Executive Summary

In Africa, although substantial progress has been made to promote gender equality and empower women in some areas (e.g. in political participation), women still face enormous constraints. Women continue to bear a disproportionate burden of the HIV/AIDS pandemic; they suffer more gender-based violence, especially in civil conflict settings but also within their homes; they have more limited access to productive resources especially land; and, with fertility levels still high in many countries, they continue to bear huge health and reproductive health burdens. New challenges, including globalization and climate change, may also disproportionately affect women.

The IUSSP Scientific Panel on Gender organized a seminar on "Gender and empowerment in the 21st Century in Africa" to address some of these issues. The seminar brought together researchers, policy makers, program managers, and other development partners to share experiences on innovative policies and programs that have pushed the region forward in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in some countries, as well as highlight experiences that have undermined such efforts in other settings. The workshop was held in Nairobi Kenya on 24th and 25th of August. It was hosted by the African Population and Health research Center and funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Several themes emerged during discussion in the various panels. These themes are summarized in below:

Research:
(a) Researchers should increasingly adopt mixed methods instead of regarding methodologies as if they are discreet.
(b) The need to link research on gender to the larger socio-economic structures was emphasized. Researchers should move from just capturing individual characteristics because we may miss a lot of what is happening at the community level that may also impact on women's empowerment as a group.
(c) There is a need to involve the African academic researcher in researches instead of always pursuing research agendas from the north.
(d) There is a need to incorporate the role of masculinities in transactional sex, premarital and extramarital sexual relationships. Men may be bread winners in other types of relationships as well.
(e) The penis should be studied and interrogated as a weapon of war.
(f) Researchers should be willing to interrogate their research findings. For example they should be willing to dig deeper into findings such as investigating the the processes that are going on behind numbers they may come up with. For instance, it may not be enough to say boys are now disempowered because the number of boys going to university has decreased compared to girls. It may be worthwhile to ask who these boys that are not going to University are. Is it because other occupations and activities have become more useful than attending school? Researchers should also resist the urge to essentialise and romanticize the past. For example, researchers should be careful that in using anthropological texts from Victorian authors they may see empowerment when in fact

there was no empowerment. We should be in a position to interrogate more. We should not essentialise the past because culture and societies are not static but dynamic

(g) Researchers should pay interest to silences as sometimes what people do not say is as important as what they say.

(h) Researchers should not equate gender equity to gender equality at the same time they should also not equate sex to gender.

Programs:
(a) Just adding women to existing program does not work to empower them. At the same time there is need to define ways that men can be involved in projects to empower women.

(b) We should link the various process of development to gender. Both men and women are suffering from larger structures. Is there an alternative to men's sense of powerlessness in the face of women's empowerment? At the same time men have made repeated attempt to recreate patriarch in ways that try to subordinate women.

(c) For sustainability of the women's movement there is need to build capacity of women and other gender advocates.

Policy:

(a) Women's work should be valued and evaluated in economic terms such. Valuing women's work such as care giving in economic terms will help policy makers understand the contribution women are making.

(b) Some health interventions can take away resources from women's issues. For instance the focus on male circumcision has disadvantaged women's health issues as huge resources are being poured into this. So policy makers should take care that by advancing certain policy positions they are disadvantaging women's issues by reallocating resources in ways that are not favourable to women.

(c) Policies should also be targeted towards improving women's human capital to improve the quality of their participation in the labour force.

Recommendations:
The workshop came up with recommendations as outlined below:

1. **Gender research should be based on mixed methods and a reconceptualisation of gender and empowerment terminology**

(a) We should define concepts and choose appropriate methodologies.

(b) Researchers should adopt mixed methods to understand gender issues holistically. For example, where purely statistical approaches may give us the extent of the problem being studied, ethnographic frameworks may assist researchers to understand the various meaning that actors place on certain actions. There is no one way of investigating gender.

(c) There is the need to come up with new definitions and measurements of gender and empowerment that are relevant to today's world. Gender and empowerment as concepts should become more refined and precise.

(d) There is need to transform type of data to be collected to be able to address gender issues. For instance, DHS data asks directly if one is using a specific method so if the respondent husband has had a vasectomy the respondent may be less likely to mention it.
(e) Researchers should employ other methods such as participatory evaluation methodologies so that women can evaluate themselves

2. There is need to investigate both micro and macro level structures and how they relate to gender empowerment

(a) Since men and women are both suffering under the burden of larger structures, there is great need to interrogate inequalities among men as these inequalities can also have an impact in what happens in the lives of women. Male gender issues need to be addressed in the same way as we address women's issues. In order to empower women and redress gender inequalities there is a need to 'walk on two legs'.
(b) Development processes that take place at the macro level can have undesirable impacts on women's empowerment and welfare. Therefore development needs to be interrogated and not just assume that development will be good for both men and women.
(c) By focusing solely on women issues there is a tendency to neglect national and international development that may further disadvantage women. The link between the local and the global has to be investigated especially in situations of war where local and global interests intersect usually with dire consequences for women and men who are caught up in such conflicts. For example, there is need to link masculinities to sexual violence by focusing on the underlying structural causes such the profit interests of multinational and national interests (the politics of my pocket), multiple interests, related discourses and the way they intersect with history, culture, global politics, ethnicity gender and class.

3. Researchers should explore new research methodologies that empower the study populations

(a) Researchers should increasingly make use of research methodologies that makes a difference in the lives of people that are being studied. There is need for simultaneous research and action to ensure that research positively impacts on the lives of the researched people. There is need for more participatory and action research to make a difference in the lives of people.
(b) At every stage of the research process researchers need to ask themselves if the kind of questions they are asking and the research process and the findings will make a difference in the lives of the researched population.

4. Women's experiences should be privileged

(a) Researchers and other practitioners should ground empowerment from a gender perspective that is female. Female gender experiences should be privileged because men have always been privileged. Men's situation cannot be regarded as equal to that of women. Women as a group are disempowered. There is need to interrogate the importance of the penis is male decision making.

5. There is need to avoid stereotypical images of the African woman and African man.

(a) Researchers have to be careful about the question they ask and that research should move away from gender stereotypes and stop portraying women as victims and men as perpetrators all the time. Women's agency, class issues and socio-economic change have been over looked in research projects that portray women as victims. Western male and female opposition results in a mental block that prevents researchers from critically investigating gender relations. Stereotyping causes gender blindness and myths. The existing understanding of women as the defenseless victims and men as the oppressors needs to be revised.

(b) Researchers should acknowledge that men are not equal so theories of masculinities have to be integrated into gender work so as to also study inequalities among men which also impact on the lives of women.

(c) When conducting research we should reject binary oppositions between men and men. Men and women also have common interests, it might be better to start from these common interests to foster cooperation between men and women.

(d) We should investigate the other side of patriarchy seeing that western approaches have failed to empower women.

(e) Researchers should also not that contexts are not translatable and should bear this in mind before making unwarranted conclusions about all African men and women.

(f) There is need for men to be targeted in various contexts. For example in Islamic societies we may not expect the subdued people to stand up and demand for right especially if they are not given space to air their views and disappointments.

6. Possible areas of research

(a) There is need to investigate the role of the body. For example, by defiling the body of a woman, the whole community is also defiled. The body is a place where culture is written. There is need for more research on this issue.

(b) There is need to focus on climate change issues as deaths due to climate changes have exposed women's vulnerability as opposed to men.

7. Research should have policy impact

(a) Researchers should investigate how to reproduce success stories and policies elsewhere.

(b) The results of research should have clear policy implications for the improvement of gender equality. Researchers should network with others of similar mind in order to influence the policy agenda.

Background

The International development and policy agenda has galvanized global attention to issues of gender inequality and women's empowerment through various international policy platforms like the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo and the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. The importance of gender equality and women's empowerment in achieving national and global development goals is underscored in the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), with the third goal (MDG 3) specifically addressing the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. A mid-point assessment of global progress on the MDGs noted that "doors are opening slowly for women in the labor market". However, women still account for over 60% of unpaid family workers(UN DESA, 2007) only 17% of members of single or lower houses of parliament; and more girls than boys remain out of school(UNSD, 2007).

In Africa, although substantial progress has been made to promote gender equality and empower women in some areas (e.g. in political participation), women still face enormous constraints. Women continue to bear a disproportionate burden of the HIV/AIDS pandemic; they suffer more gender-based violence, especially in civil conflict settings but also within their homes; they have more limited access to productive resources especially land; and, with fertility levels still high in many countries, they continue to bear huge health and reproductive health burdens. New challenges, including globalization and climate change, may also disproportionately affect women.

The African Union Solemn Declaration of Gender Equality in Africa(SDGEA, 2004) aimed at addressing issues of major concern to women of Africa. These issues included lack of access to social services, health care, discrimination against women living with HIV/AIDS, lack of representation of women in decision making bodies as well as their lack of participation in peace building and post-conflict reconstruction. Other problems which were highlighted as facing the African woman included gender based violence and the trafficking of women and girls into sex slavery. The AU has resolved to encourage African heads of states to show commitment to gender issues by increasing budgetary allocation in the health sector to alleviate women's burden of care, to increase the participation and representation of women in peace building processes and post-conflict reconstruction as well as to spearhead campaigns against gender based violence and trafficking of women and girls.

The IUSSP Scientific Panel on Gender organized a seminar on "Gender and empowerment in the 21st Century in Africa" to address some of these issues. The seminar brought together researchers, policy makers, program managers, and other development partners to share experiences on innovative policies and programs that have pushed the region forward in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in some countries, as well as highlight experiences that have undermined such efforts in other settings[1]. The workshop was held in

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[1] Participants selected to present papers were selected through and open competitive process. A call for papers was posted on the IUSSP and APHRC websites. Ninety abstracts were submitted and were then put under a rigorous selection process by a panel that eventually selected 28 abstracts for presentation.

Nairobi Kenya on 24th and 25th of August. It was hosted by the African Population and Health research Center and funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

This report is a synthesis of the issues that were discussed at that meeting.

Summary of issues presented at meeting

The objective of the workshop was to stimulate and advance research, policy and programs to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. Papers presented at the workshop were diverse in their disciplines as well as areas of focus. A wide range of papers addressed the theoretical and methodological issues, presented empirical case studies, some analysed policy or program gaps on gender equality and women's empowerment. Although a majority of the papers focused on Africa, there were also papers from other regions such as Asia for comparative insights. The IUSSP workshop on Gender and empowerment in the 21st century in Africa focused on a number of themes. The papers focused on Measurement and conceptualization of gender (including changing meanings and perceptions of gender equality and women's empowerment), Gender and Fertility, Gender and HIV/AIDS, Gender and civil/armed conflicts (including sexual and gender based violence), Gender and political participation, Gender and the labor market (including internal/international migration), access to resources, poverty and gender as well as Education and gender.

Presenters at this workshop highlighted the need to revise and come up with new measurements of gender that are relevant to the world today. Emphasised was the need to make sure that researchers are careful about the questions they ask and that research should move away from gender stereotypes and stop portraying women as victims and men as perpetrators all the time. Public health discourse has to come up with a new image of women which suits reality if public health interventions are to have an impact. Evident in the presentations was the fact that not all men are equal so theories of masculinities have to be integrated into gender work so as to also study inequalities among men which also impact on the lives of women. The link between the local and the global has to be investigated especially in situations of war where local and global interests intersect usually with dire consequences for women and men who are caught up in such conflicts. Both individual and structural factors are important in understanding women's empowerment and researchers should not privilege one over the other.

Women's participation in both formal and informal politics and the various restrictions that can prevent women from full participation in electoral politics were discussed. In some societies women may create spaces or political participation in ways that are less threatening to themselves at the same time exploiting some cultural resources that determine their roles as women. However these forms of protests are met with varying degrees of success and may not lead to significant challenge of structures that may have negative gender implications for women. Some papers also address the issue of women empowerment at the grassroots levels and how we can incorporate some cultural traditional practices to advance women's empowerment. What was apparent in this session was the need to unpack development because if not properly planned

development may lead to further disempowerment of women. Sometimes women are not strategically placed to take advantage of development to better their own situation.

The workshop acknowledged man's increasing vulnerability but decided that women's gender issues should still be privileged as men continue to draw privileges from the patriarchal advantage.

Panel 1: Keynote Addresses

The papers and speeches in this panel highlighted the slow progress towards achieving MDG3 in Africa. Although progress has been made in some respects, some areas are still lagging behind. There has been low progress around issues of gender representation in political processes. For instance the number of women parliamentarians is still very low in some countries. Women are still disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS and gender violence. In some countries women still have limited access to productive resources like land. Alex Ezeh gave an example of Ethiopia where an evaluation of microfinance showed that only 46% of the recipients were women in-spite of the fact that the microfinance projects were meant to target women.

The Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of gender Dr Nyikal, opened the workshop by highlighting that the relevance of the gender workshop lies in how researchers are able to improve and better the lives of people. He stressed the need to realign the definition of gender to the emerging realities. The traditional roles of men and women are changing and breadwinning is no longer the sole responsibility of men. In many rural areas in Kenya women are fast becoming the breadwinners in their families. He stated that men's involvement and participation is critical in efforts to empower women. He reiterated that men's involvement in roles such as care giving is long overdue. He emphasized the need to study the psychology of rape in war and conflict situations. He highlighted that economic independence is at the center of women's empowerment. For him the problem of women's empowerment lay many women still exist outside of the money economy. He noted that in many African countries, giving of loans is still discriminatory against women. He however pointed out that the Kenyan government has sought to address this by establishing a women's fund to support women's entrepreneurs. He reiterated that the Kenya government has also put in place laws to eliminate gender based violence as well as female genital cutting. In spite of legal instruments Female genital cutting is still occurring in some areas and less than half of the girls in primary school proceed to secondary school. There is need to investigate ways in which women can be better positioned t take advantage of this legislation and better themselves.

Acknowledging the role of popular culture in shaping the social construction of gender, Akosua Adomako Ampofo's paper highlighted that gender violence is not only about women but construction of masculinity is also important in what happens in women's lives and in the lives of other men The paper stressed the need to interrogate current definitions and measurements to ensure that they are relevant and meaningful to people's lives was highlighted. Akosua also addressed methodological issues in large scale surveys and how they may overlook gender issues. The paper emphasized that the way survey questions are asked need to be revised to be

able to tackle the gender question. For instance, in the issue of unmet reproductive health needs, depending on how questions are asked sometimes unmet needs are not really unmet needs. Akosua gave an example of a respondent who wanted a second child. When she got pregnant the husband convinced her to have an abortion because he was not ready for another child. In surveys the abortion may be interpreted to mean that there was an unmet need for contraceptives. Other issues highlighted revolved around men's unmet needs. She highlighted instances where men may coerce their wives into having more children if they do not have boy children because of pressure from their peers. In such cases if we rely on quantitative studies alone we may not be able to adequately address the gendered social context of reproductive decision making. She also gave an example of the Kenya population census where the father's ethnic group is the one that was used to denote ethnicity, according to her this meant that those ethnic groups with large numbers of women would decline in number. She intimated that in cases where parents are of different ethnicities, father's ethnicity should not always be the one used to denote ethnicity.

Margrethe Silberschmidt presentation highlighted the need to move away from gender stereotypes of the African women peddled by national and international agencies and interrogate women's agency further. However there has been a stereotypical image of gender relations where women are depicted as subdued and men as perpetrators. Women's agency, class issues and socio-economic change have been over looked. Western male and female opposition makes as a mental block to critically investigate gender relations. Stereotyping causes gender blindness and myths. The existing understanding of women as the defenseless victims and men as the oppressors needs to be revised. She also noted that there was an overwhelming preoccupation with women's issues and yet men are increasingly becoming disempowered in the world today and not much is being said about them. She however acknowledged that men benefit from the patriarchal advantage and enjoy certain advantages that women don't have. Silberschmidt suggested 3 ways that can be adopted to understand men in Africa. The first way is taking a geo-political approach which interrogates the relationship between colonialism development and the formation of African masculinities today. This will enable researchers to understand how socio-economic changes (e.g. colonialism) affected and still affect women's and men's lives. The second way involves integrating theories of masculinities into gender work to interrogate inequalities among men. Thirdly she highlighted the need to discuss and come up with new ways of discussing gender in African contexts. According to Silberschmidt's paper defining gender roles and relations interms of patriarchy fails to recognize the complexity and the constant change of gender roles and relations. The need to study masculinities is very essential as increasingly wives are beginning to challenge the social worth of husbands leading to lower self esteem among men and other compensatory behaviours such as multiple sexual partnering to reaffirm their masculine identities. However Silberschmidt stressed that she was not seeking to downplay women's underprivileged positions but to show that if women and men are seen as diametrically opposed with no interests in common cooperation between genders is made impossible. She advocates that in gender debates there is a need to 'walk on two legs' one female one male.

In her presentation Beth Main Ahlberg emphasized the need to go beyond gender violence as violence against women. She highlighted the fact that there is increasing evidence showing that gender ideologies permeate the military and state security systems. Security systems of governments privileges masculinities. Thus systematic sexual violation is used as a weapon of

war mainly targeting women and children as victims in order to demoralize the men who fail to protect their families against such violation. She gave an example of the DRC where the body of the woman is the battle ground where the militia rape women so that by traumatizing her they also traumatize the men who failed to protect her. The penis has become a much more powerful weapon of war than tanks and guns. She gave examples to show that war is a complex intersection of markers of identity and power. She highlighted the sense of shame among men who fail to protect their women; the women who are raped are increasingly blamed for bringing disease and unwanted children. In Rwanda gender based violence continues even after peace was declared. Is this because of the traumatisation of war? She also mentioned forced circumcision of men and mutilation of the penis in Kenya during the 2007 post election violence as a manifestation of politicized ethnicities. She emphasized the need to look at dynamics that shape violence in war and situations of conflict and how communities could be used to deconstruct masculinities. There is need to link masculinities to sexual violence by focusing on the underlying structural causes such the profit interests of multinational and national interests (the politics of my pocket), multiple interests, related discourses and the way they intersect with history, culture, global politics, ethnicity gender and class.

Panel 2: Researching Gender – Methodological Issues

This session suggested ways to study women and gender issues in meaningful ways. Suggested ways included using mixed methods (both qualitative and quantitative); exploring the role of space physical geography and mapping in gendered processes as well as interrogating the way our experiences as researchers can affect the way we ask questions and the issues we seek to problematise.

Enid Schatz's presentation showed ways in which the DHS can be improved to capture women's status and empowerment. She acknowledged however that space limitations may make the DHS unable to capture indicators of gender empowerment. The need for uniformity across environments in the DHS may also limit the type of questions that can be asked and also impede specificity within sites in the interest of cross site comparisons. She suggested 3 ingredients that are necessary to operationalise concepts within the DHS to capture women's position. Firstly, her paper highlighted the need to understand and implement theories of sex and gender. Secondly she stated that researchers should make use of existing conceptualizations and models of women's empowerment in designing a women's empowerment module. Lastly, researchers should be cognizant of the role of context and culture. She suggested the suitability of qualitative methods within the DHS to understand gender. Participant Observation is necessary because individuals interact in public and private spaces; FGDs will give researchers insights into local norms and values related to gender from various constituents. IDIs are useful in understanding the way gender affects men and women in their own lives. There is need to improve the validity of DHS questions by understanding the way questions are understood and answered by individuals in various contexts before using them for analysis. According to her paper, qualitative approaches would help us to interrogate silences. Qualitative data can provide the meanings that people attach to different behaviours as well as help researchers to gain insights into people's health outcomes. Using the qualitative studies will allow researchers to go beyond the fixed answers provided for by the DHS.

Emphasized in this session was the need take the nature of culture into account to understand female empowerment and ways that we can borrow from local cultures to empower women. In his paper Peter Ezeh stressed that gender relations are a cultural creation. Using textual and language analysis, he traced the roots of women disempowerment among the Igbo of Nigeria from the colonial era and colonial discourses. He stressed that as a result of colonial discourses Igbo women are now disempowered and called for the re-empowerment of Igbo women. His main message was that not all cultures are disempowering to women, therefore instead of stereotyping African cultures there is need to take each case on its own merits and conduct more ethnological studies.

The need to look at other disciplines to access the roots and perpetuation of disempowerment of African women was emphasized. Borrowing from architecture Epifania Amoo Adare demonstrated how non-ownership of housing in urban areas can be disempowering for urban women. She highlighted the importance of researching the politics of space since space in urban areas is tied to access to a variety of different resources. Epifania's work tries to show that space is not gender neutral. It shows the need to interrogate land tenure, access to services and permits as these relate to gender and access to other resources such as loans. This was closely tied to Nixon Chisonga's presentation that showed that in Lusaka Zambia access to housing was intimately linked to small scale informal business enterprises. These two papers particularly Nixon Chisonga's papers emphasized the need to understand the everyday experiences of women and to regard them as partners is research not as research objects. Nixon's paper showed sensitivity to positionality and attempts to show how who we are influences the questions we ask and how we ask them. This work demonstrates how use of narratives provide us with an insight into everyday lived experiences

Panel 3: Gender and Public Health Issues

This session highlighted the need to investigate women as agents and emphasized the need for cross disciplinary perspectives. This session spoke to the need for a new image of woman in the public health discourse if public health interventions are to have an impact.

Male circumcision has been highlighted in many forums as protective against HIV/AIDS for men. a Salome Wawire sought to discuss the benefits of circumcision for women whose sexual partners choose circumcision. In her paper she also investigated the ways in which women contribute to a successful uptake of male circumcision. She recognized that women were very much involved in urging men to take up circumcision. She noted that many of the men who undergo circumcision in ethnic groups that did not previously circumcise in Kenya approach their female relatives especially mothers and grandmothers for advice instead of male relatives. Some women forced their husbands to be circumcised under threat of divorce. Some men who were circumcised did not see circumcision as reducing their risk of HIV infection but did it to keep their wives. In this way women have emerged as actors and agents in negotiating the sexual landscape contrary to previous models that show women as oppressed. In her work she found that cross gender and cross generational communication was critical in the choice of many men

to take up circumcisions. There is need for new approaches in empowerment of women to improve Sexual and Reproductive Health.

The need to understand women as agents and for cross disciplinary fertilization of ideas was highlighted in the paper presented by Chi-Chi Undie. She stated that conversations in public health and gender are not connected. She suggests that researchers and public health practitioners miss many opportunities by adopting the public health way of portraying women as victims. Chi-Chi emphasized that the woman in public health discourses is a wife neglecting that women occupy different roles in their communities some of which can be empowering. She posits that women are subordinated as wives not because they are women but because they are strangers in their marital homes. Giving examples from Nigeria she shows how women in their natal homes where they are 'daughters' can have a superior status vis a vis their wife counterparts. She does this by showing that women as daughters have various entitlements in the context of birth, death, as well as possession of cross cultural skills since they have to marry outside of their communities. It emerged in her paper that the woman in the public health imaginary is a wife and it is wifehood that puts women in a subordinate position. She suggests that we should have a different image of the African woman. Public health programs should be made around women as daughters not women as wives. Every wife is a daughter in her native village, and there is always an opportunity to exercise power. For instance, women as daughters could force their brothers to allow their wives to go to hospitals for prenatal care.

Understanding the differential impact of disease and morbidity between women and men was an area that was mentioned as needing to be researched further. Focusing on 22 African countries using DHS data, Monica Magadi's paper sought to understand gender disparities in HIV infection. She examined the role of HIV/AIDS awareness and sexual behaviour and gender disparity in infection rates. She conducted multi-level analysis of both national and subnational variations in gender disparities. She noted that in general there was lower awareness for women and that gender disparity in infection was higher for young age groups. In all countries there was a significant relationship and big gender disparities. Women's risk in some cases was more than twice that of men. In some countries women had 50% odds of infection than men although in Niger and Burkina Faso the gender disparities were not very high. Gender disparity also increases when sexual behaviour is controlled for. HIV/AIDS awareness was significant in HIV infection for men but not for women. Gender disparity was very high in high prevalence countries. Her paper highlights that in countries like Swaziland among the oldest age groups above 35 gender disparities are reversed; in the discussion it was pointed they may be need to explore this further.

Nancy Luke sought to discuss agency and sexual decision making among couples. She suggest that there is need to shift focus to couple level using the bargaining power perspective to understand transactional sex. In their research they found out that not everyone who was receiving gifts from their male partners was having sex. However women who entered relationships explicitly for money, gifts, and other assistance were significantly more likely to have sex and least likely to use condoms. Nancy states that receiving an income is not sufficient to increase young women's bargaining power for safer sex or indeed on whether od not to have

sex in a non-marital relationship. However the level of income is crucial with larger earnings affording greater power to women. The paper highlighted that economic participation at lower levels do not always translate to decision making powers for women. In their sample 20% of girls were employed and 60% received transfers from their male partners. Women who were engaged in better paying jobs were less likely to have sex and to use condoms if they did even if they received gifts from their partners. However, neither employment nor transactional sex affect condom use in the first month of a relationship. In the discussion it was emphasized that there is need to use mixed methods to understand what is meant by receiving gifts since gift giving is part of all relationships.

Panel 4: Politics and violence

This session discussed women's participation on both formal and informal politics and the various restrictions that can prevent women from full participation in electoral politics. In some societies women may create spaces or political participation in ways that are less threatening to themselves at the same time exploiting some cultural resources that determine their roles as women. For example, women may choose to exploit symbolism to hold governments accountable may exploit their vulnerability as mothers or exploits the spiritualized position of the female body. It was noted that in many circumstances women stripping naked in public is used as a powerful political tool to influence certain decisions. However these forms of protests are met with varying degrees of success and may not lead to significant challenge of structures that may have negative gender implications for women.

Martha Mutisi's presentation shifted the focus from power politics (political party politics) to gender and peace building using the social movements theory. Using a case study of WOZA activists in Harare Zimbabwe she discussed factors that can result in successful social movements. She showed how women are actively engaged in peace building, challenging the state and keeping it accountable without resorting to violence. She highlights the strategies that women use such as exploiting their traditional gender roles and using symbolism (such as empty pots to show that there is not food and brooms to symbolically wash away corruption and bad governance), use of roses in their demonstrations as a symbol of tough love, the role of networking, the effective use of the media as well as marching and demonstrating with their children to show their vulnerability as mothers. She however highlighted that although WOZA is confronting the state on many issues, its oligarchical leadership that depends on two people at the top is risky under a situation where being eliminated by a repressive state mechanism is a possibility. At the same time WOZA's over reliance on protests and demonstrations can provoke hostility from the state.

In his paper Forge sought to show how women have rights that have to be protected and that sometimes they play an active role in politics as they are responsible for keeping leaders in power. He gave an example of how the one opposition leader in Cameroon had female body guards of women above the age of 50. He also emphasized the role of the spirituality and

sacredness of the female body and how it has been shown is some cultures that seeing a naked female body when women are protesting is taboo.

Most of the presentations were on sub Saharan Africa. However Boudhipa's presentation focused on North Africa (Tunisia) showing how the Islamic religion can be both empowering and disempowering for women. He noted that North African countries have started trying to offer women more space to reach sexual emancipation without going against the prescriptions of the Koran. According to Boudhipa, Islam forms the bases of a very strict control of the sexual life of women, while it is more tolerant concerning sexual behaviours of men. As such, violence against women could be legitimated if the Islamic text is read and understood at the surface without search for deeper meaning. He highlighted the violence that women face in their homes in cases where they defile the family honour such as getting pregnant outside of marriage or losing their virginity. He pointed out that women can commit suicide after getting pregnant out of wedlock because they face rejection and abandonment from their families. He also highlighted the role of various hadith in controlling the behaviour and sexuality of women. He noted that because of declining economies and rise in male unemployment, there has been an increase in male violence against women in countries like Tunisia as men become increasingly frustrated at not being protectors and providers for their families. Women who earn an income may suffer increasing violence from husbands who may feel increasingly disempowered. He points out that the struggle against sexual and gender-based violence could be made at three different levels: assistance to victims, prevention of violence and advocacy. Assistance to victims could include reconstructive surgery, training police officer and doctors to deal with cases of domestic violence and work place sexual harassment. He advocated for more research on the typology of offenders and mapping so as to develop policies and projects to target these. In the discussion it was suggested that there may be need to investigate more if the problem of women in Islamic contexts arises from the Islamic principles or from patriarchy. Interms of the policy action should we target the Koran or the hadith?

Participation of women in formal power politics was a theme that was highlighted in this session. Aderemi Suleiman investigated the participation of Yoruba women in politics. He noted that political power relations in pre-colonial Yoruba society are different from those in the colonial and post colonial era. Both the colonial and post-colonial periods recreated patriarchal politics that was more difficult to crush for Yoruba women. Yet, rising from historical marginalization that cut across colonial to post-colonial era, some Yoruba women have been able to break through patriachal politics, while many others are still struggling to breakthrough. Yoruba politics is characterized by many political panics caused by its patriarchal nature that continues to restrict women to political appointement. Women are still excluded from elective politics that is the mainstream of political action. Non-inclusion of more Yoruba women in elective politics negates the principle of democracy and incapacitates democractic development in Nigeria. Hence, to appropirate democractic gains for community development elective politics must be all-gender friendly.

Panel 5 Fertility and Gender

This panel only had two papers. The third speaker failed to turn up. The panel discussed issues to do with unmet need for both men and women interms of contraception and desired number of children. It was agreed that in many Sub Saharan Africa countries researches focus on unmet need where the couples are in disagreement but not when couples are agreeing. It was apparent that there is need for intense studies because Jensen's study, showed that it appeared women in Kwale (Kenya) were controlling their fertility because they were having fewer children. However the study proceeds to show that these women were operating at sub-fecundity level even if they would have wanted to have more children. Thus other factors may be at play. There is a great need to look at hidden mechanisms that drive fertility. It was highlighted that in the face of increased mortality due to HIV/AIDS we need to investigate what impact this is going to have on fertility. It emerged in the discussions that when investigating fertility there may also be need to go beyond personal choices to community or family contributions to the decision of number of children for couples. There is a need to investigate other societal factors and dynamics other hand education that affects marriage and fertility. It was highlighted that some women may use contraceptive clandestinely although they may discontinue due to side effects. For example a study conducted in Malawi in 1998 indicated that 3-4% of the women were using contraceptives clandestinely. In other studies in Nigeria women in polygynous marriages used contraceptives clandestinely because they did not want their co-wives to find out and were afraid that their husbands would marry other wives if they found out. In the discussions some participants emphasized that it may be wrong to assume that reduced fertility will be good for women across all societies because in some societies women can solidify their economic and social status in the household by the number of children they have. Targeting fertility alone without focusing on other factors to empower women may not be in the women's best interests that may not work or may be resisted but the women themselves.

Akin Bankole's presentation highlighted that use of modern contraceptives is low in Sub-Saharan Africa and there is a fair amount of disagreement among couples about method use. Men were more likely to mention condom use compared to women. The age gap between marital partners persists in SSA and men continue to have advantage over women in education. Husbands remain the more pronatalist of the two spouses, both in terms of their fertility preferences and actual behavior. Evidence of the association between fertility preferences and contraceptive use suggests that spousal preference disagreement has little or no effect on modern method use in most of the countries. Where it does, couples tend to use contraception more when wives want no more children than when husbands do. This suggests that if men do have greater power and autonomy in household decision-making, they do not seem to translate into decision-making regarding fertility regulation. He concludes by saying that there is need to explore other factors for the low use of contraception in the region.

An-Magritt Jensen's study in two provinces in Kenya sought to compare and explain differences in attitude towards fertility between a predominantly Christian community in Bungoma and a predominantly Muslim community in Kwale. In her observation women in the Muslim (Kwale) quarter were breaking every rule. They were living in marriages with a high level of instability, could divorce and remarry several times. However marriage patterns had an effect on fertility as children were born in marriages. The marriage pattern among the Moslem women did not support high fertility at the same time their sexual patterns made them vulnerable to disease and to sub-fecundity. Women in Kwale often expressed a desire to have more children but could not.

Kwale was regarded as backward but the women had a level of independence that the Bungoma women did not have in spite of their high levels of education. Bungoma experienced high fertility. In both communities there was low use of contraceptives and high child mortality. For Jensen, individual choices are over emphasized in discussions of fertility. Whether or one has another child can be mediated by social institutions such as marriage patterns.

Panel 6: Poverty Gender and Employment
This session discussed the need to interrogate certain development discourses and see how they can both benefit and disadvantage women. These papers stress the problematic of a time of heightened economic changes, characterised by stagnating agriculture, economic reforms and unfair terms of trade. This is all happening at a time when welfare systems are being displaced. This has negative effect on women's participation in the economic arena. An issue that needs to be investigated is what states and government are able to o and should do to improve the lot of women. Some papers in this session also address the issue of women empowerment at the grassroots levels and how we can incorporate some cultural traditional practices to advance women's empowerment. What was apparent in this session was the need to unpack development because if not properly planned development may lead to further disempowerment of women. Sometimes women are also not strategically placed to take advantage of development to better their own situation.

Prosper Asima's paper highlighted how diasporic masculinities are transnationalised and marginalised masculinities. He noted that there are different family types and patterns among Ghanaians who migrate to the United Kingdom. Ghanaian men who migrate to the United Kingdom may become unemployed as their certificates are not recognised in the United Kingdom. At the same time men do not like taking on menial jobs in the UK which they find demeaning. Women on the other hand take these jobs and increasingly become bread winners for their families. Thus although both are disempowered in the labour market, women increasingly gain empowerment in the household as they take more and more the role of provider for their families. In spite of this if asked together women and men are more likely to point to the men as the bread winner although when asked separately the woman is more likely to say she is the bread winner.

Jennifer Schulte paper focused more on programming, specifically on how to evaluate microfinance for poverty reduction and women's empowerment. She pointed out that multidimensional, multi-level empowerment evaluation frameworks for microfinance programs are more powerful for learning about and improving progress on development objectives.
She emphasized the need to focus on practical and actionable strategies to which evaluations can contribute by identifying factors that enhance women's economic empowerment, whether economically or in the broader social dimensions. Her paper highlighted that group-based programs and those offering non-financial services have better economic and broader empowerment results. She called for researchers to adopt more rigorous conceptual models and to establish meaningful testable hypotheses to be tested empirically through evaluations to yield policy and program applications of results to improve empowerment impacts of microfinance.

She recommended evaluations that rigorously test demand for and empowerment impacts of innovative financial products and services; establish replicable features of group-based actions that are empowering; establish effective and replicable training strategies, e.g., for business skills development, and group cohesion.

Jonathan Mafukidze's paper focused on how tradition promotes citizenship at the local level for women. In his case study of Mbire of Zimbabwe he showed how women and other migrants can negotiate co-existance with local people and achieve full citizenship if they are accepted by the mhondoro spirit medium. Tracing development from the colonial to the post colonial era, he discussed how traditional discourses and spirit mediums have been incorporated into post-colonial rule. He pointed out that tradition and cultural practices among the Mbire promotes inclusion without demanding assimilation and that it positively frames difference and diversity. This works to the advantage of women as women can access land as widows through the mhondoro. Some traditional practices such as Zunde ra Mambo (which involves keeping food reserves at the Chief's place to be distributed to vulnerable groups) responds to group difference by building communities through shared work and inclusion of the weak and vulnerable. Women have also assimilated the Zunde raMambo concept and adapted it to start their own businesses. He gave examples of grinding mills that women had established consulting their husbands so that men would not feel left out and resist the project. Women have also started sharing responsibilities of care giving. Mafukidze highlights the need to take cognisance of the social and non-political importance of traditional institutions and practices. He however notes that there are also weaknesses in the traditional system thus advocating for gradual and informed transformation. He concluded his paper by noting that encouraging internal community transformation is the fastest way of ensuring the empowerment of women at the local rural level

This panel raised concerns that sometimes development may be disadvantageous to women's empowerment. Mazumdar's paper highlights the paradox of a system that cares for women at the same time other indicators such as participation in employment are getting worse. In his study of Kerala, Summit Mazumdar noted that development in Kerala resulted the social betterment of women's position, but led to employment disequilibrium which resulted in extensive out migration. He noted a systematic displacement of women from traditional domains and notes that the development process has disadvantaged women. In Kerala women outnumber men and their literacy rate is at 90%. Inheritance in Kerala follows the matrilineal line. Despite these positive indicators women in Kerala have the lowest workforce participation rate in India. Mazumdar observed a divergence in economic and social development. Within Kerala itself, the southern parts of kerala which are predominantly Christian have shown an increase in women's workforce participation. Women in Kerala as a whole are loosing long term employment and casual labour is on the rise.

Guo Wei noted that women's participation in the labour force promote gender equality. There have been fundamental changes since the founding of modern China that have allowed women to join the labour force in large numbers. He noted that China has an abundant labour supply in the world however unemployment is becoming more severe. Thus people with less skills or older have been withdrawing for the labour market. Women have been disproportionately affected as they are less skilled than men. In his paper Guo Wei investigates the selective processes of age

and education in ways that impact badly on women's participation in the labour market. He makes an important point that booming economies do not necessarily translate to empowerment processes for women. In his conclusion Guo Wei notes that the government of China should concentrate on promoting female human capital, improving quality of female workers and creating opportunities for women.

Panel 7: Education and Gender

This session discussed the empowerment potential of education from primary level education through secondary to university level. This session showed that the level and kind of education people get has a huge implication in labour force participation. As a result of differential school socialization for boys and girls, girls may not be able to compete effectively in the labour market at the same level as boys. This session advocated for an education system that has emancipation potential for women and that opens the doors for women to participate competitively on the labour market.

In her study in Ghana, Ajayi notes that despite progress in gender equality in education, female students still lag behind their male peers. Gender and academic ability still have strong influences on program choice at school. This may have significant implications for labor force outcomes if programs are linked to future occupations. The demands of male students are more aligned with the nature of school supply. She noted that male students seem to be positioning themselves for better labor market prospects. Program choice at the secondary school level affects the options of courses available to students in university. Kehinde's paper raises two central questions about the welfare of female secondary school students: Are they competitive candidates for admission into tertiary institutes?; Are they adequately prepared to enter the labor market directly after completion of secondary school?. She recommended that government institutions could more actively consider the extent to which existing institutions cater for students' aspirations and preferences, taking into account the existence of gender differences. She pointed out that female students (and their families) may stand to benefit from a revised conception of secondary schooling, one which encourages a less conservative approach to learning, and; emphasizes an educational experience that is more directly geared towards improving future economic opportunities.

Although female students expressed optimism in the ability of education to empower them, in a study among female University students, Jeylan Wolyie Hussein noted that a socially based unequal power relationship is perpetuated in universities which hinder the attempt to achieve equity. Fewer girls enter the university system and those that do are afraid to participate in class citing their fewer numbers compared to men. He advocates for creating a classroom atmosphere that is free of gender biases giving equal focus to both sexes interms of commendation and encouragement. He points out that education should be all encompassing to equip learners with sufficient knowledge and the strategy to apply it to increase their sphere of influence in the

economic, social, cultural and political arenas. In addition to preparing females for labor force participation, education must prepare them to obtain accurate and grounded awareness about their legal, political, economic and reproductive rights. To actualize the students' optimism about the empowering role of education and to change the felt imbalance in educational participation, the paper states that practitioners and researchers should deal with the complex social fabric of unequal power relationships, which permeate the university classrooms and obstruct the pedagogy of possibility. Jeylan Wolyie concludes by noting that if the culture of domination is not addressed the alluring and emancipatory proclamation about women and their life such as one articulated in Ethiopia's 1993 national gender policy become an impossible dream rather than achievable, realistic goal.

Ekuri Emmanuel Etta Asuquo highlights the role of cooperative learning in classrooms in increasing the ability of female students to grasp science subjects. He highlighted that in many instances in school setting teachers ignore girl children in favour of boy children with the result that boys are socialized better to grasp science subjects in school. In a controlled experiment in 4 schools in Nigeria, researchers experimented with group learning. Results indicated that girls in mixed groups consistently performed better at science subjects than girls in single sex groups. In their conclusion they advocate for the introduction of cooperative learning in teacher training programs with a special attention to the nature of groups.

Panel 8: Setting Priorities

Focusing on research, Alex Ezeh urged researchers to make sure that measures and definitions they use capture exactly what they want to capture. He raised several issues that he thought researchers should also focus on. For instance, how can harmful traditional practices be captured? He emphasized the need to identify what aspects of gender are not being measured and what can be done to incorporate these. He reiterated the need to interrogate how researchers can account for different positionalities and how this can be leveraged to empower women. How can researchers understand the different roles of women so that they can be leveraged to empower women in other areas? He also addressed the issue of whether or not gender studies should privilege women. He acknowledged that there is need to walk on both legs in other instances but in some cases it may be critical to prioritise women's issues. For example in conflict issues privileging women's experiences may make better sense. He pointed out that researchers in Africa are yet to tackle the issue of climate change as it relates to gender; how does the impact of climate change worsen existing inequities? Ezeh pointed out that elsewhere research has shown that in natural disasters women are more likely to die than men. Others issues like climate change can impact on women's ability to meet their gender roles such as fetching water need to be investigated. He also emphasized the importance of contextualizing our research. Making reference to papers that had been presented he acknowledged that understanding context is central to coming up with workable solutions for gender equality. He acknowledged that although patriarchy disadvantages women, it may also be looked at form a different angle. For instance, are there instances where patriarchy can be favourable or disadvantageous to women? He advocated that we should investigate both sides of the coin.

Charles Okigbo focused on the link between research and policy. He emphasized that it is important to use research results for policy making. He encouraged researchers to engage in

action research where they involve the researched population to come up with solutions to their problems. There is also need to publicise good policies elsewhere and see how these can be adopted in other countries. He emphasized the need to promote private policies because according to him not every policy is public. For instance in our work places we can have codes of conducts and sexual harassment policies and other policies that enable women to experience gender equity at work. Researchers have to adopt a continual approach to policy making. Policy work should not end when a policy in enacted but there is need for continuous review and analysis of policies and their implementation with the aim of further improving them. To be able to influence policy researchers need to strategise well. He stressed the importance of networking with like-minded people. There may be need for early education for children to teach them about gender equity. This will have an impact on gender equality in the long term.

Stella Maranga talked about the link between research and programming. She indicated that programmers and implementers wanted research evidence to help them hold governments to account. Programmers need to get an idea of what gender responsive policies exists at different levels. Secondly research should feed into capacity building. She pointed out that people in the various ministries may have their hearts in the right place but may lack capacity to implement any good ideas they may have. Research may give direction on how this capacity to deliver can be built. Research should also move deeper and further. It is not clear as yet whether researchers and programs are reaching the most vulnerable women or women who are easy to reach. After several years of program implementation and policy changes, research should show what has changed or not changed. If research is able to measure and report emerging trends this can be highly relevant to program implementation. Stella also pointed out that there is need to explore the theory and concept of gender mainstreaming. In response to debates on whether women's issues should be privileged in gender debates, she pointed out that it is not yet time to say men are marginalized since even the resources that target women are not going to women. In governments it is usually the men who have the jobs and not women. She emphasized that gender practitioners and activists should not lose focus of the need to empower women. Researchers should interrogate their data more before concluding that men are now disempowered. Although she agreed that it is not useful to polarize gender debates, the MDG report shows that women are not achieving in comparable levels to men. She pointed out that as gender practitioners they are challenged by the quality versus quantity debate. They do not know how to make women participate in more meaningful ways. It is not clear to program implementers why when they get women into a certain sector the men abandon move away from that sector. Researchers have to provide more data and evidence on these issues.

Summary of main points

Several themes emerged during discussion in the various panels. These themes are summarized in this section:

Research:
   (i) Researchers should increasingly adopt mixed methods instead of regarding methodologies as if they are discreet.
   (j) The need to link research on gender to the larger socio-economic structures was emphasized. Researchers should move from just capturing individual characteristics

because we may miss a lot of what is happening at the community level that may also impact on women's empowerment as a group.

(k) There is a need to involve the African academic researcher in researches instead of always pursuing research agendas from the north.

(l) There is a need to incorporate the role of masculinities in transactional sex, premarital and extramarital sexual relationships. Men may be bread winners in other types of relationships as well.

(m) The penis should be studied and interrogated as a weapon of war.

(n) Researchers should be willing to interrogate their research findings. For example they should be willing to dig deeper into findings such as investigating the the processes that are going on behind numbers they may come up with. For instance, it may not be enough to say boys are now disempowered because the number of boys going to university has decreased compared to girls. It may be worthwhile to ask who these boys that are not going to University are. Is it because other occupations and activities have become more useful than attending school? Researchers should also resist the urge to essentialise and romanticize the past. For example, researchers should be careful that in using anthropological texts from Victorian authors they may see empowerment when in fact there was no empowerment. We should be in a position to interrogate more. We should not essentialise the past because culture and societies are not static but dynamic

(o) Researchers should pay interest to silences as sometimes what people do not say is as important as what they say.

(p) Researchers should not equate gender equity to gender equality at the same time they should also not equate sex to gender.

Programs:
(d) Just adding women to existing program does not work to empower them. At the same time there is need to define ways that men can be involved in projects to empower women.

(e) We should link the various process of development to gender. Both men and women are suffering from larger structures. Is there an alternative to men's sense of powerlessness in the face of women's empowerment? At the same time men have made repeated attempt to recreate patriarch in ways that try to subordinate women.

(f) For sustainability of the women's movement there is need to build capacity of women and other gender advocates.

Policy:

(d) Women's work should be valued and evaluated in economic terms such. Valuing women's work such as care giving in economic terms will help policy makers understand the contribution women are making.

(e) Some health interventions can take away resources from women's issues. For instance the focus on male circumcision has disadvantaged women's health issues as huge resources are being poured into this. So policy makers should take care that by advancing certain policy positions they are disadvantaging women's issues by reallocating resources in ways that are not favourable to women.

(f) Policies should also be targeted towards improving women's human capital to improve the quality of their participation in the labour force.

Recommendations:

Gender research should be based on mixed methods and a reconceptualisation of gender and empowerment terminology

(f) We should define concepts and choose appropriate methodologies.
(g) Researchers should adopt mixed methods to understand gender issues holistically. For example, where purely statistical approaches may give us the extent of the problem being studied, ethnographic frameworks may assist researchers to understand the various meaning that actors place on certain actions. There is no one way of investigating gender.
(h) There is the need to come up with new definitions and measurements of gender and empowerment that are relevant to today's world. Gender and empowerment as concepts should become more refined and precise.
(i) There is need to transform type of data to be collected to be able to address gender issues. For instance, DHS data asks directly if one is using a specific method so if the respondent husband has had a vasectomy the respondent may be less likely to mention it.
(j) Researchers should employ other methods such as participatory evaluation methodologies so that women can evaluate themselves

There is need to investigate both micro and macro level structures and how they relate to gender empowerment

(d) Since men and women are both suffering under the burden of larger structures, there is great need to interrogate inequalities among men as these inequalities can also have an impact in what happens in the lives of women. Male gender issues need to be addressed in the same way as we address women's issues. In order to empower women and redress gender inequalities there is a need to 'walk on two legs'.
(e) Development processes that take place at the macro level can have undesirable impacts on women's empowerment and welfare. Therefore development needs to be interrogated and not just assume that development will be good for both men and women.
(f) By focusing solely on women issues there is a tendency to neglect national and international development that may further disadvantage women. The link between the local and the global has to be investigated especially in situations of war where local and global interests intersect usually with dire consequences for women and men who are caught up in such conflicts. For example, there is need to link masculinities to sexual violence by focusing on the underlying structural causes such the profit interests of multinational and national interests (the politics of my pocket), multiple interests, related discourses and the way they intersect with history, culture, global politics, ethnicity gender and class.

Researchers should explore new research methodologies that empower the study populations

(c) Researchers should increasingly make use of research methodologies that makes a difference in the lives of people that are being studied. There is need for simultaneous research and action to ensure that research positively impacts on the lives of the researched people. There is need for more participatory and action research to make a difference in the lives of people.

(d) At every stage of the research process researchers need to ask themselves if the kind of questions they are asking and the research process and the findings will make a difference in the lives of the researched population.

Women's experiences should be privileged

(b) Researchers and other practitioners should ground empowerment from a gender perspective that is female. Female gender experiences should be privileged because men have always been privileged. Men's situation cannot be regarded as equal to that of women. Women as a group are disempowered. There is need to interrogate the importance of the penis is male decision making.

There is need to avoid stereotypical images of the African woman and African man.

(g) Researchers have to be careful about the question they ask and that research should move away from gender stereotypes and stop portraying women as victims and men as perpetrators all the time. Women's agency, class issues and socio-economic change have been over looked in research projects that portray women as victims. Western male and female opposition results in a mental block that prevents researchers from critically investigating gender relations. Stereotyping causes gender blindness and myths. The existing understanding of women as the defenseless victims and men as the oppressors needs to be revised.

(h) Researchers should acknowledge that men are not equal so theories of masculinities have to be integrated into gender work so as to also study inequalities among men which also impact on the lives of women.

(i) When conducting research we should reject binary oppositions between men and men. Men and women also have common interests, it might be better to start from these common interests to foster cooperation between men and women.

(j) We should investigate the other side of patriarchy seeing that western approaches have failed to empower women.

(k) Researchers should also not that contexts are not translatable and should bear this in mind before making unwarranted conclusions about all African men and women.

(l) There is need for men to be targeted in various contexts. For example in Islamic societies we may not expect the subdued people to stand up and demand for right especially if they are not given space to air their views and disappointments.

Possible areas of research

(c) There is need to investigate the role of the body. For example, by defiling the body of a woman, the whole community is also defiled. The body is a place where culture is written. There is need for more research on this issue.

(d) There is need to focus on climate change issues as deaths due to climate changes have exposed women's vulnerability as opposed to men.

Research should have policy impact

(c) Researchers should investigate how to reproduce success stories and policies elsewhere.

(d) The results of research should have clear policy implications for the improvement of gender equality. Researchers should network with others of similar mind in order to influence the policy agenda.

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ANNEX 1

Panel 1: Introduction and Keynote speakers

Session Chair: Nisha (Deputy Regional Programme Director UNIFEM Regional Office for East and Horn of Africa)

Welcome and Introduction: Dr Alex Ezeh

Conference Opening: Speech by Hon Dr Nyikal (Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Gender, Kenya)

1. Akosua Adomako Ampofo : *If he's the* Man on Top *is she the* Naughty Girl*? Changing meanings and measurement of gender equality and women's empowerment.*
2. Margrethe Silberschmidt : *How to achieve gender equality and empower African women when men are increasingly disempowered?*
3. Beth Wangeci Maina Ahlberg: *Traumatising and traumatised masculinities: Sexual violence in war and conflict situations in Congo, Kenya and Rwanda*

Discussant

Nancy Luke

Panel 2: Researching Gender Methodological Issues

Session Chair: Chimaraoke Izugbara

1. Enid Schatz: *Understanding gender in Africa: Using qualitative methods to enhance DHS analyses of women's empowerment collection*
2. P-J Ezeh: *Patripotency and Position of Women among the Igbo of Nigeria: the Facts and the Fiction*
3. Epifania A. Amoo-Adare: *Real Agency is in Building(s)?: Women, Empowerment and Urban Space*
4. Nixon Chisonga: *Gendered access to housing in Lusaka: an ethnographic study of small scale market traders in Matero Township of Lusaka, Zambia*

Discussant: Akosua Adomako Ampofo

Panel 3: Gender and Public Health Issues

Session Chair: Caroline Kabiru

1. Salome Wawire: *Male Circumcision and the Female Question: Do Women Benefit in the Promotion of Male Circumcision for HIV/AIDS Prevention?*

2. Chi-Chi Undie: *Beyond wifehood: Public health interventions and local gender ideologies in Nigeria*
3. Monica A. Magadi *Understanding the gender disparity in HIV infection in sub-Saharan Africa*
4. Nancy Luke, *Employment, Transactional Sex, and Reproductive Health Risks among Young Women in Urban Kenya*

Discussant: An-Magritt Jensen

Panel 4: Politics and violence
Session Chair: Stella Maranga (Gender and Governance Advisor to UNIFEM
1. Martha Mutisi: *Women's Agency in confronting the impact of protracted social conflict: The Case of Women of Zimbabwe Arise*
2. Aderemi Suleiman AJALA: *From kitchen to the corridor of power: Yoruba women breaking through patriarchal politics in South-western Nigeria*
3. John Forge: *Mainstreaming Gender Empowerment: Facing the Politics and Challenges of Empowerment and Disempowerment (Cameroun)*
4. Sofiane BOUHDIBA *Sexual Emancipation and Violence against women in the XXIst century: The case of Muslim Africa*

Discussant: Margrethe Silberschmidt

Panel 5: Fertility and Gender
Session Chair: Wanjiku Khamasi
1. Vezumuzi Ndlovu *Women on top? Exploring reproductive decision making among couples with HIV/AIDS in Zimbabwe*
2. Akinrinola Bankole and Suzette Audam: *Fertility Preferences and Contraceptive Use among Couples in Sub-Saharan Africa*
3. An-Magritt Jensen Professor *Does gender impact sustained high fertility in Kenya? Exploring recent fertility development through case studies in Bungoma, Western and Kwale, Coast Provinces*

Discussant: Enid Schatz

Panel 6: Poverty Gender and Employment
Session Chair: Salome Wawire
1. Prosper Asima: *Breadwinning and the household: Gendered diasporic choices and mobility in the labour market*
2. Jennifer Schulte: *Evaluating Microfinance for Poverty Reduction and Women's Empowerment*
3. Jonathan Mafukidze: *The implication of tradition, locality and mobility on access: narratives and experiences of rural women of Mbire*
4. Sumit Mazumdar: *Does High Social Development Guarantee Economic Opportunities For Women? Gender and Workforce Participation in Kerala.*
5. GUO Wei: *Women's Changing Participation in the Labor Force: Empirical Evidence from China*

Discussant: Beth Maina Ahlberg

Panel 7: Education and Gender
Session Chair: Martha Mutisi

1. Kehinde Ajayi: *Gender and Demand for Schooling: Lessons from School Choice and Student Placement in Ghana*
2. Jeylan Wolyie Hussein: *Female students' expectations about the empowering role of education and educational processes*
3. Ekuri Emmanuel Etta Asuquo: *Effect of sex-group composition in cooperative learning classrooms on science concept attainment among female secondary school students in Calabar-Nigeria*

Discussant: Moses Oketch

Panel 8: Final Plenary session: Setting priorities

1. Research (Speaker Alex Ezeh)
2. Policy (Speaker Charles Okigbo)
3. Programs - (Speaker Stella Maranga)

ANNEX 2: List of Participants

1. Aderemi Suleiman Ajala , Gorg Forster Fellow of Alexander Von Humboldt Foundation, Universitat Mainz
2. Prosper Asima, Ford Foundation Fellow and doctoral candidate in Migration Studies at the Sussex Center for Migration Research (SCMR), University of Sussex
3. Bouhdipa Sofiane, Professor University of Tunis
4. Nixon Chisonga, PhD candidate, Center for Social Science Research, University of Capetown
5. Netsayi N Mudege , Associate Research Scientist, African Population and Health research Center
6. Peter-Jazzy Ezeh, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Nigeria
7. Ekuri Emmanuel Etta, Department of Educational Foundations, University of Calabar, Nigeria
8. Guo Wei, PhD candidate (Demography) Peking University, China
9. Jeylan Wolyie Hussein Faculty of Education, Haramaya University Ethiopia
10. John W Forge, Department of Political Science, University of Yaoundé Cameroon
11. Kehinde Ajayi, Phd candidate, Department of Economics, University of California
12. Monica Magadi, Senior Lecturer, department of Sociology, City University, London
13. Martha Mutisi PhD Candidate, George Mason University and lecturer in the Institute of Peace, Leadership and Governance at Africa University, Zimbabwe
14. Salome Wawire, PhD candidate in Anthropology at Brown University
15. Jonathan Mafukidze, Human Sciences research Council, Pretoria South Africa
16. Sumit Mazumdar, Research Consultant, Center for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta
17. Beth Wangeci Maina Ahlberg, Professor, Department of Women and Children's Health, Uppsala University and Skaraborg Institute for Research and Development.
18. Margrethe Silberschmidt, Professor, Department of General practice Section of Women and Gender, University of Copenhagen
19. Nancy Luke, Department of Sociology, Brown University
20. Akosua Adomako Ampofo, Associate Professor, Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana
21. An-Magritt Jensen, Norwegian University of Science and Technology

22. Akinrinola Bankole, Guttmacher Institue
23. Alex Ezeh, Executive Director, African Population and Health Research Center, Nairobi, Kenya
24. Enid Schazt, University of Missouri
25. Jennifer Schulte, Gender and Livelihoods Specialist, International Center for Research on Women
26. Chi-Chi Undie, Population Council, Nairobi, Kenya
27. Chimaraoke Izugbara, Research Scientist, African Population and Health Research Center, Nairobi Kenya
28. Charles Okigbo, Policy Engagement and Communication, African Population and Heath Research Center, Nairobi, Kenya
29. Stella Maranga, Gender and Governance Advisor, UNIFEM, Kenya Country Office
30. Epifania Amoo Adare, Biraa Creative Initiative
31. Julia Ombasyi, Administration Department, African Population and Health Research Center, Nairobi Kenya
32. James Nyikal (Dr), Permanent Secretary, Ministry of gender and children's affairs (Kenya, Nairobi)

Observers
1. Katherine Namuddu, Associate Director of the Africa regional program at the Rockefeller Foundation
2. Wanjiku Khamasi, Director, Institute of Gender Equity Research and Development, Moi University, Kenya
3. Nisha, Deputy Regional Program Director East and Horn of Africa, UNIFEM
4. Meryem Aslan, Regional Program Director East and Horn of Africa, UNIFEM
5. Emmy Kipsoi, Lecturer, department of Educational Foundations, Moi University, Kenya
6. Rachel L Karei, Lecturer Department of Family and Consumer Sciences, Moi University, Kenya
7. Florence Gitau, Games tutor, Moi University
8. Lizzy Awuor, Science Africa, Nairobi Kenya
9. Ivy Kodzi, Post-Doctoral Fellow, African Population and Health Research Center
10. Henry Wonyama, Media, The Star
11. Victor Raballa, Media, People's Daily
12. Venter Mwongera, Media, Nairobi Star
13. Rose Oronje, Policy Engagement and Communication, African Population and Health Research Center
14. Dennitah Ghati, Population Council, Nairobi Kenya
15. Lawrence Ochieng, Ministry of gender and children affairs, Nairobi, Kenya
16. Michelle I Buky, Media, Kenya News Agency
17. Peter M Mwariri, Media, Kenya News Agency
18. Fatuma Fugicha, Media, The Standard
19. Tabitha Otwori, Media, The Standard
20. Joyce Kinyanywi, Uwezo-Kenya
21. Maureen, Radio Africa
22. Lucas, Science Africa
23. Shadrack Kavilu, Media, Sunday Express

24. John Njenga, Freelance
25. Michael O Ouma, ASNS

ANNEX 3: Abstracts

Prosper Asima: Breadwinning and the Households: Gendered diasporic choices and mobility in the labour market
The gendering of the public and private spheres has been attributed to the 'male breadwinner' norm. There is general agreement, however, that migration leads to a reconfiguration of gender relations with relative changes in the status and power of women and men in the destination country. Nonetheless, studies are inconclusive as to the degree of change in gender asymmetries as a result of the engagement of migrant women in the labour market, especially because gender relations vary over time and space. This paper examines the interactions between migration, gender and the labour market drawing on ethnographic material from Ghanaian women and men migrants in London. Using 'empowerment' as a conceptual framework, it explores gender relations and examines other social differentials showing their impacts on breadwinning, work and masculinities. The evidence suggests that movement to a different socio-economic space,

coupled with other crosscutting differentials challenges and reconceptualises gender ideologies and relations. Ghanaian women and men are both empowered and disempowered, with gender relations becoming more egalitarian. The paper argues using evidence from Africans in a different historical context and space, rather than in their 'home' context. It demonstrates the complex interactions between host labour market, gender and other social differentials, revealing the constraints and choices influencing the dynamics and pattern of gender relations and migrant experiences.

Aderemi Suleiman Ajala: Genderless politics: The rise of women in Yoruba nationalism and civil politics in South-western Nigeria.

While early Yoruba nationalism and civil politics had little or no feasible women coloration, the recent political activities have changed gender perception of Yoruba nationalism and civil politics from male dominant to women inclusive. This paper, through ethnography and feminist theoretical approach examines gender perception of Yoruba politics and nationalism in South-western Nigeria. The paper similarly historicises the rise of Yoruba women in politics and ethnic nationalism between 1920 and 2009. The paper also identifies factors influencing women participation in civil politics and ethnic nationalism and identifies some challenges against equitable women inclusion in Yoruba politics and ethnic nationalism. Among others, increasing values of monogamy and more women's access to western education; culture of first ladies in governance; women socio-economic empowerment through wage labour and Nigerian petroleum-based entrepreneur; grassroots mobilization from O'odua Peoples' Congress (OPC); and global effects of Beijing Conference played significant roles in Yoruba women's rise in civil politics and ethnic nationalism. Nonetheless, the nature of Yoruba politics; gender stereotypes and household labour are among the challenges inhibiting equitable gender participation in Yoruba civil politics and ethnic nationalism. Hence, for optimum delivery of democratic dividends in South-western Nigeria, more political openings are desirable for women in Yoruba society.

Sofiane Bouhdiba : Sexual emancipation and violence against women in the XXIst century: The case of Muslim Africa

Today, in the XXIst century, the African Muslim woman is still victim of persecution and punishments legitimated by the Islamic tradition. The Islamic myth presents to us the image of the woman stoned in a public square because she had sex with somebody else than her husband. But on the other side, under the effect of globalisation, modern Muslim societies are proud to present the image of a modern woman, enjoying a free sexual life. What happened during 14 centuries of Islam? What are the rights of the Muslim African women regarding to her sexual life? To what extent can we talk about sexual empowerment of the African Muslim woman? Are all Muslim women enjoying the same sexual rights in Africa? Why some of them are protected while others are still suffering from violence from their fathers, husbands, brothers? What is the role of education in reducing such violence? These are some of the questions to which I will try to find answers. The research is organized into three sections. The first one examines the historical representation of gender-based violence in Islam. The second part focuses on the variety of situations between the traditional and modern African Muslim countries. The last part of the paper discusses the policies of the African Muslim governments in their struggle against

Gender-based Violence.

Nixon Chisonga: Gendered access to housing in Lusaka: an ethnographic study of small scale market traders in Matero Township of Lusaka, Zambia.

Until 2008, Zambia's housing policy was structured along a colonial system of housing and city planning. There was a male dominant housing system linked to employment. Women were thought to be 'care-takers' of homes and could not access housing. With the privatisation policy of the mid 1990s, access to housing was no longer dependent upon employment. As a result, many people in Lusaka have turned to small scale market activities to ensure their survival. In this paper, I investigate the relationship between small scale trading market activities and gendered access to and use of housing in Lusaka (Zambia). This was an ethnographic study in 2008 involving a mix of research methods that included observations and in-depth interviews. Guided by the desire to produce feminist knowledge in an African context where I grew up, in a place I call home, I engaged in a research methodology in which I found myself on the peripheral – I was half insider and half outsider.

I concluded that since access to housing was a preserve for men due to cultural and historical developments that allocated housing to men, women had little or no means to gain access to it. However, engaging in small scale trading market activities ensured that women had access to housing and made use of its surroundings. On the surface it would appear economic reasons were the major factor. But, the nuanced everyday life teachings in the area showed women were more inclined to wait for marriage and access housing through their husbands. When a husband died for among other reasons, HIV/AIDS, women's access to housing could not be guaranteed due to property grabbing by the in-laws. Where the house could not be grabbed, it became a 'family house' – owned by siblings and extended family, a situation that created its own problems. In this situation, the best available alternative for women was to engage in small scale trading market activities for them to lay claim to their own houses either by legal ownership or rent, among other means to access housing and its use.

Peter Jazzy Ezeh: Patripotency and Position of Women among the Igbo of Nigeria: the Facts and the Fiction

Gender relations among the Igbo of Nigeria attracted the attention of professional ethnographers following British colonization of Nigeria. Leith-Ross (1939), Green (1964), Amadiume (1987), and Agbasiere (2000) are some of the world-class ethnographies that focus on Igbo women. Lugard (1939), the first colonial Governor-General of Nigeria, found the power that women wielded in traditional Igbo society remarkable. This paper combines synchronic ethnographic data, current official records, and recent history to argue that most disadvantages Igbo women now suffer are the results of post-contact acculturation. It also demonstrates that because pre-contact traditional gender relations among the Igbo were equitable, re-empowerment among the Igbo has progressed faster than most places in Africa. In many Igbo districts more girls than boys now go to school. University of Nigeria, Nsukka, the first in the Igbo area, now has more female than male students in most Departments, and equal number of female and male students in others, except Engineering. The paper advises that if policies on women empowerment should

not be based on the assumption that women are exactly in the same position in all African societies. Accurate understanding of each case through empirical investigations is necessary to fashion out a policy that will work.

Ekuri, Emmanuel Etta: Effect of sex-group composition in cooperative learning classrooms on science concept attainment among female secondary school students in Calabar-Nigeria.
Co-authors: Asuquo, Patrick Nyong, Ekanen , Robito Samuel, Omoogun, Ajayi
Education has been identified as a key to women empowerment and realizing national and global development goals. Research evidence indicates that female access, participation, enrollment and achievement in school especially, in the basic science and technology subjects, have been considerably low. The application of cooperative learning has been found to have a high potency for increasing achievement in basic science and eliminating gender differences. It is however not yet clear from empirical perspectives, how the nature of the groups in terms of sex-composition affects female achievement. The present study is therefore designed to find out if female students placed in the same sex-group composition (all females) will learn science concepts better than their counterparts placed in mixed sex-group composition (both males and females). In the investigation, Solomon four design was utilized in collecting data from 84 female secondary school students in cooperative groups in Calabar, Nigeria. Data analysis utilizing independent t-test indicates that female students in mixed-sex group composition performed significantly better than their counterparts in the same-sex group setting. The implications for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment is addressed.

Guo Wei: Women's Changing Participation in the Labor Force: Empirical Evidence from China
Co-author: YANG Cun
During the economic transition, China's female labor force participation rate has changed because of many factors. This paper investigates and analyzes the determinants of labor force participation of women living in male-headed households in China at five points in 1989,1991,1993,1997 and 2000, and studies the female labor force participation rate based on the theory and practical analysis , and applies the Probit Model to analyze whether China's women chose to be employed or not. Then the paper estimates the corresponding parameters which help estimate wage equations. Based on the parameters of the wage equations, the paper analyze the employed women's working hours using Tobit Model. The data used for the above-mentioned models are from the 1989,1991,1993,1997 and 2000 China Health and Nutrition Survey (CHNS). The empirical results generally confirm the economic model's theoretical predictions. Finally, the paper finds that both women's educational level and family economic status determine women's labor force participation in China and the level of the husband's income has an unexpected positive effect on the annual hours that employees work.

Jeylan Wolyie Hussein: Female students' expectations about the empowering role of education and educational processes
I conducted a qualitative and interpretative study on female students' expectations about the empowering role of education and educational processes. The study involved 70 randomly

selected female students from seven departments in one of the universities in Ethiopia. The data obtained from the participants' reflections were analyzed using hermeneutical procedures. In addition to viewing education as a means towards personal income, the female students viewed that education and educational processes should serve empowering roles. The thematic analyses of their expectations revealed that they want education to promote *independent thinking, creative and powerful assertions*, *civic courage*, *commitment to discovery* and *perseverance in the face of life challenges*. The thematic concepts worked out from beneath their reflective thoughts were then elaborated with the help of sample excerpts. The study suggests that the participants are of the view that these values of education should filter through educational processes.   What is more, it reveals the respondents' critical awareness and deep concern that the empowering role of education faces challenges from attitudinal obstacles buried deep in the social and political structure of the patriarchal society. The study outlines the respondents' concern that on their day to day educational as well as social activities in university, they are confronted by patriarchal ideologies that subjugate women through institutionalizing, rationalizing, formalizing or naturalizing their secondary positions. The study suggests that the research participants are aware of the existence of the two aspects of gendered life in their university, which Connell (1998) designated as *hegemonic masculinity* and *de-emphasized femininity*. On the whole, the study indicates that educational institutions as well as pedagogical processes are not neutral as far as gender equity is concerned and that access to educational opportunity may not guarantee educational equity in so far as the carry-overs of the cultural and social prejudice against females continue to hinder equal participation. The study outlines key detrimental factors which, according to the respondents, forbid females the opportunity to benefit from educational enterprises. One of these is females' own direct or indirect participation in the systems or processes that call for their unconditional obedience, subordination and submissiveness. Policy implications are drawn on the basis of the analyses.

John W. Forje: Mainstreaming Gender Empowerment: Facing the Politics and Challenges of Empowerment and Disempowerment

Human development is the beginning of economic growth. This gives added value to the natural resources potentials of a country. The main purpose of wealth should be to enrich people's lives – improved quality livelihood. To broaden people's choices and to enable every citizen attained full potential. Africa is one of the largest continents endowed with vast natural resources yet poor in the midst of plenty. Why? The focus of the paper is to demystify the notion of female empowerment and male disempowerment in the African context. It argues that building bridges across existing gender divide and exploiting the hinder potentials of neglected female gender constitutes the right path for sustainable development. No one is disempowering males as it generally perceived with the issue of gender empowerment. Rather developing the human potentials of women, who constitute more that 53 percent of the population in some countries is of added advantage to the sustainable development of the society. The conceptual premises of department builds on the neglect of women in the development process drawing lessons from the first Women's conference Mexico 1975 to Beijing 1995. The importance of gender equality and women's empowerment in achieving national and global development goals is underscored in the Millennium Development Goals. It argues that male chauvinism or fear of male disempowerment is grounded in outmoded thesis which should be demystified. Female gender empowerment is a plus in the development process which must be encouraged with all available

resources if the continent is to overcome its current status of neglect, marginalisation and exploitation and be part of the fast evolving global community. The conclusion is clear – there can be no democracy and development without genuine partnership between men and women. Strategic proactive policy measures are advanced that should move female gender from the minus side to the plus side of the development continuum

Kehinde Ajayi: Gender and Demand for Schooling: Lessons from School Choice and Student Placement in Ghana
This paper uses a unique dataset on Ghana's education system to examine demand for schooling. Admission of Junior Secondary School (JSS) students into Senior Secondary School (SSS) is based on students' rankings of their top six programs and their performance on the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE). I estimate a demand model using students' rankings of their top SSS choices to examine how schooling preferences vary by gender. I find that there are distinct differences in program choice, preference for day or boarding facilities, valuation of academic performance, and desire to attend schools outside of a student's region of residence. Finally, I consider the extent to which these findings may have important implications for educational achievement and future outcomes of young men and women.

Monica Magadi: Understanding the gender disparity in HIV infection in sub-Saharan Africa
Women in sub-Saharan Africa bear a disproportionate burden of HIV infections, which is exacerbated by their role in society and biological vulnerability. Despite the alarming disparity, awareness of how HIV is transmitted and how to prevent infection is lower among women, and the little knowledge is often rendered futile by the discrimination and violence women face. In this paper, we carry out a comprehensive cross-national analysis of the gender disparity in HIV infection based on recent DHS HIV test data from 20 countries in sub-Saharan Africa. The specific objectives are to (i) examine the role of HIV/AIDS awareness and sexual behaviour factors on the gender disparity; and (ii) establish how the gender disparity in HIV infection varies across countries in sub-Saharan Africa. The analysis involves multilevel analysis of pooled data across countries and allows the gender effect on HIV-infection to vary across countries. The modelling introduces HIV/AIDS awareness and sexual behaviour factors in successive stages to understand how the gender disparity is modified by these factors. The findings will be useful in establishing the extent to which increased HIV/AIDS awareness or change in sexual behaviour could reduce the gender disparity in HIV infection in specific settings of sub-Saharan Africa.

Martha Mutisi: Women's Agency in confronting the impact of protracted social conflict: The Case of Women of Zimbabwe Arise
Since 1999, the conflict in Zimbabwe has largely manifested itself as power politics between the old regime, the Zimbabwe African National Union- Patriotic Front (ZANU- PF) and an emerging contender, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). However, the conflict has other nuanced dimensions, which are less explored, including gender. Despite advances towards peace, made at the political levels by rivals, ZANU PF and MDC through the signing of the Global Power Sharing Agreement on 15 September 2008, the Zimbabwean political conflict has had

socio-economic ramifications, with women bearing the greatest brunt of diminished livelihoods, reduced political space and declining socio-economic conditions. Against this background, a movement known as the Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA) emerged to confront those challenges using various locally shaped strategies. WOZA has evidently managed to consolidate women's issues with the broader economic, social, governance and political concerns that confront the citizens of Zimbabwe. However, WOZA's protest has been an arduous task as women are faced with a state which uses brute power to respond to protest. Underscoring the notion of women's agency in peacebuilding, the proposed paper explores reasons for WOZA's resilience and the sustainability of their strategies for confronting the state. Drawing on literature from gender and social movement theory, the study uses interviews with members of WOZA and secondary data in the form of news reports, NGO reports and think tank publications to explain WOZA's resilience and continuity. The reasons for WOZA's resilience include, among others, the movement's ability to embrace coalition building, the power of collective action, effective use of the media and global technologies, gendered and political openness of the movement as well as the grounding of this struggle in justice and peacebuilding discourse. Ultimately, the paper moves beyond the subject of women's victimhood, and demonstrates how women contribute to peacebuilding through their interrogation of, and engagement with tough socio-economic and political conditions.

Salome Wawire: Male Circumcision and the Female Question: Do Women Benefit in the Promotion of Male Circumcision for HIV/AIDS Prevention?
With studies showing that male circumcision (MC) reduces HIV/AIDS risk, the WHO has recommended MC in the prevention of HIV/AIDS. Promoters of women's rights and sexual reproductive health (SRH) fear that such a male-oriented approach would erode strides made to advance women's participation in SRH. Based on results from a qualitative study in Kisumu, Kenya, this paper discusses these concerns. Women emerge as actors and agents negotiating the sexual landscape, normally viewed as men's domain in patriarchal and gerontocratic social systems. Driven by concerns ranging from health to sexual satisfaction, women demonstrate sexual agency through calculated discussions with their sexual partners. Young men who choose to be circumcised involve the non-sexual female members of their social network (sisters, mothers, grandmothers) in the decision-making process. With little evidence that MC biologically/physiologically reduces HIV/AIDS risk for women, I show other benefits which are social in nature, that allow women to negotiate their sexuality, particularly with regard to circumcision, and impact their sexual behavior, as well as that of their sexual partners and people across generations. Women demonstrate that they can creatively re-imagine their sexual relationships in new and different contexts, and in the process, assert themselves as key people in the fight against AIDS. There is need to rethink the framework which informs approaches to the empowerment of women in patriarchal and gerontocratic social systems, which is often based on the idea that women lack sexual agency. I recommend that programs implementing MC involve women so as to strengthen their acceptability and effectiveness.

Jonathan Mafukidze: The implication of tradition, locality and mobility on access: narratives and experiences of rural women of Mbire (Zimbabwe)

Women's struggles for active citizenship are complex and are driven, enhanced and even impeded by individuals, groups, institutions and other factors at both the macro and micro level. This paper discusses the micro-level factors such as tradition, locality and mobility that challenge, constrain or advance poor women's struggles for socio-economic and political participation. The paper uses qualitative data focusing on the narratives and experiences of poor rural women of Mbire, a rural area in Zimbabwe to gain an insight into how tradition, locality or place and mobility impact on their struggle for access to material, political and social space. Using data gathered during an ethnographic study carried out in Mbire between 2006 and 2008 this paper suggests that individuals and groups selectively turn to traditional practices and discourses to reinforce or weaken women's struggle for visibility and active participation in public spaces. Therefore discourses of tradition are tools that both proponents and adversaries of women's struggles deploy to advance their course. The paper also suggests that some poor women's struggles are either more difficult or less so depending on location or context, that is, depending on where the women are and the realities obtaining within the socio-economic and political milieu in which they live. This paper recognises the importance of locality in influencing women's claim on active citizenship as it either offers them protection or increases their vulnerability depending on how they command or access social, natural, physical and natural assets. Access to these resources is also enhanced or undermined by mobility. Mobility affects asset accumulation, social networks, access to services, natural resources and livelihood strategies of those involved and depending on their socio-economic circumstances, it affects their livelihoods differently. Therefore the paper finally suggests that mobility either reinforces or weakens poor women's ability to withstand shocks that characterise their struggles for more meaningful active citizenship depending on their skills, financial and social assets, their ability to adapt as well as on the response of the host population.

Sumit Mazumdar**: Does high social development Guarantee Economic Opportunities for Women? Gender and Workforce participation in Kerala**
Co-author (s): M. Guruswamy

The southern state of Kerala in India is known for greater status of women and low gender bias in society. However, the social and human development in Kerala have not been congruent to the economic emancipation of women, and paradoxically, female labour force participation has been on the decline. This paper aims to examine the issues and understand the linkages to identify the possible determinants of the observed paradox. We have mainly used Census of India 1991 and 2001 and the successive rounds of National Family Health Survey (NFHS 1, 2 and 3) as our data source. Bivariate correlation analysis and multivariate logistic regression were done to understand the association between and relative contributions of significant predictor variables of female work force participation. As apparent, constriction of general economic opportunities in Kerala has an additional gender-intensification. Internal migration, stagnant agricultural and industrial growth and a vibrant informal economy negates the positive effects of education and social status leading to constrained workforce participation of women. The paper takes a closer look at the existing bottlenecks hindering women's economic activity in the state of Kerala and suggests possible policy actions, aiming at enhanced empowerment of women, in a favorable social setting.

Vezumuzi Ndlovu: Women on top? Exploring reproductive decision making among couples with HIV/AIDS in Zimbabwe

Objectives: To explore how HIV positive couples negotiate and make reproductive and sexually related decisions as well as explore how each partner exercises power to influence the reproductive decision making process. The paper will pay particular attention on the influence of women on reproductive decision making among HIV positive couples. The broader aim of the paper is to understand how men and women with HIV make decisions about sex and reproduction, how those decisions are influenced by broader social patterns and gender power dynamics, and what those decisions indicate about the realities of HIV-positive relationships. **Methods**: In depth interviews were conducted with 15 couples in which at least one of them was HIV positive. All respondents were of reproductive age and had or were confronting reproductive and sexual decision making. Interviews were tape recorded and data were analysed using a grounded theory approach, based on a process that helps researchers to "discover" categories, themes and patterns that emerge from the data. **Results**: Reproductive decision making is not dominated by men. Decisions made were usually a result of negotiation and compromise between partners. However, women's fertility and sexual preferences were found to be a major factor in determining whether a couple would try for a child or not and whether they would use contraception and which one. Men's fertility desires and/or intentions did not have a decisive influence on the decision made by the couple while those of women had. **Conclusion**: Women exercise significant power over reproductive decision making. Contrary to conventional wisdom men do not always dominate decisions on reproduction and contraception. It was not clear whether this visibility of women in reproductive decision making was the result of being HIV positive or a general trend among the general population. Nonetheless the results of this research point to the need for further research on reproductive decision making among both HIV negative and positive couples to determine the role of women in it.

Beth Maina Ahlberg: Traumatising and traumatised masculinities: Sexual violence in war and conflict situations in Congo, Kenya and Rwanda
Co-authors: Anne Kubai, Asli Kulane, Jill Trenholm, Kezia Njoroge, & Anne Kamau.

A critical look at masculinities in contexts of war and conflict is imperative not just because wars and conflicts have increasingly become a common feature globally and more so in the African region. Also in these conflicts nearly 90% of casualties are civilians of who over 80% are women and children. Moreover, systematic or mass rape and the heinous manner in which it is perpetrated for example, "vaginal destruction" in women has become part of the battle. Men have been raped though not to the same extent as the women; or have been forced to witness the rape of their wives and daughters, and also to rape or sexually assault others. They have been forcefully circumcised, suffered castrations and other forms of mutilations. Thus wars are not just fought with guns, sexual violence is used to humiliate, traumatize, destabilise communities, sow terror and a sense of hopelessness particularly given the prevailing impunity to which the UN responded in June 2008 by declaring rape a war crime and genocide. This paper, which is part of an ongoing research in three countries: the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Kenya and Rwanda addresses the phenomenon of sexual violence and argues that the rape of women in war is a reflection of the prevailing gender ideologies, and therefore there is need to understand the contextual processes in which these ideologies manifest and continue to evolve. While the aim is partly to interrogate how history, culture, ethnicity, gender and class intersect and shape masculinities and sexual violence in the three countries, the focus in this paper is the Kenyan situation. During the post-election conflict in Kenya, women were exposed to sexual violence in similar ways as in the DRC and Rwanda. In Kenya, women were raped not only by the 'enemy', but also by their protectors even in the camps for the displaced where they were gathered for safety, which leads our research to question general perceptions of sexual violence in conflict situations and go beyond the 'enemy' concept and situate this violence within the social discourse of power-gender continuum.

In addition, the Kenyan form of sexual violence of forcibly circumcising men from ethnic groups that do not culturally practice male circumcision to humiliate and terrorize them, was hitherto unknown or scientifically undocumented. Ironically, male circumcision is one of the most important rites of passage, 'the making of men' through which masculinity is conferred on the next generation for many ethnic groups in Kenya. The point here is that this same notion was reversed and used to intimidate and hence emasculate members of these communities who do not practice it. Here it was used to achieve the exact opposite of its traditional value, hence the need for research to unravel the social processes that foster these dynamics and their implications for sexual violence.

Silberschmidt, M: How to achieve gender equality and empower African women when men are increasingly disempowered?

The aim of this paper is threefold: *first*, to challenge western feminist theory which has led to the firm belief in the universal subordination of women and the systematic asymmetry of gender relations – an asymmetry that favours men and constrains women (cf. Ortner, S. & H. Whitehead, 1989/81) and to deconstruct gender stereotypes which have permeated the international and national development agendas; *second*, to stress the importance of making the issue of gender a two-sided topic that recognizes that gender is not only about women but also about men, and that men constitute a development issue as well; *third*, to demonstrate that without addressing male gender issues and men's disempowerment, the goal of achieving gender equality and women's equality will not be possible. The argument that the relationship between women and men is not now nor ever has been, in most societies an equitable one (cf. Whitehead, S. 2007) has been cemented over and over to the extent that it has become conventional wisdom.

Gender concepts were forced down onto and into gender research in Africa (Morell, 2005), and within the vast literature gender largely appears as analytical shorthand for women's subordination within conjugal relationships (Cornwall, 2005). Extensive enquiries have been made into women's lives – not into men's lives. With African societies being strongly patriarchal, men are seen as drawing on the 'patriarchal dividend' (cf. Cornell, 1995), benefiting from patriarchal structures and with access to privileges that women do not have. Focus, therefore, has been on the negative impact of patriarchal ideologies, ideologies of masculinity, and how these ideologies have caused gender inequality. Consequently, men are mainly referred to in relation to their power over women, women's subordination and the significant differences between women and men in terms of economic, educational and health status. From the presumption of oppositional hierarchy between categories 'women' and 'men' from the 'woman-as-victim' to the men-as-the-problem discourse, the gender myths of contemporary Gender and Development continue to sustain interventions that seek to reshape African gender identities – just as in colonial times (Cornwall, 2005).

Nancy Luke: Abstract: Employment, Transactional Sex, and Reproductive Health Risks among Young Women in Urban Kenya
Co-authors: Rachel Goldberg, Blessing Mberu & Eliya Zulu

Employment and income are considered to be a major means of empowering women and increasing their bargaining power to influence health outcomes in their families and unions.
Social science research has found, however, that the effects of employment and income are conditioned by the nature of work, and income from participation in the formal labor force more readily translates into bargaining power than income from informal sources. In sub-Saharan Africa, socioeconomic realities enable men to monopolize labor market opportunities and dominate sexual and reproductive health decision-making. In this context, many young women turn to "transactional sex"—where money and gifts are exchanged within nonmarital sexual relationships—as an alternative strategy to gain economic benefits. This source of income is assumed to disempower women within these relationships. In this paper, we use unique life history survey data collected from women ages 18-24 in urban Kisumu, Kenya, to explore young women's employment opportunities, involvement in transactional sex, and reproductive health risks. We test the hypotheses that formal employment increases young women's bargaining power and leads to increased condom and contraceptive use within their sexual relationships, while transactional sex decreases the probability of these safe behaviors. Our research underscores the need to provide improved labor market opportunities for women to enhance their power in relationships, position in society, and sexual and reproductive health.

Akosua Adomako Ampofo: **If he's the Man on Top is she the Naughty Girl? Changing meanings and measurement of gender equality and women's empowerment.**
The subject of 'women's empowerment' has been on the front burner for some time. Maybe. But if it has it may be simmering there too long. And yet, as we track improvements in women's lives it seems we are doing some kind of a dance - a few steps forward, a few steps back; and nothing really changes in the aggregate. Or does it? Maybe the problem is the music - not everyone wants to dance. Perhaps we are asking different questions? Maybe we are measuring different things in different ways? He says he's the 'Man on Top', she says she's the Naughty Girl who wants things her way. Ultimately, if we want to appreciate women's situations relative

to men's with a view to interrogating how global/local policy and international/local practice might better respond to the challenge of securing and sustaining tangible improvements in women's lives we must tear at conceptual, methodological, very practical issues. This presentation will seek to do this in a collaborative manner.

An-Magritt Jensen: Does gender impact sustained high fertility in Kenya? Exploring recent fertility development through case studies in Bungoma, Western and Kwale, Coast Provinces.

Given the scope and magnitude of the global fertility development Kenya stands out as a particular case with a halt in decline at a fairly high level. A break-down by regions reveals substantial variations in scope and pace of the decline with contrasting fertility levels and developments in Western and Coast Provinces. In Western, with the highest levels in 1989, fertility initially declined and then levelled out. By contrast in Coast, with the lowest level in 1989, very little change took place. Since 1998 fertility has increased in most provinces (incl. Western), while a slight decline has now taken place in Coast. This paper will be based upon two qualitative studies on the status of women and fertility carried out in the two provinces between 1988 and 1992. The studies revealed that women in the Muslim Coast area, Kwale, wanted and had fewer children compared to the Christian Western area, Bungoma with very high fertility desires. How can the studies inform us on the development taking place in the following years? Why did fertility decline in Bungoma, and stop at a fairly high level (5.8)? Why did fertility remain stable in Kwale? The paper will emphasise marriage patterns and women's education to explore paths of recent fertility development.

Akinrinola Bankole: Fertility preferences and contraceptive use among couples in Sub-Saharan Africa
Co-author(s): Suzette Audam
This paper will presents a comparative analysis of the fertility preferences of marital partners and their contraceptive behavior, using Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) data collected in 28 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa between 2003 and 2008. The focus of the study is on understanding how women's reproductive aspirations compare with those of their husbands and how they jointly affect the couple's contraceptive behavior. The study will answer questions such as: Do husbands and wives desire similar number of children? If not which spouse tends to desire fewer children than the other? What is the level of contraceptive use among married men and women and how do husbands' and wives' report compare with each other? Who's fertility desires exert a greater influence on the couples' use of modern methods of contraception? Answer to these questions will enable us to determine the extent to which men and women have similar reproductive goals and motivation to achieve the goals, and point to the nature and direction of influence on contraceptive use and, potentially, fertility outcome when there are disagreements between marital partners. The results will also be compared with the outcome of a similar study in the late 1990s to examine how marital power relations regarding reproductive decision-making have shifted, if at all, within the last decade.

Enid Schatz: Understanding gender in Africa: Using qualitative methods to enhance DHS analyses of women's empowerment

Co-author(s): Jill Williams
Through proximate questions about women's status, demographic surveys add to demographic research on gender. Often, however, the quantitative data are limited conceptually and in scope. Survey researchers at times conflate women's status, empowerment and autonomy—three terms that are conceptually different, have different temporal components and referent groups. Without qualitative data to help shape quantitative data collection and unpack the meaning of survey measures, it is difficult to generalize which questions may represent each concept in different settings. This paper gives an overview of the advantages and limitations of current quantitative surveys as a window into gendered dynamics in developing countries, with a focus on Africa. The paper then argues for integrating qualitative data collection to provide a more nuanced demographic gender analysis of women's status, through the improvement of quantitative measurement, theoretical structures for quantitative analysis, validation/refuting of quantitative results, and assistance in the interpretation of statistical relationships and in the construction of indices. Using empirical examples from work in Malawi and South Africa, this paper will show how triangulating data sources help elucidate the meanings *and* magnitude of women's empowerment in various settings.

Jennifer Schulte: Evaluating Microfinance for Poverty Reduction and Women's Empowerment
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Microfinance is an important instrument for poverty reduction that reaches millions of low-income people globally. Because the majority of microfinance clients are women, there has often been criticism for its failure to empower women. This stems from the expectation that it is not enough for microfinance to reduce women's and household poverty, but it should also be empowering for women. Although women's empowerment is not always an explicit goal of microfinance programs, the potential for it exists in poverty reduction and collective action components, and through both individual and group-based models. Recognizing this, the paper examines available global evidence on how well microfinance programs have done in reducing poverty along with engendering women's empowerment. The paper challenges the assumption that microfinance will automatically empower women, examining instead the evidence on the pathways to empowerment, for example, via agency and collective action, that may involve factors such as the benefits of training, social networking, improved decision-making and greater mobility. Finally, with examples from Africa and Asia the paper examines whether and how microfinance may or may not reduce gender-based violence and vulnerability to HIV/AIDS and what factors enable women to take greater control over their lives in order to enable positive outcomes for themselves.

Chi-Chi Undie: Beyond wifehood: Public health interventions and local gender ideologies in Nigeria
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Public health discourse surrounding women in Africa has yet to benefit from longstanding, rigorous problematizations and theorizations of gender in African settings. In a word, the African woman, from the public health perspective, is still primarily a 'wife'. Yet, targeting women solely as wives obscures the other important and varied positions which women in Africa occupy and limits the opportunities available for addressing their myriad health issues. That this

approach has continued unquestioned is an indication of a need to merge conversations occurring across disciplines. For several decades, anthropological studies have highlighted the dichotomy that exists for women in some African contexts between being a 'wife' and a 'daughter,' and the strikingly different implications that each of these social positions and spaces have for women's lives. This paper aims to bring anthropological data on Nigerian gender ideologies and constructions into conversation with public health as a field of practice, in search of opportunities for productive synergies. We explore here the spatial/locational orders, domains, and practices provoked by the concepts of 'wifehood' and 'daughterhood' in Nigeria, and the implications for the well-being of women in particular, and for their communities in general.

We draw on data emerging from our years of ethnographic work among two communities in Southeast Nigeria – the Ubang and the Ngwa Igbo, examining indigenous/local gender constructions and the attendant implications for women's decision-making and action related to illness. We conclude by advancing a new public health approach to women in African contexts – one that engages more closely with anthropological and gender insights – and by demonstrating that in engaging with women exclusively as wives, public health interventions have unwittingly overlooked other critical entry points for improving the health status of women in Africa.