

The Education Centre for Women in Democracy is a non-partisan, not-for-profit organization. Through its non-partisan organizational commitment, which includes women from all parties and provinces, the Centre works cooperatively with interested parties and its own members to address political, social and economic concerns that affect not only women but the nation as a whole. The Centre hopes to seek broad participation among grassroots women to expand knowledge about political activities at all levels by strengthening voter education and by sharpening the focus on issues of national importance. The Centre will be a focal point of cooperation and collaboration with male political figures who support the Centre's policy agenda. Equally important, the Education Centre seeks dialogue and interaction with women from other countries in order to learn from their experiences, identify models for civic and political activities and join in the global movement to ensure greater political visibility and equal access and participation for women. The Centre hopes to assist women not only to become more active in politics but also to secure leadership positions in political parties, parliament, and government.

HISTORY

The Education Centre for Women in Democracy was founded and registered as an official Kenyan organization in July of 1993. The Centre's mission was crystallized during a international planning conference on women's political participation held in Nanyuki, Kenya in October of 1993. This conference was co-sponsored by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs and was held at Mt. Kenya Safari Club.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Centre will act in a non-partisan manner to assist women who aspire to political office at all levels through research, communications, training and civic education, so that women are able to develop relevant and efficient campaigns; provide more effective services to their communities; foster more development; and serve as genuine leaders who participate equally in helping shape and implement Kenya's national policy agenda.

EDUCATION CENTRE FOR WOMEN IN DEMOCRACY



P. O. Box 62714
Nairobi, Kenya

Education Centre for Women in Democracy
P.O. Box 62714
Nairobi, Kenya

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME : _____

ADDRESS : _____

TEL : _____ FAX: _____

PARTY AFFILIATION (OPTIONAL): _____

PROVINCE: _____

DISTRICT : _____

**Membership requirements*

18 Yrs of age, Kshs. 100.00 Any member who falls into arrears of membership for more than six (6) months shall automatically cease to be a member.

COMMITTEE INTEREST

- Program _____
- Fundraising _____
- Membership _____
- Communications _____

DUES ☐ One year ☐ Two years

- Associate member _____ 100 Ksh/yr
(Non Kenyan and men)
- Patrons _____ 100 Ksh/yr
- Honourable patrons _____ *
- Student _____ 50 Ksh/yr
- Lifelong member _____ *
- Organizational
Member/Affiliate _____ *

*Please contact the Centre for more information.

MEMBERSHIPS

PATRON - Patrons are women who are involved in and contribute significantly to Kenya's political life, and who work to enhance the participation of Kenyan women in politics. These women will be consulted upon to give guidance, encouragement, and support to the Centre.

HONOURABLE PATRONS - These members consist of prominent individuals from any part of the world, including Kenya, who contribute a set monthly contribution to the Centre as an acknowledgement of the importance the Centre's work. Non-Kenyan Honourable Patrons, like Associate Members, have no voting rights. They will include individuals whose political vision and contribution towards the enhancement of women's political status and participation is outstanding.

LIFELONG MEMBER - These members, by the nature of their contribution - either in kind or otherwise have shown a significant commitment to the Centre's life and sustainability.

ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBER - Certain women are members by virtue of their membership in an organization which has, by its level of contribution, been designated a set number of individual memberships.

STUDENT - These members are enrolled in institutions of learning.

ASSOCIATE MEMBER - This category is reserved for non- Kenyans and men. Associate members do not have the right to vote.

ACTIVITIES OF THE CENTRE

Will include but are not limited to the following:

- * Seminars, workshops and conferences
- * Public health and education campaigns
- * Civic education forums for women in rural, sub-urban and urban areas
- * Development and dissemination of public policy documents
- * A research and resource library
- * Women's leadership development
- * Internships, fellowships and resident scholars programs
- * Women's campaign training institute
- * Parliamentary legislative assistance program

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Centre's primary objectives are to assist and support women seeking greater political involvement.

- * Promoting democratization, human rights and gender relations.
- * Enhancing awareness about women as mainstream political players through education and information dissemination.
- * Promoting women's equitable participation in politics and public affairs.
- * Advocating for women to have equal opportunities of employment and education.
- * Educating women on issues and policies which disproportionately affect them.
- * Assisting women who are interested in seeking political office.

**INTERNATIONAL PLANNING
CONFERENCE ON
WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION**



**Nanyuki, Kenya
October 19 -23, 1993**

**Education Centre
for Women in Democracy**

**National Democratic Institute
for International Affairs**

INTERNATIONAL PLANNING CONFERENCE ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

**Nanyuki, Kenya
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Education Centre
for Women in Democracy



National Democratic Institute
for International Affairs

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Photo's courtesy of Nation Newspapers Limited



THE EDUCATION CENTRE FOR WOMEN IN DEMOCRACY

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE EDUCATION CENTRE

This report outlines our joint deliberations in a non-partisan, multi-party framework. It sets forth a blue-print for empowerment and partnership, a concrete and action-oriented agenda that is designed to provide civic education and information for all, while encouraging women to come forward as full and effective participants in Kenya's political processes.

Women constitute 52% of Kenya's voting population. They, however, remain a marginalized majority due to various historical, social, cultural and economic factors which impact upon and impede women's full integration into the formal development and decision-making processes. For a variety of reasons, little has been done in the past to educate women, in particular, about their rights and the value of their contributions. Their increased participation in the political mainstream should significantly improve the plight of Kenyan families, particularly the very poor.

In spite of the international efforts for the total emancipation of women, and in spite of the adoption of the "Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women" by the United Nations General Assembly on 18th December, 1979, sometimes described as a "Women's Bill of Rights", and the Women's Decade which ended in 1985 culminating into the Nairobi forward-looking strategies, individual countries and organisations, including national governments, need to make deliberate efforts and not tokenism in the direction of women's liberation and political empowerment. Over the years women in various parts of the world including ours have continued to witness increased equality in theory and increased inequality in practice. The Centre is therefore geared toward joining other women's organisations in the efforts to "right" the wrongs of history.

*The **Education Centre for Women in Democracy (ECWD)** wants to thank all those who came from urban and rural communities; from other countries; from all major political parties; and from all walks of life to make this an exciting planning conference. And, it wishes to thank the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs of Washington, DC for its enabling grant that made these constructive and results-oriented deliberations possible.*

**Hon. Agnes Ndeti (MP),
Chair - Education Centre for Women in Democracy**

National Democratic Institute For International Affairs

conducting nonpartisan international programs to help promote, maintain and strengthen democratic institutions



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The National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) was established in 1983. By working with political parties and other institutions, NDI seeks to promote, maintain and strengthen democratic institutions in new and emerging democracies. The Institute is headquartered in Washington, D.C. and has a staff of 120 with field offices in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America and the former Soviet Union.

NDI has supported the development of democratic institutions in more than 60 countries. Programs focus on six major areas:

Political Party Training: NDI conducts multipartisan training seminars in political development with a broad spectrum of democratic parties. NDI draws international experts to forums where members of fledgling parties learn first-hand the techniques of organization, communication and constituent contact.

Election Processes: NDI provides technical assistance for political parties and nonpartisan associations to conduct voter and civic education campaigns and to organize election monitoring programs. The Institute has also organized more than 25 major international observer delegations.

Strengthening Legislatures: NDI organizes seminars focusing on legislative procedures, staffing, research information, constituent services, committee structures and the function and role of party caucuses. NDI programs also seek to promote access to the legislative process by citizen groups and the public at large.

Local Government: NDI provides technical assistance on a range of topics related to the processes of local governance, including division of responsibility between mayors and municipal councils, and between local and national authorities. NDI programs also promote enhanced communication between local officials and their constituents.

Civic Organization: NDI supports and advises nonpartisan groups and political parties engaged in civic and voter education programs. NDI programs work with civic organizations to enhance their organizational capabilities.

Civil-Military Relations: NDI brings together military and political leaders to promote dialogue and establish mechanisms for improving civil-military relations.

Kenneth D. Wollack—President • Jean B. Dunn—Vice President for Administration & Development
Senior Associates: Patricia Keefer—Political and Civic Organization • Thomas O. Meha—Democratic Governance
Nelson C. Ledsky—Former Soviet Union • Patrick Merlog—Election Processes
Program Coordination Director: Eric C. Bjornlund



CONFERENCE INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

In some places, women are believed to be voiceless. Seen--but all too rarely heard--our needs; fears; dreams for family, children, community and nation; vision for the future; contributions at all levels; potential and real leadership often are muffled by layers of "business as usual", entrenched interests, legal barriers and fear of competition.

And yet, we are seen: We are seen as we manage 80% of many nation's agricultural production. We are seen guiding families and planning for our children's survival against great odds. We are seen leading community-based organizations, church and women's groups, creating new strategies for generating resources, institutions and community development. We are seen as entrepreneurs, teachers, executives, academics, activists, journalists, farmers and politicians. We are seen at the earliest and the latest hours, working through the day's long labours and planning for tomorrow's. We are seen as nurturers, natural planners; we shape and mold lives and events.

Now, women are galvanized and want to be heard. We seek to add our voices to national policy debates. We seek to chart new agendas, new styles of leadership, a new order. As active partners in the change that is sweeping this continent, this country and many communities, we want to give words and direction to visions of a society that so many women share.



And so, like many women have done before--in Kenya, in other times and in other places--Kenyan women have come together to voice their views; to give shape to their vision; to plan, in partnership, for a future that is far better--for far more persons--than the past has been.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At an October 1993 planning conference on women's political participation co-sponsored by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), women from Africa, Europe and the United States joined Kenyan participants to support the newly formed Education Centre for Women in Democracy, the conference co-sponsor. The Nairobi-based Education Centre was established in early 1993 to provide practical assistance to women seeking greater participation in Kenyan politics.

The 51 participants in the planning conference, held October 19 to 23 in Nanyuki, Kenya, came from Botswana, Germany, Ireland, Namibia, Uganda, the United States, Zambia and from throughout Kenya. (See Appendix A.) At least eight of the participants were elected officials or former elected officials; conference participants were split almost evenly between urban dwellers (55 percent) and rural residents (45 percent). The Kenyan participants represented all major political parties and included members of parliament, local elected officials, civil organizers, academics and professional women.

During the four-day program, participants developed action plans for identifying technical and financial resources available to women candidates, for creating issue-based campaigns, for conducting grassroots organizing and voter education programs, and for encouraging women to consider elective office (See Appendix B). Conference participants attended plenary sessions, took part in working groups and affinity groups and visited local women's groups. The working group topics included: identifying resources for candidates, identifying issues of importance to women, grassroots organizing, educating voters, encouraging women to participate in political affairs and supporting women in elected positions.

Using the recommendations of conference participants, the Education Centre drafted a two-year plan of action (See Appendix C) and planned to organize a secretariat that would conduct a nationwide voter education campaign, provide support for women seeking political office, act as a liaison with political parties and community groups, and support nonpartisan advocacy for women's concerns. Conference participants also stressed the urgency of the Education Centre's mission and recommended that the Centre remain staunchly nonpartisan and inclusive. They suggested that the Centre become a focus for women's political cooperation and a catalyst for increasing women's participation in the democratic process and for concentrating greater attention on issues that concern women.

NDI looks forward to building on the accomplishments of this conference by this conference by further working with the Education Centre to foster the development of a nationwide support network for the women of Kenya.

THE PROJECT

i). History of Women's Political Involvement in Kenya

Like many women in other countries, Kenyan women have become increasingly vocal about their social, economic and political status. Their list of grievances is long--and legitimate. Women contribute greatly to many aspects of Kenyan life, including its agricultural, business and educational sectors, but are unable to obtain equal financial credit, access to services or recognition. Many laws still exist that discriminate against women, and even when laws and policies are "neutral", application of the laws too often disadvantages women.

Kenyan women have perceived that they must be more politically involved, at all levels, if their concerns and issues are to receive attention and be addressed. Women, spurred by political developments in Kenya and the region began in 1992, to found several new organisations (including the Commission on the Status of Women, an off-shoot of the National Council of Women of Kenya) and initiate efforts to support women candidates and to monitor elections at all levels. At the same time, these initiatives have met with mixed results due to a lack of financial and technical resources, and of practical political experience.

Obstacles to full political participation for Kenyan women abound: some are cultural or traditional; others are created by the political institutions. There are a limited number of women who actually have enjoyed electoral success. Many women who would make excellent candidates or political activists are ambivalent or fearful about political engagement. Moreover, there is a dearth of technical or other resources that are made available to Kenyan women who want to increase involvement.



The history of Kenyan women's political participation illustrates the up-hill struggle that women have waged and still face today. Kenyan women remain disadvantaged despite reports that they constitute between 52% and 60% of registered voters and vote in higher numbers than men. In Kenya, there are 188 parliamentary constituencies (or seats) and

934 other elected positions. Between 1963 and 1969, the first years of Kenya's independence, no women served in Parliament. In 1969, Grace Onyango was elected Mayor of Kisumu thus becoming the country's first woman office holder. That same year Jemimah Gecaga became the first female Member of Parliament after her appointment by the President (under the Kenyan Constitution the President appoints 12 people to Parliament; they are referred to as nominated members).

Between 1969 and 1974, women constituted 0.56% of the elected MP's, and just 8% of MP's nominated by the President were women. Women attained their highest representation in Parliament in 1979, when five women served as MP's - Chelegat Mutai, Dr. Julia Ojiambo, Grace Onyango, Phoebe Asiyo, Nyiva Mwendwa - and one woman Eddah Gachukia was nominated by the President. In 1983, just two women, Grace Ogot and Phoebe Asiyo were elected and one woman, Rose Waruhiu, was nominated. Between 1988 and 1992, the same was true when only Agnes Ndeti and Grace Ogot were elected, and Nyiva Mwendwa nominated toward the end of the five-year parliamentary session.

At least 70 women declared their intention to contest parliamentary and other offices in the most recent elections in December 1992. Ultimately, 20 women ran in 19 of the 188 parliamentary constituencies. By participating, some of the women faced enormous challenges, including personal attacks and even threats directed against them and their families; some women candidates were also victims of "rigging".

On the positive side, six female candidates were elected to Parliament in 1992 - the highest ever. These women, however, represent only 3.2% of all the candidates that were elected. Moreover, no women were nominated. The six women who were elected, along with their constituencies and their party affiliations are:

- o **Agnes Ndeti** (Kibwezi)--DP
- o **Phoebe Asiyo** (Karachuonyo)--Ford Kenya
- o **Martha Njoka Karua** (Gichugu)--DP
- o **Charity Kaluki Mwendwa** (Kitui West)--DP
- o **Nyiva Mwendwa** (Kitui West)--KANU
- o **Mary Wanjiru Mwangi** (Kinangop)--Ford Asili

To date, no woman has ever reached the Ministerial level. The highest position ever held by a woman was Assistant Minister: Julia Ojiambo served as an Assistant Minister of Culture and Social Services and was followed in the same position by Grace Ogot. Recently, after public outcry when for the third time a woman, Nyiva Mwendwa, was named to the **same** post in the Ministry of Culture, she was transferred to the Public Works ministry, albeit at the same mid-level). The situation is similar in local political bodies, in which women are substantially under-represented in elected and appointive positions.

ii). The Education Centre for Women in Democracy

Frustrated by the lack of overall progress, several women politicians and political activists have begun to discuss future actions and strategies. They were particularly motivated by women's absence and/or exclusion from political positions and policy-making roles; the lack of practical support (both technical and financial) for women who seek greater involvement in political activity; the absence of vehicles to raise women's concerns to the national agenda; lack of knowledge among women--particularly rural women--of their rights and potential; the inadequate accountability by elected officials, both men and women; and the generally unsatisfactory level of voter education for all Kenyans.



As a means to respond to these concerns, the *Education Centre for Women in Democracy* ("Centre") was founded and registered as an official Kenyan organisation in July 1993. The Centre has a directorate of women that includes Members of Parliament, local elected officials, former political candidates, organisations and community leaders, and

political activists. The Centre has received legal and technical assistance from several professionals who support its goals and objectives.

From its inception, the Centre has had as one of its primary objectives the provision of **practical assistance and support** to women seeking greater involvement. The Centre also intends to be an inclusive, non-partisan organization, that permits women from **all** parties - and all provinces - to work cooperatively to address political, social and economic concerns that affect not only women, but the nation as a whole. It seeks to broaden participation in and knowledge about, political activities at all levels by strengthening voter education and sharpening the focus on issues of national importance. The Centre hopes to become a focal point for cooperation and collaboration with male political figures who support the Centre's policy agenda. Equally important, the Centre seeks dialogue and interaction with women from other countries so that it can learn from their experiences, identify models for civic and political activities, and join in the global movement to ensure greater visibility, and equal access and participation for women. (See Appendix D for a summary of the Centre's Constitution). The Centre not only hopes to assist women become more in politics, but also to help them secure leadership positions in political parties, parliament, and government.

iii). The International Planning Conference:

At an international conference in October, women from Africa, Europe and the United States joined Kenyan participants to support the newly created Education Centre and the United States-based National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), was held in *Nanyuki, Kenya, from October 19 to 23, 1993.*

From the plans developed at the conference, the Education Centre hoped to develop a longer-term, three- to five-year plan to guide its development and activities. The conference organizers also sought to generate interest, as well as financial and technical support, in order to organize a secretariat to conduct nationwide voter education and issues campaigns. The secretariat would also provide support for women, regardless of party affiliation, who seek political office or involvement; act as a liaison with other political parties and community groups; and be a nonpartisan advocate for women's concerns. In addition, the Education Centre would concentrate on empowering rural women, involving younger voters in political life and training women political activists.

The Education Centre would also seek to develop research capabilities for women members of Parliament and for women elected locally so that they can be more effective and influential. The program activities would include: developing models for consistent constituent service; reaching out to and encouraging younger Kenyans, especially young women, to become more involved in political activities; and forging alliances with male politicians. No programs addressing these types of initiatives are available in Kenya.

Specific objectives of the conference included:

- o Sharing experiences and skills among women who have participated in political processes in Kenya and other countries;
- o Developing strategic plans including developing concrete workplans to organize Education Centre activities and strategies; and
- o Publicizing the conference and subsequent activities to sensitize Kenyan communities to democratic processes, and the role of women in the political process.

The four-day, working conference was attended by 51 participants. They included 41 Kenyan elected officials and political activists and 10 participants politically active women from other African countries, the United States and Europe.

A non-partisan Local Organizing Committee was formed to work with NDI to plan and organize the conference; to serve as liaison with donors; and to prepare the post-conference report. The Committee also consulted with a larger Honourary Advisory Committee that included prominent women who have made outstanding contributions to Kenya. The Local Organizing Committee members were:

Chair:	Hon. Agnes Ndeti
Secretary:	Tabitha Seii
Treasurer:	Betty Tett

Members:	Orie Rogo-Manduli
	Josephine Kiluta
	Hon. Phoebe Asiyo
	Beth Mugo
	Hon. Charity Kaluki
	Agnes Chepkwony

Resource-persons:

<i>Kenya</i>	Pamela Onyango, Francesca Farmer Wanjiku Waititu
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<i>NDI</i>	Mary Curtin Maura Brueger Palmer Kiperman
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THE PARTICIPANTS

Kenyan participants were drawn from regions throughout the country and were divided almost evenly between those who lived in or represented rural constituencies and those who were urban dwellers. Participants from Botswana, Germany, Ireland, Namibia, Uganda, the United States and Zambia formed the international delegation. The Kenyan participants represented all major political parties and included current and former elected officials, political party officials, leaders of nongovernmental organizations, activists, entrepreneurs, teachers, journalists, farmers, executives. Conference participants were joined by six resource assistants (three NDI representatives, one American living in Kenya and two Kenyans) and three Kenyans conference assistants.

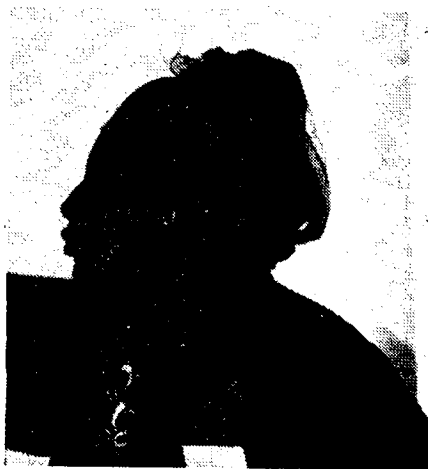
In addition to inviting women from each Kenyan political party, the Education Centre and NDI sought regional representation as well. Urban women accounted for 55 percent of the Kenyan participants; 45 percent came from rural areas. In a conscious effort to achieve diversity, women who were invited and attended represented all parts of the country. All of the participants were experienced political practitioners, among them: eight were elected officials; several were formerly elected officials; and nine were political party officials. Participants also included six women who headed major organizations (generally, women's organizations). One international participant was a candidate for parliament.

PROVINCE	% Participants
Western & Nyanza	27.5%
Rift Valley	7.5%
Central	15%
Nairobi	22.5%
Eastern	10%
North Eastern	2.5%
Coast	15%
Urban	55%
Rural	45%

Participants recommended that the Education Centre establish regional and international links, including joint strategy development through conferences, study missions, internships or exchange programs, and technical assistance groups. In particular, participants from Africa recommended conducting several follow-on consultations -- both with other Africans and with non-African women -- so that women throughout the continent could exchange views and experiences and enhance their influence on national and international policies and political developments. Participants also suggested that planned international conferences, such as the pan-African consultations in Dakar in the fall of 1994 and the 1995 Beijing conference on the status of women, be used as forums to continue discussion of ideas generated at the Nanyuki conference. They added that the Education Centre should support active participation of its officers, staff and supporters in such international events.







THE PROCEEDINGS

Education Centre Chair Agnes Ndeti addressed the conference participants at the opening session. Ndeti outlined the purpose of the conference, the challenges facing Kenyan women and the Education Centre's overall objectives. There were two panel discussions held during plenary sessions. One discussion focused on media and women's perspectives; the other, in which women recounted their experiences in electoral politics, discussed women's political development in Kenya and abroad. The conference also featured caucuses and "affinity groups." In the caucuses, women from the same geographical area discussed issues of particular concern and formulated special recommendations. Affinity groups brought together participants toured three local women's groups based near the conference facility. These visits provided a context for conference deliberations and clearly identified, particularly for these women from rural areas, priorities that could shape the agendas of the Education Centre and of women political activists.

Although not yet formally adopted, a "**Mission Statement**" for the Education Centre emerged from deliberations of caucuses and Small Working Groups:

The Centre will act in a non-partisan way to assist women who aspire to political office at all levels through research, communication, training and civic education so that they are able to develop relevant and efficient campaigns; to provide more effective services to their communities and foster more "even" development throughout the nation; and to serve as genuine leaders who participate equally in helping shape and implement Kenya's national policy agenda.

Conference participants also generated a list of more than 20 obstacles or barriers to political participation or careers. Among them were: intimidation, low economic and social status of women, family or spouse opposition, party resistance and lack of resources, role models, confidence and education. Most participants said that the Education Centre, by providing a comprehensive schedule of activities and opportunities, could and should help women throughout Kenya in addressing these and other obstacles.

i) Working Groups

The bulk of the conference proceedings were formed around working groups of about 8 to 10 participants each. The organizing committee, in consultation with NDI staff, selected one Kenyan and one non-Kenyan to lead each working group. The practical results of the working groups, each of which concerned a specific aspect of women's political involvement, were reinforced by a workplan that each group developed as part of its deliberations. The workplans were synthesized into five plans of action to guide the Education Centre's future activities and development. Participants discussed and adopted the plans at the end of the conference. (See Appendix E.)

The working group titles and the topics discussed in each follow:

- o *Finding Resources for Candidates: Party, Financial and Technical* concerned practical technics for preparing women to become effective and successful candidates, including comprehensive training, polling, fund-raising, research and use of party resources.
- o *Identifying Key Issues and Structuring Issue-Based Campaigns* covered creating campaigns that attract voters based on issues of concern to women and the citizenry at large.
- o *Grassroots Organizing Techniques* addressed methods of appealing to hard-to-reach, rural or apathetic voters; using local resources to support women candidates.
- o *Educating Voters: Their Fears, Their Rights, Their Influence* centered on developing effective nation-wide civic education and voter rights campaigns that are culturally appropriate, focused and sustainable.
- o *Encouraging Women to Participate: Overcoming Barriers and Maximizing Benefits* addressed specific barriers to the political involvement of women, including culture and tradition; lack of training for women as candidates; absence of encouragement for younger women; and opposition of spouses. Participants also discussed both the strategies for overcoming deterrents as well as the public policy benefits that would accrue from involving more women in politics.



- o *Supporting Women in Elective Positions: Enhancing Their Ability to Offer Constituency Services and Contribute to Government Processes* concerned possible strategies for developing a Resource Centre to support women elected officials at all levels.

ii) **Caucuses, Affinity Groups and Special Consultations**

During the Conference, Affinity Groups (Members of Parliament; Local Elected Officials; NGO, Party, Academic and Political Activists; and Candidates and Aspirants) and Caucuses (Urban, Rural, Kenyan Women and International Participants) met to discuss issues, concerns and recommendations from their unique perspectives or needs. These discussions enriched Working Group deliberations and recommendations, and are reflected in the Centre's proposed Plan of Action (See Appendix C). Participants also asked to have a special session to discuss the clashes that were creating havoc and violence in several Kenyan communities. This discussion was viewed as particularly relevant and critical since a disproportionate number of clash victims are innocent women and children.

iii) **Media Panel**

Several professional journalists and public relations experts led a spirited discussion about the media and its relevance to, and relationship with, women elected officials and candidates. Participants generally agreed that the media needed to be sensitized and exposed women leaders and concerns at all levels and that women were either misrepresented or worse ignored by important national media outlets. At the same time, it was noted that women must develop their skills to better interact with media.

Participants identified several impediments to more positive images in, and improved relationships with, the media. They especially noted cultural barriers (e.g. women's fears that they will be ostracized or considered "pushy" if they pursue media coverage) and women's lack of familiarity with methods for obtaining better media coverage.

The media working group recommended that: a) women activists and politicians become better acquainted with journalists from the local and international media; and b) women hold news conferences and prepare timely, cogent and clear press releases. The group also encouraged the Education Centre to establish a media contact list and publish a regular newsletter to highlight women's activities.

iv). Constituency Visits

Conference participants visited three primarily rural constituencies surrounding Nanyuki. With the assistance of Members of Parliament representing these areas (Hon. Charles Mukora - Laikipia East; Hon. J. Mathenge - Nyeri; Hon. Mwai Kibaki - Othaya; Hon. Joe Githingi - Tetu; Hon. Kairo Munene - Kieni; and Hon. Matu Wamae - Mathira), local women's groups were asked to meet with Conference participants and to share their views about women's issues, political participation and community needs. Among the concerns cited by women were:

- o Lack of leadership and services by elected politicians.
- o A need to end the clashes and violence in their communities.
- o A need for women to have greater access to capital, agricultural support and land.
- o The deterioration of the education system and the need for more and better schools and teachers, and more educational opportunities for girls.



- o The need for a national commitment to greater protection of women's rights and guaranteed equality.
- o A need for greater unity among urban and rural women, with more opportunities for leadership and interaction being given to rural women who are still the majority.
- o More education about political and civic issues, especially in rural areas, even when there are no elections.
- o The need for more even and fair national and community development policies, so that jobs can be created in their communities.
- o The need for better health infrastructure, including family planning services, in their communities.

- o A hope that they could receive more technical assistance and support to build the capacity of local women's groups and institutions.

Participants who visited the different constituencies were moved by the deep concerns about local community problems and the desire to become involved in problem-solving as expressed by the rural women with whom they met. One rural women eloquently summarized these feelings. She said:

"We are tired of being ignored except when its time to vote. We're tired of clashes and suffering and poverty. We want our concerns to be heard and we want change now. If you can't get yourselves organized and become effective leaders, then step aside. We'll organize and do it ourselves..."

The Kenyan participants viewed this as an important challenge, repeated at all three locations and a call to action for the Centre.

THE PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE

The Education Centre, through continued activities by the Local Organizing Committee, plans to implement recommendations by Conference participants. To begin to implement a plan of action the Centre must: secure a permanent office and hire staff to help women politicians and activists conduct activities and coordinate with existing groups (including political parties); plan additional activities that are consistent with Centre's goals and objectives; establish and maintain alliances with international groups interested in women, politics and democratization; and identify resources to support women engaged in politics.



Financial and in-kind support from national and international donors is a priority for the Education Centre. These resources are needed if the ambitious plans recommended by the conference participants are to be implemented. The Local Organizing Committee has prepared a two-year Plan of Action. The Plan is an attempt to build a foundation for longer-term activities, beginning with the most important recommendations and laying the ground-work for future, more cost- or labor-intensive activities--such as a national voter education program.

The Committee was influenced by the sense of urgency expressed by participants, by the women's groups that were visited and by others who were not able to participate in the Conference but who were willing to express their views and concerns. The Education Centre is now preparing to begin the difficult but ultimately rewarding process of supporting the empowerment of women. The Centre will need partners, resources and sound leadership; it already has inspiration from the words and ideas of women who participated in this important planning conference.



APPENDIX A:
CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS



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APPENDIX B:
CONFERENCE AGENDA

EDUCATION CENTRE FOR WOMEN IN DEMOCRACY INAUGURAL CONFERENCE AGENDA

"PROMOTING GREATER POLITICAL PARTICIPATION"

OCTOBER 19 - 23, 1993

NANYUKI, KENYA

Conference Definitions

- Plenary:** all participants convene for broader issue presentation & discussion
- Working Group:** participant selected groups for developing action plan for the six topics identified by the organizing committee (see chart below for topics).
- Affinity Group:** groups of participants that share a common political affiliation (MP's/party leaders, NGO's, academics, activists/candidates & aspirants/local officials)
- Caucuses:** groups of participants that share a geographical affiliation (rural & urban/international & Kenyan)

WORKING GROUP	KENYAN FACILITATORS	INT'L FACILITATORS
Finding Resources for Candidates: Party, Financial and Technical	Dorcas Kombo Beth Mugo	Maura Brueger (U.S.A.)
Identifying Key Issues and Structuring Issue-Based Campaigns	Tabitha Seii Charity Kaluki	Prisca Nyambe (Zambia) Clara Olsen (Botswana)
Grassroots Organizing Techniques	Phoebe Asiyo Gertude Kopiyo	Winnie Byanyima (Uganda) Ellen Musialela (Namibia)
Educating Voters: Their Fears, Their Rights, Their Influence	Agnes Ndeti	Gracia Hillman (U.S.A.) Venita Vinson (U.S.A.)
Encouraging Women to Participate: Overcoming the Barriers and Maximizing the Benefits	Orie Rogo-Manduli Betty Tett	Nuala Fennell (Ireland)
Supporting Women in Elected Positions: Enhancing Their Ability to Offer Constituency Services and Contribute to Government Processes	Jael Mbogo Rose Waruhiu	Fran Farmer (U.S.A.)

OCTOBER 19, 1993

6:00 - 7:00 Cocktail Reception

7:00 - 8:30 Dinner

9:00 - 10:00 **PLENARY SESSION - WELCOME**
The Honourable Agnes Ndeti

- o *Introduction to the National Democratic Institute*
- o *Conference Concept/Goals and Expectations*
- o *Structure of Program*
- o *Participants sign up for Working Groups*

OCTOBER 20, 1993

8:30 - 10:00 **PLENARY SESSION:**
Kenyan and International Perspectives on Women's Political Development

Moderator/Convener: The Honourable Charity Kaluki, MP

- Panelists:*
- o *Dr. Michaela Blaunck (Germany)*
 - o *Ellen Musialela (Namibia)*
 - o *Orie Rogo-Manduli (Kenya)*
 - o *The Honourable Grace Onyango (Kenya)*
 - o *Tabitha Seii*

10:00 - 10:30 Tea

10:30 - 1:00 **WORKING GROUP: Issue Identification**

1:00 - 2:30 Lunch

2:30 - 3:45 **AFFINITY GROUPS: MPs/Local Elected Officials/NGO, Party Leaders, Academics, Activists/Candidates and Aspirants**

3:45 - 4:30 **FEED-BACK COLLOQUY ON AFFINITY GROUP DELIBERATIONS**

4:30 - 5:00 Tea

5:00 - 6:30 **WORKING GROUP: Issue Identification continued**

7:30 - 9:00 Dinner

OCTOBER 21, 1993

7:30 - 9:00 **BREAKFAST CAUCUSES: (1) Urban / (2) Rural**

9:00 - 10:00 **WORKING GROUP: Strategy and Feasibility/Adaptation to Kenyan Realities**

10:00 - 10:30 Tea

10:30 - 12:00 **WORKING GROUP continued**

12:00 - 1:30 Lunch

1:30 - 5:00 ***Meetings with Women's Groups in Local Constituencies Surrounding Nanyuki***

5:00 - 6:30 Free

7:00 - 8:00 Dinner

8:30 - 10:30 **PLENARY: Reflections on Kenyan Reality**
[Reports and Feed-back on Visits to Local Constituencies]
--Includes feed-back on results of the urban/rural caucuses

Moderators/Conveners: Rachel Mzera and Betty Chemutai

OCTOBER 22, 1993

7:30 - 9:00 **BREAKFAST CAUCUSES:**
(1) Coordination and Coalition Building of Groups in Kenya /
(2) Building Networks Among Activist Worldwide

9:00 - 10:30 **PLENARY: Media and Women's Perspectives**
--Includes Feed-back on the Breakfast Caucuses

Moderator/Convener: Josephine Kiluta

Panelists: o Tami Hullman (Africa News Service)
 o Margaretta Gacheru (The Nation)
 o Clara Olsen (Botswana Gazette)

10:30 - 11:00 Tea

11:00 - 1:00 **WORKSHOP: Develop Action Plans and Needs Assessments**

1:00 - 2:30 Lunch

2:30 - 4:00 **WORKSHOP: Preparation of Action Plans**

4:00 - 4:30 Tea

4:30 - 6:30 **PLENARY ROUND TABLE:
Presentation of Action Plans and Integration Into A Coordinated
Master Plan of Action**

Moderators/Conveners: Betty Tett and Fran Farmer

7:00 - 9:00 ***Closing Dinner***

OCTOBER 23, 1993

7:00 - 8:00 Breakfast

8:30 - 11:30 Drive to Nairobi

12:00 - 1:00 Caucus With Male Political Leaders

1:00 - 1:30 ***Awards Ceremony: Honouring Grace Onyango and Margaret Kenyatta***

1:30 - 3:00 ***Awards Luncheon***

APPENDIX C:
EDUCATION CENTRE
TWO-YEAR
PLAN OF ACTION

Project Activities	Project Quarters								Person/Institution responsible	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		
ESTABLISH CENTRE HEADQUARTERS:										
1. Locate office quarters, secure services (electricity, phone, etc.)	■									Local Organising Committee
2. Identify, recruit, hire staff Prepare job descriptions, contracts	■									Local Organising Committee
3. Purchase office equipment (computer, fax, desks, shelves)	■									Local Organising Committee
4. Prepare detailed annual budget.	■			■						Exec. Director, Staff
5. Create separate workplan for establishing Resource Centre. -Computer data bases -Subscriptions, books -Roster of consulting experts (national, international) -Research priorities list -Centre "Issues Seminar" schedule -Identify legislative drafting expertise	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■	Exec. Director, Resource Centre Program Officer
ESTABLISHING CENTRE STRUCTURE:										
1. Hold quarterly meetings of Centre	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Centre Chair, Officers

1. Locate office quarters, secure services (electricity, phone, etc.)
2. Identify, recruit, hire staff
Prepare job descriptions, contracts
3. Purchase office equipment (computer, fax, desks, shelves)
4. Prepare detailed annual budget.
5. Create separate workplan for establishing Resource Centre.
 - Computer data bases
 - Subscriptions, books
 - Roster of consulting experts (national, international)
 - Research priorities list
 - Centre "Issues Seminar" schedule
 - Identify legislative drafting expertise

1. Hold quarterly meetings of Centre

PLAN OF ACTION

Project Activities	Project Quarters								Person / Institution responsible
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Executive Committee to monitor Plan implementation.									Centre Chair, Heads of Kenyan Women's Organisations Exec. Director, Centre Officer
Release Conference Report at half-day seminar/luncheon of key women activists.									
Establish network of key women's groups and meet semi-annually to plan joint strategies.									
Develop Centre fund-raising strategy. -Prepare three- to five - year proposal. -Identify other funding sources (multilaterals, foundations, corporations, public/private sector, individuals). -Create fund-raising plan. -Develop Centre brochure.									
CIVIC / VOTER EDUCATION STRATEGIES									
1. Request model materials from African countries, US, Latin America, Europe -Store in Resource Centre									Centre Program Officer
2. Establish national Working Group on Voter Education Materials Development									

[illegible]

PLAN OF ACTION

Project Activities	Project Quarters								Person / Institution responsible
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
3. Identify Centre Press Officer -Develop media plan and series of articles -Hold media briefings on selected issues related to Kenyan women and political participation. Use national, international lecturers, guests to build media interest. -Design Centre newsletter. -Identify graphic artist -Create production schedule -Appoint Newsletter Advisory Board; identify regular contributors. -First publication of quarterly newsletter									Press Officer
CANDIDATES TRAINING:									
1. Identify resourcepersons / master trainers									Exec. Director
2. Develop curricular for: a. campaign organizing b. campaign funding c. using issues for community mobilization d. communication skills									Exec. Director, Resource-persons
3. Obtain, create training materials									Centre Staff, Resource-persons

PLAN OF ACTION

Project Activities	Project Quarters								Person/Institution responsible
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
4. Organize pilot training sessions -Using selection criteria and results of outreach activities, identify pool of 50 trainees -Plan schedule (3 sessions/15 trainees) -Identify faculty -Develop evaluation, follow-up procedures, methodologies									Centre Staff, Resource-persons
5. Prepare quarterly list of international conferences -Circulate lists to contact groups -Identify resource base to facilitate participation by Kenyan women in events -Provide support for at least 10 Kenyan women/year to attend international meetings, training									Exec. Director, Donours
2ND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE:									
1. Compile Centre mailing list; update									Centre Staff
2. Circulate questionnaire on topics, training needs to Centre mailing list.									Exec. Director, Centre Staff

PLAN OF ACTION

Project Activities	Project Quarters								Person/Institution responsible
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
3. Plan agenda; select venue									Exec. Director, Conference Committee
4. Identify resourcepersons; send invitations to participants									Conference Committee
5. Conduct conference.									Conference Committee, Centre Staff
6. Develop next two-year Action Plan including regional activities									Conference participants Centre Officials
7. Hold Action Plan dissemination seminars									Centre Officials
-National -Regional (8 Kenya Provinces)									Centre Officials

APPENDIX D:
EDUCATION CENTRE
CONSTITUTION
(SUMMARY)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: CONSTITUTION

EDUCATION CENTER FOR WOMEN IN DEMOCRACY

Description:

The Education Center for Women in Democracy is a **registered**, non-partisan, non-profit making national lobby group formed in 1993 by Kenyan women.

Objectives:

- a. Civic education
- b. Enhancing awareness about women as mainstream political players; raising the self-esteem of women as leaders in society; de-mystification of politics for all women; provision of support for women politicians and elected officials at all levels.
- c. Promoting a democratic society in Kenya in which women participate fully, actively, freely and equally in politics, in public affairs through the electoral system and as voters and leaders in society; promoting equal opportunity for women and lobbying for improved social welfare and other services for all Kenyans; promoting issues of special concern to women.
- d. Supporting and lobbying for world peace, international cooperation and the abolition of all forms of oppression, racism, chauvinism, sexism, social bigotry, exploitation and discrimination.

[Objectives summarized]

Justification:

Women constitute 52% of Kenya's voting population. They, however, remain a marginalized majority due to various historical, social, cultural and economic factors which impact upon and impeded women's full integration into formal development and decision-making processes ...Politics regulates people's access to economic and social resources. The right to development implies the right to knowledge, information and resources that can facilitate women's rights to self-determination. [Citing the decline in numbers of nominated Members of Parliament and absence of women in cabinet positions...] The aim of the Centre is therefore to pursue the correction of several anomalies.

Activities:

Includes but are not limited to:

- o Seminars and conferences (including sponsorship of international fora)
- o Public education campaigns and literature
- o Preparation and dissemination of issues analyses and concerns of women
- o Provision of research and resources services for women politicians and elected officials

Membership:

Any Kenyan woman over the age of 18 years shall be eligible for membership. Members shall pay an annual subscription fee of Kshs 100.

Officers:

- o Chair
- o Vice Chair
- o Secretary-General
- o Vice Secretary-General
- o Treasurer-General
- o Vice Treasurer-General

APPENDIX E:
WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

KEY STRATEGY / ISSUE AREA	WORKING GROUP TOPICS					
	Finding Resources for Candidates	Identifying Key Issues	Grassroots Organization	Educating Voters	Encouraging Women to Participate	Supporting Women in Elected Positions
Candidates:						
* Identification of women with leadership potential; training for effective candidacy, greater confidence.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
* Provision of technical assistance in running campaigns	✓	✓			✓	
* Resources (financial, technical) especially shared or pooled	✓	✓		✓	✓	
* Give techniques to forge communication linkages between voter, candidate.		✓	✓	✓	✓	
* Care for "whole" politician by educating parties, families, public about roles, responsibilities of women candidates.	✓			✓	✓	
* Identify technical, financial resources (local, international); provide t/a (seminars, publications, data bases) to candidates in how to access them.	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
* Establish "WOW" or revolving fund made available to women candidates, civic / community groups.	✓		✓	✓	✓	

KEY STRATEGY / ISSUE AREA	WORKING GROUP TOPICS					
	Finding Resources for Candidates	Identifying Key Issues	Grassroots Organization	Educating Voters	Encouraging Women to Participate	Supporting Women in Elected Positions
Organizations:						
* Coalition building/joint strategies, especially with other women groups.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
* Establish formal linkages with international women and other groups interested in politics, democracy.	✓	✓			✓	✓
* Encourage political parties to provide more support for, involvement of women.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
* Provide training, institution-building t/a for political parties.	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
* Lobby to remove restrictions on meetings.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Issues:						
* Create public awareness of linkages between women issues and those affecting national development.		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
* Create greater public awareness of women contributions, issues.		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
* Foster, support law reform initiatives affecting status of women.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

KEY STRATEGY / ISSUE AREA	WORKING GROUP TOPICS					
	Finding Resources for Candidates	Identifying Key Issues	Grassroots Organization	Educating Voters	Encouraging Women to Participate	Supporting Women in Elected Positions
Media:						
* Foster better media strategies; journalist education, sensitization of media to women issues.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
* Create/maintain media contact list	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
* Centre should create regular newsletter, radio, TV programs on women candidates, contributions, issues.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
* Centre sponsorship of joint advertisements for women candidates, issues.	✓			✓	✓	✓
* Centre should hire media specialist to provide t/a.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
* Women should use popular culture to reach voters.		✓	✓	✓		
* Develop strategies to project positive images for women.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Civil Education:						
* Provide simple, clear but effective information about democratic process, value of vote, rights/obligations in local languages.		✓	✓	✓		✓
* Explore, adapt techniques for voter contact (door-to-door, lobby groups).		✓	✓	✓		✓

KEY STRATEGY / ISSUE AREA	WORKING GROUP TOPICS					
	Finding Resources for Candidates	Identifying Key Issues	Grassroots Organization	Educating Voters	Encouraging Women to Participate	Supporting Women in Elected Positions
* Link voter education to development activities.	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
* Begin national voter education programs immediately.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
* Use advertisements for voter education.	✓	✓		✓		✓
Political Parties:						
* Parties need to develop more "professional" skills, institutional capabilities.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
* Centre should identify national, international resources to assist parties.	✓	✓		✓		✓
Constituency Services:						
* Identify, prioritize community needs as on-going process.		✓	✓	✓		✓
* Provide seminars, mechanisms to sensitize government officials to community needs.		✓	✓			✓
* Develop networks with rural, traditional women; meet regularly to expose issues, activities.		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

KEY STRATEGY / ISSUE AREA	WORKING GROUP TOPICS					
	Finding Resources for Candidates	Identifying Key Issues	Grassroots Organization	Educating Voters	Encouraging Women to Participate	Supporting Women in Elected Positions
Resource Centre:						
* Education Centre should have permanent office, staff.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
* Establish standing Centre committees that create, monitor workplans, mobilize resources, meet regularly.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
* Mobilize technical resources and build research capability to support women elected officials candidates (including legislative drafting).	✓	✓		✓		✓
* Maintain data base, clearinghouse.	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
* Provide, seek opportunities for international travel, exposure of women politicians.	✓	✓			✓	✓
* Provide regular women candidates training.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
* Provide support, training for women w/out party affiliations but who network or are interested in politics.	✓	✓	✓		✓	

APPENDIX F:
PRESS RELEASE AND PRESS COVERAGE

THE EDUCATION CENTRE FOR WOMEN IN DEMOCRACY

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PRESS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release
October 14, 1993**

Nairobi, Kenya

Today, the Local Organizing Committee of the *Education Centre for Women in Democracy*, a non-profit, non-partisan organisation designed to provide tangible and practical support to women who are, or who aspire to become, elected officials at all levels throughout Kenya, announced that it will host an international planning conference from 19-23 October, 1993 in Nanyuki, Kenya. The Centre and the conference has attracted broad support from representatives of all parties and all regions of the country.

The Committee noted that this is consistent with the non-partisan character of women's concerns. She also pointed out the importance of women working together in common cause regardless of party affiliation, from rural and urban areas and from various kinds of expertise and involvement in political affairs.

The Conference will include women from other African countries, Europe, New Zealand and the United States. They will share their own experiences and provide models for delivery of services to constituencies; parliamentary activities; civic and voter education; and research into parliamentary bills and other legislative affairs that may be adapted by Kenyan women involved in politics.

Conference participants will develop a three- to five-year plan of action that will be implemented by the Centre's Honorary Advisory Committee and a small Secretariat. Conference proceedings will be published and will be used to explain the Centre's goals and to serve as organizing principles for future Centre initiatives.

The Centre also will be seeking longer-term funding to ensure that women elected officials can have research and other support to facilitate their work on behalf of their communities and issues affecting Kenyan women at all levels and in all areas.

Among topics to be included in action planning are:

- o Finding Resources for Candidates: Party, Financial and Technical
- o Identifying Key Issues and Structuring Issue-Based Campaigns
- o Grassroots Organizing Techniques
- o Educating Voters: Providing Important Information for Kenyan Voters
- o Encouraging Women to Participate: Overcoming Barriers and Maximizing Benefits
- o Providing Technical Support to Women Elected Officials

On October 23, the Centre will honor two Kenyan women pioneers at an awards ceremony and luncheon at the Nairobi Serena. They also will hold a press conference and a closed-door brief of interested male political colleagues preceding the luncheon.

--more--

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Committee members said: "This is an idea that many women have talked about, met about and worked toward. It is long overdue, and is born out of our experiences as women in the recent national elections and as a majority of Kenya's voters who, unfortunately, still find ourselves on the margins of political involvement and influence." They noted that many of the "ugali and sukuma wiki issues, so important to our families, still are not receiving the attention and support that they deserve. We want to work, together, to make a difference, and the Centre will provide one important focal point to organize our efforts to secure permanent change, progress and prosperity for all Kenyans."

Members paid tribute to other women's groups and individuals who had made historic efforts to bring these issues to the forefront and stated her hope that the Centre will "serve as a coordinating mechanism and a place where the talents of Kenyans, both men and women, can be brought to bear, in positive and constructive ways, on the political destiny and future of the nation."

For more information, please contact:

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2 SUNDAY NATION, OCTOBER 24, 1993

NATIONAL NEWS

Give women a chance to develop, urges envoy

By SHEILA WAMBUI

Those in positions of leadership must give Kenyan women more opportunities to develop, the Ugandan envoy to Kenya, Mr J. Tomusange, told a meeting yesterday.

The same meeting heard that public health facilities mostly affecting women and children had deteriorated so drastically "that it was more advisable to give birth at home through a traditional birth attendant (TBA) than sharing one pair of gloves with 15 other patients due to lack of facilities in the public health institutions."

Dr Khama Rogo who addressed the meeting urged leaders and women to focus their attention on the youth and decried the situation of the girl child, 10,000

of whom drop out of school due to unwanted pregnancies with no chance of pursuing their education.

Mr Tomusange said without the help of local leaders and politicians, Kenyan women will have a lot of difficulties in their ventures.

He said the cultural and traditional barriers that have inhibited African women for many years were hard to break and they needed the co-operation of the existing systems to boost themselves.

The envoy said in Uganda, a law was passed for each district to elect one woman representative and since then the number had risen to 34.

The meeting, organised by the Education Centre for Women on

Democracy was held at a Nairobi hotel during which two long-serving women politicians, Mrs Grace Onyango, and Ms Margaret Kenyatta, were honoured.

It was attended by various dignitaries from Kenya as well as visitors from Botswana, Uganda, Southern Africa and the USA and women parliamentary aspirants during the last general elections.

Mrs Onyango who was presented with a gift by the centre, urged women to strive to excel in whatever they did so that their critics would have nothing to stand on. She was elected first woman Mayor in 1972 and MP in 1979 having ventured into politics in 1963.

Mrs Beth Mugo received the award on behalf of Ms Kenyatta.

Women to host conference

By SUNDAY NATION Correspondent

The local committee of the Education Centre for Women in Democracy yesterday announced that it will host an international planning conference from October 19-23 in Nanyuki.

The centre is a non-profit, non-partisan organisation aimed at giving tangible and practical support to women who are, or aspire, to become elected officials.

The centre and conference has attracted broad support from

representatives of all parties and all regions of the country, a statement signed by a FORD Kenya activist, Ms Orie Rogo Manduli, said.

The conference will include women from other African countries, Europe, New Zealand and the United States.

The participants will develop a three to five year plan of action to be implemented by the centre's Honorary Advisory Committee and a small secretariat.

2 SUNDAY TIMES, OCTOBER 17, 1993

Women's body to hold conference

By SUNDAY TIMES Reporter

THE Education Centre for Women in Democracy plans to host an international planning conference starting next Tuesday to discuss parliamentary bills and other legislative affairs that may be adapted by Kenyan women involved in politics.

The centre's local organising committee said in a press release that the five-day conference will be held at Nanyuki and will include women from other African countries, from Europe, New Zealand and from the United States.

The conference participants are expected to come up with a three to five year plan of action that will be implemented by the centre's honorary advisory committee and small secretariat.

The participants are expected to share their own experiences

and provide models for delivery of services to constituencies; parliamentary activities, civic and voters education together with the researching into the parliamentary bills and other legislative affairs that may be adapted by Kenyan women involved in politics.

Some of the women in the committee and who are also going to act as facilitators are Hon Agnes Ndeti, Orie Rogo Manduli (Mama Safi), Tabitha Seii, Betty Tett, the Hon Assistant Minister for Public Works Mrs Nyiva Mwendwa, Dr Julia Ojiambo, Hon Charity Kaluki Mwendwa and Mrs Grace Onyango among others.

The women will also next weekend honour pioneer Kenyan women mayors Miss Margaret Kenyatta and Grace Onyango.

Women map out plan for elections of 1997

In four years, 1997 will be upon us. And then what?

Another General Election like the last one - where party affiliations mattered more than pithy issues and practical programmes pertinent to the people's quality of life?

Nineteen-ninety-two was a year when women leaders and organisations like the National Committee on the Status of Women, talked themselves hoarse about the import of women jumping on the political hand-wagon and running for elected office.

But then what happened?

Nineteen women stood for Parliamentary seats, out of which six were elected. They were Mrs Phoebe Asiyo (FORD Kenya), Ma Martha Karua (DP), Mrs Nyiva Mwenda (Kanu), Mrs Agnes Ndeti (DP), Mrs Kaluki Ngilu (DP) and Ma Mary Wanjiru (FORD Asili).

"It was discouraging to see only 19 women vie for 122 seats," said the MP for Kitui Central, Mrs Ngilu, "but it was only because women hadn't yet come to accept the idea that we can lead. That perspective is changing fast."

So fast, in fact, that more than 150 women stood for local authority seats. Some won and some lost.

Those who lost can be proud that they had the audacity to stand up and campaign against male aspirants and an electorate which wasn't fully informed about the meaning of multi-party democracy, leave alone the virtues of having women occupy seats of political power.

Come 1997, the scenario is likely to have changed dramatically. Women are planning a strategy of winning the next elections.

The new Education Centre for Women in Democracy believe that they and their sisters (irrespective of party affiliation) can provide the dynamic leadership required to steer the country effectively into the 21st century.

"What is essential is for women to unite," said Mrs Ndeti, the MP for Kibwezi and head of the Education Centre.

"The centre is strictly a non-partisan forum through which women must unite to save this country," said Mrs Ndeti late last week during the centre's first planning conference. "It's in women's unity that we see hope for the future."

But it isn't only women's unity that the centre is concerned

Women leaders and political aspirants have set their sights on 1997's General Elections. MAGARETTA wa GACHERU reports on a meeting women held last week to launch the Education Centre for Women in Democracy. The participants at the meeting designed a three-year action plan aimed at assisting women to win half the seats in Parliament and local councils.



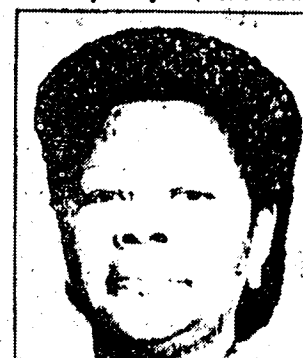
Mrs Agnes Ndeti (DP)



Mrs Mary Wanjiru (FORD Asili)



Mrs Phoebe Asiyo (FORD Kenya)



Mrs Nyiva Mwenda (Kanu)

about. Convinced that women in politics can rectify practically all the country's major ills - economic, educational, agricultural, managerial or militaristic - the centre's founders brought together an illustrious group of women from all over Kenya and from other parts of the world, to draw up an action programme aimed at seeing women obtain at least 50 per cent of the political power in 1997.

During the four-day planning conference, local women's leaders brainstormed with women MPs and professionals from Southern Africa, Europe and the United

tswana, Uganda, Germany and Ireland.

The conference organisers also had a strong sense of history and included local women pioneers like Grace Oryango, Kenya's first woman mayor, woman MP and former acting Speaker of the House; Muthoni Kihara 23 the country's youngest woman councillor; Fatuma Hassan, the first Kenyan-Somali woman to come out and fight for women's rights; Samoe Abdallah Amur, the first Coast Muslim woman to join multi-party politics way before Uhuru and Wambui Otieno a former freedom fighter and a candidate in Kajiado North in 1992.

Enriching the sessions were Kenyan women activists and prospective candidates, including a few who failed to be elected in '92 such as Tabitha Seii, Betty Tett, Joel Mugo, Beth Mugo, Orie Rogo Manduli and Rose Waruhiu.

For elected women leaders like Mrs Ndeti, Mrs Ngilu and Mrs Asiyo, the centre may play the role of a think tank or a research, information/documentation centre.

What was clear at the end of the conference, was that the centre will be emphatically non-partisan, and multi-purpose. The women want the centre to provide technical services and provide a political support base for training skills - from public speaking to strategic planning as well as being a national and international networking mechanism for building coalitions from the grassroots.

A one day close encounter with grassroots women living nearby illustrated one vital fact - the rural women can sometimes be more politically perceptive and informed than their educated urban sisters.

In the case of the Nyeri women's group who met the participants, they were very clear about the value of voting in women candidates and for unity among the parties.

Without unity, the rural women said, women leaders will be left no choice but to unite and solve the country's problems themselves.

Endorsing that view, the MP for Kibwezi went a step further. "With a unified front of women, there is no reason why women can't produce their own Presidential candidate in 1977."

Women politicians, it seemed, are planning ahead this time and also thinking more ambitiously

By Gretchen Lang
NANYUKI, Kenya

Sometime a woman running for office has to get up and walk. Mima Halako Nderi, a Kenyan mother of six walked 100 miles of dusty road to every polling station in her district in her quest for a seat on the national council. She lost.

But others won. In the country's first multi-party elections last year, 18 women ran for parliament, six of them successfully, doubling the number of women in the House. Frustrated by the failings of their male colleagues, African women have exploited the democracy movement movements sweeping the continent and are putting their reputations and finances on the line to fight for better government.

"We are the ones who look after our men, but they have failed us", Parliament member Charity Kaluki told women voters. "Let us tell the men they've been defeated and they should give the woman a chance".

In Kenya and in other African states, outrage over the deterioration of human rights and government services has propelled women into public life, an arena that is decidedly dangerous.

Candidates have been shot at, arrested, jailed, dogged by security police and slandered in the local press.

In Kenya's elections last year, 10 supporters of a female parliamentary candidate were raped by men who said they supported her opponent, according to an election watchdog report. Opposition candidates received no protection from local police departments who were aligned with the ruling party.

"When you declare your candidacy, you know it is a matter of life and death", says Nairobi City

Council member Muthoni Kihara.

But for African women, the stakes are as high as the obstacles they must overcome. When a corrupt or indifferent government fails to deliver basic services, women and children are the first to be affected.

"Clean water, immunization for children, violence, poverty - these are life-threatening issues for women", says Fran Farmer, an American lawyer and former executive director of the Congressional Black Women's Caucus, who has lived in Kenya for four years.

Perhaps even more than their American counterparts, African women know their fate is linked with the fate of their women constituents.

"I fought to get property rights for women," said Grace Onyango, elected as Kenya's first woman mayor in 1964. "I know that this time (the men) would give me what I want because I'm the mayor. Next time I'll be just another lady they can push".

Getting to the halls of power takes everything the women can master.

"They told me the ladies can't go out at night" recalls Mrs. Onyango. "They can't go to bars and buy people drinks, they can't leave their children".

Uganda's Winnie Byanyima, a former guerrilla, who is now running for parliament in Yoweri Museveni's government has heard same complaints on the campaign trail.

MORE AFRICAN WOMEN SEEKING OFFICE

Foes can make candidacies dangerous

They say "Why is she competing against men. She is arrogant, she is stubborn. She just wants to prove she's as good as a man," she said.

Local businessmen and politicians recently offered her a seat in the parliament women's wing if she would quit her candidacy. She refused.

"They like to think they're political big shots" Ms. Byanyima said. "I told them where to go".

In a society where most women are confined to the home, women politicians and advocates have turned those roles to their advantage.

In colonial Kenya in 1958, women pushing for adoption of a law guaranteeing paternal support for children born out of wedlock refused to sleep with their husbands for a week. The men gave in and supported the bill. (A white majority later defeated it).

I'll admit that a woman's place is in the kitchen," said Ms. Kaluki. "But that's where decisions start".

Like their American counterparts, however, African women are struggling with hard choices on the road to power.

When Ms. Byanyima discovered that her opponent was bribing a local newspaper to keep her name out of the press, she offered a bigger bribe.

"You can call that corruption, but I want results." Ms. Byanyima told a delegation of women

activists who met here recently to exchange ideas. "The question is how far do we have to adopt male values to participate".

In their most ambitious moments, the Education Center for Women in Democracy conference talked of ousting Kenya's president by fielding their own candidate. Last year's elections failed to dislodge Daniel Arap Moi who won when the opposition splintered and its majority vote split three ways.

But lining up support behind a woman candidate is a daunting task in a country where more than 60 percent of women are illiterate. Most live in isolated rural areas and often are coerced not to participate in the electoral process.

When delegates visited a group of rural women near Nanyuki, the were told that some women had accepted bribes from the government to vote for the ruling party so that they can feed their children. Others said their husbands threatened to beat them if they did not vote a certain way.

Party and tribal prejudice often divert votes away from female candidates. Even more worrisome, the same divisions now threaten to split the women's movement.

But many women lock boldly past those obstacles. Ms. Kihara, the Nairobi Council member, is a 23 year-old former secretary who survived a bout with polio and now walks with a limp. Dressed in schoolgirl dresses and anklets, she seems an unlikely choice for Kenya's next president, but even that office is within her grasp, she says.

"I have already walked where people with two good legs have not" she said. "What is there to stop me?"

Gretchen Lang is free-lance journalist based in Nairobi, Kenya

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