

Women's Participation in the Catholic Church in Zambia

Conducted by:

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¹ Fr Kennedy Seketi is also Liturgical Coordinator, Zambia Episcopal Conference (ZEC)

trio have committed themselves to mainstreaming gender in their decision making structures. ZEC has started the mainstreaming process including training, mainstreaming gender in the seminaries and in the Catholic Formations for both the clergy and the laity.

Many thanks go to staff of the Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR), for all of the work they did to make our work easy even within the challenging and sometimes difficult circumstances in the various Dioceses from where the data was to be collected. We are very grateful for their patience and their complete co-operation. We were impressed with the professionalism, capacity, and enthusiasm and pride commitment to gender justice. Thank you Ms Sheila Kambobe, The Deputy Director of JCTR, Sister Kayula G. Lesa, The Programme Manager, JCTR and Mr. Brian Banda, The Programme Officer, JCTR, Ms Mwila Bwalya, Receptionist, JCTR and last but not least, Mr Dominic Liche, JCTR Associate. Mr. Banda and Sr Kayula accompanied the teams to the field to get a feel of the process but also to enhance ownership of the process and products of the study. Thanks to Fr. Leonard Chiti, SJ, The Director of JCTR and his team.

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Special thanks go to Fr. Cleophus Lungu, the Secretary General of ZEC for giving a lot of time for the interview on the issue of women’s participation in the Catholic Church, for providing office space for the team while collecting data in Lusaka, the Diocesan Development Commission Chairpersons, to the Parish Council, the Zambia Association of the Religious and the Catholic Women’s League and to all the Bishops for allowing this study to go ahead.

- SNDP - Sixth National Development Plan
- WLSA - Women and Law in Southern Africa Research and Education Trust
- ZAS - Zambia Association of Sisterhoods
- ZEC - Zambia Episcopal Conference

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/RECOMMENDATIONS

This report provides findings of the assessment of women's participation in decision making within the Catholic Dioceses in Zambia. The Executive Summary contains key highlights of analysis and recommendations. The Catholic Church has specific doctrine and related structures in which women, men, boys and girls take part. The doctrine and social teachings provide the basis for Diocesan Governance. The 21st Century discourse on development has a vision of a sustainable development in which women and men, girls and boys are equal in all spheres. The study on the participation of women in Diocesan decision making structures is not only overdue but is significant to the realization of the Catholic Church in Zambia- *Integral Evangelization*.

The study provides findings on which recommendations are made for enhancing the participation of women in the Diocesan decision making structures so as to promote equitable and democratic governance. Gender roles and how they are perpetuated within the Dioceses is, to a large extent, symptomatic of a deeper problem. The majority of the respondents in the study demonstrated humble background knowledge of gender and its related discourse including mainstreaming. The Diocesan faithful; the religious and clergy are not very familiar with the national and regional and international frameworks on Gender equality and most of them do not adequately use them as reference documents to inform their actions towards gender equality.

To ensure effective implementation of the Zambia National Policy on Gender, the 2008 SADC Protocol and African Union Optional Protocol on Gender and the MDG goal 3 which seeks to enhance gender equality by 2015, the Dioceses as secondary duty bearers, should promote an active and visible policy of gender mainstreaming if the Diocesan structures should have 50:50 representation in decision making structures by 2015. This requires that the Catholic Bishops should demonstrate a commitment towards gender equality by taking a key role in monitoring and assessing progress on the advancement of women. The Dioceses as secondary duty bearers should deliberately promote an active and visible policy of gender mainstreaming.

1. Overall, findings reveal that Dioceses lack accountability for gender equality. Despite comprising the majority of the faithful, women have remained in the periphery of the Governance of the Dioceses. Women are recipients and main implementers of the decisions made by their colleagues, the men. Further, it was found that the main decision makers in Diocesan activities are the *Clergy, the Bishops and Priests*. Women are active participants in "*servicing the church*" and as such perform what is referred to as "*reproductive roles*." Dioceses have norms that restrict women's roles to subsistence production. These include nurturing the sick, taking care of the sick and vulnerable within the church and community at large consequently leading to heavy workloads for women and girls. Women are found in the reproductive positions transferred from the family of doing "domestic chores such as cleaning the church, cooking, making tea etc. during meetings while their male colleagues participate in meetings and other foras where decisions are made. In the Diocesan activities, there was evidence of excessive demands on women's time: visiting the sick, arranging

weddings, funerals and other functions etc. The women transfer their multiple roles from home to Church negatively impacting on their effective participation in decision making.

2. Cultural beliefs and practices relating to sexuality, fertility, productive and reproductive rights also undermine women's choices such as deciding whether or not to serve on committees, whether to take contraceptives or not or to challenge views of traditional leaders, the priests or their husbands or male family members. During the study for example in a focus group discussion in one of the Dioceses, a man argued that his wife should not fill in a questionnaire since he, as the head of the household was going to fill one in. These issues make women invisible, vulnerable and susceptible to issues such as HIV and AIDS, inheritance and overall decision making patterns within the church.
3. A review of the Diocesan strategic, institutional and programming levels have shown that gender is not mainstreamed and this has an effect on the participation of women in decision making structures.

3.1 **Diocesan Strategic Level:** A review of the key Diocesan policy and programme documents found the following:

- Not all Dioceses have Strategic Plans while others have some drafts. Those with Strategic Plans have not adequately mainstreamed gender and issues of women's participation.
- Gender is not mainstreamed in the policy guidelines.
- There is limited engagement with gender based NGOs.

3.2 **Diocesan Institutional Level:** Although the Dioceses are working with women issues in both the liturgical and development programmes addressing poverty and human rights in programmes such as Justice for Peace and Development, there is an evident lack of an institutional framework for mainstreaming both gender and human rights within and link the strategic plan to the institutional framework for implementing the programme. The Dioceses aim at promoting justice through integral evangelization. As an institution that is responsible for ensuring that justice among the faithful happens in communities, they should have an inward look and look at its various levels of the structures, ensure that staff working on promoting equitable development can effectively deliver the mission and objectives of the Dioceses. A closer look at the institution, the following were found:

- Gender is not sufficiently mainstreamed in Diocesan Strategic plans, programmes and activities
- The Diocesan policies, programmes do not adequately refer to National Gender Policy, Regional and International Treaties and Conventions on Gender and Development.
- Caritas National Office and some Diocesan Development Programmes have Gender Plan or work place policies. For example, Diocese of Monze and Mongu have Gender Policies but they are not adequately implemented in their activities.
- ZEC is party to Theological Declaration on Gender Justice developed in 2010 jointly by other Mother bodies; Council of Churches in Zambia (CCZ) and Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia (EFZ) and has developed a programme

targeting Dioceses and Seminaries but this new initiative needs financial support to effectively penetrate the Diocesan level frameworks on Governance, Gender and Development.

- Doctrine and Social Teaching used to maintain status quo on gender and women's participation in decision making and yet the doctrine and Social Teachings should provide basis for enhancing the participation of women, especially that the doctrine is progressive enough.
- Some clergy and lay men and women demonstrated antagonism, conservatism and misconception about gender and women's participation in decision making structures within the dioceses and prompted responses like:

BOX 6: Misconceptions about Gender in the Catholic Dioceses

- *"What do these Jesuits want regarding the participation of women in our Diocesan activities? Who tells them there is a problem? Besides, we also understand gender and we can do it ourselves if there is need. It's our business." (Pastoral Coordinator)*
- *"You women, what do you really want? You want to take over from men? You should be careful and not disturb the church unnecessarily." (Priest)*
- *"It is about ordination of women and that will NEVER (emphatic) happen. You see we have guidelines in our church. Christ for example never had female disciples." (Senior Priest in key leadership position)*
- *"Oh my God, this is so damn. We should just stop it. It will not happen in our life time. We have to wait for Jesus Christ to come back for justice to happen. Priests are just selfish." (Religious male and female)*
- *"At last someone is doing a research on this thing, maybe we can have a change in our roles. We are tired of cleaning the church and laying flowers." (Religious female)*
- *"It is not like we starting to talk about this thing now. Bishops and cardinals have held meetings before about women's participation in decision making. They can change something if they really want but they don't want to. How is this not being accountable to people who make the majority of our Church?" (Priest)*
- *"The African Synod of Bishops has submissions even to submit to the Pope but this was just put aside by Rome. The Pope had responded that it won't be during His lifetime." (Religious)*
- *"We the Priests have the responsibility to ensure that gender justice happens in the Dioceses, individually and as a collective." (Priest)*
- *"Priests don't want to emulate Christ. He was the most gender sensitive." (Lay female)*
- *"The Religious women, especially, have the knowledge, skills and competencies even to lead a Parish and even be Bishops." (Lay female)*
- *"Especially we are not informed what to do and we have to comply by oath."*

Source: Respondents, Field work 2011

3.3 Diocesan Programming Level

- There is no systematic gender mainstreaming in the Diocesan Project cycles
- Limited/Inadequate participation of women and girls in programmes and projects committees but are many as recipients (beneficiaries).
- Diocesan Strategic plans, activities and logframes are not gender disaggregated

4. Through the Diocesan Justice and Peace Programmes as well as Development, there is also an increase in understanding and appreciating of gender issues. In Dioceses visited, there was some evidence that men and women are gradually taking gender issues seriously although they were quick to indicate that there are big challenges for gender equality to be fully

appreciated and mainstreamed in all the Diocesan activities. References were made to various gender based injustices including men stopping their wives from attending church meetings and gender based violence in Small Christian Communities with few women actively participating in the decision making in various structures. They also indicated that there are gender stereotypes and resistance to issues of gender equality due to entrenched and rigid attitudes and behavior from culture and traditions. Dioceses and ZEC are gradually increasing the activities aimed at empowering the faithful to play a key role in development and especially fostering active participation of women in Diocesan activities.

5. The study further found out that whereas some Dioceses are undertaking Training for Transformation in communities through Caritas on issues of Human Rights, the work deals with the empowerment of vulnerable women and children but the Rights Based Approach to “monitor, promote and protect human rights and gender activities” was not adequately featuring in Diocesan activities. Advocacy work on Human Rights, Gender and Governance target the state and not the Dioceses themselves through introspection to see the extent to which the Dioceses have shown accountability towards the majority of the faithful by ensuring that they are equally represented in Diocesan Decision making. It is worth noting however that Caritas National Office has applied the equal representation of women among staff. Caritas should deliberately target the Dioceses and intensify the advocacy work to ensure that women and men are equally represented in decision making within the church.
6. There is no doubt that the low participation and representation of women in various decision making structures within the Catholic Dioceses undermines not only women’s empowerment but democracy as well as the call to justice and dignity for all as stipulated in the Church Doctrine. Strengthening accountability to ensure that women who constitute 2/3 of the population of the church are participating meaningfully in decision making implies an important democratic governance advance in the Catholic Church. Men, who hold key leadership positions in the church, predominantly the Clergy, however well informed and committed to women’s empowerment, cannot represent women in all respects due to different life situations and experiences. “*We are all God’s Creation but are different for necessity.*”² Since it is an established fact that women comprise the majority and thus are the Church, the Dioceses should ensure that women have their fair share of opportunities to participate and represent themselves fully at all levels of decision making. Interventions must be designed to encourage men who hold power to loosen their grip and relinquish and share the socio-economic, political and social power along with putting in place measures to the upcoming clergy, lay boys and girls about the importance of gender equality in all dimensions of their lives as a prerequisite for the attainment of gender justice in the house of God.
7. Key determinants for achieving the equal participation and representation of women and men at all levels of decision making include societal attitudes towards women’s and men’s leadership, a politically conducive environment, the Catholic Church’s systems and structures, the church statutes and doctrinal obligations on equality and non discrimination, the policy and legislative frameworks and their implementation, empowerment of women and girls (women themselves must be significant actors for change), the willingness by the

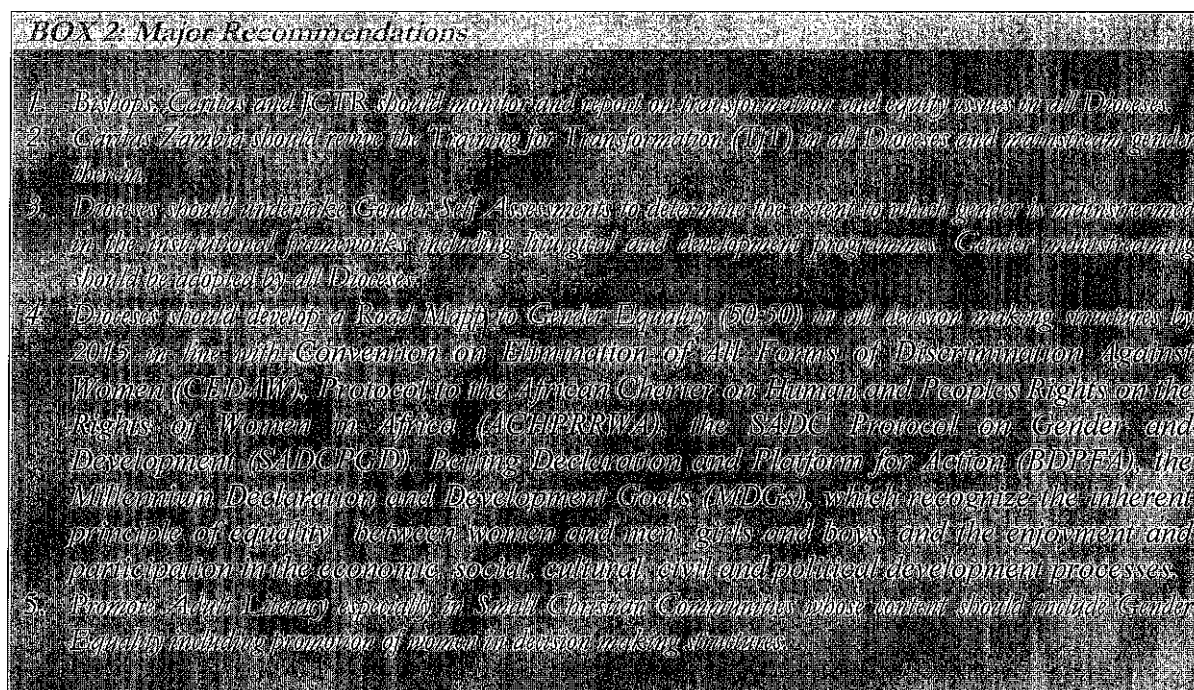
² Clergy, Diocese of Chipata, 2011

clergy to take special measures to increase women's participation and representation in various church structures.

8. The relevance of the Dioceses in promoting the concept of Integral Evangelization should be reflected by mainstreaming of gender and governance issues in the various structures whose roles and responsibilities for the various structures, management systems and procedures.
9. Gender mainstreaming is no longer an option but mandatory for all actors especially the catholic Dioceses that seek to enhance human rights including gender justice. This requires that the Catholic Bishops demonstrate a commitment towards gender equality by taking a key role in monitoring and assessing progress on the advancement of women within the Dioceses.
10. There is a need to broaden women's participation into decision making in the Church and integrate gender analysis into policies and programmes. ZEC is already undertaking some work on engendering the Dioceses and this is commendable and should be scaled up. Key activities should include awareness of the Gender Justice and devise actions to develop implementation strategies for the Gender Justice Declaration.
11. Dioceses should join the Gender Equality race towards 2015. The gender agenda and especially gender and governance under which the issue of women's participation in decision making is discussed be developed in which implementation strategies should have targets and benchmarks for monitoring of Diocesan Programmes Performance on gender equality.
12. The Catholic Bishops are encouraged to promote networking and collaborative efforts with Civil Society Organizations especially the women's movement and its focal point the NGOCC so as to create synergy in the process of increasing women's participation in Diocesan decision making structures.
13. Gender mainstreaming should be adopted in the Dioceses. This is a process of strengthening women's active participation in development by linking them to macro-economic and social issues such as poverty, debt, HIV and AIDS among others. This process requires that Bishops take explicit consideration of not only the actual but also the potential role of women in socio-economic and political sectors; the impact of the macro policies, programme plans, monitoring and evaluation as well as reporting systems within the Dioceses in order to address the barriers to women's participation and the issue of equality between women and men.
14. In terms of decision making within the Diocesan structures, the focus by Dioceses should be on reviewing the Diocesan policies, structures, strategic actions, implementation plans and management systems. Each Diocesan structure should be interrogated to assess quantitative

(numbers) participation of women- as well as the qualitative abilities to influence, communicate, contribute in decision making in the Diocesan structures. While numbers are important, it is much more significant to ensure that women in those structures have demonstrable capacity to influence decision making. If those qualities are not there, the Dioceses should invest to improve the knowledge, skills and competencies of women and men through capacity building. Analysis of gender based participation patterns (female and male) and the imbalances would assist the Diocesan Policy makers and planners to devise appropriate interventions for change.

The **major recommendations** therefore, based on the key findings are:



Concretely, the following are recommended:

Recommendation 1: Promote equal distribution of power and influence between women and men in shaping the functioning of the Catholic Dioceses in Zambia. Two approaches are fundamental in that process namely:

- a. **Mainstream gender**, women’s participation in all programmes. Gender should be a cross cutting issue³. **Gender Mainstreaming** is a process within development in which the Church should promote equal rights, opportunities and access to resources for women and men to participate and influence the representative and participatory governance structures and processes.
- b. **Women’s Empowerment**: It is established that women comprise a bulk of the believers within the Catholic Church. It’s also established that many women have humble educational background, a factor affecting their effective participation in decision making structures.

³ UNDP- defines gender mainstreaming as “taking account of gender equity concerns in all policy, Programme, administrative and financial activities, and organizational procedures, thereby contributing to a profound organizational transformation.

Recommendation 2: Dioceses should ensure that all documents; policies, plans and reports have gender disaggregated data.

Recommendation 3: It is recommended that the Catholic Dioceses **devise measures and practices that help reduce gender disparity in decision making.** *Affirmative Action* is one of the strategies that have proven to work. Other interventions include the *quota system* or *proportional representation* in decision making structures. To compel the actors in the various decision making structures, the Bishops have to mainstream these measures in the Diocesan statutes or Constitution. The initiatives must promote transformation of power relations between men and women in a manner that enhances *participation, representation and accountability* in the various leadership and governance structures of the Dioceses.

Recommendation 4: Building gender based democratic structures: Religious and the lay to play an active role towards the transformation of the church towards gender justice, the Diocesan structures should be institutionally adequately oriented to deal with gender issues. There is a need to turn around the institutional framework and the staff to address gender and women's participation. In order to attain Gender Justice within the Catholic Church there is a need to build capacity of all Catholic Church decision making structures. In accordance with the Rights Based Approach, women in the Catholic Church in Zambia cannot ably claim their rights or increase the "political" space for their participation without constructively engaging the duty bearers within the Church to fulfill their duties and responsibilities to have justice for all attained.

Recommendation 5: Engender the Formation and Training programmes: Gender should be a thematic area in formation programmes starting with the Catechists curriculum at Small Christian Community (SCC) levels to the curriculum for the Clergy and Religious in Seminaries and other training institutions of the Catholic Dioceses. It was found that this process is starting and should be intensified. It is also recommended that the teachings at seminaries as well as for those for preparing women to be nuns must be improved to include human rights, gender, knowledge with regards to policies, protocols, conventions and treaties on women in decision making, gender equality and equity to help the Church in moving towards striking a balance in decision making positions between women and men at all levels.

Recommendation 6: The Bishops should take responsibility to open up spaces for women: It is the responsibility of the Bishops to ensure that development work which comprises liturgy and development in all the Dioceses is gender responsive in the context of *Integral Evangelization*. Under the direct supervision of the Bishops are Parish Priests working closely with Caritas at various levels for the Church. While the Policy Guidelines are developed at the higher levels of the Church, The Parish levels and especially Small Christian Community (the core fabric of the Church- the foundation and base of the Church) should address gender and women's participation in the Parish Development Plans- the Strategic Plans. Unless the Church interventions develop clear **Strategic Plans** in line with the doctrine, gender and women's participation in the Catholic Church will be a peripheral issue outside the mainstream of the Church. It is the Catholic Bishops that should compel the Church to ensure that doctrine and practice are harmonized. The women are the church, argued most respondents, men and women. If the women are unable to effectively participate in the church activities, the clergy as the main duty bearers on justice for all are mandated to enact policies and where there are policies, translate them into concrete interventions which women and men should be active participants in the various activities of the Church.

Recommendation 7: Open up the closed Structures: The view that the Church looks open from outside was echoed by respondents at various levels recommending that spaces should be opened for both the lay and religious women to participate. Since the religious are part of the Church, it is recommended that they are given higher portfolios within the office of the Bishop so that lay people and religious work together. An example was given of the Philippines where the Religious run the Parishes and not seen as “helpers”. A new structure should be identified where the Religious are involved since the development agenda is for everybody. They should participate not only in the implementation but also in the conceptualization of issues and policy formulation as is the case in Diocese of Mongu. Participation in the various processes such as Strategic Planning should be a key unifying factor within the Dioceses.

Recommendation 8: Document and replicate approaches that have been used in the Church to promote the participation of women in decision making structures. The Family as a Development Unit Approach used in Diocese of Monze should be documented and scaled up in various Dioceses.

Recommendation 9: Women’s participation and representation should be made into a main thematic area- with the purpose to enhancing empowerment measures such as Leadership Skills Development. Further, the Dioceses should strengthen integration of gender dimensions in various levels of decision making structures.

Recommendation 10: Improve Dialogue between Men and Women: It is recommended that openness and dialogue from sides, the women and men in the Church shall help to accelerate the implementation of the necessary change to increase the role of women in decision making process in the Church.

Recommendation 11: Enhance Capacity on gender equity and equality among the various stake holders in the Catholic Dioceses. The focus should be on both the policy makers (Bishops Priests, the religious and laity) as well as programme implementers. Capacity building include among others:

- 11.1 **Capacity Building:** Build capacity of Diocesan staff to implement gender sensitive and equitable programming, planning and management
- 11.2 the Concept of Gender and Human Rights
- 11.3 Awareness Raising: various Treaties, conventions on Gender Equality as well as the National Gender Policy.
- 11.4 Gender mainstreaming and how to create, maintain gender disaggregated data Dioceses
- 11.5 Rights Based Approaches with focus on Rights Claiming
- 11.6 Public Policy Advocacy focusing on increasing the participation of women in Diocesan Decision Making structures

Recommendation 12: It is further recommended that women lay believers as well as the Religious be empowered in order for them to rise to the challenge of performing certain roles in the Church, especially those roles to do with decision making.

Recommendation 13: Enhance Networking and Alliance Building to create an interface between the Catholic Dioceses and Civil Society Organizations working on gender equality especially on gender and governance under which the women's participation in decision making is discussed. Dioceses should build and strengthen relationships/partnerships/collaborative efforts with CSOs such as NGOCC, WLSA, ZNWL and Women for Change who have been working in the area of increasing women's participation in decision making. Dioceses should also make efforts to develop linkages with the Ministry of Gender and Child Development.

Recommendation 14: Dioceses and their cooperating partners should demonstrate commitment to gender and governance and especially women's participation in decision making structures through increased funding to the gender agenda in the Dioceses.

PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

The assessment of women's participation in the Catholic Church was commissioned by JCTR. The purpose of an analysis such as this one was to help an understanding of the phenomena but also seeks to ensure that women, men, boys and girls participate in and benefit from development within the Catholic Church. The study further seeks to bring out the root causes of gender inequality between women and men and boys and girls within the church in order to address them. The findings are a challenge for the leadership within the Catholic Church in Zambia. It's hoped that the findings will contribute to addressing the challenges identified as well as the positive developments. The participation of women in various activities with the Catholic Church is not only fundamental as stipulated in the various treaties and conventions of the United Nations but within the concept of the dignity for the human person and justice for all as articulated in the Holy Bible and also within the Social Teachings of the Catholic Church.

This report contains findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study on the participation of women in decision making structures within the Catholic Dioceses in Zambia.

Part one is the introduction to the study.

Part two provides the context of the study; the socio-economic and political situation of Zambia as well as the issues around participation of women in decision making structures.

Part three provides methodology, overall and specific objectives of the study, approach and limitations.

Part four provides review of literature; the concept on gender, gender frameworks as well the doctrine and Social Teachings of the Catholic Church.

Part five has the findings of the study while part six covers the challenges regarding the participation of women in Diocesan decision making.

Part seven provides Concluding Remarks.

The Recommendations are part of the Executive Summary.

Terms of Reference and list of people that participated in interviews, focus group discussions are annexed.

PART TWO: THE CONTEXT

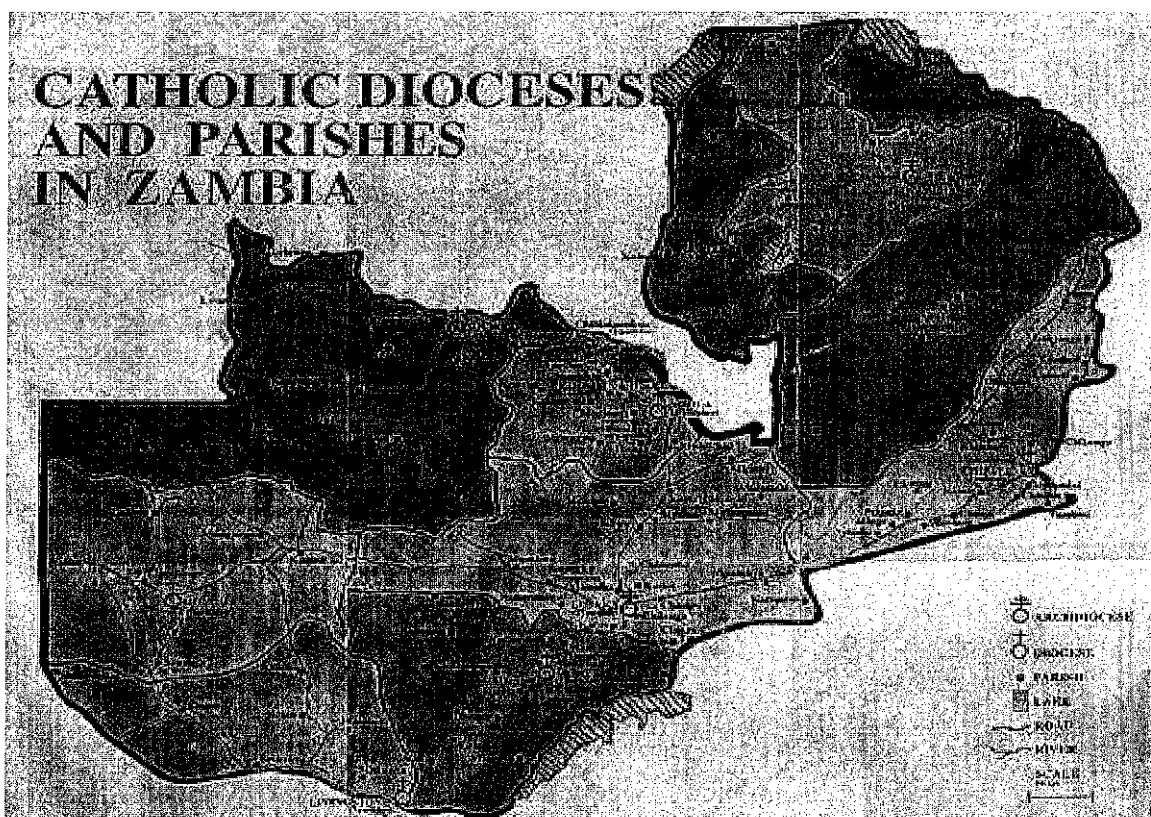
2.1.1 The study on women's participation in the Catholic Church in Zambia aimed at reaching all the ten (10) Dioceses. Three Dioceses however did not participate in the study, Archdiocese of Kasama, Diocese of Ndola and Mansa and no questionnaires were received from them making only Seven (7) Dioceses including Zambia Episcopal Conference.

This section provides an overview of the socio economic and political situation of Zambia. The contextual analysis is important as the situation highlighted affects the various Catholics who form the majority of the Christians in Zambia. Three quarters of the members of the Christian Communities are women and children and most are affected by poverty especially for those that live in rural areas where service providers, rarely reach. The positive part of the work of the Catholic Church in Zambia is that it has Parishes and Out-Stations in remotest parts of Zambia where few and even the Government is unable to reach. The Catholic Church in Zambia is one of the oldest religious institutions which has reached out to all parts of Zambia providing services such as basic education and healthcare services and also taking care of the vulnerable who are mostly women and children. No wonder the issue on the participation of women in the Church is not only fundamental but critical to the sustainability of the Church in Zambia.

A Diocese is defined as a territorial circumscription administered by a Bishop whose boundary represents a portion of the people of God entrusted to the pastoral care of the Bishop. It constitutes what is referred to as the Local Church. Within the Dioceses are Parishes. A Parish is “a community of Christian faithful stably constituted in a particular Church, whose pastoral care is entrusted to a Pastor (parochus) as its proper Pastor under the authority of the Diocesan Bishop. At the Small Christian Community level, a Parish comprises different sub Parishes or Outstations. Each of the Dioceses working through Parishes seeks to promote the empowerment of the Small Christian Communities under sustainable Integral Evangelization and Development which covers areas such as youth development, celebrate and share the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Dioceses respond to the various needs and interests of the Small Christian Communities through interventions which are usually in reflected in their Strategic Plans.

Figure 1. Below is a Map showing the various areas where the Catholic Church Dioceses in Zambia are located.

Figure 1: Catholic Dioceses and Parishes in Zambia



2.1.2 The Zambian Context: Zambia is a landlocked country covering an area of 752,614 km² and is situated in Southern Africa bordered by the Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania, Angola, Namibia, Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Botswana. Zambia is one of the few central African Countries endowed with rich resources such as water, fertile lands with mineral resources. With a tropical climate, Zambia has seasons ranging from cool dry, hot dry and warm wet. Despite the rich resources, Zambia has in several years suffered from either droughts or floods depending on the terrain within that province. Zambia has a population of 13,000,000. Of this population, 6,000,000 are males while 7,000,000 are females, clearly indicating that the population has more females than males. It is estimated that 61% of the population (8,000,000) lives in rural areas, while 39% of the population (5,000,000) lives in urban areas.⁴

As a country, Zambia has made some strides in an effort to address the issue of equality between women and men. For example, Zambia has signed some global, regional and sub-regional declarations and instruments. In the year 2000, Zambia enacted a National Gender Policy to advance gender equality and women’s human rights. The Policy recognises equality in various

⁴ Central Statistical Office (2010)

decision making structures within State and Non-State Actors⁵ as crucial to the attainment of equitable and sustainable development. The Government of Zambia, through the NGP has recognised that women's participation in decision making is not only a demand for simple justice but a necessary condition for the attainment of good governance and accountability towards all citizens.

In the area of women's participation in decision making, social economic and political factors have played a key role in shaping and influencing the number of women that are involved in the decision making structures. The power relations that have influenced and prevented the participation patterns among women have ranged from cultural beliefs and traditions, low education levels and especially illiteracy among women and children.

Despite having ratified most of the global, regional and sub-regional treaties and conventions, protocols and declarations, Zambia has not domesticated them to ensure justiciability and enforceability. Although there is a National Gender Policy, women have continued to be seriously underrepresented in various decision making structures.

Although women have key roles to play in the implementation of various programmes especially small scale enterprises in the informal sector and public life, women and girls suffer from various stereotypes which define what roles and responsibilities women ought to play in development. Although women are key actors in Zambian development, they have remained in the periphery of various decision making structures.

In the political decision making structures for example, Zambia has demonstrated a declining trend with significant decrease in the number of women represented in various political decision making structures. The institutional and legal frameworks for example of political parties have rules and regulations which continue to be a barrier to women's participation in various decision making structures. Discriminatory attitudes and practices, patriarchal structures and lack of legal institutional frameworks have been a barrier to women's participation in decision making. The current laws, systems and procedures for increasing the number of women in decision making structures are inadequate.

According to WLSA in Zambia research, discriminatory tendencies and unequal power relations have their basis in the family, the basic unit. In the family, the key roles and responsibilities played by women are not recognised or respected and this is usually a basis for non-recognition of their key role in decision making.

The Catholic Church works in both rural and urban areas of Zambia with most of the Dioceses operating in rural areas. These communities are predominantly illiterate with a corresponding poor appreciation of human rights and gender issues. The Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflections (JCTR) Basic Needs Basket 2011 edition highlights reduction of poverty levels in urban areas and

⁵ Non-State Actors comprises Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), Faith Based Organizations (FBOs), the Media as well as the Private Sector.

indicates that poverty levels in the rural areas had increased to 80% from 78%. The evidence from the Rural Basket shows that most households are not meeting the recommended calories of 2,400 per adult and that most rural areas still face poor service provision, which negatively impacts on the development of those rural communities. With high illiteracy levels, rural communities are cited of their inability to hold duty bearers' especially public servants and public institutions accountable. Most Zambian provinces in which the Catholic Church operates have strong cultural beliefs and practices which permeate the functioning of the Church.

In both rural and urban areas, several factors affect women and men's access to and control over productive and reproductive resources as well as benefits of development. The Gender Audit undertaken by WLSA and sponsored by Norwegian Church Aid in 2008 revealed that women and girls face more constraints than their male counterparts in decision making and general development work. The following are some of the factors considered to affect the participation patterns of women in development activities and decision making structures:

- **The family and kinship systems:** These are considered in the study as persistently subordinating the interests and roles and responsibilities of women and girls in development. The family and kinship are influenced by culture and traditions.
- **Discriminatory laws, Customs and traditional practices** undermine women's socio-economic and cultural rights. Most women and girls; especially those in peri-urban and rural areas, generally lack political resources to influence decisions regarding development activities. Political resources refer to education, informal knowledge, credit, well-paying jobs, leadership knowledge, skills and competencies, self confidence, assertiveness and decision making power) especially for the illiterate members of Small Christian Communities. All these factors influence the participation patterns in both domestic and public spheres, including the church.
- Various provinces are periodically cited for **poor human rights records** with high abuses. Gender based violence, gender based inequalities, lack of appreciation of persons with disability as well as the poor access to prevention, treatment, care/support of the persons infected and affected by HIV and AIDS are among the key challenges that these communities face.

2.1.3 The Study

The Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR) is a faith based non-governmental organization operating in Zambia under the Zambia-Malawi Province of the Society of Jesus, the Jesuits, working on issues of faith and social justice. The JCTR was established more than 20 years ago in 1988 as a small in-house Jesuit Centre to reflect on social and faith issues. The Centre now does research, education and advocacy on issues that affect the day-to-day lives of Zambians with the aim of promoting the fullness of human life of all people, especially for the poor. The mission of JCTR is to foster, from a faith-inspired perspective, a critical understanding of current issues. To fulfill this mission, the JCTR works through three Programmes and an Outreach Support. The three main

Programmes are the Faith and Justice Programme, Economic Equity and Development Programme, and the Social Conditions Programme.

This research was commissioned by the Faith and Justice Programme of the JCTR as part of its efforts to contribute towards the resolutions and implementation of the Second Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops that took place in Rome from 04 to 25 October 2009 under the theme of *“The Church in Africa at the Service of Reconciliation, Justice and Peace. ‘You are the Salt of the Earth...You are the Light of the World’ (Mt 5:13, 14).”* Amongst the 57 Propositions recommended at the end of the Synod, Proposition 47 talked about *Women in Africa* in the following words: “Women in Africa make a great contribution to the family, society and the Church with their many talents and resources. However, not only are their dignity and contributions not fully recognized and appreciated, but are often deprived of their rights. In spite of the significant advances made in the education and development of women in some countries in Africa, the development of girls and women is often disproportionate to that of boys and men; girls and women are generally unjustly treated.”

Amongst the recommendations following the highlighted problems of the often unjust treatment of women, were *“the greater integration of women into Church structures and decision-making processes”* and *“the setting up of commissions on the Diocesan and national levels to address women’s issues, to help them better carry out their mission in the Church and society.”*

In order to understand and appreciate fully some of the problems that women face in the Catholic Church in Zambia, the JCTR undertook this study to look at participation of women in the Catholic Dioceses in Zambia, particularly how well women participate and are represented in decision making processes. In an often male-dominated Church in Zambia, in terms of leadership, the majority of members are women.

PART THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview: This research has been commissioned by the Faith and Justice Programme of the JCTR as part of its efforts to contribute towards the resolutions and implementation of the Second Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops that took place in Rome from 04 to 25 October 2009 under the theme of “The Church in Africa at the Service of Reconciliation, Justice and Peace. ‘You are the Salt of the Earth...You are the Light of the World’ (Mt 5:13, 14).” Amongst the 57 Propositions recommended at the end of the Synod, Proposition 47 talked about *Women in Africa* in the following words: “*Women in Africa make a great contribution to the family, society and the Church with their many talents and resources. However, not only are their dignity and contributions not fully recognized and appreciated, but are often deprived of their rights. In spite of the significant advances made in the education and development of women in some countries in Africa, the development of girls and women is often disproportionate to that of boys and men; girls and women are generally unjustly treated.*”

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This study, undertaken from a gender perspective provides knowledge based information ^{to} ~~on~~ promote equal participation and representation between women and men in the church as well as from marginalized groups in society. One of the fundamental and enduring challenges facing societies including faith based organizations is the continued lack of gender equality in positions of power and decision making. This study thus focused on the ten (10) Dioceses in Zambia from which five (6) including the Catholic Secretariat based in Lusaka had field visits by the researchers. The Dioceses targeted for the field work were randomly selected and these are Dioceses of Chipata, Lusaka, Mongu, Monze and Mpika. Initially, the Diocese of Ndola and Kasama were among the randomly selected for field work and when it was not possible to have the meetings, the two were replaced by Chipata and Mpika. What was important in the choice of the Dioceses was a balance between the rural and urban based Dioceses. Three Dioceses did not participate in the study: Archdiocese of Kasama, Diocese of Ndola and Mansa. No questionnaires were received from the three.

3.2 Key Question: The key question pursued was: what are the levels of women's participation in the general activities of the Church; what kind of activities are they mostly involved in and why; and their levels of participation in decision-making processes in the Church; and how does the Church in Zambia encourage women to participate in Church activities?

3.3 Background of the Study

3.3.1 Framework of the analysis

Hypothesis: The analysis has collated information in response to the following hypothesis;

1. The equal access and participation of women and men in the Catholic Church is largely determined by the church doctrine, cultures, systems and processes and in particular the higher level decision making church governance structures and misinterpretation and misapplication of both the Biblical and Catholic Doctrine and Social Teachings. In many instances the low participation and representation of women in the various church activities is influenced by the broader societal cultural and traditional attitudes that are entrenched within and perpetuated by the Catholic Church's norms, systems, practices, procedures and access to leadership positions which are male dominated.
2. The Churches or "*Houses of God*" are perceived as "*safest places where justice, including gender justice prevail*" to accessing gender equality and the equal participation of women in the church entails that it is those in positions of power within the church that can ensure that women's empowerment and gender equality principles must be put into practice. Therefore, the clergy or the Catholic Church as an institution, political movements or parties as institutions that can support democracy building should provide an enabling environment for the meaningful participation of both men and women.

3.3.2 Overall Objective: The overall objective of the analysis is to determine the participation of women in the Catholic Church in Zambia. This comprises the 10 Dioceses which are spread throughout the various provinces of Zambia and predominantly covering rural and remote areas. Seven (7) out of the ten (10) Dioceses participated as well as Zambia Episcopal Conference.

3.3.3 Specific Objectives of the Study

The following were the specific objectives of the study:

- (a) To understand the statistical patterns of the Catholic population with disaggregated data between dioceses and between the genders;
- (b) To determine the levels of participation in the general activities of the Church giving clearly what kind of activities women are mostly involved in and why;
- (c) To determine the levels of participation of women in decision-making processes in the Church;
- (d) To determine how the Church in Zambia has been encouraging women to participate in Church activities (e.g., through pastoral letters, appointments, diocesan strategic plans);
- (e) To find out the availability of policy documents that promote the participation of women in decision making processes;

- (f) To determine the explicit/implicit factors that make women passive in influencing decisions in the Church;
- (g) To highlight the practical and ecclesial challenges that women face in fully participating in the Church;
- (h) To offer some recommendations on how women can greatly be involved in decision making processes.

3.3.4 Methodology

1. Document Reviews of Catholic Doctrine, Policies/Strategic Plans. The findings from this study contain information generated from the reviews of the Social Teachings from the Catholic Church, the Bible and pastoral letters and statements from the various Popes. The Diocesan level policy documents, plans and reports were also reviewed.

2. Meetings: With the Assistance of the National Pastoral Coordinator Fr. Justin Matepa and the Mrs Regina M Chitunda (Secretary- Pastoral) contacts with the Diocese were made to organize for the meetings within the Dioceses, Parishes, and Small Christian Communities. Individual and group meetings were organized also among the Diocesan Staff and the religious women and men. The in-depth discussions with priests, lay and religious men and women brought out the various perceptions, insights and challenges regarding the participation of women in the various activities of the church as well as decision making structures. During meetings, the roles and responsibilities of women were observed (participation patterns) and levels of understanding of the issue under discussion. Some participants, especially women at community level were sometimes unable to speak out and remained silent and could not challenge men's views. In some parishes, women automatically took leadership roles during group meetings. There were also fewer men who attended the meetings arguing that they had short notice, a sign of their commitment towards church activities.

3. Interviews: Most of the interviews held during the study were individual targeting various leadership in the various structures of the Church starting with the Dioceses to the outstations and Christian Communities. The religious were also interviewed. At community level, local languages were used in order for people to communicate more effectively. Interpretation was provided where necessary for both the researchers and the communities or individual respondents.

3.3.6 Approach

Stage I - Orientation and negotiation of the study between Consultants and JCTR: The two Consultants, Margaret M. C. Machila and Matrine BBuku Chuulu undertook the study. In the first meeting JCTR took some time to meet with the two consultants to discuss the Terms of Reference for the study. Information on the work of JCTR was given as background. Background information to the study, value additions of the study and the overall purpose of the study was shared.

Stage II- Document reviews: During the study, The Catholic Doctrine was reviewed to establish the extent to which the framework facilitates or hinders the participation of women in the Catholic

Church. Various documents which influenced or guided the participation of women in the Dioceses and Parishes and at the Secretariat were collected including the Strategic Plans. Gender Justice Policy documents were also reviewed. This was done by reviewing some of the existing Church documents such as Catechism of the Catholic Church, Pastoral letters from the Catholic Bishops, the Compendium of the Catholic Social Doctrine, the Bible, and key Diocesan Policy documents such as their Strategic Plans, the Annual Reports, Handbooks such as the Management Handbook for the Catholic Secretariat, the Diocese of Monze Development Structures which defines the various structures within the Diocese, the functions and relationships. The International, regional and national frameworks on gender and women's participation were also reviewed and they provided basis for assessing and analyzing the various issues of women's participation in the church activities. These were collected and analyzed to establish the extent to which they mainstreamed gender and women's issues in their frameworks and procedures.

Stage III Questionnaires and Score Cards: A standard questionnaire was designed for administration in each of the ten Dioceses including the Zambia Episcopal Conference and the various Women Structures for the lay groups such as the Catholic Women's Leagues at national and Diocesan levels. Forty (40) questionnaires were sent through Zambia Episcopal Conference to the Dioceses making a total of 240 questionnaires. An additional 40 were administered under the religious groups in Lusaka and the Catholic Women's League making a total of 320 questionnaires administered. Due to illiteracy levels, most respondents to the questionnaires were undertaken by the Diocesan and Parish leaders and literate members of the Church. In some cases, the respondents were assisted to fill in the questionnaires.

Three Dioceses did not participate in the study: Archdiocese of Kasama, Diocese of Ndola and Mansa. No questionnaires were received from the three.

Score Card on Women's participation in the Catholic Church: Apart from the questionnaires, an additional instrument, a score card to determine the level of gender sensitivity of the various Dioceses was used. This was preferred by most respondents as it was basically a check list where respondents were merely rating the responses by indicating "not sure", "yes" and "no" against the statements on the Policy framework, governance, participation, planning, gender specific programmes, mainstreaming of gender, transport, health and HIV and AIDS as well as environmental health and social development. These are the areas in which the women and men face challenges of participation.

Stage IV-Interviews: From the reviews, interview guides were developed for use during the interviews. Interviews were conducted with people at the Catholic Secretariat, and key Church leaders in the sampled Dioceses of Chipata, Lusaka, Mpika, Monze and Mongu. The Interview guides were necessary to maintain consistency and objectivity during the data collection process. Both quantitative and qualitative data was collected. In the case of quantitative statistics on the populations of the Dioceses, the data was unfortunately not gender disaggregated.

Stage V - Data Analysis and Reporting: This stage basically involved collation of the information from the previous stages used for the qualitative analysis, drafting a preliminary report. The two researchers had separate analysis and another process was undertaken to combine and synthesize the findings. The report was then given to JCTR for comments. The final stage was the finalizing of the report which was incorporation of the JCTR comments.

3.3.7 Limitations

The main limitations encountered during the study were several. The first and most daunting was the general unwillingness by some Dioceses to participate in the study. One Pastoral Coordinator was clearly resistant to the study being administered in "*their Diocese.*" Despite the pleading and request to have the meeting rescheduled to another suitable time, the Pastoral Coordinator declined despite having made an appointment and the team having travelled to the site. The research team interpreted the response as unwillingness by the Diocese to have the study on women's participation in the Diocese. This made the study which had started off well come to a stand still pending negotiations between JCTR, ZEC and the Dioceses. Thanks go to the National Pastor Coordinator Fr. Justin Matepa and Mrs Regina Chitunda for the support /introductory letters for the researchers. The Dioceses of Mpika and Chipata replaced the Dioceses that declined as these were indeed visited with short notice. Dioceses of Mpika, Chipata and Monze were exceptional in facilitating the teams to have the studies undertaken and went out of their way to organize various groups for interviews and focus group discussions to take place.

Despite the encouragement from ZEC and the appeal to treat the study as important, Dioceses had very poor response towards the study. The delayed receipt of the questionnaires which were sent through ZEC to Diocese of Ndola, Kasama, Livingstone, Mansa, and Solwezi had a very poor response and affected the timeframes for the completion of the report. In some Dioceses, logistical arrangements were poor and respondents had no organized scheduled appointments. In those cases, some interviews and focus group discussions were ad-hoc or arranged on site. On several occasions, appointments had to be rescheduled when they had already been made. These delays in turn affected the original timetable of the study.

In some areas, the respondents struggled with understanding the questions as they were not translated and much time was taken to translate the questions since respondents were unable to read and write. The questionnaire intimidated some of the respondents as it was too long and not translated from English to the local language. Some respondents declined to fill it in and the researchers had to assist. A lack of documentation in some areas was also a limitation. Some questions in the questionnaire required knowledge and availability of certain types of documentation in the Dioceses such as a strategic plan and this information was not available to the researchers as the respondents simply did not have one or had no knowledge of what a strategic plan was. Another limitation faced by the researchers during the study was reluctance by the womenfolk to participate in the beginning. Once the study and its topic were introduced the women in some of the groups interviewed took a backseat and let the men talk. It was only after coaxing from the researchers or reassurance that they would remain anonymous did they begin to partake in the interviews.

PART FOUR: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The participation of women in the Catholic Church has been an issue of concern raised by various Popes and other writers in pursuit of Justice for all. Various challenges have been raised regarding this concept and much is also related to the structured nature of the Church guided by the Canon Law as well as its structured nature. Some critics say the Church and teachings by St. Paul, the Fathers of the Church and Scholastic theologians perpetuated a notion that female inferiority was divinely ordained, even though official Church teaching considers women and men to be equal, different, and complementary.

Equality between women and men, boys and girls is a fundamental tenet of any democratic system of governance- including the FBOs. It recognizes the ability of women, men, boys and girls to work as equals in engaging and shaping the development of society. While most actors rarely dispute this fundamental principle of equality, in practice across the world, men and women, boys and girls experience inequality in various areas of life.

4.1 Concept of Gender

Although the study focused on women's participation in the Catholic Church, gender has to be applied as an analytical tool for assessing the participation patterns of women and the study has to compare the women's participation to that of men. *Gender* refers to socially constructed rather than biologically determined *roles* of women and men, as well as the *relationships* between them in a given society at a specific time and place, while sex refers to the biologically determined difference and roles. The qualities, identities and behaviors expected from men and women are determined through the process of socialization.⁶

Gender is an analytical category comparable to race, class, ethnicity, religious background etc. and it should be used in a similar way as an analytical tool. Just as race, class, ethnicity, religion and culture, gender constituted and still constitutes a basis for oppression and discrimination among individuals; the term gender captures a frequently invoked reason for inequalities between women and men, boys and girls.

Gender is often overlooked as an aspect of men's social identity, yet the lives and activities of men as well as women are strongly influenced by gender. In most societies, men and boys tend to have broader options, more opportunities and greater access to society's resources than women and girls. This is the result of a framework of legislation, policies, and institutions that incorporate attitudes and practices about what is appropriate to being male and female in a given society.

⁶ International IDEA, 2011

4.2 Sex and Gender Roles

Sex and gender roles in the Catholic Church have been the subject of both intrigue and controversy throughout the Church's history. Some critics have argued that the Church and teachings by St. Paul and the Fathers of the Church and Scholastic theologians perpetuated a notion that female inferiority was divinely ordained, even though official Church teachings consider women and men to be equal, different, and complementary. The doctrine is generally considered to be gender sensitive, recognizing that the sexes are meant by divine design to be different and complementary, each having equal dignity and made in the image of God. Some critics have however maintained the view that policies regarding women priests are discriminatory towards women.

4.3 Gender and Institutional Frameworks

The Zambian woman has faced many challenges an example of which is poor representation in decision making structures and the Church has not been an island. Unless the barriers to the participation of women are removed, it will remain difficult for women to access decision making positions. Mtintso (2008) also establishes a link between “how an institution is constituted and defines itself, and its ability to be an agent for transformation in any society.”⁷ Faith based communities including the Catholic Church are influenced by their own frameworks of legislation, policies and defined structures. It is these legislations, policies, systems and structures that incorporate attitudes and practices about what is appropriate to males and females. Culture of any given society also permeates the functioning of the faith-based communities.

4.4 Rights Based Approach and Rights Claiming

Participation of women and men in decision making structures is one of the fundamental human rights. Human rights are legitimate claims that all human beings have for living a life in dignity and in conditions of social justice. The poor people in small Christian Communities, the constituency of the Dioceses are in persistent and systemic denial of basic freedoms and needs. As Bas de Gaay Fortmann argues, *“If the poor have rights – and doubtless they do – there is no new “approach” thinkable that would deny or ignore these rights. Indeed more than an approach, Human rights is first of all a conviction and a commitment”* which is reflected in the Catholic Social Teachings and other doctrines and the vision of Integral Evangelization.

The denial of the basic needs has, within the Rights Based Framework been considered as human rights deficits.⁸ The oppressed and poor people are considered poor within this framework because they have been denied or have been unable to access their rights and freedoms including the right to participate in decision making structures in order to influence and control the processes and benefits of development. Most institutions have inappropriate development policies and strategies which have been inadequately addressed questions of non-discrimination and equity in the distribution, access and control of resources and rights in communities.

⁷ Thenjiwe Mtintso, SA ambassador to Cuba, Chair of GL and former Chairperson of the Commission on Gender Equality.

⁸ DanChurchAid's Commitment to Rights and Development, 2004.

Kabeer, (2003) argues that women's participation in Catholic Church does not challenge their own realities but rather accepted the polarity between those in top leadership positions (usually men) and those in the "bottom strata," the women and this leads to compromise and, manipulation. While it is a right and that it should not be a struggle, reality is about power and hence a struggle. Women comprise the larger population within the Catholic Church and this was confirmed by the information from all the Dioceses. This realization was known by all the Dioceses visited. Although the report focuses on women's participation, the analysis done is from a gender perspective.

In her paper entitled "*Gender equality and Women's Empowerment: A critical Analysis of the 3rd Millennium Development Goal*"⁹ Kabeer argues that in order to increase the number of women in parliaments and other decision making structures, empowerment, abilities to make choices was important and that to be disempowered is to be denied choice. Empowerment is a process by which those who have been denied the ability to make choices acquire such ability. In relation to power relations, gender often operates through the unquestioned acceptance of power. Various literature also show that women in various decision making structures do not challenge their own realities but rather accept the polarity between those in top leadership positions (usually men) and those in the "bottom strata." Not challenging the polarity often leads to compromise and, manipulation. *The Rights Based Approach* to development stipulates that unless women and men are empowered and know their rights, they cannot be in a position to claim their rights. In any organization or institution, women cannot ably demand increased space in decision making without being able to know their rights, acquire relevant knowledge, skills and competencies for them to challenge primary and secondary duty bearers and claim their rights.

4.5 Frameworks on Participation of Women in Decision Making

This section brings out the international and national frameworks on the participation of women to which all in society should abide by. The section also brings out various writers' concerns on the Catholic Church regarding the share of responsibility and participation of women in Church activities.

Zambia as a country, has made a number of commitments about promoting gender equality and equity, therefore, advancing gender equality, and equity and women's empowerment has become a priority for Zambia since June 1985 when the country signed and ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW 1979). Under Article 2 of CEDAW, countries pledge to legislate to counter discrimination against women. Zambia has not yet domesticated CEDAW to ensure justiciability and enforceability.

At the Fourth world conference on women in Beijing in 1995, Zambia joined other countries of the world in the adoption of a Declaration and a Platform for Action which acts as a guide for the work around gender equality. It is the global blueprint for achieving gender equality, two concepts used throughout the platform for action are "empowerment" of women and "mainstreaming".

⁹ Kabeer, Naila (2003) *Gender Mainstreaming in Poverty Eradication and the Millennium Development Goals: A Handbook for Policy makers and other Stake holders*, London: Commonwealth Secretariat.

In 2000 Zambia also joined 189 members of the United Nations in the Millennium Declaration, a global vision for improving the conditions for humanity throughout the world in the areas of development and poverty eradication, peace and security, protection of the environment, and human rights and democracy. The resulting Millennium Development Goals (MGDs) recognize the advancement of women's right to gender equality as critically necessary for progress. The Declaration pledges explicitly to combat all forms of discrimination and violence against women and to implement CEDAW. Furthermore, it recognizes the importance of promoting gender equality and women's empowerment as effective pathways for combating poverty, hunger and disease for stimulating truly sustainable development.

Regionally as a member of the African Union, Zambia in 2005 signed and ratified the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa.

Article (9) of the African Union's women's protocol requires state parties to take specific positive actions to promote participative governance and equal participation of women in the political life of their countries through affirmative action, enabling national legislation and other measures to ensure that participation in elections, electoral processes and the development and implementation of state policies and programmes is non-discriminatory. It also requires state parties to ensure increased and effective representation of women at all levels of decision making. The call for equal participation as set out in the Constitutive Act of the African Union argues well for the political participation of women.

In the year 2000, the MMD government launched the National Gender Policy, in which the government recognized the need for the equal and full participation of women and men at all levels of national development. Therefore, the government is committed to facilitating the process of removing gender imbalances. In order to attain the vision of gender equality, the government has adopted and will fully implement The National Gender Policy ¹ (NGP pg.1) which recognizes the need for the full participation of women in the development process at all levels to ensure sustainable development and attainment of equality and equity between the sexes. The National Gender Policy states that government is determined to redress the existing gender imbalances and provide equal opportunities for women and men to actively participate and contribute to their fullest ability and equitably benefit from national development.

The National Gender Policy further recognizes that over a period of time women have been under-represented at all levels of decision making in the public and private sectors, special committees, religious groupings, boards and other institutions in the community. Government through the National Gender Policy recognizes the need to promote gender representation at all levels of decision making positions through affirmative action, the empowerment and improvement of women's social, economic and political status.

The National Gender Policy is supported by the Constitution of the Republic of Zambia (CAP 1), under Article 11 which provides that "it is recognized and declared that every person shall continue to be entitled to the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual, that is to say, the right,

whatever his race, place of origin, political opinions, colour, creed, sex or marital status, but subject to the limitations contained in this part, to each and all of the following, namely;

- a) Life, liberty, security of the law
- b) Freedom of conscience, expression, assembly, movement and association
- c) Protection of young persons from exploitation
- d) Protection for the privacy of his home and other property and from deprivation of property without compensation.

The article in the Constitution though general, makes provision for gender equality.

4.6 The Sub Regional Agenda on Participation of Women in Decision Making

In 1997 two years after the Beijing Conference on Women, the fifteen (15) countries in the region adopted their own SADC Declaration on Gender and Development and its Addendum (1998) on the Prevention and Eradication of Violence Against Women and Children. The SADC Declaration also had a bench mark of every member state achieving at least thirty per cent female representation in all positions of decision making (public and private) by 2005.

In addition, a SADC Gender Unit was established in the SADC Secretariat to spearhead the sub region's quest to advance gender equality and women's rights. Each member state also developed a national gender policy, and established national gender machinery.

Zambia ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), has a national gender policy, signed the 1995 Beijing Platform of Action which is the global blueprint for achieving gender equality. In 1997, Zambia signed the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development and later the 2008 SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. The SADC region through its Gender Policy recognizes that women's empowerment is a central strategy for achieving gender equality. This approach, as a principle, is also found in the SADC fifteen year Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP), the blueprint for regional integration. In 2011, Zambia signed the Anti-Gender Based Violence Act. Zambia has also adopted the Millennium Development Goals which stipulate the need for countries to promote equitable sustainable development and to especially achieve gender equality as stipulated in Goal 3.

4.7 Biblical Writings on Women's Participation in the Church

4.7.1 The Doctrine

The Doctrine encourages equal participation of women and men in decision making structures. The Doctrine allows equal participation of women and men but the problem is practice. The review of Catholic Doctrine, including the *Cannon Law* as well as the rich body of knowledge of the *Catholic Social Teachings*, has no clause anywhere justifying gender injustice within the Catholic Church. Contrary to the practices, "both men and women" were created in God's image and any such practice contrary to what is written is but abuse of the doctrine to justify discriminatory practices.

"Gender Justice" in the Church is assumed to include the participation of women, girls and men and boys in the decision making structures of the Catholic Church. A review of the Bible shows that there is nowhere in the Holy Book where there is a distinction made on the participation between women and men in the church activities. On the contrary, there are many verses that encourage both men and women to participate equally indicating that both are made in God's image. Proponents of Gender Justice base their approach on an interpretation of Galatians 3:28 that include gender in Paul's insistence on lack of distinction between Jew or Greek slave or free. No scriptures in the Bible forbid women from participating in the church.

The doctrine demonstrates that God called and used women as leaders and as preachers in the Old Testament, such as Deborah, Miriam, Huldah and Isaiah's wife (a prophetess and mother of Maher-shalal-hasha-baz). The command to go out and "*Preach the Gospel*," (Mark 16:15) was made to all believers, men and women, boys and girls and to all the Church of Jesus Christ. The command to "preach the Gospel" is to both male and female. Despite that practice, history has been of male domination over women with limited efforts to open up the structures to ensure that women and men participate equally in decision making structures within the church. Rather than using the Church scripture to enhance the participation of women, evidence has shown that many use various literatures to justify the exclusion of women from equally taking part in decision making structures.

The Gender Audit undertaken by WLSA in 2008 and funded by Norwegian Church Aid, indicates that Patriarchal culture which has its tradition in Hebrew culture and traditions, has permeated the Church and influences the attitudes of both the Clergy and the Laity around issues of equality between men and women. The Gender Audit Report (2008) observes that gender equality ranging from rituals such as sexual cleansing, gender based violence to women's participation in decision making remain a challenge in the Church. The audit report recommends quick action now by the Churches as they have been too silent and suggests further that the church should be vigilant and aggressive to deal with discriminatory practices and tendencies within Church institutions.

Throughout history, the various Papal writings have shown that within the Church, women have been subjugated, abused by and forced to be subservient to men and there have been various callings to society and the Church through the social teachings to ensure that women and men are treated equally and with dignity. In Zambia, the issue of the participation of women in decision making structures has not only been a challenge for both the religious and lay women but also requires urgent attention by those in positions of leadership to open up the spaces to increase the number of women in decision making portfolios.

Literature has shown that there are many strides within civil society which show that men and women are increasingly having mutual responsibilities in their quest to promote integral evangelization within the Catholic Church. Many examples during and after the life of Jesus Christ show the key role women have played in the history of the Church. For example, the news of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ was first proclaimed by women, (including Mary Magdalene), to Jesus' female disciples. It is written in the Bible that it is the men (disciples), who abandoned the tomb after Jesus' crucifixion. The New Testament gives other examples such as *Anna, the four daughters of Phillip (Acts 21:9), Priscilla and Phoebe (Christian woman)*. The story of creation ably demonstrates the

equity principle within the doctrine. "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created him; male and female He created them." (Genesis 1:27). This verse also illustrates the image of a loving and caring God and that the Church "must continue the mission of Jesus, of bringing salvation to all people, of liberating women and men, girls and boys from all that binds them, - thus bringing justice to them so that they live lives that are fully developed in accordance with God's vision, image and likeness in which all, male and female, are created. The Church in the present day must address gender injustices and gender-based violence through preaching, counseling and teaching."¹⁰

4.7.2 Papal Position on Women's Participation in the Catholic Church

Contrary to the critiques by the religious, the lay women's movements and other writers on the participation of women in the Catholic Church, some writers have indicated that the Catholic Church has been the most progressive over the last 2,000 years regarding gender issues. Proponents of this view have their argument in the Church's focus on women as beneficiaries of the various interventions over time.

On 3 March 1998, during the 42nd Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, Dr Suzanne Scorsone made a statement on behalf of the Holy See and in her presentation, Dr. Scorsone argued that the Catholic Church has been involved in the empowerment of women ranging from - military leaders, judges, chatelaines and controllers of property. The statement refers to the various interventions made by the Catholic Church ranging from "a long history of involvement with the education of women and girls", the pioneer role of the Church in which during the dark ages, while the rest of society was illiterate, "women in religion often learned to read" and that The Catholic Church through "The monasteries, has produced great women scholars, such as the Polymath Hildegard of Bingen, a Poet, Scientist and Musician, and the Poet and mystic, Catherine of Bologna" to mention only but a few."

Much emphasis among those that argue that the Catholic Church has performed a great job in the empowerment of women" especially through "Ursuline Order" which targets the education of girls and "other women's orders who have dedicated themselves to women's education" are considered to have undertaken much work on empowering women in the Catholic Church. In her presentation to the United Nations, Dr. Scorsone indicated that in 1998, "more than 21.3 million women and girls being educated in Church-run institutions: 84,194 Catholic primary schools teach 11.5 million girls; 237,640 secondary schools teach 6.2 million girls; 3,163 Catholic colleges or universities currently have 1.2 million women students." The Holy See was firmly convinced that even before legal prescriptions or international decisions, the Catholic Church provided education in communities which in turn raised the human spirit through training and opportunities for fulfillment in areas dealing with economic and social rights and that "many modern women who have become heads of government or agencies within the United Nations have received opportunities for education from institutions of the Catholic Church which offer education to all without distinction."

Proponents of the above view have also associated the Catholic Church with great works done in *Health Care* in areas where no other institutions were or are available and often targeting women coming from poor families. Through such work, the Catholic Church is understood to have made fundamental contributions towards the enjoyment of human rights for all through its work

¹⁰ Norwegian Church Aid (2011). *The Church's Curriculum on Gender Injustice and Gender-Based Violence in Zambia*. Lusaka: NCA, p.1.

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undertaken by a worldwide network of 985 national Catholic organizations dedicated to the promotion and distribution of financial resources for social and spiritual development maintaining more than 54,742 day-care centers, caring for 2.3 million girls. The Church today also supports 100,231 health-care institutions worldwide, including hospitals, crisis pregnancy centers, shelters for battered women, leprosaria, nursing homes for the elderly and centers' for the assistance of the seriously disabled. Mother Teresa's 4,000 Missionaries of Charity alone maintain shelters for battered women, orphanages for girls and boys, and homes for destitute and dying women and men in 564 sites around the world."

Despite these positions, various writings by the Holy See took the position that "*The rights of women are a natural consequence of the fundamental and inalienable equality of all persons flowing from the dignity of the human nature which they share.*" The above examples show that women indeed have to date, participated in and benefitted from the various activities of the Catholic Church. The above argument is however limited to "service delivery" and not the "political" and governance dimensions of the Church in which policies and strategic decisions that influence practice are made.

As such, the various writings on the importance of actualizing the equity principle puts emphasis on the Dioceses to see the importance of not only understanding that these doctrines and policies of inequality are from men and not of God who created both with love *in His image* and that "*since both are created in God's image*", the faulty logic would imply that part of God is less equal than another part." It is this part of the discourse in the Church that raises controversy regarding the participation of women in the Catholic Church.

4.8 The Ordination of Women in the Catholic Church and its implications for participation of women in decision

Regarding the Ordination of women, The Catholic view is that since the 12 apostles chosen by Jesus were all male, only men may be ordained in the Catholic Church. This is reflected in the ^{early} Church Orders, the *Didascalia* and the *Apostolic Constitutions* in which the tradition of not ordaining women is confirmed.

Box 3: Didascalia and the Apostolic Constitutions

*"But over and above considerations inspired by the spirit of the times, one finds expressed especially in the canonical documents of the Antiochian and Egyptian traditions this essential reason, namely, that by calling only men to the priestly Order and administering it in its true sense, the Church intends to remain faithful to the type of ordained ministry, willed by the Lord Jesus Christ and carefully maintained by the Apostles."*¹¹

Based on the above cited "tradition", only bishops can administer the Sacrament of Holy Orders; and, in the *Latin Rite*, Confirmation is ordinarily reserved to them.¹² Bishops are responsible for teaching and governing the faithful of their Diocese, sharing these duties with the Priests and

¹¹ *Didascalia Apostolorum*, ch. 15, ed. R. H. Connolly, pp.133 and 142; *Constitutiones Apostolicae*, bk. 3, ch. 6, nos. 1-2; ch. 9, nos. 23-4; ed. F. H. Funk, pp. 191, 201. The Coptic, Ethiopian and Arabic versions of the *Synodos* have been translated and published chiefly by G. Homer, *The Statutes of the Apostles or Canones Ecclesiastici*, Oxford University Press, 1915 (=1904). "Quoted by www.womenpriests.org

¹² [Htt://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_gender_and_the_Roman_Catholic_Church#cite-note-Onefaith](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_gender_and_the_Roman_Catholic_Church#cite-note-Onefaith) 114-39.

Deacons who serve under them. The traditions cited above have influenced the practice in the Catholic Church in which only Priests and Bishops may celebrate the *Eucharist* and administer the *Sacraments of Penance and Anointing of the Sick*. They and deacons may preach, teach, baptize, witness marriages and conduct funeral services. Baptism is normally performed by clergy but is the only Sacrament that may be administered in emergencies by any Catholic”¹³

Critics of the practice not to ordain women have argued that “The text in the *Dilascalia* does not prevent women from being priests but “widows” not being allowed to preach, an aspect which the current Church Law has addressed and currently women too can be deputed to read Scripture during the liturgy, preach, teach or preside over liturgical services. The real reason for the mistrust in women as ‘teachers’ is not the allusion to Jesus only choosing men, but the general prejudices of the time which did not allow women to hold public office because they were considered inferior. The prejudices against women have been addressed by Jesus Christ in His work. The unwillingness not to ordain women is considered to have its basis in the social and cultural prejudice of the Jewish traditions of the time.

The key challenge is the unwillingness in some Dioceses by the Clergy to engage and debate on the participation of non- ordained women in the jurisdiction with the Church. In some cases, there is some “unwillingness” by the Clergy to interrogate the phenomenon in the context of the current realities of the Church. This was evident in the unwillingness by some Dioceses such as Ndola and some clergy to participate in the research with some evidence of “unwillingness” to see if it is possible to revise the Code of Canon Law to ensure responsible participation of women in the Life and Mission of the Church. Some Clergy even indicated that “if there will be change, *it won't be in their life time.*” *The Box below shows that the issue of ordination of women has been addressed elsewhere and remains a challenge.*

BOX 4: Precedence: Czechoslovakia's Secret Church: Catholics behind Iron Curtain
The article examines the forty-one years of communist rule in the former Eastern bloc country, and how an underground network of groups and individuals kept the catholic faith alive, even to the point of ordaining married women and men. The article details how in desperation severe persecution at the hand of the most relentless atheist regimes, Bishop Felix Maria Dáudek, ordained married women and men to the catholic priesthood. The article says that the survival strategies he undertook illuminate the church's potential for reform. Bishop Dáudek received the Herbert Haag Foundation award for freedom in the church for his actions, which is bestowed annually on persons and institutions "for courageous actions within Christianity." He was given this award in April 2011 at the UN city church in Austria, Vienna. Bishop Dáudek went so far as to ordain a small number of women. For some time, he had been discussing women's role in the church. He was convinced that as women had baptized, distributed communion to the sick and had their place as women deacons in the church hierarchy in the first millennium, they were only excluded from the priesthood for historical, and not dogmatic reasons. His main reason for ordaining women was pastoral.

¹³ Diocesan Clergy, Field Work, 2011

4.9 Apostolic Constitutions and Ordination of women: The doctrine in the Didascalia has been reproduced in the Apostolic Constitutions and is thus a major guide to the practices in the Dioceses. It is almost literally copied in the Apostolic Constitutions:

Doc. 5: The Didascalia on Ordination of Women

"We do not permit our women to teach in the Church," but only to pray and hear those that teach, for our Master and Lord, Jesus Himself, when He sent us the twelve to make disciples of the people and of the nations, did nowhere send out women to preach, although He did not want such. For there were with us the mother of our Lord and His sisters, also Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Martha and Mary the sister of Lazarus, Salome, and certain others. For, had it been necessary for women to teach, He Himself had first commanded these also to instruct the people with us. For "if the head of the wife be the man," it is not reasonable that the rest of the body should govern the head. Let the widow therefore own herself to be the "altar of God," and let her sit in her house, and not enter into the houses of the faithful, under any pretence, to receive anything; for the altar of God never runs about, but is fixed in one place. Let therefore, the virgin and the widow be such as do not run about, or go to the houses of those who are alien from the faith."

The *Apostolic Constitutions* recommend ordination of women Deaconesses which is Sacramentally valid and part of Holy Orders but prohibits widows from preaching. The Widows are told to stay at home while Deaconesses are urged to visit people in their homes and take care of them. Even more than in the Didascalia, the reason for not allowing women to become priests, if this issue is raised at all, is that women may not teach which has recently been challenged by the Clergy, the Laity and the Religious. *The underlying causes are thus attributed to the general prejudices of the time.* As such, the various parts of the doctrine as reflected in the *Apostolic Constitutions* in an attempt to support the prohibition of women from ordination and partaking in the various strategic decision making structures within the Church have been found lacking by various writers and respondents from this study. Most critics attribute the basis of the unwillingness to ordain women to the priesthood to the social and cultural prejudice of the time.

Later writings, *the Didache, Didascalia* (3rd cent.) and the *Apostolic Constitutions* (4th cent 'The Catholic Didascalia'¹⁵ claimed to have been written by the Apostles themselves challenge the position in the Apostolic Constitution and opened it: *'The Apostles and elders to all those who from among the Gentiles have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ; grace and peace from Almighty God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, be multiplied unto you in the acknowledgment of Him'* (Opening of the Apostolic Constitutions). The idea behind it was no doubt that the general contents of the document was in harmony with the teaching of the

¹⁴ Apostolic Constitutions, book 3, § 6.

¹⁵ The Teaching of the Twelve Holy Apostles and Disciples of Our Saviour (Title of the Didascalia)

Apostles. In later generations both the Didascalia and the Apostolic Constitutions were believed to be the actual words of the Apostles and were therefore taken as reliable sources of doctrine. They seem to have been affirmed as such by the Council of Trullo (692 AD) and the Second Council of Nicea (787 AD). These texts were also taken as reliable guides on the way in which 1 Timothy 2,11-15 and 1 Corinthians 11,2-16 should be interpreted, namely as implying the impossibility for women to be ordained.

The *Statuta Ecclesiae Antiqua* incorporated the above text from the *Apostolic Constitutions* and over the years, it became part of it and a major source text for medieval Theologians and Church Lawyers and that is why those within the Church that agitate for exclusion of women confidently, *but mistakenly*, quote these texts as scriptural proofs against the ordination of women. The same combination of 'Scripture' (1 Timothy 2,11-15; 1 Corinthians 11,2-16) and 'Tradition' are used to justify the exclusion of women from ordination in Church Law¹⁶ and it is for the same reason why the combination became "standard" proof as to why women cannot be ordained priests. Proponents of the ordination of women have further argued that there is a problem with 'tradition' in that mistakes in it escalate in the course of time. This text from the *Didascalia* contributed much to the unwarranted opposition of women Priests in the Church. In the discourse regarding the participation of women in Church activities globally, this issue has remained thorny with some key members of the Church, the Religious feeling that they are relegated to "minor" and "undignified" roles and positions despite being created in the same image by God.

4.10 Civil Society and Gender Discourse in the Church

The various discussions on equality and equity have permeated the Religious and Lay movements in Zambia with Clergy who see the "sense" and need for equality at all levels of decision making with the Church joining the quest for change. The Church in Zambia has been part of the women's movement and general actors in pushing the state to apply the democratic principles of change in which the citizens, women, men, boys and girls are considered key participants in their own developments. Further, the Catholic Church has been known in its Training for Transformation (TfT) programmes, to demand the involvement of persons in communities so that they are the key architects of their own development. The Development arm of the Catholic Church in Zambia; *Caritas Zambia* as well as the Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflections (JCTR) preach the concept of "*Holistic Evangelization*" as the vision of the Church and attempt to implement it. ZEC, CCZ and EFZ have through the Oasis Forum (OF), pressured government to be democratic and adhere to the principles of Governance and Democracy including rule of protection of tenets of justice in the Constitution, rule of law and promotion of gender equality.

¹⁶The Corpus Iuris Canonici (#Canon) (1234 - 1916 AD).

Despite these general relationships in which ZEC cooperates with the women's movement, there is a general lack of systematic interface between Civil Society Organizations and Dioceses to promote a joint agenda and synergy on promoting gender equity, human rights and especially promoting equal participation of women and men in decision making structures within the Catholic Church. Organizations such as NGOCC, ZNWL, WLSA, WFC, and YWCA have been working through various initiatives to challenge both the state and non-state actors to adopt a gender equality agenda which can lead to the equitable representation of women and men in decision making structures. The tools developed by these organizations such as research and capacity building manuals can be adopted by FBOs.

The ZEC Mission Statement however shows that it has been influenced to a great extent by the changes taking place in Civil Society and the State. *"It is committed to Gospel Values and is at the Service of the Catholic Church through different national and diocesan bodies and exists for the whole people of God, providing a communicating, coordinating, facilitating and animating role in different Pastoral fields as a response to the needs of the time."*¹⁷ The key words in the mission statement are that the Church, through the various Dioceses exists for the *"whole people of God"* in response to *"the needs of the time."* The Hand Book, sanctioned by the Catholic Bishops in Zambia also manifests the principles of equity and equality in the seven (07) objectives namely:

"To initiate and maintain the building of God's Kingdom by encouraging maximum participation and contribution from every Christian, religious, clergy or laity to the Catholic Mission and of the Christ which seeks Integral Development and the Integrity creation by empowering people of God to respond to both their human and Spiritual needs. "These policy pronouncements have to be translated into practice in the Dioceses in partnership with other stakeholders.

4.11 Catholic Social Teachings

Later writings in the Church by various writers and especially the Popes **"Vatican II and modern Popes"**, have succeeded in translating the message of the Gospel into a set of moral principles and spiritual orientations for the Guidance of Modern Societies. A new dialogue between the Church and Contemporary societies has been initiated for the common benefit of Christian faith in today's teachings.¹⁸ The Church is speaking more/identified with *"liberation and promotion of women and men"* and there is evidence of more studies which are examining, the new meaning of the Church's Social Doctrine: *The Catholic Social Teachings*. This discourse is active today in human societies. The Social doctrine which emanates from the various documents from Popes Leo III to John Paul the II illustrate the meaning of the social doctrine which has come to play a more significant role in influencing the relations within the Church. The social doctrine provides cumulative experiences evolved for a period of centuries. The Social Doctrine is *Moral Theology* which helps the Church deal with various social issues or questions such as the participation of women in the activities of the

¹⁷ Zambia Episcopal Conference (ZEC) (2006). Management Handbook for the Catholic Secretariat-Zambia Episcopal Conference, Lusaka: Catholic Secretariat, 27/01/2006.

¹⁸ Herve, Carrier, S.J (1990) The Social Doctrine of the Church Re-visited, A guide for Study, Vatican City, 1990: Pontification Council for Justice and Peace.

Catholic Church. *"It is an application of theology, and especially to the ethical questions raised by human societies and assists in interpretation of the social realities. It guides Christian behavior and as a process, it is not fixed social norms."*

Further, the *Catholic Social Teaching* which is a body of doctrine developed by the Catholic Church on various critical issues of concern namely poverty, wealth, economics, social organization and the role of the state raises issues of justice for all women and men. Pope Benedict XVI describes *the Social Teachings* as critical in that they *"help purify reason and to contribute, here and now, to the acknowledgment and attainment of what is just."* "[The Church] has to play her part through rational argument and she has to reawaken the spiritual energy without which justice cannot prevail and prosper and Pope John Paul further adds that the Social Teachings are a foundation that "rests on the threefold cornerstones of human dignity, solidarity and subsidiarity" and these concerns reflect the Biblical Teachings from the prophetic books of the Old Testament and the teachings of Jesus Christ recorded in the New Testament. The Social Teachings thus provide the fundamental issues inherent in the Catholic Doctrine. The Social Teachings, critiques of modern social and political ideologies both of the left and of the right. Outlined below are the four key principles of the Church Social Teaching:-

1. *The first principle is about life.* According to Genesis 1:27, "God created the human in his own image; in the image of God he created them." Therefore each person, females and males are created in God's image and the persons thus *"become not just something but someone"* JCTR. The fundamental worth of women and men, boys and girls originates from God and is the foundation upon which all other principles of the Catholic Church Social Teachings are rooted"¹⁹

2. *The second one is the common good:* Society and its institutions exist predominantly for the benefit of its members. An institution can only be judged as promoting the common good if it's a good to which all people have easy access." In addressing an issue such as women's participation in the Church, it is assumed that the Church will create an enabling environment for the enjoyment of human rights for women, men, boys and girls. Therefore the transformation towards gender equality is not only a demand for institutional change within the Catholic Church but is also the need to transform the culture within the Church. This is where the fundamental values- philosophy- that guides the functionalities of the Church becomes critical as they guide practice. It is only when the Church will see the value and cost of leaving women out will real transformation happen at all levels of decision making within the Church.

3. The third principle relates to *people's right and duty to participate in society*, "seeking together the common good and well-being of all, especially the poor and vulnerable" emphasizing that the role of the government and other institutions is to protect human life and human dignity and promote the common good.

¹⁹ JCTR Catholic Social Teachings

4. The other principle is on the "*Rights and Responsibilities*," "every person has a fundamental right to life and a right to those things required for human decency. Corresponding to these rights are duties and responsibilities - to one another, to our families and to the larger society." Inherent in this principle therefore is the issue of participation of women and men in decision making structures within Government but also within Faith Based Organizations (FBOs) and other decision making structures.

4.12 Catholic Church's Response to Universal Declarations

"The value of the Universal Declaration was underscored by Pope John Paul II in his Message for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace, 1 January 1998, with the words: "Fifty years ago, after a war characterized by the denial for certain peoples of the right even to exist, the General Assembly of the United Nations promulgated the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. That was a solemn act, arrived at after the sad experience of war, and motivated by the desire formally to recognize that the same rights belong to every individual and to all peoples. The document must be observed integrally in both its spirit and its letter" and argued further that "women and men of every nation, race, creed and class" "must be empowered to share fully in the enjoyment of those rights which are theirs by nature, and to fulfill their responsibilities by contributing to society and to the family. These rights are characterized by their universality and their indivisibility. For this reason, the international community must strive to help women to live their full dignity by exercising those political, economic, social and cultural rights which have been recognized in that Declaration." Again to cite the words of Pope John Paul: "*Universality and indivisibility are two guiding principles which, at the same time, demand that human rights be rooted in each culture and that their juridical profile be strengthened so as to ensure that they are fully observed*". Further, the Holy See demanded that the various structures should serve to foster the inclusion of women in the full exercise of those universal and indivisible human rights.

The doctrine indicates that the difference between the discipleship of the Twelve and the discipleship of the women was obvious; the tasks assigned to each group are quite different. Yet Luke makes clear—and the other Gospels also show this in all sorts of ways—that 'many' women belonged to the more intimate community of believers and that their faith-filled following of Jesus was an essential element of that community, as would be vividly illustrated at the foot of the Cross and the Resurrection."²⁰

4.13 "The Second African Synod: The Church in Africa in Service to Reconciliation, Justice and Peace"

It is acknowledged that the women are the backbone of the local church, in many countries, the Catholic women organizations are a great force for the apostolate of the Church. The booklet also reveals that the 1st African Synod recommended that in the Church '*women should be properly trained so that they can participate at appropriate levels in their apostolic activity*'.

The Synod recommends to the local churches to go beyond the general statement of the 1st African Synod, and put in place concrete structures to ensure real participation of women '*at appropriate levels*'.

²⁰ Pope Benedict XVI, pp. 180–181

The booklet observes that The *Holy See* has given a good example in this regard by appointing women to very high levels of office. It also notes that all over Africa, there is much talk about women's rights, especially through the plans of action of some UN agencies, much of what they say is right and in line with what the Church has been saying. *"We charge you, our catholic women, to be fully involved in the women's programs of your nations, with your eyes of faith wide open."* In 1994 during the United Nations Cairo World Conference on Population and Development, the Catholic Bishops Pastoral Statement shows a position and commitment by the Catholic Church on the role of women. Pope John Paul II in His Apostolic Letter raised many challenges women face and recognized the efforts being made *"everywhere to give equal opportunities to men and women in every area"* including equal payment for equal work, equality for husbands and wives in family rights, and recognition of the rights and duties of citizens in a democratic state, for all women.

To secure justice for women, the Church recommends the setting up of policies, which ensure respect for a woman as a person. The Pope further added that *"the quality of a society is expressed in the attitude shown towards its women. Women must be able to express themselves in setting up movements which help them to obtain greater recognition in our society."*²¹ All the various writings by the Popes affirm the dignity of both man and woman, recognizing that they are different and emphasizing that both were created in the image of God *"gifted with intelligence and will and, although different, are essentially equal in dignity and right, each complimentary to each other."*²² This last statement affirms the assertiveness of the Catholic Doctrine on the issue of women's participation in societal and Church activities by both women and men.

²¹ "The Family is the Basic Unit of Society" –"Pope John Paul II's Letter to Families"-Pastoral Statement on the Cairo World Conference on Population and Development, 1994.

²² Ibid.

PART FIVE: FINDINGS

This section provides findings emerging from the analysis of the situation regarding the participation of women in the Catholic Church in the 10 Dioceses of the Catholic Church in Zambia. Although only Seven (7) Dioceses participated and the Zambia Episcopal Conference, the findings of the study are generalized to all the ten (10) Dioceses as they are an adequate sample to represent the Catholic Dioceses in Zambia.

In spite of the widespread rhetorical commitment to the principles of gender equality and women's empowerment, the translation of these principles into practice and substantive gains remains uneven and incomplete within the Catholic Dioceses in Zambia.²³ Women still face a number of challenges in fully exercising their right to participate in all decision making structures within the Catholic Church and face significant barriers to entering positions of power and decision making and are clearly under-represented at all levels of decision-making, even though they constitute the majority of the population in the Catholic Church. Responses from various respondents show that women, girls, men and boys have "specifically" different and yet complimentary roles.

5.1 Women are the Majority in the Dioceses but are not many in Decision Making Structures

Women and girls were found to be the majority in the various Dioceses of the Catholic Church in Zambia and play a key role therein. Women and girls predominate in Small Christian Communities and are the core fabric on which the Church is founded which men dominate and enjoy the control of power in decision making structures, the upper echelons of the Church. Some semblance of participation has been described by both some priests and religious as unfortunate indicating that "*it is inside the Catholic Church that justice and adherence to human rights*" should be observed but ironically, that is where the "most inhuman nature is practiced, reproduced and even supported by the very people to whom injustice is applied." This was a response to the majority view of the women in one Parish who were very strong against the ordination of women as priests. The respondent further added that "*The Church in Africa has done a very good job of brainwashing the worshippers. . . they trust it so much. It is the worshippers who are predominantly women that defend the various gender based injustices within the Church.*"²⁴ Respondents argued and blamed women for not taking up the challenges given that women are the majority. Other respondents have argued that women have been given chances before to serve in various portfolios but have not done a good job.

Women effectively participate in SCC and some of them are leaders despite their illiterate levels. "*Women are perceived as the anchors of the Church*" and that it is not possible to visualize the Church without women. They are basically found at every level except that they cannot be priests and as such cannot perform those duties which are the "*preserve*" of the priests.

²³ Catholic Priest from one of the 5 Dioceses where Field work was undertaken.

²⁴ Ibid

5.2 The Participation of Women in decision Making Structures within the Church

The participation of women in the Catholic Church is broadly divided into the participation for the Laity and the participation of the Religious. The Laity are the ordinary Catholic women while the religious are the ordained women.

a) The Diocesan Structures

The “*Catholic Dioceses*” all have more women members of the Church making the Diocese of Zambia having “*a female face*” whose manager is the “*male*”. From the Small Christian Communities, women are organisers and animators and the situation gradually changes at the Parish level.

The analysis of the 5 Dioceses and ZEC in which field work was undertaken reflects that the top leadership in the Dioceses is predominantly male. All Bishops are male as well as all Vicar Generals and the Secretary General at Zambia Episcopal Conference is a male with a Religious female Secretary. Respondents indicated that in Pastoral meetings at the Diocesan level, few women participate but added that “*because they are few, their views are not recognised even though they have the right to be heard since they are created in the same image as men.*”²⁵ Respondents argued further that the women in the Church are scared, the fear of not being heard and listened to and that the language in the Church is basically “He”. This needs to be changed.”

5.3 Participation of Religious Women in Diocesan Decision making Structures

The various structures of the Religious are defined in their Statutes. For example, the Statutes for the Zambia Association of Sisterhoods are developed in line with the Vatican Council II (*Perfectae Caritatis, n.23*) and are ratified by the Code of the Canon Law (can.708).

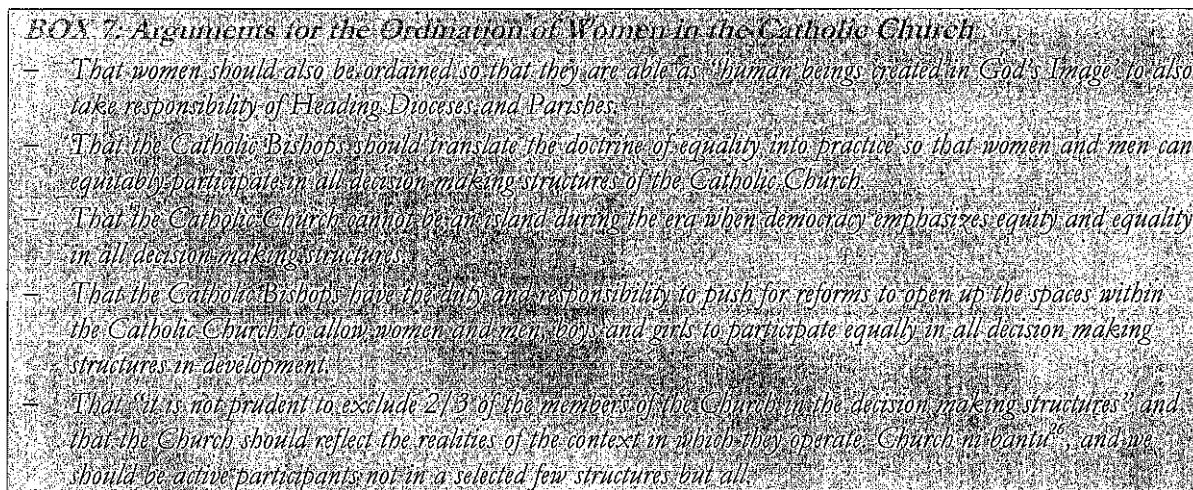
BOX 6: The Aims of the Association of the Religious Women

- 1. To promote the spiritual welfare and development of the women religious in Zambia by enabling individual institutes to fulfil their purpose adequately.*
- 2. To foster communication and cooperation between member institutes with due regard to their autonomy and their own spirit.*
- 3. To work on matters of common concern to all Religious Institutes and Societies of Apostolic Life.*
- 4. To assist the Sisters in giving effective service to the Church and society, always in collaboration with the Zambia Episcopal Conference, as well as with each individual Bishop.*

The various congregations of the sisters are the members of the Zambia Association of Sisterhoods. While working with the rest of society in service delivery, the fourth objective clearly shows that the Religious collaborates with Zambia Episcopal Conference and the individual Bishops (Dioceses). The Association is expected to function through the Diocesan Branches/Meetings, the National Executive Committee and the Secretariat and the General Assembly. As one of the Religious

²⁵ Respondents, Diocese of Chipata, 2011.

respondents indicated, the religious are not considered as part of the Diocese although they can be invited to work on one of the key development issues such as education and health.



Source: Respondents, field work 2011

The major challenge regarding the participation of religious women in the Diocesan activities hinges on the hierarchical nature of the Church and the preservation of participation to some structures to "the ordained men only". Respondents who were strong on this issue argued that this is the "core issue regarding the participation of women in decision making within the Church." It was felt that the structures in which women are unable to actively participate at the higher levels of the Church is the "cardinal one in terms of influencing policies and practices within the Church." "Any other discussion regarding the participation of women at lower levels is considered tokenistic and symbolic behaviour." "Why do the ordained priests refuse to share the decision making portfolio with women" if they are the true disciples of Jesus Christ? This was the common issue that was raised. The other decision making structures below the Presbyterian Council was considered not critical as these levels were only at the level of implementation-executing what has already been decided upon.

The Canon Law is considered definitive on the roles and responsibilities with the justification that "The Ministry of Jesus Christ" had only male Disciples. The entire discussion on this issue during field work showed that it was highly unlikely and that it will take Centuries before the Catholic Church may be compelled to open up those spaces on the ordination of women as priests. The Religious point of view is that The Canon Law lays the foundation for the discrimination against women by allowing its application to contexts from which it was not founded. The argument advanced by proponents of the ordination of women as priests argued that both the Bible and the Canon Law are highly influenced by the Jewish Traditions which were highly patriarchal at the time. The argument that Christ had only male disciples does not merit wholesome application of the then Jewish

²⁶ Female respondent from one of the Parishes in Diocese of Mpika.

tradition to societies that have evolved in time and space. The arguments advanced were that continued hegemonic and patriarchal nature of the structures and the enforcement of the said law with regard to women's participation in the Catholic Church expose the biases of those in position of power toward patriarchy.

Despite the various interventions that seek to empower women in the Catholic Church, critics comprising the laity, religious and the priests have challenged women's participation in the various decision making structures within the Church arguing that the hierarchical nature of the structure does not allow women to participate in the key decision making structures. For example, the Presbyteral Council which advises the Bishops comprises only priests and there are no women represented in that structure.

The participation of women in the higher levels of the Catholic Church structures are not adequately discussed by the lay persons in the Church who believe that *"it is a taboo to challenge what has been given by the Popes and the doctrine of the Church over Centuries"* and is clearly stipulated in the Canon Law. Some priests also believe that this is a non-issue since the Religious women have their own structures which are defined by the Canon Law. Other priests, mostly the young, indicated that this issue has been a challenge in the Church and that it has been brought out at the African Synod and further that petitions have even been submitted to the Vatican. Priests and the Religious who are advocating equality at every level of Catholic Church structure have argued that this issue will not go away no matter how resolutely the Catholic Bishops and the Church in Rome refuses to discuss the matter.

The Religious also referred to national processes within Zambia in which they have tried to promote a genuine dialogue between the religious and the Bishops. Some respondents argued that while there is reasonable debates and dialogue with international congregations, the local congregations have an even greater challenge as they are not given the space and the voice to speak out. It was also indicated that those groups that raise issues are considered difficult and petty such that the groups are shying away from raising the issues of women's participation in the Catholic Church.

The arguments that the Religious should be happy with their own structures and constitution has been challenged by some respondents who argued that there should be a close partnership between the Dioceses and the various Religious Congregations since they are part of the same Catholic Church. Respondents and especially some Priests felt that the Religious have total control of their own work in areas such as education and health and that they should be content with that. Relating the matter to social justice, most Religious argued that *"they are tired of being reduced to placing flowers in the Church"* and doing *"reproductive roles"* such as *"taking care of the Church"* usually at implementation level with limited involvement in decision making. Referring to the Bible, some respondents argued *"anyway, the Christian Attitude does not separate man from woman, and woman from man and if God has created woman from man, man is born from woman and both come from God"* (1 Corinthians 11:11-12) . Further they argued that EVERYONE, men and women alike, were created in God's image, should have the symbol of authority; meaning, spiritual authority and that is part of God's order. This group of respondents argued that there is no basis for discrimination of women from

ordination and that “women and men alike should rise up to fulfill the destiny God has for them and rise to spiritual authority and leadership.”

Although some Dioceses have challenges on the partnerships and engagements with the Religious, some Dioceses showed positive developments on the participation of the Religious women in Diocesan activities. Diocese of Monze was cited as one progressive Diocese where the Pastoral Coordinator is the only Religious female throughout the 10 Dioceses in Zambia. While some Dioceses have Priests serving as Secretary to the Bishop, Monze and Catholic Secretariat has the Religious women serving as Sectary to the Bishop and the Secretary General respectively.

The Diocese of Mongu also showed some positive developments in having an interface between the priests, religious men and women as well as the lay men and women.

Table 16: Diocesan Committees and Administration for Diocese of Monze

Position	Position Holder		Male			Female	
	No.	Status	Clergy	Religious	Lay	Religious	Lay
Vicar General	1	Priest	1	0	0	0	0
Port. Miss. Soc.	1	Priest	1	0	0	0	0
Pastoral Coordinator	1	Priest	1	0	0	0	0
Dioc. Secretary	1	Sister	0	0	0	1	0
Dioc. Treasurer	1	Priest	1	0	0	0	0
Ass. Diocesan Treasurer	1	Priest	1	0	0	0	0
Canon Councillors	1	Priest	1	0	0	0	0
Catechists	1	Sister	0	0	0	1	0
Education Section	1	Sister	0	0	0	1	0
Litany	1	Mr.	0	0	1	0	0
Prayers	1	Sister	0	0	0	1	0
Youth	1	Sister	0	0	0	1	0
Development	1	Mr.	0	0	1	0	0
Justice and Peace	1	Mrs.	0	0	0	0	1
Dev. Ed. Prog.	1	vicar	0	0	0	0	0
HomeBased Care	1	Sister	0	0	0	1	0
CWCs	1	Mrs.	0	0	0	0	1
Livelihood/Food Supplement	1	Mr.	0	0	1	0	0
Anti-retroviral therapy	1	Mr.	0	0	1	0	0
Totals	18		6	0	4	6	2

The Mongu Diocesan Curia has for instance almost 50:50 representations of women and men and has a mix of various stakeholders; the Religious and Lay men and women as well as the Priests. Some Priests shared this view that “Priests have a lot of power within the Church and they enjoy it. They will not let go of that power. That is very sad because there are some sisters who are even better performers than some priests, is that justice?”

5.4 Policy and Institutional frameworks on Participation of Women in Dioceses

The research team also investigated on whether or not the Catholic Church is doing something to encourage the participation of women in various activities within the Church. At the national level, there was evidence of concerted efforts to increase the participation of women in various church activities.

Although the Dioceses functions are based on the principle of subsidiarity; which means that the various Dioceses can devise interventions which can respond to the various realities that should lead to the realization of equitable participation of women and men in various decision making structures, they have not been able to comprehensively mainstream gender equality into governance. Based on the Catholic doctrine or policy declarations, various actors can be compelled to promote the principle of equality between men and women as shown by Caritas national office. It was also found that Zambia Episcopal Conference which is made up of the Catholic Bishops, have policies that compel the Dioceses to address gender justice and Gender Based Violence within the Church. At the time of the study, ZEC was in the process of engaging various Dioceses to seriously address gender in both the Pastoral and Development activities. Similarly, Dioceses such as Monze were found to have draft gender policies which the national level had an approved work place gender policy.

(1) Theological Declaration on Gender Justice and Gender Based Violence in Zambia

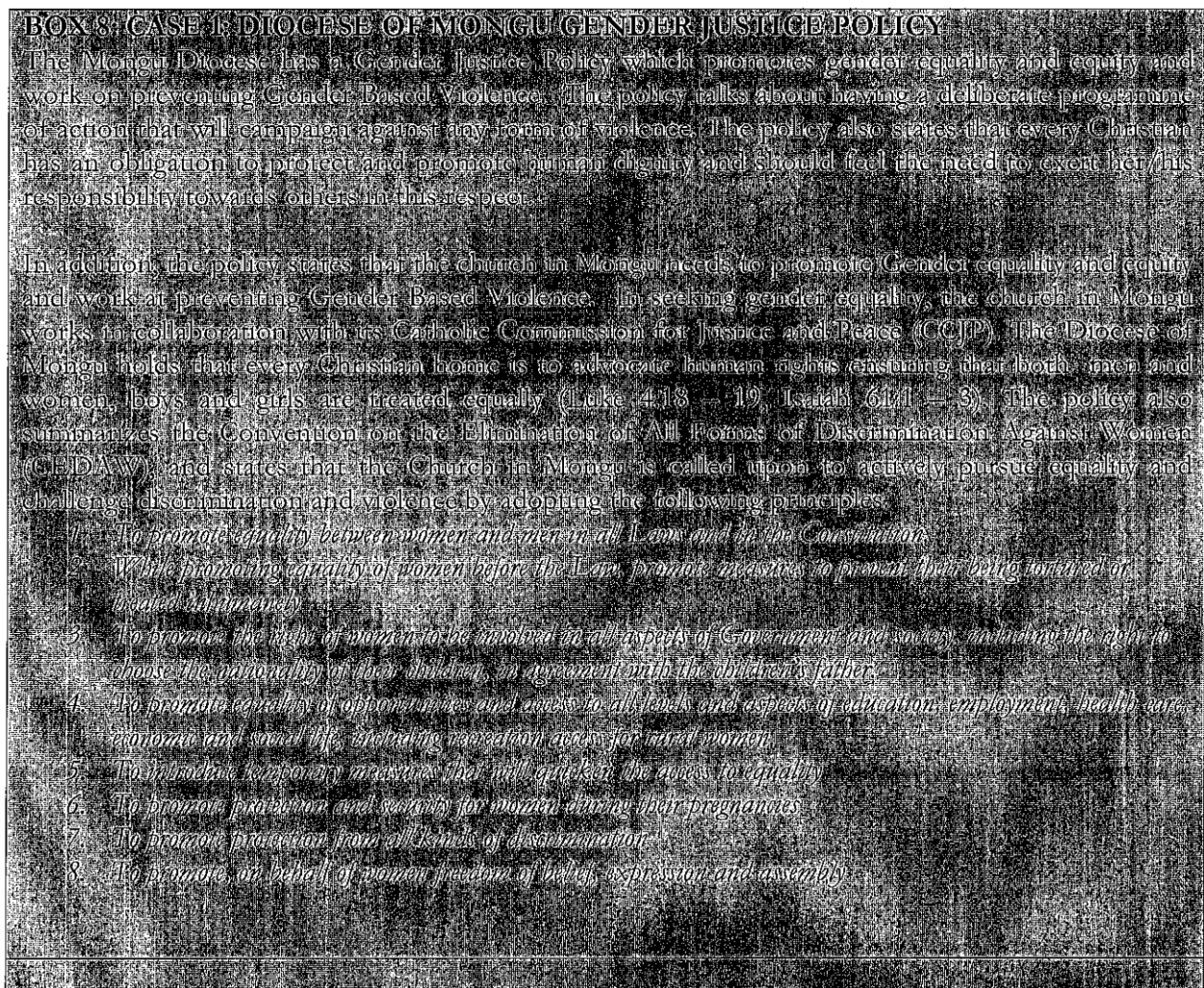
In 2009, Zambia Episcopal Conference in partnership with the Council of Churches in Zambia and Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia signed a Theological Declaration on Gender Justice and Gender Based Violence. This is a joint Declaration by the Three Mother Bodies of the Church in Zambia, an affirmation of their acknowledgement of the existence of gender inequalities and Gender based violence in Churches and society at large.

(2) **Diocesan Policies:** Some of the Dioceses visited have a Gender Policy. For example, Dioceses of Monze and Mongu have a policy intended to mainstream Gender in the activities of the Church. Similarly, the Zambia Episcopal Conference (ZEC) has also signed a Gender Justice Declaration in which the Church is committed to promoting gender equality in all structures of the Church. These however have tended to be in the Development arm of the Church under Caritas and not Liturgical departments. At the institutional level, the following documents were found:

- Draft gender polices, Diocesan workers policy, Diocesan Curia/Councils- policies
- The Diocesan statutes (3-1) Pastoral Care Guidelines
- Constitutions of Pastoral Councils

– Constitutions for various Religious Groups

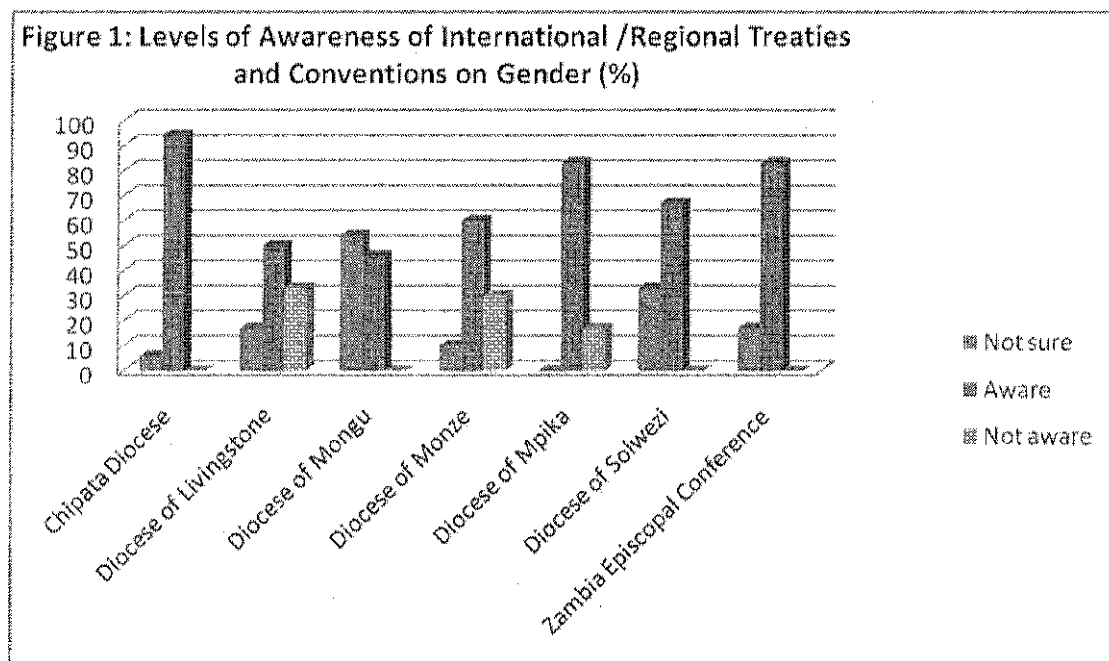
- (3) **Upholding of Virgin Mary:** The entire Catholic Church hold the Virgin Mary as the model for all women. Both men and women bow before her and she is the only woman that the Catholic Church believes can intercede and commune straight with God for all Catholics. All over the Zambia, there are shrines of devotion to Holy Mary. The Virgin Mother is the model for women in many countries and yet, women are still not accepted as equal partners with men in daily running and management of the Church.



5.6 Level of Awareness of the Regional and National Gender Policy

The level of awareness of the regional and national gender policies was pretty high among the respondents. Whereas respondents at the Diocesan levels were aware of the international, regional and national instruments on gender, most of them, knew the policies, treaties and protocols, such as The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, the African Union Gender policy Feb, 2009, the

National Gender Policy (2000), they had no access to these documents. The other documents they were aware of included the CARE International Gender Policy, CARITAS-Zambia Gender Policy, Gender Violence-FAWEZA, Gender Justice, and Diocesan Policies in the Catholic Church, Decentralization Policy, Land Policy, Education Policy and NGOCC Policy.



Diocese	Not sure	Aware	Not aware
Chipata Diocese	6	94	0
Diocese of Livingstone	17	50	33
Diocese of Mongu	54	46	0
Diocese of Monze	10	60	30
Diocese of Mpika	0	88	17
Diocese of Solwezi	33	67	0
Zambia Episcopal Conference	17	83	0

Source: Score Card on levels of knowledge of International Treaties and Conventions on Gender

Despite the many declarations and protocols that have been signed by Zambia, the participation of women in decision making structures in public domains such as within the faith based communities remains low. Within the Catholic Church, the Development Commission, Caritas has tried to respond through its strategic plans but most interventions designed lack corresponding resources to effectively address the issue. Diocese of Mongu had more respondents (54%) who indicated that they were not sure about the international treaties and conventions followed by the Diocese of Solwezi (33%). The Diocese that had more respondents who were aware of the International Treaties and Conventions on Gender was Chipata (94%). In both the Diocese of Mpika and Zambia

Episcopal Conference 83% of respondents were aware of the International Treaties and Conventions on Gender. Diocese of Solwezi scored 67%, Monze 60%, Livingstone 50% and the least aware was Diocese of Mongu (46%). Three Dioceses had respondents who indicated that they were not aware of the Treaties and Conventions on Gender and these were Dioceses of Livingstone (33%), Diocese of Monze (30%) and Diocese of Mpika (17%). In Diocese of Chipata, Mongu, Solwezi and ZEC all respondents indicated that they were all of the international treaties and conventions.

5.7 Diocesan Activities in which women/girls and men/boys participate

Apart from the structures which are defined in the hierarchy where priests only can participate as dictated by the Canon Law, the participation of women in other structures faced some barriers and these are:

1. **The Structure Defines the Activities:** The structure has been identified as the major problem regarding the participation of women in the Catholic Church. All the participants in the key decision making structures are men except for the “reproductive” sectors such as education, health and development. The structure is considered as a hindrance as it directs women’s participation despite the fact that women are the majority in the Church. Women are the main fundraisers for the Church and are playing a key role as organizers of the Church. They mobilize the membership and sustain it. At the Community level, it is the Parish Priest that makes decisions making the leadership in the church “male”. In the Diocese of Chipata, “Azimai a pa Mutondo” were given an example as “*the main body of the Church*” and they are all women. These are reduced to *women’s desks* within the Diocese and yet comprise 75% of the Church Membership.

The Diocesan structure provides the mechanism for accountability within the Church. The structure basically provides the way the Church is organized within the Dioceses and these are defined. A review of the various Diocesan literature shows that the Dioceses have the following structures in which people participate either as Priests, Religious men and women and the laity. These are:

- (i) The Diocesan Curia and Administration
- (ii) Diocesan Commission for Catechists
- (iii) The Diocesan Commission for Justice and Peace
- (iv) The Diocesan Commission for Liturgy
- (v) The Pastoral HIV and AIDS Commission

Other structures are:

1. Diocesan Pastoral Council
2. *Deanery Pastoral Council (DPC)*: Pastoral Coordinating Team meets often to give reports on how different parishes are doing; Decisions are made by the Diocesan Bishop and his Consulters, Bishop and Priest Council, Bishop and Diocesan Council Executive. Other decisions are made by Commissions and these are approved by the Bishop

3. Diocesan Consulters to the Bishop:
4. Priests Council (PC):
5. Association of Men Religious Superiors (ARMS)
6. Zambia Association of Sisterhoods (ZAS)
7. Association of Zambia Diocesan Catholic Clergy (AZDCC)

The Diocesan Curia and Administration: This is the supreme policy making structure of the Diocese. In some Dioceses, only the clergy men participate in these activities. In the case of Mongu Diocese however, it was found that various stakeholders are represented (see Table below for details).

Table 2: Diocesan Curia and Administration for Diocese of Mongu

Position	Position Holder	Male			Female	
		Clergy	Religious	Lay	Religious	Lay
Wear General	1 Priest	1	0	0	0	0
Rom. Miss. Sec.	1 Priest	1	0	0	0	0
Pastoral Coordinator	1 Priest	1	0	0	0	0
Dioc. Secretary	1 Sister	0	1	0	1	0
Dioc. Treasurer	1 Priest	1	0	0	0	0
Ass. Diocesan Treasurer	1 Priest	1	0	0	0	0
Communications	1 Priest	1	0	0	0	0
Catechists	4 Sister	0	0	0	1	0
Education Section	1 Sister	0	0	0	1	0
Lady	1 Mr.	0	0	1	0	0
Pioneers	1 Sister	0	0	0	1	0
Youth	1 Sister	0	0	0	1	0
Development	1 Mr.	0	0	1	0	0
Justice and Peace	1 Mr.	0	0	0	0	1
Dev. Bld. Pro.	0 Vacant	0	0	0	0	0
Home Based Care	1 Sister	0	0	0	1	0
OMCs	1 Ms.	0	0	0	0	1
Livelihood/Food Supplement	1 Mr.	0	0	1	0	0
Antiretroviral therapy	1 Mr.	0	0	1	0	0
Total	18	6	1	4	6	2

Source: Diocese of Mongu, Personnel Directory, 2009

It was even found that there are more religious women participating in the curia which is composed of institutes and persons who assist the Bishop in governing the entire Diocese especially in directing pastoral action and administration.

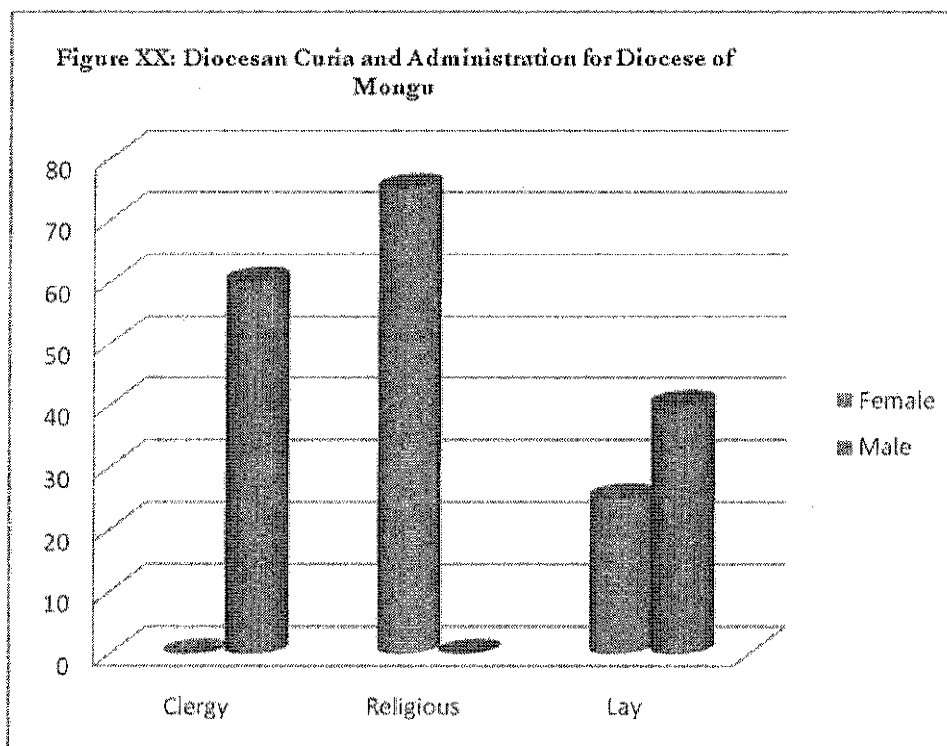


Table 3: Diocesan Curia and Administration for Diocese of Mongu

Gender	Clergy	Religious	Lay
Female	0	75	25
Male	60	0	40

Source: *Diocese of Mongu, Personnel Directory, 2009*

The above figure shows that there are more religious women represented in the Curia in Diocese of Mongu followed by the priests and lay males. There are a smaller number of Lay women represented.

1. *The Diocesan Pastoral Council:* This is the Policy Making structure whose main responsibility is to advise the Bishop on pastoral issues facing the Diocese.
2. *The Diocesan Consultors to the Bishop:* The main function is to advise the Bishop on ecclesiastic issues, establishment of new Parishes, Episcopal Appointments and makes recommendations on the related issues. This comprises only ordained men, the Priests.
3. *The Priests Council:* It is a forum for all Diocesan priests to discuss issues related to their priesthood and their ministries. The issues from this structure are communicated directly to the Bishop for harmonization and formalization.

The main work of the Clergy (priests) in the Catholic Church is to celebrate Mass, baptize Christians, and conduct Mass at funerals. According to Canon Law, it's **ONLY** the Priests who are allowed to bless the Sacrament (**the Body and Blood of Christ, the Eucharist**). After blessing it, others such as the trained laity and religious can distribute it (give it).

However, especially in rural outstations, members of the Catholic Church were not so keen to see both the religious and the laity administer the Sacraments during Mass or when someone is sick. In Kabwata Parish in Lusaka, it was found to be a tradition for the Religious and the Laity to accompany the priest to distribute the Eucharist after the Priest(s) have blessed it. The other roles of the Clergy are given in the BOX below.

BOX 9: Roles and Responsibilities of the Clergy

- *Visits the sick in the community*
- *involved in other Pastoral work in the communities. Priests preach in the communities.*
- *The Bishop sees to it that all men together with the Priest follow all the good things they do in the community.*
- *Giving Holy Communion. All the Clergy give Sacraments to Small Christian Communities.*
- *The Clergy are the only ones that are allowed to bless the Sacrament.*
- *Giving spiritual and psychological counseling.*
- *Marriage Counseling and Blessing*
- *Religious work in Church and communities*
- *The Priest conducts Mass Church in times of funerals, weddings etc.*
- *They pray for the sick members of the Church*

5.8 Work performed by Women in the Catholic Dioceses

Women in the Catholic Dioceses were categorized into two groups: The Laity and the Religious, commonly known as the Sisters or Nuns. The Laity are the ordinary Christian women in the Church and these comprise approximately 75% of the church membership. The two categories were considered to play very distinctive roles and responsibilities. In almost all Dioceses, respondents were of the view that women were participating in the various activities of the Church and were sure that the women were fewer in the higher decision making structures. The lower one went from the higher policy making levels to the Small Christian Communities, the more respondents felt that there was nothing wrong with the current state of affairs on the participation patterns of women in the Church. They felt that women were more in the Church representing a larger proportion of the Catholics. Respondents from Parishes and Small Christina Communities argued that they were guided by the rules (Malamulo). A few respondents who were in leadership positions at the community levels such as Catechists, Youth Leaders had a more critical view of women's participation patterns and argued that women faced many barriers in participating in the activities of the Church. The main reasons advanced at this level were that "it's the women themselves who declined to take up leadership roles, and that some of them even if they were chosen, they were shy and not confident to lead. Another argument was that women had limited education and for someone to take up a leadership position, they should be able to read and write. Inferiority complex among women was identified as another factor. In a few cases, cultural values and practices were also given as factors that inhibited the active participation of women in decision making and leadership positions in the Church.

Table 4: Perceptions of representation of women and men in Diocesan Councils

Diocese	Not sure	%	Aware	%	Not aware	%	Total
Chipata Diocese	6	9	46	71	13	20	65
Diocese of Livingstone	2	15	5	38	6	46	13
Diocese of Mongu	7	44	8	50	1	6	16
Diocese of Monze	6	32	7	37	6	32	19
Diocese of Mpika	0	0	5	83	1	17	6
Diocese of Solwezi	3	17	12	67	3	17	18
Zambia Episcopal Conference	2	33	4	67	0	0	6
Total	26	18	87	61	30	21	143

Source: Field Work

Table 5: Diocesan Perceptions of Women's influence on decisions taken by the Dioceses

Diocese	Not sure	%	Women influence decisions in Dioceses	%	Women do not influence Diocesan decisions	%	Total
Chipata Diocese	2	3	54	82	40	15	66
Diocese of Livingstone	1	9	6	55	4	36	11
Diocese of Mongu	1	6	10	63	5	30	16
Diocese of Monze	0	0	15	75	5	25	20
Diocese of Mpika	1	17	2	33	3	50	6
Diocese of Solwezi	5	26	8	42	6	32	19
Zambia Episcopal Conference	1	20	2	40	2	40	5
Total	11	8	97	68	35	24	143

Source: Field work from Dioceses

Overall, from the 6 Dioceses selected (see Table above), 97% of the total number of respondents felt that women influence decision making within the Dioceses against the 24% who felt that women do not influence Diocesan decisions. Only 8% were not sure as to whether women influenced Diocesan decision or not. From the interviews and focus group discussions on the other hand, approximately 70% of the respondents were of the view that the major influence by the women on decision making was mainly because the women are the implementers of the activities and various programmes in the church in both the pastoral and development components. At Diocesan levels however, more respondents felt that women were participating quite fairly in the activities of the Church mostly as implementers of the decisions made by Policy makers within the Church who were mostly priests and the lay men. Furthermore, out of those that felt that women did not influence Diocesan decisions, 30% were very strong and argued that the decision makers in the Catholic Church were priests headed by the Bishop and the other members (the lay and religious) simply rubber stamped the decisions. One respondent indicated that “once the Bishop (at Diocesan level) and the Priest (at Parish level) made the decision, it was final.

5.9 The Roles and Responsibilities of the Religious Women

The Religious women commonly known as Sisters are in two categories: those that belong to the International Orders and the local Diocesan Congregations. Both local and international Orders are in charge of the various disciplines which they are given responsibility by the Dioceses to administer such as running of schools and hospitals. *The Religious Groups* have their own constitutions which guide how they ought to function as entities and have their own decision making structures. For example, the Good Shepherd Sisters in Chipata were invited to work in Chipata Diocese. The

head of the Congregation is referred to as Mother Superior. This group operates autonomously and is not involved in the decision making structures of the Diocese.

Most religious groups, local and international work at Parish level managing schools, hospitals, youth programmes, and communications such as Radio Maria in Chipata Diocese. The Religious are usually associated with missionary work and the Bishop is the one that defines what role they can play in a Diocese. For example, although the Sisters of Mary of Immaculate Conception in Chipata Diocese take care of the Home Craft Centre for school leavers in the Diocese, their core work is promoting Women and Health and have no role in decision making within the Diocese.

The local congregations created by the Dioceses also operate as autonomous entities implementing their own projects and are not part of the Diocesan decision making structures. In situations where the Religious are working within the Dioceses, they are subjected to unfair allowances. For example, if a Religious Sister is working at the Parish level, they are subjected to the Parish allowances which are very low. “--at Diocesan level for example, a Religious Sister is paid K400, 000 and this is a person who has a degree arguing that they are at the service of the poor.” Some respondents appealed to JCTR to do Basic Needs Basket analysis for the Dioceses as it was felt that transparency was lacking. BOX 10 below summaries their activities.

BOX 10: Activities in which the Religious women are involved in within the Dioceses

- ✓ Sisters of the Catholic Church help women to work and help the sick in the community.
- ✓ They just volunteer and are not given any salary and sometimes Staff receive remuneration.
- ✓ They are people of God and do charitable work wherever they work. It can be in Christian Homes, Schools (especially Community Schools), Hospitals, Home for the sick and above all in.
- ✓ They manage for their Projects, management of the projects, raise with donors and report to the Donors, the Bishop and Community Decision Making Structures such as Hospital Boards, District Education Boards.
- ✓ By Sashaba Salemi Church: “Ba Sister, Lapatekamitale, kumbi, ever and muna Nokedibonyalwa.”
- ✓ Sisters are not consulted in Diocesan work. Bishops and Priests make decisions and sisters and the women in the church just obey as instructed.
- ✓ They are the good-hearted Samaritans who do God's work and their pay will be in heaven.
- ✓ They do work in very difficult conditions and the type of work they do, ordinary persons and even the priest find it difficult to do.
- ✓ They look for money, clothes and blankets and they donate these to the in the table in society.
- ✓ They are humble servants of God, the good Shepherd.
- ✓ We work within the Diocese but we have our own organisations which have guidelines on how we work. We work in different thematic areas and usually, we are invited by the Bishops. We are not involved in Diocesan Decision-making unless those when work at the Diocesan Offices. But we inform the Bishop on progress of our work.
- ✓ It's unfortunate that the Bishops do not see us as part of the Diocesan structures. You see, Bishops and Priests are selfish people. They believe they are the only chosen ones to preach the word of God, here Parishes do. They just follow the Jewish tradition which was applicable at the time of Jesus Christ's. The Priests are the ones that block the participation of women because they instead the faithful by uncertainty and misapplying the doctrine. God says, God. He is fair.

It was felt that the religious are not aware of how much they are earning. The situation was considered terrible for the local congregations who are at the mercy of the Dioceses. The roles and responsibilities of the Religious women, according to the findings, is that they are involved in pastoral work and do preparations for Church Service and help Priests in giving the Eucharist. They also do a lot of charity work within the Dioceses.

5.10: Roles and Responsibilities of the Lay Women

The Lay women are the majority in the Catholic Church and are the main participants in the day to day running of the Church. In most situations, they are the volunteers; the “Stellas” in the community giving service to the Dioceses, Parishes and the Small Christian Communities. The following were identified as the main activities in which the lay women participate as the main implementers of the various Dioceses. As one clergy in Mpika Diocese indicated, the Catholic Dioceses work is predominantly carried out by women. Even in difficult circumstances, women are considered committed to church work and are the pillars of the church. *“Without women, there would be no Church. Men participate but women have shown much more commitment to the Church work and attend most of the meetings. That’s why I prefer women to serve in our Parish Committees.”*

- (a) Women are more involved in implementation of Church activities: Apart from the structures which are defined in the hierarchy where priests only can participate as dictated by the Canon Law, the participation of women in other structures has been identified as a major part of the Church. High workloads at implementation levels are undertaken by women in spite of not being in positions of decision making. *“Women have continued to show much interest in the affairs of the church more than men”*. Respondents indicated that women have demonstrated the enthusiasm and passion to participate in the activities of the Church at various levels. Women are however playing more reproductive roles within the Church, doing care and maintenance work like cleaning the church, taking care of the sick and vulnerable persons.
- (b) Women are less involved at higher levels in Church activities/decision making. The higher level Church activities are predominantly male dominated, especially in regard to decision making. Women execute the decisions that are made by men. Despite playing this key role of implementing the activities, respondents indicated that the suggestions from women are less considered compared to those raised by men. *“When it comes to decision making, the Church follows power dynamics since the Catholic Church is headed by Priests hence the women have no power to make decisions. Once a decision is made as long as it’s the Bishop or Priest who has made that decision, it will be respected.”*²⁷ The details of the main activities in which they participate are described below.
- (c) **Productive, Reproductive and Community Roles:** They are more active in -productive, reproductive and community roles of the church. Even in the groups where there are women only, challenges of participation of the illiterate members of the community was identified as an issue. They serve in Youth Groups; visiting in the community, hospitals and

²⁷ Clergy, Religious and Lay Respondents, Chipata and Mpika Dioceses

prisons and also service of the underprivileged, serve in the Choir and Home Based Care groups. For example, they organize Picnics, variety shows and they organize themselves “to help our Parish Priest” and we also do hospital, prison and home visitations, caring for the sick and poor in the communities. “

BOX 11 below gives a summary of most of activities lay women participate in within the Dioceses.

BOX 11: The role of lay women in the Dioceses

- They help in cleaning the interior of the Church and sweeping, decorating the Altar, general cleaning of the Parish surroundings. They organize the Church to look good to be convenient for Mass to be conducted in a clean environment. They ensure cleanliness of the Church surroundings. They help with cleaning the church
- Women help in conducting the liturgy and Women in singing/Choir
- Assist men in running the Church
- They help organizing weddings for the Church members including counseling those wishing to marry. Through marriage encounters, they help to sustain marriages among the faithful.
- They are members of the women's groups in the Church
- Traditional Counseling for various age-groups; young adults, married and boys and girls
- Visiting the sick people in the hospitals and in the community. They also visit old people in their homes
- They provide nursing care in SCC to the sick
- Cooking for priests during meetings, during meetings at the Church and during funerals
- “Ba Stella-ukusefya mu Church”
- “Ukusambilishanya, ukupyanga palubansa na mu Church”
- “Ukufundwa ifyakuisunga fwe banamayo”²⁸
- Women in the Church have a very big task to teach the young ones how to serve the Lord's work, how to live with obedience to their parents and to other people.
- They socialize with each other
- Women are in the forefront in taking care of the sick in the Church / Community. They visit the sick ones.
- They are the pillars of the Choir and other singing associations
- They help in dressing the young ones (Mass Servers)
- Conduct fundraising ventures
- They participate in decision making
- Providing various professional skills as employees, Board/ Committee members and as consultants
- Visiting the sick and taking care of the vulnerable children and elderly men and women in the communities, as well as counseling the young.
- Taking care of the Priests and Alter boys. They clean and launder their garments.
- Cleaning the Church and its surrounding
- Supporting bereaved members of the church at funerals
- Fundraising for the Church and welfare of the Clergy

²⁸ “Teaching ourselves, sweeping outside and inside the Church and being taught how we, as women should take care of ourselves”

- (d) *Small Christian Communities:* At small Christian Community levels, most of the members are women most of whom participate as leaders in church activities. To a large extent, the Church puts women and girls in leadership positions at this level. Communities felt that while the church has opened doors for the women to take part, “they feel inferior” and cannot for example stand in front of people and that the change should target the individual communities so that they can develop interest and be willing to take part in the Church activities at the different levels. The membership has more women and yet the leadership is taken by men. At Chikungu Parish within Chipata Diocese, in the leadership, there is only one woman in the Parish team and she is a Parish Catechist. The community here argued that there was lack of interest from the women due to among other things, cultural beliefs and low education levels.
- (e) *Charitable work:* Approximately 82% of the respondents from the seven out of 10 Dioceses indicated that it is mostly women that do charitable work in the Dioceses such as visiting the sick, taking care of the sick, taking care of OVCs and HIV and AIDS patients and make donations through such works as Cheshire Homes and visiting the sick.
- (f) *Liturgical Work: Pastoral Council* - Diocesan Pastoral Council at Diocesan level (Grouping of Parishes), Presbyteral Council, and Consulters Team: In the Pastoral Council, women in the various Dioceses are considered to contribute a lot in the liturgy than in decision making. In the *Liturgy* women participate in singing, readings and a few reflections and in preaching at the Novena. They also participate at Small Christian Community levels teaching the faithful and taking a leading role in prayers.
- (g) *Administration of Eucharist:* It is the Priest’s job to bless the Eucharist after which the Laity or Religious may be allowed to administer the Eucharist. In some Dioceses visited, it was found that the Religious women and men and even the Laity can administer the Eucharist as was the case in Lusaka and Chipata. In Chipata, one Sister works very closely with the Parish Priest in organizing Mass and in the administration of the Eucharist. In Lusaka, one woman working at ZEC used to be a Eucharist Minister in Kabwata Parish. Even though women participate in the Administration of the Eucharist evidenced in the cases above, respondents argued that there was still stigma and discrimination by the members of the Church who preferred to receive the Eucharist from a Priest or a Religious Male (Brothers). Although not fully practiced in all the Parishes, many identified this development as one of the positive changes in the Church.
- (h) *Serving on Parish Councils:* In various Dioceses visited, it was found that women are active participants in the Church. In this structure, women have taken some leadership positions as chairpersons and ordinary members. For example, The Parish Council Chairperson in Itezhi-tezhi Parish in Monze Diocese is a woman and in the Good Shepherd Parish in Kabwata in Lusaka, the vice chairperson is a woman and another woman working

at ZEC indicated that she had been a Chairperson for the Finance Committee for the Kabwata Parish in Lusaka.

- (i) *Mobilizing Communities to come to Church.* The women are the key organizers of big gatherings, instructions for marriage, cooking, cleaning the church, receiving the visitors and the same people are the ones that help when it comes to instructions for children. It is therefore important that these groups receive recognition even at higher levels of decision-making.
- (j) *Participating in Lay Movement activities:* In most lay movements, many participants were found to be women. A key advocate of women's participation argued that "women have special characteristics...as mothers, they care, they protect and they love. It is very important that women should lead and they will bring unity and love in the church"²⁹

(k) SPECIALISED WOMEN'S GROUPS IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

The Catholic Church has a number of organized lay organizations that women in the Church belong to, in pursuit of different aims.

- a) The Diocesan Council of Catholic Women of Mongu, for instance was established as permanent branch of the National Council of Catholic Women (NCCW). Its aims as stated in the Constitution are:
 1. To unite Catholic women in Mongu and to coordinate their activities which take place in the Church and in society, in line with the policies of the Bishop's office and National Council of Catholic Women.
 2. To support women in their struggle for human and spiritual development.
 3. To promote the contribution of Catholic women to the larger community.
 4. To be a link between Catholic Women's Organizations (CWO) and non-Catholic organizations.

The DCCW operates at the Diocesan level and seeks to:

- *Study in Christian spirit, problems relating to the advancement of women, their role in society and in the church and other problems of general interest;*
- *Work for the recognition of a woman's place in society, her dignity, her rights and equal opportunities;*
- *Promote among catholic women an understanding of their responsibilities so that they can contribute to their own development to life in society and in the church;*
- *Organize study groups, seminars, workshops and meetings on topics related to the Amis and programmes;*
- *Further retreats, reflection and other such exercises for all catholic women;*
- *Propose common goals and programmes to its members.*

²⁹ Respondent, Catholic Diocese of Mpika, 2011

b) *The Nazareth Lay Organization* was established in 1952. The founders' main concern was that newly married Catholic women needed an organization that would deal with married life issues. It was felt that such an organization would build and strengthen young women in their married life. The objectives of the Nazareth organization are:

- *To strengthen family life and Christian faith in homes because the family is the foundation of the Church and society;*
- *To help build good Catholic families in the spirit of the Holy Family of Nazareth and of St Elizabeth of Hungary;*
- *To identify issues and challenges that weaken family life in our society, i.e. economic poverty, moral decay, HIV/AIDS and its consequences;*
- *To encourage good traditional values in today's society;*
- *To care for the poor and neglected people in our society;*
- *To help in the initiation of young people in our society;*
- *To help in the initiation of young people and prepare them for marriage;*
- *To counsel and help married couples that face difficulties in their married life.*

(l) *Roles of Girls:* The roles of the girls is mainly decorating the church, in some Parishes, they also participate as Mass Servers. They also sing in the choir, help during Christmas time and some join the women in various activities.

5.11 Work performed by Men in the Catholic Dioceses

(i) Roles and Responsibilities of the Clergy (Priests and Bishops)

The Bishop, who is a clergy man and ordained Priest, is in charge of the Diocese. A Diocese is defined as a territorial circumscription administered by a Bishop whose boundary represents a portion of the people entrusted to his pastoral care and constitutes what is known as the "*local Church*".³⁰ The main work of the Diocese is Integral Evangelization which seeks to use the gospel and the teachings of the Church to empower and promote integral sustainable development. To achieve integral evangelization, the Bishop, as an overseer of the Diocese, works with various priests, religious and the lay men and women. The structures in which they participate are determined. The activities in which the men take part in are given in detail below.

5.9 Roles of the Lay Men and Boys

Men are part of the religious faithful that participate in various Diocesan activities. The young men participate in youth group leadership while men predominantly lead in the various structures in the Church. The boys are usually at the Insaka and do their homework and sometimes play football. They are also Alter Servers and sing in the choir and Holy Childhood. Their main work is cleaning the surroundings, watering flowers and preparing the church for Mass. They also help out in conducting Masses with the Priests by carrying out some simple necessities that the Priest may need while conducting the Mass such as Candle sticks, towels, Holy Communion and water (Mass Servers). They also "long for new ideas from other elders and Priests". They are Alter Boys and

³⁰ Diocese of Mpika Strategic Plan 2009-2013

they sometimes welcome visitors by acting as ushers. They are members of the various Youth Groups of the local church. As members of the Small Christian Communities., boys participate in the movement group activities such as sharing the Bible (Word of God) during meetings. By working together, they socialize with each other by doing some simple games such as football.

Most of the Parish Council Chairpersons are males. Men also participate in activities like planning. All activities are as prescribed in their job descriptions for a specific programme. Some men also take part in awareness campaigns, home-based care and fundraising while some are involved in the men lay organizations in leadership position, and boys are involved in Holy Childhood and alter services groups. They also do maintenance and take part in decision making. They teach the faithful-Choirs (instruments) and lead prayers and care for the sick and poor. Men also take part in Marriage Counseling and in leadership positions.

BOX 12: Roles of men in Diocesan activities

- ✓ They belong to the different groupings in the Church
- ✓ Mostly head the Pastoral Councils
- ✓ Men do mostly manual works in the Church which women cannot easily do
- ✓ They attend Small Christian Community Meetings but are fewer in numbers than women
- ✓ Participating in activities such as Buck Laying
- ✓ *Ukusanabwshanyasitemuniki*
- ✓ *Ukufunda ukwizigaba*
- ✓ *Ukushaka*
- ✓ *Ukufundisa amajambanja jeka pakw'ubukumbi*
- ✓ A man in the Church is able to help the Priest to do the work of God. Some like visiting the Church members and conducting Lords Table
- ✓ *Ukupapasha ubutumwa Church* (Conducting Mass)
- ✓ *Ukubanga bawumuna kati ba Father pa Masi*
- ✓ They visit the sick in the communities
- ✓ Act as Lay Leaders in SCC and in Church
- ✓ Some are professionals and taking high leadership positions
- ✓ Some are professionals and some are lay leaders at SCC and Parish levels
- ✓ Men do Trades Skills (Life Skills) e.g. Carpentry, Buck laying, Stenographers
- ✓ Decision making in the Church
- ✓ The men take a leading role in the running of the Church
- ✓ They are the Chaplains in the Institutions of Learning
- ✓ They help the Clergy in decision making
- ✓ Burying the dead

5.10 AFFIRMATIVE ACTION REGARDING WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE CHURCH

1. *In the whole Catholic Church in Zambia, out of the ten (10) Dioceses, it was found that only one (01) Pastoral Coordinator was a woman, in Catholic Diocese of Monze.* The National Pastoral Coordinator based at ZEC is a male. The Diocesan structures have accepted her role but some critics have argued that “she is de facto a “man” because she tries so hard to please the male colleagues” and that she is sometimes worse than the “male Pastoral Coordinators” who are equally gender insensitive. Caritas National office indicated that they have not adopted affirmative actions as the department has a good number of qualified women who have been employed based on their professional competencies.
2. *All the Catechists in the five Dioceses visited and at Catholic Secretariat were all trained in gender* although the intensity of gender awareness and sensitization varied from Diocese to Diocese. At the national level (ZEC), the Catechist is a woman who has extensive knowledge of gender issues. In Mpika and Chipata, husband and wife were Catechists and all had good background knowledge of the importance of women and girls participation in the Catholic Church. The Dioceses however still have a “gender desk” concept rather than adopting the gender mainstreaming approach in which all the programme and project officers are gender aware and mainstream gender in all the activities. Within Caritas however, gender is considered a cross cutting issue in the Strategic Plan although in practice, there is a need to develop a Monitoring and Evaluation framework which brings out gender disaggregated data in the various expected results in the logframes.
3. *Women's participation in the Parish Councils:* Parish Councils are the structures which are at the Community levels. These structures are created to advise the Parish Priest in the administration of the Dioceses. These also indicated that although much more needed to be done, they have attempted to develop gender programmes but have limited funding. Some Dioceses have undertaken Training of Trainers in which gender is mainstreamed. The Women Councils play an important role in both the liturgical and development of the Dioceses. In the Diocese of Mpika, the Parish has set up a Parish Financial Board and a Committee of 8 (eight) in which three (38%) are women. In this Committee, both the Chair and Secretary are males and the only female member is a signatory to the Financial Board because women are considered trustworthy especially where the handling money is concerned. St Andrews Parish Priest in Mpika argued that the Religious and the Lay women form a powerful constituency of women in the Church and are usually considered when forming various committees. However, as Fr. Joseph Besa from St. Andrews Parish in Mpika Diocese argued, “some women are not able to accept their roles due to humble education. The Parish Council Chairperson is a male, the Secretary a woman and out of four (04) Catechists³¹ only one is a woman who was chosen by the Priest. The Priest argued that it is the women who elect men in leadership positions. In these structures, if there is a Religious person, s/he is an ex-officio but Mpika Diocese does not have any Religious Group. Overall most Chairpersons at Parish level, including sub Parishes, are male.

³¹ A catechist is responsible for the formation, the foundation of the Catholic Faith. These men and women interpret the doctrine in the process of converting non-believers into the Catholic faith. This is a strategic level for mainstreaming gender and increasing the number of women in decision making.

4. *Small scale farming, entrepreneurship, small business:*

- Women's council
 - Establishment of women's council
5. Diocese-parish-small Christian communities lay organization.
- In leadership women are encouraged to hold posts
 - Women are encouraged to hold posts at diocese level
 - Promoting DCCW (Diocesan Council of Catholic Women)
 - Encourage Gender Balance in choosing leaders
6. Some Dioceses indicated that they are aware of the principle of affirmative action but have not yet applied it.

5.11: Positive Experiences/Practices on Women's Participation in Dioceses

Respondents indicated that there are positive practices that seek to promote the participation of women. Some respondents indicated ³²that the positive experiences should be seen within the "perceptions of women's roles" and within what would be acceptable by the Parish or Diocesan Bishop. "Yes the Diocese has positive practices to promote women, but the practices must not be seen to be better than a Priest. Any practices at all must have the priest as a final authority in decision making."

1. **Interest in gender equality enhanced:** As a result of the participatory processes used in the data collection process through methodologies such as focus group discussions, participants in the various Dioceses evidently demonstrated keen interest in the issue of not only women's participation in the Diocesan activities but in gender: the roles and responsibilities of women and men, boys and girls in Diocesan development. This finding is important in that interest has been generated on the issue and this is fundamental to the process of taking gender mainstreaming forward. Respondents reflected deeper on the significance of women's participation in decision making. Some male respondents felt that men should be challenged and mobilized to take a more active role in the activities of the Dioceses.
2. **Women taking key leadership positions such as Parish Council or Parish Development Committee Chairpersons.** Roma Parish in Lusaka for example had a woman for Parish Council Chairperson for many years. Navutika (Mary Mother of God Parish) showed that women were key in that committee where the Chairperson, the Secretary and the Vice and Treasurer were all women with a man as a vice treasurer. All the active women in this group indicated that they had gone through some sensitization and training. As a result of the training, they were able to speak up and contribute in the various activities of the Parish and were also able to lobby and advocate some changes at the Parish level. The Female

³² Lay Respondent, Chipata Diocese, 2011

Catechist demonstrated high leadership qualities and was articulate during the data collection process. As a Catechist, she is responsible for the formation programme and was able to raise these critical issues of concern during the training of men and women who wished to be Catholics. The Catechist also indicated that men in the Catholic Church misinterpreted the doctrine on issues of equality. The Diocese of Monze is one of the progressive Dioceses with one Religious woman holding the position of Pastoral Coordinator and she was the only woman Pastoral Coordinator at the time of the research. The Secretary to the Bishop is also a female Religious and the Head of Health is a female lay person.

3. **Eucharist Administrators.** Some Dioceses visited argued that there are good experiences regarding the participation of women in the Church activities. One of them is the Giving of the Eucharist by the Lay persons as well as the Religious women. Once the Priests bless the Eucharist, the Religious and the Catechists and other lay persons are allowed to give the Eucharist especially in the Outstations where Priests are not always available. In situations where the Priests are present, the church members prefer to receive the Eucharist from the Clergy. In Some Dioceses like Chipata, the priests are working hard to sensitize the congregations to accept the administration of the Eucharist by the Religious and lay persons and especially women.
4. **Use of Girls as Mass Servers:** This practice used to happen in one of the Dioceses visited but was discouraged by the church members. This was identified as one of the good practices that the Church should promote. Both boys and girls should be allowed to serve during Mass so that people get used to seeing this practice and appreciate it over time.
5. **Role Modeling:** The Diocese of Monze has used a female Religious Person as a Pastoral Coordinator, the only one nationwide. It was suggested that more women should occupy those positions and if possible a 50:50 approach should be adopted for every level of decision making. Respondents argued that it should be possible for the Dioceses to change the rules to mainstream the concept of equity and equality. The only Female Pastoral Coordinator in the Country is working at the Diocese of Monze. In general the factors advanced for having fewer women in leadership positions were partly associated with discrimination, limited capacity among Lay women. In the case of the Religious, there are many women with professional qualifications and in some cases, the Religious women are in some cases more qualified than the Priests.
6. **Caritas Role as a Development Promoter.** Caritas at national level as well as the departments in the various Dioceses showed that the department has been able to challenge issues of equality and discrimination for women and men in development.

Example of Diocesan Development Office Staff (Cairns) by Gender

Cairns Monze

Diocesan Development Commission: 11 - 5 women and 6 men (Comprises Parish, Religious and Lay Persons)

Chairperson Male (Priest)

Secretary, Development Promoter

The Office

The Development Office in Monze is headed by a male Development Promoter. His structure is under the Development Commission under the Bishop's office. The Promoter is de facto employed by the Bishop. On the day to day functioning, the promoter has a management team.

The Management Team: The management has 50:50 gender representation comprising the Promoter who is a lay person, the Administrator (a Religious female), an Advocacy Officer (Clergy (Priest)) and a Training Officer, a lay female person. The office also has a Technical Person.

Technical Staff: These are staff and Diocesan Development Animators, and the structure has 50:50 representations of women and men. Respondents indicated that in their last employment, there was a deliberate search for women.

Administration: The Administrator, a female Religious works as a Finance Officer and the Assistant Accountant is a lay female. The Secretary, Transport Officer and Office Assistants are all women.

Youths: Mostly girls participate in church activities but on their own communities have developed the principle of 50:50 representations.

In communities, they allow alternating in leadership positions. Where a woman is the Chairperson of a Project Committee, the vice would be a man. In most communities the Chairpersons are women since they are the active participants. Communities decided to have more women to avoid high rates of absenteeism by the Chairpersons. Where the Chair is a man, the vice has to be a woman and vice versa. The practice has evolved over time due to the community trainings which focus on the *Family as a Development Unit*. The concept of *Family as a Development Unit* was identified as one of the progressive approaches that has promoted the participation of women in Diocesan Activities and has contributed to change in the communities.

Respondents indicated that while the concept of Gender in the past had divided families, the communities in which the concept has been applied have rated the incorporation as progressive. The Communities where it was applied, there were signs that men and women in the various groups were sharing roles with men at household levels and in community based structures, men, women and children were working together as family units. Also attributed to *Family as a Development Unit approach* were the increased number of women in leadership roles and the doing and taking notes of meetings. Women were always speaking up and had their voices and opinions heard during community meetings. The approach was gradually addressing men's household power relations, decision-making between women and men, boys and girls, such as issues of access to resources, decision-making and participation patterns of women and men, boys and girls in development activities. The Approach also deliberately recognizes the roles and responsibilities of young men and women in decision making structures.

Source: Interview with Development Promoter, 2012

The example above showed some positive results, demonstrating that sharing of roles and gender mainstreaming can be enhanced at the Diocesan levels. The examples from Caritas Monze (See above BOX) and Caritas Chipata as well as the Caritas National Office show that the Lay women and men, Religious (women and men) and Priests and Bishops can equitably share roles and responsibilities.

7. **Pastoral Coordinators:** Pastoral Coordinators too have undertaken some programmes aimed at empowering women and men, boys and girls to challenge the various discriminatory practices within the Church as part of their call to integral evangelization. Although there is still some more work to be done, during elections, Dioceses indicated that Pastoral people together with Catholic Commission for Justice Development and Peace (CCJDP) have encouraged women to accept the roles they want. The Dioceses should thus intensify the gender sensitization to encourage women and men to participate in leadership positions and decision making in the various Diocesan structures.

At St. Atnazio Parish in Chipata, the Parish Team showed that the Religious and the Ordained as well as the Lay are able to work together. There is a Parish Priest and also a Parish Sister who work together in managing the Parish activities as well as the activities at the Outstations despite the fact that two (02) out of the eight (08) Parish Executive members are women. This team indicated that the SCC committees are male-dominated but there are efforts towards promoting equity at different levels.

5.12 Barriers to Women's Participation in Diocesan Activities

- 1) *Culture:* The Dioceses acknowledged the role of culture in influencing the participation patterns of women and girls, men and boys in the Church activities. For example, in Chipata Diocese, respondents indicated that families follow Ngoni succession patterns in which girls are not allowed to participate in the succession process. The men and women from these communities are the leaders in the Church. As a result, they bring in their patriarchal traditional knowledge, beliefs and practices to the Church setting. Women are bound by their own culture and with their lack of exposure, women are in the forefront advocating and choosing the men to take up the leadership positions in the Church. In the Dioceses visited, early marriages were found to be a big challenge. These are the youths that once they join the Church, are denied leadership positions because they lack adequate knowledge and skills to assume those roles. Some respondents argued that the Church has to interrogate culture if they have to promote equity and equality.
2. *Attitudes:* Attitudes were identified as some of the key challenges that affect the participation of women in the church activities. The mind-set or mentality of the Christians as one respondent called it is one of the major problems affecting participation of women and girls in the Church. Respondents argued further that elders in the Church are part of the conservatism of the Church and recommended that the Church deliberately mobilizes the boys and girls to sensitize them not only in the doctrine and practice of the Church but also gender justice.
3. *The Religious and Lay women have* fundamentally no position in the Diocese as they are not considered as part of that structure with the argument that they can be invited by the Bishop

to work in the Diocese in any of the service delivery portfolios such as Education, Health and Home Based Care. Since the women; The Religious and the Lay, are outside the strategic decision making structures and positions, it is the clergy (Priests and the Bishops) within the Diocesan Curia³³ who should put in place policies that should compel practitioners to ensure equitable representation of women and men in all decision making structures within the Catholic Church. The women have attempted to speak including seeking intervention from the “*United Nations*” but in vain. The argument that not many women can stand in-front and preach was considered “*cheap preach*” by Priests and Religious women who argued for equality principle to be effected. Some respondents have argued that “*women are not ignorant*” “*given chances, they can perform to excellence.*” Both the Religious and the Lay have argued that they have been given chances before but “*not to their expectations*” and that “*women are too often given cheap roles*” which are “*not fundamental*” to the much required transformation towards a Church that is just for all.

Some respondents indicated that the some Religious Groups which function as autonomous with their own Constitutions have depicted the extreme form of discrimination among themselves. Practices such as excluding and ex-communicating an individual from the majority activities were cited. Some sisters, acting under the leadership of a Mother Superior have traumatized those members of the groups considered too outspoken or “*radical.*” The members are expected to be obedient failure to which they are forced to leave sisterhood or face psychological trauma.

Some Lay respondents accused the Religious Women of being gender insensitive and promoting gender based discrimination especially against the lay women. Every Diocese raised some concerns around the issue of discrimination among the Religious. In one Diocese, one lay person argued:

“I tried to be part of the diocesan workforce but was rudely replaced by a man in the health sector as Diocesan Health Co-coordinator. The women in the religious organizations are the ones who are in the fore front to pull down any women who seems to be more educated than they are to be seen to be trying to improve things in the Diocese. Inferiority complex is killing especially the GSS. Some of the Religious are hard-hearted and vindictive and would rather support a man than a woman.”³⁴

Respondents also indicated that Priests have a lot of power adding that it is the Priests together with the Bishops that can change the situation arguing that it would be worthy it to work with the Religious and the Laity. Further, it was argued that it is only the ordained that can conduct Mass with Consecration (of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ). Many respondents strongly felt that change will happen very soon as there is an increasing debate of the issue at various levels. “*As for me, I haven't met pope, the Church is just too slow but with soon change . . .*” arguing that “*the issue of ordaining a woman to priesthood is not Biblical but is tradition. The issue of tradition, not doctrine*

³³ The Diocesan Curia has no presence of women in its composition and is the key Diocesan Decision Making Structure.

³⁴ Anonymous Lay woman in one of the five Dioceses visited, 2011

were to be referred to the higher bodies and not the Synods; it is the College of Cardinals which is consultative to the Catholic Pontiff in Rome.”

4. *Use of the Bible to justify Women's Participation in the Dioceses:* It was found that both the lay persons and the clergy (Priests and Bishops) use the Bible and the Catholic Doctrines in general to exclude women from participating in certain activities. The selection of the verses was however found to be often out of context.

5. Some Clergy and Lay leaders in the Catholic Church do not see the problem regarding the participation of women. “It’s the other people who see the problem” argued one of the Diocesan Clergy. “Women are the church, they are the ones who are so many,” so how possible is it that one can talk about not including the women in the activities of the Church? At the First African Synod of Bishops, “it was proposed that women should be ordained Priests. The Synod proposed to the Roman Pontiff. The recommendation was made at the 2nd Council since the inception of Catholic Church at the Vatican I and Vatican II. By implication, the Church will have to wait till the Vatican III to table the recommendations. In the meantime, respondents argued that the Bishops should promote the participation of women and men and especially the youths in various decision making structures in accordance with the National Gender Policy (2000), SADC Protocol on Gender and Development and other international treaties and conventions. This recommendation was given in the context of the less participation of women in programme related activities and that various baselines have shown that women are not free to interface with men due to culture and traditions.

6. Need for the Clergy to Change their Mind-set : Most respondents argued that the clergy seem not willing to change or allow for debate on issues such as the ordination of women as priests. They argued further that the time will come when they (Priests and Bishops) will have to change their mind-set and succumb to the pressures from the changing times and dictates of the 21st Century.

7. “...but the women have inferiority complex.” Some respondents argued that the Catholic Church encourages women and men, boys and girls to take part in the church activities but they refuse to take up those leadership roles. The question that was asked was “*why women do not do the same as men do, take up the leadership positions, learn along the way while in positions of leadership?*” Responses by mostly men were that in situations where women take up the roles, they do not perform to the level and satisfaction to that of men. “Women fear to make mistakes” and as such, “they refuse to take up positions which they know they will not be able to deliver”. “Unlike men who volunteer easily and take up the leadership positions even if they do not qualify, women are considered to fear taking up risks”. Most male respondents argued that women can easily lead at various levels but they do not want to take risks. Some female respondents argued that they may be able to lead at SCC level in settings where there are fewer people and that they cannot participate in bigger meetings. Inferiority complex was identified as one of the reasons why women shun participating in Church activities at higher levels. A few Clergy men (Priests) held a different point of view arguing that women have excelled when given chances to lead and argued further that women are more reliable, accountable and trust worthy.

Women were also considered to volunteer easily, undertake fundamental tasks such as taking care of the orphans, the sick, the dying and Church...they were considered the Church.

8. Most women are illiterate; they cannot read and write and that affects their roles and responsibilities in the church activities. In Catholic Diocese of Mpika, it came out clearly that in most outstations, its mostly men who assume leadership roles because of lack of education among women. To assume leadership position in the Church, it is a requirement that someone has to be able to read and write and most women are unable to read and write. The effect of illiteracy was considered fundamental mostly in rural Dioceses where educated women are very few. The illiterate women, for example in Mpika, argued that the “educated” female members of the Church excluded them from participating in some activities such as workshops and conferences at national and higher levels. As a result, “the same women participated in those activities” and “continued to assume leadership positions”. The illiterate members of the Church argued that at Community levels, the local language should be the medium of communication to ensure that more women participated in the various activities of the Church. The “educated women” took advantage of the illiterate who argued “they were all equal before God” and in line with the Church teachings on “integral evangelization.”

8. Diocesan Practices: In one of the Dioceses visited, respondents argued that women that hold key positions were appointed by the Bishop and felt that the employment should be objectively done so that professional persons are employed. In the same Diocese, it was observed that the sitting arrangements were stereotypical where women and men sat separately and that the Church used to serve mass with the girls as mass servers but the congregations discouraged it. In this Diocese, one of the Priest respondents argued that the “*biggest culprits, it is us the priests who are always wanting to sideline the religious and the laity*”³⁵ and other respondents also argued that some Priests are strongly against the Religious women to take up leadership roles such as heading a Parish and that the Priests are always heading.

³⁵ Priest, Chipata Diocese, 2011

Part Six: Challenges on Women's Participation in Dioceses

Various challenges were identified by various respondents regarding the participation of women in the Catholic Dioceses in Zambia. These are summarized in the section below:

- 1. The Challenge lies within the Dioceses:** Approximately 70% of the respondents argued that the people with a bigger challenge regarding the participation of women in Diocesan structures are that “*most Priests want to be with illiterate people who cannot challenge them*” and that “*the Clergy does not want to be challenged*” and further that the “*clergy always want to find*” even with their knowledge that “men and women were created” in God’s image. Some of the reasons given were that Priests lacked *ongoing formation* to enable them to address the key emerging issues from the communities such as gender and women’s participation. The respondents argued for the ongoing formation through the training in the Seminary and the laity should be involved in Priestly formation from the Seminaries to ensure that the Church has a human face and mainstreams the issues.
- 2. Clericalism:** Too much acquisition of power by the clergy has frustrated women who make more than 50% of the Church population. The clergy, speaking in self criticism have argued that they behave as though they know it all and have been “ruling” with authority from the Vatican. This has been attributed to the Patrilineal Legacy from history where traditionally, “God is addressed as father, and this has had a disempowering effect on women in the Catholic Church and will take some time to be changed.”³⁶ Almost all decisions are influenced by the Clergy and this is associated with “tradition” within the Church. Some clergy have argued that “Christ called only male disciples” a factor which has been dismissed arguing that that was due to Jewish Tradition and that the Church today should be founded on the realities and dynamics of the context in which its operating.
- 3. “Challenges are with the Clergy and not the women.”** In interrogating the issue of women’s participation within the Catholic Church and the challenges that lay within, respondents paused this as a challenge not for the women but the clergy. That the gender issue is an issue for those in authority in the Church, those who compose the hierarchy; they are the ones that can change the situation. The clergy are considered to be the ones who are ruling with authority and hold the issue of justice in their hands. They have the duty and responsibility; they also have the power and are respected to be able to change the power dynamics between the participation of women and men, boys and girls. “Justice is in

³⁶ Clergy- Lusaka Diocese, 2011

the Church and it is from there that it shall come and be realized.” Some respondents argued that instead of using the Church as an instrument of perpetuating gender injustice, the situation should be turned around by the clergy to realize gender justice within the context of “integral evangelization” where justice for all including equal participation of women and men and representation are cardinal.

4. “Sometimes we are not given the chances to lead or not having a voice to speak up.” Most female respondents argued that women are not given the opportunity to take up leadership positions either because they are looked down upon that they cannot do anything in the Church leadership. They argued further that men were selfish as they always want to lead as they do at home. They argued that the Priests sometimes need to motivate the women by making some rules that can compel the women to take part in the various leadership positions. In Small Christian Communities, women are sidelined in decision making positions despite the fact that women do a lot of work in the running of the Church more than men. “This is mistreatment especially not to be in Parish Councils and Bishops Councils”³⁷

5. **Gender Based Violence.** In four out of the five Dioceses visited (rural Dioceses), gender based violence was identified as one of the major reasons why women do not take up leadership positions within the Church structures. The following specific factors were cited:

- “*Ikuchushiwa kubalume babo*” (*Harassment by their husbands if they took up leadership positions.*)
- “*Ukupumiwa kubalume babo*” (*Getting beaten by the men) if one continued attending meetings and especially if one took up leadership positions.*)
- “*Sometimes we are accused of having relationships with other men, including the Priests if we continue to attend Church Meetings and this was associated with jealousy from the male folks.*”

6. **The rules and regulations are not cast in stone/steel:** Advocates of change are arguing that changes have happened in history and the Church which is a major actor in demanding change from the state; in demanding an inclusive, democratic culture and practice, has to taste the dosage demanded of the state in the quest for justice for all. The Catholic Church cannot be an island but should move with the dictates of our times and respond to the need for justice for all, “we can change, yes we can.”

7. **Culture and Traditional Practices:** At the SCC level, Catechists who are responsible for the formation and are teaching the Christians- the lay non-baptized to deepen their faith, argued that there are many challenges especially in the rural areas that affect the participation of women in the church activities. In marriages, women are not regarded as

³⁷ Female Respondent.

human beings and the man is seen as the Superior in the relationship and inferiority complex at that level is considered one of the biggest challenges that are experienced in the process of trying to deepen the faith among women. Cultural beliefs that men are superior to women affect their participation and women end up failing to come out openly on most issues of concern. Respondents indicated that theory of equality and justice for all was all right at the level of theory but practice was the most difficult as the cultural and traditional practices continue to discourage women to take up their rightful roles and positions in both the Church and society. *“Men continue to be the problems as there are a lot of misunderstandings between the participation of women and men in the Church”*.

Part Seven: Concluding Observations

1. The Catholic Church is a well structured and hierarchical institution. The functioning of the various structures is governed by the Church's doctrine as described in the Canon Laws as well as the various established Biblical and Social Teachings which have evolved over the years and tested in the Catholic Church. Vatican I was very clear on the key role of the Priest but there are some changes in Vatican II in which windows were opened and traditions of particular locality were allowed such as change from preaching in Latin to preaching in local languages. This shows that although the Church is Patriarchal, it is not as rigid as it was in the past. There is increasing evidence that women can read in the Church and take leadership positions. The place of the woman in the Dioceses is small but gradually widening and some prominence is emerging. For example, in all the five Dioceses visited as well as ZEC, a good number of women are Chairpersons of key Diocesan decision making structures and many are fund-raisers for the Church. Lay persons (non priests) can hold positions for social programmes.
2. The Catholic Church seems very slow to change (Conservative).
3. The Canon Laws and the Social Teachings as well as the Bible depict equality before all human persons, men and women, boys and girls for all were created in His image. The doctrine and Theological Declarations are in place, practice does not match the doctrinal and policy pronouncements. The various practices based on their interpretations are not in concordance with doctrines and Biblical principles as well as the Catholic Social Teachings as articulated therein.
4. Overall findings from the study show that the various Diocesan structures are predominantly still insensitive to the plight of women who have remained in the periphery of the decision making structures. A few women, Religious and Lay, have taken leadership positions in the Dioceses but these are too few.
5. The various Diocesan Gender Policies are informed by the Catholic Social Teachings as well as the *National Gender Policy (2000)* and the Beijing Platform for Action (1995). At the national level, the *Gender Justice Declaration (2010)* to which Zambia Episcopal Conference (ZEC) is party and signatory to; draws heavily on the National Gender Policy as well the 2008 SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, the AU Option Protocol on Gender and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women. While this is the case, the level of knowledge about these important treaties and conventions which Zambia has signed in the Diocesan programming is a concern. It thus can be concluded that although the Church preaches Justice for all using the doctrine and the Bible, the same doctrine and the Bible are also used to deter women from participating equally in all Diocesan decision making structures. This situation is compounded by the limited levels of education for the majority of women, especially those in rural areas who are in impoverished living conditions. As a result, even in situations where some Dioceses and parishes have tried to break those barriers by encouraging women to take part in leadership, some women decline to take up those leadership positions within the Church due to lack of confidence, assertiveness due to cultural pressures from patriarchal set up. Women and men

in the Dioceses lack sufficient knowledge on gender mainstreaming in the sphere of decision making.

6. It appears that practically all Diocesan Development Programmes have challenges around the participation of women in their activities. While the Catholic Church is de facto female, its governance structures in which policies and decisions are made is predominantly male dominated. The Diocesan Development Commissions are working hard to narrow the gap between women and men in decision making structures and will only succeed with deliberate institutional arrangements that compel the various actors, policy makers and implementers alike to have gender “lens and glasses” so as to mainstream gender justice; the quest for equal participation in the Diocesan decision making structures. The Liturgical Commission should also address the gender mainstreaming issue. The best option lies in the Catholic Dioceses having one Diocesan Strategic plan which focuses on Integral Evangelization.
7. Mainstreaming of gender into the Diocesan activities remains a challenge that needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency. Dioceses are lagging behind regarding the issue of adopting strategies that deliberately puts the issue of women’s participation in decision making at the centre of Diocesan liturgical and development agenda. The 21st Century discourse has acknowledged women’s experiences and major contributions to equitable sustainable development. The Diocesan goal of achieving integral evangelization will remain an elusive goal unless women’s participation in the governance and management of the Catholic Church is recognized and supported. In the process of mainstreaming gender and gender equality issues and especially women’s participation in decision making, Catholic Dioceses in Zambia should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming in which all Diocesan policies and programmes deliberately incorporate gender in all interventions.
8. During the study, it was difficult to identify the participation patterns of women, men, boys and girls without gender disaggregated data. The immediate concern therefore for the Dioceses is to aggregate their strategic plan activities and have log frame matrix, which can be regularly revised to allow for the disaggregation of all indicators, baselines and targets by sex or gender. Ultimately, Dioceses like other development actors in Zambia, are expected (within the context of the Zambia National Gender Policy as well as the 2008 SADC Protocol on Gender and Development³⁸) to adopt the gender equality principles in their work. Once gender is explicitly counted in all Diocesan policies and strategic frameworks, it will meaningfully start to count in programming and implementation.
9. Levels of knowledge about gender and gender mainstreaming strategies are low. The Dioceses with Draft Gender Policies need to re-align their strategies within the national and regional treaties and conventions on gender and Catholic Church doctrinal statutes and policies, especially the Theological Declaration to which the Catholic Church is party.
10. Two emerging issues, namely the ordination of women into priesthood and the need to respond to the national and regional policies, treaties and conventions which demand **scaling up** actions to increase the numbers of women to 50% in all decision making structures by 2015.

³⁸ The 2008 SADC Protocol on Gender and Development stipulates that by 2015, Zambia, like the other SADC member states should have 50:50 representation in all decision making structures within state and non-state actors decision making structures.

Appendix 1: Terms of Reference of the Research
WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE CHURCH

1.0 Introduction

The Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR) is a faith based non-governmental organization operating in Zambia and Malawi, working on issues of faith and social justice. The JCTR was established more than 20 years ago in 1988 as a small in-house Jesuit Centre to reflect on social and faith issues. The Centre now does research, education and advocacy on issues that affect the day-to-day lives of Zambians with the aim of promoting the fullness of human life of all people, especially for the poor. The mission of JCTR is to foster, from a faith-inspired perspective, a critical understanding of current issues. To fulfill this mission, the JCTR works through three Programmes and an Outreach Support. The three main Programmes are the Faith and Justice Programme, Economic Equity and Development Programme, and the Conditions Programme.

This research has been commissioned by the Faith and Justice Programme of the JCTR as part of its efforts to contribute towards the resolutions and implementation of the Second Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops that took place in Rome from 04 to 25 October 2009 under the theme of "The Church in Africa at the Service of Reconciliation, Justice and Peace. 'You are the Salt of the Earth...You are the Light of the World' (Mt 5:13, 14)." Amongst the 57 Propositions recommended at the end of the Synod, Proposition 47 talked about *Women in Africa* in the following words:

Women in Africa make a great contribution to the family, society and the Church with their many talents and resources. However, not only are their dignity and contributions not fully recognized and appreciated, but are often deprived of their rights. In spite of the significant advances made in the education and development of women in some countries in Africa, the development of girls and women is often disproportionate to that of boys and men; girls and women are generally unjustly treated.

Amongst the recommendations following the highlighted problems of the often unjust treatment of women, were "the greater integration of women into Church structures and decision-making processes" and "the setting up of commissions on the Diocesan and national levels to address women's issues, to help them better carry out their mission in the Church and society."

In order to understand and appreciate fully some of the problems that women face in the Catholic Church in Zambia, the JCTR is undertaking this study to look at participation of women in the Church, particularly looking at how well women participate and are represented in decision making processes. In an often male-dominated Church in Zambia, in terms of leadership, the majority of

members are women. The research will be conducted in all the ten Dioceses of the Catholic Church in Zambia involving a representative sample and key decision makers in the Dioceses.

2.0 Objectives of the Study

The following are the objectives of the study:

- 2.1 To understand the statistical patterns of the Catholic population with disaggregated data between dioceses and between the genders;
- 2.2 To determine the levels of participation in the general activities of the Church giving clearly what kind of activities women are mostly involved in and why;
- 2.3 To determine the levels of participation of women in decision-making processes in the Church;
- 2.4 To determine how the Church in Zambia has been encouraging women to participate in Church activities (e.g., through pastoral letters, appointments, diocesan strategic plans);
- 2.5 To find out the availability of policy documents that promote the participation of women in decision making processes;
- 2.6 To determine the explicit/implicit factors that make women passive in influencing decisions in the Church;
- 2.7 To highlight the practical and ecclesial challenges that women face in fully participating in the Church;
- 2.8 To offer some recommendations on how women can greatly be involved in decision making processes.

3.0 Scope of Work

- 3.1 Do a desk review on the participation of women in Church processes. This can be done by reviewing some of the existing Church documents such as Catechism of the Catholic Church, Pastoral letters from the Catholic Bishops, the Compendium of the Catholic Social Doctrine, the Bible, and any other relevant documents.
- 3.2 Conduct a key informant interviews with people at the Catholic Secretariat, and key Church leaders in all the ten Dioceses.
- 3.3 Design and administer a questionnaire to at least 20 people in each diocese. The questionnaire should be designed in a way that it captures all the required information.
- 3.4 Analyze the data from the key informant interviews and the questionnaires
- 3.5 Write a comprehensive research report clearly outlining the following
 - 3.5.1 Historical background of participation of women in the Church and showing the disaggregated data on membership of the church in Zambia.
 - 3.5.2 Levels of participation of women in general Church activities.
 - 3.5.3 Levels of participation of women in decision making processes and in leadership positions.
 - 3.5.4 Response of the local/national church to encourage women to participate.

- 3.5.5 Challenges faced by women in participating in Church processes.
- 3.5.6 Recommendations on how well women can participate in the Church.
- 3.5.7 Write an executive summary of the research report which has clear recommendations to the Church at national and local levels

4.0 JCTR's Responsibilities

JCTR will provide the consultant with:

- 4.1 All relevant background information related to the Second African Synod.
- 4.2 Some contacts in the areas where we work especially the Outreach Support teams and the Basic Needs Basket (BNB) researchers.
- 4.3 A consultancy fee as may be agreed with the researcher.

Appendix 2 : List of Respondents

DIOCESE OF CHIPATA

BISHOPS OFFICE

1. Fr. Peter Phiri - Bishop's Secretary
2. Fr. Peter Banda - Secretary to the Bishop
3. Beatrice Namonje Mulenga
4. Michael C. Mulenga
5. Fr. Gabriel Musipu- Treasurer
6. Lawrence Kamanga Deacon
7. Macleanor Banda Focal Point- CCJDP

HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS

8. Youth Department
9. Education Department

THE RELIGIOUS GROUPS

10. Missionary Sisters of Immaculate Conception (MIC)
11. Sr. Maria Theresa Katongo, MIC, Mother Superior
12. Sr. Helene Geamme, MIC, Accountant

M'CHINI PARISH

13. Catechist
14. Parish Projects Coordinator

CARITAS

15. Fr. Vincent, Development Promoter- Caritas/Vice Chairperson Executive Association of Diocesan Clergy
16. Programme Officer, Caritas

ST ANNAZIO PARISH

17. Fr. Peter Banda Parish Priest
18. Sr. Hilda Namukonda Parish Sister
19. Fr. Vincent
20. Catechist

ST ANNE CATHEDRAL

21. Benjamin Mumba Catechist
22. Joyce M. Simonda Treasurer DCCW
23. Prisca M. Ndowa Chairperson DCL
24. Anne Munyembe Treasurer, St. Anne
25. Bether Chali Mpandamano, St Anne
26. Diana Sinkala Mpandamano, St Anne
27. Mevises Bowa St. Anne
28. Regina Bwalya Chairperson, St Anne

29. Anne Mutale	Chairperson, St Anne
30. Mary Ngoma	Chairperson, St Anne
31. Bibian Mulenga	Catechists/DCCW Member
32. Royda Kampamba	Nazareth
33. Phillipho Phiri	Choir Teresiary
34. Rosemary Chibwe	DCCW Committee Member
35. Hildah Chimba	Tersiary Secretary
36. Agness Chinsembe	Tersiary Vice Prefect
37. Margaret Mulenga	Secretary-Legion of Mary

MARY MOTHER OF GOD PARISH (NAVUTIKA)

(Focus Group Discussion)

38. Ephraim Sakala	Chairperson-St. Mary's
39. Sipilato Banda	V/Chairperson-D.V
40. Papias Sakala	V/Chairperson -St. Annazio
41. Catherine Chipeta	V/Chairperson- Mchini
42. Beatrice Phiri	Secretary- Legio
43. Regina Mutale	Chairperson- St. John
44. Florence Ngwenya	Secretary- C.W.L.
45. Catherine Mitti	Matron-Youth Group
46. Mathews Banda	V/TRS-D.V

MARY MOTHER OF GOD SUB-PARISH

47. Lilian Mumba	Catechist
48. Julius Banda	DE
49. Edix Nkhata	Chairperson-Parish
50. Mary Chipandwe	V/Chairperson-Parish
51. Paul M. Mwale	Parish Secretary

DIOCESE OF MONZE

52. Bishop Emilio Partriarca	Monze Diocese
53. Father Sebastian Milimo	Vicar General and Parish Priest (Pemba)
54. Sr. Mshael Manianga	Pastoral Coordinator
55. Sister Marcelina Haazele	The Bishop's Secretary
56. Mr. Solomon Phiri	Promoter of Development ((DPC member)
57. Mrs Gertrude Malambo	Gender Programme Manager and Training Officer
58. Father Raphael Mweempw,	Priest in Charge Manungu church
59. Parish Council members	Manungu Church
60. Father Kenan Chibawe	Parish Priest Cathedral Church (he is also Dean of Monze/Diocesan Parish Council)
61. Father Kenneth J. Munsanya	Parish Priest Assumption Parish. He is also a member of the Diocesan Parish Council
62. Members of the SCC, Catechists	
63. Women and men lay leaders, Parish Project Coordinators (HBC)	
64. Parish Council members	

CHURCH COUNCIL EXECUTIVE

65. Mr. Martin Mwala	Chairperson
66. Mrs Julian Himoonga	V/ Chairperson
67. Mrs Harriet Kangumu	Treasurer
68. Mr. Lamek Kumalo	V/ Treasurer
69. Mr George Moonga	Secretary
70. Mr Mike Milimo	V/Secretary
71. Mrs Margaret Mulukisi	C/Member
72. Miss Angelina Hanungu	C/Member
73. Mr Moses Sankondo	C/Member
74. Mrs Felistus Kabwe	C/Member

ST FRANCIS SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

75. Mr Moses Sankondo	Chairperson
76. Mr Funny Ngoma	V/ Chairperson
77. Mrs Margaret Mulukisi	Secretary
78. Mr Owen Kwibisa	V/ Secretary
79. Mr Griffin Sibanda	Treasurer
80. Mrs Brenda Ngoma (Late)	V/ Secretary
81. Mrs Selina Nzala	C. member
82. Mrs Patricia Muzhandu	C. member
83. Mrs Theresa Chisanga	C. member

ST VERONICA SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

84. Mr Simon Chimuka	Chairperson
85. Veronica Hanene	V/ Chairperson
86. Miss Angelina Hanungu	Treasurer
87. Mr Kennedy Sikanyika	V/ Treasurer
88. Mr Conceptor Moonga	Secretary
89. Anna Mandali	V/Secretary
90. Christine Malambo	C/Member
91. Anna Chimuka	C/Member
92. Edward Simutowe	C/Member
93. Florence Lungu	C/Member

ST KIZITO SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

94. Mr Mike Mzinga	Chairperson
95. Mrs Emma Mazuba	V/ Chairperson
96. Mrs Felistus Kabwe	Treasurer
97. Mrs Dube	V/ Treasurer
98. Mrs Mzinga	Secretary
99. Miss Joyce Lukosha	V/Secretary

100. Ms Euginia Hanzala	C/Member
101. Ms Bester Mafonko	C/Member
102. Mr Dube	C/Member
103. Mr Jerico	C/Member

ST STEVEN SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

104. Eneless Chimweta	Chairperson
105. Mr Kangumu	V/ Chairperson
106. Lita Namalambo	Treasurer
107. Getrude Muzike	V/ Treasurer
108. Mrs Harriet Kangumu	Secretary
109. Mrs Gladys Chibala	V/Secretary
110. Mr Katongo E. Namatama	C/Member
111. Mrs Veronica Mwiinga	C/Member
112. Felistus Nalukwi	C/Member

ST. CHARLES LWANGA SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

113. Mrs Alice Himakoma	Chairperson
114. Pascalina Hamakando	Treasurer
115. Loveness Makubilo	Secretary
116. Ivy Mufumbwa	V/Secretary
117. Maxswen Mulumbwa	C/Member
118. Stanely Lwiindi	C/Member

ST. ANNA SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

119. Mr Lamek Kumaso	Chairperson
120. Mr s Eva Mukosa	V/ Chairperson
121. Mrs Selina Kumalo	Treasurer
122. Mrs Angelina Sitali	C/Member
123. Miss Margaret Harreta	C/Member
124. Mr Frank Mbata	C/Member
125. Mrs Sally Mbata	C/Member
126. Miss Alice Murosa	C/Member

ST. JOHN SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

127. Mr Eugene Mainza	Chairperson
128. Rosemary M. Hanyinde	V/ Chairperson
129. Christine Malambo	Treasurer
130. Violet Mwamba	V/ Treasurer
131. Annet Hamaralu	Secretary
132. Gwen Makondo	V/Secretary

133.Phales Miyanda	C/Member
134.Hilda Chuulu	C/Member
135.Elizabeth Nosiku	C/Member
136.Augustine Hasende	C/Member

ST. MONICA SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

137.Mr Martin Mwala	Chairperson
138.Mr V. Maanya	V/ Chairperson
139.Miss Lida Muchindu	Treasurer
140.Miss Hambulo	V/ Treasurer
141.Mrs Mulimo	Secretary

ST. JACOBS SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

142.Mr R. Chirwa	Chairperson
143.Grace Mulenga	V/ Chairperson
144.Mrs Mbinga	Treasurer
145.Mrs Grace Mwananyambe	V/ Treasurer
146.Steven Mumba	Secretary

ST. JOSEPH SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

147.Mary Himpwali	Chairperson
148.Doris Hamwene	V/Chairperson Treasurer
149. Treza Kanyande	Secretary
150.Ivy Mufumbwa	V/Secretary
151.Maxswen Mulumbwa	C/Member
152. Stanely Lwiindi	C/Member

ST. PETER SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

153.Mrs Julian Himoonga	Chairperson
154.Saria Monze	V/ Chairperson
155.Eneless Hanyinde	Treasurer
156.Mr Patrick Ng'andu	Secretary
157.Anna Cheelo	V/Secretary
158.Emelda Musika	C/Member
159.Jessy Ngoma	C/Member
160.Mary Ngoma	C/Member
161.Evanis Hampande	C/Member
162.Vaida Munkombwe	C/Member

LEGION OF MARY

163.Elizabeth Nosiku	Chairperson
164.Regina Milimo	V/Chairperson

165.Christine Malambo Secretary
166.Dorothy Chimuka Treasurer

NAZARETH GROUP

167.Margaret Mulukisi Chairperson
168.Edina Mizinga V/Chairperson
169.Justina Schiyasa Secretary
170.Christeta Mulangu V/Secretary
171.Gladys Muleya Treasurer
172.Violet Mwamba V/Treasurer
173.Lessy Maanya C/Member
174.Doris Hikabasa C/Member

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175.Moses Sankondo Chairperson
176.Rosemary M Haanyinde V/Chairperson
177.Agness Malambo Secretary
178.Macswin Mulumbwa V/Secretary
179.Josephine Malende Treasurer
180.Rosa Malambo C/Member
181.Euphrazia Buumba C/Member
182.Eneless Chimweta C/Member
183.Feliter Nalukwi C/Member
184.Dickson Kamona C/Member

LITURGY GROUP

185.Christine Malambo Chairperson
186.Julian Himoonga V/Chairperson
187.George Moonga Secretary
188.Vinus Sankondo V/Secretary
189.Shildah Nzala Treasurer
190.Annah Mandali C/Member
191.Angelina Sitali C/Member

DIOCESE OF MONGU

192.Father Robert Lavertu Diocesan Pastoral Coordinator
193.Sister Assumpta Choongo Zambia Association of Sisterhood also Secretary to the Bishop
194.Nazareth Group- 12 Women
195.Mrs Francesca Mubita Deanery Treasurer
196.Mrs Catherine Akapelwa Deanery Vice Chairperson
197.Mrs Agness

ARCHDIOCESE OF LUSAKA

- 198.Mrs Margaret Gondwe Chairperson Lusaka Arch Diocese
199.Mrs Margaret Kapihya Vice Chairperson Lusaka Arch Diocese
200.National Council for Catholic Women members

ARCHDIOCESE OF MPIKA

- 201.Fr. Daniel Kashimoto Pastoral Coordinator
202.Fr. Patrick Chibuye Caritas Director
203.Fr. Joseph Besa St. Andrews Parish
204. Rita Mwale Caritas-Governance
205.Joy Tasha Caritas-Governance
206.Peggy Simwanza Caritas-Governance
207.Beatrice Namonje Mulenga Marriage and Family Life Officer- Department of Marriage and Family
208.Micheal C. Mulenga Marriage and Family Life Officer- Department of Marriage and Family

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION (DIFFERENT LAY GROUPS)- Diocese of Mpika

- 209.Davy Lombanya Accountant, Home Based Care
210.Jennifer Kaluba Office Accountant, HBC
211.Priscilla Kazembe Accountant- Caritas
212.Sr. Anna Phiri Livelihood Officer
213.Exilda Chisongo M and E-Caritas
214.Arnold Chalwe Programme Officer, HBC
215.Douglas Simbaya Driver, CRS
216.James Yala Caritas Driver
217.Susan Namwinga Accountant Clerk/Secretary
218.Violet Manyatela Banda M and E, HBC
219.Emmanuel Chiluba Programme Coordinator, HBC

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC WOMEN (NCCW)

- 220.Ms Christine Katungulu Christ the King Parish, NCCW Chairperson
221.Ms Mary Phiri Christ the King Parish, NCCW Secretary
222.Ms Janet Ngoma Mandevu Parish
223.Ms Edina Musadabwe Chainda Parish, Chairperson- ACCW
224.Astrida M. Mulaisho Chunga Parish, Vice-Chairperson-ACCW
225.Dorica Kasesha Chongwe Parish . Secretary- ACCW
226.Annie N. Chindele Roma Parish
227.Theresa C. Chileshe Mandevu Parish
228.Emma Kaira Roma Parish
229.Anna Chansa St. Charles Lwanga Parish, St. Anna
230.Rose Mwansa Roma Parish, NCCW – Treasurer
231.Mary Lange St Charles Lwanga Parish (Regiment)

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Research Paper

Advocacy on Gender Equality and Inclusivity

2010

Women's Participation in The Catholic Church

Machila, Margaret

Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection

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<https://repository.jctr.org.zm/handle/20.500.14274/93>

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