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WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

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ABOUT THE SERIES

One of the central tools for achieving gender parity is to increase women's presence in spaces of political representation. Even when greater representation is achieved, however, a central question remains: will having more women in decision-making positions result in more gender-sensitive policies? The CPPF Working Papers on Women in Politics series looks at how four different regions—the Asia-Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East and North Africa, and sub-Saharan Africa—have encouraged women's political participation, and it evaluates the success of these efforts, examining the correlation between wider participation and changes in the political agenda, and noting specific policy measures that have been implemented and that may be needed to overcome barriers to gender parity.

WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

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One of the most interesting developments in African politics since the mid-1990s has been the increase in women's political participation. Women are becoming more politically engaged and seeking representation at all levels, from local government to legislatures and even executive office. To state the obvious, access to political power is important to groups that have historically been excluded from formal and informal politics because it means being able to have control over basic decisions affecting one's life in areas including health, education, and access to land and resources, among many others. Many women seek power to affect how justly resources are divided in society and how equitably policy decisions are made.

This study looks at explanations for changing patterns in women's political engagement in sub-Saharan Africa, focusing on legislatures (largely based on data considerations). It examines both the factors that have facilitated these changes and the obstacles to women's further participation, as well as the consequences of these developments, especially as they influence the advancement of women's rights. It draws on existing research, along with analysis of data obtained from Afrobarometer surveys, International Parliamentary Union, IDEA, and several other databases. It focuses primarily

on four cases—Botswana, Rwanda, Senegal, and Uganda—but draws on cross-national evidence and other cases as well.

The four cases provide a useful means to analyze some of the factors driving women's political engagement throughout Africa. Botswana and Uganda share a British colonial heritage, while Senegal is a former French colony, and Rwanda was part of German East Africa and, later, together with Burundi, a Belgian protectorate. With respect to religion, Uganda is predominantly Christian with a Muslim minority population; Botswana and Rwanda are primarily Christian; and Senegal is predominantly Muslim. The countries also represent regional variation: Uganda is in East Africa, Senegal in West Africa, Botswana in southern Africa, and Rwanda in Central Africa. Rwanda is regarded as an authoritarian regime and Botswana as a democracy. Uganda falls on the spectrum between the two poles as a semi-authoritarian regime, as does Senegal, as a semi-democracy. Uganda is a post-conflict country, as is Rwanda, which suffered a massive genocide in 1994, while Senegal has experienced a rebellion in the southern Casamance region. Botswana, in contrast, is regarded as stable. Senegal, Uganda, and Rwanda have all signed and ratified the 2003 African Union Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, also known as the Maputo Protocol, but Botswana has not signed it, even though forty-six other states have done so, and twenty-eight have ratified it. All four countries have ratified the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), as have all African countries except for Sudan and Somalia, which have not signed it. South Sudan has signed the treaty but has yet to ratify.

The four countries fall along a spectrum in terms of per capita gross domestic product (GDP), with Rwanda, Uganda, and Senegal at one end, with per capita incomes of \$1,102, \$1,251, and \$1,730, respectively (according to 2010 data from the Human Development Report), and Botswana at the other, recording \$13,462 per capita (United Nations Development Programme 2013). Similarly, the four are dependent on net flow of foreign assistance to varying degrees, with Botswana the least dependent, receiving \$157 million a year, compared to Uganda's \$1.73 billion, Rwanda's \$1.034 billion, and Senegal's \$931 million (Economic Commission on Africa 2012).

In sum, these countries capture many of the relevant dimensions of this study and serve well to illustrate the cross-national findings.

CHANGING PATTERNS OF POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

African countries have some of the world's highest rates of female political representation. In 2003, Rwanda claimed the world's highest ratio of women to men in parliament, and today Rwandan women hold 64 percent of the country's legislative seats. In Senegal, Seychelles, and South Africa, women hold more than 40 percent of parliamentary seats, compared with more than 35 percent in Angola, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Uganda. Across the continent, the rates of women in parliament tripled between 1990 and 2010. We are now seeing a diffusion of these sub-Saharan trends into northern Africa and, especially, the Maghreb, where women parliamentarians in Algeria hold 32 percent of the seats, in Tunisia 27 percent, in Mauritania 22 percent, and in Morocco and Libya 17 percent, mainly as a result of electoral quotas. These trends in the Maghreb are distinct from what we see in other parts of the Middle East, where the rates of female legislative representation are generally much lower. Finally, women are speakers of the house in one-fifth of African parliaments, which is higher than the world average of 14 percent (see appendix).

These patterns are evident in other areas of government as well. Before 2000, only nine women had run as presidential candidates in Africa, and only three had served as heads of state. Carmen Pereira was briefly acting head of state in Guinea Bissau in 1984; Ruth Perry served as chair of the Council of State of Liberia in 1996; and Sylvie Kinigi served briefly as president in Burundi in 1993–94. Since 2000, at least sixty-three women have run as presidential candidates in Africa (see appendix). The majority (twenty-two out of twenty-seven, or 81.5 percent) polled less than 1 percent of the vote (Adams 2008). It is interesting to note that most women running as presidential candidates come from countries with very low percentages of women in legislatures, with a heavy preponderance in West and Central Africa.

Six women in all have served as heads of state. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf became the first elected female head of state when she took over the presidency of Liberia in 2006; she won reelection in 2011. Four others served as acting heads of state, and Joyce Banda, who was vice president of Malawi, took over as president when the former president died in 2012.

Of the few women who have been executives, a disproportionate number gained prominence during moments of instability and political uncertainty.

These patterns are also found globally, although generally the circumstances are characterized less by instability and more as moments of flux and transition (Jalalzai 2008). Sylvie Kinigi acted as president in Burundi following the murder of president Melchior Ndadaye in October 1993. Agathe Uwilingiyimana served as prime minister of Rwanda from 1993 until her death on April 7, 1994, during the Rwandan genocide. According to the UN commander Roméo Dallaire's book, *Shake Hands with the Devil* (2005), she and her husband surrendered to the presidential guard to save the lives of her children, who eventually escaped to Switzerland. Ruth Perry led the National State Council of Liberia that governed the country after the ouster of president Samuel Doe. The most recent examples of this pattern include the election of Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf in 2005, after years of conflict, and Catherine Samba-Panza's selection as interim president in the Central African Republic in the midst of civil strife in 2014.

Thus, the changing of opportunity structures is making the ascent of women increasingly likely, as evidenced by the end of conflict in Liberia, where women voters' electoral activism was evident as they rallied in large numbers to support and campaign for Johnson-Sirleaf, and by the expansion of democracy in Malawi. A perception also prevails—regardless of the reality—that women represent a new style of leadership, especially in dealing with corruption, conflict, and the ills of the past.

Since 1975, twelve women have been vice presidents of African countries; of them, Wandera Kazibwe of Uganda served the longest, for ten years. Since 1993, nine prime ministers have also been women, of whom Luísa Días Diogo of Mozambique held the position the longest (six years). Many of the nine filled the positions only briefly or in an acting capacity because their countries were going through transitions or periods of uncertainty (see appendix).

Currently, women are taking over key ministerial positions in defense, finance, and foreign affairs, which is a departure from the days in which they primarily led the so-called "softer" ministries of education, community development, sports, and youth. Today, for example, South Africa has a female defense minister, Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, and Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala is Nigeria's finance minister. Women hold close to or more than 40 percent of ministerial positions in South Africa, Cape Verde, Burundi, and Uganda. Of the ten countries with the highest percentages of women in the cabinet,

six are post-conflict countries, once again suggesting that post-conflict dynamics influence women's leadership in distinct ways.

Women are visible in regional bodies as well. They make up 50 percent of the African Union (AU) Parliament, and in July 2012, South Africa's Nkosazana Dhlamini-Zuma took over the leadership of the African Union Commission. From 2004 to 2009, Gertrude Mongella of Tanzania chaired the AU's Pan-African Parliament as the first president of the body. Fatoumata Ceesay from Gambia heads up the Parliament of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), made up of fifteen member states, and Margaret Nantongo Zziwa is speaker of the East African Legislative Assembly. One sees similar changes in the judiciary, with women magistrates advancing to the top levels. African women judges are even making it into the international arena, with Fatou Bensouda from Gambia as the chief prosecutor in the International Criminal Court. Curiously, all but one of the current five African judges on the ICC are women.¹

At the local level, women hold almost 60 percent of government positions in Lesotho and Seychelles; they represent 43 percent of the members of local councils or municipal assemblies in Namibia; and they fill over one-third of local government seats in Mauritania, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Uganda.

ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION

The changes in the electorate are less striking. In general, men seem to vote at slightly higher rates than women—on average, roughly 2 percent more in countries surveyed by Afrobarometer. In Botswana and South Africa, however, consistently more women than men have voted since 1999, and the gender gap has lessened in Malawi and Tanzania since 1999, according to Afrobarometer. In Botswana in 2009, 403,000 women registered to vote, compared to just 320,000 men (Ntibinyane 2011), and more women than men voted in Lesotho and Senegal, according to the 2008 Afrobarometer survey. Similar rates of men and women reported voting in Cape Verde (80 percent) and Mauritius (87 percent) in 2012 (see table 1).

TABLE 1. Voting Patterns by Gender, 2012

	Men	Women	All
Benin	92%	84%	88%
Botswana	61%	63%	62%
Cape Verde	80%	80%	80%
Ghana	78%	73%	75%
Kenya	76%	71%	73%
Liberia	92%	86%	89%
Malawi	79%	77%	78%
Mauritius	87%	87%	87%
South Africa	72%	75%	74%
Uganda	85%	81%	83%
Total	80%	78%	79%

Source: Afrobarometer Survey, 2012.
www.afrobarometer.org.

Given the limited number of countries for which data are available, generalizing for the whole continent is difficult. The smallest differences in voting levels between men and women do seem to be found in southern Africa, however, given that more women than men vote in Botswana, Lesotho, and South Africa, and that, in 2008, only 1 percent more men than women voted in Malawi and 1.4 percent more in Namibia, and in Mauritius the rates were the same.

FACTORS INFLUENCING REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN LEGISLATURES

Women's political representation in legislative bodies generally has been associated with the type of electoral system (with proportional representation systems having positive effects); the introduction of quotas; party and district magnitude; the use of open or closed party lists; regime type; levels of economic growth; and prevalent cultural attitudes, particularly dominant ideologies, religious beliefs, and egalitarian attitudes.

In Africa, however, proportional representation systems, democracy, economic growth, and cultural factors—while still significant—are of less importance than they are in other parts of the world in explaining women's

representation. The extensive use of reserved seats in plurality systems means proportional representation is not as important in accounting for women's legislative representation as it is in Europe, for example. Also, the use of quotas in Africa's many new hybrid regimes (neither fully democratic nor authoritarian) has created new mechanisms for women to advance politically in countries that are not democratic. Moreover, culture, particularly ideology and religion, plays less of a role than it once did, especially with the increased use of quotas after the mid-1990s.

The main dynamics driving women's political empowerment in Africa generally have to do with the following:

- Institutional factors—for example, the influence of proportional representation systems, but, most importantly, the introduction of quotas
- The emergence of autonomous domestic women's movements with political opening after the 1990s
- The willingness of international donors, peacekeepers, and UN agencies to advance women's rights agendas, with women's rights advocates themselves using international institutions to advance their causes at the national level
- Post-conflict impacts, which have played an increasingly important role since 2000. The decline in conflict after the mid-1990s created new opportunity structures (for instance, peacekeeping negotiations, constitutions, and elections) through which women could assert their interests. Conflicts themselves transformed gender relations and roles, regardless of whether women played roles as fighters or peacemakers.

While the discussion that follows focuses on women in legislatures, many of the same dynamics apply to changes in the executive, local government, the judiciary, and other institutions that have received far less attention than legislatures in Africa.

Electoral System

In Africa as in other parts of the world, the electoral system is an important determinant of women's representation, with proportional representation resulting in higher rates of women in parliament than other systems (Hughes and Tripp 2010; see table 2).

TABLE 2. Types of Electoral Systems and Women in Parliament

	Average Percentage of Women in Parliament	Number of Countries
Party List Proportional Representation	24	14
Plurality	16	28
Mixed	30	4
Other	14	2
All	20	48

Quotas

The gradual increase of female representation in Scandinavia, which was the model when the Nordic countries alone were enjoying high rates of female representation, has now been replaced by what Danish political scientist Drude Dahlerup has called the "fast track" model. This is evident in African countries, which have experienced dramatic jumps in female parliamentary representation, primarily through the adoption of electoral quotas (Bauer 2012; Britton 2005; Dahlerup 2006; Geisler 2004; Goetz and Hassim 2003; Tamale 1999; Tripp 2000; Tripp et al. 2009). Quotas became especially popular after 1995, the year of the UN Fourth Conference on Women in Beijing, which adopted a platform of action that encouraged member states to promote the leadership of women in all spheres. In the decades leading up to 1995, only six countries in sub-Saharan Africa had adopted quotas, while today a preponderance of sub-Saharan African countries have them.

Three types of quotas have generally been adopted, two of which are commonly used in Africa. *Reserved seats* or *women's lists*, mandated by constitutions or legislation or both, set aside seats in the legislature for which only women can compete. This approach guarantees from the outset, prior to the election, that a predetermined percentage of seats will be held by

women. In the second arrangement, parties themselves *voluntarily adopt a quota*, with or without a constitutional or legal mandate, to ensure greater female representation. This approach is often, although not always, also successful, depending on the parties' level of commitment.

Finally, a third arrangement involves *compulsory quotas*, in which legislation requires all parties to include a certain percentage of women on their candidate lists. They generally do not mandate where the women should be placed on the lists, which is crucial to the success of such a provision, as candidates closer to the top have much better chances of being elected. Few such arrangements are found in Africa. They tend to be the less successful mechanisms because they are imposed on parties, which may not comply or may find ways to put women further down on their party lists. The larger numbers of reserved seats and reliance on voluntary quotas in African countries means they have often enjoyed greater success than most with the adoption of quotas. Those countries with the highest rates of female representation tend to have them: women claim almost 24 percent of parliamentary seats on average in countries with quotas, compared to an average of 14 percent in those without them. The countries adopting reserved seats and legislative quota systems have, on average, 24 percent of their seats held by women, while those with party quota systems have 23 percent (see table 3).

TABLE 3. Average Percentage of Women in Parliament by Quota Type

Legislated Quota	Reserved Seats	Party Quota	No Quota
24%	24%	23%	14%

In general, countries with proportional representation systems are most likely to adopt voluntary party quotas, while those with plurality/majoritarian systems are mostly likely to adopt reserved seats (Laserud and Taphorn 2007). In Africa, however, no such distinct association is apparent between quota types and electoral systems (see table 4).

TABLE 4. Relationship between Electoral System and Quota Type

	Party Quotas	Legislated Quotas	Reserved Seats
Electoral System	4	1	4
First Past the Post	4	1	3
List Proportional Representation		1	
Party Block Vote	4		2
Other	12	3	9

Data Sources: www.quotaproject.org/; Reynolds, Reilly, and Ellis (2004); and African Elections Database, <http://africanelections.tripod.com/>.

Note: Some quota systems overlap.

With regard to regime type, little difference is evident among those African countries with the highest rates of representation (see table 5). On average, women in democracies hold 18 percent of the seats, while in hybrid and authoritarian regimes they hold 20 percent and 19 percent, respectively. Authoritarian regimes and democracies are equally likely to adopt quotas, although hybrid regimes are slightly less likely to do so. No statistically significant correlation is apparent between regime type and levels of female representation, or between regime type and adoption of quotas. There is a relationship, however, between regime type and type of quota adopted, with democracies most likely to adopt party quotas and authoritarian regimes most likely to adopt reserved seats.

TABLE 5. Relationship between Regime Type and Quota Type

Regime type	Frequency of Quota Type			
	<i>Party Quotas</i>	<i>Legislated Quotas</i>	<i>Reserved Seats</i>	<i>No Quotas</i>
Democratic	4	0	0	4
Hybrid	1	3	5	14
Authoritarian	3	1	5	8

Finally, no particular correlation has been found between region and quota adoption (Hughes and Tripp 2010).

Democratization

Democratization in Africa has been shown to correlate negatively with women's political representation in cross-sectional analysis because of the many nondemocratic countries adopting quotas (Paxton 1997; Tripp and Kang 2008). Longitudinal analysis suggests, however, that while the expansion of civil liberties in the early 1990s did not start out affecting women's representation, it proved to be an influence over time. One explanation is that the political opening that began in the 1990s created space for civil society actors like women's organizations to press for greater inclusion (Paxton et al. 2010; Hughes and Tripp 2010). Indeed, most qualitative studies in Africa have linked the changes in women's representation to the democratizing trends that swept the continent at that time (Bauer and Britton 2006; Fallon 2008). Lindberg (2004) has shown how women's representation increased with each of three rounds of elections between 1989 and 2003, and Yoon (2004) found democratization increased the number of women in national legislatures between 1990 and 2001, especially in countries with proportional representational systems that had adopted quotas.

As suggested above, the role of women's movements has been especially important in taking advantage of democratic openings. In Senegal, the campaign for gender parity was spearheaded by Conseil Senegalais des Femmes (the Senegalese Council of Women, or COSEF), which was formed in 1995 to bring women politicians together with the women's movement. In 1998, it began raising the issue of quotas with various political parties, which promised to implement them. But after the 1998 elections it was evident that moral commitment was insufficient, and COSEF decided it needed a legal means to bring about parity. Abdoulaye Wade, who became president of Senegal in 2000, had made campaign promises regarding gender parity, and COSEF seized on this moment to advance the issue. In 2004 under Wade, Senegal signed the Maputo Protocol, which includes a provision around gender parity, and added it to its constitution.

COSEF then launched the "Together, let's strengthen democracy with gender parity!" campaign in 2005. It received input from various legal and constitutional experts and worked together with the Ministry of Women to get parity introduced into parliamentary elections, although leaders of the movement, like COSEF president Fatou Kiné Diop, claimed their independence from the ministry gave them added leverage. They worked with women from

the parties and, on March 27, 2007, held a demonstration in which women dressed in white and got the parties to support their campaign.

As a result, the gender parity law was adopted in 2012, mandating the alternation of candidate lists between male and female candidates. Since Senegal has a parallel electoral system, these provisions would apply to proportional representation party lists and the seats contested through the plurality system in multimember constituencies. Thus, in a constituency with five seats, two would have to be filled by women. The National Observatory on Gender Parity is to oversee the implementation of the parity law (Bissonnette 2013). While more women than men were already voting in the Senegalese elections, according to a 2008 Afrobarometer survey, the introduction of a parity law resulted in the proportion of female parliamentary representatives jumping from 23 percent to 43 percent of the seats with the 2012 elections.

These developments in Senegal demonstrate how women's movements played an important role in some African countries by taking advantage of political opening to push for quotas. In contrast, the lack of a vibrant women's movement in Botswana resulted in setbacks. In the 1980s and 1990s, women's organizations in that country—a longstanding democracy—were more mobilized than they are now and were able briefly to push for increased political representation, the creation of a women's policy agency, reform of discriminatory laws, and the passing of progressive legislation (Bauer 2011). By the 2000s, however, the movement had lost momentum, and, by all accounts, it became fairly anemic due to a drop in donor funding, internal difficulties (Mokomane 2008), and the hemorrhaging of leaders from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to government positions (Sebudubudu and Osei-Hwedie 2005). Although the two opposition parties, the Botswana National Front (BNF) and the Botswana Congress Party (BCP), adopted 30 percent quotas for women candidates in 1999 (Global Database of Quotas for Women 2006; Kethusegile-Juru 2002, 8), they did not ensure the quotas were met. Commentators also point to a fierce culture in Botswana that discourages women from public engagement. As Ntibinyane Ntibinyane (2011) explained, "Tswana sayings—such as *'Ga di nke di e etelelwa pele ke manamagadi pele'* [loosely translated as 'women would never lead']"—create additional obstacles for women.

Thus, unlike in post-conflict or democratizing countries, key opportunity structures did not emerge in Botswana that would have created enough

sustained momentum for women's organizations to seek an increase in female parliamentary representation. Women parliamentarians eventually lost support, and they now hold only 8 percent of the seats, down from a high of 18 percent attained in the 1999 election. They do not do any better at the local level, where, according to the Botswana Association of Local Authorities, they account for only 19 percent of leadership positions.

International Influences

Pressures from the international community have influenced women's political representation generally. In Africa, the 1985 UN Conference on Women in Nairobi, attended by fifteen thousand women from 140 countries, served as a catalyst for women's mobilization across the continent. Ten years later, the UN Fourth Conference on Women, held in Beijing, prompted significant increases in rates of quota adoption across the globe as women's organizations lobbied multilateral institutions to adopt treaties, conventions, and resolutions regarding women's representation, thus changing international discourse and norms (see, for example, Hughes 2009; Paxton et al. 2006; Snyder 2006; and Tripp 2006).

The African Union and regional bodies such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) subsequently initiated efforts to expand women's representation within their member states, setting targets of 30 percent in 1997 and 50 percent in 2010. Despite pressure put by the SADC on its member states to find ways to increase representation, no statistical correlation is apparent between membership and the adoption of quotas. Eight SADC countries do not have quotas, while seven do. Botswana and Mauritius, the only two that have not signed the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, both have low rates of female representation in parliament. And although SADC countries do have higher rates of representation (24 percent) than non-SADC countries (17 percent), the regional body does not appear to have an independent effect that is statistically significant when other factors are considered (Hughes and Tripp 2010).

Nevertheless, the timing of the increase in women's representation in Africa relative to the impact of the UN world conferences on women is evidence of the role of international mobilization.

Armed Conflict and Women's Political Representation in Africa

In general, the rates of representation for women in parliament in post-conflict countries are double those in non-post-conflict countries—a phenomenon that has been identified both in the literature on Africa (Bauer and Britton 2006; Tripp et al. 2009; Zuckerman and Greenberg 2004) and more generally (Hughes 2009; Luciak 2006).

The increases in female representation began after wars of independence ended in the 1970s—for example, in Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, and Mozambique in 1974 and Rhodesia/Zimbabwe in 1979. The patterns were not sharply evident, however, until 1986, when the conflict ended in Uganda. Uganda was one of the first countries to show this strong relationship between women's representation and the end of conflict, with the return to stability throughout most of the country that took place with the takeover of Yoweri Museveni and his National Resistance Army.

During the years of conflict, Ugandan women had assumed new leadership roles within their households and communities and become economically more active. Some fought in the guerrilla war. After it ended, they began to seek leadership at the national level. Women activists put pressure on the government to increase their political representation and expand their rights more generally. They drew inspiration from the UN conferences already described, as well as regional meetings of women activists from East Africa and Africa more generally. They took advantage of the political opening that occurred in the late 1980s and early 1990s to mobilize independent women's organizations and press their demands.

Early on, Museveni introduced reserved seats for women in Parliament, resulting in significant changes in their political presence. In 1980 one woman held a seat in the National Assembly; with the introduction of quotas in 1989, women held 18 percent of the seats. The numbers continued to rise steadily, so that today, 35 percent of the seats are filled by women. In the cabinet, women's presence increased from 0 percent in 1980 to 10 percent in 2001 and 28 percent in 2012, and women came to hold key ministerial positions. From 1994 to 2003, Uganda had the first woman vice president in Africa. Today, women hold almost half of local government seats.

Similar trends in increasing women's representation have been evident in other post-conflict countries. Rwanda, as mentioned earlier, claimed the

world's highest ratio of women in parliament in 2003, and today women hold 64 percent of the country's legislative seats. In South Africa the proportion of women is 42 percent; in Mozambique, 39 percent; Uganda, 35 percent; Angola, 34 percent; Ethiopia, 28 percent; and South Sudan, 27 percent. In Burundi, women comprised 31 percent of members in the lower house and 46 percent in the upper.

Although these patterns are evident in other parts of the world as well—in Nepal and Timor Leste, for example—they are most visible in Africa because so many conflicts have come to an end there. Three major conflicts ended between 1990 and 1999 and twelve between 2000 and 2005. The conflicts that were starting had outnumbered those ending until 1995, when the pattern reversed. Although research suggests the decline in armed conflicts has been part of a global trend (Goldstein 2011; Gurr 2000), Africa has arguably been most affected by it because so many countries there have been drawn into conflict over the last forty years. The end of the Cold War influenced some of the decline. There was also the increased importance of international and regional peacekeeping efforts, greater efforts regarding diplomacy and peace negotiations, and the increase in influence of peace movements.

Conflict in Africa ruptured society in powerful ways that resulted in changes in gender relations, with the most dramatic seen in countries whose conflicts were long or intense (that is, resulting in high death rates; Hughes and Tripp 2010); countries with more localized and smaller conflicts saw far fewer changes. The end of a major conflict provided women with political opportunity structures through which to make demands for increased representation: peace negotiations and agreements, rewriting of constitutions, electoral legislation, and electoral processes. Women's organizations seized on these moments of transition to demand greater political representation.

Although the countries with the longest and most deadly conflicts have been most likely to experience the highest rates of female representation, even those with lower levels of violence (for example, Kenya after 2008) or more localized violence have seen similar changes. In Senegal's Casamance region, which in 1983–2005 experienced an armed rebellion seeking independence for the region, women were left to run their communities and seek livelihoods as men engaged in combat.² Since 1999, women's organizations there have participated in peace negotiations and engaged in lo-

cal post-conflict reconstruction activities through the National Agency for the Reconstruction of Casamance (ANRAC) and the Programme to Restart Economic and Social Activities in Casamance (PRAESC). Women have also pursued collective strategies to seek land ownership, which is critical to the survival of their households (Ndiaye 2012). In Kenya, the election violence of 2008 propelled the country into constitutional reform, which included extensive provisions for women's rights, including a legislative quota.

The timing of the decline in conflict was critical to producing such changes in female representation; earlier conflicts did not lead to them. By the time the later wars were ending, various multilateral organizations, like the United Nations, and international donors were increasingly pressuring governments to improve the status of women. It was the convergence of these changing international norms with the decline in conflict and expansion of civil liberties in Africa that created internal pressures for change. Thus, the impact of the end of civil conflict had independent effects beyond what can be explained by institutional changes and democratization (Hughes and Tripp 2010).

Colonial Legacies

Although rates of representation for women in former colonies have changed since independence, today the former Belgian and Portuguese colonies have overtaken those formerly under the British and French (see table 6). Much of the variance can be explained by the fact that the overwhelming majority of former Belgian and Portuguese colonies have been involved in conflict and exhibit the post-conflict effects mentioned earlier.

TABLE 6. Colonial Legacy and Women's Representation in Parliament

Most Recent Colonial Influence	Average % of Women in Parliament	Number of Countries
Belgium	34	3
Portugal	25	5
Britain	20	17
France	17	16
Other	20	7

Ideology

Generally, left-leaning parties have taken a more egalitarian stance on women's rights and leadership than right-leaning ones (Caul 2001). Longitudinal studies of Africa find strong effects by parties on the left on women's political representation in the 1980s. Rates of female representation were relatively low in most African countries and slightly elevated only in those with left-leaning parties in power, including Angola, Guinea Bissau, Cape Verde, Mozambique, and Tanzania, which had its own brand of African socialism. The parties' impact declined over time, however, and by the end of the Cold War their independent influence had disappeared altogether (Hughes and Tripp 2010). The small island nation of Seychelles, for example, had 47 percent women's representation in the early 1990s, and today, with a left-leaning party in power, women hold 44 percent of the seats. Any remaining influences from the left have been flattened with the increased use of quotas among countries with all types of ideological influences.

Culture

Cultural attitudes regarding gender equity influence women's status (Inglehart and Norris 2003; Inglehart, Norris, and Welzel 2002). When it comes to women's representation, however, the various institutional factors, particularly the introduction of quotas, have tended to override cultural constraints. Some have argued that Islam, for example, has dampened support for women's rights. While this may be true in terms of attitudes, Tripp and Kang (2008) found that when region and use of quotas were factored into their cross-national study, Islam no longer acted as a constraint on the legislative representation of women globally. In fact, in Africa, many countries with significant Muslim populations, such as Eritrea, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Somalia, Sudan, and Tanzania, adopted quotas for the very reason that cultural attitudes might impose particular constraints on women attempting to run for office. Predominantly Muslim Senegal has one of the highest rates of female representation in the world, with 43 percent of its parliamentary seats held by women.

The overriding of culture by quotas is illustrated by a comparison of Botswana with neighboring South Africa. In South Africa, 42 percent of the parliamentary seats are held by women, largely as a result of party quotas. Yet only 73 percent of the population agrees with the statement in the Afrobarometer

survey that, “in our country, women should have equal rights and receive the same treatment as men do.” In Botswana, which does not have quotas and where women hold 8 percent of parliamentary seats, 79 percent agree with the aforementioned statement. Thus, while attitudes might influence women’s representation, they can also be trumped by institutional measures.

Economic Growth

Global cross-national studies find a strong correlation between economic development and female representation (Tripp and Kang 2008; Paxton et al. 2006; Inglehart and Norris 2003). Hughes and Tripp (2010) did not, however, find such a relationship in Africa in a longitudinal study using latent growth curve analysis. In contrast to the global patterns, economic growth, as measured by GDP, appears not to influence rates of female representation over time on the continent. Rather, one finds very poor countries with high rates of representation, suggesting that quotas can override not only culture and ideology but low economic development as well.

Oil

Some have argued that oil production negatively influences women’s representation because oil rents reduce the number of women in the workforce, and hence their capacity to mount pressure for change (Ross 2008). Many sub-Saharan African countries are oil producers, including Angola, Chad, Congo Brazzaville, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Nigeria, and Sudan. The adoption of quotas in countries like Angola and Sudan and in North African oil producers like Algeria and Libya, however, as well as some non-African countries, makes this argument less salient. Kang (2009) looked at the impact of oil internationally and found that when quotas are introduced, the effect of oil rents on women’s representation is no longer statistically significant.

Diffusion Effects

Diffusion refers to the influence of changes in one country on neighboring countries or countries in the same region. Some small diffusion effects on female representation are evident based on the observation that the rates are lowest throughout all of West Africa (see table 7). Regional influences are generally weak, but they are nevertheless apparent, as in the foremen-

tioned SADC resolutions on women's rights in southern Africa. Moreover, women's movements in Tanzania and Uganda played an important role in influencing Kenya to adopt quotas.

TABLE 7. Impact of Regional Diffusion on Female Parliamentary Representation

Region	Average Percentage of Women in Parliament	Number of Countries
Central	19	11
East	23	12
West	14	15
South	22	10

Research thus shows that the key factors influencing women's representation in Africa today have to do with the decline of conflict, institutional changes (such as the adoption of quotas and proportional representation electoral systems), and an expansion of civil liberties. International changes in norms and donor funding influence all these factors in turn. While colonial legacies, economic growth, ideology, oil, cultural influences, and diffusion effects are evident, their impacts are not as strong.

GENDERED PROFILES OF PARLIAMENTARIANS

Socioeconomic background data on parliamentarians in Africa are difficult to find. Some of the most detailed data on women who engage in politics come from Uganda and are made available on the website of the Ugandan National Assembly. More anecdotal studies of other parliaments suggest fairly similar patterns in other parts of Africa, particularly with respect to the socioeconomic profiles of women running for office (Bauer and Britton 2006). By way of background, Uganda's Ninth Parliament comprises 238 constituency representatives and 112 district woman representatives. In addition, the Uganda People's Defence Forces representatives include 10 members, the representatives of the youth 5, the representatives of persons with disabilities 5, and the representatives of workers 5; 2 members of each of these groups must be women. Finally, 3 of 13 ex-officio members must be women.

To be eligible to run for Parliament in Uganda, candidates are expected to have completed secondary school (see table 8). Thus, men and women dif-

fer relatively little in educational levels. They attain bachelors' and masters' degrees at similar rates, although no women have PhDs, while 4 percent of the men do, and almost twice as many men as women have law degrees. Thus, women are no less qualified than men in terms of their academic backgrounds; nor, as Diane O'Brien (2012) found in examining the Eighth Parliament, are the quota women significantly different from the women who run for open seats.

TABLE 8. Ugandan Parliamentarians: Highest Degree Attained

	Women %	Men %
Secondary	16	11
BA	38	39
LLB	4	7
MA, MSc, MBA	37	37
PhD	0	4
NA	5	2
	100%	100%

Although employment in Uganda is segregated by gender to a high degree, the majority of both male and female parliamentarians includes teachers, accountants, and administrators, as well as many lawyers. The biggest gender differences appear in the ratios of occupations. There are three times more male than female lawyers, twice as many female as male administrators, and almost three times more female than male teachers. In addition, 6 percent of the representatives are male physicians and 2 percent male veterinarians, while no women are in these fields.

Lucy Creevey (2006) found a similar pattern for Senegalese women parliamentarians, who in 2001 included three university professors, two teachers, a lawyer, a midwife, and two secretaries. In the most detailed qualitative study to date of the socioeconomic backgrounds of women parliamentarians in Africa, Hannah Britton found a similar trend within the 1999 cohort of parliamentarians she interviewed in 2003. Most came from advanced educational or occupational backgrounds (business, journalism, academics, research, or law) and included women with PhDs and professional degrees. All were fluent in English (2006, 79).

In Uganda, the median age for women parliamentarians is forty-five, and for men it is forty-seven. The difference might suggest women are encouraged by the availability of reserved seats to run for office slightly earlier than men. The median age of forty-four for women in constituency seats suggests they are starting even earlier than those in reserved seats. Women in general appear to be starting to run for office after their children have grown up.

Women parliamentarians are more likely than men to be single, widowed, or divorced (see table 9), suggesting that not being married allows them greater freedom to run and serve in office. Not surprisingly, religious differences do not seem pronounced between men and women; they are divided evenly between the two main groups, Protestants and Catholics.

TABLE 9. Marital Status

	Women %	Men %
Divorced/Separated	2	0
Married	68	88
Single	20	6
Widowed	4	1
NA	6	5
	100	100

Women overall are more supportive of the ruling National Resistance Movement party, with 72 percent belonging to the NRM, compared with 64 percent of men. Of women in the constituency seats, only 66 percent support the NRM, which is less than women in the seats reserved for women (75 percent) and women in the seats reserved for workers, the disabled, and youth (83 percent).

Up through the Eighth Parliament (2006–11), women parliamentarians were elected by an electoral college within each district. Following the introduction of multipartyism in 2006, they came to be elected by universal suffrage. Despite this change, the current patterns of party support are similar to those of the Eighth Parliament, where 73 percent of the women parliamentarians supported the NRM. Moreover, according to Josefsson (2013), the change did not affect the incumbency rate, which was 34 percent for the Ninth Parliament (2012–) as compared with 34 percent for the Eighth Par-

liament. The women in the Ninth Parliament were, however, more educated than those in the earlier parliaments, although they had slightly less experience in local politics; 24 percent had participated in local politics, compared with 28 percent in the Eighth Parliament (Josefsson 2013).

One concern about having a large number of reserved seats for women in the Ugandan Parliament is that they not only help deliver the votes to keep the dominant party in power; they also deny elected women independence to pursue a more forceful women's rights agenda. In a country where executive dominance is strong, some have argued that women in reserved seats are beholden to the ruling party. It is important to bear in mind, however, that multiple agendas are at play. Women fought for the reserved seats, having lobbied for quotas in Uganda as far back as 1964, and they have had their own agendas in advancing women's representation in Parliament. Reserving the seats for women was not merely a strategy by the NRM or the executive to maintain dominance; they have been used by women themselves to advance their own agendas. Moreover, the women in the reserved seats do not vote in ways that are significantly different from those of the non-quota women. Considerable cross-party cooperation takes place through the Uganda Women's Parliamentary Association (Muriaas and Wang 2012). The women parliamentarians were able to pass a considerable amount of legislation in the Eighth Parliament in advancing women's rights legislation.

Key pieces of legislation relating to land, inheritance, and domestic relations have, however, been more challenging to pass. Thus, what can be accomplished in the context of limited democracy and one-party dominance is often restricted. The intransigence of the ruling party on this legislation caused leading feminist activist Miria Matembe, a long-time NRM supporter, parliamentarian, and ethics minister, to become seriously disillusioned about the prospects for women's rights in Uganda. At an October 2012 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) conference in Kenya on gender quotas, she commented, "Affirmative action can be a double-edged sword. We have ended in power without power. They will create space and will seek the women who are not going to disturb them, who they can control. Numbers are necessary, but being able to have influence is more important" (author's notes).

IMPACT OF WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS AND WOMEN IN GOVERNMENT

Leaders bring women into leadership positions for a number of reasons. For some, it is a matter of principle and of equality and justice. Others regard their presence as useful for symbolic reasons. Some seek to appeal to women voters by increasing female representation, while others wish to give the appearance of modernity, and still others use support for women to drive a wedge between themselves and Islamists and other forces that may be opposed to female political engagement. Women activists and “femocrats,” or feminists in government, have their own objectives, which do not necessarily coincide with those of the ruling party or the executive. Their concern generally is to see that women in positions of power advocate for gender-related legislation and policy changes.

Although passing legislation or engaging in constitutional reform does not necessarily lead to actual implementation, it does provide a starting point in terms of a formal commitment to women's rights. Women parliamentarians, who are rarely successful on their own, must seek allies among male parliamentarians, their constituencies, and women's organizations, and from parties and within government. We have seen the most change in women's rights in the countries where women's movements have been most active. The ripple effects are felt throughout society, extending well beyond the legislative arena to change attitudes and reach new constituencies. Traditional leaders in many countries, for example, are now found working more on gender issues, such as land disputes, inheritance, bride price, gender-based violence, and the reinterpretation of “traditional values.”

Constitutional Reforms

Since the 1990s, women's organizations and activists in Africa have been advocating for constitutional reforms to protect women's rights, and they have been increasingly successful in these efforts, reflecting new global norms and sensibilities around gender. Most sub-Saharan African constitutions have been rewritten, with women advocates for gender equality actively involved in the process in countries like Rwanda and Uganda. Only the constitutions of Botswana, Cameroon, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mauritius, and Tanzania remain unchanged, and some are undergoing revision at this time.

Interestingly, one finds significant differences in constitutional provisions regarding women's rights between countries that have come out of conflict since the mid-1990s and those that have not experienced conflict, the reasons for which have already been discussed. For example, more post-conflict countries than non-post-conflict countries have introduced new clauses to their constitutions to ensure that statutory law and the constitutional provisions around gender equality will override customary law, should customary law result in violation of these rights. Article 33 of the 1995 Ugandan constitution, for example, states that "laws, cultures, customs and traditions which are against the dignity, welfare or interest of women or any other marginalised group . . . or which undermine their status, are prohibited by this Constitution." Similarly, all but one of the post-conflict countries have provisions barring discrimination based on sex, compared to only two-thirds of non-post-conflict countries.

Thus, some of the most explicit wording regarding women's rights can be found in post-conflict constitutions. All six of the constitutions mentioning that a child's citizenship can follow the mother are post-conflict, for example. Post-conflict countries are also more likely to mention quotas and other positive measures the state needs to take to address the status of women or past discrimination. The only area in which the constitutions of non-post-conflict countries make more references to women's rights is employment. About 38 percent of non-post-conflict countries mention equality in the labor force, while only a quarter of the post-conflict countries do. This probably reflects the greater economic instability of the countries coming out of conflict, the weakness of their economies, and the reality that most women work in subsistence agriculture.

Of the countries we are focusing on, the constitutions of Botswana and Senegal do not reflect the kinds of changes mentioned above, in contrast to those of Uganda and Rwanda, which have incorporated these constitutional innovations and also provide for quotas and for positive rights for women. Although Botswana's constitution has an antidiscrimination clause that mentions gender and refers to people's being entitled to fundamental rights and freedoms regardless of sex, it allows for discrimination in matters of "adoption, marriage, divorce, devolution of property upon death and other matters of personal law" in the same clause. Botswana has one of only five constitutions of sub-Saharan Africa's forty-eight that do not incorporate some clause specifically mentioning equality between men and women.

The constitutional courts have become another arena for change. In 2007, the Constitutional Court in Uganda struck down key provisions of the Succession Act (regarding women's right to inherit property), the Divorce Act, and the Penal Code Act, and it issued a ruling that decriminalized adultery for women.

Legislation

The passage of constitutional provisions advancing women's rights laid the basis for many legislative changes that followed. While many legislative reforms have been largely symbolic—since many governments often have not had the means nor the political will to enforce them—they do represent a shift in norms and provide those who are able to contest the status quo the means with which to do so.

As with the constitutional reforms, more legislation promoting women's rights has been adopted in post-conflict countries than in non-post-conflict countries since 2000. After the 1990s, new land laws incorporating women's rights concerns were enacted in Eritrea, Liberia, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania (and Zanzibar separately), Uganda, and Zambia. All but two of these—Tanzania and Zambia—are post-conflict countries. The disruptions in property have been more extreme in post-conflict countries, making it more urgent to address women's need to control their means of livelihood and support for the household.

Women have been active in and leaders of a variety of land alliances and coalitions—in Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda—that have fought for the land rights of women, pastoralists, the landless, and other marginalized people. Land is of critical importance to women because they depend on it for cultivation and, therefore, their livelihoods. Unequal access to land is one of the most important forms of economic inequality between men and women and has consequences for women as social and political actors. The problems are particularly acute in patrilineal households, where women's access to inheritance and ownership is through males.

Post-conflict countries in Africa have passed legislation around violence at twice the rate of those that have not experienced conflict. Some of the changes evident with respect to gender-based violence include the following:

- To date, twenty-eight African countries have passed legislation around domestic violence. Eleven out of thirteen post-conflict countries have adopted such legislation, as compared with one-half of the non-post-conflict countries.
- Half of post-conflict countries have legislation prohibiting marital rape, compared with less than one-fifth of countries that have not experienced major conflict.
- All countries in Africa have anti-rape legislation, although in some it is fairly nonspecific. Since 2000, virtually all post-conflict countries have adopted new legislation specifically addressing sexual violence, in contrast to five out of thirty-five non-post-conflict countries that have done so.
- At least twenty-seven countries have set an age of consent, generally between fourteen and sixteen years, below which sexual relations are regarded as rape. The rape of children and teenagers is of grave concern in most countries, especially post-conflict ones, where the breakdown in societal norms has been extensive.
- At least 70 percent of post-conflict countries have adopted anti-trafficking legislation, compared with only half of non-post-conflict countries.
- Similarly, 70 percent of post-conflict countries have passed legislation addressing sexual harassment, compared with only 40 percent of non-post-conflict countries (Tripp 2010).

The following details how these types of legislation have been passed by women's organizations in our case study countries.

Uganda. The Uganda Women's Parliamentary Association (a cross-partisan organization of female members of Parliament) has pushed key legislation supportive of women's rights. Recent legislation the association has been able to influence includes the following:

- The Refugee Act (2006), which contains specific provisions recognizing discriminatory practices based on gender as grounds for seeking asylum
- The Employment Act (2006)
- The Equal Opportunities Commission Act (2007), which established a commission to address laws, policies, customs, and traditions that discriminate against women

- The National Equal Opportunities Policy (2006) for monitoring the implementation of the Convention on the Prevention of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
- The National Plan of Action on Women (2007)
- Amendments to the penal code prohibiting defilement of girls and boys (2007)
- Ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, as well as its optional protocol (2008)
- The Domestic Violence Act (2010)
- The Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation Act 5 (2010)
- The Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act (2010)
- The International Criminal Court Act (2010), criminalizing sexual exploitation of women

Of the thirty-three bills considered during the Eighth Parliament, four had direct implications for women, suggesting women's rights are very much on the agenda.³ Women raised gender concerns regarding other bills as well.

In other areas there has been less success. In July 2010, overcoming powerful opposition by the Roman Catholic Church and the Uganda Joint Christian Council, Uganda's Parliament ratified the Protocol to the African Charter on the Rights of Women in Africa (the Maputo Protocol; see above); but the government has yet to pass any implementing legislation. This is unlikely to be resolved soon, as the Parliament is balking at provisions in the protocol to protect women's reproductive rights by allowing for medical abortion in cases of sexual assault, rape, incest, and where the pregnancy endangers the mental or physical health or life of the mother or fetus.

In addition, civil society organizations like Uganda's Association of Women Lawyers (FIDA) have been exerting considerable pressure for passage of the Marriage and Divorce Bill (which used to be called the Domestic Relations Bill and has languished for decades), the Muslim Personal Administration Bill, the Sexual Offences Bill, and a national sexual harassment policy. Despite the many remaining gaps in legislation and implementation, however, the changes mentioned above suggest a significant and sustained momentum to transform the status of women in Uganda.

Rwanda. Although Rwanda has a higher proportion of women in Parliament than in the past, legislation pertaining to women's rights has gained less momentum. The Forum of Women Parliamentarians spearheaded several

initiatives to improve women's status, including a 1998 inheritance law, which gave women equal rights to inheritance and to maintain separate property within marriage. It got the gender quotas incorporated into the 2003 constitution and drafted a bill around gender-based violence that was passed in 2008. Legislation was also passed to expand the rights of pregnant and breastfeeding mothers in the workplace (1997) and to protect children from violence (2001).

More troubling than the relative shortage of such legislation is the fact that of the measures that were taken, not all advanced women's status. The same Parliament also approved a new labor code that reduced paid maternity leave from eight to two weeks and increased the work week from five to six days and from forty-five to fifty hours. In the course of discussions surrounding the 2004 Land Law, the Forum for Women's Policy, together with the Ministry of Gender and Women in Development, argued that land was not a special issue for women, when, in fact, women's land rights are a serious concern in this part of the world. Jennie Burnet (2008; 2011) has suggested that as women's representation has increased, their ability to influence policy has decreased. She sees the benefits of the heightened female representation as primarily symbolic, devoted more to addressing the consequences of sexual violence than remedying its causes, such as poverty, land conflict, hostile civil-military relationships, disorganization of the army and the police, weakness of the justice system, physical and economic insecurity, and oppressive gender norms. Devlin and Elgie (2008) also argue that increased representation of women has had little impact on producing policy supportive of women's rights in Rwanda, while Coffé (2012) finds that Rwandan women parliamentarians see their own impact on policy outcomes as limited.

The most worrying aspect of politics in Rwanda is the way in which the overall political climate has limited possibilities for democratic debate and is intensifying ethnic tensions (Longman 2006). While legislatures in many African countries have gained in importance as institutions, the executive in Rwanda has remained especially strong relative to the other branches of government. Moreover, criticism of the ruling party and government is severely curtailed, often on the pretext of claims of genocide denial and fomenting tribalism. In the period leading up to the 2010 presidential elections, for example, Victoire Ingabire, who is the chair of United Democratic Forces, a coalition of opposition parties, was prevented from running and, in October 2012, sentenced to eight years' imprisonment for "conspiracy

against the country through terrorism and war” and “genocide denial.” In 2013, the Supreme Court not only upheld the conviction but increased her jail term to fifteen years. Carey Hogg (2009) argues that the ruling party, Revolutionary Patriotic Front (RPF), has created a situation in which women are in Parliament to represent women in what she considers an essentialist manner and that this construction has contributed to an ethnic equation that privileges Tutsi over Hutu.

Botswana. Botswana’s legislative record on women’s rights is weak. In recent years, the country has adopted legislation to improve the status of women in a few areas:

- A 2008 Domestic Violence Act
- A 2009 Children’s Act, which raised the age of marriage to eighteen years
- The Affiliations (Maintenance of Children) Act
- Amendments to the sexual offences provisions of the penal code and the Deeds Registry Act
- An amended Citizenship Act of 1995, which allowed a woman married to a foreigner to pass her Botswanan nationality on to her children—the result of a well-publicized campaign by feminist activist Unity Dow and her supporters

Many limitations for women remain in Botswanan law, however, and customary and statutory laws still need to be reconciled:

- Although the Abolition of Marital Power Act in 2005 allowed a woman to choose where she wanted to reside after marriage (whereas in the past she was automatically forced to become part of her husband’s ethnic group and reside with her husband’s family), the act still needs to be extended to customary and religious marriages and to allow women control over matrimonial assets.
- Children still automatically affiliate to their fathers’ tribes, and custody generally goes to the father in the event of divorce.
- Property in Botswana still passes to the eldest son in the event of the death of the husband, and, if there is no son, the eldest daughter inherits the property, which is administered by her male guardian.
- Botswana has legislation banning sexual acts between men,

but it expanded its laws to criminalize sexual involvement between women in 1998. Although the penalties are not enforced, they contribute to homophobia and the stigma of being lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT).

Senegal. At this writing, it is too early to know what impact the presence of a large number of women legislators will have on the Senegalese Parliament. In 1999, the criminal code was amended to introduce tougher penalties for violence against women, in particular, for acts that previously were not recognized as crimes, such as incest, rape, sexual harassment, female genital excision, and domestic violence. In 2005, the National Strategy for Gender Equality was adopted to improve women's social and economic standing and raise awareness of their status. Major challenges remain in reforming the 1972 Family Code, which places the husband at the head of the family and discriminates against women in provisions concerning child custody, choice of residence, property rights, divorce, minimum age for marriage, polygamy, and other such issues.

The above case studies suggest that women's movements are key to maintaining pressure for change on the legislative and other policymaking fronts in Africa. The post-conflict influences in both Rwanda and Uganda have resulted in greater pressures for legislative change regarding women's rights, particularly since 2000. Women parliamentarians, through their nonpartisan parliamentary caucuses, have spearheaded these efforts. Post-conflict influences have created a different trajectory for these countries in terms of a women's rights agenda not evident in countries like Botswana and Senegal that have not gone through major conflict. At the same time, the lack of democracy in Rwanda severely impedes change and mobilization on the part of women, limiting capacity for sustained reforms.

SYMBOLIC ASPECTS OF WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION

Jennie Burnet (2011) found in her 2009 study of Rwanda that one of the most significant aspects of having many women in parliament is its symbolism. Women repeatedly mentioned to her in focus groups that women had "found respect" (*babona agaciro*). When she asked about the prevalence of domestic violence, one woman explained that husbands no longer hit their wives as a result of a new awareness of the dignity of women. Others said polygamy had declined, although still others described stubborn men who did not want to accept the newfound authority of women. In general,

however, she found in both urban and rural areas women voicing their support for the new status of women in Rwanda.

Similar impacts of the increase in women's political representation were found in Uganda (Tripp 2000). In fact, some of the most important have been symbolic in terms of the ability of women to imagine a different reality for themselves. Women have come to envision not only political power but also the possibility of running businesses, universities, and religious and other nongovernmental institutions.

EFFECTIVENESS OF WOMEN REPRESENTATIVES

How effective are women parliamentarians? This question comes up particularly in reserved seat systems, as some charge that the women in the quota seats are serving simply as tokens.

In 2011, the Africa Leadership Institute conducted in Uganda one of the few studies that assess the performance of parliamentarians in Africa. The institute created a scorecard for members in four sessions of the Eighth Parliament (2006–10), looking at measures including attendance at district meetings, accessibility and responsiveness to constituents, attendance at parliamentary sessions, engagement in Parliament, and so forth. They reported scores for seventy-nine district women's representatives (in reserved seats) as well as sixteen constituency members (who ran for open seats), and other women who represented special interests (in reserved seats for youth, the disabled, workers, and the military). During the first session, women—especially the constituency women—performed as well as or better than male parliamentarians. In the second and third sessions they performed slightly worse than men, and in the fourth men outperformed women in all areas except debating. Some women scored very highly on all measures and were among the top ranked in terms of participation scores. Of the seven parliamentarians who did not speak for two years in this Parliament, only one was a woman.

This gender discrepancy may be due to the years of socialization that discourage women from speaking in public in front of men. Their multiple responsibilities in the household also place time burdens on women that men do not face, and they have had to surmount additional hurdles within the culture of the National Assembly. Although women may be outperformed by men in Parliament, they certainly are not invisible, and one could not say

their presence is merely symbolic. With growing numbers as members, a female speaker of the house, and their leadership in committees, women are an important and vital part of the life of the Parliament.

Other indications of women's participation in Uganda include their role in introducing bills. While most bills are brought forward by ministers of state, members of parliament have a right to initiate them, although it is often difficult for them to gain support outside of government. Of the three private bills brought forward in the Eighth Parliament, two were initiated by women, including the Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation Bill, which passed, and the Plant Protection and Health Bill. (The third bill, brought forward by David Bahati, was the infamous Anti-Homosexuality Bill.)

Yet another measure of participation in Parliament is committee leadership. In Uganda, half of the standing committees are headed by women and half by men, but of the sessional committees only a quarter are headed by women. Since the speaker of the house is a woman, she also heads the Appointments Committee and the Parliament Business Committee. The appointments tend to be gender stereotypical, however, with women heading the HIV/AIDS Committee and the human rights, business, and equal opportunities standing committees rather than the heftier budget, national economy, public accounts, defense and internal affairs, and foreign affairs committees.

Nevertheless, the current committee leadership structure is an improvement over 2000, when women served as chairs of only two out of the twelve standing committees and two of the ten sessional committees. As in 2000, all sessional committees are today chaired by the ruling NRM. All standing committees chaired by the opposition party are chaired by men, even though women are as likely as men to be in the opposition (Forum for Women in Democracy 2000).

By contrast, in Rwanda, five of the legislative committees are chaired by men and four by women, and female and male deputies have not been relegated to traditional gender-stereotyped areas. Indeed, men head the Gender Committee and the Committee on Unity, Human Rights, and the Fight against Genocide, while women head the Committee on National Budget and Patrimony and the Committee on Economy and Trade. Overall, the Ugandan and Rwandan cases suggest that, as women's presence in parlia-

ment increases over time, their presence on parliamentary committees also increases, and committee assignments become less gender stereotyped.

Thus, it is safe to say women hold their own in the Ugandan and Rwandan parliaments and are integral to the workings of the bodies. Even in countries like Botswana, however, where women are poorly represented in the legislature, the few women parliamentarians are hardly tokens. Indeed, several have risen to national and international prominence, including the country's first woman speaker of the National Assembly, Dr. Margaret Nasha, who was also first in the cabinet in 1994 and became speaker in 2009. Another woman, Dr. Gaositwe Chiepe, was instrumental in shaping the country's foreign policy; she started as a member of Parliament in 1974 and remained active in politics until 1999. Joy Phumaphi served as the minister of health and was a fierce fighter against the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Botswana at its height. She became a vice president of the World Bank.

CONSTRAINTS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

In spite of dramatic changes in women's representation in many countries, important constraints have encumbered their entry into the political sphere. The dominance of men in the public realm is reinforced by their dominance in private, where they are seen as heads or power holders in the family. The cultural beliefs that keep women subservient to men in the household have implications for political leadership in the public sphere. As in much of the world, these and religious practices and beliefs may buttress a view that makes it difficult for women to run for and serve in office, even as previously discussed institutional factors such as quotas facilitate their political participation.

These attitudes are slow to disappear, as is evident from Afrobarometer surveys (see table 10), although those toward women's political participation have no doubt changed since the time of the one-party state. Afrobarometer does not show much overall positive change between its third-round and its fifth-round surveys in attitudes toward female leaders (2005–6 and 2011–12, respectively). This is true even in countries such as Uganda and South Africa, where women have been leaders for some time (see table 10). Men are the most resistant to gender equality (see tables 11 and 12). As Afrobarometer (2010–12) shows, in some countries, such as Ghana, Kenya, and Uganda, they are almost twice as likely as women to agree with the statement that men make better political leaders than women and should

be elected rather than women; in Mauritius, they are almost four times as likely to agree. Oddly, support for women as leaders is higher in countries that have low representation, such as Botswana and Malawi.

TABLE 10. Support for Women as Leaders by Country

	All countries	Benin	Botswana	Ghana	Kenya	Liberia	Malawi	Mauritius	South Africa	Uganda
Agree Very Strongly with 1	17%	23%	7%	24%	19%	16%	15%	11%	11%	29%
Agree with 1	11%	10%	9%	10%	7%	6%	5%	20%	18%	12%
Agree with 2	25%	23%	25%	23%	26%	32%	12%	37%	34%	11%
Agree Very Strongly with 2	46%	43%	57%	42%	45%	45%	66%	31%	34%	47%
Agree with Neither	1%	0%	1%	1%	3%	1%	1%	1%	3%	1%
Don't Know	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Question: Which of the following statements is closest to your view?

Statement 1: Men make better political leaders than women and should be elected rather than women.

Statement 2: Women should have the same chance of being elected to political office as men.

Source: Afrobarometer Round 5 (2011–12)

TABLE 11. Support for Women as Leaders in Eleven Countries: Men Only as Leaders vs. Women Leaders by Gender of Respondent

N=20,411; Weighted results	Total	Male	Female
Agree Very Strongly with 1	14%	17%	10%
Agree with 1	10%	11%	8%
Agree with 2	24%	25%	24%
Agree Very Strongly with 2	51%	46%	56%
Agree with Neither	1%	1%	1%
Don't Know	0%	0%	1%
Total	20,411	10,127	10,284

Selected samples: Benin 2012, Botswana 2012, Cape Verde 2011, Ghana 2012, Kenya 2011, Liberia 2012, Malawi 2012, Mauritius 2012, South Africa 2011, Uganda 2012, Zimbabwe 2012.

Question: Which of the following statements is closest to your view?

Statement 1: Men make better political leaders than women and should be elected rather than women.

Statement 2: Women should have the same chance of being elected to political office as men.

Source: Afrobarometer Round 5 (2011–12)

TABLE 12. Support for Gender Equality in Eleven Countries: Women Have Equal Rights vs. Subject to Traditional Laws by Gender Respondent

N=20,411; Weighted results	Total	Male	Female
Agree Very Strongly with 1	52%	47%	56%
Agree with 1	27%	29%	25%
Agree with 2	9%	10%	8%
Agree Very Strongly with 2	11%	12%	9%
Agree with Neither	1%	1%	1%
Missing; Unknown	*	*	*
Don't Know	0%	0%	0%
Total	20,411	10,127	10,284

Selected samples: Benin 2012, Botswana 2012, Cape Verde 2011, Ghana 2012, Kenya 2011, Liberia 2012, Malawi 2012, Mauritius 2012, South Africa 2011, Uganda 2012, Zimbabwe 2012.

Question: Which of the following statements is closest to your view?

Statement 1: In our country, women should have equal rights and receive the same treatment as men do.

Statement 2: Women have always been subject to traditional laws and customs and should remain so.

Source: Afrobarometer Round 5 (2011–12)

In spite of generally stagnant attitudes with respect to gender equality, the election of steadily increasing numbers of women in consecutive rounds of elections within countries that have not adopted quotas suggests changes in popular attitudes have taken place in some countries. For instance, Malawi experienced an increase in female representation from 6 percent in 1994 to 21 percent with the 2009 election; Zambia from 7 percent in 1991 to 14 percent in 2006; and Lesotho from 5 percent in 1993 to 25 percent in 2007. Most recently, the 2011 elections in Seychelles, conducted without quotas, resulted in 44 percent female membership in its Parliament. Most countries without quotas, however, have remained stagnant in female representation or, like Botswana, have regressed.

In addition to negative attitudes, cultural prohibitions on women speaking in public and campaigning in public places are prevalent. Husbands may also forbid their wives from engaging in politics because of how it may reflect on them and the gossip it might generate. For this reason, women who run for office tend to be disproportionately single, divorced, or widowed. Part of the stigma may stem from perceptions that women politicians are loose women, that they are bad mothers and wives, and that they are not adequately fulfilling their marital obligations.

Women may also fear politics because it is considered dirty and dangerous, a game fit only for men. As Kenyan women's rights activist Dr. Maria Nzomo put it:

Women are still afraid of power . . . we need to realize that politics does not make itself dirty, people make it dirty, and that we can't continue to say it is dirty and sit on the sidelines. We need to jump in and change politics. We have to deal with it. (Nzomo 1995)

Gendered divisions of labor also place burdens on women, as they tend to bear heavier responsibilities in the household and community. Meetings scheduled late into the night pose challenges for them that men do not generally face. Some find the financial costs of running and remaining in office onerous. The greater likelihood of being economically disadvantaged imposes additional constraints on women, particularly with regard to expectations for patronage.

Finally, the internal culture of a legislative body or other governmental institution can be hostile to women. As women become more accustomed to holding office, and as others become used to seeing them there, many of these concerns fade, but sometimes disparaging treatment and remarks have to be dealt with head on. According to Devlin and Elgie (2008), parliamentarians reported that the presence of a large proportion of women in the Rwandan Parliament (56 percent) had affected the culture of the body, making the women feel at home there, increasingly confident, and apt to participate more than the men, who had historically dominated the chamber. Some parliamentarians saw no great distinctions between men and women. They felt the men understood the women better now and worked together with them as partners, particularly around gender issues. Women parliamentarians reported considerable solidarity among the women parliamentarians, dating back to 2003, when women became the majority.

CONCLUSION

Much of the threefold increase in women's representation in African legislatures between 1990 and 2010 can be explained by three developments: the adoption of gender quotas, largely after the ending of major conflicts and with the opening of political space; changing international norms around women's representation, which influenced governments to increase female representation, particularly after 1995; and the growth of women's movements that pressed for political power and other changes. A number of policy implications flow from the findings in this study:

- In Africa, countries that have come out of conflict have twice as many women in parliament as countries that have not. The post-conflict context has been particularly propitious for women activists because it created new opportunity structures through which they could demand representation for women, either through constitutional or legislative reforms. Some countries were able to incorporate language to this effect in their peace agreements. Post-conflict countries have also been much more inclined to adopt broader constitutional and legislative changes pertaining to women's rights, particularly legislation regarding violence against women, land rights, and customary law. Changing international norms and UN and other regional treaties, conventions, and protocols support increases in women's political representation. Thus,

post-conflict settings are important moments to seek change in women's status through peace agreements as well as constitutional and legislative reform.

- Those countries that have adopted quotas in sub-Saharan Africa have, on average, 9 percent more seats for women than countries that have not. Quota adoption, thus, is a key mechanism today for improving female representation. How the quotas are designed, however, is just as important as their adoption, since a quota system without accountability and with possibilities for evasion can easily be undermined.
- Proportional representation electoral systems with party lists result in more women in parliament than plurality systems.
- Countries that are not democracies are generally as likely as democracies to have high rates of female representation and to adopt quotas. In Africa, however, democracies are most likely to adopt party quotas, whereas hybrid and authoritarian systems are most likely to adopt reserved seats and legislated quotas. Nondemocratic countries should be careful not to rely too heavily on party good will to increase female representation; they may be better off adopting a reserved seat system to ensure female representation. Countries like Liberia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) that did not adopt quotas to advance women have not been very successful, particularly when parties have been recalcitrant and lack an ideology of inclusiveness or egalitarianism.
- Those countries that face particularly strong cultural resistance to women's political representation have found that adopting quotas helps overcome some of these challenges.
- Countries like Uganda that have adopted quotas early on have found that women who come through the quota system are as qualified as those who have run for open seats in the constituencies. Thus, it is important to argue against efforts to stigmatize women who run for reserved seats.
- Although women in parliament have been more likely to be interested in women's rights and social concerns than men, countries with large numbers of women in parliament cannot always be counted upon to advance a women's rights agenda, as is evident in the case of Rwanda, where the lack of democracy acts as a constraint.

Recent developments in women's political engagement in sub-Saharan Africa have been significant, though continued efforts are needed in the push toward gender equality. Among them, women's movements should be strengthened to help them exert pressure on legislatures to increase female representation and the production of legislation pertaining to women's rights. Additional research is also needed on the growing participation of women, as well as on the effects of new policies.

APPENDIX

Women Speakers of the House

Years in Office	Name	Country
1975–80	Carmen Peirra	Cape Verde
1980–91	Alda Neves de Graça do Espírito Santo	São Tomé and Príncipe
1984–89	Carmen Pereira	Guinea Bissau
1994–2004	Dr. Frene Noshir Ginwala	South Africa
1995	Almaz Meko	Ethiopia
1999–	'M'e Ntlhoi Motsamai	Lesotho
2000–2003	Philomène Omatuku Atshakawo Akatshi	DRC
2002–3	Grace Minor	Liberia
2004	Elizabeth Alpha Lavalie	Sierra Leone
2004	Trusty Gina	Swaziland
2004–8	Baleka Mbete-Kgositsile	South Africa
2005–	Edna Madzongwe	Zimbabwe
2005–7	Immaculée Nahayo, President of the Inama NshingmateKa/l'Assemblée Nationale	Burundi
2006	Trusty Gina	Swaziland
2006	Gelane Zwane	Swaziland
2006	Gelane Zwane	Swaziland
2006	Marie Zénaïde Lechat Ramampy	Madagascar
2006–7	Belinda Bidwell	Gambia
2007	Patricia Olubunmi Foluke Etteh	Nigeria
2007–10	Fatoumatta Jahumpa Ceesay	Gambia
2008–	Rose Mukantabana	Rwanda
2008–9	Gwen Mahlangu-Nkabinde	South Africa
2009–	Dr. Margaret N. Nasha	Botswana
2009–	Rose Francine Rogombé née Etomba	Gabon
2009–	Joyce Bamford-Addo	Ghana
2010–	Jeanne Martin-Cisse	Guinea

Years in Office	Name	Country
2010-	Anna Makinda	Tanzania
2011-	Rebecca Kadaga	Uganda

Female Presidential Candidates (1992–)

Year	Name	Country
1992	Amália de Vitoria Pereira	Angola
1992	Angèle Bandou	Congo-Brazzaville
1993	Ruth Rolland-Jeanne-Marie	Central African Republic
1997	Charity Kaluki Ngilu	Kenya
1997	Wangari Maathai	Kenya
1997	Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf	Liberia
1998	Déborah Nazi Boni	Burkina Faso
1999	Amália de Vitoria Pereira	Angola
1999	Antonieta Rosa Gomes	Guinea-Bissau
2000	Marième Wane Ly	Senegal
2001	Marie-Elise Akouavi Gbedo	Benin
2001	Dr. Chomba Gwendoline G. Konie	Zambia
2001	Dr. Inonge Mbikusita Lewanika	Zambia
2002	Angèle Bandou	Congo-Brazzaville
2002	Hawa Sanogo	Mali
2002	Zainab Hawa Bangura	Sierra Leone
2003	Aicha Mint Jeddane	Mauritania
2003	Sarah Nnadwa Jibril	Nigeria
2003	Mojisola Adegunla-Obasanjo	Nigeria
2003	Antonia Abayomi Jorge Ferreira	Nigeria
2003	Alivera Mukabaramba	Rwanda
2003	Foawziya Yussuf Haji Adan	Somaliland
2005	Antonieta Rosa Gomes	Guinea-Bissau
2005	Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf	Liberia
2005	Dr. Margaret Tor Thompson	Liberia
2005	Anna Claudia Senkoro	Tanzania
2006	Marie-Elise Akouavi Gbedo	Benin
2006	Celestine Zannou Wetohossou	Benin
2006	Catherine Nzuzi wa Mbombo	DRC
2006	Justine Kasa Vubu M'Poyo	DRC

Year	Name	Country
2006	Wivine N'Guz N'landu Kavidi	DRC
2006	Marie-Thérèse N'landu Mpolo	DRC
2006	Princess Antoinette Ngongyombe Tosimiaka M'Fumfu	DRC
2006	Elia Ravelomanantsoa Razafindrabe	Madagascar
2006	Miria Kalule Obote	Uganda
2007	Nazlin Umar Rajput	Kenya
2007	Sidibé Aminata Diallo	Mali
2007	Mojisola Adekunla-Obasanjo	Nigeria
2009	Victoire Lasseny Duboze	Gabon
2009	Anna Claudine Ayo Assayi	Gabon
2009	Yvette Ngwevilo Rekangalt	Gabon
2009	Francisca Maria Monteiro e Silva Vaz Turpin	Guinea Bissau
2009	Loveness Gondwe	Malawi
2010	Alice Nzomukunda	Burundi
2010	Pascaline Kampayano	Burundi
2010	Jacqueline Lohouès-Oblé	Côte d'Ivoire
2010	Kaba Hadja Saran Daraba	Guinea
2010	Dr. Alvera Mukabaramba	Rwanda
2010	Fatima Abd el-Mahoud	Sudan
2010	Brigitte Kafui Adjmagbo-Johnson	Togo
2011	Edith Kabbang Walla	Cameroon
2011	Mariama Bayard-Gamatié	Niger
2011	Maria das Neves Ceita Batista de Sousa	São Tomé and Príncipe
2011	Elsa Maria Neto D'Alva Teixeira de Barros Pinto	São Tomé and Príncipe
2011	Beti Olive Kamyá Namisango	Uganda
2011	Edith Nawakwi	Zambia
2012	Luisete de Jesus Macedo de Sousa Araújo	Angola

Year	Name	Country
2012	Amsatou Sow Sidibé	Senegal
2012	Diouma Diakhaté Dieng	Senegal
2012	Amal Abdi Ibrahim	Somalia
	Asha Ahmad Abdalla	Somalia
2013	Martha Karua	Kenya
2013	Lalao Harivelo Ravalomanana Rakotonirainy	Madagascar
2013	Saraha Georget Rabeharisoa	Madagascar
2013	Brigitte Ihantanirina Rabemanantsoa Rasamoelina	Madagascar
2013	Malala Savaron	Madagascar
2013	Dr. Roseline Emma Rasolo-voahangy	Madagascar
2013	Ndakana Joelah Antony	Madagascar
2013	Sabine Harivola Ramamonjy	Madagascar
2013	Aïchata Cissé Haidara	Mali
2014	Regina Konzi-Mongo	Central African Republic
2014	Catherine Samba-Panza	Central African Republic
2014	Mamphela Ramphela	South Africa

Female Heads of State

Years in Office	Name	Country
1984	Carmen Pereira	Guinea Bissau
1993–94	Sylvie Kinigi	Burundi
1996–97	Ruth Perry, Chairperson of the Council of State of Liberia	Liberia
2004	Elizabeth Alpha Lavalie	Sierra Leone
2004, 2005	Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka	South Africa
2006–	Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf	Liberia
2012–	Joyce Banda	Malawi
2012	Monique Agnès Ohsan- Bellepeau	Mauritius
2014–	Catherine Samba-Panza	Central African Republic

Female Vice Presidents

Years in Office	Name	Country
1975–76	Élisabeth Domitién	Central African Republic
1980–91	Alda Neves da Graça do Espírito Santo	São Tomé and Príncipe
1992–	Kadidja Abeba	Djibouti
1994–2003	Dr. Wandira Specioza Kazibwe	Uganda
1997–	Aisatou N'Jie Saidy	Gambia
2004–	Joyce Mujuru	Zimbabwe
2005–8	Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka	South Africa
2005–6	Alice Nzomukunda	Burundi
2006–7	Marina Barampama	Burundi
2008–9	Baleka Mbete	South Africa
2009–12	Joyce Banda	Malawi
2010–12	Monique Agnès Ohsan-Bellepeau	Mauritius

Female Prime Ministers

Years in Office	Name	Country
1993–94	Sylvie Kinigi	Rwanda
1993–94	Agathe Uwilingiyimana	Burundi
2001–2	Mame Madior Boye	Senegal
2002–4	Maria das Neves Ceita Batista de Sousa	São Tomé and Príncipe
2004–10	Luísa Días Diogo	Mozambique
2005–6	Maria do Carmo Trovoada Pires de Carvalho Silveira	São Tomé and Príncipe
2009	Cécile Manorohanta	Madagascar
2011–12	Cissé Mariam Kaidama Sidibé	Mali
2012	(Acting) Adiatu Djaló Nandigna	Guinea Bissau

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NOTES

1. Joyce Aluoch (Kenya), Fatoumata Dembélé Diarra (Mali), Akua Kuenyehia (Ghana), and Sanji Mmasenono Monageng (Botswana).
2. Low-grade fighting has continued since the 2005 negotiations, with sporadic attacks into 2012.
3. The Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation Bill, the Marriage and Divorce Bill, the Women's Council (Amendment) Bill, and the Domestic Violence Bill.

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