, and programs.
- To examine public awareness about Millennium Development Goal 3 and the extent of their involvement in the advancement of its principles.
- To explain the obtaining gaps, challenges and disharmony in the implementation of Millennium Development Goal 3 in Kenya.

Literature Review

The purpose of this section is to develop a conceptual framework and come up with assumptions that can be followed through based on insights from authoritative sources and review of previous studies. The section will examine the dominant writings of study problem. It is broadly divided into four parts, each dealing with four themes that will run across the study. The first section examines development discourse in general while the second section looks at women in

development. Section three provides an overview of gender approaches in development. The last section sheds light on the feminization of poverty debates.

Development

Every nation strives after development which is a multidimensional process involving the reorganization and reorientation of entire economic and social system. In addition to improvements in incomes and output, it typically involves radical changes in institutional, social and administrative structures, as well as in popular attitudes and sometimes even customs and beliefs as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality and eradication, of absolute poverty¹¹.

Wolfenson observes that theorizing about poverty has been complicated by the fact that the concepts and indices used have been broadened beyond income focus and made a multidimensional aspect.¹² This has been due to changing ideas of development and underdevelopment, which has also been widened from economic, social and environmental development to 'human development'. Yet the official literature and indicators may remain focused on income, and differences persist about basic anti-poverty strategy and policy, e.g. whether to target poverty directly and primarily or to deal with it indirectly through the broader approaches of economic growth.

Such issues have been complicated further by current process of globalization and urbanization which claim that both forces have improved national economies through freer and greater foreign trade and investment. Opponents argue however, that globalization has only

¹¹ Tadora Michael, *Growth Poverty and Income Distribution: Economic Development*. Addison Wesley Longman 2001. pg 151

¹² Wolfenson ,James D. and Francois Bourguigon. *Development and Poverty Reduction: Looking Back , Looking Ahead*. Paper prepared for the 2004 Annual Meetings of the World Bank and IMF ,The World Bank. 2004.

worsened poverty and inequality within and between countries. Urbanization which is expected to mount in developing countries, is also seen not necessarily as a blessing, but also as a bane especially on the account of the ever increasing phenomenon of urbanization of poverty.¹³

Michael Todaro¹⁴ further argues that development literature has been dominated by three strands of thought (1) the 'stages of economic growth' theories of the 1950's and early 60's ;(2) the 'international dependence' theories of the late 60's and the 70's; and the 'free-markets' theories of the 80's and 90's. The thinking of the 50's and early 60's focused on the successive 'stages of economic growth' in which the process of development was seen as a series of sequential stages through which all countries must pass. It was primarily an economic theory of development in which the right quantity and mixture of saving, investment and foreign aid were all that was necessary to enable the third world nations to proceed along an economic growth path which historically had been followed by the more developed countries. Development thus became synonymous with rapid economic growth, while increased saving and investment were the engine of that growth.

The dependency theory views underdevelopment in terms of international and domestic power relationships, institutional and structural economic rigidities, and the proliferation of dual economies and dual societies (i.e. a few rich people or nations coexisting with many poor people or nations) both within the nations of the world. Dependency theories tend to emphasize external and internal institutional constraints on economic development such as gross inequalities in land ownership, highly unequal and imbalanced international trade relationships and control of the most important domestic and international economic levers by a small group of wealthy local

¹³ Buckley , Robert M. and Jerry Kalarickal , *Shelter Strategies for the Urban Poor: Idiosyncratic and Successful , but Hardly Mysterious*, World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 3427 , p 35

¹⁴ Tadora Michael, *Growth Poverty and Income Distribution: Economic Development*. Addison Wesley Longman 2001 ,pg 151

and global power elites. Emphasis is placed on policies needed to eradicate poverty, provide more diversified employment opportunities and to reduce inequalities.¹⁵

Dundly Seers notes that during the 80's and the 90's many economists argued that third world needed more 'free- markets' and less government intervention in the economy in order to promote competition and stimulate rapid growth and development But he poses the basic question about the meaning of development when he asserted that:

"The question to ask about a country's development is therefore: what has been happening to poverty? What has been happening to unemployment? What has been happening to inequality? If all three of these have declined from high levels, then beyond doubt this has been a period of development for the country concerned .If one or two of these central problems have been growing worse, especially if all three have , it would be strange to call these development even if per capita income doubled."¹⁶

In essence, development must represent the entire gamut of changes by which an entire social system, tuned to the diverse basic needs and desires of individual and social groups within that system, moves away from a condition of life regarded as materially and spiritually 'better'. Development is thus conceptualized as the sustained elevation of an entire society and social system towards a better or 'more humane' life¹⁷.

According to Dennis Goulet¹⁸ 'the good life' consists of three basic core values which serve as a conceptual basis and practical guideline in understanding the inner meaning of development. These core values are life-sustenance¹⁹; self-esteem²⁰ and freedom²¹, representing

¹⁵ Gordon, David M, *Theories of Poverty and Underdevelopment*. Lexington, MA Heath Company. (Including comments by E.Rauch and the proceeding summary).

¹⁶ Dudley Seers , 'The Meaning of Development', *Eleventh World Conference of the Society of International Development*, New Delhi, 1996,p.3

¹⁷ Ibid

¹⁸ Dennis Goulet, *The Cruel Choices :A new Concept in the Theory of Development*, Athenaeum, NY, 1971, P.23

¹⁹ Life sustenance: The ability to provide basic human needs i.e. Food ,shelter, health and protection . When any of these is absent or in critically short supply conditions of absolute underdevelopment exist.

²⁰ Self Esteem-To be person :Sense of worth and self respect , of not being used as a tool by others for the own ends

common goals sought by all individuals and societies. They relate to fundamental human needs which find their expression in almost all societies and cultures all the times.

Women in Development

Not all women are poor in third world or elsewhere. But no country treats its women at the same level or as well as its men. Goulet notes that some years back, it was said that women did one third of the paid work, two thirds of the productive work, for one tenth of the income and less than one hundredth of the property. Today, it is highly likely that the figures are even more against women and especially in developing countries.²²

Beckman and Amico²³ add that a series of global crises, in terms of trade, development, debt, and restructuring, have hit women especially hard. The crises have imposed harsh conditions on states in return for loans including structural adjustments policies (SAPs), deregularization of finances, and liberalization of trade. The obtaining condition has led to preference of export industries and a reduction of social services and public support, including food subsidies. These dramatic changes are part of the globalization of the product and the 'Market'. Developing countries have therefore had to cope with high unemployment, polarization of wealth within and between states, and reduction of state provisions as well as growing impoverishment. These developments have been gendered in their effects.

Peterson and Runyan²⁴ further argues that cut backs in state services like health, education, and social security have especially affected women's employment opportunities. They

²¹ Freedom from servitude: To be able to choose-freedom from alienating material conditions of life and freedom from social the social servitude of men to nature, ignorance, other men, misery, institutions and dogmatic beliefs.

²² Buckley, Robert M. and Jerry Kalarickal, *Shelter Strategies for the Urban Poor: Idiosyncratic and Successful, but Hardly Mysterious*, World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 3427, p 35

²³ Beckman, P., and D'Amico, F.(eds)*Women, Gender and World politics; Perspectives, Policies and Prospects*, Westport, Conn: Bergin and Grevey, 1994 p 405

²⁴ Peterson, V. S., and Runyan, A.S., *Global Gender Issues*, 2nd Ed .Boulder, Colo. :West View Press,1999 p.103

note that, women are everywhere overwhelmingly responsible for family and household maintenance, and must compensate through their own time and labor when state support is reduced or removed. The cost of globalization is therefore not evenly spread and the 'feminization of poverty' which refers to the growing proportion, as well as numbers of women and their children living in poverty increases. This is in part a reflection of the worldwide trend. The gendered effect of restructuring then amounts to a massive crisis in reproduction, eventually affecting any meaningful development efforts.

Enloe ²⁵ affirms that the changing international division of labor is gendered. Transnational corporations go on the prowl of cheap labor, which often means women's labor. Especially since the 1980s increasingly competitive trading and labor deregulation in many countries have accompanied the rise of a largely female marginalized workforce, with a core of skilled and professional workers who are mainly male. Women are concentrated in poorly paid work, which partly explain why many women juggle between their domestic and paid work. But it also reflects the construction of women workers as cheap labor –or more accurately as 'labor made cheap'

In light of the above Sussane Posing²⁶ points out that within development cooperation, mainstreaming gender implies taking into account different conditions and priorities of men and women at all levels of development planning and implementation. Today gender mainstreaming has developed to the extent of a "must" for almost all kinds of project applications; policy documents, government policies, donor interventions strategies, etc.

²⁵ Enloe, C., *Bananas, Bases and Beaches: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics*, London printer 1992, p.213

²⁶ Susanne Posing, *Engendering Development –Obstacles and Opportunities*, Regional Workshop on Gender and Human Rights, Zambia 2000.Pg 38

Contrary to Susanne Possing's position, Cotter²⁷ stresses that engendering development deliberately takes the approach of meeting people, rather than focusing on male / female dichotomies and differences between men and women. This approach aims at recognizing efforts of all people involved as opposed to widening gaps or creating confrontations between people that could otherwise be avoided. He claims that gender sensitive policies will meet reluctance or even resistance to admit space for women to be heard and listened to (particularly in public fora), or for them to be trained to be given access to economic and social resources. Cotter therefore advocates for changes in perceptions as well as in relations between people.

Today, it is advisable to be conscious of this inequality and to seek ways of reducing skewed participation in development for the good of society. Both men and women have a role to play in the development process. There is therefore, need to promote gender equity, which means fairness to both sexes in the assignment of duties, responsibilities and leadership roles. When the principle of equity is given due prominence, then society can work towards equality.²⁸

Johnstone Toney on the other hand argues that gender empowerment should go beyond mere presentation of figures of women and men in society. Instead, it should focus on the analysis of social cultural, economic, legal and political constraints that affect the active and equal participation of women and men in development. The effective mainstreaming of gender issues in development interventions requires the integration of equality concerns in the analysis and formulation of policy, programs and project with the objective of ensuring positive impact on women and men in bridging the gender disparities. It encourages the inclusion of interest,

²⁷ Cotter D., *Poor places: Local Opportunity structures and households poverty*, 64/4 p.76

²⁸ Ibid

needs, experiences and visions of women and men in the definition of development approaches, policies and programs in determining the overall development agenda.²⁹

Gender Approaches to Development

In the 1940's, 1950's and 1960's, within development policies and programs, women were only viewed as mothers and housewives, their economic activities and contributions were ignored and less valued. Development theorist and planners saw men as agents and actors of development. Men were seen to be the breadwinners of their families, while women were simply invisible.³⁰ But some international events served to heighten women's issues which are worth discussing. In the first place, the feminist movement in various parts of the world (both in developed and developing countries) advocated for the elimination of all kinds of gender discrimination. Secondly, women in the developing countries lobbied for change in the legal and administrative structures to ensure that women would be better integrated into the economic system. And lastly, the UN decade for women (1975-1985) advocated gender for equity, development and peace. These fora provided a space where women round the world converged to discuss socio-economic and political issues that specifically affect them.³¹

²⁹ Johnstone Tony et al., *Kenya: Gender Facts and Figures*, CIDA/GESP 2003, Pg 17

³⁰ Sen, G., and Grown, C., *Development, crisis and Alternative Visions: Third World Women's Perspectives*. New York, 2003

³¹ In these conferences women from developing countries have challenged the western feminist global sister hood ideology (that all women share and experiences similar oppressions and marginalization, not taking into account cultural and other factors). Women from the south have also criticized the hegemonic vision of the western feminist agenda and the way third world women are constructed and represented by northern feminist scholars.

The Women in Development Approach –WID

The proponents of Women in Development approach argue that women are ignored and excluded from development programs.³² It is believed that development is not obtainable in the absence of women's integration into development process; women were seen as underutilized resources for development and now they are found and could be a valuable resource. They also believe that the result of development will be successful if only women are fully integrated into the development process. The approach is aimed at integrating women into the existing development scheme and runs in contradiction to the modernist approach which holds that the benefits from development will indiscriminately trickle down to all members of the society including women.

For the purposes of empowerment, the WID approach advocated for the implementation of 'separate' or integrated projects for women under the belief that women had spare time available to undertake these projects. 'Separate' or 'women only' projects were also seen as the right solution to address women's marginalization. WID assumed that if women are provided access to resources such as skill training, credits, small scale income generating activities and home economics, then they would improve their situation and women will become full economic partners with men.³³

It is in order to note that WID seems to categorize women as separate and homogenous entities while in fact they are diverse groups belonging to different classes, ethnicities, history and cultures. The approach thus fails to question existing structures and their effects on gender

³² Schaffer, D.M., "*The Feminization of Poverty: Prospect for an International Feminist Agenda*" in Ellen Boneparth and Emilt Stoper (Eds), *Women, Power and Policy: Towards the year 2000*. NY, Pergamon Press, 1988 .p.56

³³ Buckley , Robert M. and Jerry Kalarickal , *Shelter Strategies for the Urban Poor: Idiosyncratic and Successful , but Hardly Mysterious*, World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 3427 , p 57

equality. It did not examine the root causes of women's subordination and oppression. This (anti-poverty) approach has been blamed for marginalizing women further and treating them identically to men.

Women and Development Approach (WAD)

The Women and Development Approach holds that women are already integrated into the development process in an exploitative way, primarily because the planners hold inaccurate assumptions about women specific needs. The aggregate result is the unconscious neglect of women's real needs and over exploitation of their labor. Proponents³⁴ of this approach are mainly activists and theorist from the south and a few from the north who saw the limitations of WID and argued that women would never get their equal share of development benefits unless patriarchy and global inequality are addressed.

The WAD approach offers a more critical view of women's position than WID. Unlike WID, WAD's perspectives assumes that women's position will improve if and when international structures become more equitable. It argues that the dominant development approaches lack women's perspectives (viewpoints) and the perspectives of developing countries. The WAD school holds that overcoming poverty and addressing the effects of colonialism are also as important as promoting gender equality in the development process.

Out of WAD emerged the Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era Network (DAWN), based in the South, and which aimed to make the view of developing countries known and influential globally. According to this perspective, women were not a

³⁴ Nussbaum Martha and Jonathan. Gloves, (eds). *Women , Culture , and Development Study of Human Capabilities*. New York , Oxford University Press, 2000 p.53

neglected resource but overburdened and undervalued.³⁵ What is needed is a reevaluation of women's considerable contribution to the development process and the redistribution of the benefits and burdens of development between men and women.

The Gender and Development Approach

Gender and Development Approach (GAD) is concerned with gender and gender relations. The approach stops short of advocating for WID's strategy of "adding women" into the development process but rethinks development concepts and practices as a whole through a gender lens. Nelson and Chowdhury³⁶ draw attention to the unequal power relations between men and women that prevent women from accessing resources. They contend that women's inequality exists not because they are bypassed or marginalized by development planners, but because women are not part of the power structures. In this regard, gender relations impact on how development programs are planned and implemented and inevitably lead to favoring one gender (men). For example unequal gender relations deny women from accessing or obtaining credit, education, technology and agricultural extension. Unlike WID, GAD is critical of the economic model of development.

According to Edward Budd³⁷ the approach values women's reproductive roles (bearing and caring roles); women's double pay day (paid and unpaid works) benefits both capital and domestic spheres. Unlike WID, GAD views women as already integrated into the development process and are central to it as they provide unpaid family labour. GAD sees women belonging to diverse categories (age, class, marital status, ethnicity race religion) rather than a homogeneous

³⁵ Ibid

³⁶ Nelson, B., and Chowdhury N. (Eds), *Women and Politics Worldwide*. Newhaven: Yale University Press, 1994. P 215

³⁷ Budd, Edward C., ed. *Inequality and Poverty*. New York W.W. Norton and Co. 1987 p 90

group “women”. In the era of economic restructuring and globalization, proponents of GAD have provided critical gender analysis on the effects of SAP’s policies on women. They have criticized the effects of the international division of labor on social economic and political spheres in both developed and developing countries.

Feminization of poverty

Feminization of poverty arises in the Third World Countries due to the migration of the male members of households in search of jobs mainly in urban centers. This phenomenon is a major contributor to the increased incidence of poverty among women.³⁸ The rising proportion of female-headed households would not necessarily create poverty if women had equal access to employment or assets. Indeed, conditions obtain in the developing countries in which biases in the labor markets, land tenancy laws, land use, and the discrimination of technical assistance and credit, severely disadvantages women in the third world.

Poverty in Africa is not just severe: the fact that approximately half of the population lives on US\$ 1 a day or less, points to the fact that poverty is on the increase.³⁹ A recent review by the World Bank⁴⁰ found that between 1990 and 1999, the number of poor people in Africa increased by one quarter per year, and if that trend continues “Africa will be the only region where the number of poor people in 2015 will be higher than in 1990.” Poverty is the prime mover of the vicious cycle that stifles men’s and women’s aspirations. The poor have less

³⁸ Schaffer, D.M., “*The Feminization of Poverty: Prospects for an International Feminist Agenda*” in Ellen Boneparth & Emily Stoper (Eds), *Women, Power & Policy: Towards the year 2000*, New York, Pergamon Press, 1988 pg225

³⁹ New estimates by the World Bank in August 2008 show that the number of people in the developing countries living in extreme poverty may be higher than previously thought. Using a new threshold for extreme poverty now set at \$1.25 a day {purchasing power parity} in 2005.

⁴⁰ World Bank, Research Report, *Integrating Gender into World’s Bank Work: a Strategy for Action*, The world Bank, January 2002.

education, less healthcare and great exposure to HIV/AIDS and unsafe living conditions, all of which make it more difficult for them to improve their conditions. Women suffer all this as well as discrimination which consequently increases their burden immeasurably.⁴¹

A recent government of Kenya report prepared by the Gender Department alludes to the fact that women contribute to the economy and to combating poverty through both remunerated and unremunerated work at home, in the community and the workplace as well.⁴² Therefore empowerment of women is a critical factor in the eradication of poverty. While poverty affects households as a whole, because of the gendered division of labor and responsibilities for household's welfare, women bear a disproportionate burden, attempting to manage household's consumption and production under conditions of increased scarcity.

Gender inequality retards economic growth and poverty reduction. This is a key conclusion of a recent World Bank policy research paper, *Engendering Development-through Gender Equality in Rights, Resources, and Voice*. The Report also considers the links among gender equality, development and public policy. As this Report makes clear, there is growing evidence that several aspects of gender relations - the gender based division of labour, disparities between male and females in power and resources, and gender biases in rights entitlement – act to undermine economic growth and reduce the well being of men, women and children.⁴³

⁴¹ Rees, Teresa, *Social Exclusion and Equal Opportunity*, International Planning Studies 3/1 p15-34

⁴² Government of Kenya, *Gender Mainstreaming into PRSP, Advocacy Package for Gender Mainstreaming* Discussion paper prepared by Gender Department December, 2006. P. 16

⁴³ World Bank .The research Report “*Integrating Gender into the World Bank's Work a Strategy for Action* , The World Bank .January 2002

Justification of the Study

The control role of women in the development in any country cannot be overstated. Indeed, women play a pivotal role in agricultural production as well as the upkeep of the family units. Despite this realization, women are still a marginalized group in the development process. In an attempt to include women in the mainstream development process, the issue of gender mainstreaming has been advanced. Proponents of this theory argue that the inclusion of women in the development process will not only hasten the overall development of any given country; but will bring women to a state as equal partnership with men in the development process.

This study can be justified on both academic and policy grounds. The study is one among few empirical attempts to provide an analysis of the implementation of the MDG's in addressing gender inequalities in Kenya and the Third World in general. As already captured above, Kenya does not in principle discriminate on the basis of gender. In practice, however, gender gaps persist in many sectors which lead to a situation where women and children continue to dominate the poor population groups. The study thus seeks to fill the knowledge gap by investigating into the actual and potential contribution of the Millennium Development Goal 3 in poverty reduction among women, gender equality and women empowerment in general by assessing its implementation process in Kenya.

The information derived from this study could be used by future feminist scholars and researchers to enrich the understanding of gender relations in Developing Countries. The study findings could also serve as a springboard towards the mobilization of more concerted efforts by development practitioners in ensuring equal participation of both men and women in the development process.

On policy grounds, the study is very timely especially in the wake of the increasing need for the operationalization of the MDG framework into facilitating the mainstreaming of gender into the development goals in Kenya. Indeed, there is an emerging realization that without a coherent and comprehensive overall framework for guiding different sectors and agents involved in the development process, tremendous resource may continue to be wasted in an attempt to mainstream development. Only a well informed and empirically grounded policy framework may ensure greater participation of men and women equal access to development resources and the distribution of the benefits. Although nine years have elapsed since the adoption of MDGs, it is not too late for the Kenya government to adopt new strategies aimed at accelerating the process of mainstreaming gender in all sectors and levels of development. The study will thus establish and recommend policy guidelines to assist both national and international institutions in their endeavor to effectively involve women in development initiatives.

Theoretical Frameworks

In pursuing the objectives of this study one theory will provide theoretical guidance. These theory is the feminism theory.

Feminism theory

Feminism theory aims to understand the nature of inequality and focuses on gender politics, power relations and sexuality. While generally providing a critique of social relations, much of feminist theory also focuses on analyzing gender inequality and the promotion of women rights.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Peterman ,J,J., *Worlding Women: A Feminist International Politics*, London :Routledge, 1996 p 56

According to Steans and Peterman, feminism came in play to change women's inequality, exploitation and oppression.⁴⁵ However, feminist politics globally are constrained by the differences between feminism within and between states. First wave feminism was concerned with suffrage, that is, with women's legal and civic rights, including their rights to education. Many of these early days feminist were active in politics as socialist, anti-colonial nationalists, or pacifists. The second wave feminist had different politics that affected their understanding of sexual differences, for example their views on the possibility of alliances with progressive men.

In the 1970's and 1980's, these differences were summed up under labels of liberal, radical and socialist feminist.⁴⁶ While many feminist do not easily fit under one label, and the lines of difference and alliance shift over time and place, the difference between them are important for thinking about gender, and about strategies necessary to overcome gender inequality or oppression. Broadly, liberal feminists are equality feminist, seeking an end to women's exclusion from or underrepresentation in office, power, and employment. They seek women's equal rights in the military , including combat, for they see women's 'protection' as a way of keeping them from power, and their dependence on men as compromising their claims to full citizenship, which is usually understood to include fighting for one's country.

As Tincker notes liberal feminist seek equality in masculinity institutions on men's terms.⁴⁷ In different ways they seek to change the institutions themselves to be women –friendly. They disagree, however on what lies on the heart of the problem. Some radical feminist see women's subordination as universal, though taking different forms at different times. Some argue that women are a sex-class, systematically and everywhere subjected to men's sex-rights, or their claims for access of their bodies, children, and labor. Violence against women is seen as

⁴⁵ Steans, J., *Gender and International Relations*, Cambridge. Polity Press, 1998. P 239

⁴⁶ Ibid

⁴⁷ Tinker .A., *Gender in International Relations* New York :Columbia University Press,1992 p 45

key to keeping women recourse less and 'in their place'. They also draw attention to sexuality as politics.

Cultural feminist views women as different from men, more nurturing and peaceable. For example, they do not reject 'women's values', as liberal feminist do, but they argue that these values are just what world politics and the ecology need. Some cultural feminists are accused of essentialism, of representing these values as naturally women's and so reinforcing the gendered stereotypes that underpin women's oppression. Others see women's values more as learned skills. They argue that men, too can learn to nurture.

Socialist feminists combine class and gender, arguing that a class analysis alone leaves out much that women's experience.⁴⁸ In particular, socialist feminists argue that class alone cannot explain why women are those responsible for reproductive and family labor, why women are over-represented among the poor, or why gender inequalities, often reinforced by violence against women, continue even where women are fully integrated into the workforce. Liberal feminist on the other hand seek admission to their state or profession on equal terms with men, while others only seek to build alliances across class lines between elites and poorer women.⁴⁹

Development within feminism in recent years has shifted both in theory and practical politics, for example post modern feminist have added to growing recognition of differences between men and women. These shifts have unsettled the category 'woman', raising issues about who speaks for 'women?' Whose experiences as women are not reflected in feminist knowledge making and politicking? There is thus an ongoing tension in feminism between equality and

⁴⁹ In the 1980's black and their world feminist accused white feminists of ignoring race, culture, and colonial relations as also affecting women. These locate white women in ambiguous ways, as oppressed in relation to gender and perhaps class, but privileged by their membership of the dominant race/culture, and by citizenship rights in rich countries.

difference claims; and between trying to build up the category 'woman' for political purposes. This is made even more difficult in these times of growing right-wing and fundamentalist movements, which seek to discredit feminism and attack women's rights⁵⁰.

Hypotheses

- The external origin of MDG 3 and general lack of commitment among state and non-state actors have affected the program's implementation process in Kenya.
- Persistence of gender insensitive practices, attitudes in the national policies have led to the sustained levels of inequality and poverty among the Kenyan women.

Research Methodology

The research study was informed by primary and secondary sources. Primary data was derived from oral interviews, informal interactions with women, focus group discussions and observation. Field research was done in Nairobi province. The study targeted key informants working with selected government ministries and departments and civil society organizations. In particular, interviews were conducted with informants from the Ministry of Gender and Children, the Ministry of State for planning and National Development and Vision 2030, women non-governmental organizations and women-based groups.

The study targeted a total of 120 adult respondents out of which 20 were males. The respondents were divided into two equal categories, that is, the low income and relatively low education respondents living in the Nairobi slums and high income and high education groups

⁵⁰ Tinker .A., *Gender in International Relations* New York :Columbia University Press,1992 p 67

working in government ministries, private sectors, NGOs and the wider civil society. Each category had ten key informants purposively selected for interview because they were felt to have the relevant information on the study subjects on the implementation of the MDG's in relation to women's empowerment.

Both open-ended and closed questionnaires were used for interview purposes. The questionnaires were personally administered by the researcher and her field assistants. The questionnaires were pre-tested and revised to ensure their adequacy in soliciting the information desired. Five field assistants – four women and one man – were trained on the most effective methods of administering the questionnaires and collecting relevant data. The oral interview method enabled the coverage of a wide sample and provided depth through the probing of the interviewees. However, the method was time consuming and not all respondents were readily available or willing to be interviewed.

The study also relied on focus group discussion. Under this method, a group of ten respondents were identified from each category and subjected to focus group discussions. A focus group discussion questionnaire was developed for this purpose and each group was identified through random sampling, thus giving equal chances of each respondent to be in the research sample. The focus group discussion method not only enabled deep probing but also helped to compare the results from the interviews with the focus group discussion results. However, the method was very involving in terms of questionnaire preparation and moderation. Besides, some respondents in the group could not resist the temptation of diverging from the theme of discussion.

Secondary data included journals, periodicals, books, and relevant websites. Both published and unpublished research works were reviewed. The study relied heavily on secondary data from the Ministries of State for Planning National Development and Vision 2030 and Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Services where women issues have been accorded priority as well as the implementation of the MDG's. To the extent that the government is the leading implementer of MDGs, The data from the ministries was regarded as both official and reliable in providing the much needed information on the study. Secondary data was also obtained from civil society organizations and private consultancy firms involved in research on gender issues.

The information obtained through the above described methods was subjected to critical analysis to provide crucial as well as relevant information for the sake of interpretation and presentation of research findings. The process involved sorting, classifying, identifying, describing, assessing and defining the data collected. All variables generated from the focus group discussions, interviews, observations and library research were categorized and analyzed. The data was thereafter interpreted and presented, with a view to answering the question raised in the research problem. The end product of the study is this dissertation which is expected to be useful to a variety of actors including policy makers, women organizations, gender studies researchers, feminists, and other agencies involved in improving the situation of women both locally and internationally.

Chapter Outline

The study is presented into five chapters. Chapter 1 provides the introduction, research problem, objectives of the study, literature review, theoretical perspectives, hypotheses and methodology employed in the study. Chapter 2 provides an overview of women empowerment strategies in

Kenya since independence, While Chapter 3 captures an overview of the status of the MDG(3) implementation initiatives in Kenya. Chapter 4 deals with public awareness and involvement in the realization of MDG 3 in Kenya. The study ends with conclusions and recommendations in Chapter 5.

Definition of Terms

Poverty: Concepts of poverty have revolved around low income as the criterion. Income “command over goods and services to meet minimum needs.” So the lack of income means poverty in terms of basic needs {food, shelter and clothing}

Poverty line: An agreed upon budget for a society is called poverty line. The World Bank has adopted about \$1 a day as a global poverty line below which “people are struggling to survive.”⁵¹

Absolute poverty: An important distinction is that between absolute and relative poverty. Absolute poverty is the situation of all falling below the established poverty line.

Relative poverty: Measures the income gap or economic distance between the poor and the non poor. Instead of measuring poverty according to an absolute standard {poverty line} the situation of the poor is compared to that of affluent groups.”When most Americans have a great deal, those who have much less are poor regardless of their absolute level of income.”(Rauchs 1978 quoted by Gordon 2002)⁵².Even when the poor move up income wise, they remain poor if left “too far behind” by their richer groups.

Basic needs: Although income implies command over resources to meet basic needs, the income criterion has limitations that make the distinction a practical one. Income may not adequately represent basic necessities such as food, shelter and clothing. On the other hand government

⁵¹ World Bank: *Attacking Poverty*: World Development Report 200/2001/Washington, D.C Oxford University press, for the World Bank.2001

⁵² Gordon, David M *Theories of Poverty and Underdevelopment*, Lexington, MA Heath Company.1999.Pg.112

programs that address such basic needs directly may sustainably improve the health and welfare of the poor without necessarily raising their incomes.⁵³

Gender equality: refers to equal rights, responsibility and opportunities of women and men and girl and boys. It also implies that the interests of both men and women are taken into consideration.

Gender: the state of being either male or female. It refers to all the socially given attributes, roles, activities and responsibilities connected to being male or female in a given society.⁵⁴

Gender aware: The recognition that women are development actors as well as men, that the nature of policies, women involvement is determined by gender relations, which make their involvement different, and often unequal, and that consequently women have different needs, interests and priorities, which may sometimes conflict with those of men.⁵⁵

Position: describes the place of women in society relative to that of men .Changing Women's position requires addressing their gender interests, including equal access to decision making and resources, getting rid of discrimination in employment and, landownership.⁵⁶

⁵³ Tadora Michael, *Growth Poverty and Income Distribution: Economic Development*. Addison Wesley Longman 2001 pg 151.

⁵⁴ March et al, *A Guide to Gender analysis Frameworks* (Oxford: Oxford Great Britain Publication, 1999) pg 18.

⁵⁵ Ibid. pg 29.

⁵⁶ Op.Cit .pg 18

CHAPTER II

AN OVERVIEW OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT STRATEGIES IN KENYA SINCE INDEPENDENCE (1963)

Introduction

The UN decade for the advancement of women, proclaimed in 1975, set in motion a process which led to the increased awareness of women's contributions not only to the sustenance but also to the development process. However, this recognition has not been accompanied by equal improvements in the lives of women. The global economic crises, the sluggish performance of the national economy, made worse by structural adjustment programmes (SAP's), have had a negative impact on the gains made in improving standards of living in general and advancement of women in particular.⁵⁷

The declining economic performance, poverty and erosion of cultural values have also resulted in increased incidences of crime and violence against women. Since 1963, national and sectoral policies have had different impacts on Kenyan women and men, and more often than not have overlooked gender concerns.⁵⁸

Werner Fornos observes that the even though the world has been in need for concerted efforts in the area of gender equality and equity, and despite the fact that policy makers have long known what is required - starting with equal access to education, employment, reproductive health and the entire spectrum of the development process - most nations have not acted as

⁵⁷ Government of Kenya, Ministry of Gender, Sports, Culture and Social Services, *Sessional Paper No. 2 of 2006 on Gender Equality and Development*. Printed by the Government of Kenya, May 2006.

⁵⁸ Government of Kenya., *Gender Mainstreaming into the PRSP Advocacy Package for Gender Mainstreaming*. Discussion Paper Prepared by Gender Department, December 2006.

earnestly and aggressively on these pivotal human problems as they should and they must.⁵⁹ The facts of gender inequality and the restrictions placed on women's choices, opportunities and participation have a direct and often malign consequence for women's health and education and for their social and economic participation.

National Gender and Development Policy Framework in Kenya

Since independence, the Kenya Government has demonstrated concern for the welfare and special needs of women. This concern led to the establishment of the *Women's Bureau* in the Ministry of Culture and Social Services in 1976 as the national machinery for the advancement of women. This was an acknowledgement of women as a population category with special needs that require particular attention.⁶⁰

The functions and responsibilities of the Bureau, according to the Cabinet Memorandum 78 (b) include: policy formulation, implementation and evaluation; co-ordination of all Government initiatives and programmes for women; collection and analysis of data and information required for the design, monitoring and evaluation of policies and projects for women; and support to and liaison with NGO projects and women's organisations. This broad and comprehensive mandate clearly reflected the government's commitment to the advancement of women.⁶¹

As the Government machinery responsible for co-ordinating gender activities, the Women's Bureau has over the years undertaken a number of activities in an attempt to ensure

⁵⁹ Werner Fornos, *Consequences of Women Inequality in Achieving MDG's*, UNFPA State of World Population 2002 "People, Poverty and Possibilities" <http://www.unfpa.org/swp/2001>

⁶⁰ Government of Kenya, *Perspectives on Gender Mainstreaming and Poverty Reduction*, 30th September at Kenyatta University Centre, Prepared by Women's Bureau.

⁶¹ Government of Kenya, *Effective Management for Sustainable Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction*. (2002 – 2003) Nairobi

gender responsive policy formulation and implementation of programmes. Some of the activities include development of a training manual for sensitisation of stakeholders on gender issues; strengthening the capacity of women groups for socio-economic development; establishment of Units of Gender Issues (UGIs) or strengthening of such units, in key sectors; establishment of a gender disaggregated database; setting up a resource centre; conducting gender based studies; developing and disseminating the National Action Plan for Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action; participating in review and formulation of sectoral policies; and participating in the task force set up by the Government for the review of laws relating to women.⁶²

Other Government Ministries also set up special units that were aimed at addressing women issues and subsequently gender concerns in their respective sectors. The Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development had a department of women's education that was essentially a home economics unit. This unit has been transformed into a gender focal point and has launched a task force that has formulated an action plan for mainstreaming gender in the education sector. The Ministry of Agriculture addresses women's concerns in agriculture and food production through the home economics division. It has recently introduced a clear gender and development strategy with a specific unit for implementation. The Ministry of Health also addresses gender concerns through the Primary Health Care Programme. It also has a network of Maternal Child Health and Family Planning services (MCH/FP). Other line ministries have set focal points geared towards mainstreaming gender issues in their programmes and policies.⁶³

⁶² Government of Kenya, Ministry of Gender, Sports, Culture and Social Services, Sessional Paper No. 2 of 2006 on *Gender Equality and Development*, May 2006 Printed by the Government. Nairobi.

⁶³ Ibid

National Gender and Development Policy Context

The Association of Media Women in Kenya (AMWIK) argues that development initiatives impact differently on men and women in the development process. Whereas the planning and policy making processes recognize that it is the right of men and women to participate and benefit equally from development initiatives, this has often not been the case. The Association , therefore, recognizes that traditional development theories have not facilitated the participation of women in strategic areas and positions of power and influence because they are based on traditional assumptions of the roles and responsibilities of women and men. ⁶⁴

The need for a National Policy on *Gender and Development* arose from the Government's realization that without a coherent and comprehensive overall framework for guiding the different sectors and agencies involved in development, tremendous resources may continue to be lost unless the thrust of mainstream development directly addresses gender concerns. The approach also recognizes that without quality gender disaggregated data, the planning and programming process cannot be efficient and productive. ⁶⁵

The Policy further recognizes that it is the right of men, women, boys and girls to participate in and benefit from development and other initiatives. It is policies that will help Kenya meet its development goals and establish women and men- friendly institutions. The policy advocates for new departures and strategies that are aimed at ensuring greater participation of men and women and equal access to development resources and distribution of the benefits. It promotes a more cost-effective way of managing resources and ensuring

⁶⁴ Association of Media Women in Kenya with Support from UNIFEM and UNDP. (2005). *A Fair Share for Women: Briefing Kit on Gender and Millenium Development Goals -Kenya*. Association of media women in kenya

⁶⁵ Government of Kenya, *Gender Mainstreaming into the PRSP: Advocacy package for gender mainstreaming*. Discussion Paper –Prepared by Gender Department ,December 2006

sustainable development. This will ensure better targeting of marginalized groups and their integration into the mainstream of development.⁶⁶

The Policy further asserts the need to focus on empowerment strategies that not only demonstrate understanding of the essential linkages between the reproductive and productive roles of women, but also recognize the need to adopt equity as a goal and its achievement through the removal of any existing disparities between men and women. It highlights the social, cultural, economic and political factors that perpetuate inequalities in access to and control of development resources and benefits. It proposes strategies that will ensure that resources are available and that structures are in place to address specific needs and skills of men and women.⁶⁷

The national focus on industrialization by the year 2020 as stipulated in the current National Development Plan (1997-2001) and the Sessional Paper No. 2 of 1997 on Industrial Transformation by the Year 2020 focuses on accelerated economic growth and employment creation. This will not be achieved if the government does not take into consideration the fact that greater participation of women in the industrialisation process and in the labour market will facilitate access to resources and accruing benefits at family, community and national level.⁶⁸

The Policy reflects and builds upon past experiences and commitment of the Government, NGOs, religious organisations, donor communities and especially the women themselves to the need for such a policy. They are inspired by valuable experiences of Women in Development (WID) activities undertaken during and after the United Nations Women's Decade, 1975 - 1985.

⁶⁶ Government of Kenya, *Gender Mainstreaming into the PRSP: Advocacy package for gender mainstreaming*. Discussion Paper –Prepared by Gender Department ,December 2006

⁶⁷ Government of Kenya, Ministry of Gender, Sports, Culture and Social Services, Sessional Paper No. 2 of 2006

⁶⁸ Ibid

It is therefore envisaged that the *National Gender and Development Policy (NGDP)* will provide a framework for advancement of women and an approach that would lead to greater efficiency in resource allocation and utilization to ensure empowerment of women.

Situation Analysis of Gender Equality and Development

2.4.1 Women and the Economy

According to the Ministry of Planning and National Development Report (2002-2003) Kenya is emerging from a legacy of systematic institutional and legal gender imbalance as well as a weak gender mainstreaming capacity.⁶⁹ The economic situation analysis in Kenya has produced clear evidence that there are significant differences between women, men, girls and boys in participation, mobility and in distribution of benefits. There is growing evidence that gender responsive development strategy contribute significantly to economic growth and to equality objectives. This has generated demand for adoption of economic approaches that diversify creation of opportunities while widening and deepening distribution of generated benefits to women and men.⁷⁰

In Kenya, over 80 % of women live in the rural areas where the majorities are engaged in the farming of food and cash crops, livestock keeping and in agro-based income generating activities. In many areas of the country, male migration to urban areas and large-scale farms in search of paid employment has left women in charge of the management of small scale farming activities. It is estimated that women constitute over 70 % of all employees in the agricultural sector. The majority is casual or seasonal employees with no security of tenure and no

⁶⁹ Government of Kenya. *Effective Management for Sustainable Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction*. Ministry of Planning and National Development. (2002-2003) Nairobi

⁷⁰ Government of Kenya. *Perspectives on Gender Mainstreaming and Poverty Reduction*. 30th September at Kenyatta University, Centre prepared by Women's Bureau

employment benefits such as housing, medical scheme and pension. Their wages are low and uncertain, and they are classified as being among the poorest of the poor, with particular reference to those heading households once the men migrate to urban areas.⁷¹

According to AMWIK, participation of women in modern sector employment has risen gradually from 12.2% in 1994 to 29.6% in 2003.⁷² However this progress is unsatisfactory since clearly, women still constitute a minority among Kenyans employed in modern sector. Statistics show that the participation of women in modern sector non agricultural wage employment has improved but remains low. Although the rate of participation of women in urban areas in the labour force increased, this has not translated into much gain as women are still subjected to low productivity, low pay and long hours of work. In addition women are more at risk of unemployment than their male counterparts.

Women's efforts are fundamental in many other sectors of the economy. They contribute to domestic services including childcare, housework among others, for which no monetary rewards are received. Besides they play major productive roles in business and community services within the informal sector. The general participation of women in contribution to the economy is under rated. Social and cultural factors make claims on their time. For example, their multiple roles in reproduction, production and maintenance are extremely time-consuming and exhausting. This affects the extent to which they can take advantage of new methods of production, information, knowledge and available skills. This limitation is compounded by the high dropout rates and illiteracy among older women, which is a greater hindrance to their self reliance and ability to acquire knowledge. Their ability to acquire skills is associated with

⁷¹ Ibid

⁷² Association of Media Women in Kenya ,with support from UNIFEM and UNDP. (2005). *A Fair Share for Women Briefing kit on Gender and Millenium Development Goals –Kenya* . Nairobi

overburdening household chores, impacting negatively on access to opportunities for gainful livelihoods. Major decisions influencing their participation in the economy are made without their being consulted, considered or involved.⁷³

Women, Poverty and Sustainable Livelihoods

Poverty can be defined in absolute and relative terms. Absolute poverty refers to the ability to attain a minimum standard of living measured by a range of economic and social indicators such as a household income and expenditure per income per capita, health status, life expectancy, and access to basic social services, infant mortality rates, nutritional status and literacy. This type of poverty is manifested in hunger and chronic malnutrition, high levels of illiteracy, lack of sufficient incomes, and productive resources, increasing morbidity and mortality, homelessness, inadequate housing, and social discrimination. Relative poverty on the other hand compares the status of an individual to that of others

According to the welfare Monitoring Survey, national absolute poverty increased from 44% to 52% between 1994 and 1997. The incidence of poverty in rural areas increased from 47% to 53% while urban poverty increased from 29% to 49% during the same period. Over the same period, approximately 53% of Kenyan men in rural areas and 49% of men in urban areas lived below the poverty line. The corresponding statistics for women is higher i.e. 45% living in rural areas and 63% in urban areas. Female members of poor households are often worse off than male because of gender based differences in the distribution of resources within the household. This clearly indicates that the burden of poverty falls disproportionately on women.

⁷³ Ibid

Poverty permeates all sectors of the economy and carries critical implications for sustainable development. Poverty among women cannot therefore be isolated as a purely economic feature since its causes and effects are diverse. The basic objective of any development initiative is to enlarge people's choices by facilitating equal access to opportunities and ensuring that they are sustained so that both men and women are able to participate in and benefit from the development process.

Women and Agricultural Development

The outcomes of agricultural development should be to develop mechanisms to ensure efficient and effective utilization of available resources and the provisions of opportunities for gainful livelihoods for women, men, boys and girls. It is notable that women take care of 60% to 80% of household and reproductive activities and agricultural production. However under Kenya's patriarchal system, men have greater advantage to the benefits of agricultural production.⁷⁴

Historically, agriculture production systems, including marketing, have assumed that factors of production, including availability of land, capital and household labour will generate incomes and other benefits will trickle down to all members of communities. Likewise there is inadequate gender disaggregate data in this sector especially on decision-making process on land use, representation in marketing outlets, and workload analysis in agricultural production.

Women, Law and Justice

Gender disparities persist because social and legal institution still do not guarantee women equality in basic legal and human rights in access to or control of land or other resources, in

⁷⁴ Government of Kenya, Ministry of Gender, Sports, Culture and Social Services. Sessional Paper No. 2 of 2006 on Gender Equality and Development May 2006

employment and earnings and social and political participation.⁷⁵ These disparities have serious consequences, not only for women themselves, but also for their families and society at large.

The government has consistently reviewed laws relating to women, purposely to amend current regulations, practices, customs and policies that impose constraints on equal enjoyment of rights of women in civil, political, social –economic life or related matters with a view to preparing legislation designed to remove inequalities on the basis of gender.

Access to, and effective participation for women in the judicial process continues to be key challenge not only for women in Kenya but also for the justice system as a whole. The traditional male-female power imbalances, women's multiple roles and responsibilities in society, negative attitudes towards the girl child, the feminization of poverty and the fact that typically women are victims of gender specific crimes such as incest, rape ,trafficking , domestic violence etc are factors that combine to pose unique challenges for women's access to justice as well as effective delivery of justice. The matter is further compounded by the fact that the courts are mostly located in urban centers and the court systems in Kenya is alien and mystical to the lay person due to its colonial inheritance.⁷⁶

Women, Political Participation and Decision-making

Equal participation of women and men in decision making is needed to strengthen democracy. A democratic political culture offers opportunities for gender issues to be a shared concern for all citizens. The broader the political participation in democratic processes, the more enabling it is for the concerns of all Kenyans. Despite the fact that women account for slightly more than half

⁷⁵ *Consequences of Women Inequality in Achieving MDG's UNFPA State of World Population 2002 "People ,Poverty and Possibilities"* <http://www.unfpa.org/swp/2001>

⁷⁶ Government of Kenya. Ministry of Gender , Children and Social services .*Kenya Review and Appraisal Final Report on the Implementation of Beijing Platform for Action(Beijing +10)(1994 – 2004)*, June 2004 pg 56

of the total population and comprise a large voting population, they are still dismally represented in strategic decision-making institutions such as parliament, central government and local authorities, trade unions, cooperative societies, professional bodies and grassroots based institutions such as land boards. In the recent past, national trends have shown gradual increase in women's participation in politics and high level decision making organs. However, their number is still far too low compared to their male counterparts.

In 2007, the Political Parties Act, No. 10 of 2007 was enacted and has taken effect. The Act seeks to ensure equal participation between men and women in the political life and decision-making on political matters concerning the country. The Act fell short of making a provision requiring that 30% or 50% of all elected parliamentarians be women. There is however a requirement that at least 30% of the office bearer must be of opposite gender. The above-average performance of elected women who are currently serving in Kenya's parliament gives hope that intensified efforts to promote female parliamentary candidates, which is long overdue, would not be a futile effort.⁷⁷

Women, Education and Training

The government regards education as a basic right for all citizens and a prerequisite for economic and social development. In the recent past there has been an increase on the enrollment of the girl-child in the school system through the free primary education program. Despite this expansion, gender disparities in terms of access to education to another and performance have

⁷⁷ Ibid

persisted over the years. In addition girl schools are poorly equipped and facilities are less girl friendly, especially in mixed schools at both primary and secondary levels.⁷⁸

The government has taken some measures to close the gender gap and promote the education of girls and women through appropriate policies and programs. Those measures include: the government affirmative action at the university level; review of curriculum and teaching materials to ensure gender sensitivity; re-entry to school of adolescent mothers, enhanced bursary for girls education. All these continue to keep in the public agenda the issue of girls and women education and to mainstream gender issues.⁷⁹

Women, Health and Population

The policies that the government has pursued over the years have had a positive impact on improving the health status of women, men and children. Although there have been substantial improvements, significant disparities still exist especially in relation to women's reproductive health. According to a recent government report HIV/AIDS epidemic poses the biggest challenge of our time. Although both men and women are affected, women are at a greater risk than men due to illiteracy, cultural emphasis on reproduction, low economic status of women, deprivation, submissiveness, gender violence and biological factors that make women more susceptible to heterosexual transmission.⁸⁰

Women also tend to carry a greater burden than men in taking care of family members with HIV related illness, often without adequate knowledge of how to protect themselves. A report by Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Africa affirms this position. The report adds that

⁷⁸ Republic of Kenya, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, *Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2005 on A Policy Framework for Education, Training and Research: Meeting the Challenges of Education, Training and Research in Kenya in the 21st Century* (2005).

⁷⁹ Ibid

⁸⁰ Government of Kenya, *Gender Mainstreaming into the PRSP: Advocacy Package for Gender Mainstreaming*. Discussion Paper –Prepared by Gender Department December 2006

gender inequality deprives women of the ability to refuse risky practices, leading to coerced sex and sexual violence. The fact that women are kept uninformed about prevention has put them last in the line for care and life saving treatment, and has imposed an overwhelming burden on them to care for the sick and dying. Women are truly the most vulnerable in the HIV/AIDS pandemic and until there is a much greater degree of gender equality women will always constitute the greater number of new infections.⁸¹

According to a United Nations Report on Special Sessions on HIV/AIDS, the overall rate of infection among girls and young women was twice that of boys their age; not because the girls are promiscuous, but because, nearly 3 out of 5 girls are married by 18 years, 40% of them to much older, sexually experienced men, who may expose their wives to HIV/AIDS.⁸² Abstinence is not an option for these child brides. Those who try to negotiate condom use commonly face violence or rejection. Although significant progress has been made in advancing the status of women, there exists cultural practices which are prejudicial to the health of women and girls. Such practices include female circumcision and forced early marriages.

The National Gender and Development Policy Implementation Mechanisms

The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Development (formerly the Ministry of Gender, Sports, Culture and Social Services) has now been divided into two ministries. The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Development is the new lean and efficient mechanism to drive gender mainstreaming and to promote implementation of international agreements that address gender equality. Its establishment has marked the beginning of a focused consideration of the situation and status of women and their participation in the development process. The Ministry

⁸¹ Stephen Lewis, UN Secretary-General Kofi Anan's Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS, in Africa, 2001

⁸² United Nations General Assembly Special Session on AIDS, June 2001; and Mocumbi, Pascord, 2001 "A time for Frankness on AIDS" The New York Times' Website [Http://www.nytimes.com/2001/06/20](http://www.nytimes.com/2001/06/20)

has developed a strategic plan to guide its prioritized work of mainstreaming gender into all development process, engendering the national budget, promoting generation of sex disaggregated data to guide interventions, and enhancing collaboration and partnership with stakeholders for sustainable development.

The institutions that make up the national machinery in Kenya include the Department of Gender, Gender Divisions and the National Commission on Gender and Development. The Department of Gender was established in 2004 and took over the role of what used to be the women's bureau of the department of social services. The function of the new department is to ensure the inclusion of gender concerns in policy formulation, planning and implementation. To achieve this goal of gender mainstreaming the department formulates and reviews gender responsive policies; domesticates national and international resolutions from conventions on the status of women and; develops indicators on how to engender the national budget. The Gender Department also promotes efforts aimed at providing gender disaggregated data; coordinates the implementation of the national policy on gender and development and; engages in advocacy work to mainstreaming gender in the development process.

Gender divisions aim to mainstream gender into all government sectors by initiating relevant plans and strategies and by focusing on the allocation of resources intended to strengthen the gender sensitivity of line ministries. The divisions have taken over the functions of what used to be called focal points and units of gender issues in line ministries.

The National Commission was established through an Act of Parliament in January 2004 and operates as an oversight body mandated to take part in formulating the national development policy and to exercise general supervision over the implementation of the national policy on gender and development. The Commission suggest ways of strengthening the institutional

mechanisms that promotes gender equality and equity in all spheres of life. Further, it initiates legal reforms in collaboration with the Attorney General's office on laws affecting women.

The Ministry has departments in every district in the country and a gender officer in every district. Out of 209 districts, 84 have District Gender and Social Development Officers. The Ministry's stakeholders include development partners, academic and research institutions, media and public relations agencies, civil society, community based organizations and local communities as well as the judiciary, private sector, line ministries and government institutions.⁸³

The Policy on Gender Equality and Development establishes institutions as well as programmes and activities through which the specified government objectives would be met. The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Services through the Department of Gender and the National Commission on Gender support gender mainstreaming in all government ministries, advice on the impact of all government policies on women, monitor the situation of women, help formulate policies and implement strategies to eliminate gender-based discrimination.

The Gender Department is assigned the responsibility of improving the efficiency and effective integration of gender dimensions in future policy formulation, planning and implementation. It is therefore responsible for providing a technical base for gender mainstreaming through national sectoral approach and implementation of recommendations of international conventions

Through Gender Division, the Gender Commission as well as other institutions created under the ministry, the government has made progress in various sectors. In particular, the government has established gender focal points in all government ministries, (now numbering

⁸³ Government of Kenya , Ministry of Gender, Children Social Development -Strategic Plan 2008-2012

41) to facilitate mainstreaming of gender issues in all government ministries and departments. A Training Manual on Gender Mainstreaming has also been developed to co-ordinate and harmonize gender mainstreaming initiatives by various governmental and non-state actors. The government has also developed a monitoring and evaluation system to track gender mainstreaming in the country.

More importantly, the government has developed a National Plan of Action to Implement the Gender Policy (2008 – 2012) and a National Plan of Action for the Abandonment of Female Genital Mutilation (2008-2012). In particular, the government has established a functional National Committee for the Abandonment of FGM/C a Secretariat with strong support from civil society and development partners.

There has been sufficient collaboration between and among ministries to develop sector-specific gender policies, for example the Gender Policy in Education developed in 2007; Draft Land Policy, Gender Mainstreaming Strategy for the Ministry of Agriculture among others. The institutions in place have been central in lobbying both governmental and non-governmental organizations for gender mainstreaming and for promotion of women's participation in various activities as well as promotion of equality between men and women in various areas. Lastly, the institutions have conducted surveys of various government ministries and departments to determine the situation of women's participation in various sectors as well as their current level of participation.

Strengths and Challenges in the Implementation of the National Gender and Development Policy in Kenya

Policy on gender, equality and development express the government's commitment to advance the status of women as stated in Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and other international instruments. The overall objective of the

policy is to ensure women's empowerment and the mainstreaming of their needs and concerns in all sectors of development initiatives. The policy recognizes that gender and development approach is cross-cutting and therefore, programme strategies should incorporate equality as a goal and mechanisms to achieve gender balanced development through the removal of disparities between women and men.

Strengths in the Policy Implementation

The gender policy implementation is a collaborative effort between the government ministries, civil society organisations (CSO's) communities and other development partners. The implementation of the proposed policy guidelines requires an institutional framework in which institutional structures are responsive to gender issues. All ministries are in the process of establishing gender divisions that will facilitate the mainstreaming of gender into government policies, plans, budgets, and programmes geared towards achieving gender equity in all aspects of the society.

The government has developed a national plan and strategy for the country dubbed *Vision 2030*. This plan sets out a national vision to be achieved in the year 2030 through three key pillars i.e. political, economic and social pillars. Under the social pillar, Vision 2030 goal is "A just and cohesive society enjoying equitable social development in a clean and secure environment." The social pillar has identified gender concerns and in particular equity in power and resource distribution between the sexes as a priority. It aims at increasing all round opportunities among women and increase the participation of women in all economic, social and political decision making processes. It seeks to do this by starting with higher representation of women in parliament, improving access to business opportunities, health services, education services, housing and justice to all disadvantaged groups including women.

Challenges in the Policy Implementation

Challenges facing these new legislative developments include harnessing the political will and involvement of men in promoting gender equality. The civil society organizations have been addressing these by conducting education and awareness creation on human rights targeting men and women in country. On the other hand the challenge is further made complex by matters concerning marriage and family especially because the family is a cultural construction of women's roles *vis a vis* that of men. Cultural attitudes and belief about women and their traditional roles have led to women's subjugation and the persistence of retrogressive cultural practices, including forced widow inheritance, forced or coerced early marriages and property disinheritance.

These obstacles lead to domestic violence against women and girls, inability to access health care services, including family planning, the birth of more children than a family can adequately raise and women's underachievement in development. Although spousal abuse amounts to battery and/or assault in law, law enforcement agencies are still reluctant to intervene in cases of domestic violence and other problems arising in the domestic arena because their conscience is informed more by culture, which forms part of their lives, than by official laws.

In the education sector lack, of family education in Kenyan schools is a big challenge too. Calls have been made for introduction of family education in schools, which would have the potential to properly educate boys and girl on acceptable family roles and responsibilities and on measures to avoid domestic violence. However, to date, efforts to introduce family education have met with resistance, especially from some churches in Kenya. A number of religious

organizations are bridging the gap by introducing teachings on the family in their religious programmes, but without legislative backing, impacts of such programmes are limited.

Further, the sheer lack of knowledge of legal rights, coupled with lack of financial and other resources continue to pose a hindrance to women's recourse to legal and other remedies for abuse of their legal rights, especially in relation to marriage and the family. In addition to the above-stated challenges, it is noted that functional and legal illiteracy remains strong barriers to the advancement of women's rights. A good percentage of women cannot read or write; neither can they understand the laws whose application is critical to their advancement. Although awareness activities are being undertaken, only a small proportion of the population of women has been reached.

Poverty therefore, remains a formidable challenge to the progress of women and their realization of equality with men in almost every sphere of life. The majority of women live in absolute poverty. In such a state, most women are pre-occupied with the quest for survival and hardly pay attention to legal awareness campaigns, adult education and other measures intended to improve their socio-economic status. In the midst of poverty, many women continue to suffer domestic violence which hinders their meaningful participation in subsistence and development activities.

HIV and AIDS continue to pose one of the most formidable of all challenges. More people are infected and affected by HIV and AIDS. Many men have died, leaving behind many widows, most of them young and without support. The numerous cases of HIV/AIDS illnesses and frequent premature deaths rob women of time that could be devoted to productive activities, yet women bear the greatest burden of care giving to the sick and the elderly, without recognition of the significance of their contributions. The Government's efforts to support persons affected

with HIV and AIDS is complemented by that of several NGOs focusing on widows and orphans. However the support is small compared to the magnitude of the problem.

One of the biggest challenges to increased women's participation in the labour force is limited opportunities for education. As a recent report by the Ministry of Education shows, girls enter into elementary school in large numbers and that there is a near parity between girls and boys in education at that level. However, during transition into secondary schools and colleges, the number of girls drastically reduces, which means that fewer girls manage to acquire necessary educational qualifications and technical competence to secure paid employment. Obstacles contributing to the unequal realization of the right to employment between women and men include: forced and coerced early marriages and unwanted pregnancies. The number of teenage pregnancies has increased which has negatively impacted on completion rates for girls in the education system.⁸⁴

Poverty as earlier mentioned is another obstacle to women's unequal participation in employment. Poverty hinders many parents from educating their daughters beyond primary school. In some cases, where resources are scarce, parents still prefer boys' education over girls' meaning that fewer women would qualify for meaningful wage employment. The situation has been exacerbated by frequent premature deaths due to HIV and AIDS, which leaves many orphans without parental support.

Another challenge that Kenya is faced with is child-labour where majority are girls. The government has put in place programs that seek to eliminate the worst forms of child labour such as child prostitution, working in plantation and mines and child trafficking. In addition

⁸⁴ Republic of Kenya, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2005 on *A policy Framework for education, Training and Research: Meeting the challenges of education, Training and Research in Kenya in the 21st century*, 2005.

insufficient social services, especially those related to child care have made young mothers to depend on unskilled house-helps to supplement roles. This has an impact on their productive roles in the workplace. Employers consider that women's double roles contribute to disruption of work and underachievement, which makes many employers deny employment to women with actual of perceived child-bearing potential.⁸⁵

Regarding property ownership, only 3 per cent of Kenyan women own title deeds, thereby minimizing their opportunities to access credit. More women are poorer than men. Empirical evidence reveals that there is a significant gap in poverty levels between female headed and male headed households. In rural areas, 48 per cent of male-headed households were classified as poor as compared to 50 per cent of female headed households. In urban areas, the gap is larger; 30 per cent of male headed households are poor while female headed households constitute 46 per cent.⁸⁶

Another major challenge facing government measures to advance women's equality and participation in various sectors of the Kenyan society has been that of mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of progress made. The government in conjunction with civil society organisations and international community development partners - through the Ministry of Gender - has now developed a monitoring and evaluation framework to address the issues. The Monitoring and evaluation tool is in use in the ministry and will go a long way in tracking the progress of the implementation. Additionally some ministries have not earmarked budgets to establish the required gender desks. The ministries are however being trained on gender budgeting and some of the government parastatals have already been allocated resources for gender programmes.

⁸⁵ Government of Kenya .Ministry of Planning and National Development, Kenya Bureau of Statistics, *Basic Report: Kenya Integrated Household Survey – 2005/06* (August 2007), at 73.

⁸⁶ Government of Kenya, *Vision 2030: A Globally Competitive and Prosperous Kenya* .2008, pg 117

Conclusion

Women make up more than half of Kenya's population and their enhanced status is bound to translate into improvement of the entire society. The advocacy of gender issues should not therefore be viewed as leading to win /lose situation for women as compared to men but rather a win win situation for both. The Kenya government has put in place strong foundations for the improvement of the status of women and eventual attainment of gender equality. This positive achievement is as a result of various policies and legislation which has been adopted or enacted during the last 10years and in particular from the year 2000.

More efforts is needed in monitoring and evaluation of the policy implementation, more gender disaggregated data covering all critical areas of concern. Other factors that greatly contribute to slow implementation of the policy include high poverty levels, weak institutional mechanisms, negative attitudes of men, inadequate human, financial and material resources. There is also urgent need for the government and the civil society organisations and in particular women organisations to strengthen coordination mechanisms in the policy implementation

Furthermore there is urgent need to strengthen the central bureau of statistics to enhance gender data collection capacity and need for political good will on the part of politicians to implement the draft new constitution which will greatly advance women issues. Finally, it is evidently clear that with the support and commitment from all the players that is government, civil society organisations, development partners and other interested parties in the implementation of the policy, Kenya will greatly improve the status of women.

CHAPTER III

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOAL (MDG)3 IMPLEMENTATION INITIATIVES IN KENYA

Introduction

This chapter assesses the implementation process of MDGs in Kenya. The Chapter begins by presenting an overview of the eight MGDs in terms of their implications on gender equity and women empowerment. The central argument in his chapter is that MGD 3 cannot be effectively realized in isolation. Instead, its pursuit must go in tandem with efforts to realize the other seven goals because each has direct implication on the welfare of women. This overview offers a fertile ground on which to assess Kenya's MGD 3 implementation initiatives.

An overview of MDGs and their Implications of Gender Equity and Women Empowerment

The Millennium Development Goals were born from the Millennium Declaration, through unprecedented global consensus reached in year 2000 by 189 member states of the United Nations. In the Declaration, nations undertook to advance a global vision for improving the conditions of humanity throughout the world in the areas of development and poverty eradication, peace and security, protection of the environment, human rights and democracy.⁸⁷

The Millennium Development Goals are eight. Under Goal 1 UN Member states seek to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. Towards this end, member states aim to educe by half the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day, and to educe by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.

⁸⁷ Association of Media Women in Kenya with support from UNIFEM and UNDP. (2005). *A Fair Share for Women: Briefing Kit on Gender and Millenium Development Goals -Kenya*. Association of Media Women in Kenya.pp3

A major obstacle for countries trying to escape the poverty trap is lack of human skills and abilities needed to make the transition from poverty, and gender inequality is one of the greatest contributions to this problem. The exclusion of many women from primary secondary and higher education, from the full benefit of health and social services, and from full labour force and market participation combine to severely limit their ability to develop skills needed by their economies.

As the millennium task force on poverty has noted the greatest barriers to human capital transition is the denial of basic human rights to a significant part of the population and this applies broadly to women⁸⁸. Women access to productive assets and resources is frequently limited . For example a large majority of world's poor farmers are women, but in many countries they do not have the legal rights to own either the land they till or assets that would enable them to invest in it. In addition, governments failure or inability to provide adequate social infrastructure transfers a major care giving labour burden to poor women and girls- and the time caused by the extension of their working day limits their chances of engaging in income-generating activities, participating in community affairs and obtaining an education.

Poor women and especially in developing countries can also be deeply affected by trade policies and practices, which have an impact on the way in which essential services are provided and on the demand of markets for labour, goods and services. In relation to hunger and malnutrition in particular, it is important to recognise that economic growth alone will not provide a cure if unequal social conditions and exclusionary practices continue to deny women and girl's equal access to food and healthcare ensuring women's autonomy and empowerment is critical to protecting both their own and their children's nutritional needs.

⁸⁸ World Bank Gender and Development Group.2003.Gender Equality and the Millennium Development Goals. Washington D.C.: World Bank. [Http://www.worldbank.org/gender/](http://www.worldbank.org/gender/)

Under Goal 2, states seek to achieve universal primary education

The key target under this goal is to ensure all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling. The education goal is intended to ensure that by the year 2015 all girls and boys complete primary education.

While there has been a clear movement towards achieving gender equality in education over the past decades- it remains out of reach globally – of the 150 million children aged 6-11 currently not in school, over 90 million are girls and in some regions girls enrolment remain below 60percent. These figures imply that a wide range of economic, social and cultural barriers must be addressed to achieve gender equality in primary education, including demands for girls labour at home and on farms, and both the reality and perception that as adults their employment and income generating opportunities will be limited.⁸⁹

And measures sensitive to the particular obstacles blocking girls' access to education need to be implemented including the reduction of the costs of schooling (such as school fees, and uniform and text books) which studies have shown to have especially beneficial effect on girls school participation. Along with those initiatives, there is need to address parental concerns about modesty and safety through training and hiring more female teachers and improving access to sanitary facilities.

Goal 3, which is the subject of this study seeks to promote gender equality and women empowerment. It targets to eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably 2005, and to all levels of education no later than 2015.

⁸⁹ Women's International Coalition for Economic Justice .2004. Seeking Accountability on Women's Human Rights: Women Debate the UN Millennium Development Goals. Mumbai: The information company. <http://www.wicej.addr.com/mdg/index.html>

The full range of measures that must be taken to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment have been mapped out in the CEDAW and BPFA .as well as in key provisos of other international instruments and conference documents. Contained in this documents are most critical dimension of gender inequality in all aspects of women's lives-including in relation to gender based violence, cultural stereotypes, trafficking and prostitution, armed conflict, political life, laws and legal status, government structures, the media, education , employment , health care , family planning, poverty, the environment, rural life , and marriage and family relationships .

The MDGs were conceived as a means of accelerating and re-intensifying efforts to fulfill existing global commitments, and the millennium declaration specifically the pledged to enhance the implementation of CEDAW. Therefore the most pressing demand to be made under goal 3 is to implement CEDAW and Beijing platform for action across the board.

Goal 4 and 5 seeks to achieve a reduction of child mortality and improved maternal health. Under this goal, member states set out to reduce by two thirds the mortality rate among children under five and to reduce by three quarters the maternal mortality ratio.

CEDAW and BPFA understand gender-based discrimination as simultaneously threatening the health of both women and their children, for this reason the two goals are being addressed together. The millennium task force on child and maternal health has noted the challenge to achieving these goals is not technological but rather is a matter of delivery.⁹⁰ The social structures needed to effectively deliver appropriate health services do not currently exist because of under funding, deterioration of public health systems from economic reforms.

⁹⁰ Ibid

For women and children a range of gender inequalities entrenched in social economic, cultural and political structures have rendered this situation even more threatening depriving women of educational and literacy opportunities significantly impairs their ability to care for their health and that of others.

UN Members states seek under Goal 6 to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. Towards this end, states target to halt and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS and to halt and begin to reverse the incidence of malaria and other diseases. It is now well recognised that gender inequality is one of the principal factors that fuel the spread of HIV/AIDS. Halting and reversing the spread depends on the success of efforts to combat a series of deep rooted and interconnected gender inequalities that rendered women more vulnerable than men.

Cultural norms of sexual ignorance and purity of women block their access to information about prevention. Gendered power imbalances make it difficult for women to negotiate safer sex with their partners, while the burden of caring for their dependants and themselves has become overwhelming, sinking families into poverty and destitution, because women lack access to economic resources. Strategies to respond to HIV/AIDS crisis have consistently failed to include a gender perspective, in large measure because women have not been placed at the forefront of HIV/AIDS policy formulation.

Millennium Development Goal 7 seeks to ensure environmental sustainability.

States target to integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programs and reverse the loss of environmental resources; and to reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water. States also seek to achieve significant improvements in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020

Because of gendered division of labour, women shoulder the primary responsibility for agricultural work, water and fuel collection and providing food for their families. Environmental degradation and lack of access to and control over natural resources have consequently had an especially severe impact on women. For example, due to forces that are reducing access to supply of clean water-pollution, privatization of water services, poor service delivery and increasing population pressures-the burden on women has increased dramatically. Poor women and girls travel long distances from home in search of water sources, which expose them to violence, extends their already lengthy working days and limits the time they have to grow food and generate income.

Girls may be forced to drop out of school to assist in water collection. And the alternative many overburdened women are obliged to accept is lower quality water, often contaminated ground water not normally used for consumption that threatens their family's health. Furthermore where HIV/AIDS has entered the household, lack of proper access to water needed to care for the family members can completely exhaust women's capacity as caregivers and is speeding the deaths of people infected with HIV/AIDS.⁹¹

Through their responsibility in relation to key environmental resources, women have developed valuable knowledge in conservation and play key roles in the life of their environment. However gender inequalities and discrimination have deprived women of the necessary decision-making power to take the steps that would help achieve this goal

⁹¹ Women's Environment and Development Organization . 2003.Common Grounds: Women's Access to Natural Resources and the United Nations Millennium Development Goals .New York :WEDO <http://www.wedo.org/>

Under Goal 8, states seek to develop a global partnership for development

In particular, states target to develop further an open, rule based, predictable, non discriminatory trading and financial system. In addition they target to increase cooperation with pharmaceuticals companies to provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries. States also target to cooperate with private sector to make available the benefits of new technology, especially information and communication technologies.

Analysts observe that whatever commitment national governments undertake to implement the changes mandated by MDG 's they will remain unfulfilled if the needed resources and policy making flexibility are missing. Of particular concern is potential incoherence between strategies required for achieving the MDG's and economic trade policy setting frameworks at national and global levels, such as poverty reduction strategies. For example if decision taken at national level and global levels in relation to subsidies effectively disadvantage poor women's agricultural products, promote privatisation schemes that price water out of the poor women's reach or shrink the pool for overseas Development Assistance (OAD) available for development cooperation, then even the best efforts at the national levels will not be sufficient to achieve MDG's.

Against this background, it should be stressed that even apart from their responsibilities under the MDG's, government are already obliged to promote women 's human rights and eliminate all forms of discrimination⁹².for this reason as well as the broader economic and political positions they advance in international fora should always facilitate the realization of women's human rights rather than serving as obstacles. Women leadership and the inclusion of

⁹² Women's Environment and Development Organization . 2003.Common Grounds: Women's Access to Natural Resources and the United Nations Millennium Development Goals .New York :WEDO <http://www.wedo.org/>

a women's human rights perspective at the international level are critical to ensuring the right decisions are taken.

Kenya and MDGs: A Historical Survey

The MDG's have been an integral part in independent Kenya's development agenda. In retrospect, the immediate post-Independence economic development blue print – Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965 outlined the government's commitment to the eradication of hunger, illiteracy and diseases. Subsequent national policy documents which the government has published since independence have been geared towards achieving broad-based sustainable improvement in the welfare of all Kenyans. This includes the National Poverty Eradication Plan (NPEP), the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and lately the Economic Recovery Strategy (ERS) and the Strategy for Revitalizing Agriculture (SRA).⁹³ The plans, strategy papers and various sectoral plans have addressed MDG's in varying degrees of concentration and their focus have all been geared towards achieving broad-based sustainable development in Kenya.

According to the strategic plan 2008/9 -20012/3 the Kenya government has developed an ambitious national plan and strategy for the country dubbed *Vision 2030*.⁹⁴ This plan sets out a national vision to be achieved in the year 2030 through three key pillars i.e. political, economic and social pillars. The Vision provides a framework that builds on past development accomplishments in order to further inform future developmental progress. Vision 2030 complements the MDGs as a long-term plan expected to transform Kenya into a globally competitive and prosperous newly industrialized middle income country. It provides the impetus

⁹³ Kenya Vision 2030, at 117. Kenya, *Vision 2030: A Globally Competitive and Prosperous Kenya* (2008), at 117.

⁹⁴ Gok .strategic plan 2008/9-2012/3 ministry of state for planning national development and vision 2030, May 2009 . pp3

for economic growth and development. A five-year medium term plan (MTP) 2008-2012 forms the first phase of implementation of *Vision 2030* expected to contribute immensely towards the achievement of the MDGs.

The first major MDG related activity in Kenya took place in September 2002 when the first national stakeholders' workshop on the Millennium development goals was held. The main objective of the workshop was to seek consensus and promote an understanding of the significance of the millennium development goals and their links to the national planning framework. The workshop served as the first avenue towards agreeing on a country-level reporting format including the role of various stakeholders. The workshop also led to the establishment of a national MDG task-force to spearhead the MDG campaign. Consequently an MDG progress report for Kenya was officially launched in July 2003. The report formed major reference material for subsequent work and MDGs campaigns.

According to the Millennium Development Goals report focusing on the country's development agenda on the MDGs, the government has prepared a needs assessment that was carried out in May 2004 as an initial step in the move to an MDGs based planning path. This has led to the launching the MDG-based national planning process. The MDG status report has continued to inform the planning and budgeting process in Kenya. The effects of all these measures can be seen through increased budgetary allocations to the MDG related sectors and programs. In a nutshell, MDG have become a key criterion for allocating budgetary resources.⁹⁵ The key issues in the MGD's has therefore been to assess what needs to be done to scale up investment up in order to achieve the goals. The MGD's process has also entailed rallying all national and development actors behind the MGD's.

⁹⁵ Republic of Kenya Millennium Development Goals Status Report 2007: Ministry of State for Planning National Development and Vision 2030. July 2008.

A major problem hindering a detailed assessment of the progress of MGD's in Kenya is the paucity of relevant data. However, such data as available on Kenya's progress towards realizing the MGD's by the target date indicate that at the current trend and pace, achieving MGD's in Kenya will be an uphill task notwithstanding the fact that there is significant progress being recorded towards realising some of the goals especially Goal 2 (achieve universal education) and Goal 6 (combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases)

Implementation Mechanisms of the MDG's in Kenya

The overall coordination of the MDGs process is being done through a National Focal Point at the Ministry of State for Planning, National Development and Vision 2030. The Kenya government has set in place a number of activities guide Kenya towards the attainment of the MDGs.

The government has put in place an elaborated institutional framework to drive the process that includes a national steering committee comprising permanent secretaries, representatives of development partners, civil society organizations and private sector, and a technical committee for the technical oversight of the process. A National Steering Committee, an MDG unit and an MDGs task-force all work at different levels nationally to oversee the implementation of MDG initiatives at the national Level. These initiatives have had a number of substantive impacts upstream at the national level as well as at the district level in efforts to localize MDGs as well as making available a number of decentralized resources to contribute towards MDGs attainment.

The United Nations Development Program has supported the government in its MDGs initiatives specifically in the achievement of set objectives under the Development Strategy for Upstream Support as well as at the district level through a number of initiatives. At the district

level, some eight districts - namely Kilifi, Garissa, Meru South, Muranga, Bungoma, Turkana, Suba and Bondo - had been initially selected by UNDP in conjunction with the Ministry of state for Planning and National Development and Vision 2030 as a framework for the implementation of MDGs.

The Kenyan Cabinet has also directed the MDGs be mainstreamed in all the country's development framework, thus making it a requirement for all ministries to have MDG units. Through the MDG units, all ministries are expected mainstream MDG in their specific policies, plans, budgets and operations. The aggregate effect of all these measures can be seen through increased budgetary allocations to the MDGs related sectors and programs and the fact that MDGs have become a criterion for allocating budgetary resources.

The Kenyan government has taken advantage of the existing Local Authority Transfer Fund (LATF) to pursue the realization of its development ambitions in relation to MDGs. LATF was established through an act of parliament primarily to direct the expenditure of government funds on development projects at the ward level. Through the arrangement, councilors are supposed to utilise this fund to develop their respective wards. With the pressing needs to attain the MDGS – related developments, the Kenya government has directed that 20% of LATF be spent on core poverty programmes (MDGs related) at the ward level.⁹⁶

The Constituency Development Fund (CDF) has also been handy in strive towards the realization of MDGs. The CDF initiative was designed to take development to the people at the grassroots level. The fund is intended for development projects within the constituencies with the prime objective of having people drive their own development agenda. CDF is thus intended make development process at the grassroots level participatory and faster.

⁹⁶ Morris Odhiambo, *Devolved Funds and Development: A Handbook on Participation*, 2005 .Claripress, Nairobi Kenya pp11

A snap monitoring of the projects at the constituency level has shown that since the release of the first tranche in October 2004, there has been a marked improvement in the social sector (i.e. education, health and water) hence speeding up the realization of MDGs.

The other funds disbursed at constituency level include the Constituency Aids Fund (CAF) that is mainly used for HIV/Aids awareness creation, the Constituency Bursary Fund and Constituency Roads Fund. These funds have significantly improved the infrastructure and social needs of Kenyan population at constituency levels, thus contributing positively to the achievement of the MDGs at the national level.⁹⁷

An Assessment of Strengths in the Implementation of the MDG3 in Kenya

The implementation of the information, education and communication strategy has enhanced awareness and advocacy aspects of the MDGs process in Kenya. Various means and materials such as posters, brochures, and documentaries have been used to reach a cross section of the population on MDGs. The objective is to ensure that development activities at all levels are informed by the MDGs agenda.

MDGs mode of implementation in Kenya has also been identified as a major strength. The government has adopted district based planning process established through 9 pilot districts of Bondo, Bungoma, Garissa, Kilifi, Meru South, Muranga, Siaya, Suba and Turkana. This strategy aims at developing district level planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation and decision making process. District based documentation centres have been useful in enhancing district level information, education and communication capacities for data generation.

The Kenya government has also initiated capacity building programs at the district level which have recently culminated in the identification of district-specific quick impact initiatives.

⁹⁷Ibid

Analysts observe that this strategy would contribute to the realization of MDGs at the district level if fully implemented.

In the spirit of promoting local partnerships towards the realisation of the goals, the Kenya government has in conjunction with various development-partners undertaken pilot initiatives with the aim of developing best practices for replication nationally. Some of these include the millennium villages in Ban Sawi and Dertu in the Western and North-eastern provinces respectively. The purpose of these initiatives is to offer innovative models for rural communities to lift themselves out of extreme poverty and address poverty at village level through community led initiatives. The community creates and implements sustainable and community led initiatives that are tailored to the needs of the locals in the attainment of the MDGs.

The Kenya government also issued directives in March 2005 requiring all ministries to mainstream MDGs in their specific policies, plans, budgets and operations. Analysts believe that this move indicates the government's government goodwill towards the attainment of MDGs.

Challenges to the Attainment of MDG 3 in Kenya

The efforts toward the attainment of MDGs in Kenya have been confronted with some challenges. Firstly, strong attachment to socio-cultural and political issues have served to limit potential at the district level towards the realization of MDGs. A key hindrance, for instance, is the limited participation of specific groups such as women and youth. The culture of many ethnic communities still excludes the youth and women from active participation in decision making processes, thus limiting their input in the development.

The persistence of weak governance and leadership structures at the district level has also led to non-inclusion of various groups of stakeholders in planning and implementation process.

This has led to low levels of awareness at the district level of government initiatives in general and the MDGs in particular. Indeed, low levels of awareness have also exacerbated poverty levels.

Low level of institutional cooperation among various actors and agencies involved in the implementation process is another impediment to the realisation of MDGs. In particular, there is poor cooperation among government ministries and departments, between the state and non-state actors (especially the civil society) and, between the local agencies and the international community. Lack of cooperation and collaboration on development initiatives has stifled synergies and in many cases propagated wastage of time and resources (including human, technical and finances). Indeed, there exists noticeable tension between institutions or the planning structures, especially committees.

Lastly, there exists poor linkage and coordination between decentralized funds and line ministry resources resulting into low technical capacity at the district level. The planning process, especially pertaining to decentralized funds is heavily politicized thus curtailing proper participation and implementation of grassroots community projects which consequently lead to the realization of the Millennium Development Goals.

Summary and Conclusions

The chapter reveals that the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's) have opened a new door for the advancement of gender equality. Used to the best potential the MDGs can be the means by which the insidious link between gender inequalities, the waste and destruction of women's human potential, and the seemingly endless reproduction of poverty is overcome.

Because the MDGs have become the centrepiece of a common agenda embraced by the Kenya government (mainstreamed in the line ministries) and by development partners, they are positioned to be a genuinely effective engine for change. For the government to achieve the MDG by the set date, increased momentum is required at the implementation of the goals. In particular, nothing short of a more enhanced institutional cooperation and collaboration will ensure the achievement of the goals.

More attention needs to be put in the area of entrenching the MDG's at all developmental levels (nationally, grassroots levels). More effort should be directed on the implementation of the information, education and communication strategy which in the long run will ensure that all developmental aspects at whatever level are informed by the MDG's agenda.

CHAPTER IV

PUBLIC AWARENESS AND INVOLVEMENT IN THE REALIZATION OF MDG3 IN KENYA

Introduction

This chapter captures public awareness and involvement in the realization of MDG 3. The chapter divides Kenyan public into two broad categories, that is, the literate and high income groups and the illiterate/ semi- literate and low income groups. The first category groups can be located in public service, private sector, and the civil society. The second category groups can be identified as rural households and slum dwellers. This categorization is fairly rigid and has been adopted primarily to assess the extent to which the literate population is conscious and involved in the pursuit of MDG 3 compared to their low income and illiterate counterparts.

The underlying argument in this chapter is that is that involvement of the public is pivotal to the realization of the goal, and the more widely conscious and widely involved the Kenyan public, the higher are the chances that the goal may be attained by 2015. Data that informs this chapter was derived from oral interview conducted in Nairobi among slum residents (representing the low –income class) and a selection of respondents employed in the public service, civil society, institutions of higher learning, gender activists, human rights agencies, and the personnel working in local/ international non-governmental organizations.

The chapter is divided into two sections. Section I presents the finding of the field research conducted in the Nairobi slums among a variety of adult respondents. To the extent that women constitute the majority (80%) of the respondents, the findings largely represent the position of slum women. Section II presents the views of respondents identified as belonging to

the second category of respondents. The majority of the respondents in this category (70%) were also women. The emerging issues are captured in the summary and conclusions section.

The Perception Nairobi Slum Residents on Gender Issues and Actors Involved in Women Empowerment

An oral interview was randomly conducted with 75 respondents who reside in Kibera, Mathare, Korogocho, Kawangware, Kangemi, Kiambiu and Huruma slums. 60 respondents were women, while 15 were men. In terms of age categories, 39 respondents were aged between 18 and 25; 24 were aged between 26 and 35; 11 were aged between 36 and 45 and 7 were aged 46 and above.

Majority of the respondents (36) had secondary school education. 19 had post secondary school (tertiary) 9 dropped out at primary school level, 7 were university graduates while 4 had never been to school (illiterate). Majority of the respondents had lived in the slums for over 5 years, implying that their responses were based on experience based slum life.

The predominant perception of the slum residents on gender roles is still primarily traditional. Male respondents view the role of women as confined to cooking, giving birth, providing emotional care to both men and children, small scale farming, giving motherly advice, conducting informal education at home to children and running small scale grocery businesses popularly identified in the slums as *mama mboga*. Majority of the female respondents also hold same views as men in favor of their traditional gender roles. Majority of female respondents expressed discomfort with their colleagues who venture into male roles, saying that their femininity is God-given.

A minority of the respondents were able to identify laws of Kenya that discriminate against women and therefore serve to inhibit women empowerment initiatives. These include marriage laws, succession laws, child support laws and migration laws. Some of the cultural practices still observed in the slums which discriminate against women were identified prohibition against eating some food, preference of the boy-child over the girl child in schooling, public resentment against women's involvement in preaching, and restricting women religious faith to the husband's.

Other forms of gender inequalities practices which some respondents detest are lack ownership or property rights, insensitive division of household chores, leaving the bulk of the responsibility to women thus overburdening with house work. Respondents acknowledge that women are still an inconspicuous gender in leadership institutions largely due to low level of awareness and inhibitions placed on them by men. Men in slums still deny their ambitious wives the opportunity to participate in development project, to work and earn a living, and vie for political office.

Wife battering is still a common practice in the slums. So is sexual violations and abuse. One of the consequences of poverty and rampant sexual abuse in the slums the high ratio of vulnerability among women to HIV/AIDS which is commonly attributed prostitution and unprotected sex. HIV/AIDS scourge has occasioned poor health among women and children thereby exacerbating poverty and vulnerability.

Regarding access to opportunity for self actualization in the political arena, most respondents hold that women should (and do) have equal opportunities as men to register as voters, cast their votes, and run for elective offices including local government, parliamentary and presidency. Both female and male respondents also believe women should own property including land. The respondents are united in their observation that women have not achieved equal opportunity as men owing to structural constraints or forces beyond women's control. The respondents therefore advise that voter education in the slums should target women more.

The some respondents maintain that women have benefitted from a number of women empowerment programs they identified to include training in catering, community service, HIV AIDS awareness. Besides, slum based women are members of a number of Merry go Round organizations(revolving loans) through which they raise money for small scale income generating projects. Some non-governmental organizations have also trained women on small scale farming methods under the popular urban farming program.

It is important to note however, that majority of the women empowerment programs in the slums are local voluntary initiatives thus lacking the involvement of the government or the international community. Female respondents acknowledge that they do receive support from men in relation to gender empowerment, but it is inconsequential. Majority of men in the slums propagate inequality by engaging in polygamous marriages, wife battering, and resisting challenges from their ambitious wives who want to always be on top. In a nutshell, men are less accommodative of new ideas from women .

Men in the Nairobi slums contribute to women empowerment in a number of ways. Some husbands support their wives to advance their education, while quite a majority encouraged women to participate in local community development initiatives. Men also

supported women's business by injecting capital and giving advice. More importantly, women do not face opposition from men when they associate with other women in local welfare groups. Men advocate and promote girl child education, share and give property to wives and daughters, and provide (physical) security to the family and household goods from thugs who abound the slums.

The respondents were divided over the nature and extent of support that they receive from the government to support women empowerment. Majority of the respondents in the Nairobi slums seem to appreciate government support in the promotion of gender equity issues in the community. The most noticeable forms of governments support to gender empowerment nationwide in general and in the slums in particular. Some of the government initiatives in place to promote gender equality that the respondents could identify include the availability of easy loans to women groups to promote and stimulate business and entrepreneurship, the creation of a Gender Ministry and the National Women Fund.

Other government support measures to women empowerment include the creation of Constituency Development Funds which is highly supportive of women projects, the promotion of girl-child education, the enactment and enforcement of new laws that protect women and the girl-child such as the implementation of gender policy and enactment of Sexual Offence Act; affordable health services including family planning and maternity care, the *Kazi kwa vijana* initiative. The provincial administration – ranging from the village elders (*wazee wa vijiji*) to the District Commissioners also listen and seek to address the plight of women within the limits of their capacity.

A section of the respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the nature and degree of government support. The discontented lot cite bureaucratic bottleneck in government offices, widespread corruption among government officials, and the sheer lack of government officers on the ground as the major impediment to effective government involvement in support of women empowerment. As one respondent stated, "women empowerment is just an afterthought: it does not exist as a mainstream government development policy.

A majority of the respondents agreed that women are actively involved in supporting gender equality initiatives. This is especially so because women want to uplift their self-esteem through participation, and direct involvement in development initiatives. Women also offer psychosocial support to each other especially during situations of distress. But a relatively small section of the respondents cited frequent disagreement among women and high levels of ignorance as a major hindrance to their participations and involvement in women empowerment initiatives. This is further exacerbated by traditional beliefs about women's inferiority to men to which majority of the slum women have succumbed.

Non-governmental organizations are more supportive of gender equality initiatives in the slums than the government. A number of non-governmental organizations involve women directly in their empowerment programs and challenge them to take up leadership roles especially by insisting that any organizations they support must be gender sensitive – more often reflected in the leadership structures. NGOs play a critical role in training, capacity building and advocacy programs in which. They not only get sensitized about human rights but are also challenged to play a role in the global effort to uplift the situation of women. The most critical challenge is that NGOs operating in the slums only recruit and work with literate women some of whom relocate to affluent estates once their incomes improve from the remunerations received

from these agencies. Majority of the slum-base women population is seldom reached. Despite these weaknesses, NGOs are still rated as the leading champions of gender empowerment in the slums, followed by welfare organizations. The Kenya government comes last on this score.

The female population in the slums is generally optimistic about the prospects of realizing gender empowerment dream. A Significant number of the respondents are encouraged by the fact that women are increasingly assuming a leading role in development initiatives both locally and internationally. Within the slums, more women groups are being formed to address socio-economic afflictions of women. Equally, girl-child enrolment in primary school education is on the rise and rape cases are on the decrease. In a nutshell, Kenyan communities are waking up to the challenge of valuing, protecting empowering women. This is attested by the increasing number of women elected to key positions and elective posts. The number of women ministers in churches is also swelling.

The Nairobi Slum Residents and MDG 3

A significant proportion of the slum population neither knows nor have an idea about MDGs. Even among the few that seem to have an idea about MDG, there is a tendency towards associating the goals with women empowerment only. Some of the responses received on the question posed to the respondents on the meaning and aims of MDG read like: the UN empowering women to take their rightful place in development, women empowerment, development of infrastructure and human resource. Other respondents understand them as initiatives aimed at helping women in a number of ways including to assist them to get more seats in parliament, to promote women education, to support women financially, and to uplift women to equal status as men.

About 30% of the respondent acknowledges government involvement in the efforts geared towards realizing MDGs. They cite initiatives involvement at the grassroots levels such as law reform in the gender sector, the establishment of women fund, equal employment opportunity for both men and women and, the creation of Gender Ministry. But a significant number of respondents (65%) observe that there is minimal government interventions. They note that there is too much talk about MDGs than action. The respondents note that the anticipated trickle-down effect has not been felt in the slums. Instead, conditions have only worsened as a large section of the slum population cannot meet basic need including food, drinking water, shelter, sanitation. Massive corruption in government projects, the obsession among key government leaders with 2012 elections, lack of proper coordination among government departments and between the government and other non-state actors are all impediments to the realization of MDGs.

In particular reference to MDG3, majority of the respondents further note that political interference, traditional beliefs and practices, early marriages and pregnancies have combined to hinder women advancement. The respondents further observe that infighting between women organizations has been detrimental to the unity of purpose which is a prerequisite condition for achieving the gender equality. Inadequacy funds to initiate gender equality projects and poor management and bureaucracy in institutions of implementation of gender agenda have slowed the entrenchment of affirmative action, which have the potential to translate to more political participation of women.

MDG and Enlightened Kenyan Public

Majority of the respondents that were sampled for interview were female respondents with educational levels ranging from college diplomas to post graduate degrees. Majority of the

respondent were young people in the age bracket of 18 – 40 years who work in various government ministries, private sectors and the wider civil society.

Enlightened members of the public attribute to effective women participation in the development process to insensitive government policies, weak legal structures, and cultural and socio-economic factors. Cultural beliefs coupled with negative male attitude have constrained women to accept that they cannot do what men can do. Likewise men also think women should not do what they are doing even if they have the potential. Consequently, some men prevent their wives and children (especially girls) from engaging in initiatives that go beyond the mainstream. They believe too much education is dangerous for a woman. Equally, too much money destroys even a good woman. Some respondents in this category attribute the problem to the socialisation in which women are considered as second class citizens.

The respondents also noted that despite free primary school education, ignorance among a significant population of women still hinders them from active participation in development projects. Majority of the respondents identify with the notion that most women lack confidence in themselves to articulate and engage meaningfully in development process. This is brought about by low educational levels, low self esteem / and male stereotypes towards women that derails their active participation .

The aggregate effect of ignorance is that women are not up to date with development trends and emerging issues both locally and internationally. The enlightened Kenyan public seems to agree with their counterparts in the slums on the observation that women's time is consumed on giving responsibilities at home such as performing household chores and caring for children. Such responsibilities make women less effective in the development process.

On the empowerment of women, the respondents observe that low financial powerbase among most organizations limit program implementation to non-priority areas which do not empowerment women 75 percent of the respondents under this category are actively involved in programs within their respective organizations which strive towards the realization of women empowerment and equity. NGOs, in collaboration with the government run programs that seek to sensitize the rural communities against female genital mutilation (FGM). Some organizations address gender disparities within the communities where they work by mainstreaming gender within our projects and advocating for more representation of women in decision making processes as well as overall participation in community development. Others are engaged in implementing affirmative action on leadership and providing equal opportunities of employment to women, as well as conducting gender sensitisation awareness which is about being an equal opportunity employer.

On the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming in the government national development plans, some respondents observe that the government has embraced affirmative action in most of its plans and projects. And the government also recognizes the empowerment of women and youth through the ministry of Gender and the Youth Ministries. To the extent that the government has played its role, the challenge at the moment is upon women to take up their opportunities and sensitize the less-privileged and the illiterate counterparts about their right of participation. They reiterate that the government has proved beyond doubt that it is sensitive to gender issues especially through the establishment of gender divisions in all line ministries.

Selected women s countered that the government has not done enough to uplift the status of women. They compare Kenya unfavorably with other countries such as Rwanda, Uganda and South Sudan where specific positions have been set aside for women throughout the government

structures. For instance, in Southern Sudan, 25% of all elective positions, presidential appointments etc must be women. In Kenya, this has been used by politicians for political gain, but has not been put into proper use.

The respondents do not only know about MDGs, they are also capable of launching critical examination of their implementation status in Kenya. Firstly, are they skeptical about the extent of MDG awareness in rural areas and in the slums. They raise the concern that if the people whom the MDGs target do not understand them (MDGs), they can hardly be partners in the implementation process. Yet the rural population constitutes the majority. Indeed, the rural population constitutes 60% of the national population the slum dwellers account for more than 50% of the urban dwellers and make up a sizeable portion of the workforce. The few who have heard about them in the rural areas do not understand what the goals mean, and there is evident confusion between Vision 2030 flagship projects, i.e women fund, and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

Other respondents were especially critical about MDG3 which seeks to empower women gender at the expense of the male gender or by leaving out men. They also note that very little has been done by the government to breakdown the MDGs in simple terms for the populations to understand. There is, thus an urgent need to domesticate the United Nations Millennium Declaration and to device effective information, education and communication strategies for the Millennium Development Goals so as to enhance grassroots understanding.

The enlightened public who fall under this category believe that the key stakeholder in the implementation of MDG 3 include the government, Community Based Organizations, the people (citizens) , the Civil Society Organizations, the United Nations, and private sectors, in terms of weaknesses that the respondents have noted in the existing strategies and plans adopted

by government for the realization of the MDGs include lack of monitoring & evaluation for strategies to track down the implementation process especially the activities implemented by external development partners. A clear national structure and policy of implementation of MDG's is also lacking. The masses are out of picture as far as implementation is concerned.

Other challenges include lack of proper coordination of MDG activities within government, lack of political goodwill in the implementation of MDG's. One respondent cited a case in which policy makers snubbed the Mombasa retreat organized by UNDP to sensitise parliamentarians about the Goals. Further, the dispersion of the implementation departments among different ministries for political reasons defeats the implementation focus and there is discordance and lack of effective collaboration between actors implementing the National Gender and Development Policy and the Millennium Development Goals.

48% of the respondents praised effectiveness in collaboration between and among MDG implementing agencies but recognized the need to minimize unnecessary bureaucracy that exists between various inter governmental institutions so as to enhance smooth implementation of the policy and goals. To achieve the desired effect, the National Gender Commission should take active role in coordinating the implementation roles.

Despite loopholes and challenges in the implementation of MDG, majority of the respondents believe that Goal 3 will eventually contribute to the advancement of gender equality in Kenya. However, there must be improvement in the implementation mechanisms and strategies must be adopted to domesticate some of the issues that are abstract in the MDGs or to domesticate them to suit the Kenyan context.

As to whether MGD3 are really an effective strategy for empowering women and attaining gender equity in Kenya, majority of the respondent in the affirmative but only at the

policy level. However, at the grassroots level, practical implementation and more strategic action will have to be undertaken. There is also need to solicit the government's good will from all line ministries and politicians. A respondent proposed that in order to assure effectiveness in implementation, the government should establish a department specifically to deal with MDGs. And to step up awareness, MDGs should be captured in syllabuses in both lower and upper learning institutions. This will also ensure speedy domestication of the MDG's.

Summary and Conclusions

This chapter exposes a number of issues regarding public awareness and involvement in the realization of MDG3. In the first place, it reveals that majority of the Kenyan population in rural areas or slums are less knowledgeable about MDGs in general and MGD 3 in particular compared to their highly educated and high income groups. The same populous groups are also less involved with the government in the initiatives that aim to realize a fulfillment of the goals. To the extent that rural areas and slums host majority of the poor Kenyan women, the study findings imply that very little can be done to change the situation of women unless the target group is sensitized first and then directly involved.

The study exposes the existence of two different categories of women: the rural, illiterate and poor women; and the educated, highly enlightened and economically privileged lot. The former group is the intended beneficiary of MDG3 yet they have not been reached effectively by government and civil society initiatives.

The study further reveals that other agencies (NGOs self-help projects) have been more actively involved with slum communities in gender equity and women empowerment than the government. This exposes loopholes in government initiatives as well as the evident lack of determination to realize the goal by 2015. More worrying is the fact that the public is aware that

MDGs is not part of government to the extent that huge resources are diverted to politics and other programs that have no direct bearing on women.

In a nutshell, the majorities of the Kenyan public, especially women are ignorant about MDGs and are less involved in the initiatives aimed at its realization. Since eight years have elapsed since the declaration in 2000, it is possible to cast aspersions on the prospects of realizing the same by 2015 unless government strategies and priorities are re-organized drastically towards this goal.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Introduction

A number of conclusions can be drawn from the above chapters. First and foremost, MDG3 is a global aspiration which is difficult to achieve in developing countries unless the socio-political and economic conditions that characterize and define these countries also change. Gender equity and women empowerment therefore appears to many actors and agencies as an alien construct with little relevance in domestic politics and economics. This may partly explain why the Kenya government has not launched an aggressive campaign towards the realization of Millennium Development Goals(MDG).

Given the external origin of the Millennium Development Goals (MGD's) the conviction locally is something like "If the Western women is empowered, let them bear the cost. The conservative attitudes locally among the male gender as well as a significant population of females who are victims of culture have combined to retard progress towards the realization of MDG3(Gender Equity and women empowerment). Here is one area in which modernity is in conflict with tradition. And as the study reveals, modernity is making its way through, but slowly.

Further complicating the prospects of MDG3 realization by 2015 is the fact that states that are party to the declaration are independent and sovereign actors whose responsibilities in this task is only voluntary, not compulsive. To the extent that international relations theory (IR) conceives states as self-interested actors, nation-states in the developing countries are likely to take advantage of this lack of compulsive measures in tackling MDGs by according priority to other areas that have direct implication on domestic politics and power struggles.

The study, therefore confirms the hypotheses that external origin of MDGs puts a constrain on prospects of its realization in domestic settings, and that conservative cultural attitudes inhibit the progress towards the realization of MDG3. But significant progress has been made by the government, NGOs, and international community that can be built upon to enhance the realization of MDGs in Kenya. It is against this background that the following recommendations are proposed.

Recommendations

There is need to strengthen mechanisms for accountability to gender equality and women's empowerment that will accelerate the achievement of the MDG's .This will be possible through the demand of positive and strong constitutional, legal and institutional mechanisms that promote gender equality and women's empowerment at all levels and across sectors. The government must provide more appropriate functional mechanisms for enforcing gender based rights at the local and a national levels. The draft constitution of Kenya should be enacted as it contains clauses that call for equality and the improvement of opportunities for women.

There is need to lobby for the implementation of international agreement aimed at eliminating gender based discrimination, such as the convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW), Beijing platform for action(BPFA) and convention on the rights of child(CRC).All actors should support capacity building for the implementation of international conventions (domesticating them). Disseminate and popularise the convention on elimination of all forms of discrimination against women(CEDAW) provisions with the aim of institutionalising it for monitoring discrimination based on gender .For example in the current

constitution review there is incorporation of the improved definitions of discrimination , this is indicative of governments awareness of its Conventions on elimination of all forms of discrimination against women(CEDAW) obligations and efforts to meet them. Although the reviewed constitution was defeated in a referendum conducted in the year 2005, the government has now renewed its commitment to complete the review process. With a lot of international support that the intended constitutional review process now enjoys, there is hope that Kenya may soon have a definition of discrimination that is compliant with CEDAW's requirement. The new constitution will provide an accurate definition of discrimination and that it will also embody the principle of equality.

To complement legislative and judicial measure to promote women's rights, the Kenyan government is currently implementing a number of programmes and activities alone and in collaboration with partners , in collaboration with development partners a reform program in the governance, justice , law and order sector (GJLOS) covering over thirty ministries, Departments and Agencies through the ministry of justice, national cohesion and constitutional affairs. The GJLOS reform program 's vision is "A safe , secure , democratic , just ,corruption free, human rights respecting and prosperous Kenya for all."Its mission is "To reform and strengthen sector institutions for enhanced protection of human rights, efficient, accountable and transparent governance and justice."In pursuit of this vision and mission, GJLOS is committed to shared values which include rights based reform, gender responsiveness among others.

Sensitization campaigns should be put in place in communities and schools and at policy levels promoting male involvement in women empowerment and advancement. Sexual maturation education should be enhanced at the school and community level to promote gender equality and human rights. The education will have the potential to properly educate boys and

girls on acceptable family roles and on measures to avoid domestic violence. Encourage community mobilisation and sensitisation in support of the girl child as a basis for influencing social-cultural and household dynamics to overcome the differential treatment of boys and girls.

Strengthen the coordination mechanisms related to the implementation of the national gender policy in line with the implementation of the millennium development goals (MDG). The policy on gender equality and development expresses the government's commitment to advance the status of women as stated in CEDAW and other international instruments. The overall objective of the policy is to ensure women's empowerment and mainstreaming of their needs and concerns in all sectors of development so that they can participate and benefit equally from development initiatives. The focus should be on empowerment strategies that only demonstrates understanding of the essential linkages within sectors, but also recognizes that gender and development approach is cross cutting and therefore, programme strategies should in cooperate equality as a goal and mechanisms to achieve gendered balanced development through removal of disparities between women and men

The government has developed a national plan and strategy for the country dubbed vision 2030 . The plan has three pillars i.e. political , economic and social pillars. Under the social pillars, vision 2030 goal is "A just and cohesive society enjoying equitable social development in a clean secure environment. The social pillar has identified gender concerns and in particular equity in power and resource distribution between sexes as a priority. It aims at increasing all round opportunities among women and increase the participation of women in all social economic and political decision making process. The vision 2030 seeks to do this by higher presentation of women in parliament, improving access to business opportunities, health services, education services, housing and justice to all disadvantage groups including women.

Minimizing vulnerabilities through prohibitive of harmful cultural practices such as female Genital Mutilation /Cutting (FGM/C), increasing school enrolment for girls and children from marginalised communities and poor rural and slum communities, attaining gender parity and fairness in the delivery of justice.⁹⁸

Women who have no final say in any decision in the household have higher childhood mortality rates than those who have a say in decisions in the household. Therefore the government through the ministry of health and organisations working in this sector, should increase women's ability to access information, make decisions and act effectively in their own interest or in the interest of those who depend on them. Intensify Information Education and Communication (IEC) activities and programs, involve women's groups networks in mass media to increase outreach programmes for men and women on various issues relating to their health. This will include information dissemination on the importance of family planning in general and child spacing in particular, taboos and harmful traditional practices that impact negatively on the health of the women and girls.⁹⁹

HIV/AIDS is a gender issue because it affects both men and women but women are more vulnerable due to biological, epidemiological and social reasons. The feminization of poverty is a key characteristic of the socio-economic impact of HIV/AIDS. The burden of care of the infected and sick invariably falls on women in the family, leading to an increase in female headed households sometimes of girl children with little access to productive resources, often driving them into sex work for survival. Therefore the government through the help of the ministry of health needs to strengthen the gender based approach to HIV/AIDS that takes into

⁹⁸ Kenya, Vision 2030: A Globally Competitive and Prosperous Kenya (2008), pg 116 – 117 & 120.

⁹⁹ Kenya Demographic Household Survey, 2003

consideration different social expectations , roles status and economic power of men and women affected and infected by the epidemic.¹⁰⁰

There is need to enter the information superhighway because at the moment there is the threat of a new form of information poverty that could further widen the gap in economic status and competitiveness especially among women, therefore more women need to be trained on use of ICT's to communicate their own agenda at the international and the national platforms in order to effect the advancement of women' s empowerment and social change¹⁰¹

Create non discriminatory support services, including investment funds for women's businesses, and target women ,particularly low income women in trade promotion programmes. The recent launch of Women Enterprise Fund which is a flagship project in Vision 2030 will facilitate women's access to micro-finance credit and other financial services . The demand for credit outstrips the available funds allocated by the treasury, there is therefore need to mobilize more resources from other development partners and scale up the Women Enterprise Fund(WEF) if it's to make any meaningful impact in economic empowerment of women and in promoting women's rights and addressing the critical gap in the economic and social field of women.

The government's efforts to increase women's accessibility to financial facilities is increasingly being complemented by non-governmental organizations NGO's such as the Kenya women finance trust fund, Jamii Bora and many other micro -finance organisations that offer flexible loans to women for small scale business in rural and urban areas. The government has continued to encourage the establishment of more of such organisations and for capacity of existing ones to be enhanced.

¹⁰⁰ UNIFEM /RATN Gender and HIV/AIDS Training Manual , 2004

¹⁰¹ www.APC.org and Gender IT .org.

Organise, support and fund community based education training campaigns to raise awareness about violence against women. Which prevents women from enjoyment of their human rights, and mobilise local communities to use appropriate gender sensitive traditional and innovative methods of conflict resolution , take special measures to eliminate violence against women, particularly violence against those in vulnerable situations such as young women , women with disability , girls . Intensify public educational campaigns directed at women individually, in their groups and organisations and to promote and support their efforts in contributing to the national development. Encourage public educational campaigns aimed at facilitating change from persistent cultural and traditional taboos and practices that are detrimental to gender equality advancement.

There is need to capacity build women`s organization and policy influencing institutional capacity building for promoting and facilitating gender equality goal entrenched in the millennium commitment. In creating awareness encourage active participation of women in political decisions making process at the grassroots level, government, NGO`s, private sector and legislative bodies .This will in the long run facilitate the re-defining of priorities regarding gender-specific concerns , values and experiences

Ensure education programmes including special education and technical training are more gender responsive in curricula, training and learning materials. Continue creating awareness and initiate programmes and activities , including community based specific intervention on dangers or risky sexual behaviour, protective measures, prevention of mother-to-child transmissions and community based care and support for people infected and affected by AIDS.

Conclusions

A major finding of the analysis is that although many of these aspects are articulated in the policies and strategies for reducing poverty and gender inequality, implementation is lagging behind. The slow implementation appears to be that conventional civil service practices discourage collaboration between departments and the institutionalization of participatory practices. This situation is exacerbated by a lack of understanding of gender issues on the part of political leaders and civil servants who tend to see women as a disadvantaged group rather than a potentially productive asset a view which prohibits creative thinking on how to realize this potential. There is need to capacity build civil servants working in the ministries whose main focus is implementation of gender equality, for example Budgeting officers' understanding of gender budgeting (A representative from one of the government ministry made the point that "decisions on budgeting were left up to the individual officer who is usually male and not very gender aware, "we have been subjected to many different policies in the last years, we have had no breathing time to properly take stock of what we have achieved and no time to think before we prepare another policy". There should be proper coordination of the implementation process and the national development plan should be built upon to help all involved to articulate their roles and responsibilities and decide how to achieve mutually supportive relationships for more effective implementation.

The number of women civil servants, politicians and professionals is slowly increasing, decisions makers and leaders continue to be mainly men. The majority of women still labour long hours in underpaid work and are still subject to the constraints imposed on them by male dominated societies. There is lack of innovative and visionary leadership, there is still more talk

than action, and the international community is still too cut off from the experience of ordinary people to apply realistic responses.

Although it is not yet possible to fully assess whether specific commitments made in the national gender policy have been adequately implemented, it is generally agreed that strategies are not always being implemented mainly due to lack of coordination at the central government level. Effective implementation of the MDG based planning (integrating the gender aspect) depends on collaboration to ensure that broad policies are translated into action plans and budgetary allocation to achieve implementation at the local national and local levels.

Reviewing the government gender mandate and linking gender policy implementation with the implementation of the national development policy (vision 2030) consideration should be given to using effectively the national development plan process as the platform for developing, coordinating and implementing gender policy. This would involve setting up or enhancing gender focus of the national plan review process through direct involvement of gender activists groups and improving gender monitoring by including officers responsible for monitoring gender aspects in the national development plan monitoring teams.

Emphasis on local domestication and total support be accorded to the gender responsive budgeting (GRB), it should be entrenched into the local communities not to be seen as an elitist issues. All Kenyans should embrace gender responsive budgeting (GRB). it seeks to mainstream gender into budgetary process from planning to implementation, monitoring and evaluation. GRB has increasingly used as an effective tool, both to hold government accountable to its commitment to achieve gender equality. The government of Kenya has embraced budget reforms, which includes public participation in the budget making process to allow transparency and negotiations .public sector hearings of the budget preparation are announced through the

media and in this way, women are availed the opportunity to make their contributions in the budget development process. The other positive development is the shift from line budgeting where the budget was based on line items to programme –budgeting providing for the financing of specific programs/projects .This shift has enabled the government to track budgetary allocations that target gender equality and women`s empowerment.

Concerted efforts have to be made by governments and donors alike to ensure that gender equality and the Millennium development goals (MDG`s) they are comprehensively implemented , their focus should be on identifying and building on successes at the local level. empowering civil society and enlightening leaders. The social context is changing as countries embrace democracy. Actions are required to influence these changes and ensure evolution of better education, more productivity and more gender enlightened societies.

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