WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP FOR ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AND FOOD SECURITY IN ETHIOPIA, GHANA AND ZAMBIA (EMPOWER PROJECT)

A Capacity Building Needs Assessment Report

September 2013

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Appendices

1. INTRODUCTION

The Women's Leadership for Economic Empowerment and Food Security in Ethiopia, Ghana and Zambia (EMPOWER Project) is a five year CIDA-sponsored project that focuses on reducing poverty and strengthening women's leadership in the three African countries. The partners in the programme are Women for Change (Zambia), the organization for Women in Self Employment (WISE) in Ethiopia, the University for Development Studies (UDS) in Ghana working with a local NGO Centre for Indigenous Knowledge and Organisational Development (CIKOD) with its affiliates and the Coady International Institute in Canada.

The EMPOWER project commenced in 2013 and will run up to 2017 with a focus on women's empowerment as a key to achieving broader goals of economic development and food security. For the purposes of the project, women's empowerment will be viewed with a holistic approach that encompasses social, economic and political spheres.

The ultimate outcome of the EMPOWER project is to strengthen women's leadership for poverty reduction in Ethiopia, Ghana and Zambia. In order to reach this goal, there are four intermediate outcomes which are:

Intermediate Outcome 1:

Strengthened voice and leadership for women and girls at the community level in decisions that affect their economic livelihoods and food security

Intermediate Outcome 2:

Strengthened leadership, capacity and organizational sustainability of three partner organizations that directly support women's economic empowerment and food security

Intermediate Outcome 3:

Increased knowledge on women's leadership, women's economic empowerment and food security

Intermediate Outcome 4:

Strengthened influence by partners and their peers on programme and policy decisions that contribute to women's leadership, women's economic empowerment and food security

In responding to Intermediate Outcome One, Women for Change conducted a Needs Assessment in five of its eight older operation areas. This was done to facilitate with the design of appropriate capacity building activities. The focus of the capacity building will be Outcome One which is strengthened voice and leadership for women and girls in decisions that affect their economic livelihoods and food security. The four community level trainings planned under the EMPOWER project will be done according to the leadership gaps identified in this report targeting the Groups, Area Association (AAs) and District Development Associations (DDAs) leadership including their affiliates.

2.   STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

The report is structured according to the arrangement of the survey (*Appendix i*) which focused on the following issues:

- Identifying the respondent's role in the Group, Area Association (AA) or District Development Association (DDA) vis-à-vis their role in the home or community

- Respondents' perception on the characteristics that make women good leaders

- Respondents' perspective on the main barriers to women's leadership

- Respondents identified capacity needs

The assessment focused on identifying the barriers to women and girls' leadership and decision making with the view of developing programmes that would address these gaps. Data collection employed the use of quantitative and qualitative tools. The quantitative tool was in form of a structured questionnaire. A total of 151 respondents (93 women and 58 men) participated in the survey from the older operation districts of Choma and Kalomo in Southern Province; Kapiri-Mposhi and Mumbwa in Central Province; as well as Kaoma and Senanga in Western Province.

Table 1: Respondents per District

Districts	Number of Surveys Completed
Choma	55
Kalomo	14
Senanga	28
Kaoma	25
Kapiri Mposhi	18
Mumbwa	11
Total	**151**

Fig 1: Respondents per Sex
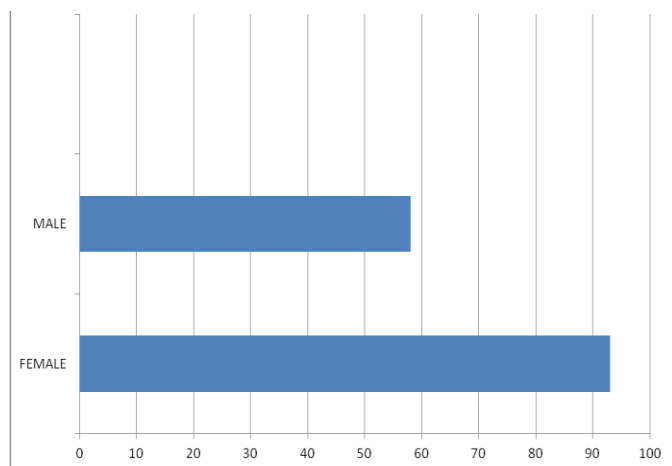
The qualitative data capturing involved exploring questions in the structured questionnaire in Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and this was only done for respondents in Mumbwa and Kapiri-Mposhi. A total of 88 participants out of which 57 were women and girls; and 31 men and boys participated in the exercise.

In the structured interview which involved administering a questionnaire (*Appendix i*) Respondents were asked to state their age. The Table below tabulates the characteristics of the Respondents according to the five age-groups defined in the questionnaire:
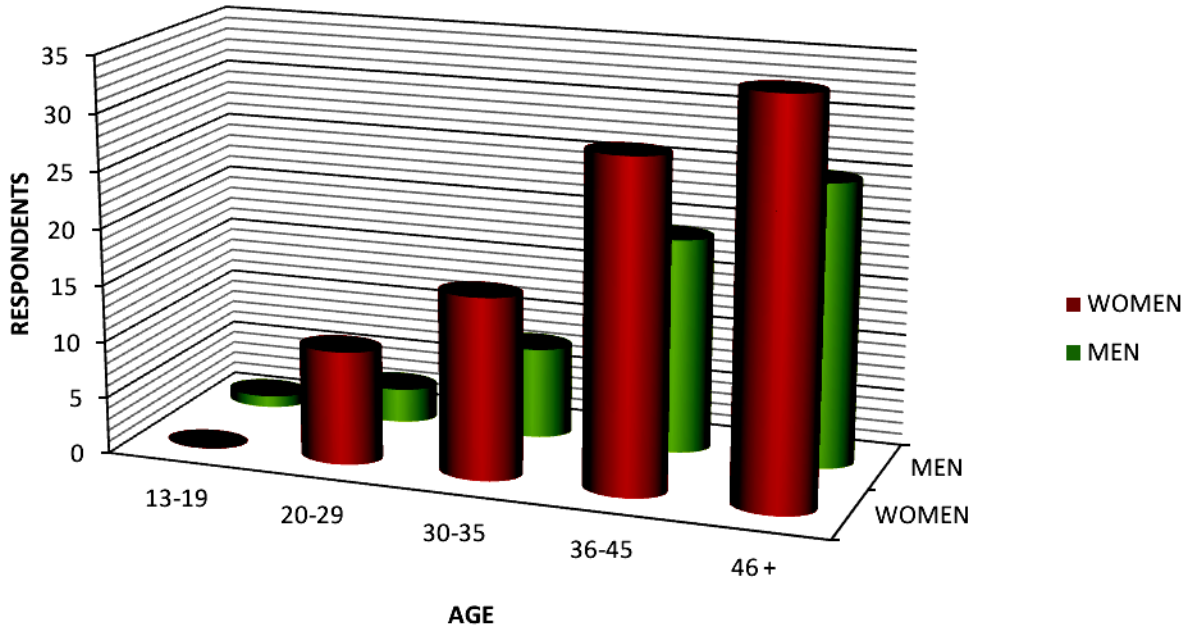
Since the assessment aimed at identifying leadership gaps among women and girls the exercise mostly Women for Change group members who would be the first point of contact for capacity building in leadership at community levels. Of the total 151 that participated in the structured interview, 80 were ordinary members and 71 held leadership positions either at District Development Association, Area Association or Group levels. The Women for Change structures at community level are explained in *Appendix ii*.

3. FINDINGS

3.1. Respondent's Roles

The assessment focused at sampling a cross section of respondents in terms of roles played in the groups, AA or DDA. At the same time, since the primary target were women and girls, deliberate effort was made to have more female respondents than male. Male respondents helped to correlate community perceptions on female leadership and their participation in decision making.
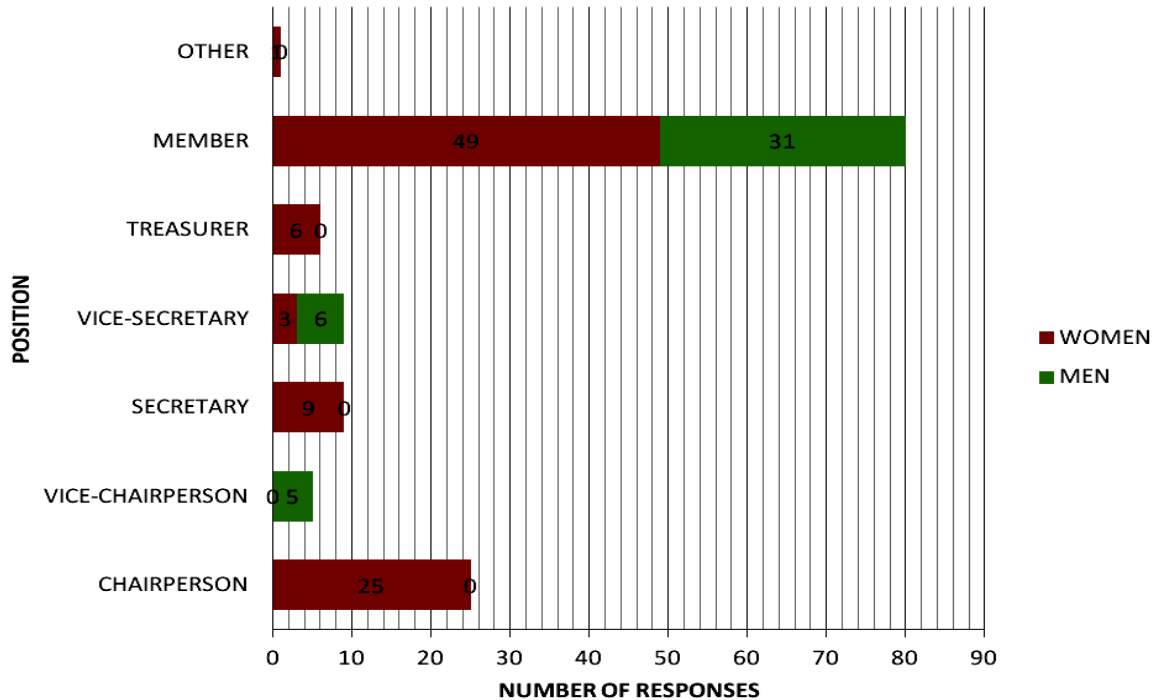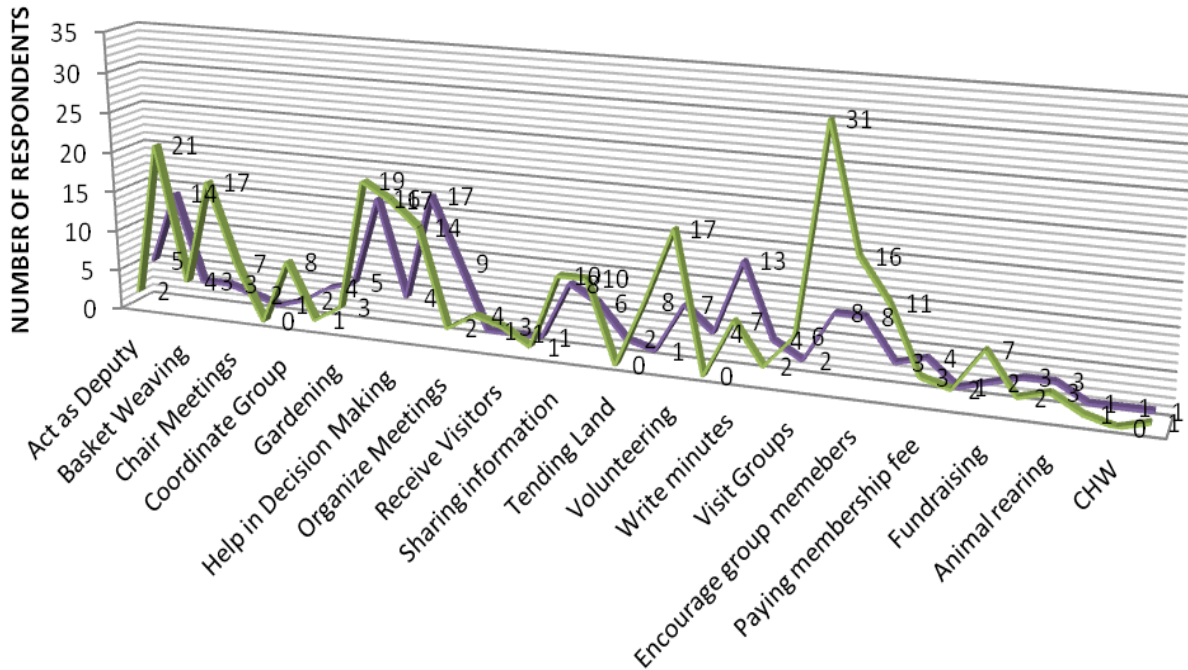

Each set of respondents defined their roles according to the duties of their position as described in their Constitution. However, it was clear to note that the emphasis of the roles that each respondent held was determined by the sex of the respondent. The men emphasised the role of writing minutes - an indication of their literacy levels while women highlighted the role of encouraging others, weaving, visiting group members and sharing information - traits related to women.

The role of decision making and chairing meetings was mentioned by women holding positions of Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer as it is a common responsibility for these positions, however, despite men not allowed to hold the position of Chairperson and Treasurer due to Women for Change's affirmative action, more men still saw themselves as being key in helping arrive at a decision than women in other positions other than the three key positions mentioned.

The Tables correlate respondents' defined roles in the Groups, AAs or DDAs and what major duties they played in their homes:

6

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS

21
14 17
5   4 3 3 7
2   0   8
         2 4 3
            1 3 19
              5   16 7 17
                 3   14
                       4
                    2 4 1 3 1
                          1 1
              10 10
                 8
                 6
                 0   17
                     8
                     2 7
                     1 0 13
                        4 7
                        0 4
                           2 31
                           6
                           2 16
                              8
                              8 11
                                 3 4
                                 3 7
                                    4 3 3
                                    1 2 2
                                       1 1
                                         0 1

Act as Deputy · Basket Weaving · Chair Meetings · Coordinate Group · Gardening · Help in Decision Making · Organize Meetings · Receive Visitors · Sharing information · Tending Land · Volunteering · Write minutes · Visit Groups · Encourage group memebers · Paying membership fee · Fundraising · Animal rearing · CHW

■ MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES WOMEN   ■ MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES MEN

ACTIVITY

Business
Looking after property
Car Maintence
Solving conflict
Sewing
Fishing
Animal rearing
Church
Working for family
Washing
Maize
Farming
Cooking
Collecting Water
Cleaning
Building

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS

■ MAJOR ACTIVITIES DONE AT HOME WOMEN
■ MAJOR ACTIVITIES DONE AT HOME MEN

7

When asked to define what their major duties at home was, the responses with the highest mention among women included cooking, cleaning and child care while male respondents cited animal rearing, building and farming. Other identified activities among the men involved engaging in sport, recreation such as going to the Bar while the women talked about collecting firewood and water. Both women and men stated that they engaged in community work in equal measure.

3.2. Perception on Women Leaders

The second aspect of the assessment focused on measuring respondents' perception on the characteristics that made women good leaders. It is interesting to note the similarities among female and male respondents on what was considered a good characteristic of leadership among women and girls. Both sexes emphasized qualities of kindness and empathy as opposed to having a sound mind or leading by example - virtues considered to be worthy of men. The age factor did not affect the characteristic identified as the youth and adults perceptions from both sexes were similar.

While the structured questionnaire had respondents mentioning personal qualities of the leader, the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) challenged respondents to look beyond personal traits and bring out the kind of skills or talents that a woman leader needs to have. Participants highlighted the characteristic of literacy, which is the ability to read and write even in the local language as key to one being a good leader. Participants also raised the need for the female leader to be a visionary with capacity to influence her followers.

The FGDs were done using Women for Change Participatory Education Methodologies (PEM) Tools which involved the use of role play to highlight the characteristics related to women. With the help of the Animal Code (attached as *Appendix iii*) participants come up with role plays depicting characteristics associated with female leaders from a positive and negative perspective. The common negative qualities were associated with the animals described negatively in the Animal Code namely the Rabbit who runs away at the sign of trouble, Tortoise who is not ready to offer an opinion or the Mouse who is too shy to get involved. Others were the Monkey who is described as not serious, the Cat who goes looking for sympathy from everyone and the Chameleon who cannot stick to her decision.

In two of the FGDs, participants demonstrated the key issues using role play on the need for the female leader to be able to read and write. The play showed the kind of struggle an illiterate leader faces when it came to documenting information. Another role play showed how a leader without a vision was easily swerved (Chameleon characteristic) by her followers on agreed decisions resulting in the group not being able to accomplish their task. These role plays helped participants analyse from real life examples the kind of qualities they felt a leader required.
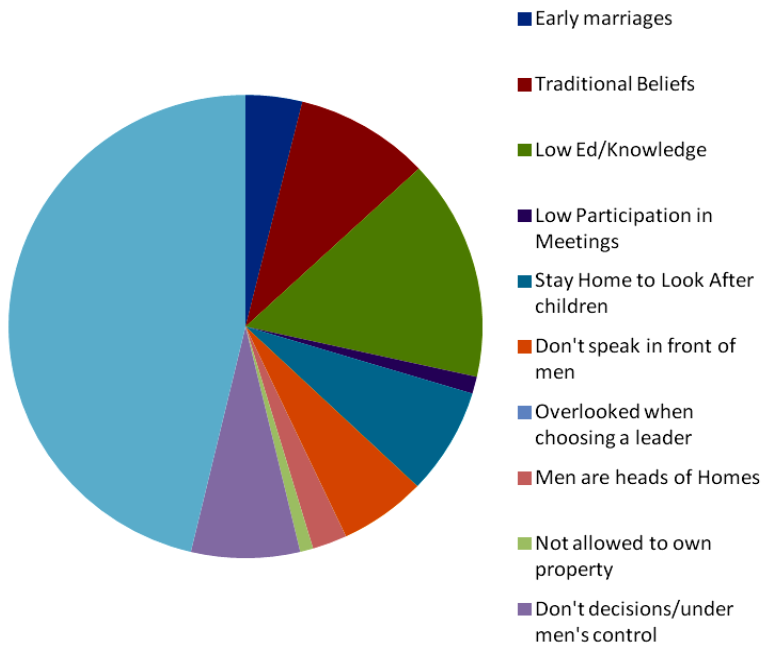
For both FGDs and the structured questionnaire, participants responses centred on key words as tabulated below. The Table also highlights the number of times each characteristic was mentioned by the respondents according to sex.

Summary of No. of Times a Characteristic was Identified

Characteristics	Freq. of Responses by Sex		
	Women	Men	Total
Good hearted	40	20	60
Greater Empathy	27	18	45
Honest	27	18	45
Inclusive	18	8	26
Listen to advice	15	10	25
Humble	15	7	22
Less likely to steal	14	6	20
Active	14	7	21
Hard working	13	7	20
Educated	8	5	13
Organized	9	4	13
Patient	8	4	12
Not selfish	7	7	14
Question Not Understood	7	4	11
Courageous	5	8	13
Friendly	4	3	7
Have vision	4	3	7
Easy to Understand	4	1	5
Responsible	4	0	4
Trustworthy	6	2	8
Ability to multitask	3	1	4
Good at mobilizing people	3	4	7
Have equal rights	3	1	4
Encouraging	3	1	4
Helpful	3	0	3
Cheerful	2	1	3
Self Respect	1	2	3
Greater awareness	1	1	2
Committed	1	3	4
Honour their husbands	0	1	1
Slow to anger	2	1	3
Clever	1	1	2
Forgiving	1	1	2
Follow instructions	0	2	2
Transparent	2	2	4
Respectful	2	2	4
Leads by example	2	0	2
Sound mind	1	0	1
Not Jealous	1	0	1
Creative	1	0	1
Avoids Pregnancies	2	0	2
Total Responses	**284**	**166**	**450**

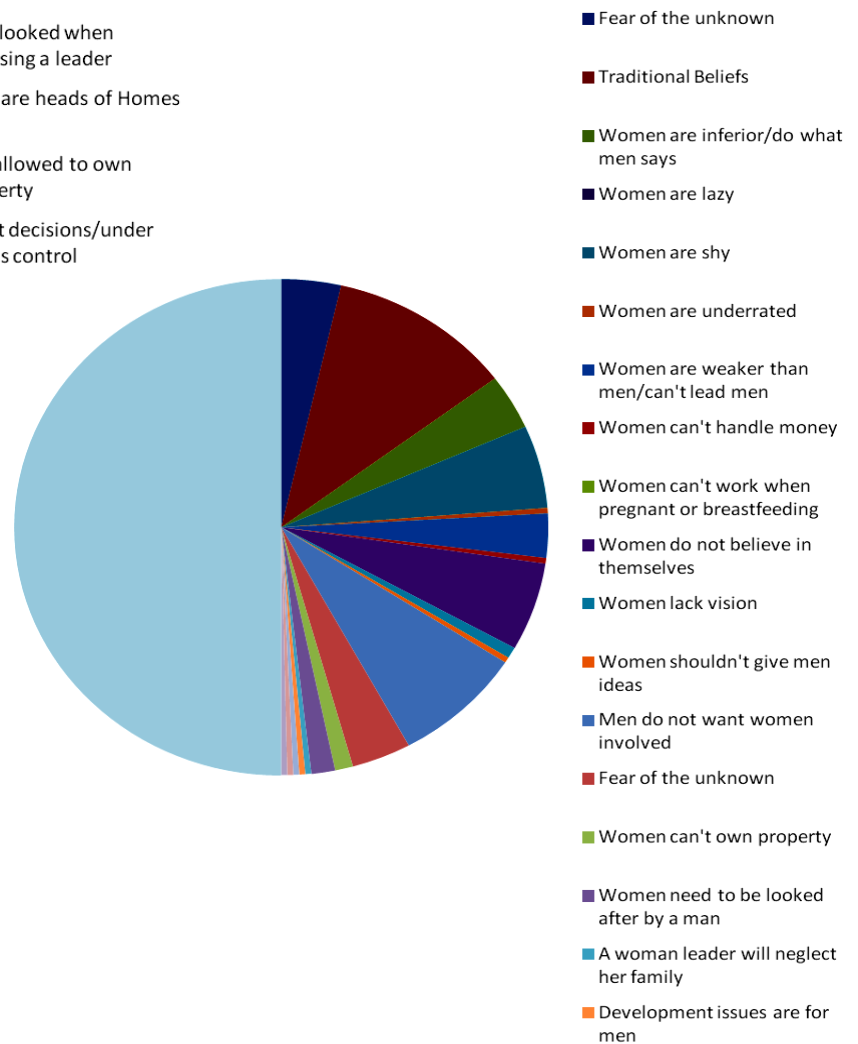## 3.3.   Barriers to Women's Leadership

Practices that Hinder Women Participation

Legend:
- Early marriages
- Traditional Beliefs
- Low Ed/Knowledge
- Low Participation in Meetings
- Stay Home to Look After children
- Don't speak in front of men
- Overlooked when choosing a leader
- Men are heads of Homes
- Not allowed to own property
- Don't decisions/under men's control

Respondents were asked to identify what they considered to be the major barriers to women and girls becoming leaders. The responses were grouped into two categories with the first identifying common practices that negatively impact women's participation. The second was the common beliefs that hinder women's participation and desire to take up leadership positions.

Beliefs that Hinder Women Participation

Legend:
- Fear of the unknown
- Traditional Beliefs
- Women are inferior/do what men says
- Women are lazy
- Women are shy
- Women are underrated
- Women are weaker than men/can't lead men
- Women can't handle money
- Women can't work when pregnant or breastfeeding
- Women do not believe in themselves
- Women lack vision
- Women shouldn't give men ideas
- Men do not want women involved
- Fear of the unknown
- Women can't own property
- Women need to be looked after by a man
- A woman leader will neglect her family
- Development issues are for men

Of the total 237 responses given among the discouraging practices, 156 were identified by women and girls while 81 came from men. Similarly of the 219 beliefs that have shaped women and girls' aspiration to take up leadership position, 139 responses were given by female respondents and 80 by their male counter parts.

While the assessment had more women than men taking part in the responses, the results are an indication of the kind of socialisation that girls go through as opposed to boys and how this has influenced their decision making and leadership skills.

When correlated, the depth of the practices and beliefs can be seen to be more entrenched in women than men as demonstrated by some of major issues highlighted in the Table below:
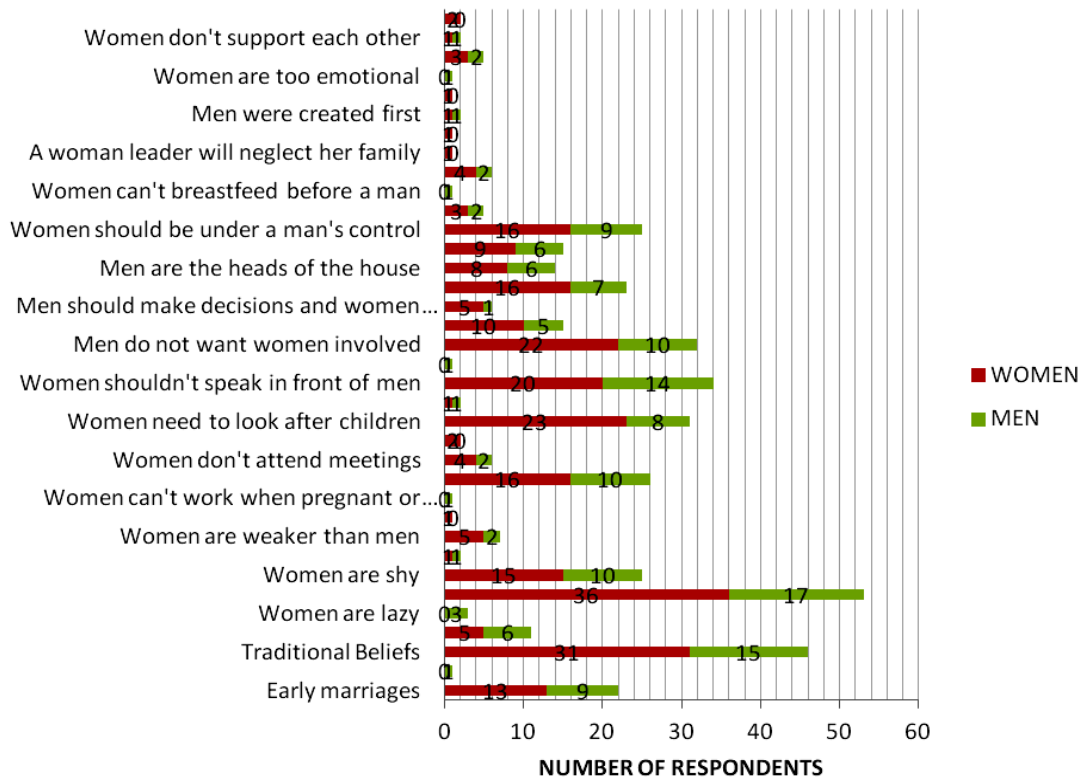

The FGDs further reinforced these perceptions when the majority of respondents confirmed being raised to uphold these practices and beliefs. The adult participants stated that such traditional practices and beliefs affected how they related to their daughters and sons. They were more focused in instilling leadership qualities in sons and male dependents than in their daughters and female dependents. The girls were instead being raised to submit to their husbands. One participant in the Mumbwa FGD testified how her parents raised her to believe that "the women's place is in the kitchen, traditionally they are not supposed to stand up before men to speak!" For this reason, she always found it difficult to talk in a meeting when men were present.

Respondents in all the FGDs were unanimous on how strongly the traditional socialisation for female children affected their capacities to take up leadership positions and participate in decision making.

3.4. Leadership Capacity Needs

The Table below summarises the Respondents' views on how to address the challenges of low female participation in leadership and decision making according to sex. Recommendations ranged from buidling the women and girls' capacities through training and supporting them with resources to providing support in form of mentorship and peer support.
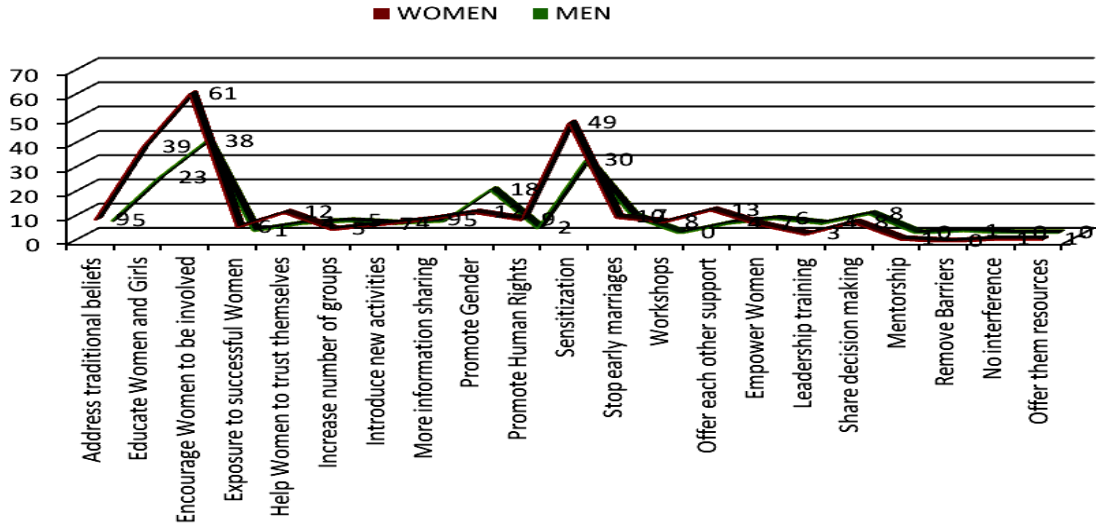
Among the top identified suggested capacity needs was to build confidence in women and girls to take up leadership positions. Related to this was the education of women and girls followed by sensitization of women and men on the need to provide for women's participation in leadership and decision making.
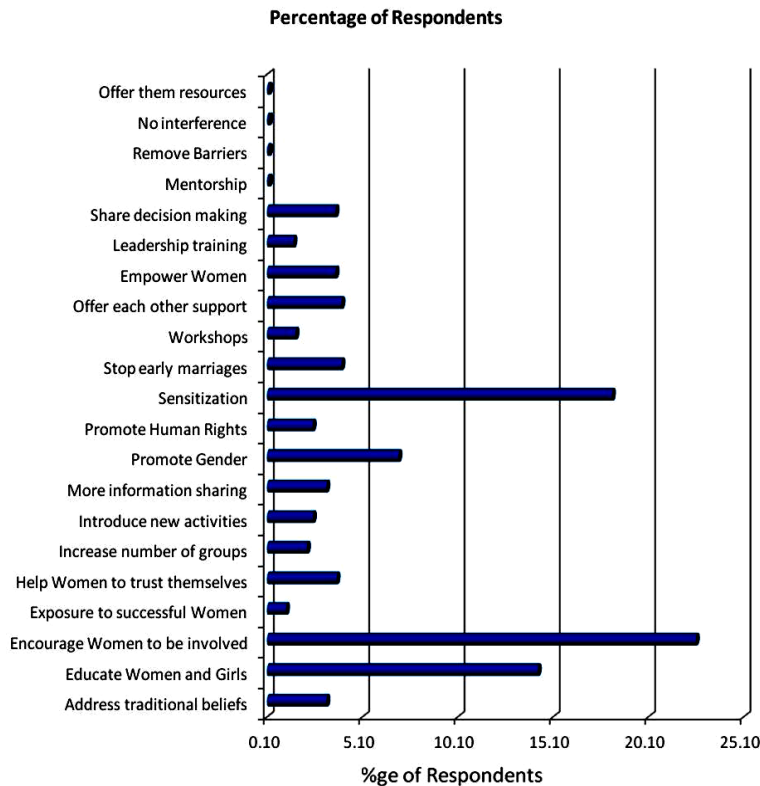
The Respondents were also agreed on building peer support structures among women and girls. Examples mentioned included the need to share information and decision making. Another example is the issue of mentorship which also underscored the importance of exposing women and girls to female leaders as well as increasing the number of community structures where women and girls will be given opportunity to enhance their leadership. Such platforms would also provide an opportunity to enhance participation in decision making processes.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

4.1. Recommendations

- Based on the findings from the assessment it was clear that Women for Change community structures had provided women and girls an opportunity to take up leadership positions and participate in decision making, therefore, there is need to strengthen these structures in order to create more opportunities for women and girls. In this way, the Women for Change structures will act as stepping stones for women to aspire for leadership positions in other structures within the community.

- Taking affirmative action has ensured women and girls' participation in positions which would otherwise have been dominated by men and boys and needs to be emphasised upon. However, there is need to strengthen capacities for women and girls in these positions in order to counter the negative perceptions about women and girls in leadership entrenched in them. Thus the proposed peer support, mentorship and community sensitizations would help enhance their capacities and how they should distinguish themselves in their duties and responsibilities.

- Continued community sensitizations on Gender and Women's Rights are an important aspect to address the negative practices and beliefs that have hindered women's participation in leadership and decision making.

- Given the deeply patriarchal nature of the target communities, continued engagement with traditional leaders namely chiefs, headpersons, traditional advisors and counsellors will help address the structural causes of inequality. The focus of engagement with traditional leaders may involve advocacy initiatives, capacity building on Gender and Human Rights as well as raising awareness on national and international instruments that support Gender and Human Rights. These include the National Gender Policy, SADC Gender Protocol, CEDAW and Convention on the Rights of the Child.

4.2. Conclusion

Based on the reported findings, it is apparent that the communities under study appreciate the fact that addressing the structural causes of inequality between women and men is important. Capacity building and support groups at community levels are essential in increasing women and girls' participation in leadership and decision. Women and girls while recognised as important actors in the development process have lagged behind their male counterparts hence the need to take affirmative action in order to address barriers and provide for an environment in which women and girls are able to confidently contribute to the development of their communities.

The deeply entrenched patriarchal systems that make up Zambia's society coupled with low levels of literacy among women are a great hindrance to increased women and girls' participation in leadership and decision making. The Women for Change Human Rights Based social empowerment model uses Gender Analysis and Popular Education Methodologies to address gender gaps thereby providing for increased women and girl participation.

Women for Change in partnership with a Canadian based Development organization, Coady International Institute and two African partners, the organisation for Women in self Employment (WISE) based in Ethiopia and the Ghana University for Development Studies (UDS) are jointly co-implementing a project on Women's Economic Empowerment and Food Security in Ethiopia, Ghana and Zambia.

We appeal for your support in responding to the questionnaire. The purpose of this needs assessment is to assess leadership and decision making among women and identify possible barriers to women's participation.

1. Name of District: _____

2. Sex:

　　1. Female ☐　　　　2. Male ☐

3. Age:

　　1. 13-19 ☐　　　　2. 20-29 ☐

　　3. 30-35 ☐　　　　4. 36-45 ☐

　　5. 46 and above ☐

4. Marital status:

　　1. Single ☐　　　　2. Married ☐

　　3. Divorced ☐　　　　4. Widowed ☐

5. Which DDA/AA or group do you belong to?

_____

6. What is your position in the DDA/AA or group?

　　1. Chairperson ☐　　　　　　2. Vice-chairperson ☐

3. Secretary	☐	4. Vice-secretary	☐
5. Treasurer	☐	6. Member	☐
7. Other	☐	**If other, specify:** _____	

7. For how long have you held the position chosen in 6? _____

8. What are your major responsibilities in the DDA/AA or group?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

9. List all the activities that you engage in as a group.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

10. What role do you play in each of the activities listed under question 9?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

11. Mention major activities that you do at home?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

12. Who makes final decisions about each of the activities mentioned in question 11?

1. Women ☐ Men ☐

2. Women ☐ Men ☐

3. Women ☐ Men ☐

4. Women ☐ Men ☐

13. What characteristics do you find in women that would make them good leaders?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

14. Give reasons for your answer to question 12.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

15. Mention any beliefs or norms that you think hinder women and girls from becoming leaders?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

16. What do you think should be done to increase women and girls participation in decision making in your community?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Thank you for your time
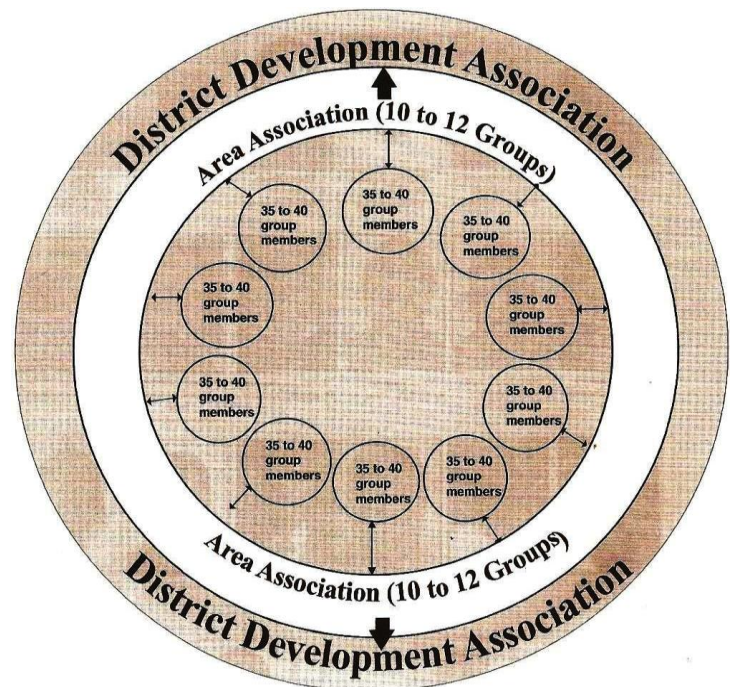
WOMEN FOR CHANGE LED COMMUNITY STRUCTURES

Women for Change uses the group approach when animating development in the target communities. The group approach is based on the traditional Bantu premise of *Ubuntu* ('human-ness' which is the spirit of acknowledging that one is a person through other people – tying one's humanity to others). This reminds the communities of who they are and helps build resilience among them. Thus communities are encouraged to form groups which later result into the formation of Area Associations until they establish an umbrella structure called District Development Associations.

These different structures can also operate as Community Based Organisations (CBOs) that are registered with the Government's Registrar of Societies able to independently build their own linkages and operate as autonomous bodies. Women for Change strives to help these structures to move towards this goal as a measure of them becoming a critical mass.

As they operate as CBOs the structures hold the following functions:

i.   To monitor, supervise and co-ordinate group activities in the area to ensure continuity and sustainability of the programmes.

ii. To foster village led actions on an issue that is important to the community.

iii. To collaborate with government extension services, NGOs and other CBOs to promote development in the area.

iv. To form new groups in other areas so that more people are empowered to take control of their own lives.

v.   To conduct various training programmes for the groups and the community.

As a result of these functions, Women for Change builds capacities of the Area Associations to manage themselves which helps address the issue of sustainability. The capacity-building partnership between Women for Change and the Area Associations ensures that Area Associations are able to operate independently even when Women for Change exits the area. Women for Change reached over 600,000 women and men using the Area Association model during the strategic period 2008 – 2012. In older districts where WfC has worked, a

number of Area Associations come together to form District Development Associations (DDAs) as demonstrated in the diagram above.

Through the group structures, Women for Change is also able to reach rural communities by building their capacities using Popular Education Methodologies and Gender Analysis on a number of development issues. Coupled with the organisation's engagement with traditional leaders, the achievement rate is impressive. Therefore, community level capacity building is key to sustainable community led development projects especially when interventions are engendered for increased women and girl participation. The establishment of structures at community level has ensured that skills are passed on to the people who then take initiatives on their own.

THE ANIMAL CODE TOOL

A Tool used to discuss qualities of leadership with participants in a safe environment. The qualities of the animals can help us understand the kind of leaders and members we have and how these qualities affect relationships in groups:

Animal Code	Unhelpful Behaviour in the Group
Donkey	Stubborn and does not change point of view
Lion	Gets in and fights with others who disagree with his/her plan or interfere with his/her desires
Rabbit	Runs away at the point of tension, conflict or unpleasant job. This means quickly shifting to another topic (flight behaviour)
Ostrich	Buries head in the sand and refuses to face reality or admit there is a problem
Tortoise	Withdraws from the group and refuses to give his or her ideas or opinions
Monkey	Fools around and chatters a lot. Prevents the group from concentrating on any serious business
Elephant	Simply blocks the way and stubbornly prevents the group from continuing along the road to their desired goal.
Giraffe	Looks down on others and the programme in general. Moves with an attitude of *"I am above all this childish nonsense."*
Cat	Always looking for sympathy, "It is too difficult for me...*miaow*..."
Peacock	Always showing off and looking for attention, *"See what a fine fellow I am."*
Snake	Hides in the grass and strikes unexpectedly
Rhino	Charges around without thinking (puts his or her foot in a situation and upsetting people unnecessarily)
Owl	Looks solemn and pretends to be very wise, always talking in long words and complicated sentences
Mouse	Too timid to speak up on any subject in public. Pretends to be good to fellow members but tarnishes their image behind their back.
Frog	Croaks on and on about the same subject in a monotonous voice
Hippo	Sleeps all the time and never puts up his or her head except to yawn
Fish	Who sits there with a cold glassy stare, not responding to anyone or anything
Chameleon	Changes colour according to the people he or she is with, saying one thing to this group and something else to another group.