

# Replicating Strategies that Worked for

Women in 2010 Constitution Making Process

in Networking and Alliance Building for  
Women's Economic Empowerment (NABWEE)

*2nd Monitoring Survey Report*



*Prepared by: Agnes Meroka-Mutua, Diana Anne Wanjiku and Akoth Brender*

# Replicating Strategies that Worked for

## *Women in 2010 Constitution– Making Process in Networking and Alliance Building for Women’s Economic Empowerment*

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Layout & Design: Minneh Nyambura

**University of Nairobi**  
**African Women Studies Centre**  
**Women’s Economic Empowerment Hub**  
P.O. Box 30197-00100, Nairobi | Kenya

Email: [awskenya@uonbi.ac.ke](mailto:awskenya@uonbi.ac.ke) | [weehub@uonbi.ac.ke](mailto:weehub@uonbi.ac.ke)  
Website: [awsc.uonbi.ac.ke](http://awsc.uonbi.ac.ke) | [weehub.uonbi.ac.ke](http://weehub.uonbi.ac.ke)



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI







# *List of Abbreviations*

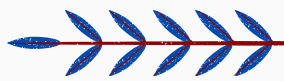


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AGPO	Access to Government Procurement Opportunities
AWSC	African Women Studies Centre
AIDS	Acquired Immuno-deficiency Syndrome
CBOs	Community Based Organisation
CGS	Credit Guarantee Scheme
CoK	Constitution of Kenya
CWN	County Women Network
CWEEN	County Women's Economic Empowerment Network
C4P2	Cluster 4 Project 2
CRAWN	Community Advocacy and Awareness Trust
FIDA	Federation of Women Lawyers
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GBV	Gender Based Violence
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HR	Human Resource
IDEA	Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
INV	Investment
KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
KIIs	Key Informant Interviews
MCA	Member of County Assembly
MP	Member of Parliament
NGAAF	National Government Affirmative Action Fund

NGAAF	National Government Affirmative Action Fund
NABWEE	Networking and Alliance Building for Women's Economic Empowerment
NCC	National Constitutional Conference
NHIF	National Hospital Insurance Fund
NSSF	National Social Security Fund
OCS	Officer Commanding Station
PR	Public Relations
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SGBV	Sexual, Gender Based Violence
SHA	Social Health Authority
SHIF	Social Health Insurance Fund
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
UN	United Nations
UNIP	United National Independent Party
UoN	University of Nairobi
WEE	Women's Economic Empowerment
WEF	Women Enterprise Fund





## *Acknowledgements*

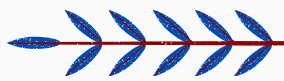


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This research work is a collaborative effort of researchers from the University of Nairobi, African Women Studies Centre, Women Economic Empowerment Hub (UoN-AWSC WEE Hub), and the County Women's Economic Empowerment Network (CWEEN). The lead researcher was Agnes Meroka-Mutua and the co-researchers were Marygorety Akinyi; Dorothy Njiraine and Wambui Kanyi. Other researchers who contributed to this Study from the UoN-AWSC WEE Hub include Isaac Kimathi, Diana Anne Wanjiku, Brender Akoth, Beatrice Kamau and Maryanne Mbogo. From the County Women's Economic Empowerment Network, the following members participated in the Research: Beatrice Mampei Nkirampai, Jane Kamwaga, Shamilla Lawendi, Daisy Odeko, Joy Kiambati, Zipporah Kamau, Julia Chege, Wambui Kihui and Wangari Mwangi.

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## Executive Summary



Kenyan women actively participated in the making of the Constitution of Kenya between 1992 and 2010. Their participation resulted in transformative constitutional provisions, which have promoted women's rights in a significant way. Thus, given the success of the policy advocacy conducted by women during the Constitution making process, the University of Nairobi, Women's Economic Empowerment Hub borrowed these policy strategies and replicated them in the context of WEE. It is expected that these strategies will also result in gains for women in the context of WEE. It should be noted that the Constitution contains several provisions that are concerned with WEE and these provisions can only be enjoyed by women once they are effectively implemented and enforced. Thus, by replicating the strategies used by the women's movement in the Constitution making process in the context of WEE, it is expected that this will also have the additional outcome of promoting the implementation of the gender transformative constitutional provisions.

NABWEE initiative was launched in 2022 to propagate women's economic empowerment through



74%

level of awareness about key policies such as those on affirmative action programs. A decreased from 94%

enterprise development, training, and access to the requisite resources. The broad objective of NABWEE is to contribute towards strengthening the women's movement for WEE by replicating and utilizing the strategies that worked for women in the Constitution making process.

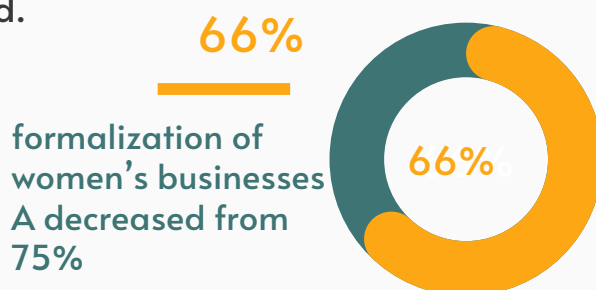
Building upon the first monitoring survey which was undertaken in 2023, the objectives of the second monitoring survey were to: assess changes in the level of consciousness on policy advocacy and networking among women; assess changes in the level of participation in policy advocacy and networking among women; identify challenges and barriers that women face when participating in policy advocacy and networking; and

assess the impact of policy advocacy and networking on women's lives. As with the first monitoring survey, the second survey used a feminist methodology, where the voices of women are given primacy. All participants in the Study are female, and thus, the data tells the stories of women as told by women. Mixed methods design, adopting qualitative and quantitative methods was adopted.

The Study found that there have not been major changes in levels of awareness about policies generally since the first monitoring survey.

However, it is notable that levels of

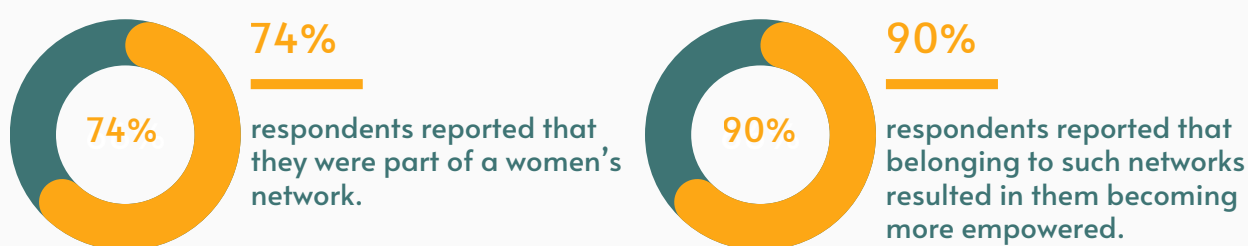
awareness about key policies such as those on affirmative action programs decreased from 94% to 74%. Those on formalization of women's businesses decreased from 75% to 66%. Further, on the Not More Than Two Thirds Gender Principle, none of the respondents reported being strongly aware of the policy during the second monitoring, as compared with 27% during the first monitoring survey. This decline on awareness levels of these specific policies is attributable to global funding cuts which have led to the stoppage of many projects working on women's rights. Indeed, the global funding cuts have meant that many women's rights organizations have ceased their operations. Another factor which has impacted levels of awareness is the contextual changes, whereby programs that had received widespread attention and popularisation during the first monitoring survey are no longer being popularised. In particular, the Hustler Fund, which was established in 2023 and was popularised throughout that year, was not receiving as much attention in 2025.



Levels of participation remained high, with 74% of the respondents reporting that they were part of a women's network and of these, 65% participated in policy advocacy. 90% of the respondents reported that belonging to such networks resulted in them becoming more empowered. 73% reported becoming more aware of the women's agenda; 71% reported that the networks had contributed to their increased visibility, particularly for purposes of political participation; 62% reported that the



networks supported them in addressing gender discrimination, while 61% reported that the networks supported them to advocate for women friendly policies. Thus, women's networks continue to be vehicles for promoting the realization of women's rights. While levels of awareness and participation remained generally high, barriers to women's participation in policy advocacy remain. In particular, competition for limited resources, cultural and gender norms that lead to the discrimination of women and violence against women were some of the enduring challenges that were cited.



and violence against women were some of the enduring challenges that were cited.

Given these findings, the UoN-AWSC WEE Hub recommends that the Donor Community and the Government of Kenya increase funding to projects undertaken by women's rights organizations. Further, the findings demonstrate the importance of women's networks as vehicles for promoting women's empowerment more generally and Women's Economic Empowerment in particular. It is therefore important to support the establishment and sustainability of women's networks, particularly at community level. To this end, the Hub recommends that the Ministry responsible for Gender Affairs formulates and implements policies that support women's networks. Crucially, in order to ensure the continuous sustainability of women's networks, it is important for existing networks to mentor young women and induct them into the networks. This is because the findings show that young women are more aligned with the youth movements as compared to the women's movement. The women's movement and women's networks need to promote inter-generational collaboration by including more young women into their spaces.



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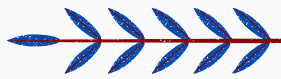
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# CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND



## *1.0 Introduction*

The Networking and Alliance Building for Women's Economic Empowerment (NABWEE) Project of the University of Nairobi, African Women Studies Centre, Women Economic Empowerment Hub (UoN-AWSC WEE Hub) under cluster 4 Project 2 (C4P2) seeks to evaluate what works in networking and alliance building by replicating the strategies that worked for women during the Constitution making process (1990-2010). The women's movement has made remarkable progress culminating to gains in the 2010 Constitution of Kenya. Owing to this, the WEE Hub decided to replicate the strategies that worked for women during the Constitution making process to influence policies, regulations and programs both at the national and county levels through the NABWEE. The NABWEE Project therefore aims to evaluate what works in networking and alliance building for WEE by utilizing best practices for women's self-mobilization in influencing policies, programs and regulations for WEE. By building a network of women leaders, women entrepreneurs, and women's rights advocates, NABWEE aims to create a space where women can use evidence generated through research to self-advocate for WEE.

The Project's purpose is to galvanize the creation of networks of women's organizations and women's entrepreneurs in order to promote a shared understanding of issues affecting Women's Economic Empowerment and the strategies that work for the full realization of women's economic rights; and leverage on strengthening synergies among policies and programmes that target women. The Alliance aims to contribute in promoting mutual support and accountability towards ensuring that women entrepreneurs tap into the available opportunities within the local and international markets. Using the research that the UoN-AWSC WEE Hub has conducted





on strategies that work for women's self-mobilization for WEE, NABWEE aims to support women entrepreneurs and women's organizations to mobilize and advocate for Women's Economic Empowerment.

The NABWEE Project was launched in collaboration with CRAWN Trust in February 2022, following the development of the project design, concept and workplan in 2021. The Project aims to support the establishment and sustainability of women's networks in Kenya. These networks are important vehicles for women's self-advocacy, hence NABWEE seeks to support self-advocacy by women.

**The specific objectives of the project are to:**

**01**

Replicate selected strategies used by women leaders and pathfinders during the Constitution making process (1990-2010).

**02**

Monitor and document the effectiveness of the strategies that worked in Constitution making in women's self-mobilization for WEE.

**03**

Measure the strength of the women's movement in Kenya and identify the specific ways in which NABWEE can contribute towards strengthening this movement.

**04**

Assess the level of consciousness on policy advocacy and networking among women

**05**

Assess the level of participation in policy advocacy and networking among women.



06

Identify challenges and barriers that women face when participating in policy advocacy and networking.

07

Assess the impact of policy advocacy and networking on women's lives.

Since inception in September 2021, the following strategies which worked for the Women Pathfinders during the Constitution making process have been replicated in the NABWEE Project:

### Strategies that Worked

1

Research work on identified areas of interest for women by WEE Hub researchers.

2

Documenting women's experiences in the Constitution making process, which was done in the publication and docu-series, Conversations with Pathfinders.

3

Identifying selected strategies that worked for replication in constitution making and in promoting Women's Economic Empowerment.

4

Establishing institutional frameworks for replicating the strategies that worked, which was achieved through the establishment of the NABWEE Steering Committee and the County Women's Economic Empowerment Network (CWEEN).

5

In consultation with the NABWEE National Steering Committee identifying critical policies for policy advocacy.

6

Developing a draft priority agenda for WEE.

7

Sharing the draft priority agenda in a forum where women from different counties and at the national level participate, discuss, share their input and finalize the Priority Agenda for WEE.

8

Mobilizing women for public participation in WEE policies and budget processes, and providing platforms for sharing experiences and strategies that work for Women's Economic Empowerment.

9

Creating awareness on persisting barriers to WEE and the legal and policy instruments available for promoting Women's Economic Empowerment based on research findings of the Hub and other research.

10

Conducting policy advocacy to influence policy change, legislative framework, and regulations and guidelines related to WEE based on WEE Hub research findings and that of their partners.

11

Building the capacity of women to effectively participate in the public fora to influence policies.

## *1.1 Achievements of the NABWEE Project*

Since the inception of the NABWEE Project in 2022 the following have been achieved:

- 01) Completed research on the following key areas which have informed policy advocacy conducted by NABWEE.





- ✦ Research and documentation of the strategies that worked for women during the Constitution making process. This Research was documented and published as a book titled “Conversations with Pathfinders. It was launched during the International Women’s Day celebrations in March 2022. A docu-series on the Conversations with Pathfinders was also published and is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0KdQbsRtrz8&list=PLQ6e7FQL5x7UeoDkMeolXk65LvwBiHTY>.
- ✦ Research on “The women’s movement and policy advocacy for WEE in Kenya”, which was published in 2022. This research involved evaluating the effect of women’s self-mobilization through grassroots associations and the national women’s movement for Women’s Economic Empowerment.
- ✦ Other research projects which have informed the NABWEE Project include: Affirmative Action Funds (AAFs), where the WEE Hub in collaboration with the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) conducted research on what works for women in accessing the Credit Guarantee Scheme and the Social Protection Policies, where the WEE Hub collaborated with the State Department for Social Protection in developing the draft of the Social Protection Policy and Social Protection Bill.

- 02) Establishment of the NABWEE Steering Committee, which is a network of women leaders working on various issues relating to women’s rights and WEE.
- 03) Development and launch of the Priority Agenda for Women’s Economic Empowerment. This is a strategy document that identifies priority areas for policy advocacy. The Priority Agenda was developed under the auspices of the NABWEE Steering Committee, using a participatory and consensus building approach. It was launched in July 2022.



04) Establishment of the County Women's Economic Empowerment Network (CWEEN). Since the launch of the Project in 2022, NABWEE worked towards the establishment and growth of a women's network at the county level. CWEEN was is a network of women at county level, which has been established through the support of women leaders who are part of NABWEE. The network participates actively in policy advocacy by responding to calls for public participation on proposed bills and policies that have an impact on WEE and on women's rights. Further CWEEN participates in the Gender Responsive Budgeting Project. The women in the network respond to calls to give input on county budgets. In addition, CWEEN members attend meetings to make oral submissions on bills and policies that have an impact on WEE. For instance, CWEEN was the only women's network that participated in the public hearings on the proposed Social Protection Bill.

05) Continuously conducting policy advocacy using various strategies, which include:

- ✦ Responding to calls for public participation on various bills and policies that impact women.
- ✦ Participating in policy dialogues with policy makers and implementers on matters relating to financial inclusion and Affirmative Action Funds.
- ✦ Participating in national meetings and interacting with policy makers at this level.
- ✦ Creation of informal platforms for networking and using digital spaces such as WhatsApp to promote this networking.
- ✦ Participating in high level meetings with policy makers. For example, the NABWEE Steering Committee members attended the high-level meeting held by the National Taskforce on the Implementation of the Not More than Two Thirds Gender Rule and presented proposals on how these



constitutional provisions might be effectively implemented through legislation.

✦ Participation in media campaigns to promote WEE.

06) Using evidence-based research to conduct policy advocacy, awareness creation and sensitization. Conducted the first monitoring survey to assess the impact of policy advocacy on women's empowerment. Since its launch in 2022, NABWEE has worked closely with researchers at the WEE Hub to consolidate the evidence-based research produced by the WEE Hub, and to use that research to advocate for policies that promote WEE. It is in this context that the first monitoring survey was conducted between November 2023 and February 2024. This survey informed the continued implementation of the NABWEE project.

The baseline survey was intended to test the work done under NABWEE and to monitor and record the progress made. Following the successful establishment of key structures under NABWEE, including the Steering Committee and the CWEEN, the baseline survey was monitored the impact of policy advocacy on WEE, looking specifically at the role of networking in promoting effective policy advocacy and how this ultimately contributes to the empowerment of individual women.

A key achievement during the first monitoring survey was the involvement of women from CWEEN in the data collection process. The women were trained on how to collect data, thereby building their research capacity. In addition, the research design, where the women from the various counties actually collected the data was very robust, ensuring that there was credibility of the research findings at the local level. Further, the women were able to disseminate information about WEE during the data collection process, hence the baseline survey also served as a mechanism for awareness creation on matters relating to WEE.





Some of the key findings from the first monitoring survey were:

- There are high levels of awareness among women on what policy advocacy is and its significance in promoting their rights.

95% of 373 respondents who were surveyed were aware of women's rights, Affirmative Action Funds and programs that support women; social protection policies that are important for women, such as the National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF) and provisions relating to gender equality, such as the Not More Than Two Thirds Gender Principle. Further 99% of the respondents were of the opinion that policy advocacy plays a significant role in addressing women's concerns. However, only 67% of the respondents had participated in policy advocacy and only 56% were very confident of their ability to negotiate for women friendly policies.

- 92% of the respondents had taken up leadership positions within their communities, including leadership of their women's groups, chairing the Neighbourhood Support Program (Nyumba Kumi), and Membership to the County Assembly (MCA).

- 57% of the respondents indicated their willingness to vie for elective positions in the general elections. From these findings, it is noted that the majority of the women in the Network already hold leadership positions and are ready to use those positions to promote WEE. Further, 57% of the participants are ready to run for elective politics, and if successful, there would be a core of women leaders at national and county level who are part of the Network. This would be very strategic and would increase the level of influence that the Network has particularly in promoting WEE friendly policies. From this survey, it was therefore established that NABWEE is a strategic network, which if supported to become more established, with in-built sustainability mechanisms, will become a key actor in policy advocacy for WEE in Kenya.

## 1.2 Second Monitoring Survey Objectives

The second monitoring survey was conducted in May 2024 with the purpose of measuring change within the women's movement and to test the effectiveness of the strategies that have been implemented through NABWEE in order to promote WEE friendly policies through women's self-advocacy.

The objectives of the second monitoring survey were to:

- ① Assess change in the level of consciousness on policy advocacy and networking among women.
- ② Assess change in the level of participation in policy advocacy and networking among women.
- ③ Identify any changes in the challenges and barriers that women face when participating in policy advocacy and networking.
- ④ Assess the impact of policy advocacy and networking on women's lives.

## 1.3 Research Design and Methodology

The Study used a feminist methodology, where the voices of women are given primacy. All participants in the Study were female, and thus, the data tells the stories of women as told by women. Mixed methods design, adopting qualitative and quantitative methods was adopted.

## 1.4 Data Collection Methods

Qualitative methods were used to collect data from women who have been participating in policy advocacy at national, county and grass roots levels. The specific methods that were used include Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with women who are leaders at national level and who have participated in policy advocacy nationally. A total of 30 KIIs were



conducted with women at the national level, who are leaders of women's organizations, networks and groups. The interviews were conducted via telephone.

Three follow up Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were held with the same participants who had participated in the first monitoring survey. The FGDs were stratified as follows: 1 FGD with women who participated in policy advocacy through NABWEE and the County Women's Network; 1 FGD with women who have participated in policy advocacy more generally and not necessarily through NABWEE and 1 FGD with women who have never participated in policy advocacy.

Data was also collected using a quantitative questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered by research assistants via telephone interviews.

## *1.5 Sampling Procedure and Sample Size*

For the second monitoring survey, the sampling approach remained consistent with the methodology employed during the first monitoring survey. Respondents were again selected purposively through the County Women's Economic Empowerment Network. However, due to budgetary constraints, the sample size for the second monitoring survey was reduced from 350 (used in the baseline survey) to 234 respondents. The recruitment strategy focused on reaching as many of the original respondents from the first survey as possible. Phone interviews were conducted, and only those who were reachable and willing to participate were retained in the final sample. Respondents who could not be contacted or declined to participate were dropped from the sample.

While the original sample size of 384 (adjusted to 350 due to the finite population size of approximately 3,000 women) was calculated using the standard sample size formula:

3

follow up FGDs held

30

Key informants conducted



$$n = Z^2 P(1-p) / [e]^2$$

where:

n = Sample Size

Z = the critical value for the desired confidence level (95%) = 1.96.

p = the estimated proportion of the attribute of interest in the population = 50% (give the maximum sample size).

e = is the desired level of precision (margin of error) which is 5%.

The second monitoring survey adopted a pragmatic approach driven by feasibility rather than recalculating for statistical representativeness. Nonetheless, the selection process ensured continuity and comparability with the baseline survey by prioritizing follow-up with the same cohort of respondents.

## *1.6 Theoretical Approach and Literature Review*

### *1.6.1 Theoretical Approach*

In measuring the growth of the NABWEE Platform, Sarah Longwe's Women's Empowerment Framework (1995) was used. The philosophy behind this Framework is that development interventions address different levels of empowerment. That is, welfare, access, conscientization, participation and control. In this Framework, participation recognizes the importance of women in the decision-making process as critical in policy making, planning and administration. Women's participation means they are taking part in the projects' design, needs assessment, implementation, as well as monitoring and evaluation of the Program. Participation allows for women's voices to get to the mainstream, as well as allowing their experiences to inform policy formulation. It ensures that greater goals are achieved that will benefit all sections of the society. Women's participation in decision making is not just a right, but also key to sustainable development. The implementation of women's rights is improved in



environments where women participate fully and equally in decision-making.

Through participation, women can bring their perspectives and interests into the mainstream and create a confluent that may probably change the mainstream; they can bring their knowledge to the whole process, and bring other women's perspectives into the process of implementation. The Constitution of Kenya 2010, provides for women's participation in leadership; such as in the National Assembly, Senate, Political Parties, all organs of the Government, Constitutional Commissions amongst others.

Affirmative action for women's participation has become a household concept. The Beijing Platform for Action, 1995, emphasizes the prioritization of women's leadership. Countries must "take measures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making" and "increase women's capacity to participate in decision-making and leadership". Numerous socioeconomic advantages of female political leadership have been demonstrated, including the elimination of inequality (WEF, 2017). However, women must be present in significant numbers and be able to engage in order to have an effective impact. This is a requirement for the change that must be made in laws, policies, practices, and the provision of services in order to achieve gender equality. Women's participation in leadership was one of the tools used in assessing the growth of NABWEE and self-mobilization for WEE.

The Longwe Framework (1994) highlights conscientization as equally important in the growth of feminist action and feminist self-mobilization. This refers to the question as to whether women in their different categories, are aware of the structural forces that disadvantage them and how this is reflected in the arguments in the advocacy strategies used.

### *1.6.2 Literature Review*

Research has demonstrated that women's participation in policy development processes result to improved governance, gender responsive budgeting and sustainability (Agarwal, 2010; Komarudin et al., 2008). According to these scholars, women's participation in policy advocacy has





positive impact on women who are able to exercise voice and agency as they become more confident, skilled and informed about various issues affecting them. Thus, participation and inclusion are central principles in ensuring that women have a voice and are able to influence decisions at various levels.

Self–mobilization has over time proved more impactful than coercion in policy advocacy. There is a possibility of women’s economic breakthrough and progress when they mobilize themselves and take initiative for their cause. In their paper, Htun and Weldon aver that through self-advocacy, women have been able to push for protective policies that enhance their equitable access to opportunities and resources for their collective and individual economic advancement (Htun and Weldon, 2018; Weldon, 2011). Further, through policy advocacy, women particularly shaped the agenda for women in the 2010 Constitution of Kenya because they were the negotiators of the process, agenda setters; promoters of dialogue and presenters of views through constituency forums. In her book *A Time for Harvest* (2012) Kabira discusses women's struggle to "dance from the centre" and the attendant challenges as women sought to have their voices heard during the Constitution making process through the 1990s to their gains in the 2010 Constitution and the challenges of its implementation. She argues that it is time for Kenyan women to harvest, having succeeded in bringing their issues of concern into the Constitution as reflected in the Bill of Rights and other chapters of the Constitution.

According to Mbugua (2017), marginalised and oppressed groups have always come together to build alliances in a bid to give and get support from each other. In thisway, she avers that numbersand trusted networks for collective action have given women a platform on which to share experiences, visions and support each other in times of need. They have learned over time that their voices are better off in multiples, not in the singular, if they are to be heard. Mbugua further contends that women organising themselves to push forward their agenda has almost been a natural reaction. Pointing out the case of women of Guinea who, during the struggle for independence invoked the spirit of the guardian of women and children to protest colonial rule. In Zambia, the Women’s Brigade of



the Pro-independence Party, the United National Independent Party (UNIP) mobilized women to expose their breasts to various colonial officers as a way of protesting their stay in their Country (Geisler, 1987). Further, in Cameroon the Kom women, inspired by their earlier tradition of Anlu and Frombuen, got together in the 1950s to ridicule and shame male authorities in a three-year rebellion where seven thousand women protested against raising taxes and laws regulating farming techniques (Diduk, 1989). After independence the groups joined in the political fray and some of them were appointed to strategic positions in the independent government.

In Kenya since pre-independence, women were organized in groups focused on self-help, merry-go-rounds, and general welfare. These included many Community-Based and run Organizations (CBOs) such as those that preceded Maendeleo ya Wanawake like the Mabati Women Groups and the Nyakinyua Groups in Central Kenya and other places which later became members of Maendeleo ya Wanawake. Other organizations were: The Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA)-Kenya Chapter; The Association of Media Women of Kenya (AMWIK); the League of Kenya Women Voters (LKWV); The National Council for Women in Kenya (NCWK); The African Communication and Development Network (FEMNET); The Greenbelt Movement and the Association of African Women in Research and Development (AAWORD). The Education Centre for Women and Democracy (ECWD) and Coalition on Violence against Women (COVAW) advocated around gender based violence in all spaces, including during the electoral process. These organizations engaged with women's concerns with passion and consistency (Peterson, 2001).

Despite the many challenges experienced, the organizations stamped their authority and presence during the Constitution making process. They were at the fore front in agitating not only for the review of the Constitution, but also for women to be placed right in the middle of the entire process. They organized with great success for women to give their views through organizations with grassroots structures such as Maendeleo ya Wanawake. Women organizations played different roles. According to Kabira (2012), they participated in the negotiations and were negotiators,



themselves they set the agenda, engaged in dialogue at all levels, presented views and carried out research. She continues to say that women organizations were the main drivers when it came to negotiating for women's participation in the review process and that they organized themselves to collectively or individually present their views at both national and constituency levels through their grassroots networks.

The impact was that the issues they agitated for were included in the Constitution. These included affirmative action, outlawing harmful traditional practices, political inclusion through the 2/3 gender principle, social and economic rights and many other issues which are reflected in the Bill of Rights and the rest of the Constitution (AWSC WEE Hub (2021)).

Women's rights to participate in politics and to be able to have a presence through affirmative action were a major achievement with far reaching impact. A critical mass of women in Parliament, the Judiciary and the Executive meant that their platform would expand and that their issues would be articulated and heard from the highest levels of decision making. Women's participation during the Constitution making process ensured the protection of their interests. Suteu and Bell (2018) observes that in the deeply divided Kenyan constitutional reform process, women came together in the National Constitutional Conference (NCC) to coordinate, strategize and offer a model for overcoming the political stalemate. Thus, advocacy and building alliances are critical tools for a strong and successful women's movement.

Another key factor that shaped women activists' success was the broad and inclusive nature of their advocacy, bringing together a wide range of women around a common agenda despite rural–urban, ethnic and religious differences. As Kabira and Kimani (2012) describe, within the Kenyan women's movement “structures have been inclusive, horizontal, and dependent on collective and individual commitment; they are multi-ethnic, are across political parties and respect different expertise”. According to Waylen (2014), such a broad advocacy and presence was critical, as women were better placed to take advantage of opportunities offered by constitutional reform.



In summary, the Kenyan women's movement proved to be a powerful force and a vehicle for change with a number of successes in its history. As a report by UN Women 2017 underscores, the importance of establishing a strong network of women and building strategic alliances to bring about WEE policy reforms, the NABWEE remains a tool for policy advocacy. Therefore, this Study maintains that by replicating strategies that worked for women during the Constitution making process in NABWEE, a strong and impactful women's movement can be realized.



## CHAPTER TWO:

# FINDINGS OF THE SECOND MONITORING SURVEY

### 2.1 *Women's Consciousness about Policy Advocacy and Networking*

#### 2.1.1 *Level of Awareness about Women Rights and WEE Policies*

In the first monitoring survey, the women were asked how aware they were of women rights, while in the second monitoring survey they were questioned on their awareness of Women Economic Empowerment (WEE) policies. In the first survey, 39% of the women said they were strongly aware of women's rights, while 20% were somewhat aware. Only 5% were not aware of women's rights in Kenya.

In the second survey, the question was refined in order to specifically focus more on WEE policies. 30% of the women were strongly aware, while 41% were somewhat aware of WEE policies. 15% said they were neutral about the matter and only 3% were totally unaware. Still, 98% of the participants believed that they had a right to participate in WEE policy reforms, while 2% did not.

*Table 1: Degree of Awareness of Women's Rights in Kenya*

First Monitoring Survey: Degree of Awareness of Women's Rights in Kenya.	
Response	Percentage (n=373)
Strongly Aware	39%
Somewhat Aware	20%
Aware	36%
Not Aware	5%

Second Monitoring Survey: Degree of Awareness of WEE Policies	
Response	Percentage (n=373)
Strongly Aware	30%
Somewhat Aware	41%
Aware	15%
Not Aware	11%
Totally Unwaware	3%

*“There has also been increased awareness about WEE policies. As I mentioned earlier, there’s increased awareness and deliberate interventions to increase awareness, to strengthen and empower women leaders, to build alliances and to build synergies around WEE issues. We have also seen closer collaboration and coordination between women rights organizations and women political leaders.”*

(KII Respondent)

### **2.1.2 Awareness about Specific Policies and Programs Relevant to WEE**

Participants were asked whether they were aware of specific policies which are relevant to Women’s Economic Empowerment. During the first monitoring survey, 94% of the respondents were aware of Affirmative Action Funds; 93% were aware of social protection policies; 67% were aware of county budgets; 54% were aware of the Access to Government Procurement Opportunities (AGPO), and 2% were not aware of any of the policies and programs. Concerning the formalization of women’s businesses and the requirements for registration, 29% of the respondents were strongly aware about this; 28% were aware; and 18% were somewhat aware. Cumulatively, 75% of the respondents had some level of awareness about this, while 25% were not aware at all.

At the second monitoring survey, the question was modified to include specific policies of which the participants were asked if they were aware. 89% were aware of NHIF/SHIF/SHA Policies, while 79% and 77% were aware of the ‘Not more than two-third gender principle’ and the Early





Childhood and Development Education Policies respectively. 74% were aware of the Affirmative Action Program, and 48% were aware of the Employment Policy. 3% were not aware of any policy.

*Table 2: Awareness about Specific Policies and Programs Relevant to WEE*

<b>First Monitoring Survey</b>	<b>Percentage Aware (373)</b>
Affirmative Action Funds/ Programs	94%
Social Protection Policies	93%
County Budget	67%
National Budget	57%
AGPO	54%
Formalization of Women's Businesses	75%
Not Aware	2%
<b>Second Monitoring Survey</b>	<b>Percentage Aware (234)</b>
NHIF/SHIF/SHA	89%
Not More Than Two-Third Gender Principle	79%
Early Childhood and Development Education	77%
Affirmative Action	74%
Formalization of Women's Businesses	66%
Finance and National Budget	58%
Access to Credit	56%
Employment Policy	48%
Others	8%
Not Aware	3%

According to one respondent, women are not only aware but they are also advocating for their right. About the Not More Than Two–Third Gender Principle, she said:

*“Informed by the happenings of the last year that have taken on political, social and economic elements, I would say that politically I have seen women agitating on the rights to representation as provided for by the constitution. I would say that they have been able to agitate for the implementation of the Two-Thirds Gender Principle. They have been able to agitate where it has not been met perhaps during the appointed, perhaps in appointed positions. We have seen women agitate that the right of representation and the right to participate, that those have been included. I've also seen women also agitate for the right of inclusion in processes”.*

(KII Respondent)



### *2.1.3 Extent of Awareness of WEE Policies and Programs*

Table 3 presents awareness levels of various WEE policies among participants across the two monitoring surveys. The data gathered from the two rounds of monitoring reflect a progressive shift in awareness of WEE policies and programs among women. The first monitoring survey, which involved 355 respondents, focused on four policies: National Health Insurance Fund/Social Health Insurance Fund/Social Health Authority (NHIF/SHIF/SHA), the not more than two-thirds gender principle, formalization of women's business, and the Early Childhood Development and Education (ECDE) Policies. During this survey, the levels of awareness was moderate. For instance, while 39% of respondents were strongly aware of the NHIF/SHIF/SHA Policy, 26%, 27%, and 29% reported strong awareness of Early Childhood Development and Education (ECDE) policies, not more than two-thirds gender principle, and policies on the formalisation of women's businesses. 26% reported being not aware of the ECDE Policy.

The second monitoring survey introduced additional policies and refined the awareness categories. Sample sizes also varied across policies. Employment Policy showed the highest very aware level (48%), followed by Affirmative Action (49%) and Access to Credit (45%). Most respondents were somehow aware across all policies. Notably, the proportion that was unaware dropped in the second monitoring survey for most policies. Only 1% of respondents were unaware of Affirmative Action, Finance and National Budget, Early Childhood Development and Education, and Access to Credit Policies. Higher proportions (37%, 45%, and 52%) were unaware of NHIF/SHIF/SHA, Not Nore than Two-third Gender Principle, and the Formalization of Women's Business Policies respectively.



NHIF/SHIF/ SHA	Not More Than Two- Third Gender Principle Policy	Formalization of Women's Business	Early Childhood and Development Education Policy	Employment Policies	Affirmative Action Policies	Access to Credit Policies	Finance and National Budget Policies
First Monitoring	n = 355	n = 355	n = 355	-	-	-	-
Strongly Aware	39%	29%	26%	-	-	-	-
Somewhat Aware	21%	18%	13%	-	-	-	-
Aware	30%	28%	35%	-	-	-	-
Not Aware	10%	25%	26%	-	-	-	-
Second Monitoring	n=208	n=155	n=180	n=113	n=173	n=130	n=135
Very Aware	0%	0%	48%	0%	49%	45%	30%
Somehow Aware	52%	43%	39%	47%	42%	43%	51%
Not Very Aware	7%	5%	10%	9%	3%	9%	13%
Unaware	37%	52%	1%	39%	1%	1%	1%
Not Sure	4%	1%	3%	5%	4%	2%	4%

Despite many not being aware of SHA, the percentage that are aware were sharing their knowledge with other women and advocating for its uptake as indicated by a respondent:

*The specific ones that I've mainly advocated for is about health. Because, in our area in Homa Bay, the rate at which HIV/AIDS has impacted on the lives of people is very high. And the basic thing that I do is to ensure that these people that get referrals to the public hospitals and even private ones, to be able to access health facilities. Like before, we had NHIF, which has now been rolled into SHA. I personally ensure that through my networks and the leaders of the Wazee Wa Kijiji, we use them to ensure that mostly women, because they're the ones who take care of children, even take care of their husbands, they enrol in this SHA, so that when they get sick, they're able to access a medication. So that even as they want to go about their businesses, they would be in good health conditions.*

(KII Respondent)

On Affirmative Action Policies, a respondent said:

*"We have an affirmative action for girls who are under scholarships so that we can have a good number of girls completing education, and I being a manager of these scholarships, we do mentorships, we do mentorships for the girls. And we don't allow any girls to drop due to pregnancies. We've been able to bring back many girls back to school. Recently, we admitted one back. We re-enrolled one of the girls. We've been doing that all the time, and we support them. We give them basic needs, all the basic requirements, which is a part of the scholarship. But again, we talk to them and encourage them to work hard and go to the highest level they can in education."*

(KII Respondent)

## 2.2 Assessment of Participation in Policy Advocacy and Networking among Women

### 2.2.1 Women's Participation in Leadership

In the first monitoring survey, 92% said they held leadership positions in their communities which rose to 93% in the second monitoring survey. In the second survey, the participants were further asked whether they held elective or appointive positions, where 49% said they had held elective positions, 29% had held appointive positions, and 22% other positions.

Figure 1: Leadership in the Community

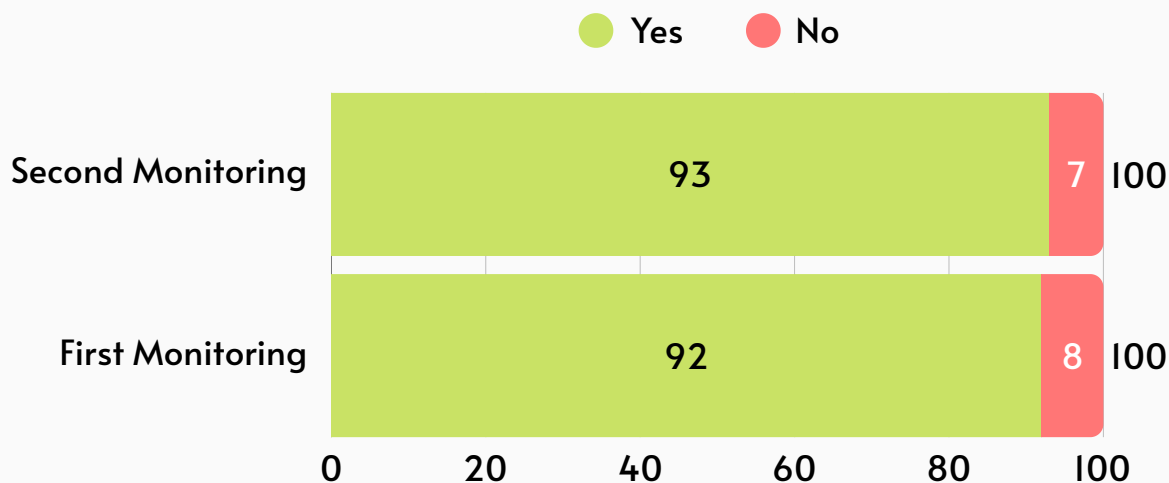


Table 3: Type of Leadership Positions held by the Women

Type of Leadership	First Monitoring (n=343)	Second Monitoring (n=217)
Elective	52%	49%
Appointive	48%	29%
Others	0%	22%

The respondents were also asked the leadership position they held in the Community. The findings indicate a general increase in the proportion of those who held leadership positions in line with this question. Those elected as Members of County Assembly increased from 1% to 2% while those who were leaders in other positions increased from 16% to 18%. However, those in leadership in the women groups reduced from 49% to 31%. Of these, 18% were women Group Chairpersons, and 9% were Group Secretaries in the second monitoring survey. The proportion of women who were Church Leaders, and in Nyumba Kumi also fell by 10%, and 3% respectively.

Table 4: Leadership Positions held by the Women

Leadership Position Held	First Monitoring (n=264)	Second Monitoring (n=217)
Member of County Assembly	1%	2%
Women Group (Chair, Secretary etc)	49%	31%
Church Leaders	27%	17%
Nyumba Kumi	8%	5%
Others	16%	18%

Elaborating on her advocacy efforts as a Member of County Assembly, one respondent remarked:

*"I was a Member of County Assembly in 2017, 2022. The money which was set aside for youth, the 30% has never been used in the first revolution because there was no law. So, when I came to Isiolo County as Member of County Assembly, I was able to bring the motion to set aside that money instead of doing the special, you know, what do we call, when the money is being supplemented, it's usually taken to a special program. So, I stopped it and said, why don't we use some of this money, part of it, to process, to initiate the bill so that when the bill is being enacted, the youth and women*



*are going to benefit from their fund. We did that and the bill was tabled. I tabled it myself and it was passed.”*

(FGD Respondent)

### ***2.2.2 Ability to Take up Leadership in Institutions***

In the first monitoring survey, 52.8% of the participants said that they would like to run for an elective/political seat, while 28.7% attempted to do so. In the second monitoring survey, the participants were asked if they were able to take up leadership positions in institutions such as the County Assembly, County Executive, School Boards, Parastatal Bodies, and Nyumba kumi, to which 91% said yes, 5% said no, while 4% were not sure. This is supported by the qualitative data, where a key informant indicated as follows:

*You find that in most of these chief barazas, almost half of the elders are now women. It is the women who are running the affairs in the villages. So these areas that they had never known that they could also be able to participate at the chief barazas, I can see now they are taking up most of these positions, and even the school boards. And churches, it's automatic that it is women who are the majority who run the churches, except they are limited because of those rules in the churches. They can only do this activity; they can only do their leadership levels for the benefit of the church. But those who have grown and have seen the impact of their leadership are also encouraging others to be able to speak out the problem. There are also young upcoming women who are able to connect through social media with other young leaders, and they're also creating a lot of impact in the community.*

(KII Respondent)

Women's advocacy has contributed towards the increase in the numbers of women holding leadership positions as illustrated by this quote from a key informant:

*We also advocate and tell women aspirants that even if they are not elected politically, they need to also get to be elected in their schools to be part of the board members, and even at their churches. So that leadership is also shared and they also get to be able to make decisions. And that is how even when*





*they're selecting the clan elders, we ensure that whenever there's a strong woman in a certain clan, she should be given a chance to also represent that clan.*

(KII Respondent)

Some of the challenges that were experienced in accessing leadership roles include lack of finances, social/cultural barriers, stiff competition, lack of support, childcare and family responsibility, and gender-based violence among others. These challenges appeared more pronounced in the second monitoring survey than in the first monitoring survey.

*Table 5: Challenges that were experienced in accessing leadership roles*

<b>Challenge</b>	<b>First Monitoring</b>	<b>Second Monitoring</b>
Lack of Finances	31%	26%
Social/Cultural Barriers	16%	20%
Stiff Competition	-	18%
Lack of Support	8%	18%
Childcare and Family Responsibility	9%	9%
Gender Based Violence	15%	-
Others	21%	9%

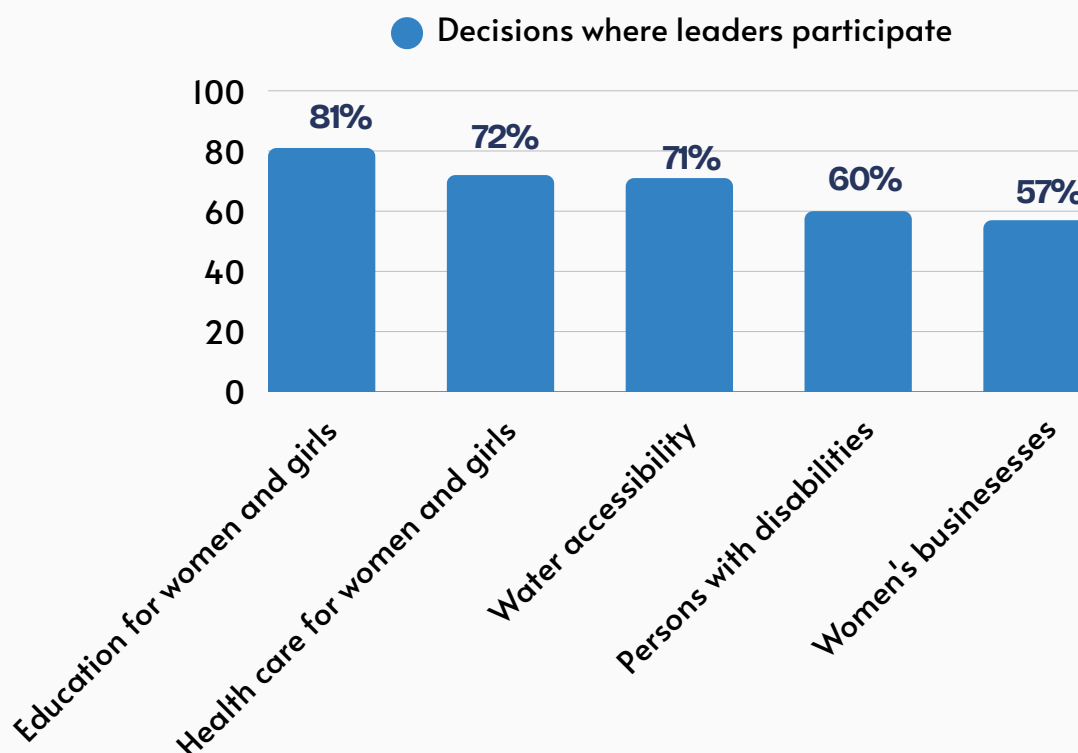
### ***2.2.3 Perceptions about Leaders' Ability to Influence Decisions at Community and National Levels***

Participants were asked about their perceptions regarding the leaders' ability to influence decisions. At the first monitoring survey, 55% indicated that leaders had the ability to influence decisions so, which reduced to 41% at the second monitoring survey. 28% and 34% did not think leaders influenced decisions at the first and second surveys respectively. 17% were neutral at the first monitoring survey, which rose to 23% at the second monitoring survey, and 3% were not aware if leaders influenced decisions at the community and national levels.

*Table 6: Perceptions about Leaders' Ability to Influence Decisions at Community and National Levels*

<b>Do you think those in leadership roles currently are participating in influencing decisions in the community or at the national level?</b>	<b>First Monitoring n=372</b>	<b>Second Monitoring n = 234</b>
Yes, I think so	55%	41%
No, I don't think	28%	34%
Neutral	17%	23%
Not Aware		3%

81% of the participants stated that leaders participate on decisions in education for women and girls. Healthcare for women and girls and water accessibility were mentioned by 72% and 71% respectively. 60% mentioned that leaders participate in decisions regarding persons with disability, and 57% said leaders participate in decisions regarding women's businesses as shown in Figure Two.



#### 2.2.4 Participation in Decision making

Regarding decision making, majority of the participants were able to make economic decisions about employment or entrepreneurship in both monitoring surveys, with 94% at the first monitoring and 91% at the second monitoring. 91% were able to make political decisions and 90% could make decisions about their bodies at the first monitoring survey. In the second monitoring survey, 89% could make political decisions while 82% could decide about their bodies. 88% were able to decide on household income at the first survey which reduced to 81% at the second survey though still very high as captured in Table 8.

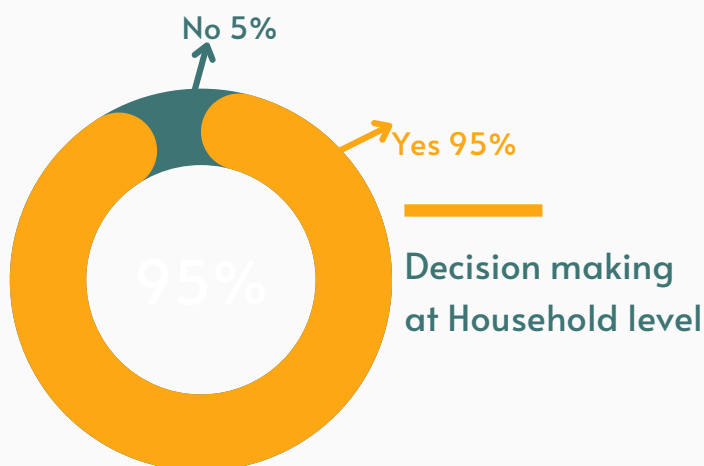
*And even that saving a little money, it is my decision to say with my small money that I'm able, I can only contribute 100 bob or 2000 in this cooperative. Nothing has changed within Maasai land that women are the ones who are*

*supposed to provide shelter. But we see women who are saying for me to manage this land in future nicely so that I can have where the cows will graze. Probably I can have my irrigation farm here. I will build my house here. So we've seen women who are like, let's say widows, who are able to manage the land and make decision in their homes.*

(KII Respondent)

Table 7: Participation in Decision Making

What decisions among the following are you able to make about yourself?	First Monitoring (n=360)	Second Monitoring (n=234)
Economic decisions about employment/entrepreneurship	94%	91%
Political decisions	91%	89%
Decisions about my body	90%	82%
Decisions about household income	88%	81%
Decisions about my family e.g. decisions about children	-	77%



95% of the respondents agreed that they were able to make decisions at household level, while 5% said they could not make decisions. This was a decline from the first monitoring survey where 97% said that they can make decisions at household level.

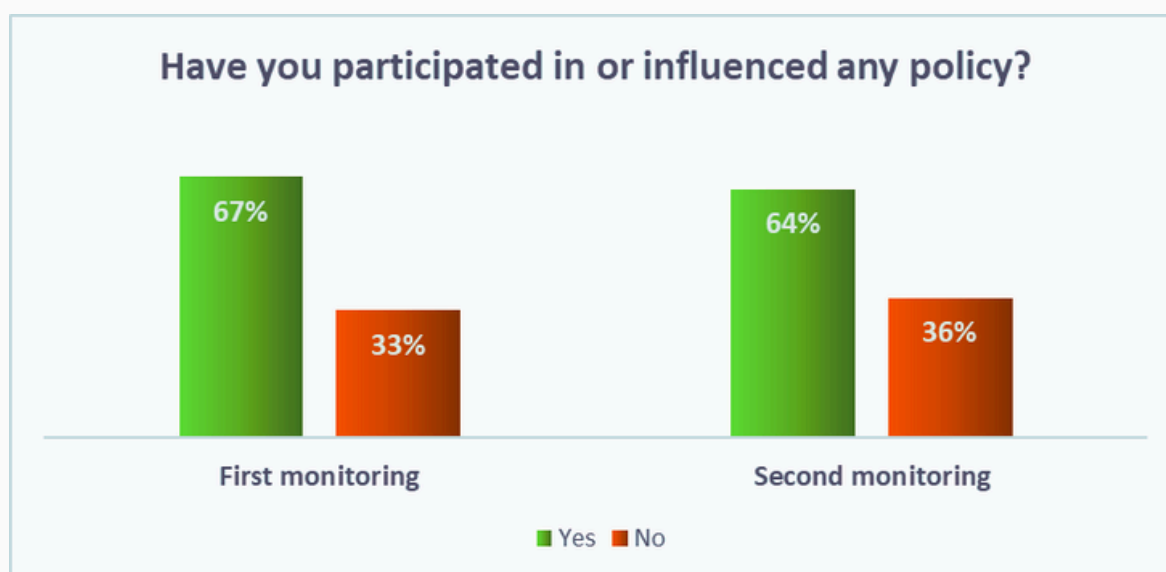
*The decisions we make, for instance, is through the movement, you know, with this boda bodas, especially in almost every place, they carry these women, carry their goods, and sometimes they kind of misbehave. But because of the women's associations or the women's movement, when they bring in their complex, we are able to sit down with the boda boda leadership and tell them what the women are going through, the insecurities that are there. And usually this meeting is a..., they are usually a security meeting, whereby the OCS also sends their representatives, and the complaints of the women can be registered, so that they know what the . When the taxes are too much in the market, we are able to put them on a platform and in a collective manner, so that their cries are also listened to by the county government. And finally,*

*through the women's movement, we are able to tell them to choose wisely on the funding systems that come across, because you find people are misusing these women. Some people come as shy locks in the market, give them money, and the interests are so high, and even end up auctioning their cows at home. That brings even the gender-based violence again back at home, because when the cows are taken from home, then the women are getting into other problems. So, through the women's movement, we are able to make wise decisions and to advise them on every step and even financial products that they are going to acquire for their businesses. And that is how we are settling in on table banking, which is easier for them and has very little challenges, especially when it goes back to their homes and household level.*

(FGD Respondent).

## 2.3 Participation in Policy Advocacy and Networking and its Impact on Women's Lives

67% of the participants at the first monitoring survey, and 64% in the second monitoring survey said that they participated in the process or influenced policy. Some of the activities done to influence legislation and policies related to women rights included responding to calls of public participation (87%), participation in consultative meeting (79%), and policy advocacy (71%).



Participation in policy advocacy yielded various results in the second monitoring survey. 79% said there was increased awareness of the women's agenda, while 70% mentioned increased visibility of women. Women friendly policies and increased advocacy for women's agenda stood at 56% and 53% respectively. 41% still had their results underway, and 7% said they had not observed any results yet.

Table 8: Participation in Policy Advocacy

Results of the Mentioned Policy Advocacy Initiatives	Second Monitoring (n=149)
Increased awareness of women's agenda	79%
Increased visibility of women	70%
Women friendly policies	56%
Increased advocacy for WEE agenda	53%
Results underway	41%
No results yet	7%

To buttress this, a respondent remarked:

*The impact has actually been able to affect the economic status of women... it has also raised awareness because the women are now in groups... there are many, many other economic empowerment forums such as agribusiness... women also get educated... the impact is immense because nowadays a girl is not worried that after becoming expectant in school, she will lose education... there is more empowerment than before... politically... a good number of women are now venturing into politics.*

(FGD Respondent)

*We have supported them (teen mothers, victims of SGBV) in standing on their feet again and going maybe an extra mile by coordinating with other stakeholders, taking them back to school, taking them back to colleges, so that they... not colleges, especially, (what do you call them?) These polytechnics, so that they can get skills, where they can be able to stand again as young girls and give them hope. Also, in advocating women's rights, we've had a lot of psychosocial sessions. Because we realized this, that after this young girl gets pregnant, everybody seems to be blaming her. And they forget that she's also a human being. She's also traumatized because she's a young mother. She doesn't know what to do with her life again. Her dreams have been cut short.*





*She's also sick. She's been alienated from her peers. She's having psychosocial issues because at home, everybody's against, especially parents. There's rejection. There's war. So when we started this program, it was a way of bringing this back for her to stand and to tell her there's also hope for tomorrow.*

**(FGD Respondent)**

*If I would mention them, especially the fundings that the government provides, especially the Youth Fund and the Women Economic Empowerment. Before, most of these women were not able to access or even get to know information about these funds that have been provided by the government. But through involving the officers who are on the ground at the constituency level, I can now, I'm now happy to report that most of the women groups and their leaders, the leaders of the women groups are able to carry on their businesses directly with the officers without reference. They are learning because they have the financial products which are, these people, the programs which are part of the training. And because we have involved trainers both from the Women Economic Enterprise Fund and the Joyful Women, the women are able to save, they are able to purchase and do marketing for their wares. At the same time, there is this IT, they are able to even sell their wares through their phones and through WhatsApp groups, they are able to advertise what they have, especially those who are doing tailoring, saloonists, or those who are doing other things like those who have baskets, mats, those who are doing, they are able to share photos and they get marketing from there. Even those who are selling omenas, they are able now to share and they get orders even in Nairobi. So, I think that in that kind of advocacy that we have been doing, I can see progress because mostly everything these days is going by this social media, the new way of communicating, they are able to catch up with the rest of Kenyans and be able to sell their wares. Although it has not, it is not that impactful as such because most of these women, some do not have the smartphones, but they are able to communicate, they are able to access even loans through their funds.*

**(FGD Respondent)**





## 2.4 Challenges and Barriers to Women's Participation in Policy Advocacy and Networking

### 2.4.1 Policy Issues Affecting Women

The participants were asked on various issues facing them and women around them. The second monitoring survey indicated more awareness of these issues. In the first monitoring survey, issues such as employment (87%), entrepreneurship (84%), and gender-based violence (83%) were identified as key areas of concern. Unpaid care work was at 67%, while maternal health, and social protection were each at 68%. By the second survey, most of the proportions had increased. Employment was prioritized by 88% of respondents, followed by gender-based violence (81%) and entrepreneurship (78%). Unpaid care and domestic work were recognized by 62% of the participants, while maternal and child health rose to 72%. New areas such as harmful cultural practices (e.g., early and forced marriage) also emerged in the second monitoring, with 61% of respondents mentioning it.

Table 9: Policy Issues Affecting Women

Issues	First Monitoring	Second Monitoring
Employment	87%	88%
Entrepreneurship/business related issues	84%	78%
Sexual/Gender based violence	83%	81%
Unpaid care and domestic work	67%	62%
Maternal and child health	68%	72%
Social protection	68%	
Harmful cultural practices (e.g. early and forced marriage)		61%
Others	9%	28%

Participants indicated that policy advocacy can address the issues mentioned above with 70% agreeing and 30% being in disagreement in the first monitoring. This proportion rose in the second monitoring, with 98% agreeing that policy advocacy can be used to address the issues facing women.



Table 10: Policy Advocacy in Addressing Women's Issues

Can policy advocacy address issues?	First Monitoring	Second Monitoring
Yes	70%	98%
No	30%	2%

Thus, policy advocacy is central in addressing women's concerns, it is also context specific. To cement this, a respondent noted that in ASAL areas, land is critical for women's empowerment and they have made strides in advocating for women's land ownership:

*So, when we come to women and land, which I was ready to speak about that. So, in women and land, initially, our, let's say, our community or other African community, the land was owned by men and women were not given land because they were believed that when they get married, they'll go and own land where they're going. However, things have changed, probably because of the education. Things have changed because there's a lot of empowerment now. You'll find in our community because of the polygamy. When the head of the family who is the man dies, the women initially used to suffer or before they used to be inherited by the other brothers, so that they are being taken care of.*

*But since the county government came up with a policy where they acknowledge the importance of inclusivity, women in my county have been able to bring out their voices and say that because the head of the family has passed on, now it is important for them to have their share so that their children that they have can also own the land. We see men who are polygamists are now sharing or rather dividing the land according to their spouses. That has been a great help.*

(KII Respondent).



### 2.4.1 Policy Issues Affecting Women

Lack of finances was observed as the major challenge in conducting policy advocacy with 90% highlighting it at the first monitoring and 86% at the second monitoring. Gender discrimination, lack of awareness, and cultural and societal norms stood at 70%, 76%, and 68% at the second monitoring survey. Family responsibility as a challenge was at 57%. One respondent noted that many women miss the chance to contribute when decisions are made because meetings are convened at a time when they are engaged in care work.

*Have you thought about my unpaid care work and the domestic chores I have to take care of before I leave the house to attend public participation meeting? You know, so when you put a meeting for public participation at 8.30 and then you are surprised there are no women in the room. I think we need to influence even the timing of when public participation takes place. Even when it ends, because I have water to fetch. I have kids to cook for. I have kids to pick from school, etc. And it applies, it doesn't matter what kind of woman you are, whether you're in the professional. You will have some chores that are so family-oriented that even participation in the most important of spaces sometimes does hinder. Because somebody just put a meeting at 7.30 am at breakfast. I'm not going to come.*

(KII Respondent)

Table 11: Challenges faced in Conducting Policy Advocacy

Challenges Faced	First Monitoring	Second Monitoring
Lack of awareness	79%	76%
Gender discrimination	69%	70%
Cultural and societal norms	63%	68%
Lack of finances	90%	86%
Family responsibility	53%	57%
Others	10%	21%

Another respondent said:



*The challenges we face, of course, is the illiteracy. Sometimes you will send some money to some women, like five thousand, and they hear a ringtone. They take to their phone and they don't know. If she gives out the phone to someone to read the message for them, sometimes they are being cheated on and told it's just Safaricom saying hello. And probably they've noted there's money that have come in and now that person takes the money away from them. So, the illiteracy level has been a problem with them.*

(KII Respondent).

Additionally, implementation of the policies was also cited as a major challenge in policy advocacy as stated by one of the FGD respondents:

*But one of the biggest challenges after launching the policy, the actualization of the same policy is very difficult. And especially when it comes to the County Government, how they operate. When it comes to the budget-making process, you take your memorandum, as women, you want things to be actualized. But when you take your memorandum, no one will look at it. And it's very difficult to do the work. Because if the County Government doesn't want to cooperate with many, when you go to the streets, women ask you, where are the people from the county? And when you invite them to your meetings, they are not even ready to come. So I think that is one of the biggest challenges we have. Because, as women, we have an effort to make sure that women's rights are okay. But when it comes to the government, they need our support. I think that is one of the biggest challenges.*

(FGD Respondent)

Lack of finances was mentioned as a barrier to advocacy efforts by individual women and organizations as stated by one of the KII respondents:

*Then, constraint in resources. Sometimes you realize that as much as you want to do case follow-up, so that maybe a survivor is able to receive enough support even in terms of going to the courts and all that, we do not have resources, especially if you are an organization that has not been funded in the same, you're just doing it, like personally I'm doing it out of goodwill, just being a women's human rights defender. So we have not had any resources that is*



*specifically meant to respond to issues of women's rights or violation of women's rights. Sometimes even if you want to do case follow-ups, you realize that at some point it gets tough because you need to travel, you need sometimes to also offer financial support to this particular survivor who might be in need of medical help. So it becomes really a challenge if you don't have a resource basket that is meant to carry out that responsibility.*

(KII Respondent)

A number of respondents mentioned that attempts to engage male allies in their advocacy especially on violation of women's rights and GBV, have not been successful due to patriarchal norms. As one respondent stated:

*Another concern is that we have been really trying to involve men as allies in responding to cases of women's rights violation. But then you realize that, of course, men are very willing, but then there is still that laxity because most of these men are the perpetrators. So even the few that you get, they will still come but with that mentality that a woman must be beaten, a woman must be straightened, a woman must be disciplined*

(FGD Respondent)

### 2.4.3 Challenges in Decision making

At the second monitoring survey, the participants cited challenges faced when making decisions including lack of support from spouse or family (35%), lack of finances (84%), few women sharing the same vision (46%), lack of interest (30%), cultural or societal norms (53%) and other challenges (15%). Notably lack of finances remained the highest challenge in both the first and monitoring surveys, remaining constant at 84%.

Table 12: Challenges faced in Decision Making

What challenges do you face in making the decisions above?	First Monitoring (n=360)	Second Monitoring (n=234)
Lack of support from spouse/family	47%	35%
Lack of finances	84%	84%
Few women sharing the same vision	48%	46%
Lack of interest	34%	30%
Cultural and societal norms	57%	53%
Others	8%	15%

*The challenges we face is sometimes people take it that you are going political, and you find they also want to take some women, the divide and rule tactics, so that some of the groups want to, they told you, if you went alone, you would be able to access this and that. But we know that those are just tactics, so that they disintegrate. We are able to encounter such, because we have to work with the women group leaders. And these are the people who usually present their problems with our backing. So, we don't necessarily take their problems to be ours and we'll present, we still have to work with their leaders so that they see their participation*

(KII Respondent)

#### ***2.4.4 Proposed solutions and strategies to address the challenges***

In the first monitoring survey, key solutions were mentioned including capacity building (22%), civic education (21%), resource mobilization (20%), and solidarity among women (20%). By the second monitoring survey, a relatively similar proportion of women mentioned these solutions. Capacity building and training remained at 22%. Conducting civic education (19%) and resource mobilization (20%) were also emphasized. Change of perception (16%) and the role of solidarity (19%) reduced by 1% in the second monitoring, suggesting that more sensitization on the need for gender norms and cultural shifts was required.

In terms of strategies, grassroots mobilization was mentioned as the best approach in the second monitoring, cited by 29% of respondents, up from 27% in the first survey. Networking and collaboration (25%) and conducting consultative meetings (23%) were also widely mentioned. Setting the agenda was also cited, although by fewer respondents (17%) in the second monitoring survey.





Table 13: Proposed solutions and strategies to address the challenges

How will you address the challenges?	First Monitoring	Second Monitoring
Capacity building and training	85%	85%
Conducting civic education	80%	75%
Resource mobilization	80%	77%
Change of perception	66%	64%
Solidarity and togetherness among women	76%	74%
Others	4%	17%
What strategies would you use to address the challenges?	First Monitoring	Second Monitoring
Conducting consultative meetings	78%	73%
Setting your agenda	60%	55%
Grass root mobilization	87%	92%
Networking and collaboration	89%	80%
Others	5%	18%

Additionally, education was also noted as a key strategy.

*I said when it comes to education, they will attend the adult education. They get to learn something, the importance of education. And once they get the knowledge, they are able to read the rules, for example, in the brochures that we have made for them in an easy language. And that is a way that they are implementing the decision because now they want to know what rules govern the land. And they only get educated through adult education and through their children.*

(KII Respondent)

Further emphasizing on the need for education, another respondent opined that male involvement is key in addressing women's concerns and fostering their rights. She said:

*And I was thinking if also the men could be given some education on how to treat their women and their rights of women. Maybe we might improve on this issue. That we also consider the men in one way or the other. We are talking about women, yes, but we concentrate so much on the women and we forget that also the men would like to give them some information.*

(FGD Respondent)



Respondents underscored the need to have men as allies and a support system for the women's rights defenders as a mitigation strategy as well as working with women's organizations/champions for WEE.

*I would say as a department handling the gender issues, or rather the women empowerment, we have our technical working group at county level, where we work with all NGOs handling issues of women's rights. We have different organizations, Sauti ya Wanawake Pwani, we have Choice Humanitarian, we have the CCGD, Collaboration Center for Gender and Development, we work with NIA, you name them. So we have a team where we do sensitization together. Sometimes we also join in different activities in empowering women, in looking at the issues of SGBV which is still rampant in our area. We also do advocacy on teens pregnancy and early mothers because it is one of the issues which affects the girls in Kwale County where we have school dropouts among the girls, especially in primary schools.*

(FGD Respondent)

Leveraging groups and working with government officers was also narrated by a respondent:

*The administrative units, the assistant chiefs, especially where we have women chiefs or assistant chiefs, they also help in mitigating the issues of gender-based violence which women encounter, especially when they start doing businesses. So, they would always call the husbands or the clan elders to help mitigate such cases. And most of these cases are done at the chiefs' camps. And we find that there's progress because the men are made to understand that these women have to do something to also be able to contribute in the family budget.*

(FGD Respondent)



## 2.5 Willingness to Participate in Networking and Alliance Building for Policy Advocacy for WEE

In the first monitoring survey, 99% of the participants expressed the desire to be part of a network that conducts policy advocacy for WEE. In the second monitoring survey, 74% reported that they already belonged to a women's network/organization/group. Of these, 65% conducted policy advocacy. A respondent indicated:

*So, we work with women in places in the Western, like Kakamega and Migori, when a woman is on her menses, she is not allowed to go to the mine because the minerals will disappear. So cultural things like that, you know. So, the advocacy for me was getting to tell women, you can do mining. And mining is a business like any other. And you should be able to, even if it is not at the mine site where a lot of work is required, you can still play in the value chain. So, we were advocating for three kinds of women, because we realized women in the space are not homogeneous. We were advocating for a professional woman who is working in a mining company. She's in PR, in media, in HR, in accounts, but is still in the mining sector. And then we were advocating for women that are entrepreneurs, or SMEs, that supply the extractives value chain. Business with mining communities, supplies, equipment, etc. Then thirdly, we were advocating for the grassroots woman, or what we call artisanal and small-scale mining.*

(KII Respondent)

Table 14: Membership in a Women's Network

Are you a member of a women's network/organization/group?	Yes	
	74% (n =172)	
Does this network participate in policy advocacy?	Yes	No
	65%	35%

Still, during the second monitoring survey, the participants who belonged to women's networks mentioned some benefits of participating. Majority (90%) of the women said they had become more empowered. Other benefits included increased awareness of women's agenda (73%), increased visibility of women (71%), addressing discriminatory gender norms (62%), and advocating for women friendly policies (61%) as is evident in Table 16 below.

*Table 15: Benefits of belonging to a Women's Network*

<b>Benefits of Belonging to a Women's Network (n=172)</b>	
Becoming more empowered	90%
Increased awareness of women's agenda	73%
Increased visibility of women	71%
Addressing discriminatory gender norms	62%
Advocating for women friendly policies	61%
Others	19%

*I think it is easy and more productive for women to come together and form a network. I still advocate for women working together. It is easy to push services to them. It is easy to train them. It is easy to bring all the ideas together. And so there's still an advantage, you know, in their collective voices. So bringing them together, that is just the only strategy that can work and it will produce more fruits.*

(KII Respondent)



## CHAPTER THREE:

# DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

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### *3.1 Discussion*

The second monitoring survey intended to assess changes in levels of consciousness, participation and decision-making on issues of policy advocacy and networking among women in Kenya. During the first monitoring, high levels of awareness about various policies on women's rights was recognized. These high levels of awareness were attributed to sensitization through women's organizations and also because of their own lived experiences. During the second monitoring, there were no major changes in levels of awareness about policies generally. However, it is notable that levels of awareness about key policies such as those on affirmative action programs decreased from 94% to 74%. Those on formalization of women's businesses decreased from 75% to 66%. Further, on the Not More Than Two Thirds Gender Principle, none of the respondents reported being strongly aware of the principle during the second monitoring survey, as compared with 27% during the first survey. This outcome of decreased levels of awareness may be due to a number of factors. Firstly, the first monitoring survey was conducted in 2023, during a period when women's rights organizations were generally well funded and were active. The second monitoring survey was conducted in 2025, at a time when many Civil Society Organizations, and in particular women's rights organizations were facing funding cuts, due to global politics that affected funding by donor agencies, and many had even wound up their programs. This indicates the importance of continued community engagement in order to sustain progress made towards the realization of

This indicates the importance of continued community engagement in order to sustain progress made towards the realization of women's rights. Thus, it is possible that where there are extreme shocks happening within a relatively short period, there can be regression where progress had already been made. This seems to be the key issue in the Kenyan context.

Another factor resulting in decrease in levels of consciousness on key WEE policies is that some programs, such as the Hustler Fund, were not being popularized as much. In 2023, the Fund was receiving widespread coverage and was being highlighted particularly by the President. In 2025, that coverage had significantly decreased. Further, the proposal to merge all the funds into one fund dubbed the Biashara Fund had been reintroduced, and the focus on promoting the individual funds seemed to have slowed down. In addition, The Not More Than Two Thirds Gender Principle did not have much focus in 2025 as compared to 2023 when the Presidential Task Force that was appointed to develop a road map on its implementation had been appointed and was working actively. By 2025, the Taskforce had completed its assignment, but no clear road map on the implementation of its Report had been agreed upon.

With regard to NHIF/SHA/SHIF, during the first monitoring, cumulatively, 90% had some level of awareness. During the second monitoring, this decreased to 59%. This can be attributed to the fact that during the first monitoring, the question included a focus on NHIF, which at the time was being phased out and the Country was transitioning to the new SHA/SHIF System. During the second monitoring, the question only focused on SHA/SHIF and the element on NHIF was removed and was not asked. While the transition to SHA/SHIF is complete, it remains a relatively new policy, which many respondents have not fully interacted with, unlike the NHIF, which had been in existence for many decades and which many respondents had come to know of through their own personal experiences.

Therefore, issues such as funding for women's rights organizations, and prevailing contextual realities play a significant role in sustaining progress made towards the realization of women's rights.





Similarly, levels of participation in policy advocacy among the respondents were high during the first monitoring survey, and this was attributed to networking among women. During the second monitoring survey, participation in policy advocacy was assessed primarily by looking at women's participation in leadership and decision-making and how this ultimately supports women to engage in policy advocacy. Levels of participation in leadership and decision-making had not changed significantly between the first monitoring survey and the second one. In terms of actual participation in policy advocacy, during the first monitoring survey, 99% of the respondents were willing to be part of a women's network in order to participate in policy advocacy. During the second monitoring 74% were already part of such a network, with 65% reporting that the network to which they belonged participated actively in policy advocacy. It should be noted that following the first monitoring survey, AWSC WEE Hub embarked on recruitment of the study respondents into the Networking and Alliance Building for Women's Economic Empowerment (NABWEE) and the County Women's Economic Empowerment Network (CWEEN). Thus, AWSC WEE Hub created a data base of the study respondents and would regularly invite them to participate in various policy advocacy initiatives and events. From this, during the second monitoring survey, a significant number of the respondents were able to report being part of a women's network through which they participate in policy advocacy.

From this, it can be deduced that networking remains a central issue in supporting women's policy advocacy, just as it was reported during the first survey. In terms of the impact of women's networks, 90% of the respondents reported that belonging to such networks resulted in them becoming more empowered. 73% reported becoming more aware of the women's agenda; 71% reported that the networks had contributed to their increased visibility, particularly for purposes of political participation; 62% reported that the networks supported them in addressing gender discrimination, while 61% reported that the networks supported them to advocate for women friendly policies. From this, it is apparent that women's networks continue to be vehicles for promoting the realization of



women's networks continue to be vehicles for promoting the realization of women's rights.

However, there are still challenges around women's engagement in policy advocacy. A key issue that was raised both during the first and second monitoring surveys is the fact that the women's movement has slowed down in its momentum, particularly since the promulgation of the Constitution in 2010. This has further been exacerbated by the reduced funding to women's rights organizations. In addition, in Kenya, due to the recent political protests which primarily affected young people, there is more focus on the issues that the youth face. Many young women align more with the youth movement rather than women's movement. This affects the growth of the women's movement and its ability to self-sustain.

Further, competition for limited financial resources amongst women's organizations continues to remain a challenge. With even more reduced financial resources, and in a context where women's organizations were already competing for limited resources, the situation is even more dire. Many issues affecting women are not receiving sufficient attention. However, with this challenge, there is the opportunity for women's organization to unite and coalesce together in order to increase their strength. Women's networks remain important and strategic vehicles for promoting such unity, and supporting women's organization to continue working towards their goals, in spite of the limited resources.

Another challenge is the existence of barriers that continue to limit the extent to which women are able to participate in networking and policy advocacy. In particular, women in certain contexts are still not able to effectively participate in policy advocacy and networking due to the burden of unpaid care and domestic work and the operation of social norms which require women to stay out of decision-making spaces. Violence against women remains a challenge, and currently, the focus is on addressing femicide, which is seen as the culmination of various acts of violence against women. During the second monitoring survey, there was a very slight improvement in addressing these barriers as compared with the



first monitoring, which illustrates that these barriers continue to exist. It is important to note that as Kenya heads towards the election period, it will be important to address these barriers as a way of also promoting women's political participation.

### 3.2 Recommendations

- Decreased funding to women's rights organizations has had a negative impact specifically on levels of awareness about women's rights generally and WEE in particular. In order to prevent such regression, it is recommended that the Government and the donor community provide more resources to support the work of women's rights organizations.
- Levels of participation in policy advocacy and networking have remained generally high. This has been achieved through networking in the grassroots, hence there is a need to support the continued establishment of women's networks at the grassroots level. This can be achieved through advocacy for policies and programs that promote grassroots advocacy. This is an issue that can be taken up by the Ministry/State Department responsible for Gender Affairs.
- There is need to sustain high levels of women's participation in policy advocacy, hence strategies that promote such participation should continually be developed and implemented. The women's movement should therefore continually develop innovative ways of ensuring that women can participate in policy advocacy. This can be achieved by leveraging on technology and supporting women to participate in policy advocacy using technology, particularly in contexts where financial resources are decreasing.
- In terms of women's political participation, there are still barriers that limit women from vying for these elective positions. In the run up to the 2027 elections, it is notable that levels of awareness

about the not more than two thirds gender principle have continued to decrease. However, it remains important to advocate for laws that support and promote women's candidature, and to continue advocating for the full implementation of the constitutional provisions on the not more than two thirds gender principle. Thus, AWSC, together with NABWEE and CWEEN as well as its collaborating partners should remain vocal about the issue of the not more than two thirds gender principle in order to ensure that it continues to remain visible and be implemented.

- It is important to develop a financing model for women's organizations so as to address issues of competition for donor funding among these organizations. This is because this competition is one of the factors that contributed to the weakening of the women's movement. Thus, women's organizations should come together to develop a funding model that works for them as means of supporting the continued growth of the women's movement, particularly now in the context of reduced donor funding.
- The policy issues affecting women in Kenya will vary from county to county, hence policy advocacy strategies should be alive to these differences. It is therefore important to promote women's self-advocacy through their grassroots networks, as it is through these channels that women will be able to articulate the specific issues that affect them as well as propose appropriate and effective solutions to those issues.
- There is need to support mentorship within women's networks as a way of promoting the inclusion of young women within these networks. This can be achieved through the continued sharing of experiences by women who have participated in policy advocacy; consultative meetings among women of different ages; training programs that support women to become effective mentors; and intra-generational leadership programs.

### *3.3 Conclusion*

Findings from the first and second monitoring surveys have demonstrated the significance of women's participation in networking and policy advocacy as core pillars in promoting women's empowerment. It has identified the barriers and challenges that women face in networking and policy advocacy, including limited financial resources, waning vibrance of the women's movement, discriminatory cultural norms and the burden of unpaid care work. Key recommendations to address these challenges have also been made.

The findings will contribute towards the strengthening of women's networks and alliance building. In particular, support to the continued growth of NABWEE and CWEEN by demonstrating the specific issues that these Networks should prioritize and focus on for policy advocacy. The AWSC will use the survey findings to determine interventions that can be used in order to sustain these networks and ensure that they continue to remain active. Donors can also use the findings to inform funding decisions that are aimed at promoting women's rights and empowerment. In addition, the survey findings are important in aiding the Government Departments and Agencies in identifying priority areas for policy formulation and implementation.





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**University of Nairobi**  
**African Women Studies Centre**  
**Women's Economic Empowerment Hub**  
P.O. Box 30197-00100, Nairobi | Kenya

Email: [awsckenya@uonbi.ac.ke](mailto:awsckenya@uonbi.ac.ke) | [weehub@uonbi.ac.ke](mailto:weehub@uonbi.ac.ke)  
Website: [awsc.uonbi.ac.ke](http://awsc.uonbi.ac.ke) | [weehub.uonbi.ac.ke](http://weehub.uonbi.ac.ke)



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