

# A shared Vision: Women Championing Women in Agricultural Research and Development

Agnes W. Mwang'ombe,  
Professor of Plant Pathology and Principal, College  
of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences, UoN

## Introduction: How it all started

- Right through my childhood my greatest supporter in my education was my own Father and Mum behind the scenes: My education story
- In 1993, a group of Women Agricultural Scientists from Kenya attending a Scientific Conference in Kampala, mooted an idea to confront the media reports indicating that Women cannot do Maths and Science.
- We went through these top National Schools, we did it then and girls can still do it today.

## Introduction: How it all started

- Through informal meetings we refined our goal and objectives, recruited more Women from our discipline and the group grew large.
- Through struggles, we were then registered in 1995 and elected first Chair and stepped down in 2001.
- Amongst the key objective was to provide scholarships for top qualifying girls from very poor resource backgrounds join National schools.

## Introduction: How it all started

- This was a hit as we were handling real problem where poor girls were losing their hard earned positions into national schools to second best due to lack of fees.
- Support was both Nationally and Internationally.
- Then came the problem again of poor performance at the schools by the same girls we were funding.



## Introduction: How it all started

- It was very frustrating. I many times said, girls, you have fees, pocket money, fare home, get down and read but it was not working.
- They came from poor backgrounds and some with intimidating cultures and simply it wasn't working.
- Then, I came up with the idea of mentorship, role modeling and it was a total breakthrough.
- Some members started implementing school visits.
- The success was unmatched. More schools invited to start the same in their schools.

# Mentorship

- Mentoring is a tool that organizations can use to nurture and grow their people.
- It can be an informal practice or a formal program.
- Mentees or proteges observe, question and explore.
- Mentors demonstrate, explain and model.

# How We Learn

The Percentage (%) Of Information That We Retain When We:

10% Read

20% Hear

30% See

50% See and Hear

70% Discuss

80% Experience

95% **S H A R E**

0 20 40 60 80 100

*Based on the work of William Glasser*

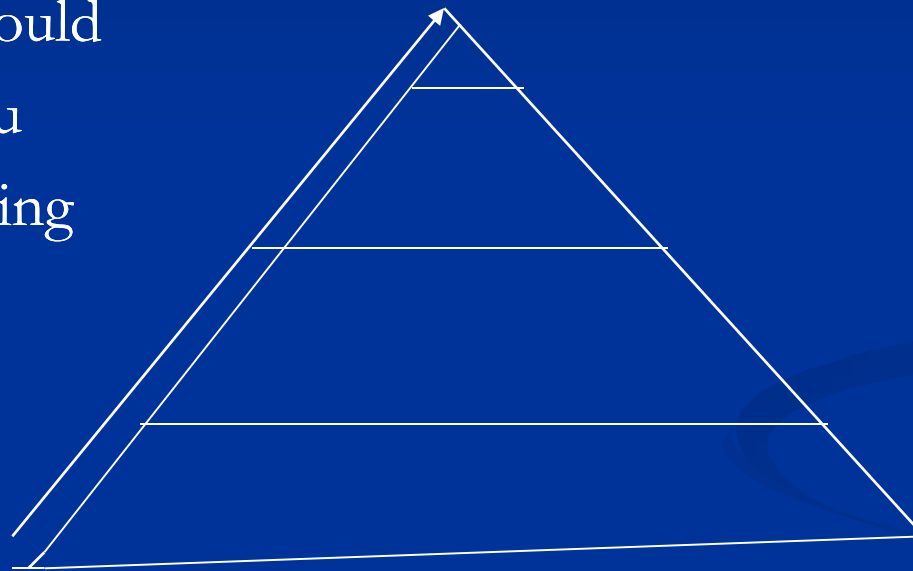
# Personal values/Institutional values (core values)

- Personal values
- Personal Vision
- Objectives
- What do you think can make you not realize your vision
- 2001: Stepped down from KEPAWAE: To prepare for Deanship which was coming up in 2002 but only shared with my family; I needed to become a Full Professor



# Your vision: what will hinder you from achieving the vision

- Vision:
- What would prevent you from realizing your vision



# MOTIVATION

## *Un Limited Potential – Abundance Paradigm*

- *How many words, stories, books we can get from 26 letters of the alphabet?*
- *Numbers from the digits 0 – 9?*
- *Oranges from one orange seed?*
- *Colors from the three primary colors: red, yellow, and blue?*
- *Tunes of music from scales of eight music notes or less?*

# Introduction: Focus in women in Agricultural Science and related disciplines

The presentation has two objectives:

- To articulate what it is that we are promoting in women's participation in science, technology and innovation for agriculture and rural development and why;
- on how we are handling this.

# To achieve these objectives

- We take a gender perspective in recognition of the fact that it takes contributions of both women and men to achieve optimum levels of growth in agriculture and rural development.

# What gender inequality means for science, technology and innovation

- First we interrogated question “Why promote women’s participation?” Why pay special attention to science?
- What do we want to promote? We Examined both quantitative and qualitative elements of participation.
- Assessed what each element contributes that leads to effective development and shared growth.
- We came up with some Suggested actions

# What gender inequality means for science, technology and innovation

- Women's experiences, knowledge, perspectives and gender needs have yet to be specifically consulted, tapped and incorporated to inform repository of knowledge or development frameworks.
- The exclusion of 50% of a nation's population from fully participating in the development process leads to sub-optimal utilisation of resources and failure to achieve development goals.

# Gender and development

- Gender inequality is a key development issue.
- Achieving gender equality is an important millennium development goal.
- There is need to mainstream gender in all development processes.
- At the moment many African Governments or Institutions: have set atleast 30% or 50% women or either gender

# Gender and development

- Female farmers play a vital role in African agriculture, accounting for the majority of the agricultural workforce.
- However, agricultural research and higher education are disproportionately led by men.



# The Business case

- Women enjoy widespread acceptance, yet the strategic case for women leadership is yet to be made in a number of cases.
- Global labor force comprises at least 50% women.
- 30-50% customers are women
- 70% shoppers are women by virtue of our gender roles.
-

# The questions many are asking

- Should women emulate the male leadership styles because men have made very successful leaders over many years?
- Does it work?
- Phrases like these are common: women are their own worst enemies, is this true in an organizational set up?
- Can we change this albeit one woman at a time?

# The questions many are asking

- It is a struggle to break the glass ceiling for women but it is even harder to stay at the top, how do we stay there?
- With all these questions and dilemmas, the success of women as leaders will depend more on how women choose to build their leadership.
- What we are talking about is for ambitious women who want to break the glass ceiling, stay they and leave a legacy.
- It is not for the faint hearted, you have to purpose and go for it. Work smart

# Gender and development

- There is an urgent need for greater representation of women in the field of agricultural science and technology (S&T) in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Female scientists, professors, and senior managers offer different insights and perspectives to help research institutes to more fully address the unique and pressing challenges of both female and male farmers in the region.

# Gender and development

- Female participation is known to diminish with career advancement in S&T systems.
- Hence, women are less represented in high-level research and management positions compared with their male colleagues.
- As a result, women have less influence in policy- and decision making processes.

# Gender and development

- women's participation in research systems is important for two major reasons:
  - ✓ the need to reach gender balance and hence more equal representation in research and policy,
  - ✓ and the opportunity to attract additional, much-needed human resource capacity.
- Lack of capacity has been a particular problem in agricultural research and higher education in Sub-Saharan Africa, where appropriate capacity is a necessary foundation for economic growth and to ensure food security

# Gender and development

- But strengthening Africa's agricultural research capacity requires more than just increasing the number of women participating in absolute terms;
- it requires more women in senior, decision making roles. Female farmers play an important role in African agriculture , producing the majority of the region's crops.
- Addressing the needs of these farmers requires increased participation by female scientists, professors, and senior managers.
- Women also have different insights, which will support research institutes in more fully addressing the unique and pressing challenges of both female and male farmers in Africa.

## Enhancing careers of Women in Agricultural research and development

- I was invited to join a program under Gender and diversity whose purpose was to support women in upward mobility in their profession in E. Africa.
- I served as a Vice Chair on the Committee and a Mentor and the outcome was amazing.
- The Women who benefited in the program were like waiting to simply be ignited.
- They were equipped with leadership, negotiation and Scientific and proposal writing skills.
- Literally, these women are holding powerful positions somewhere.



## AWARD: SSA PROGRAM

- Invited again to join the AWARD program for SSA.
- It is a more challenging program but very practical.
- Served for two years as Vice Chair and stepped down in 2010.
- It is very strategic for SSA and it is bringing in the changes we need in Agriculture and rural development.
- It has a very comprehensive professional fellowship.

# TIME MANAGEMENT MATRIX

	Urgent	Not Urgent
Important	I	II
Not Important	III	IV

## Other skills: Time Management: urgency/importance matrix

- In the matrix you can identify tasks to:
- 1 do now
- 2 plan for (to use quality time)
- 3 do quickly (not requiring quality time)
- 4 do later or perhaps delegate.

## Other skills: Time Management: urgency/importance matrix

- **Developing a personal sense of time**
- First audit how you spend your time,
- then analyze how you can improve your use of time.

# Time audit

- Keep a record (a daily time log) of where your time currently goes
- – break your day into fifteen minutes chunks for recording purposes.
- Do this for a week or so and review after each batch of three or four days.

## Other skills: Identifying long-term goals

- First of all, it is necessary to define your organization's purpose ( or SP)and
- the purpose or your job(JD), ie to what end is your time being expended.
- Then, long-term goals can be set in terms of the results that the organisation wishes to achieve (and your role as part of those goals being achieved).
- Do you know the appointment/promotion criteria in your Institution? How are you matching this at personal level

# Other skills: Identifying long-term goals

- Identifying long-term goals, the strategy of your business and your part in it, will result from pondering these questions:
- Where : are we now?
- Where: do we want to be in 3 or 5 year's time?
- What: strengths and weaknesses do we have?
- How: can we improve?
- How: can we get to where we want to be?
- *These same questions should be applied to your personal life*
- The answers to these questions will help you identify long-term goals.

## Making medium-term plans

- Your key areas of responsibility (and how your performance will be measured) should be listed
- and for each you must set objectives
- with time budgeted for each.
- The review of objective achievement (the measure of your performance) should be at the intervals you have budgeted for each (eg 3, 6 or 12 months).



# Smarter objectives: As a test of your objective-setting skills, remember they need to be Smarter: Work Smart

- Specific
- Measurable
- Agreed
- Realistic
- Time-bounded
- Evaluated
- Reviewed
- Strategic
- Meaningful
- Attainable
- Rewarding
- Teambuilding
- Empowering
- Rewarding

## Making medium-term plans

- Being successful in making medium-term plans requires you to:
- know the context (the longer-term) in which you operate and
- how the medium and longer-term goals are linked
- to be able to plan and implement activity
- set clear objectives and review progress toward them on a regular basis
- be flexible and adaptable to change in order to stay on course to meet objectives (unless you have changed those, too!)

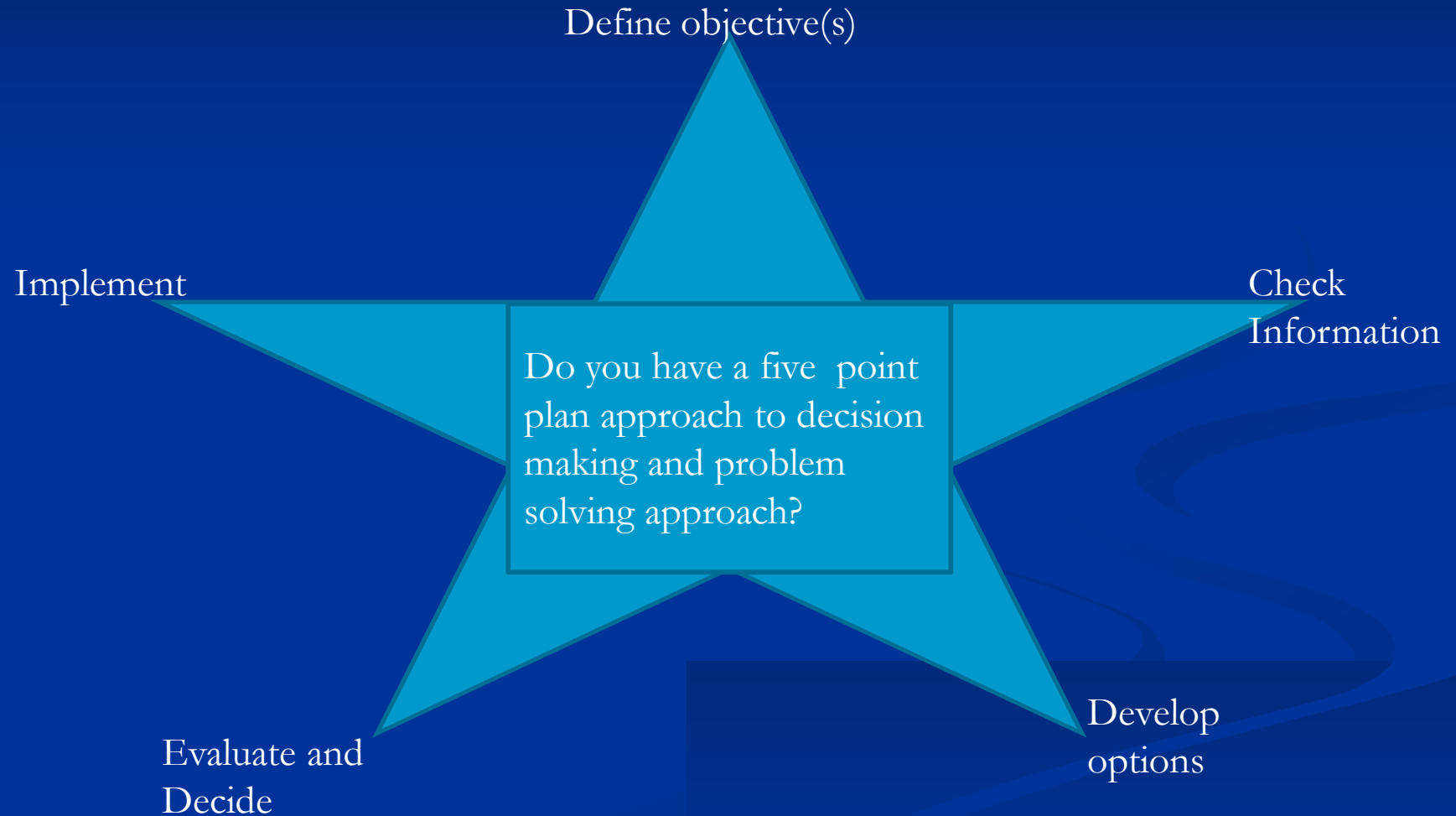
## Important in the moves to be made

- The most important message in any change process is that you need to spend time to plan the implementation of strategic initiatives.
- Haphazard moves will never support our thinking and are less likely to influence our emotions and thereby change our behavior

## Applicability: Work smart

- At work: Even when you are at the top or amongst the most Senior ones in the Institutions, challenges never cease if anything they come in all forms.
- Important, never take your eye of the Institutional vision, objectives and planned activities and expected outcomes directly under you as per the signed PC or as per your JD. This scatters them.
- Above all enjoy what you. The day it takes away my smile, then I am out of here.

# Decision making and problem Solving: Summary



Summary: Is it important? If yes then

- Initiate urgency for change
- **BUT PLAN FOR IT**
- Thank you