INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

Bell & Howell Information and Learning
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
800-521-0800

UMI®
Democratisation in Tanzania: 
Women’s Associations and the Potential for Empowerment

by

Andrea M. Brown

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Graduate Department of Political Science
University of Toronto

© by Andrea M. Brown 1999
The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author’s permission.

L’auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

L’auteur conserve la propriété du droit d’auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.
Democratisation in Tanzania: Women’s Associations and the Potential for Empowerment

by Andrea M. Brown. A thesis in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Graduate Department of Political Science, University of Toronto, 1999.

Abstract

This work is an exploratory study mapping the emerging relationship between women’s empowerment and democratisation in Tanzania, from a class perspective. It explores the impacts of the political reform process, which began in the mid-1980s, on the organisational capacities of women in Dar es Salaam and the new opportunities emerging for these women to meet empowerment goals. Middle-class women are self-consciously addressing and transforming political, legal and cultural gender power relations as well as initiating practical strategies for women. Poor women are engaging mainly in strategies to meet their practical economic needs, empowering themselves in a more indirect fashion.

The distinction between strategic and practical gender interests, developed by Caroline Moser (1989, 1993) and the structural framework formulated by DAWN (Sen and Grown 1985) are operationalised and critiqued to help evaluate strategies most likely to result in the realisation of empowerment. The determination of what strategies and outcomes can be evaluated as empowering is in this study weighted towards the opinions and experiences of the women involved. The practical/strategic distinction as used by Moser is unable to account for empowering outcomes that emerge from practical strategies at both class levels, but most significantly for women working in the informal sector. The DAWN model is ill equipped to address political environment, the middle-class women’s movement as a whole, or lower-income women’s organisational activities.
Transformations within the culture and the economy, and new policies responding to areas identified as of gender concern are resulting in an overall increase in the number of women's empowerment objectives being met at the levels of the family, civil society and the state. Nevertheless, concerns remain with the limited nature of reforms, which have implications for a continued and sustained deepening of both democracy and the potential for women to formulate and realise empowerment goals. However, in comparison with women's movements in Kenya, Zimbabwe and Zambia, the Tanzanian movement is seen as most promising due to its high level of unity and a more supportive political environment.
Acknowledgements

This study could never have been completed without the ongoing support of many institutions and individuals. Financial support from the University of Toronto and the Centre for International Studies at the University of Toronto is greatly appreciated. I would also like to thank the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Dar es Salaam for taking me on as a research associate for the duration of my stay in Tanzania, and the Ministry of Science and Technology for granting me research clearance. Also in Tanzania I would like to thank the staff at the Tanzanian Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (TANGO), and in particular its chairman Dennis Muchunguzi, for assistance in helping me locate women’s organisations. Especially deserving of thanks are all of the district and ward employees of the Ministry of Community Development, Women’s Affairs and Children who scheduled interviews for me and travelled with me all over Dar es Salaam so I could carry them out.

My thesis committee, made up of Professor Richard Sandbrook, Professor Jonathan Barker and Professor Patricia McCarney, offered insightful and useful feedback over the duration of this research. I would like to thank my supervisor Richard Sandbrook especially, for his ongoing patience and encouragement. Not only were his comments on the development of my proposal and my writing of this thesis invaluable, but his supportive emails while I was in Tanzania were a great boost to my confidence in what I was trying to accomplish.

Special thanks need to go to my research assistant Asha Hariz. She assisted me in much more than translation, navigating me though all the areas of Dar es Salaam and contributing important perspectives on this research as it was carried out. Although it may not always have been evident at the time, I am appreciative of her continued pressure for me to use and improve my Swahili, despite the hilarity this at times generated.

The willingness of all my interviewees in meeting with me and speaking frankly about their lives, activities and the changing political and economic climate in Tanzania was essential in making this study what it is. I am particularly grateful to the women in informal sector groups who met with me for interviews scheduled by the Ministry of
Community Development, many of whom had to wait to be interviewed, taking time away from their businesses.

Professor Ibrahim Shao at the Institute of Development Studies was exceedingly helpful upon my arrival in Dar es Salaam, particularly with ensuring that my research clearance made its way though the bureaucracy. Thanks are also due to both Professors Halfani for providing me with office space at the Institute and securing for me initial accommodation arrangements. When I first arrived in Dar I stayed with a relative of the Halfani’s, Alvin Kirundwa, whose hospitality and warmth provided me with the best welcome to Tanzania anyone could hope for. Between November and May I lived with the Mkony’s in Kijitonyama. The Mkony’s welcomed me into their family life and my stay in Dar es Salaam would have been nowhere near as rewarding without this. The friendship (and hot water) of Pippy Warburton and Peter Wobst also made my stay in Dar what it was.

The continued support of my family was essential in my finishing this study. My parents Christmas visit to me in Tanzania allowed me to share a little with them of my enthusiasm for the country. After letting me move back in with them for the last year and a half, they never let on if their belief in my ability to finish was challenged, but gave me the space to write in comfort unheard of by most students. Without their confidence and help this process would have been much more difficult.

While all these institutions and individuals share in the strengths of this study, all of the shortcomings are my own.
CONTENTS

Abstract ii

Acknowledgements iv

List of Tables viii

Chapter 1: Introduction: Democratisation in Tanzania – Women’s Associations and the Potential for Empowerment
   1.0 Introduction 1
   1.2 Context 8
   1.3 Conceptual Framework 15
   1.4 Methodology 40
   Notes 52

Chapter 2: Democratic Openings and the Tanzanian Women’s Movement
   2.0 Democratic openings and associational growth 54
   2.1 Identified gender concerns: the need for empowerment 58
   2.2 Strategies for empowerment 85
   2.3 Assessment: measuring empowerment and rating group’s contributions 124
   2.4 Conclusions 134
   Notes 144

Chapter 3: Economic Restructuring and Women in the Informal Economy
   3.0 Economic restructuring and associational growth 146
   3.1 Tanzania’s informal sector 150
   3.2 Groups with credit 157
   3.3 Groups without external credit 169
   3.4 Empowerment capacities of self-employed women in the informal sector 178
   3.5 Conclusions 183
   Notes 186

Chapter 4: The Tanzanian State: Women’s Representation and Emerging Relations with Civil Society
   4.0 Introduction 188
   4.1 Women’s representation at the state level 189
   4.2 Multiparty politics and its impacts for women’s empowerment 197
   4.3 Limits of reforms and weak democratic consolidation 205
   4.4 Middle class women’s strategies 212
   4.5 Informal sector strategies 223
   4.6 Conclusions 228
   Notes 230
Chapter 5: Democratisation and Women’s Empowerment: A Comparative Analysis of Kenya, Zimbabwe and Zambia

5.0 Introduction 231
5.1 The women’s movement in Kenya: Disunity in an unfavourable political environment 237
5.2 Women’s groups in Zimbabwe: State control and a revolution betrayed 249
5.3 Zambia: A fragmented women’s movement and reversals in political openings 254
5.4 Conditions for women’s empowerment: Political environment, unity and culture 257

Notes 260

Conclusions 261

Appendix A: Questionnaires 278

Appendix B: Middle Class and Political Level Interviews 281

References 284
Illustrations

Tables

1: Characteristics of DAWN's Classification of Women's Organisations 49

2: Women's Associations and Year Formed 55
2.1: Maternal Age and Child Deaths 69
2.2: The Literacy Rate as Depicted by the National Literacy Test 1975-1992 73
2.3: Total Dropout by Reason in Primary School, 1991 75
2.4: Tanzanian Women's Groups: Sectoral Focus and Gender Approach 87
2.5: Women's Groups: Achievement of Strategic and Practical Goals and Empowerment Results 90
2.6: Number of Women's Groups per Category 111

3: Total I.S. Employment/Female Employment by Type by Urban/Rural 153
3.1: I.S. Employment by Occupation, Survey Sample 154
3.2: Women's Employment by Industry of Employment 155
3.3: Education Level of Women Surveyed in the Informal Sector 157
3.4: Number and Amount of Grants Disbursed by Danida Special Grant for Women 158

4: The Participation of Political Parties in the 1995 General Elections and the Performance of Women Candidates 193

Graph

Women's Participation in Upato Clubs 168
Chapter 1
Introduction: Democratisation in Tanzania - Women's Associations and the Potential for Empowerment

1.0 Introduction

Tanzania is undergoing a process of political and economic liberalisation. In the late 1980s Tanzania began a state-led transition from a single-party socialist system to a multiparty democracy, culminating in the national presidential and legislative elections in October 1995, won by Benjamin Mkapa of the ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi (Revolutionary Party). Tanzania is also undergoing a process of structural adjustment, from 1986 under the guidance of the IMF, liberalising its economy and moving away from previous goals of achieving autonomous socialist development.

Tanzania's experience is similar to that of her African neighbours; immediately following independence there was a period of high participation and optimism, followed soon after by increasing bureaucratic centralisation (Allen 1995: 305). While in some African nations (such as Nigeria and Sierra Leone) a more exaggerated "spoils politics" and political breakdown grew out of a continuing crisis of legitimacy, in Tanzania the system remained stable until the 1980s when economic problems intersected with the political realities of the post cold war global context. This stability was in part due to Tanzania's success with overcoming ethnic divisions and this in large part due to the government's efforts at making Swahili a national language. Currently there is a move in many African states, particularly those like Tanzania that did not degenerate far into spoils politics, towards democratisation. Tanzania's transition must be understood in this
general regional context, mediated by common international pressures, as well as from its own internal momentum and culture.

Tanzania's history is of course its own and cannot be fully captured by African generalisations. The Arusha Declaration, *ujamaa*, and Nyerere himself are all components in Tanzania's unique political past, as are pre-independence factors such as Portuguese, Arabic, German and English influences and a small colonial settler population. Tanzania's unique ethnic mix, coastal location and even tsetse flies have mediated all of these elements. So while this study identifies Tanzania's democratisation as part of a general trend in much of Africa, it concentrates on the manner in which it is being shaped by forces specific to Tanzania. Cultural variables are significant not only in terms of shaping the democratic reforms initiated by the state, but also for the ways in which groups in society respond to and further shape both economic and political reforms.

This thesis investigates the impact of democratisation on gender relations, specifically exploring how democratic and economic reforms are contributing to the empowerment of women. Reforms are impacting on the organisational strategies and capacities of women, and in turn women's activities are having important effects upon the reform process itself. Empowerment is understood as a shift in power relations resulting in an increase of power for women. However, power operates on many different fronts, and an increase in power in one area may require or result in decreases in others through a complex series of choices and negotiations. Thus empowerment should not be seen simply as an absolute – a situation of total emancipation – but as operating
along a continuum with specific opportunities, choices, and contestations creating empowering possibilities for women.

The central focus of this study is organised women in Dar es Salaam region, and the differential class impacts of both political and economic changes. While the reforms have brought about increases in organisation amongst Tanzanian women, the impacts, responses, and perceptions of reforms are sharply divided along class lines. New forms of associational activities and empowerment are emerging for women of all classes, but while middle-class women are self-consciously addressing and transforming political, legal and cultural gender power relations, poor women, through collective strategies to meet their practical economic needs, are empowering themselves in a more indirect fashion. All gender interests have the potential to be translated into strategic goals, which are more likely to result in higher levels of empowerment for women. However, poor women tend to focus on practical strategies, with empowering outcomes that are less frequent and less pronounced, but nonetheless do occur and may be rated by them as more meaningful to their lives than structural political empowerment.

Political reforms have assisted in the development of a vibrant women’s movement in Tanzania. An easing on restrictions to organising in the mid-1980s has allowed the membership and number of middle-class women’s groups present in Tanzania to mushroom. The atmosphere of reform has further encouraged the growth of women’s groups as women are coming together to ensure that they are part of the reform process. In marked contrast to the period before reforms began, the government is taking a supportive stance to these groups and meets with them frequently.
This women’s movement is being directed and defined by middle-class women who are organising in increasing numbers to address a wide range of concerns targeted at transforming cultural, legal and political norms and institutions. They are less able to address economic issues of poverty, exacerbated by concurrent structural adjustment reforms, although many groups are engaged in welfare activities focused on the practical needs of poor women and most groups are strongly critical of the impacts of structural adjustment for women.

The empowerment methodology formulated by DAWN (Development Alternatives for a New Era) (Sen and Grown 1987) is helpful in classifying middle-class women’s groups into service-oriented, politically affiliated, worker-based, outside-initiated, grassroots, research, and coalitions of organisations. The empowerment potential of these organising approaches, following on the work of Caroline Moser (1993), can be further assessed by determining which approaches are more likely to result in strategic, rather than purely practical gains. However, the strength of the middle-class women’s movement is located in its high levels of co-operation and its range of approaches — not all of which are strategic or found by Moser to be the most “empowering” — which complement one another and push for women’s concerns on a variety of different plains. The analytical frameworks of both DAWN and Moser are insufficient for accounting for empowering outcomes that may result from practical strategies, the significance of political environment, or an assessment of the women’s movement in its entirety.

Poor women are also organising, in their case in response to economic rather than political factors. Despite the negative implications adjustment has for poor women, they
are becoming empowered through their increased participation in the cash economy, which is expanding their financial autonomy and resulting in some transformations of gender power relations at family and cultural levels. In addition, their participation in collective security networks has helped them to subvert legal barriers such as licensing restrictions, though the gender implications of this are unclear. While not belittling the harsh consequences economic reforms have had for poor women – increased vulnerability resulting from higher costs for food, education and healthcare – it is important to note that they have not reacted passively. Difficult economic circumstances have pushed poor women into informal sector participation and they have developed collective frameworks in response, organising into rotating savings clubs (*upato*), informal location-based security and co-operation groups, and groups to secure government and outside donor support. The responses of these women are less focused on the identification of gender needs (although they are conscious of gender discrimination, particularly at the family level) than on the practical economic concerns of individual women. However, they are having some impact on transforming women's culturally assigned roles in the family and in the economic arena.

While poor women by and large support the economic reforms, many are suspicious or cynical with regard to political democratisation – the opposite perceptions to those of middle-class women. This raises the important issue of who the women's movement is speaking for; the middle-class women's movement tends to downplay or ignore elements of economic reforms which poor women find empowering in favour of emphasising political reforms which poor women do not rate as highly.
Tanzanian women’s forms of organisation reflect their responses to the reform process and their different strategies contribute towards an alteration of power relations at the levels of the family, society and the state. An important additional space for effecting gender transformation is that of reshaping cultural attitudes towards women. While attitudes towards women’s culturally identified roles are changing more dramatically and through more focused and self-conscious strategies in Tanzania’s middle-class, poorer levels of Tanzania’s society are also undergoing some changes in gender relations, resulting in higher levels of empowerment for women.

Chapter 2 focuses on the middle-class women’s movement by examining the areas these women have identified as discriminatory – legal, health, education, labour, and political – and the collective strategies they employ to address these sectors along with women’s poverty concerns and an overall struggle against cultural constraints. While the aims of this movement are to empower all Tanzanian women, for the most part it touches only women of their own class. This chapter argues that impressive gains are being made by the activities of middle-class women due to a diversity of approaches and strong levels of co-operation and support among groups. It challenges the notion that grassroots groups with strategic gender objectives are the best model for achieving women’s empowerment, instead highlighting how a number of different approaches, with practical as well as strategic objectives and hierarchical as well as participatory structures, can complement one another. Middle-class women’s groups are analysed within the frameworks developed by DAWN and Caroline Moser to demonstrate how these groups overflow the boundaries these frameworks establish, pointing to a need to both broaden our understandings of the organisational frameworks best suited for
achieving empowerment objectives and take into account the political and cultural environments within which groups operate.

Chapter 3 focuses on poor women organising for practical purposes of survival. Poor Tanzanian women working in the informal sector are joining traditional upato or credit saving groups, securing group loans through government-administered programs, and forming informal location-based security groups in response to their immediate practical economic needs. In addition to providing women with forums for meeting together to address shared economic problems, these groups provide important social spaces that do not leave women isolated in their difficulties. Women are coming together to address practical concerns, which they do not usually identify as specifically gendered, but are still contributing to forms of empowerment, which can be understood along gendered lines. Thus, meeting practical objectives can sometimes result in transformations in gender relations with increased power for women, a point that does not follow from Moser’s analysis of practical and strategic gender interests.

Chapter 4 narrows in on the role of the state and how it is affecting and responding to women’s interests, at both class levels, in the new context of multiparty politics. New patterns of governance are emerging in Tanzanian society, although they are different for middle-class women than for poor women working in the informal sector. With pressure from middle-class women and in response to new cultural attitudes adopted among the middle-class, women are increasing their representation at the state level and new legislation is being passed to address women’s concerns. Although the state’s relations with poor women remain imbued with patrimonialism, women and men working in the informal sector have been able to influence government policy through
strategies of non-compliance. Some women's groups are taking advantage of
government loan support, but patrimonial relations and the welfare style of these
programs does little to increase their overall empowerment. For the most part poor
women are avoiding the government, taking on new roles in the economy in response to
the pressures of economic insecurity, government failures in providing affordable social
services, and avoiding government restrictions dealing with licensing. However, both
middle-class and poor women are not only reacting to government initiated reforms, but
also shaping them.

Chapter 5 introduces a comparative analysis of women's empowerment struggles
in Kenya, Zimbabwe, and Zambia. Through this discussion the variables which facilitate
and limit women's empowerment goals are highlighted, demonstrating the significance of
culture, commitment to democratic reform, and ethnicity to the success of women's
movements. The Tanzanian women's movement is found to be comparatively more
promising and cohesive than in these other countries due to a culture more disposed to
promoting women's interests, stronger democratic openings, and a relative lack of ethnic
conflict. This comparative analysis helps to emphasise the importance of examining
women's movements in their totality and political contexts, a weakness found in
DAWN's approach.

1.2 Context
In 1961 the mainland of Tanzania became independent, and the vision and leadership of
its first president, Julius Nyerere, who remained in power until he voluntarily stepped-
down in 1985, had a profound effect on the nation's development. In contrast with many
African post-colonial leaders, Nyerere continues to hold a great deal of admiration and respect, internationally as well as among Tanzanians. Nyerere’s vision for Tanzania’s development was expressed in the Arusha Declaration of 1967, with the slogan of “socialism and self-reliance.” The key means for achieving the goals of the declaration was to be through *ujamaa* – a programme of establishing co-operative rural villages with the goal of achieving self-reliant and equitable development.

Nyerere’s emphasis on bridging ethnic differences through the establishment of Swahili as a national language and limiting class differences through a focus on collective responsibility and equality have had enduring positive impacts for Tanzania. However, neither self-reliance nor socialism was ever achieved, and while the agricultural sector continues to dominate Tanzania’s economy, many facets of *ujamaa* proved problematic on both economic and democratic grounds. Tanzania saw little growth in export crop production during *ujamaa* and the nation continues to rely on food imports. In addition nationalised industries became heavily indebted to the nationalised banks. Initially voluntary movements of Tanzanians to *ujamaa* villages became compulsory in the 1970s. Elected officials gradually lost power to a swelling and increasingly corrupt bureaucracy as they were replaced by appointed civil servants. Corporations with appointed management replaced marketing co-operatives. Worker’s organisations lost the right to strike and freedoms of speech, assembly, and the press were seriously curtailed.

Tanzania’s current reform process stems from the economic and political failures of *ujamaa*. By the early 1980s Tanzania was on the verge of economic collapse, with an acute shortage of foreign exchange, declines in agricultural production, and sharply rising urban unemployment, informal sector activity and inflation. (West, 1994: 5) In 1982 this
crisis led to the first open debate over the political future of Tanzania since the Arusha Declaration. At this time the party began to ease its control over the economy by restoring independent co-operative societies (in 1982), and in 1984 beginning a process of economic liberalisation and privatisation (Due, 1993: 1). The most politically significant change was the decision, reluctantly accepted by Nyerere, to move towards a multi-party political system. Elections were held in 1995, after a transition period beginning in 1985 with Ali Hassan Mwinyi taking over from Nyerere as president. In 1986 an agreement was signed with the IMF. As part of the overall political reform process, a new Bill of Rights was introduced in 1982, although it did not come into effect until 1988, and the Leadership Code, which prevented party members from having second incomes, was removed in 1991. In October of 1995 multi-party presidential elections saw CCM retaining power under Benjamin Mkapa. Reforms continue, but as this study will indicate, the process remains incomplete and it is uncertain how committed the present government is to their furtherance.

For a democracy that will involve the participation of the majority of the population, necessary for the full realisation of women’s empowerment, the mobilisation of Tanzanian civil society is central. For this to occur the state must play a role. Decades of political exclusion, repression and apathy need to be overcome. Headway has been made in terms of legal changes that permit greater freedom for organisation: however, years of indifference and disillusionment with the political process will not be easily swept away. In order for Tanzanian women of all classes to become aware of and respond to the decisions being made which affect them, both middle-class non-governmental organisations and the state will have to develop strategies to reach out to
the grassroots, with a recognition of both the cultural and economic barriers to participation. However, it is uncertain how committed the government is to facilitating political inclusion. Without this commitment democracy in Tanzania will remain an elite preoccupation, and for the vast majority of the population little will have changed. To understand the transformation occurring in Tanzania attention must be given to both the state and civil society, as they act independently of one another and interact.

Women in Dar es Salaam, like women anywhere, are not a homogenous group. While they are differentiated by ethnicity, proximity to urban centres, religion, age, and marital status, class was found to be the most significant variable in this study. The concerns of middle-class and poor self-employed women are markedly different with middle-class women demonstrating a higher preoccupation with gender inequalities and political concerns and poor women, while organising along gender lines, addressing their economic vulnerability rather than articulated feminist goals. These different perspectives and organisational strategies highlight the diversity of women’s interests and raise important issues surrounding how far the women’s movement can be seen as representative of all Tanzanian women, and the power relations which allow some voices to be heard, while others remain at the margins.

Vibrant and encouraging as the activities of the middle-class women’s movement are, they remain confined to a small proportion of Tanzanian women. While many of these groups focus on issues which apply to all women in Tanzania, or even which relate specifically to poor, less educated women, these issues are being argued and articulated by middle-class women, not the women they seek to assist. Many of the difficulties facing Tanzanian women – legal rights, education, health issues, and poverty – need to be
addressed by the government, but they also need to be understood and addressed by the women affected. However, while poor women in Tanzania are very aware of what their specific problems are, they tend not to articulate them in political terms, but rather perceive them as ‘life problems’ that cannot be changed, just managed, with hard work or through collective activities with economic goals. Poor women have understandably prioritised economic survival over gender inequalities, and while the two are most certainly linked, their capacities for undertaking political actions are weak. Their disinterest in political matters and cynicism towards political reforms are perhaps best understood as pragmatism rather than simple apathy.

While some middle-class women’s groups do try to directly reach poor women at the grassroots, these efforts remain, due to inadequate resources, very limited. Economic reforms have contributed to worsening economic conditions for poor women, making their concerns immediate and practical; they are uninterested in politics. They have minimal contact with non-governmental organisations and the middle-class women’s movement. While they have an awareness of the cultural practices and ideologies that work against them as women, such as the sexual division of labour, their primary responsibility for supporting children, and domestic violence, they do not tend to question them. Nor do they believe they can assist in altering the marginalisation they face due to their poverty, in terms of the quality of education and health care they and their families receive and their lack of a public voice. Economic conditions limit the ability of poor women to take advantage of their new political rights and freedoms, as they are fully preoccupied with strategies of immediate survival for themselves and their families.
Difficult economic conditions also militate against middle-class groups’ abilities to reach the grassroots, particularly in more rural areas.

One prescription that comes from this study is that greater links need to form between middle-class women’s groups and poor women in order for the majority of Tanzanian women to challenge cultural norms and become politically engaged, a process that is occurring presently only with the middle-class. This is not to suggest that poor women are inherently incapable to becoming politicised on their own, or that they need middle-class women to direct them. Indeed middle-class groups themselves have much to gain in developing their theoretical understandings of women’s oppression if they were to have greater contact with poor women. However, the reform process thus far in Tanzania has been primarily state led, and decades of political exclusion and a harsh economic environment have created conditions where most Tanzanians do not believe that they have any abilities to influence the political and economic decisions which affect them. Groups that have developed programs to help women with credit and with expanding their economic activities do have a positive impact, particularly when they are designed with the active participation of the poor women they assist. However, these projects reach only a small number of women.

In the immediate post-independence era, there was widespread political engagement in Tanzania. The organisational structure of TANU, the precursor to CCM, was designed to facilitate this by having party positions existing down to the cell level of one in every ten households. This structure is still present in form, and is even being replicated by the main opposition party, NCCR-Maguezi (National Convention for Construction and Reform). The Ministry of Community Development, Women’s Affairs
and Children also has a structure that operates down to the ward level, a potential framework for greater interaction between the state and society. Some middle-class women's associations have reached out to poorer women in some communities by helping them set up groups integrating economic and political goals, offering rotating loans, adult education, or informal discussion groups, in structures the women involved can continue to run for themselves. The potential, along with some previously institutionalised frameworks, does exist for a scenario in which the majority of Tanzanians can be informed and involved at some level with the governance of the country - rather than the more typical experience where citizens may vote every four years but the business of politics is undertaken by a small elite. However, few avenues presently exist for any meaningful level of popular participation and there does not seem to be a great demand for a more inclusive system.

On balance Tanzania's economic and political reforms should be seen in a positive light. The economy has improved in terms of growth in GNP, as have political accountability and freedoms. However, as this examination of Tanzanian women demonstrates, the results of these reforms have been uneven, and there is a fear that class divisions are widening in the wake of rising costs and heavy retrenchment in the public sector (Kaiser 1996; Mbilinyi 1994: 18). For all Tanzanians to reap the benefits of reforms and participate in their own governance, greater economic growth will need to occur than is present in the current forecast. What benefits poor women would see from devoting more energy to activities such as political lobbying are not evident. How empowering is analysis of one's political or gender marginalisation without the tools to transform it? Nonetheless, the ideals of a more participatory society and greater gender
equality for all women could be given greater attention than is presently the case were the
government to show the will to do so, via pressure from the middle-class women's
movement directed both towards organising women at the grassroots and through its
lobbying of the government.

1.3 Conceptual Framework

i) Democracy

William Connolly (1983) has used democracy as an example of a term with contestable
meanings – a contestable cluster concept – with a number of possible components drawn
from different times and ideologies. For a democracy to really be a democracy it must
demonstrate a certain number of these criteria, which are weighted based on normative
assumptions. "Thus, for some the central criterion of a democracy is the power of
citizens to choose government through competitive elections; for others this factor is less
important than equality of opportunity for all citizens in attaining positions of political
leadership; for still others both of these criteria pale in significance if the continuous
participation of citizens at various levels of political life is not attained" (Connolly 1983:
10). Similarly, Dahl (1971, 1989) has written extensively on democracy, providing
detailed checklists in an attempt to pin down its possible meanings. These approaches
can be useful when one is trying to measure the authenticity of a democracy, particularly
when comparing democracies.

To what degree is there now a greater level of democracy in Tanzania than before
the institutionalisation of multiparty politics? Tanzania justified its single party system
on grounds of democracy – it was asserted that political competition would fragment the
nation and divide it along ethnic and regional lines. Thus, a single party was needed to represent *all* Tanzanians. There is a common sense to this argument: it corresponds to the African post-independence reality, not simply to a rationalisation for absolute political control. While it makes sense to discuss Tanzania’s reform transition as one towards greater democracy, because more ‘components’ of democracy are being realised – accountability, rights and freedoms, transparency, decentralisation – the fact remains that for the vast majority of the population participatory elements of democracy are still absent. While the reform process is incomplete it would appear that the forces leading the democratic transition are content with a realisation of formal institutional democracy, rather than moving towards a more inclusive system.

Tanzania’s democratic transition is being pushed from within the ruling party, the opposition parties, forces in society, and from the international donor community. All of these groups have different normative assessments of the direction in which Tanzania needs to move, as well as different levels of influence over the process. The 1991 Nyalali Commission had as part of its mandate the task of recommending “ways through which the Basic Principles of democracy in the Country can be established, expanded and maintained …” and to “examine and recommend any necessary changes to the Constitutions of the United Republic of Tanzania and the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar, or to any other relevant legislations and political conventions that are entrenched in the Country” (United Republic of Tanzania 1991: 15). Fulfilling this mandate the commission outlined a thirteen-step transition process, including a new constitution, and gave a ten-point summary of democratic defects, yet to date little action to address the problems identified has been taken. While there is no consensus within
CCM with respect to how far or how fast reforms should move, the government's record indicates an unwillingness to broaden democratic reforms beyond the minimum needed to attract donor support and maintain legitimacy at home. Professional groups in the legal profession, academia, and media along with opposition parties are vocally pushing for greater freedoms and more accountability from the government. Their success has been mixed: their views are tolerated to a point and professional groups do meet with representatives of the government, but a recent crackdown on the media and the charges of treason against several members of the Zanzibari Civic United Front party do not indicate a willingness on the part of the government to allow open debate. Tanzanians working in the informal sector have had an impact on the reform process with acts of informal resistance, resulting in greater freedom to carry out their business activities and with legal changes such as the deregulation of public transit (Tripp 1997). While this can be seen as an indication that the government is responding to public pressure, the channels available to exert pressure are largely limited to acts of civil disobedience and the ballot box.

External donors such as the IMF are pushing for a formal institutionalised liberal democracy, focusing on a competitive party system, constitutional amendments, an active civil society, and capitalism (Hyden and Karlstrom 1993: 140). These are not all weighted equally however, and the continuation of financial support has thus far only been threatened by difficulties with election results and the failure to meet economic restructuring commitments. It seems to be assumed that civil society will take care of itself once the appropriate institutional changes to permit this have occurred.
The purpose of this study is not to measure Tanzania's emerging democracy by the standards of one ideal type, but its normative focus is on the issue of empowerment, specifically the empowerment of women, understood as the ability of women to have the power to address the concrete political social and economic inequalities that they face. Inequalities have been identified by Tanzanian women as existing in the areas of political representation, health, education, the law, professional opportunities, the labour market, and overall cultural attitudes. Popular participation is essential for the achievement of many of the empowerment objectives women identify; to be fulfilled many require changes in government policy and the law and may not be raised or addressed without the input of the women affected.

Women in Tanzania are divided on the basis of class in terms of what hopes they have from the reform process. The aim of this research is to indicate what roles democratisation and the liberalisation of the economy are playing in allowing them to meet empowerment objectives, as identified by the women's movement and by poor women. For the possibility of empowerment certain minimum democratic variables must pertain: the freedom to organise and the presence of a state that responds to public pressure. Regular elections and a deregulated economy are not sufficient criteria to allow for more than a modest transformation of gender relations.

ii) Class

Class is used in this study as a key variable, but not with the classical Marxist understanding of class in terms of productive relations. The main distinction being made within the range of women's groups studied is that of class as understood by relative
economic position, rather than in terms of ownership of the means of production. For example, a poor woman selling charcoal on the road fits into my lower-class category, despite the fact that she runs her own business and may pay others to help transport her product. A woman journalist working for a newspaper, earning a wage, falls into the middle-class.

Marxist class analysis is not used because it was not found to be a useful approach in this specific case study. However, there are important and revealing class studies of Tanzania, most notably that of Shivji (1973), which carefully maps out class distinctions found in Tanzania, highlighting the important role played by the bureaucratic bourgeoisie. Shivji’s study does not address the position of women in Tanzania, or the manner in which women must be understood differently than men when applying class analysis, due to their additional roles in reproduction, the significance of their unpaid labour, and their additional oppression under cultural structures of patriarchy. However, the central reason Shivji’s analysis is not found to greatly illuminate this study is that his focus is on exploring the issue of class struggle in Tanzania during the early years of the nation’s independence, with a prioritisation of state power over other power levels and sources.

The class division between organised Tanzanian women is not best viewed as one of struggle. Certainly these women have different interests and perspectives, and these may even at times come into conflict with one another. Organised women in both class groups are disempowered on the basis of their gender. The absence of a exploitative economic relationship between them – women working in the informal sector are self-employed, not dependent on selling their labour power for a wage to another class –
means that their positions are distinct from one another, but their relationship is not one characterised by struggle or contradictory interests. While there is no question that the economic position of poor women is disadvantageous and their integration into the capitalist market has an exploitative character, the power inequalities which exist between poor and middle class women in the urban context of Dar es Salaam do not emerge from their relations of production vis-à-vis one another. In addition, the power locations examined in this study include that of the state, but equally important are those that exist in the family and civil society, mediated by culture as well as economic variables.

Other work adopting Marxist class analysis have been applied specifically to the study of Tanzanian women (Bryceson and Mbilinyi, 1978; Bryceson, 1980), pointing out interesting trends in women's changing economic positioning which alter their bases of social, domestic, and political power. These studies investigate the manner in which women engaged in subsistence agricultural work are becoming increasingly 'proletarianized' and dependent on wages in the cash economy. Bryceson and Mbilinyi argue that women's entry into the working class provides them with increased financial autonomy, allowing them to overcome some of the subordination they experienced within the family as peasant producers, but that sexual discrimination in the labour market means that women remain subject to gendered exploitation.

These insights into the ways in which women are exploited and disempowered with their entry into the cash economy are directly relevant to this study. It will be shown that for poor women working in the informal economy their increased financial autonomy is granting them more power at the family level and greater roles in civil society. It also
remains the case in Tanzania that women are discriminated against in the labour market, where they are concentrated in less skilled and less remunerative employment. This applies to middle class as well as poor women, and those working in the informal sector as well as those working in the formal sector. However, a Marxist understanding of class is not necessary to describe these developments, and indeed may even serve to obscure them as the women most disadvantaged by sexual discrimination in the labour market are not part of a proletarian class, but rather self-employed, thus part of the petit-bourgeoisie.

A social stratification understanding of class is more revealing and applicable to this study. The central reason for this is that women are organised into two central types of voluntary associations based on their relative positions in the labour market, but this stratification is not a result of the relations of production existing between these two groups. As Tanzanian women struggle for greater access to power, they must renegotiate power relations in a variety of locations, which may include a class struggle, but this is not the only or even primary arena. This is not to deny that capitalist penetration has not generated forms of women's oppression, only that the class relations between poor and middle class urban Tanzanian women are not essentially conflictual, and power relations operate at cultural and social levels that cannot be adequately explained by reference to class.

Poor Tanzanian women identify different interests and priorities than do middle-class women, but these interests are not inherently in opposition to one another. Even with regard to economic reforms, which poor women support, and middle-class women oppose, the reasons for this difference of perspective stem not from a middle-class interest in preserving their own class position at the expense of poor women, but from
different interpretations of the results of structural adjustment measures and a common interest in advancing the economic needs of poor women. Perhaps it could be argued that this is only what these middle-class women say, and their true interests are more suspect. However, this study strives to accept women’s interpretations on their own terms with a minimum of reinterpretation, including resort to functionalist explanations. That middle-class women are genuinely interested in assisting poor women and helping them reach higher levels of empowerment is apparent from the organised efforts they put into doing so, and is accepted.

While numerous divisions could be made within these two classes, for example, on grounds of proximity to the urban centre, spousal occupation, and the relative profitability of their economic activities, this structural division into two classes corresponds to the central demarcation found between organised women – roughly polar perceptions towards economic and political liberalisation and different objectives for organising. In addition, higher levels of wealth and education translate into higher levels of political, social and economic power and contribute to a significant distinction between the two classes identified here.

While middle-class women have greater levels of power, it is important to stress that poor women are not without their own sources of power. Power resides in diffuse locations, not only at the level of the state, but with communities and families. Continual contestations between groups and individuals renegotiate economic, societal and family power relations. However, there are strong links between education and power – the phrase “knowledge is power” has become so obvious as to be trite – and the more educated women, who tend to be in professional and strategically based organisations,
use their power in a more conscious political fashion than do their sisters working in the informal sector. So it is not the presence of power that informs this use of class, but the forms that power takes, a concrete awareness of power, and the relative impact that power can have for transforming gender relations. Empowerment is identified in terms of what women themselves find empowering – and this is different between women in the two class groups examined here. What women identify as empowering is dependent on their political awareness and what they feel their options are, factors that are strongly conditioned by class. Lower-income women cite practical economic concerns as most pressing, and for the most part show little interest in many of the political preoccupations of the middle-class women’s movement. The small numbers of lower-income women who are in contact with the middle-class movement through grassroots education programmes, however, do develop more strategically defined interests, although these do not get translated into actual programmes of action.

Thus, class is used in this analysis as a central organising concept for two reasons. Firstly, it was found to be the most significant divider of attitudes and impacts of political and economic liberalisation – far more so than age, religion or ethnicity. While it is strongly linked to levels of education, education is not broad enough a variable to account for all of the differences found. Class is also linked to urbanism, in that the middle-class organisations are all located in urban areas while the informal sector is everywhere. However, attitudes among poor women in urban and peri-urban areas were largely uniform. Secondly, this class division is tied to relative levels of economic, social and political power, which are important for addressing women’s gender concerns. While poor women do have access to some sources of social and political power, this is limited.
When evaluating the impacts of reforms on the associational activities and empowerment capacities of women – the purpose of this study – this class division shows two different narratives taking place. As will be demonstrated, these narratives link the importance of class with practical and strategic approaches of understanding and acting upon gender needs and the overall project of empowerment.

iii) Empowerment

Empowerment is a term growing in usage and is often poorly defined, with users assuming its contextual meaning will be understood without thorough explanation. Simply put, empowerment is the attainment of a greater share of power. The difficulties with this concept relate to how power is understood, who determines what is empowering, how to measure an increase in one source of power if it comes at the cost of losing another, and the means by which power is attained.

Feminist researchers have pointed out that power must be seen as sex-differentiated (Abwunza, 1997: 27). In her study of Logoli women in Kenya, Abwunza investigates the sources of women’s power as they exist in a patriarchal and capitalist system. While the use of patriarchy as a useful concept is problematic when it is reified into a natural monolithic structure, Abwunza’s use helps to illuminate the gendered nature of power. Rather than simply conceptualising patriarchy as an overarching structure, she is careful to emphasise that patriarchy is also an ideology/subjectivity (28). In this manner patriarchies in different cultures can be distinguished and analysed in order to reveal both the structural and ideological means by which women are
disempowered, and the avenues they have to express and expand the sources of power they have.

Jo Rowlands (1998) has identified a number of different usages of the term empowerment when discussing women’s empowerment in a development context. She finds that empowerment is used differently by those using the Women in Development (WID) perspective and those drawing on the Gender and Development (GAD) approach, which builds on analyses of empowerment focused on power as a process and adopts some Foucaultian understandings of power.

The WID perspective, which has predominated in thinking on women and development since 1970, adopts an instrumentalist understanding of power, whereby women need to be brought into the process of political and economic development not simply for their own benefit but for the larger project of development. In this understanding power is of finite supply - if women gain power, men lose - and power is always thought of as ‘power over’ (Rowlands 1998: 13). This perspective is an improvement on previous understandings of empowerment, which viewed power as neutral, without exploring the manner in which power is actually distributed, or the power dynamics of race, class, or gender. However, many gender theorists have found the WID approach to be problematic because of its association with a ‘Development-as-Westernisation’ viewpoint and the implication that if power is always ‘power over’ and can be bestowed, it can also be taken away because it is not related to structural change.

Rather than just focusing on developmental results, other empowerment theorists have adopted an understanding of empowerment that views it as a process, which has value for women on its own terms. Whereas the WID perspective understands power as
'power over', other thinkers find that power can take other forms, "variously described as 'power to', 'power with', and 'power from within', all of which allow the construction of a very different meaning (or set of meanings) for 'empowerment' (Rowlands 1998: 13). For example, Naila Kabeer (1994) favours an understanding of "power from within" because the project of empowerment necessarily involves a level of self-empowerment, which requires an analysis and understanding of existing and available power sources and relations. "A deductive analysis can help sketch out in broad brush strokes the main structural mechanisms by which women's subordination is maintained and reconstituted in specific contexts, but the 'power from within' ultimately entails the experiential recognition and analysis of these issues. Such power cannot be given; it has to be self-generated" (Kabeer, 1994: 229). Further broadening the meaning of empowerment, feminists drawing on the work of Foucault (Chowdry, 1995, Parpart, 1995) view power as relational, as well as a process; power is not a finite entity that can be located but emerges from all social relationships. This usage is helpful in contexts of understanding internalised oppressions, generative (rather than controlling) aspects of power, and collective power.

The Gender and Development (GAD) approach, which emerged in the late 1970s and 1980s, is concerned not just with women's roles but with the interaction of these roles with those of men - with the dynamics and structures of gender relations. The notion of empowerment has become an important part of this approach, and this study is an additional contribution. The GAD approach rejects the notion that power is finite (in contrast with WID) or that power is neutral (in contrast with many non-feminist
understandings of power) but rather examines power as it exists in a variety of locations and relationships, among groups and individuals.

Two of the most central contributions to GAD and empowerment have come from Caroline Moser (1989, 1993) and DAWN (Sen and Grown, 1985). This study engages with these analyses in order to understand how a GAD approach to women’s empowerment can be mapped on to the Tanzanian case. This study’s central point of departure from these works comes with a stronger recognition that empowerment is highly subjective. In order to side-step adopting a paternalistic viewpoint it avoids as much as possible advocating the ‘correct’ strategies to achieve empowerment and issues of internalised oppression, which have the tendency to drift into discussions of false consciousness. It instead lets women of different classes express what forms of power and control they most value in their lives. While it may be argued that this is a weakness, in terms of this study’s usefulness for gender planners and women’s groups, this is not necessarily the case. This study does not offer up an alternative framework of empowerment strategies which could be universally applied, however, it does focus on the important issue of listening and giving credit to marginalised voices and the significance of understanding their empowerment priorities. Furthermore, empowerment is not simply equated with the opinions of organised women, but is understood as a process that involves choices – the more choices available to women the greater range they have for developing empowering strategies. Hence contact between women’s groups, particularly between women of different classes, is seen as valuable because it can introduce new ideas and create new choices for women as well as foster a greater sense of understanding among women with different priorities. Similarly, a political
environment, which accommodates and even encourages popular participation, is important in assisting the formulation of empowerment goals and widening the range of empowerment options.

An additional departure of this analysis from some GAD studies, notably that of DAWN, is that it is concerned with not identifying its subjects as victims or only focusing on poor women. These aspects of the DAWN approach have been criticised as essentialising the category of women (Hirshman, 1995: 52). Sen and Grown (1987) attempt to explore women's disempowerment and offer up strategies for addressing it from the perspective of poor women, the most oppressed, claiming that this provides "the clearest lens for understanding the development process" (9). This may be, but it only provides one lens, and this study attempts to highlight how women of different classes experience different gendered power relations and accordingly have different perceptions and goals with respect to their political and economic environments. In addition, this study strives to indicate the sources of power that women do have, emphasising that it is inaccurate to view them simply as victims.

Power exists in diffuse locations; it may be political, economic, technological, spiritual, gendered, social, or very personal. Its significance lies in how important the individual or group who hold or desire this power views it – particularly if its exercise decreases security or power in other areas. What is ultimately found to be empowering can only be determined by groups and individuals themselves, choosing among different options. The greater the range of options the greater the empowerment potential. Thus power requires a degree of critical self-analysis; when power is available to take or to exercise, firstly this must be known, and secondly specific outcomes need to be weighed
and assessed, with cultural values playing a large role in determining what is most important. For example, a woman may choose not to exercise her "empowering" legal rights to prevent domestic violence simply because she does not know they exist. Alternatively she may not exercise them if doing so would result in community sanctions and a subsequent decrease in power tied to economic security or social status. What is ultimately most empowering for her cannot be determined by other women or by planning "experts". This study emphasises the importance of women's own assessments of what constitutes empowerment for them, and explores how these assessments are divided among women from different classes.

A point of contention among theorists of empowerment is the source from where power derives. There is an issue of whether empowerment necessarily involves "self-empowerment". Can an individual or group become empowered from outside? Tandon (1995) identifies three perspectives on empowerment, that of institutionalised power holders such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, "progressive" or "liberal" intellectuals, and an oppositional view, which he supports. The first view, associated with the World Bank and IMF, focuses on enabling conditions institutionalised at the state level to facilitate greater levels of popular participation, while the second stresses the importance of civil society and non-governmental organisations to directing the disempowered on an alternative development path. Tandon dismisses these two approaches as superficial and not in reality translating into shifts of power.

Both the above versions of empowerment are "top-down." In the first case, the (IMF, WB, etc.) seek to contain the concept with the bounds of the existing order, and in the second, liberal intellectuals seek to maintain their hegemony of knowledge. Both groups talk about "empowering the people" as if power was for them to give and not for the powerless to take. Both talk about creating "access" to resources or to "rights" (e.g. the right to food), as if
these resources and rights are for them to give. ... Against these essentially patronising, and fundamentally reformist perspectives is a third view which says that power is not there for the giving but for the taking. Those who “give” power condition it; power has to be taken. It is through active struggle for resources that you get access to those resources. ... the powerful may appear to be conceding power, but they do so in order to manage the powerless. “Empowerment” therefore, is a contradiction in terms; there can only be “self-empowerment” (Tandon 1995: 34).

Tandon is correct in asserting that empowerment requires the involvement of those being empowered, but there are a variety of ways in which this can occur, and power does not at all times exist as an absolute quantity which gets taken or passed around with a zero sum value. While an increase in power for one individual or group may result in a decrease for others, this is not always the case. Power can grow and develop from emerging conditions, and may be passed on from one source voluntarily and then expanded. For example, the reform process in Tanzania has provided women with increased opportunities to organise. Through their lobbying activities women's groups have raised the profile of women's concerns at the political level and in Tanzanian culture. In response, Tanzanian men are taking gender issues more seriously and participating in the emergence and strengthening of reforms and attitudes that increase women's power. Women outside of the women's movement benefit. There are infinite possibilities in the ways in which power can develop and be redistributed. Neither is empowerment a specific identifiable state, such that one is either empowered, or one is not. Empowerment operates as a process and along a continuum. Limited increases in empowerment, which may come with controls, are preferable to none at all.

This study focuses on empowerment from a gender perspective. The processes of democratisation and structural adjustment are creating new opportunities for women to renegotiate gendered power relations within their families, culture, society, economy,
work environments, and in political spheres - all areas where women have been disadvantaged on the basis of their gender. All of these locations exert their own pressures as to the limits and potential of empowerment strategies. While empowerment at some stage involves a critical understanding of power relations, making it "self-empowerment", this understanding may emerge through an identification of unequal power relations and subsequent struggle, or through unintended gains made by way of activities initially undertaken only to address practical economic issues of vulnerability.

A distinction between strategic and practical responses to gendered conditions (see below) is useful to differentiate between these two options. In addition, empowerment objectives achieved by the activities of one group of women may empower a larger group of women - if this power is then used it is not of less value to them than had they personally involved themselves in securing it. The key is an awareness of the power options available, necessary in order to exercise them, rather than the means by which they were attained. Nonetheless, some strategies have a better chance of creating empowerment options than do others, so differentiating between strategies is still theoretically useful. A practical/strategic distinction is used here for this purpose.

iv) Practical and Strategic Gender Approaches

The distinction between practical and strategic gender needs and interests was formulated by Maxine Molyneux (1985, 1986) and popularised by Caroline Moser (1989, 1993). The strategic/practical distinction is operationalised in this study to indicate how two different responses to gendered situations of inequality relate to empowerment and to class. Strategic rather than practical responses have the most direct impact, particularly at
the political level. Needs and interests are distinct from one another such that an interest is a "prioritised concern" that may be then translated into a need, "the means by which concerns are satisfied" (Moser 1993: 37). Both needs and interests can be classified as practical or strategic, although Moser finds that interests have more significance for gender analysis, while needs are important for planning. The distinction made is that strategic interests and needs are consciously political and challenge structures of patriarchy with a transformative intent, whereas practical interests and needs rise out of gendered conditions, but are a response to necessity or individual or collective interests without attempting to alter or challenge the gendered conditions which necessitated or mediated them. This study takes issue with the assertion that practical approaches can not result in strategic empowering outcomes, while conceding that this is most often the case.

Focusing on needs, Moser identifies strategic gender needs as,

...the needs women identify because of their subordinate position to men in their society. Strategic gender needs vary according to particular contexts. They relate to gender divisions of labour, power and control and may include such issues as legal rights, domestic violence, equal wages and women's control over their bodies. Meeting strategic gender needs helps women to achieve greater equality. It also changes existing roles and therefore challenges women's subordinate position (1993: 39).

Practical needs, in contrast, are identified by Moser as,

...the needs women identify in their socially accepted roles in society. Practical gender needs do not challenge the gender divisions of labour or women's subordinate position in society, although rising out of them. Practical gender needs are a response to immediate perceived necessity, identified within a specific context. They are practical in nature and often are concerned with inadequacies in living conditions such as water provision, health care, and employment (1993: 40).
Strategic interests, as well as needs, derive from an *analysis* of women's subordination to men, whereas practical interests and needs only derive from this subordination. For the purposes of this study the distinction between interests and needs, while perhaps significant in another context, is discarded as it complicates more than illuminates. A more useful category to contrast with a conflation of needs and interests is that of outcomes. If an increase in empowerment emerges as an outcome, need the analysis of women's disempowerment or their steps taken to address it have been strategic? This seems to be the implication of Moser's work, yet the findings in this study challenge this conclusion. Poor women tend to adopt practical rather than strategic approaches, yet outcomes which can be understood as empowering are emerging for them from their collective activities. Middle-class women employ both strategic and practical strategies, and oftentimes their choice of a practical approach is the best for furthering empowerment goals.

The key consideration in the use of strategic and practical distinctions is that of empowerment. Saskia Wieringa (1994) has criticised both Molyneux and Moser, finding that although the empowerment focus is worthwhile, and preferable to a welfare approach, "the distinction between practical and strategic interests ... is not helpful and should not be pursued" (Wieringa 1994: 836). Although she raises several good points, the most compelling relating to implementation of this analytical framework to a planning context, some modifications and clarifications of these categories can accommodate her criticisms. While these result in a blurring of the neat demarcations between strategic and practical approaches' relationship to empowerment, they need not be discarded altogether.
Wieringa correctly identifies the key consideration in the use of these categories as furthering women’s empowerment. However, Wieringa does not see categorising gender interests and needs as useful in this project. She levels four main criticisms against the approach. 1) It is mechanistic and cannot account for the diversity of women’s experiences and the conflicting or even contradictory nature of their interests. Women have interests based on identities other than gender — race, class and ethnicity, for example. Gender interests can never be seen as fixed or uniform and for the most part cannot be objectively and empirically assessed. Moser’s approach leads to the adoption of simplified tools and quantifiable targets in the planning field, a strategy that fails.

2) The distinction between needs and interests is troubling. She reads Moser as identifying a political process whereby needs, as they follow from the prioritisation of interests, can only be identified by planners, linking needs to a “teleological process of emancipation” (Wieringa 1994: 838). Wieringa also notes, returning to her first argument, that as one cannot assume the existence of a category of ‘women’s realities’ in order to identify the source of interests and needs, “women’s experiences can most profitably be addressed as symbolical codes, subject to diverse interpretations. Women’s realities are thus always discursively constructed” (838).

3) The distinction between practical and strategic is unsound. Wieringa argues that distinguishing strategic needs and interests on the basis that they have entailed an analysis of women’s engendered position, while practical needs and interests have not, is unsound because both derive from engendered conditions. Furthermore, making an empirical distinction between the two is often not possible, as it depends not on the nature
of the activities being analysed and what their outcome may be, but rather on their context and political motivation.

4) Lastly, Wieringa contends that Moser identifies strategic concerns as emerging only where planners have done the analysis for the women involved, making empowerment a hierarchical and paternalistic project.

Wieringa’s criticisms do not necessarily rule out the utility of the practical/strategic needs/interests model, but do present reasons for using it with caution and adapting it to fit the specific context where it is being applied. With regard to her first complaint – the empirical mechanistic slant to the approach – she advocates instead flexibility. However, this approach can be used in a flexible manner. For example, there is nothing in this model that precludes evaluating some concerns of a group as practical and others as strategic and incorporating issues of class or race into our understanding of that group and the specific women involved. In fact a central reason the strategic/practical model has been used for this study is its analytical utility in distinguishing the reasons for organising among women from different classes. While women in both classes may apply strategic and practical approaches at different times, in the middle-class women’s movement there is an emphasis on strategic goals while poor women focus on practical concerns. The reasons for this are to be found in the prioritisation that women themselves make about what is most important for them and the enormous challenge of addressing women’s disadvantaged economic positions in a strategic manner.

Wieringa accuses Moser of leaving to outside planning experts the tasks of creating distinctions between needs and interests and identifying strategic interests. I
believe she is here misrepresenting Moser’s position. However, this does seem to be the argument of Molyneux, when she writes, “In contrast to strategic gender interests, practical gender interests are formulated by the women themselves who are within these positions rather than through external interventions” (Molyneux 1986). This is indeed problematic as women are fully capable of undertaking their own analysis and identifying their own strategic interests and needs. That having been said, it is often the case that women come to strategic understandings from interaction with outside groups and individuals. Some lower-income groups in my sample that had adopted strategic understandings were interacting with middle-class women’s groups. However, the form of this interaction was not a simple dissemination of information from the top down, but genuine analysis on the part of the women involved. Furthermore, middle-class women themselves can learn from greater interaction with poor women who have different priorities and evaluations of the reform process.

That women’s realities are discursively constructed and open to interpretation is true but seems beside the point once we concede that they cannot be definitively located by ‘experts’ or other women. Their activities may still be classified as practical or strategic, based on their motivations for undertaking these activities, but whether or not they result in empowerment for the women involved is indeed subjective and best left to them to determine. It is possible to use these categories in a manner that recognises that women’s interests are not static or uniform and are often overdetermined. This classification is being used in this study as a tool to relate women’s opinions and activities to the larger project of empowerment and democratic inclusion and highlight how they differ based on the class position of women. Strategically defined approaches
are not prioritised in the recognition that empowering results may emerge from practical actions; that practical actions may be the only avenues available; or that strategic goals may at times be misplaced. The utility of the distinction between the two is found in the different levels of empowerment most likely to result, and an analytic interest in differentiating between the responses of different women to gendered conditions.

It is not clear to me why it is unsound theoretically to distinguish between two things, which have the same source, yet are distinct because different responses follow. Just because practical and strategic gender interests derive from engendered relations does not make them identical. Strategic interests entail an analysis of power structures and it is this distinction which differentiates middle-class women’s collective activities from those of poor women, and results in higher levels of empowerment outcomes. Also of interest is the fact that strategic analyses and activities are most often undertaken in response to political issues, whereas practical approaches are adopted, by middle-class and well as poor women, in response to economic concerns. Because poor women are more greatly affected by economic issues their practical rather than strategic approaches are understandable on pragmatic grounds.

Making an empirical distinction between the two is trickier. Thus when using them one needs to be specific about the context and political motivations involved. Practical activities can have strategic impacts; these may not be planned, but after a strategic impact has occurred, strategic interests and needs may be then defined by the women acting, and the activities are from the on strategic. Empowerment is a process, and as actions impact on this process, it in turn has an effect on the actions themselves. For example, poor women in the informal sector in Dar es Salaam have used ‘passive’
forms of resistance to laws restricting their business activities. They did not problematize this as a specifically women’s issue – it is primarily women in the informal sector who do not have licenses – nor did they carry out their acts of non-compliance in a clever attempt to force the government to change its laws. Yet their actions have had a direct impact on how the government now relates to women working in the informal sector, and, when implemented, new proposals in the government’s informal sector policy may encourage the development of more formalised women’s market associations which could act strategically. Women have organised into rotating credit associations to meet practical savings needs. This practice has allowed them to save money without their husband’s having access to it, increasing their financial autonomy and relative power within the family. This may not have been their initial reason for joining an upato club, but it provides a reason to continue once it is noted. Practical actions can lead to strategic (empowering) outcomes when structural changes, even if unintended, follow. This assertion breaks away from the use of the strategic/practical classification employed by Moser, which posits consciously articulated strategic goals as the route towards empowerment, while practical goals only meet immediate practical needs.

Finally, while strategic activities may provide the most direct route to empowerment in most cases, it does not follow that strategic actions are in all cases the best ones to adopt. Often the realisation of strategic goals is uncertain or impossible, while practical ones are a necessity. In other cases the trade-offs associated with a struggle for strategic gains may not be seen as worth the benefits. In still other cases the strategic goals themselves may be misplaced.
Wieringa’s analysis, in common with that found in this study, focuses on Moser’s conceptualisation of the strategic/practical dichotomy. However, as noted, Molyneux (1985, 1986) initially developed this formulation. Moser’s work is focused on because of its greater influence in policy circles and because, unlike Molyneux, she attempts to broaden its applicability and link it directly to empowerment. Molyneux’s concern is with how women’s interests are served or limited by socialist revolutions, specifically examining the case of Nicaragua. However, as Wieringa notes, “her distinction may have been useful in addressing some of the criticisms levelled at the performance of the Sandinistas. However, her approach has gained an influence far beyond its application to socialist states” (839).

Molyneux’s treatment of strategic and practical gender interests is somewhat more tentative and nuanced than is Moser’s in terms of identifying women’s interests in general. For example she emphasises that women have a variety of interests based on their class and ethnicity and “the interests which they have as a group are similarly shaped in complex and sometimes conflicting ways” (1986: 283). Molyneux is also sensitive to the fact that often practical interests are, in the short term, pragmatically more valuable to women than strategic interests which could threaten them. “Thus the formulation of strategic interests can be effective as a form of intervention only when full account is taken of these practical interests” (285). In addition, posing gender needs as distinct from gender interests is found only in Moser’s work; thus the difficulties found in this formulation do not apply to Molyneux. Nonetheless, Molyneux, like Moser, does argue that strategic interests can be readily distinguished from practical interests and she is cursory in her analysis of the manners by which they may blur together. Molyneux
also goes one step further than Moser, suggesting that while practical interests can be formulated by women themselves, without “external interventions,” strategic interests cannot (1986: 284).

While the strategic/practical distinction remains a useful tool for this analysis, the relationship between these organisational strategies and empowerment is different from that assumed by Moser. The distinction is helpful in differentiating between two distinct motivations for undertaking collective gender-based action. Strategic actions are geared towards a transformation in gender power relations and have as their central purpose empowerment goals. Practical activities are firstly a means of coping with situations of gender inequality, but do not directly challenge the structures that produce this inequality. Middle-class women organise to address both strategic and practical gender interests. Women working in Dar es Salaam’s informal sector primarily only organise to address their practical interests. However, this study finds that practical approaches undertaken at both class levels can lead to empowering outcomes. These outcomes are deemed empowering when the women in these associations note a positive transformation in gendered power relations resulting from the collective activities they have undertaken.

1.4 Methodology

i) Methods

My research was carried out in the eight month period between October 1995 and May 1996. This time period was chosen to follow the presidential elections, which took place in October, allowing interviews to address the voting behaviour and political activities at this time. For the first three months I familiarised myself with the city of Dar es Salaam.
and the sources of research materials available there. I gathered research material from the libraries at the University, the Institute of Development Studies, the Women's Research and Documentation Project, and the Tanzanian Gender Networking Project. Materials were also gathered from the Bureau of Statistics, the National Bank of Tanzania, Unicef, and government bookstores.

Between January and May of 1996 I held 170 interviews with members of women's organisations in Dar es Salaam region. Those held with middle-class women were conducted in English, those with women employed in the informal sector in Swahili with the help of a research assistant, Asha Hariz. All meetings were reached by way of dala-dala\textsuperscript{13}, or, in the peri-urban areas, by hitchhiking. While these groups were organised around a variety of concerns and affiliations, they are best distinguished by class affiliation: middle-class (wealthier professional women with secondary education or higher) and poor women (lower-income women with low levels of education self-employed in the informal sector). While these groups are both divisible into further class breakdowns, the findings of this study separate them into these two groupings based on different perceptions towards economic and political reforms, different goals in organising, and different levels of access to political and economic power. An additional reason for not breaking these class groupings down further is that among women in the informal sector some groups have membership drawn from different sub-class positions. Note was made of ethnic affiliation, age, religion, and marital status within groups, and while these factors are not irrelevant, for the most part groups are not composed of women exclusively drawn from the same category or organised around interests reflecting them.\textsuperscript{14} What is relevant from this fact is that Tanzanian women, at all class
levels, are not divided in an antagonistic fashion on these lines, as are women in some other countries. This contributes to higher levels of co-operation and unity.

Sources of funding (or the absence of funding) were also examined, in order to look at the autonomy of groups, whether their projects and activities were externally initiated, and what impact external support had for initiating, fulfilling or subverting empowerment goals. I was also interested in seeing if links could be made between the availability or non-availability of funding to the reform process. For example, since the process began, credit programs have been initiated to assist women working in the informal sector – does this government-administered support contribute to women’s empowerment? For middle-class groups, does external support create barriers to addressing certain empowerment capabilities? Do they perceive the non-availability of government financial assistance as indicative of a lack of political support for their activities?

All women interviewed were asked about their perceptions of economic reforms, the adoption of a multiparty political system, and which party they supported. Interviewees were also asked to discuss their relations to representatives of the government. With these questions I was hoping to make links between the reform process and the activities of their groups, to identify different perspectives, which coalesced along class lines, and determine what sort of relationship they saw themselves as having with the state.

Urban and peri-urban locations were found to accord with those of class: while there are both middle and lower-class organisations in urban areas, more remote peri-urban areas were dominated by lower-class groups. The groups of poor women are
primarily organised around practical immediate economic concerns. Middle-class groups have a variety of goals - often several within the same group - but tend to be more concerned with strategic political issues. Twenty-five middle-class and 145 lower-class groups were interviewed between January and May 1996. All groups were assessed as to whether they addressed strategic or practical gender issues, or both, with the assumption that this was significant for an analysis of their empowerment objectives and capabilities, with self-conscious strategic goals seen as most likely to result in increased levels of empowerment.

I compiled a list of professional women’s associations in Dar es Salaam from several sources: Our Histories: Women’s Groups/NGOs and Official Programme: in Tanzania (Tanzania Gender Networking Programme 1993b), the Tanzanian Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (TANGO) directory, staff at the Tanzania Gender Networking Programme and TANGO, and word of mouth from women I spoke with after I began interviews in January. For many of these groups I was initially unable to find an address or phone number for the contact, so forms were sent to their P.O. box addresses explaining who I was and requesting information on how to contact them. A return stamped envelope was provided. Five groups were contacted in this way. Professional group interviews began in January and continued through until May. All interviews with middle-class women were carried out in English in an informal manner. These interviews were held either in the place of employment of the member’s being interviewed, or else in the offices where their groups meet and organise their activities.

Interviews with groups of women working in the informal sector were conducted between February and May. These were arranged by two methods. With the assistance
of field workers with the Ministry of Community Development interviews were held with groups who had received or applied for Unicef or government loans, or Danida grants. Loan disbursements are administered by the Ministry and are given to groups of at least four women to help with their businesses. The women within a group do not usually work at the same business or even receive equal disbursements, but have a secretary, treasurer and chair and are responsible as a group for repayment. They meet regularly with a Community Development officer to discuss their progress and problems. Some of these interviews were done at the women’s places of business, but most were held at local schools or CCM offices, where they had been scheduled by the Community Development officer. Having a field worker present at times interfered with interviews as the women were unlikely to complain about their relations with her or to admit that they were unable to pay back the loan in her presence. However, without the assistance of the Ministry from the district and ward offices these interviews would not have been possible.

During the same period a series of interviews was held with women as they went about their business. Some of these women were not members of groups; others were part of upato rotating savings clubs. Other women worked together in a common location and assisted one another in collectively watching over children or another’s business if she left for any reason and provided security against harassment from city police. These interviews, as with government assisted groups, were conducted in Swahili with the help of my research assistant Asha Hariz.

All interviews with women in the informal sector were carried out in as wide a variety of wards as possible to account for the possibility of different responses based on proximity to the urban core. A fairly structured format with a questionnaire was used,
although follow-up questions were often added when a response seemed to merit it. Because these interviews were done with Asha translating much of the conversation it was not possible to have the same format as with the middle-class groups.

My position as a foreign researcher with limited Swahili visiting Tanzania for the first time placed a number of constraints on meeting my goals of conducting interview-based research. These goals are shared in part with the research concerns expressed by the Personal Narratives Group (1989). While the research in that volume focuses on in-depth interviews with individual women, often carried out over a number of years

- unlike the relatively high number of interviews, primarily with groups of women, found in this study - those researchers’ concern with letting interview subjects’ own voices present their ‘truths’ is shared. Also in common is a recognition of the importance of the female experience (4) and the belief that personal narratives can “provide a vital entry point for examining the interaction between the individual and society in the construction of gender” (5).

Difficulties with this project emerged from a number of sources. Conducting a large number of group interviews, with the somewhat awkward imposition of a translator, meant that a relationship of trust and mutual knowledge of one another’s lives could not be developed between myself as researcher and the women I interviewed. Unlike many of those studies presented by the Personal Narratives Group, my own cannot claim to have escaped the “researcher-subject” relationship, replacing it with that of “interpreter-narrator” (1989: 18). The central voice of this study is my own; it is my research agenda, along with my cultural and class biases, that informed the direction and content of interviews and influenced both the interpretation of these women’s statements and the
choices subsequently made about which to include and emphasise. This issue was expressed by Judith Abwunza (1997) in her attempt to employ the Personal Narratives approach to her interview-based study of Logoli women in Kenya: “Logoli women are speaking alongside me, while it remains my choice to include or delete their words” (35). Nonetheless, throughout the interview and writing process an attempt has been made to present the perspectives and interpretations of the women interviewed without overlaying my own interpretations of what they “really” meant to say, in recognition that “fundamental truths” are “embedded and reflected in women’s experiences as revealed” in their own narratives (Personal Narratives Group, 1989: 12).

My final set of seven interviews was with members of the government and opposition and took place in April and May. Three of these individuals are from leading opposition parties, and the other four are part of the CCM government, three of whom are women.\(^\text{18}\) The type of information being sought from these interviews varied, depending on the position held by the individual interviewed. In general discussion focused on how those at the state level perceived the reform process in terms of both goals and achievements, particularly as regards relations with civil society, and how (or if) women’s roles were being altered at different levels of society. Interviews were conducted in a fairly informal manner, with the exception of my interview with Augustine Mrema, Chair of NCCR-Maguezi. I met with Mr. Mrema three times; on the first occasion he agreed to be interviewed, at the next he requested a list of all the questions I was going to ask, and at the final meeting he read out my questions followed by his prepared responses.\(^\text{19}\)
ii) Women’s associations

Women’s associations were chosen (rather than just simply women) as my focus for examining emerging strategies of response to political and economic conditions because, as collective responses, they have a higher potential for attaining empowering results. Additionally, the organisation of women into groups is itself a key strategy for empowerment. Furthermore, women’s associations exist at all class levels and have membership from all ethnic and religious groups and thus some generalisations about all Tanzanian women may be drawn. Women’s associations are also useful as a case study because of the diverse interests and agendas they represent, and the rapid growth in their numbers over the past few years. These organisations may thus be used as a way of gauging the impacts of liberalisation and democratisation on women, a group traditionally under-represented and undervalued both economically and politically.

This study is intended to complement other work on women’s organisations in a development context. As Amy Lind notes, “Studies that focus specifically on women’s organisations provide an important basis for explaining why women choose to create their own organisations and movements, and how gender-specific forms of community action might inform local government, urban, and national policy” (Lind 1997: 1207). The focus of this study is descriptive, exploring women’s collective responses to both political and economic liberalisation and the dynamics of power at play in this transition among women of different classes.

Women’s organisations are categorised by five different means in this study. The first two distinctions drawn among them are those of class and of practical or strategic actions and outcomes. These two classifications are loosely related in that I found lower
income women organised primarily around practical issues with limited (although not entirely absent) strategic results, while middle-class women were more likely to address both practical and strategic issues, with greater success on the strategic front. A further distinction made is between associations that are ascriptive, or primary, and those that are horizontally-based voluntary interest groups (Chazan 1982: 171). Most of the women’s groups in Dar es Salaam are of the latter type, but the distinction is important as ascriptive associations are less likely to foster democracy and successfully meet empowerment goals that transcend their own immediate group. This becomes evident in my discussion in Chapter 5 of women’s movements in other countries.

The largest classification system I have used is adapted from DAWN (Sen and Grown 1985). DAWN’s classification is useful because it is an attempt to categorise women’s organisations not simply by activity content, institutional location, or organisational composition, but from the perspective of empowerment, distinguishing political agendas and policy objectives. Women’s organisations are classified into seven types: service-oriented, affiliated to political party, worker based, outside-oriented, grassroots, research, and coalition of organisations. Each of these types can then be analysed by looking at five different variables: policy approach, level of interaction, object of participation of local women, opportunities, and constraints. Caroline Moser has compiled a table elaborating DAWN’s system, with her own assessment as to whether these types of groups address strategic or practical gender interests. (See Table on following page.) This framework is used to analyse Tanzanian middle-class women’s groups and is found be useful but insufficient in accounting for the empowerment possibilities, which emerge from all of these types operating in tandem.
**Table 1: Characteristics of DAWN's Classification of Women's Organisations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dawn's classification of women's organisations</th>
<th>Predominant policy approach</th>
<th>Level of interaction</th>
<th>Object of participation of local women</th>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Constraints</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Service-oriented</td>
<td>Welfare</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>Low – for cost-sharing</td>
<td>Meets PGNs through delivery of welfare packages; offers organisational experience for women</td>
<td>Elitist class bias: top-down delivery; gender-blind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affiliated to political party</td>
<td>Equity? Welfare, Anti-Poverty</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>Low – for cost-sharing</td>
<td>Potential to raise SGNs at highest level</td>
<td>Danger of co-option with SGN subsumed not wider political goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worker-based</td>
<td>Equity, Welfare, Empowerment</td>
<td>National / Local</td>
<td>High – for cost-sharing and efficiency</td>
<td>All women workers' associations; seek to empower women but have weak resource position</td>
<td>Former man-led unions prioritise male production concerns, not the PGN of women workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside-initiated</td>
<td>Anti-poverty</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>High – for capacity building and empowerment</td>
<td>Persist as long as generate outside funds</td>
<td>Lack of theoretical analysis of subordination; among the weakest organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grass-roots</td>
<td>Empowerment</td>
<td>Local / National</td>
<td>Low to High – for capacity building</td>
<td>Specificity and relevance in meeting PGN as means to address SGN</td>
<td>Inadequate resource base; urban bias</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>Equity / Empowerment</td>
<td>Local / National / International</td>
<td>High – for empowerment</td>
<td>Research useful for other organisations involved in action</td>
<td>Danger of shifting to a less participatory top-down equity approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coalition of organisations</td>
<td>Empowerment</td>
<td>Local / National / International</td>
<td>High – for empowerment</td>
<td>High mobilisation capacity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PGNs = Practical Gender Needs, SGNs = Strategic Gender Needs
The groups examined among women working in the informal sector are divided into three types based on their form of organisation. The first type is women who have joined together to secure government-administered credit. The second type of group is *upato* rotating credit associations. The third is informal groupings of women based around a common location for their business activities.

### iii) Dar es Salaam Region

Dar es Salaam was chosen for this study because of the dynamism of its civic life in comparison with the rest of the country. Almost all professional women's groups are located in Dar es Salaam. A study which compared women's groups in Dar to those in a smaller city or in a rural region would have enriched the research and strengthened its applicability to the nation as a whole, but the time and resources for such a study were not available.

Dar es Salaam was the best single location in Tanzania for this study not only due to the high numbers of women's groups operating there, but also, as the effective capital of the country it provided access to the political leadership of all parties. Although the region is small and dominated by its large urban core, there are a number of wards, administratively designated as rural, without public transportation or newspapers linking them to the city centre. While residents of these wards are in no way as isolated from urban life as are Tanzanians in rural regions such as Iringa, these wards do provide a contrast with the urban wards and introduce a level of comparison into my sample. Dar es Salaam is ethnically diverse; Tanzanians come here from all over the country looking
for work. Thus I was able to speak with women from numerous ethnic backgrounds, which would not have been possible in a more ethnically homogenous region of the country.
Notes

1 In Allen's sequence of events and political forms there is a crisis of clientalism which leads to a centralised bureaucratic model: because clientalism was from the outset the method of obtaining legitimacy, and power was a zero sum game, corruption increased, resolved by a bureaucratic politics with the capacity to control clientalism by centralising power.

2 This engagement was of course not uniform throughout the country and all classes, but compared with the situation since the 1970s the awareness, participation and influence of all groups was much higher.

3 But not in practice, as these local levels of CCM have no power outside of clientalism and exist only as a means to disseminate information downwards.

4 Tanzania is divided up into administrative regions, districts and wards. Dar es Salaam region is made up of three districts, Ilala, Kinondoni, and Temeke, each with between sixteen to eighteen wards.

5 One exception being the University of Dar es Salaam where students and faculty are both active in encouraging this.


7 The democratic defects raised by the Nyalali Commission are as follows: 1. one-party rule had undermined citizen participation; 2. CCM over time had become a state party; 3. CCM exerted hegemonic control over all of civil society; 4. at least 40 laws restricted constitutional freedoms; 5. the Bill of Rights had not enlarged the rights and freedoms of citizens significantly because of clawback clauses; 6. the judiciary’s independence had been infringed upon; 7. the powers assigned by the Constitution were heavily weighted in favour of the executive and particularly of the President; 8. the CCM National Education Committee (NEC), not Parliament, effectively made the laws; 9. tensions between Zanzibaris and mainlanders were increased because problems with the Union were not being resolved democratically; 10. the 1977 Constitution was full of serious shortcomings, contradictions and inconsistencies. (West et al. 1994: 26)

8 Although it is not clear if representatives of the state meet with groups more as a way of encouraging public participation or to monitor and control their activities.

9 14 members of CUF were detained between February and August 1998, had they been convicted they would have faced a mandatory death sentence.
An early investigation into the issues surrounding women’s appropriate place in class analysis, in developing countries, is found in McDonough and Harrison, 1978. This issue is also taken up in Bryceson, 1980.

Although in academic circles and many grassroots groups in developing countries the GAD approach may be considered as having greater support for some time, it has had little influence in mainstream development agencies where the WID approach still predominates (Chowdry, 1995: 38).

Molyneux’s initial formulation (1995) was revised (1996); for this discussion I rely on the latter work.

Dala-dalas are privately owned vans and mini-buses that run on common routes throughout the city, forming the city’s transit system.

With the obvious exception of groups specifically organised around religious faith, such as the Muslim Women’s Organisation and the Catholic Women’s Organisation. Interestingly, these groups have less of a class division than other groups and one quite large Lutheran women’s group was located in a more rural area of the region.

Although only twenty-five interviews were conducted with middle-class groups, twenty-nine groups are examined; for two groups I was unable to meet with a member but obtained literature on their association.

See Appendix A for samples of questionnaires used.

The life-story of Christian Sibiya, discussed in Marcia Wright’s chapter, was based on conversations that spanned more than a decade.

See Appendix B for dates and individuals interviewed at the political level and as members of middle-class women’s groups.

I’m not entirely certain why he insisted on this format, none of the questions required responses beyond his scope as leader of the opposition. It is possible that he was self-conscious about his command of English.

Chapter 2
Democratic Openings and the Tanzanian Women’s Movement

2.0: Democratic Openings and Associational Growth

Increasing numbers of urban educated women in Tanzania are becoming involved in associations dealing with a wide range of concerns. A women’s movement has emerged, and it is these urban middle-class women’s groups who are defining and directing it. Aili Mari Tripp identifies two main reasons for the formation of women’s groups,

One has to do with the fact that women of diverse backgrounds have found themselves sharing common interests in fighting for greater inclusiveness in the current process of political liberalization, having historically been left out of formal politics. The second reason has to do with the deepening economic crisis that has placed greater pressures on women to become key providers within the household, necessitating new organizational strategies (Tripp 1994: 107-108).

It is this first reason – the process of political liberalisation- that has contributed to the rapid increase in numbers and membership of women’s groups among urban middle-class women and the development of a Tanzanian women’s movement. The easing of restrictions on organising, which occurred in 1985 with the Mwinyi administration, has led to the formation of many new women’s groups. Table 2 lists the groups examined in this study and the year they were formed; almost all came into existence after 1986. While many groups reported that they were formed in response to new associational freedoms to do so, the mushrooming of groups also has to do with following the example of other women’s groups. Once they began to emerge more were formed in quick succession, working together to identify new areas for the movement to address and sharing information and experiences.
A further incentive from the democratic transition encouraging women to organise collectively relates to the potential these women identify with increasing democracy to participate more fully in governance and to push for increased attention to be given to the women's concerns they identify. Many of these groups believe their activities may force further political change as they pressure the government for constitutional and legal reforms in areas such as inheritance and family law. Other groups do not focus their activities towards change at the state level, but are working to effect structural change leading to increased women's empowerment through altering cultural attitudes; addressing institutionalised gender discrimination in the fields of health, education, access to credit, and various professions; and engaging in grassroots approaches to empower poorer women or simply to help address their practical economic concerns. As the reform process provides women with the impetus to organise, these women are acting to shape this process and Tanzania's political culture.

Table 2: Women's Associations and Year Formed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Association</th>
<th>Year Formed</th>
<th>Association</th>
<th>Year Formed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albino Association</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>Midwives</td>
<td>1993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Association</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BACAWA</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Suwata</td>
<td>1987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bawata</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>TAHEA</td>
<td>1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic Women</td>
<td>1972</td>
<td>TAMWA</td>
<td>1986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Statistics</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>TAWOMA</td>
<td>1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOIGO</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>TGNP</td>
<td>1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDS Women</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>TWRCG</td>
<td>1989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JET</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Udananda</td>
<td>1993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mewata</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>UWT</td>
<td>1962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim Women</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>WAT</td>
<td>1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTTU Women</td>
<td>1986</td>
<td>WDRP</td>
<td>1978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWAAT</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thus democratic openings have contributed to the emergence of a middle-class women’s movement in two ways. Firstly they have created the conditions to make forming women’s groups possible. Secondly, some of these groups have formed in order to participate in the democratic process by striving to ensure that women are not left out of an expanding democracy and have a role in instigating new laws and provisions to protect women and expanding their rights and freedoms.

Even groups that do not directly engage the state in their activities may be contributing to a deepening of democracy. The growth in numbers of women’s groups represents an overall trend of strengthening civil society. Robert Putnam (1993) argues that even non-political societal organisations foster a democratic political culture, contributing to a growth in social capital and patterns of co-operation and reciprocity. High levels of co-operation and networking exist within the Tanzanian women’s movement, with groups addressing numerous women’s issues at state, cultural, and professional levels and meeting together to share information and support one another; its strength as a movement and a democratising force is expansive.

Many groups are also forming to respond to issues related to the process of economic liberalisation. Although these groups find themselves unable to influence this process in any structural fashion, they are taking on service-oriented practical projects to respond to failures in the public sector to adequately meet the needs of women in areas of education, health and credit.

Although this women’s movement has brought about some positive changes and is most definitely creating new opportunities for women’s empowerment, its impact must be put into context. While the numbers of groups and membership within groups are
growing, the women in these associations make up only a small minority of Tanzanian women. Women are underrepresented in professional occupations to begin with, and most professional women are not actively involved in women's organisations. Thus these women are a very small segment of their own class and do not necessarily reflect the concerns or sensibilities of other middle-class women let alone Tanzanian women in general. In many ways the preoccupations of organised middle-class women have more in common with those of other groups in civil society, particularly youth groups but also professional associations which are not based on gender, than with other women in Tanzania. Many of the groups within this movement recognise that their goals and preoccupations are not shared by the cultures they operate within, and are making efforts to draw public attention to their efforts and women's issues in order to reshape cultural attitudes among men and women.

Although most groups meet with members of the government on a regular basis, inviting ministers and members of parliament to meetings and workshops, the relationship between the government and these groups is not always co-operative and a mood of paternalism and monitoring continues. While attitudes towards gender issues are changing at the state level, as part of an overall middle-class attitudinal shift and in response to increased female representation issues of poverty – identified by the movement as the most pressing for women – have received minimal attention at the state level. Structural adjustment measures liberalising the economy are being implemented alongside democratic reforms, but they are not being addressed by the state in a gendered manner. Women's groups are quite free to criticise economic reforms for their negative gender impacts, and do so quite vocally. However, they do not hold the government
responsible for structural adjustment and have put forward no suggestions as to how to respond at any strategic level to economic concerns. While middle-class women's groups can be distinguished from the associations of poor women in the informal sector by their inclusion of strategic goals, these goals in large remain limited to the political side of the liberalisation process.

Women's groups are emerging in response to political changes and they are in turn having an effect on the political process. However, these groups, despite their identification of poverty as the most pressing gender concern, have no impact at the economic level beyond the activities of some groups to help poor women meet their practical economic needs.

2.1 Identified gender concerns: the need for empowerment

The women's groups operating in Tanzania identify a number of different areas in which women are discriminated against, and individual groups target different ones through their activities, some groups addressing more than one. Almost all women interviewed cited the issue of women's poverty as the most central factor working against women's empowerment. Olive Luena\(^1\) of the Catholic Women's Association summed up this view, commenting, "Poverty is the biggest problem for women. If they could be economically empowered then they would be active, particularly in other spheres. Now they are only concerned with survival." When women identified other discriminating factors - such as culture, political representation, the sexual division of labour, health issues, and access to credit - most linked these concerns to the broader issue of poverty. For example, Dr. Masawe of the Medical Women's Association noted, "Women have a
lot of problems. Economically women are the poorest of the poor and therefore their health situation is bad, especially their reproductive health, there is a high maternal mortality rate, there is little education compared with men – it is a vicious circle of poverty.”

Those women interviewed who did not identify poverty as the leading source of women’s disadvantaged position felt they could not identify a single key issue, as there were so many that worked against women. Mama Safe, chair of the Tanzania Midwives Association described women’s problems in this way:

The biggest problem for Tanzanian women is a mixture of problems really. I’m trying now to unveil them. One I’m seeing is equal chances and equal rights for education, especially at higher levels. There are equal opportunities at primary school but after the majority of women are not taking higher education. That goes again for employment. Women are not given equal opportunities at high posts. There is only a handful of women at the ministerial level. Also there are a lot of cultural beliefs and customs which still make women as women of old times, like the rules of the country on inheritance. First there is this child preference for boys; this is a problem for women’s health to keep having children to try to have a boy. And those laws which allow women to marry at fifteen. And genital mutilation in the rural areas, even in town. This is so well established in their heads they cannot see it as harmful. With the economy women don’t have much say, even in the economy of the home.

While most women see poverty as the central discriminating factor, groups tend to focus their efforts on other issues. Those that do focus on poverty do so by supporting Women in Development (WID) style projects and credit schemes, concentrating on practical rather than strategic poverty alleviation.

Poverty was seen as gendered and significant for women by these groups, not only on its own terms, contributing to women’s economic vulnerability, but due to its broader impacts on women’s health, their ability to work – while forcing them to work long hours – and the ability of their children to remain in school. As will be argued in the
following chapter, poverty can disempower women further by fostering a sense of political apathy and disillusionment.

To target structural adjustment alone for increasing costs of living and declines in the provision of public services, which contribute to women’s poverty, is somewhat simplistic, as Tanzania was in a deep economic crisis before adjustment measures began and adjustment was initiated in response to this crisis. Retrenchment in the public sector has had a devastating effect on those 50,000 Tanzanians affected, but it was necessary. To allocate all of the blame for measures taken under adjustment on the international aid community, primarily the IMF and World Bank, is misplaced as adjustment with a similar approach began before their intervention (Waters 1997; Biermann and Wagao 1986). The tendency to blame the international community is encouraged by the government to maintain its legitimacy at home and has been adopted by most Tanzanians. A typical attitude was expressed by Pili Mtambalike of the Tanzanian Media Women’s Association when she commented, “The economic reforms have been solely based on the wishes of the World Bank and IMF, all this open market … These reforms are not even human sensitive let alone gender sensitive, they are having a negative effect on people … it is the worst for women and children.”

However, there is evidence that structural adjustment programmes do disadvantage women. Structural adjustment programmes typically concentrate on attempts to restore equilibrium while at the same time pursuing policies to encourage the reallocation of resources towards the production of exports. The programmes implemented generally include tight monetary and public finance policies with the goal of bringing aggregate demand under control, changes in the exchange rate, trade and
pricing policy reforms, and a shift of incentives for the increased production of exports (Joekes, 1988: 4). Structural adjustment measures disproportionately harm women in lowering real wages and producer incomes and cutting back on social services which are then left up to women to provide (Bakker 1994; TGNP, 1994; Rusimbi 1994; Mbilinyi 1994).

It is acknowledged, even among the proponents of structural adjustment, that a lag effect operates on personal income. The increases in prices for consumer goods are felt immediately on the demand side, whereas increased incentives to produce take time to work through the economy. For urban groups the first effect of an adjustment programme is a reduction in real income brought about by a rise in the prices of food and other goods. This is then compounded by cuts in social services such as health, education, and transportation and by cuts in both wages and employment due to reductions in public sector expenditures. Anticipated increases in private sector wages and thus labour incomes can only come about after this lag (Joekes, 1988: 4). Multiplier effects also contribute to reducing the incomes of local producers as personal income falls and demand for consumer goods and services falls.

The impact is felt most severely on the lower income groups because food and other necessary consumer goods represent a higher share of their expenditure. Producers in both agriculture and industry may have to bear increased costs of inputs through increased import prices in the period before they realize increased revenues through sales. Smaller producers without assets may not have the resources to manage this transition, and again the effect is regressive (Joekes, 1988: 4).

The poverty inducing effects of adjustment are not limited to the short term. While structural adjustment entails the elevation of returns on some economic activities, it also involves diminished returns on others, and rises in consumer prices. Aside from the
immediate impact on incomes and prices, those individuals who are not subsequently able to shift their productive activities, or to increase the income derived from them, or to modify their consumption patterns, will find their real incomes reduced.

The effects of structural adjustment that increase poverty are felt most strongly by those groups already most vulnerable – those with low incomes. Bade Onimode asserts that in education and health sectors, which rely on free market pricing, adjustment packages penalise “the poor and the weak” and are thus “highly inequitable” (1992: 56). Within these vulnerable groups, negative effects are felt more strongly by women than by men. At the most basic level it can be argued that a central reason for this is that adjustment policies, whether examined from micro, meso, or macro levels, fail to recognise gender (Elson, 1994). The economic theories which structural adjustment programmes are based upon suffer from male-bias, in that they fail to take account of existing inequalities between women and men (Elson, 1994: 39). As a result, these programmes disadvantage women in a number of ways.

Credit reform - which occurs under most structural adjustment packages in order to raise interest rates for large-scale borrowers, who are often subsidised, and to lower rates and increase credit to the small-scale sector - is often not extended to women, who do not have the required collateral. (Lele, 1991: 58) Secondly, increased demands on women’s labour time may necessitate withdrawing children from school, and to the extent that extra labour is needed for domestic tasks, girls are more likely to be withdrawn than are boys.

Most structural adjustment packages reduce or abolish subsidies on food. Combined with price decontrols, raising producer prices for farmers, the impact of
devaluation on domestic prices, and the imposition of charges for various publicly provided services, there is a net effect of increasing food prices (Stewart, 1992: 29). This has a negative effect for women who are pregnant or nursing and have special nutritional needs. Priority in feeding is also often given to men, although this is less prevalent in Africa than in other regions (Lele, 1991: 54). However, control of income within households is significant in the African context, as women are reported to take on a higher proportion of the costs for food expenditures than do their husbands (Lele, 1991: 52).

Similar gender effects result from decreased public expenditure on health and education. The social benefits of increasing female education are well known; it results in greater productivity for women, family nutrition, and reduces fertility. Health cuts affect women disproportionately as women have different health needs and these may increase as a function of their extra work burdens under adjustment (Joakes, 1988: 24).

The effects of adjustment on the labour market also affect women differently than men. Women’s access to formal sector employment, where average incomes are higher than elsewhere, is significantly less than men’s (Stewart, 1992: 26). As these jobs become more scarce under adjustment programmes, women tend to have even less access to them and face increased competition from men in the informal sector (Mbilinyi, 1994: 25).

Interestingly, despite a higher workload since adjustment, many poor women are finding that the new opportunities (or requirements) for work outside of the home in small projects has given them greater financial autonomy and an expanded role in the community. This raises the issue of whether middle-class women’s antagonism towards
economic liberalisation, on the grounds that it is harmful to poor women, may be somewhat misplaced. The contrasting perspectives of poor women on gender concerns and the methods best suited to deal with them are presented in the following chapter. While middle-class women’s groups are unable to see a way in which they can address the gendered poverty concerns of Tanzania in any strategic fashion, they are concentrating their efforts in areas where they feel they have the greatest potential to make an impact.

The women’s movement has identified the existence of gender discrimination in the legal system, the fields of health and education, the labour market, women’s low levels of professional and political representation and access to credit, and overall culture. Statistical studies highlight the magnitude to which women are disadvantaged in all of these areas (Government of Tanzania and Unicef 1990; Bureau of Statistics Planning Division 1994; Government of Tanzania, Bureau of Statistics and MCDWAC 1995; Government of Tanzania 1988; Bureau of Statistics et al 1993; TGNP 1993). All of these reports were worked on with members of the Tanzanian women’s movement, particularly women in the Gender Statistics Group, which is part of the Bureau of Statistics, and point to the same areas of concern that women’s groups are organising around. The following discussion of the manner in which women are discriminated against and disempowered in various sectors reflects the concerns expressed by the Tanzanian women’s movement. These concerns represent what Caroline Moser identifies as gender interests, with her needs/interests dichotomy. How these interests become translated into needs is taken up in the following section. Where differences of opinion exist within this movement, they are noted. Of course not all women’s groups address all of these issues, but as a
movement they work co-operatively to do so, through a variety of strategies which will be examined in the following section.

i) Legal system

While Tanzanian law offers equal rights under the constitution to women and men, there are some legal provisions that discriminate against women. Tanzanian women’s groups have focused most of their efforts to transform discriminatory laws on those governing inheritance and marriage. A legal reform commission was established in 1987 to review these laws, but so far it has only revised the Law of Marriage Act.

For determining the inheritance rights of women, the Tanzanian legal system first decides whether customary or Islamic laws should be applied, or if State law, under the Indian Succession Act of 1865, should be used. For almost all indigenous non-Muslim Tanzanians the court applies Customary Law, despite the fact that laws under the Indian Succession Act are applicable to Christians who have abandoned their tribal norms and customs. This is because courts are not easily satisfied that the deceased had abandoned these norms and customs.

Under Customary law, women are prohibited from inheriting clan land; they may continue to use it, but when they have died this right ceases and thus women can never inherit or pass on land that they have not purchased themselves. Inheritance is distributed in the following fashion: the main heir is the first son of the first legal marriage. He usually gets the biggest share of the estate; other sons receive the next largest portion of the estate; and finally daughters receive the smallest portion. The wife inherits nothing, but must depend on her children to take care of her. If there are no children the
inheritance passes to the deceased’s brothers. If the deceased left a will, inheritance is
distributed to follow his wishes.

For Tanzanians that the court is persuaded have abandoned their customs and are
practising Muslims, and for non-indigenous Muslims, Islamic Law is applied to
inheritance. Under Islamic law widows inherit one eighth of their husband’s estate if
there are children. If there are no children they inherit one quarter of the estate. Of the
remainder of the estate two thirds are inherited by male relatives and one third by female
relatives, with priority given to children. Under Islamic Law a person may bequeath one
third of his property in a will, however the remaining two thirds must be distributed to his
children or relatives.

Under the inheritance laws of the Indian Succession Act, known as State law -
rarely applied to indigenous Tanzanians - the widow or widower inherits one third of all
property. The remainder is distributed equally to all children. If there are no children,
half is transferred to the widow or widower, and half to the relatives of the deceased.

Clearly the Customary and Islamic inheritance laws are discriminatory towards
women and can have devastating results when the children or relatives of the deceased
choose not to support the widow. These laws have been under review since 1987, but as
of yet have not been revised. The reasons given for the delay are opposition from the
Muslim community to a standard law of succession unless it is Islamic law; opposition
among some communities (Bahaya, Wasukuma and Wanyamwezi) to changes that would
alter the distribution of clan land which is currently in use under Customary law; the huge
task of creating a new legal framework which would address not only the concerns of
women, but of children - surrounding issues of age, gender, and maternal parentage; the
creation of uniform rules for recognising a Will; and establishing rules to determine who is eligible to act as administrator over the deceased’s estate (Law Reform Commission of Tanzania 1995).

While women’s groups continue to push for a new unified law of succession some legal changes have occurred which affect women. The marriage laws, which were also divided into state, customary and Islamic, have been unified into a single framework which grants higher value to women’s unpaid contributions in the home and allows them to claim support in the event of divorce. A Sexual Offences Bill has been passed, legislating a mandatory thirty-year sentence, plus caning, to offenders of rape and child abuse. A law that expelled pregnant girls permanently from the school system has been repealed. All these legal changes were pushed for by the women’s movement, and may not have occurred without their pressure.

However, where the law does exist to support women, in practice women often do not know this, cannot afford legal representation to fight for their rights, or face cultural sanctions against making legal claims. Middle-class women have recognised this and are developing programs to provide legal education and services for women. Middle-class women are more likely to be aware of their rights and to claim them than are poorer women and middle-class culture grants them greater support. Through grassroots programs the women’s movement is attempting to bridge this divide and help all women understand and exercise their rights.
ii) Health

Women's groups have identified health concerns, which specifically relate to women, in the areas of maternal health, the AIDS crisis, access to health care, and women's representation within the health field.

The Tanzanian maternal mortality rate is estimated at between 200 to 400 per 100,000 births (Government of Tanzania and Unicef 1990: 18; Government of Tanzania, Bureau of Statistics and MCDWAC 1995: 133). Out of the seven million adult women in Tanzania, between two and four thousand die of pregnancy-related causes each year. Maternal mortality rates increased from 190 to 215 per 100,000 between 1990 and 1991 (Government of Tanzania, Bureau of Statistics and MCDWC 1995: 134), the latest years for which data are available. As most women give birth outside of modern medical facilities, these numbers are likely to be underestimates. There are several reasons for such high rates. Long working hours, poverty, and under-nutrition contribute to women's poor health. The costs of health care have been rising under adjustment and there are inadequate facilities and services to provide for the antenatal and childbirth requirements of all Tanzanian women, and there are insufficient human resources, drug shortages, and poor working conditions for health workers.

Cultural factors play a role in women's pregnancy related health risks. For example, one-third to one-half of Tanzanian women bear children too early, before they are physically mature (Government of Tanzania and Unicef 1990: 23). The minimum legal marriage age for women has recently been raised from fifteen to eighteen, but with parental consent it remains at fourteen. As shown by Table 2.1, children whose mothers
are teenagers are much more likely to die that the children of mothers in all other age brackets, even those in the oldest age bracket of 40-49 years.

Table 2.1: Maternal Age and Child Deaths

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mother's age</th>
<th>&lt; 1 month</th>
<th>&gt; 1 year</th>
<th>&lt; 5 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 20 years</td>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>193.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-39</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>141.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>152.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>121.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Another culturally accepted risk factor for women is bearing too many children without long enough intervals between them. “Children born less than two years apart are twice as likely to die before the age of one year, compared to those with a two-to-three year gap between births; and 1.7 times as likely to die before the age of five years. The risks of infant and under-five mortality are two and a half times greater than for children spaced four or more years apart” (TGNP 1993: 103).

Three percent of all Tanzanians are infected with HIV and over six percent of adults (Government of Tanzania and Unicef 1990: 27), rates that are steadily rising. The rate of infection is likely even higher as only one out of every four to six cases is reported. “Given current rates of infection, observers have predicted that by the year 2010, some 37-46 percent of the Tanzanian adult population will be HIV infected – that is, two-fifths or more of the nation” (TGNP 1993: 104). Women are more susceptible to HIV infection than men. In 1990 about 400,000 women were infected with HIV/AIDS,
in 1978 the number of adult women dying each year was 40,000 (Government of Tanzania and Unicef 1990: 27).

While knowledge of AIDS in Tanzania is universal, knowledge of how to prevent it is not. Thirty-five percent of Tanzanian women and 18 percent of men believe there is nothing a person can do to avoid getting AIDS (Bureau of Statistics Planning Division 1994: 107). Furthermore, even when preventative measures are known, they are not being taken, “The unfortunate side is that there is no marked change of behaviour in the community” (Mwanga 1995: 6).

The findings in a community study undertaken in Manzese, a densely populated area of Dar es Salaam, by the youth group Wamata highlight the magnitude of the cultural obstacles in fighting AIDS and HIV. The group conducted extensive workshops with members of the community. Not only did it discover a low level of knowledge of preventive measures that can be taken against infection, but most participants rejected the three possibilities of condom use, abstinence, and faithfulness. Condoms were believed to encourage prostitution and promiscuity among youth, and women reported that it was impossible for them to insist that their husbands or partners use them. Their cost was also seen as restrictive and their use in conflict with religious beliefs. While older married members of the community supported abstinence for young people, youth themselves said it would lead to mental disorders and was simply impossible given the nature of “African sexuality.” Women reported that expecting their partners or husbands to be faithful was “a dream,”

Especially ladies agreed that [faithfulness] is good but inapplicable because most men are not faithful. One can decide to stick to him ... but when she gets a problem, such as sickness, being away for sometimes [or] having a new baby and when he discovers that she is no longer attractive enough to
stimulate his sexual desire most men tend to find another partner. … Most men lose trustfulness once a young woman or teenage girl crosses over their eyes. But culturally, nothing can be said to them as regards to changing such risky behaviours. Instead they end up giving up and praying their husbands have safer sex and God save them from AIDS (Lutimba and Mwabuki 1995: 4 and 20).

What this group and other groups examining AIDS, such as the Society of Women and AIDS in Tanzania (SWAAT), have found however, is that knowledge and acceptance of preventive measures increases dramatically with levels of formal education. Forty-seven percent of women with no education and 35 percent of men with no education believe there is nothing a person can do to avoid AIDS, in contrast to the 14 percent of women and four percent of men with secondary education or higher who believe this (Bureau of Statistics and Planning Division 1994: 80-81). The Wamata study also found respondents with education to be more willing to take preventive measures. While groups helping to educate people about AIDS are desirable, particularly as the government does not have a national program to deal with this issue, the cultural barriers are immense and will not be easily overcome. The AIDS crisis creates one more reason why the education system in Tanzania needs to be improved and highlights how education and empowerment are closely linked.

Women’s health is being treated as a political issue by middle-class women’s groups because women have become community health providers; are underrepresented at the higher levels of the health field; need better access to family planning information and contraceptives to control their own fertility; and have gender specific health needs unmet. All of these factors impact upon women’s empowerment as women require good health and control over their own bodies in order to live their lives to their potential and participate equally in other spheres.
iii) Education

The 1988 population census in Tanzania showed that life expectancy was higher among women with higher levels of education. In addition, infant and child mortality rates were lower for children of parents with higher levels of education, particularly when their mothers were educated (Government of Tanzania 1988). Higher levels of education often lead to better jobs, incomes and standards of living, which have a positive impact upon health. Studies also indicate that when the independent effect of education is isolated, education in itself plays an important role in increasing the life expectancy of women and improving the chances of their children’s survival (Government of Tanzania and Unicef 1990: 81). Education is essential for the empowerment of women. Women face challenges in the areas of poverty, health, employment, representation, and within their cultures – all of which can be addressed to a significant degree through the greater education of women. For women to become empowered in almost any area where they are marginalised, education provides a central boost to their success. Education provides women with a better ability to critically assess and challenge situations and structures; it increases their economic options; it confers respect from some elements of the society; and it allows them greater access to information on legal and health issues. An important element to empowerment – what makes it “self-empowerment” – is the process of analysing and choosing one’s power options. Education provides important tools for doing this.

The education system in Tanzania has been one of the hallmarks of the Arusha years. After independence Nyerere scrapped the racially segregated education system and expanded primary education. In 1967 Tanzania embarked upon “Education for Self-
Reliance,” stressing equitable access to primary education and adult literacy programs. In 1969 the rate of illiteracy was 55 percent for males and 81 percent among females. By 1988 rates of literacy were 93 percent for males and 88 percent for women. Primary schooling was made compulsory for all children between seven and fourteen, and by 1981 enrolment in primary schools had reached 90 percent, female students making up 50 percent of this (Government of Tanzania and Unicef 1990: 84).

Despite these remarkable achievements, women’s groups have identified gender concerns relating to education. After the primary level, female enrolment declines relative to male enrolment at each higher level. This is despite an active policy of affirmative action between the primary and secondary school levels. Females tend to specialise in non-science subjects and are less likely to take advanced degrees. This limits their ability to do well in the job market and perpetuates the sexual division of labour.

The education system itself is undergoing widespread changes under structural adjustment, which do not bode well for women. Between 1986 and 1992 literacy rates dropped from 91 percent to 84 percent (81 percent for women, 87 percent for men) (See Table 2.2).

**Table 2.2: The Literacy Rate as Depicted by the National Literacy Test 1975-1992**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Average Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are shortages of teaching materials and rote memorisation has now become the normal teaching method (Government of Tanzania and Unicef 1990: 85). Fees for primary education are not compulsory (although encouraged), but local governments barely have enough revenue to cover the cost of teacher’s salaries and are expected to meet the other costs with support from parents and the community.

The low financial base of operations of local government cannot provide quality services for which they are responsible. For a population of 3,258,600 pupils in public primary schools in 1989, local councils spent T. Shs. 6,817 million, an average of T. Shs. 2,090 per pupil. At the average exchange rate of 1989, this is the equivalent of US $13.50. In 1989, 82 percent of councils’ expenditures on education were for teachers’ salaries, which left $2.40 per pupil to provide for construction and maintenance of school buildings, equipment, books and supplies, support and supervision (Government of Tanzania and Unicef 1990: 85).

Tanzanian children attend primary schools that are overcrowded, have insufficient books, writing materials and even desks, and are taught by underpaid teachers.

Twenty percent of students drop out before they are finished. Until very recently, girls who became pregnant were permanently expelled from the school system. As shown in Table 2.3, after truancy pregnancy is the leading cause of girls dropping out of primary school. Women’s groups working to improve girls’ educational opportunities and performances are hopeful that that the rescindment of this law will help encourage girls’ to stay in school, but are generally pessimistic about the likelihood of higher levels of government spending in the educational field. Their efforts focus on improving the ability of girls to do better in school and improving education through means which do not depend on increased levels of government spending. As with other issues related to economic adjustment, middle-class women do not feel they have the space to influence economic policy beyond voicing their disapproval.
Table 2.3: Total Dropout by Reason in Primary School, 1991

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>Boys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Truancy</td>
<td>16401</td>
<td>20540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pregnancy</td>
<td>2946</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaths</td>
<td>1317</td>
<td>1600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>1234</td>
<td>1419</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Of those who do complete primary school, boys do better than girls. A system of affirmative action exists to ensure that a proportion of students from all regions and of girls is admitted into secondary school. However, as there is no system of additional tutoring for those who enter secondary school through this system, they often cannot compete and catch up with the boys who did better on the national exams. By the time they leave secondary school and enter into post-secondary institutions female students are even further behind. Some women’s groups are lobbying the government for a more gender aware distribution of educational funding; others are evaluating and creating educational materials and resources for the classroom to avoid gender biased teaching materials; and one (Udananda) goes as far as to critique the entire educational system as perpetuating misguided and foreign cultural priorities which are harmful to women, and in response setting up it own alternative schooling system.

“Education for Self-Reliance” did not envision secondary school and post-secondary education as a right in the same way as primary school. It was anticipated that most students would be working in the agricultural sector and advanced schooling was required only for the Africanisation of the civil service. The demand for secondary schooling has exceeded the availability of schools and, as a consequence, the government has introduced fees for public secondary schools and allowed private schools to emerge.
to handle this demand. The costs associated with secondary schooling are restrictive for many families, especially in boarding schools where girls tend to perform better. Paradoxically the government is expanding boys' boarding schools rather than girls', an issue that the Tanzanian Gender Networking Programme has taken up.

Post-secondary education is limited for all Tanzanians, but more so for women. Women only make up 19 percent of the students enrolled in Tanzanian universities, 20 percent of those in diploma courses at various institutes and vocational training programmes, and only five percent of those in Tanzania's three technical colleges (Government of Tanzania and Unicef 1990: 90). The increased costs of obtaining post-secondary education have resulted in declining enrolments for men and women, but the decline is greater among women. For example at the Dar es Salaam Technical College between 1981/82 and 1990/91 there was a two percent drop in enrolment. The enrolment of female students dropped five percent, compared to men, with an enrolment drop of half a percent (TGNP 1993: 87). Continuing from specialisations established in secondary school, few women university students major in engineering, agriculture, veterinary, forestry, medicine and dentistry and their numbers are declining in all science courses (TGNP 1993: 87). Thus not only are there few women in post-secondary institutions, but they are concentrated in fields with lower employment prospects in terms of monetary remuneration, social status, and power. The Tanzanian Gender Networking Programme believes that this has a negative effect for all women in Tanzania:

The lack of women in higher levels of employment and education is one reason for the perpetuation of institutionalised sexism in all spheres of society. Grassroots women lack enough educated women with a gender perspective, with whom they could network and develop broad alliances for political action. Skilled human resources are necessary components in the
struggle for gender transformation in society, and are most powerful when they belong to Tanzanian communities (TGNP 1993: 88).

Two of the women’s groups in my sample are investigating the reasons for women’s poorer performance in technical subject areas, and attempting to develop strategies to reverse this. Other women’s groups within the middle-class women’s movement are concentrating on the provision of vocational training for women, not only to help them reach practical goals of income generation, but also to attain the empowerment ends implicit in financial autonomy, reducing their dependence on men.

iv) Labour

Women’s groups have identified a variety of gender concerns in the field of labour in both informal and formal sectors: an unequal sexual division of labour concentrating women in lower level positions; undervalued women’s work; and sexual harassment in the workplace.

The vast majority of economically active Tanzanians are working in the smallholder agricultural sector and in the informal sector of the economy, in both rural and urban areas. According to the 1988 population census only three percent of women (compared to ten percent of men) were engaged in formal wage employment. The majority of non-farm positions were still monopolised by men, in both rural and urban areas. Women are 39 percent of all service employees and 45 percent of clerks; compared to only 26 percent of all professionals and 14 percent of administrators and managers (TGNP 1993: 57). Even within the professional category, women tend to be concentrated in professions such as teachers and nurses (as opposed to doctors, lawyers, and university professors) which are paid lower salaries and have much less decision-
making power (TGNP 1993: 57). It is likely that during the 1990s retrenchment has exacerbated both tendencies towards female job stereotyping and lower levels of female labour force participation in the formal sector due to increased competition between men and women for fewer available jobs.\(^5\)

Even when women are doing the same work as men they are not paid at the same level. The Bureau of Statistics claims:

> There is no deliberate or statutory wage differentiation between men and women in Tanzania. Equal work by men and women pays equally. Women appear to be paid less only because they tend to occupy the less paying occupations and often have less education and skills. The 1990/91 Labour Force Survey showed that professional occupations were the highest paying and women in these occupations were paid equally high though their number was smaller than that of men (Government of Tanzania, Bureau of Statistics and MCDWAC 1995: 57).

However, a World Bank study indicates this is not so, finding that when the amount of education and work experience is controlled, even in clerical and secretarial positions where many women are concentrated, women earn consistently lower wages than men.\(^6\)

Widespread sexual harassment in the workplace also limits women’s ability to participate equally in formal sector employment. A study done by Joyce Shaidi (1991) in four workplaces in Tanzania found that 95 percent of female respondents in all locations had experienced harassment from male colleagues at work, including: “the use of abusive language by colleagues; being punished by the boss without good cause; being locked into an office by the boss with the intention of rape; being looked down upon by male colleagues; and being denied specific rights like promotions, or deliberate delays in receiving them.” The lower the job status of the woman, the more likely and frequent was sexual harassment. The majority of women interviewed for Shaidi’s study took no
action, feeling it was a waste of time to report incidents to management because they would not be taken seriously.

One vocal exception to the futility of fighting sexual discrimination in the workforce has been Laeticia Mukurasi, who wrote a book on her successful challenge to losing her management job in the lumber industry (Mukurasi 1991), and speaks at workshops organised by women’s groups. However, despite her successful appeal, the process took years and the recurrent theme of her account is that, notwithstanding the existence of progressive laws in Tanzania to protect women from sexual discrimination, the reality for women is a culture where these laws are not respected in the workplace and are brushed aside by the courts.

Along with addressing concerns of women’s representation in various professions, women’s groups are striving to improve women’s status within political institutions. A more thorough investigation of women’s representation and influence at the political level will be undertaken in Chapter 4, but a summary of the main issues follows to indicate how they relate to concerns in the area of labour and complement the next discussion of the strategies women are employing to address their identified gender concerns.

Within the legal and political systems women have very low status. Although the Tanzanian law is quite progressive and grants equal opportunities in terms of work to men and women, it has been criticised as not living up to this in practice (Mukurasi 1991). That women are underrepresented at the state and legal levels may go some way to account for this. At independence in 1965 ten percent of cabinet ministers were women. By 1975 there were none. Presently six out of the 33 cabinet ministers (three
Ministers and three Deputy Ministers) are women. Fifteen percent of parliamentary seats are now reserved for women, but women are absent from the top positions with the CCM. There are no women on the Central Committee, and only one out of twenty-five regional chairs, and fourteen percent (24 out of 175) in the National Executive are women. This situation is similar in the new opposition parties; none has presented a strong platform on women’s issues and none has women in high level party positions. Twenty-one percent of the judiciary are women, but again concentrated at its lower levels. The Chief Justice has always been a man, only one of the 34 judges of the High Court is a woman and there are no women among the seven judges in the Court of Appeal.

Middle-class women have also identified gender issues for women working within the informal sector. The women actually working in the informal sector do not analyse their economic participation in an identical way, as will be discussed in the next chapter. Conditions of concern identified by middle-class women include women’s concentration in lower skilled and less remunerative occupations, a lack of legal protection, and sexual harassment. Middle-class women are doing little to address these issues beyond conducting research, perhaps in recognition that these concerns are of less priority to the women involved than others, or perhaps because they are unable to identify strategies to address them. However, possible methods exist whereby these concerns could be more proactively addressed – these will be examined in the discussion of specific women’s organisations and the strategies they employ.

In the urban informal sector women are engaged in small-scale urban agriculture for the market; homebrew (pombe) beer manufacture; petty trade; food preparation and sale – either in small restaurants (hoteli) or selling baked goods (maandazi, vitembua and
(chapatı) on the street; working as domestic servants (housegirls), waitresses or prostitutes. Women are further engaged in tailoring and fabric manufacture, and hair salons. While most women who work are employed in the informal sector, this sector is still dominated by men, although the proportion of women in the informal sector is higher in urban compared with rural areas (Government of Tanzania, Bureau of Statistics and MCDWAC 1995: 63).

As within the formal sector, there is a division of labour in the informal sector which concentrates women in occupations which tend to be less skilled and lower paid.

Men are more active in carpentry, metal manufacture, car repair, masonry, tailoring, bars and restaurants, and predominated in high-tech industry. A pattern of gender segmentation exists in the informal, as in the formal sector, partly because women choose to maximise on the skills and knowledge they already have, e.g. in cooking and food processing (TGNP 1993: 67).

The working conditions for most in the informal sector are precarious and poor. They involve long hours for low returns, unregulated, unsafe, and unsanitary work conditions, no benefits or job security, fluctuating incomes, and harassment from police. Women, in addition to being concentrated in the less skilled of enterprises, face sexual exploitation at work. At the most basic level, women do not have the same freedom to work in the evenings because of safety concerns returning home after dark. Working as domestic servants or in bars the threats are more explicit.

Domestic servants, or house girls, fall into a grey area under the law. Under the Employment Ordinance they have the same rights as formal sector employees, except that they are not covered under the Security of Employment Act. In reality most do not receive minimum wage or benefits such as paid maternity or annual leaves. Some receive little to no wage and are dependent on their employer for room, board and cast-off
clothing. Their work hours often exceed fifteen hours a day, including weekends, with no regard for overtime. Often house girls are brought into Dar es Salaam from rural areas, daughters of relatives or friends, and many do not speak Swahili, further isolating them in their work. In their isolation within the home of their employer they are particularly vulnerable to sexual exploitation.

One area where female labour is concentrated is the bar industry. Large numbers of outdoor bars proliferate around Dar es Salaam. The waitresses are often unpaid and are expected to work for tips only or to work as prostitutes. Even if a waitress is not working as a prostitute, the two occupations are culturally linked and she will be treated as such by the patrons of the bar.

Sexual harassment on the job is common in many institutions but worse for bar girls. They are open to all kinds of abuses from day to day and there is no law that clearly protects women from this abuse. The social stigma attached to the job itself is enough to stop the women from pursuing justice legally ... although one can take legal steps against such abuses. It is time consuming because of corruptive tactics applied by those with the technical know how, who can pay their way out (Nkhoma-Wamunza with Anna X 1991: 57).

Because of the social stigma attached to this work, women who are “bar girls” – they are called this regardless of their age – tend to be desperate and see their employment in this sector as purely short-term, which further limits their ability to organise collectively.

v) Access to Credit

Access to credit is a gendered concern identified by both middle-class and poor women. The strategies employed to increase credit availability to women tend to be practical – though the problem is analysed as gendered related issues of what empowering impacts credit access actually has for women are investigated to a lesser degree. Women have
difficulty gaining access to credit because of the smallness of their enterprises, their high rate of illiteracy, predominance in the subsistence sector, and their lack of collateral. However, there do exist a number of donor and government supported special women’s loans. These loans are administered by the Ministry of Community Development, Women’s Affairs and Children (MCDWAC) and are guided by a welfare approach which does not focus on issues of control or empowerment, disbursing credit for projects which are small, unambitious, and correspond to gender-typed projects such as embroidery, sewing, and food preparation. Of course the women involved choose these projects themselves, as they utilise skills they already have, so while they these schemes do not transform the gender division of labour, they do address the identified needs of the women benefiting. These credit programs only reach a small number of women and the selection process determining which women will be the beneficiaries is rife with paternalism and strongly biased towards women with affiliation to the Union of Tanzanian women (UWT), the ruling party’s national women’s group. Extension workers with the ministry have no means of transportation and their commitment and abilities vary widely among wards and districts. Some middle-class women’s groups have also established programs to make credit available to poor women, and while they reach even smaller numbers the design of these programs is more suited to both realising the fulfilment of women’s practical needs and initiating the formation of strategic gender interests.
vi) Culture

Culture is distinct from the previously identified areas of concern because it permeates through all of family, social, economic and political relations, and affects all of the previously identified sectors. A single culture cannot be identified – different cultural norms and values exist within and among institutions and social classes. Cultural biases against women are played out in all of the previously discussed areas, and women's groups are addressing them through a variety of strategies.

With regards to the law, cultural sanctions permit unequal legal provisions and women face cultural barriers to fighting against sexual discrimination and harassment. Educational styles and materials have been criticised for perpetuating gender stereotypes and the poor achievements of girls in science and other "male" fields. In the health sector women take on a disproportionate share of community health provision because this is considered within the culture as their role. Insufficient resources are channelled into women's health areas both because women are underrepresented in higher levels of the medical field and their priorities are not considered as essential as others. Credit schemes are few and often structured to keep women working in gender-typed occupations which do not provide a real means for economic advancement or a transformation of gender roles. Women themselves, as cultural participants, may support and accept culturally defined roles, which other women deem contrary to their empowerment. Culture is not static, and as women find ways to influence and transform cultural attitudes, successes in doing so assist them in further efforts to push them forward. Other cultural norms, which are favourable to women, such as the commonly accepted Tanzanian belief that women should have equal educational opportunities, can be used to help women push for the
means to ensure they remain prioritised and supportive policies to realise them are in place.

2.2 Strategies for Empowerment

Middle-class women's groups are attempting to address women's unequal positions in all of the previously identified sectors. In doing so they are striving to increase women's share of power, and thus addressing issues of empowerment. How they conceptualise empowerment itself varies among groups and is reflected in the type of strategies they employ. While some groups are focused exclusively or in part in helping women meet practical rather than strategic gender goals they have analysed these goals on gender lines. The significance of this for empowerment is that even if strategies do not transform all of the gendered structures that contribute to women's disadvantaged position in the area focused upon, highlighting the gendered nature of their concerns and focusing their efforts specifically towards women means that empowerment at some level is likely to result. For example, if a middle-class women's group responds to poor women's practical economic concerns by providing them with credit, thereby enhancing their economic position, individual women may become empowered - though as a group poor women are not empowered as they would be had more structural changes, in the labour market for example, occurred. Furthermore, providing women with credit raises the whole issue of how women have less access to credit than do men, and may serve to popularise this concern, heightening societal awareness of the issue and thus addressing it on a cultural level.
Women operating in middle-class organisations address both strategic and practical gender concerns and focus their activities towards their own membership and other women, other groups and institutions in civil society, cultural understandings, and the state. Twenty-seven middle-class groups are included in my sample and their activities can be categorised through different methods. My initial classification, summarised in Table 2.4, deals with the sector of discrimination they target and whether their activities are best seen as strategic or practical.
Table 2.4: Tanzanian Women’s Groups: Sectoral Focus and Gender Approach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Association</th>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Gender Approach</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albino Association – Women’s Development Wing</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Practical</td>
<td>Service-oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BACAWA (Baby Care Women’s Association)</td>
<td>Education, credit, child care</td>
<td>Strategic and Practical</td>
<td>Grassroots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bawata (National Women’s Council of Tanzania)</td>
<td>All sectors</td>
<td>Strategic and Practical</td>
<td>Politically Affiliated?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic Women’s Association</td>
<td>Religion, credit, law, education, health,</td>
<td>Strategic and Practical</td>
<td>Grassroots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>environment, agriculture, housing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country Women Group</td>
<td>Credit, law</td>
<td>Strategic and Practical</td>
<td>Grassroots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Statistics Group</td>
<td>All sectors</td>
<td>Strategic</td>
<td>Research, outside-initiated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOIGO (Getting Old is to Grow )</td>
<td>Education, Age</td>
<td>Practical</td>
<td>Service-oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDSWG (Institute of Development Studies Women’s Group)</td>
<td>All sectors</td>
<td>Strategic</td>
<td>Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JET (Journalist Environment Association)</td>
<td>Media, environment</td>
<td>Strategic</td>
<td>Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mewata (Medical Women’s Association)</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Strategic and Practical</td>
<td>Grassroots, Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim Women’s Group</td>
<td>Religion, credit, poverty</td>
<td>Practical</td>
<td>Worker-based?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation of Tanzania Trade Unions (OTTU) Women Worker’s Directorate</td>
<td>Labour, health, education, credit, law</td>
<td>Strategic and Practical</td>
<td>Worker-based, Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SERO Enterprises</td>
<td>Credit, business</td>
<td>Strategic and Practical</td>
<td>Grassroots, Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suwata (Union of Women (UWT) Economic Wing)</td>
<td>Health, law</td>
<td>Strategic and Practical</td>
<td>Politically affiliated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Sector/Concern</td>
<td>Strategic/PRACTICAL</td>
<td>Grassroots, Research, Outside Initiated?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWAAT (Society of Women and AIDS Tanzania)</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Strategic/PRACTICAL</td>
<td>Grassroots, Research, Outside Initiated?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAHEA (Tanzania Home Economics Association)</td>
<td>Health, education, environment</td>
<td>Strategic/PRACTICAL</td>
<td>Outside-initiated? Grassroots, Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAMWA (Tanzania Media Women’s Association)</td>
<td>Media, all sectors</td>
<td>Strategic/PRACTICAL</td>
<td>Grassroots, Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanzania Midwives Association</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Strategic/PRACTICAL</td>
<td>Grassroots, Research, Worker based?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAWOSTE (Tanzania Association of Women Professionals in Science and Technology)</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Strategic/PRACTICAL</td>
<td>Outside-initiated, Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAWOVA (Tanzania Women Volunteers Association)</td>
<td>Law</td>
<td>Strategic/PRACTICAL</td>
<td>Grassroots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TGNP (Tanzania Gender Networking Programme)</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Strategic/PRACTICAL</td>
<td>Coalition, Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TWLA (Tanzania Women Lawyer’s Association)</td>
<td>Law</td>
<td>Strategic/PRACTICAL</td>
<td>Grassroots, Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TWRCG (Treasury Women Research and Consultantcy Group)</td>
<td>Labour, law, education, poverty</td>
<td>Strategic/PRACTICAL</td>
<td>Worker-based, Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Udananda - Women Using Arts and Culture for Empowerment</td>
<td>Culture, Education</td>
<td>Strategic/PRACTICAL</td>
<td>Research, Grassroots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UWT (Union of Tanzanian Women)</td>
<td>All sectors</td>
<td>Strategic/PRACTICAL</td>
<td>Politically affiliated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAT (Women Advancement Trust)</td>
<td>Housing, law, credit</td>
<td>Strategic/PRACTICAL</td>
<td>Grassroots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WDRP (Women’s Research and Documentation Project)</td>
<td>All sectors</td>
<td>Strategic/PRACTICAL</td>
<td>Research</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Groups address sectoral areas by way of seven different approaches, as classified by the empowerment methodology formulated by DAWN (Development Alternatives for Women in a New Era) (Sen and Grown 1987). The different organisational classifications are as follows: service-oriented, politically affiliated, worker-based, outside-initiated, grassroots, research, and coalitions of organisations. This classification is valuable because it helps to highlight the obstacles groups face in meeting their goals, and can provide a potential framework for measuring the degree to which different strategies are likely to contribute to empowerment. Caroline Moser (1993) has integrated this system with her own analysis of strategic and gender concerns, in order to evaluate which approaches are best suited to meet empowerment objectives.

The following discussion examines the groups present in Tanzania through the lens of this classification while at the same time pointing to places where the classification is unable to adequately predict or describe how these activities contribute to meeting empowerment objectives. Most groups in my sample cover more than one of the categories however, which complicates this system of categorisation. Table 2.5 identifies groups as to whether they are engaged in strategic or practical impacts, as understood by Moser. The attainment of only practical rather than strategic objectives, contrary to Moser's predictions, does not necessarily translate into an absence of empowering results. The main weaknesses found in this framework are its inability to relate to the women's movement in its entirety and a lack of recognition to the ways practical strategies can relate to empowerment. Throughout this analysis the activities of groups are situated in the democratic and liberalisation reform contexts in which they are occurring. This is done to indicate how the reforms are influencing and being influenced by the activities of
women's groups, and how these reforms relate to the project of women's empowerment.

Activities initiated in response to economic factors tend to be oriented towards practical goals, while those that are directed towards political transformations and opportunities are strategic.

Table 2.5: Women's Groups: Achievement of Strategic and Practical Goals and Empowerment Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Association</th>
<th>Strategic</th>
<th>Practical</th>
<th>Empowerment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albino Association</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BACAWA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bawata</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>Uncertain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic Women</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country Women</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Statistics</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOIGO</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDS Women</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JET</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mewata</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwives</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim Women</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SERO Enterprises</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suwata</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWAAT</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAHEA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAMWA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAHOSTE</td>
<td>Not yet</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAHOVA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TGNP</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TWRCG</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Udananda</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UWT</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAT</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WDRP</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women Lawyers</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

i) Service-oriented groups

Service oriented groups are the most widespread mode of organisation. While they are welfarist in approach and focused on practical gender needs, as noted practical
orientations can lead to critical understandings of gender concerns and strategic perspectives, and may empower individual women, though not women as a whole. Thus a welfare focus on its own is not a negative or inadequate starting point, as these organisations provide valuable services in the areas of women’s education, health, and credit access. Furthermore they often respond to the needs identified by their beneficiaries. However, in so far as their goals are to improve women’s lives without posing a challenge to the overall structures which create unequal gender relations their individual contributions to the project of empowerment are limited to the women they assist, and do not extend to women as a whole.

The objective of service-oriented organisations is to augment the role of social welfare agencies. In the Tanzanian context of structural adjustment and the subsequent decline in the quality and availability of publicly provided health, education, and other services these functions are essential. These practical objectives are often more easily met than are strategic objectives and because they are not political or radical they may attract government and donor support more easily.

Service-oriented groups are seen by DAWN as weak in promoting empowerment because they tend to be run in a top-down manner with little involvement from the women assisted beyond cost-sharing. DAWN identifies participation as an important element in the project of empowerment. A further weakness identified by DAWN is that they are often blind to the gender issues involved in the sector they address. Examining service-oriented groups in Tanzania, I found these criticisms are seen to be somewhat misleading. This is because most service-oriented groups also take on other roles. In doing so they are not blind to broader gender issues, but concentrate on service-provision
as one of several strategies to address them. In addition, non-participatory frameworks are not at all times conducive to the type of empowerment objectives being sought, though these empowerment goals do not extend to all women.

Despite being characterised as the most widespread type of women’s group in the developing world, only three groups in my sample are solely service-oriented: the women’s wing of the Albino Association of Tanzania, the Muslim Women’s Group, and Getting Old is to Grow (GOIGO). These groups, because they do not take on additional approaches, are most vulnerable to the criticisms levelled by DAWN. As groups with practical rather than strategically defined goals, Moser’s approach would indicate that they do not result in an increase in women’s empowerment. For one of these three groups, GOIGO, this is not the case, as some women are being provided with tools to increase their economic power.

The Albino Association provides health education to its members, attracts donor support for projects to help albinos with income-generating projects, and produces research to try and educate the public and health care professions about albinism. Executive positions within the group are elected: four of the eleven members of the executive committee are presently women and they comprise the women’s wing. As a specifically women’s group, the women’s wing of the Albino Association is weak in that it has not clearly conceptualised any gender specific issues related to albinos. However, they do network with other women’s groups and are a resource for albino women who feel more comfortable discussing their problems and seeking counselling from women. The objectives of this group are practical and they provide assistance to the albino community in a top-down fashion. While they may succeed in changing popular attitudes
and prejudices against albinos, thereby providing some measure of empowerment to albinos as a group, they do not have a critical gender analysis or attempt to empower albino women as women. This is not intended as a criticism, as they are fulfilling a valuable service, but in terms of promoting women’s empowerment they are participating only peripherally by building leadership skills among the women in the executive committee. Their top-down structure is unproblematic for meeting their practical objectives – had they strategic goals it would perhaps be an issue. This organisation conforms fully to DAWN’s classification of a service-oriented group and Moser’s understanding of a practical focus.

The Muslim Women’s Group is a service-oriented group that fails to meet even its practical objectives and has no grassroots focus although there is scope and a desire within the group to address empowerment objectives. Like the Albino Association’s women’s wing, the Muslim Women’s Group is a branch of a larger group, The National Muslim Association of Tanzania (Bacwata). However, while the Albino Association supported its women’s wing in its welfare role, Bacwata perceives the Muslim women as a threat and limits their activities. Although a national group, there is minimal contact among branches and they are severely lacking in resources because they must go through Bacwata to reach donor support. Bacwata gets donor support from Muslim countries, and the women have received some sewing machines from Sudan and some children’s educational books from Iran. On only one occasion have the women been able to get some support without going through Bacwata. When a member was selected by Tango (the Tanzanian Association of Non-Governmental Organisations) to attend a conference
in Senegal Bacwata refused to sponsor her, but the group managed to get financial support from the Ministry of Women’s Affairs.

The Muslim Women’s Group’s goals are unclear and its activities are limited and sporadic. The group meets rarely, as one member explained: “Many women don’t turn up for the group’s meetings because they don’t see any progress, any money creation. Board members just volunteer and most of them don’t turn up because they have to pay for everything like bus fare, no one pays for them.” The group would like to have a grassroots focus and get more women involved but, “in the three districts of Dar there are so many wards, so to visit all these to tell the grassroots what is going on, it’s too difficult.” The group raises what money it does have by selling baskets and vitembua (fried rice cakes) that they make. The money is then shared out among their members rather than going towards other projects. They have discussed starting an upato (rotating savings club) group among themselves, but have not yet done so. During the election period some members participated in a voter education project initiated by the Tanzanian Gender Networking Programme by talking to Muslim women at mosques, contributing to the women’s movement’s concern with empowering women to actively participate the avenues available to them to have a political voice. For National Women’s Day they made some posters, a project initiated and financed by the Ministry of Women’s Affairs.

The women in this group see their weaknesses as resulting from their financial incapacity, in turn blamed on the men in Bacwata.

We have been oppressed by the men of Bacwata. Women’s activities are neglected because of the poor education of Bacwata leaders. They are selfish, not wanting to help the women. When Muslim women were first allowed in Bacwata no one really bothered with them … now there are more women involved but the men are selfish about giving them any help or room to develop … We don’t even have an office. Muslim men, few know about
women's development ... they are saying a Muslim woman cannot stand in front of so many people and be a leader. This is not right.

Unlike most service-oriented groups, the Muslim Women's Group is seen as potentially political and barriers found within their own culture contribute to their lack of success in attracting resources. This problem could be overcome were they to register as an independent organisation, something they have considered but have not yet initiated.

While the women in this group have a strong awareness of their oppression, they feel unable to undertake any independent action to address this. There are seventy members, but most participate primarily in Bacwata projects, running schools, hospitals and housing schemes, which do not entail gender analysis. The service provision of the women's group is limited to income-generating projects for their immediate membership, and they only engage in more strategically oriented activities when they are initiated from an outside group. Caroline Moser notes that this is common among older service-oriented groups in the United States, where they are often willing and motivated to cooperate with newer more 'radical' groups (Moser 1993: 201).

Getting Old is to Grow (GOIGO), another service-oriented organisation, fails in meeting its intended goals of assisting older women, but does provide education services through the running of private vocational and nursery schools, responding to failures in the public educational system which is under-funded in the current climate of austerity. The organisation was established to address the financial needs of retired women, particularly single women, who cannot survive on their government pensions or do not have a pension. Hambasia Maeda, chair of GOIGO, discussed the problems faced by the elderly:
There are many problems with growing old in Tanzania. Many women are left without a husband and we must organise to take care of ourselves. People are retiring at age 55 and immediately you can see their health deteriorate. This is due to economic conditions. This man I know, he retired and no one saw him for a while, and then people did, went to visit him, and were so shocked, there was such a change in such short time. The government pension has gone from 30,000 shillings a year to 2,000. [S450 US to S3]

Grace, a pensioner I know, gets 400 shillings a month. She doesn’t even bother collecting it, it costs more to go get it. You can never manage with only a pension; you need to have prior preparation. Next week I will be 55 and will be retired. Thinking of that I have started to deteriorate, just like the others. I have a house that I’ve started to build, now I pay rent in an apartment, my pension won’t be enough to put a toilet in the house. It is worries like these that make people disappear.

GOIGO runs a vocational school and a nursery school. They have six full-time employees: the Ministry of Education pays for the salaries of two, the Ministry of Labour, Youth and Social Work a third, and GOIGO pays the remaining three. The school teaches basket weaving, carpet making, batik, tailoring, candle making, and carpentry and in addition to their three government extension workers they receive money from the Finnish Handicraft Society and Finnida. The money they receive is not motivated by their objectives in helping older women; in Finland they were more interested in the development of handicrafts than the age issue, and for the government their school absorbs students from the overburdened public sector. They have a shop where they sell their products, and run a bed and breakfast. Neither of these later two enterprises produces much income, as the school is located quite far from the city centre.

GOIGO hopes to establish a centre where retired people can meet for recreation and income-generating projects, and where there are health services available. This was one of their early goals but remains beyond their economic capacity. Currently the only services they are providing are the schools, which help fill a gap the public sector cannot but are largely unrelated to gender issues. They have difficulty in attracting volunteers.
because as of yet members do not receive any remuneration for their time beyond the cost of transportation.

Unlike the profile of a typical service-oriented group, GOIGO does undertake a critical gender stance, evident when group chair and founder Hambasia Maeda writes,

As a woman teacher by profession I had a dream, a dream which I had always wished would come true. To liberate my fellow women, I had always supported the 8th of March "Motto" to improve the status of women, especially the aged. I personally prefer to concentrate on the ignored age group of the elderly, who feel lonely and isolated; professionals who have retired and feel they are no longer wanted by society; women with no children and families to depend on. While abroad two years ago I visited many women activities and when I came across organisations of the aged, I knew that is exactly the one we were missing here in Tanzania. As women we don’t have much identity here. Before a woman is married she is called the daughter of Mr. So and so, and after marriage the wife of Mr. So and so; and after giving birth Mama Fulani, that’s if she is lucky. If the woman is childless, she remains with her husband’s identity ... In case of death of the husband, divorce or separation, what identity does the woman remain with? Nothing! (Maeda 1993: 45).

As a group, however, GOIGO does not explore how the problems of aged women can be addressed in a strategic rather than practical manner – using Moser’s distinction they have identified a strategic interest, but not a need. Nonetheless, if their dreams of helping the elderly get put into action, individual women will certainly become empowered.

Having examined three service-oriented groups, which address practical needs, does it follow, as this characterisation assumes, that they do not contribute to women’s empowerment? All three groups provide assistance to women, but this assistance can only be seen as empowering if it identifies gender needs and contributes to redressing gender inequities. The Albino Association does not do this. The Muslim Women’s groups identifies gender concerns, strategic and practical, but only undertakes actions which could be seen as contributing to empowerment when its support is elicited from
other groups. Their income-generating activities may empower women in their immediate circle, but cannot properly be seen as contributing to women's empowerment as this number of women is so small as to be negligible. While it is impossible to establish a firm line as to how many women need to be affected to rate a group's activities as empowering, common-sense usage of the concept implies that there must be such a cut-off point, and these women's activities fall below it. Both the albino women and the Muslim women are in groups which are ascriptive rather than voluntary. Membership in these groups is not exclusively drawn from the middle-class, as in the other groups examined in this chapter. As such their ability to reach women from outside the middle-class is enhanced, a strength which is interesting when situated next to the disadvantages usually identified with ascriptive groups. However, other ascriptive associations with multi-class membership, such as the Catholic Women's Association, have better success in exploiting this potential in a gender aware manner.

GOIGO has practical goals, some of which are unmet, that do entail a gender analysis. While the group's activities provide only practical services – education and child care – the women who learn skills there are most certainly empowered in their own lives, having the tools to advance economically. To dismiss the way individual women become empowered in this way because only small numbers are affected and there have been no transformations in structures, is to ignore what the women themselves find empowering. As mentioned, it is difficult to determine how many women need to be affected in order for their empowerment to be seen as significant, however the continuous numbers passing through a school seem sufficient. Furthermore, some of the training being offered – carpentry – helps women move into male-dominated areas. The gendered
aspect to their empowerment lies in how women utilise these skills to increase their security, granting them the space for less dependence upon men.

ii) Affiliated to Political Party

DAWN characterises groups with political affiliation as having access to high political levels and being among the few groups that receive financial support from the government (provided their party is in office). They also have the capacity to operate nationally. Most take an equity approach, although their activities are most likely to be focused on welfare anti-poverty projects. The risk of co-optation by the political party is large, leading to a similar lack of autonomy faced by women’s groups that are branches of larger organisations, such as the Albino Women’s Group and the Muslim Women’s Group. A further problem, found in my study, was the antagonism between groups that are politically affiliated, and the subsequent mistrust this breeds among members and potential members. This problem has only emerged in the context of multiparty politics.

The Union of Tanzanian Women (UWT), which was organised initially by Bibi Titi Mohamed as the women’s wing of TANU (the Tanganyika African National Union, the precursor of CCM) in 1962, is the oldest women’s group in Tanzania. It is also the largest, with over three million members. Membership is open to all Tanzanian women regardless of whether they are also members of CCM. Suwata (The Organisation of Women (UWT) Economic Wing) is a branch of UWT and provides legal aid, health, family planning, and credit services. Although Suwata members consider themselves as autonomous and decidedly non-political, they are best thought of as an institutionalised service-provider of the UWT. In taking on legal aid cases for women, Suwata strives to
create legal precedents that will empower other women, and participates extensively in outreach projects to educate women about their legal rights and the importance of claiming them.

Despite identifying itself as a mass-based organisation the UWT is run in a very top-down manner, and as DAWN points out, this can have a negative impact for the realisation of broadly based empowerment goals. Many in the group's leadership have high level positions within the government - the national chair, Rhoda Kahatono, is a member of parliament - and deserve credit for their efforts in pushing through recent legal amendments such as raising the marriage age for women, the new Sexual Offences Bill, and repealing the law which expelled pregnant girls from the schools system. The UWT remains focused on strategic empowerment issues along with service provision despite its affiliation with CCM. They neither report to CCM on their activities nor seek approval for them. They receive no financial support from CCM; members work on a volunteer basis and projects receive funding from external donors. A central weakness is that its structure is so large that it does not allow for bottom-up participation to occur. There is no question that its leadership is politically motivated and the organisation is used to mobilise women to support CCM. In the context of multiparty politics, this limits the group's ability to attract support and participation from all women.

The national chair, Rhoda Kahatano, expressed a great deal of bitterness with regard to a new organisation, BAWATA, the National Women's Council of Tanzania. This group actually began in 1995 as a UWT initiative, intended as a non-partisan service-oriented women’s national group (Tenga and Peter 1996). It has become, however, closely (although unofficially) associated with the leading opposition party,
NCCR-Maguezi. BAWATA has received a great deal of external donor support, which the UWT believes is being spent unwisely and siphoning away resources that should be directed towards the UWT. Mrs. Kahatano is quoted at length in order to illustrate how personal and vehement are her feelings towards BAWATA, and in particular its leader Anna Tibajjuka.

Some people in Denmark and Norway want to make us enemies. [UWT and BAWATA] They support BAWATA when they know they support NCCR. We did initiate BAWATA but that woman [Anna Tibajjuka] didn’t follow things, she took all new members. It was supposed to be an economic neutral organisation; that’s not what is happening. ... Denmark has women’s political wings, but because they want to wipe out CCM they say we are evil, but we are the only women’s organisation at the grassroots and have educated the girls in this country, all girls. We have been shouting to educate women. But some of these educated women now talk nonsense, saying UWT is bad because it is with CCM. But these women have political women’s wings - they are embarrassing their own countries. We don’t want money from them if they think like this. Women come to our clinics, they aren’t asked which party they belong to, they are treated for illness. ... That BAWATA woman, shouting that CCM is stupid, but we will show her. We are the ones who are there, at every corner. We are very sorry our baby has been robbed, she will suffocate it. ... We didn’t do any voter education because all the money went to that NCCR wing and we didn’t get any. We just said to our branches we have no money but make sure CCM wins. ... No new person from the university can say they are bringing rights for women. We started long long ago. We had a body looking into the laws before BAWATA was born. The foreigners are being cheated. They can do their research but how do we benefit? ... We own the women in the villages, BAWATA is owned by Denmark, but BAWATA is not genuine. We have no conflict; that is childish behaviour. This woman hijacked our organisation. It is not a body for women, we don’t recognise it and the women won’t recognise it.

If BAWATA is in reality becoming affiliated with NCCR-Maguezi and merely duplicating the activities of the UWT, and by doing so restricting rather than expanding project effectiveness through the spreading out of finite resources, it would be a shame.

I spoke with Augustine Mrema, the leader of NCCR-Maguezi about his relationship with Bawata, and he said that while they are not officially linked to his party,
their presence is appreciated. “They are not part of this office, but during the campaign they were supporting me, they were supporting our policies. I have never met with them, but they did a fabulous job. The President was angry, he warned them that if they keep on campaigning for Mrema that would mean the end of them.” I was unable to interview anyone from BAWATA⁹ although I was given a copy of their constitution, their policy advocacy programme, and a report on their establishment. The goals in their constitution are very similar to those of UWT, but BAWATA emphasises that it is not politically affiliated and its purpose is to serve as an umbrella organisation for other women’s groups to work with. BAWATA acknowledges that it has had some difficulty in getting support from other women’s groups, “alienated by doubt, personality crushes and/or institutional rivalry,” but that it is committed to demonstrating to those who have shown “open hostility” that the group is “not here to challenge anyone but to collaborate all the efforts being made!” (BAWATA 1995).

Not all women’s groups have a negative view of BAWATA; Phillipina Mosha of the Women Worker’s Directorate of the Organisation of Tanzanian Trade Unions said that for her group, “BAWATA is more significant, it is a neutral party organisation for all women. UWT operates through CCM and can’t reach all women as it did before.” As BAWATA is so recent and is still trying to establish itself as a national broad-based organisation it is as of yet uncertain how successful it will be in meeting either its practical or strategic objectives, or gaining support and trust among Tanzanian women and other women’s groups.

The adoption of a multiparty framework has had a big impact on the politically affiliated UWT. Within this context their political bias works against their efforts to
empower women at the grassroots, and will do so further if support for opposition parties grows. The animosity they show towards BAWATA introduces a new competition into the remarkably unified women’s movement, where divisions such as these may have a negative impact on the movement’s ability to act co-operatively for greater empowerment gains. The UWT’s political affiliation, while enabling it to exert influence at the political level, leads it to mimic CCM patterns of top-down service delivery, in turn limiting its potential to empower women through their own participation in setting priorities and meeting them. The greatest strength of the UWT is its ability to reach women in all areas of the country, in contrast to other women’s groups.

iii) Worker-based organisations

DAWN identifies two different types of worker-based organisations: formal trade unions of workers employed in the formal sector, and organisations of poor self-employed women. This second type of worker-based group will be examined in the following chapter. As with politically affiliated organisations and other “women’s wings” of larger organisations, women’s branches of trade unions are concerned with equity but they often do not have control over their own activities. “In trade unions mainly male leadership makes decisions, while women at the base participate in carrying out policy. ... [Unions] rarely consider as a priority the reproductive concerns of women workers such as child care, maternity leave and associated benefits” (Moser 1993: 201). In addition, areas of labour that are female-dominated often do not become unionised, excluding many women from the benefits unionisation might bring.
The Organisation of Tanzania Trade Unions (OTTU) was formed in 1991 when the new Trade Union Act came into force. Previously there was only one union (JUWATA, Jumuiya ya Wafanyakazi Tanzania), an organ of CCM. Now, in theory, there are eleven different trade unions, which are not tied to any party or the government. However, all must be registered and affiliated with OTTU.

Apart from the fact that OTTU was formally no longer a party organ, nothing else changed. Since OTTU was created without consultation with its constituent unions, and its officers were selected with no worker mandate, many consider OTTU to merely represent the continuity of CCM dominance over labor. ... Registration for all unions is subject to cancellation by the Ministry of Labor if unions violate the provisions of the OTTU act. A member of CCM's National Executive Committee, Bruno Mpangala, was named to head the new union with no vote of "membership" (West et al. 1994: 73).

While OTTU is weak in matters of collective bargaining and securing political concessions for its membership, the union is involved in a number of projects to help its members. The Women Worker's Directorate is one of four technical directorates of the federation. (The others are the Education Directorate, the Planning and Research Directorate and the Legislative and Administrative Directorate.) These directorates began in 1986 under JUWATA.

The women's directorate aims to mobilise women to take on greater involvement within their unions, provides women with education on legal, employment, economic, and gender issues, and carries out research on women workers in order to identify and address their needs. The directorate also holds gender-sensitising workshops for male workers and union representatives and runs projects aimed at improving the working and living situations of women workers. At the time I met with the assistant director they were running three different projects: an educational project on women and AIDS in the
workplace covering 22 worksites in Dar es Salaam; a food security and technology project in Tanga region to address appropriate technology for women in four sisal plantations and provide credit to women; and a large project, the Mwema project\(^{10}\), involving 18 plantations in seven regions of the country, addressing women's needs in employment, income and housing. The group strongly emphasises increasing women's organisational capacities within their unions.

An assessment of how well this directorate is meeting its empowerment objectives - of gender sensitisation, increasing women's union representation at higher levels, and transforming women's work conditions - is difficult, but the group seems very committed and active and is aided by having a strong financial base from union dues and donor support. They have twenty-five paid staff members, more than any other women's group in my sample. In terms of meeting practical needs - providing credit and educational activities - they appear to be successful. Through these activities they are empowering individual women, although not women as a whole. Like other women's branches of larger organisations the Women's Directorate is not fully autonomous. They do not meet directly with the government, but must go through the Secretary General of OTTU. This is not perceived however as a major issue. "It would perhaps be better to have direct communication with them, but it has always been done by this system, and in some ways it is better because the Secretary General of OTTU is aware of all the issues involved in the union as a whole."

The goals reached by the women's directorate are both practical and strategic, both contributing to a greater share of women's empowerment. Strategically the directorate may be altering cultural attitudes with unionised labour and assisting members
to break into higher levels of their occupations. Through their projects they are meeting the economic needs of women. The directorate is not trying to broaden its membership, for example through organising house girls or waitresses, instead it accepts the structural boundaries imposed upon it by the larger union. The gender interests of these non-unionised groups are not addressed by any in the women’s movement, and the women’s directorate of OTTU seems best placed to do so. While a wholly independent women’s labour union would not be advisable or practical, greater autonomy would enhance its ability to address gender concerns. Furthermore, this group has minimal contact with other groups; a more co-operative engagement with the women’s movement would increase its ability to identify priorities and act upon them.

Other groups in my sample were organised around workplace issues, although not within formal union structures, for example the Treasury Women Research and Consultancy Group (TWRCG). Starting in 1989 with twenty members, the group is now made up of over a hundred women working in the National Treasury and the Ministry of Finance. The objective of the group is to help women working in the Ministry advance their careers. They run gender-sensitising workshops for male employees and management, and educational seminars and workshops for women dealing with AIDS and women’s legal rights, not only regarding labour law but also family law, bringing in outside experts. The group carries out research trying to isolate the factors limiting women’s advancement in their field. They finance training courses for their members in language, computers and executive management. In Tanzania, the formal wages of workers, including civil servants, cover only between 25 and 33 percent of the minimum income required to sustain a family of four (West et al. 1994: 77). To address the
economic needs of their members the group offers training on how to establish small projects outside of business hours, for example selling *maandazi* and doing tailoring.

TWRCG was only registered as an independent NGO in 1995; previously they were under the umbrella of the Ministry of Finance. This change has had advantages and disadvantages for the group. They are pleased with the greater autonomy they can now exercise and they now have their own bank account and are able to attract more money from donors than they previously received from the Ministry. They can organise activities without having to seek approval from the Ministry. However, with the group operating as an independent NGO each woman now needs to get permission from her superiors to attend meetings during working hours. Their hope is to hire two full-time employees and have a small office. With full-time members the group would be better placed to attend meetings and workshops with other women’s groups and organise TWRCG projects and activities. Full-time staff would also address their other concern that the group is too large to manage on a volunteer basis.

As an independent worker-based group the Treasury Women have avoided the common pitfall of having their goals limited by a male-dominated organisation. They have also been successful in attracting enough funds to address both the strategic and practical concerns of their members, although not enough to employ full-time staff. Unlike a union, this association is not structurally placed in opposition to management, but has membership drawn from junior secretaries right up to executives. The members believe they have been very successful, particularly with giving women more confidence to apply for higher positions within the Ministry.
Examining this group from DAWN’s framework, its small outreach, affecting only its own membership, provides limited empowerment results. However, this group targets women who might otherwise be unaffected by other programs adopted by the women’s movement, and a concentrated effort on a small group of women may have a greater effect that efforts which are spread too thin. This group complements other groups’ programs to raise women’s status within specific professions. The framework used by DAWN cannot account for the ways in which individual groups may be seen as weak if examined on their own, but in fact contribute to the overall strength of the women’s movement.

Two additional groups in my sample may also be considered worker-based: the Medical Women’s Association and the Midwives Association. However, while they are concerned with the working conditions and advancement of women in their professions and centres of employment, they also concentrate on women’s health needs outside of their membership and are better characterised as grassroots associations.

iv) Outside-initiated groups

Outside-initiated groups are characterised by DAWN as those groups that have been initiated by external donors to undertake a specific project, usually anti-poverty in focus. They are weak because they cannot survive without donor support, lack autonomy from the donors, and generally do not undertake a theoretical analysis of gender subordination. Few of the outside-initiated groups in this sample exhibit these weaknesses. Almost all groups rely on donor support, but generally they were formed first and then wrote proposals outlining their goals and objectives. While some degree of autonomy is lost
when a group is dependent on an outside source for funding, this has just become an
unavoidable condition for almost all women's groups. The benefits accrued from the
support received are seen by these groups as outweighing any subsequent loss in
autonomy.

Associations such as the Society for Women and AIDS Tanzania (SWAAT) and
the Tanzania Home Economics Association (TAHEA) were externally initiated and are
national branches of international associations. However they do not receive financial
support from their parent bodies but apply for funding independently, take on an
empowerment approach, and are more typical of grassroots groups.

The Tanzanian Association of Women Professionals in Science and Technology
(TAWOSTE) is an outside-initiated research group, created at the chemistry department
of the University of Dar es Salaam by Norad. The group was initiated in 1990 with ten
women; by 1995 its membership had reached sixty. Since its establishment however the
group has secured funds from other donors and additionally supports itself by
membership and subscription fees, so unlike the typical profile of an outside-initiated
group, it proceeds without the continued funding from its initial outside source.

This group also differs from the DAWN characterisation of outside-initiated
groups in that it is not an anti-poverty group with weak theoretical analysis, but rather a
research group stressing the strategic gender concerns of women (or lack of women) in
the field of science and technology. The group is working on compiling a database of
women in science and technology, but progress is slow and members meet infrequently,
primarily to attend the workshops of other groups. Inadequate funds are blamed for the
group's poor progress - despite their low overhead (they have office space from the Dar
es Salaam College for Science and Technology) and funding from a variety of donors as well as the government. While TAWOVA has the potential to influence the government on policy, the group has rejected this strategy. “We have approached the government ... for funds ... but we don’t bother to invite them to our workshops or seminars. We wouldn’t encourage more interactions. We are a NGO, why involve the government as far as workshops and meetings are concerned?” Membership is vague about what purpose their database, when completed, will fulfill. The weaknesses evident in this group are unrelated to their having been externally initiated. They seem more tied to a lack of commitment on the part of their membership than to any structural considerations found within their form of organising.

The Gender Statistics Group is another outside oriented research group, initiated within the Bureau of Statistics by SIDA (Sweden). Like TAWOVA it addresses strategic interests through its research and is government funded; it no longer receives support from SIDA. This group is examined in more detail with other research groups.

The pitfalls DAWN identifies as being endemic to outside-oriented organisations do not apply to any groups within the women’s movement. Groups rarely form through outside initiation, and when they do they are able to develop and take on new projects. Those that do exist do not limit their activities to welfare projects, but are more frequently engaged in research activities.

v) Grassroots groups

Grassroots groups have the strongest potential for achieving widespread empowerment objectives. It is a sign of the strength of the women’s movement in Tanzania that there
were more grassroots groups in my sample (thirteen out of twenty-seven) than of any other type\textsuperscript{11} (see Table 2.6) while DAWN's findings are that service- and outside-initiated groups generally dominate. Most grassroots organisations are also involved in service provision and originate from the economic and material conditions women experience. Their underlying policy approach however is empowerment and they address strategic along with practical gender needs and interests. Their potential weaknesses lie in their low resource bases and a membership with an urban middle-class bias, which may have difficulty identifying the most relevant goals and be prone to top-down or patronising forms of engaging with other women.

Table 2.6: Number of Women's Groups per Category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Service-oriented</th>
<th>Affiliated to Political Party</th>
<th>Worker-oriented</th>
<th>Outside-initiated</th>
<th>Grassroots</th>
<th>Research</th>
<th>Coalition of Organisations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Groups</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>2-4</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1-2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(As some groups cover more than one category, the total is higher than 27)

Women's grassroots groups in Tanzania focus on a range of sectors discriminating against Tanzanian women – legal, health, education, religion, credit, the environment, media, and housing. Most combine projects dealing with immediate practical needs with education aimed at raising the consciousness of members and the women they support. The grassroots group I found most impressive was the Baby Care Women's Association, (BACAWA).

BACAWA began in Dar es Salaam in 1989 with thirty-five members and now has sixty-five card holding members, over a thousand beneficiaries in their "clubs" and operates in ten villages in four different regions (Dar es Salaam, Njombe, Kilimanjaro...
and Pwani) with plans for further expansion. While the size of a group is not always a good indicator of its ability to meet empowerment goals, for grassroots groups, their size has an impact on the number of women it can reach and empower. The group first began as a service-oriented organisation, training single mothers in tailoring and business management, and running a nursery school. These schools continue and there are presently ten. Women are selected as students on the basis of greatest need. They are not expected to pay for their course, but after six months they are asked to contribute money from what they are selling to help pay for course materials and for a health care insurance fund. Thus older students subsidise the school so new students can enrol.

After attending a workshop on women’s groups, BACAWA was inspired by the example of the Grameen bank in Bangladesh, and began their micro-enterprise credit scheme in 1994. Their executive committee of ten is spread out over ten villages. Each village chair recruits ten group leaders, one for each village group. Each group is made up of five members whom are chosen by their group leaders. This structure is designed to ensure the women in each group like and trust one another. The group leaders and village chairs are recruited with an effort to find the best women for the job rather than taking the route of other credit schemes who find the women most active in the UWT.

Donors, like Danida, go straight to the CCM office to get to the community. So CCM supporters get funding. BACAWA took a different approach. We went to the CCM office and discussed with the CCM leader about which woman would make a good leader here in this village. Then we went to the women in the market, and said what do you think of that woman, and they said no, go to Anna. So we went back to the Chairman at the CCM office and said no, we want Anna.

Credit is disbursed through village chairs to group leaders. Each member must pay a certain amount to join the club, and then must work a certain number of hours on
constructing a local centre. This has proven to be an effective way both of ensuring the women involved are committed and of "weeding out" the high numbers of women interested in joining. Each individual member is required to fill in a calendar of how they will spend their money when it is their group's turn to receive the rotating loan. As Mrs. Mrutu, founder of BACAWA, explained: "We get them to fill out these calendars just to dream, before they are given any money, this is to teach them."

The loans are disbursed to village groups, two or three at a time, by lottery, and groups are given two years to pay it back with interest.

We didn't introduce this in terms of "credit" because we thought this would create alarm, issues of interest, where would this come from? We just said that this money was to be repaid so someone else can use it, and maybe you can borrow again. There is also pressure from the other groups, waiting for their turn to pay it back. We explained the interest in terms of keeping the value of money, to account for inflation. We gave them examples of how over time you need bigger amounts of cash to buy the same thing. And it works with the logic of upato, if I don't pay I don't collect.

The women use the loans to help with their own businesses. Sometimes members join together to work at the same business, for example running a kiosk, where they can take turns working part-time and still continue with their previous income-generating activities.

BACAWA meets its strategic objectives at their village centres, which have been constructed by its members. The centres are used as vocational schools and nurseries, but also to run workshops on AIDS awareness, health, and women's issues. They ran an extensive voter education program for their members, encouraging them to vote for women, irrespective of party affiliation. Women in these groups showed a much higher level of support for opposition parties than did other poor women. In some of the villages centres are also used as temporary housing for single mothers, and their children, who are
taking the tailoring courses offered. Club members meet at the centre once a week for workshops focused around gender concerns and to discuss their problems with one another.

As a grassroots organisation BACAWA addresses strategic and practical needs with a high level of organisation and sensitivity. It is run in a decentralised fashion, which serves to build trust and organisational skills among its membership. Village chairs do not run their local groups, but are facilitators who bring in outside experts for workshops, train group leaders in management, and maintain contact with the other villages. Perhaps they were drawn to this participatory approach by the fact that the members of BACAWA's executive committee are not themselves highly educated, a fact that was initially problematic in securing donor support.

In order for us to get aid we had to get a government recommendation. The letter said they were worried because we women were unqualified, we are none of us professors, the certificates are only small. But they did not come to ask me this, visit us, ask about our structure. We bring in outside experts when we need them, just this morning here you saw the economist we use, he has a Ph.D. They looked only at the people here who work daily.

BACAWA has secured funding, primarily for supplies such as sewing machines, from a variety of donors. Ultimately they bypassed the government route of applying for assistance and made contacts though embassy wives instead. Volunteers fill all positions, as they have chosen to use their resources for their schools, consultants, and credit base rather than pay themselves.

While other grassroots groups offer credit along with playing an educational role, for example, the Catholic Women's Group, the Country Women's Group and Sero enterprises, among others, none do so in such an extensively participatory manner as BACAWA. Many grassroots groups are formed around a sector in which their members
work. For example, the Women Lawyer’s Association operates a legal aid centre and educates women on legal rights and the Medical Women’s Group educates women in breast self-examination and nutrition and runs workshops on genital mutilation, sexual assault and rape.

One health based group, the Society of Women and AIDS in Tanzania (SWAAT) also addresses both practical and strategic gender needs. As a service-provider it is very successful, and overcomes the constraints identified by DAWN in purely service-oriented groups and some outside-initiated groups (SWAAT is a branch of an international organisation), in that it is not gender-blind, but has rather developed a strong analysis of the gender components of AIDS. However, the group has been less successful in achieving its objective of altering culturally accepted risky sexual behaviour, although not for a lack of energy and commitment amongst its members. The empowering aspect to SWAAT’s programs is found in its efforts to help women suffering from AIDS and their families to develop ways to cope with the disease. This form of empowerment is very personal; through counselling services SWAAT helps women to get beyond the stigmatisation of their illness and maintain as positive an outlook as possible.

SWAAT is a national branch of an international organisation and has 26 chapters in Tanzania. Through donor support SWAAT is able to pay several part-time councillors, thus is not subject to the economic limitation DAWN associates with grassroots groups, perhaps because of its outside-initiated status. In the field of service provision SWAAT provides counselling services for AIDS patients and their families. The demand for their services exceeds their ability and they are providing a much needed and valuable service to the community. Research is also a priority for SWAAT; at the time of our interview
they were working on a study examining the relationship between genital mutilation and AIDS. SWAAT networks with other non-governmental organisations and with the government.

With a grassroots focus, the group goes into communities to help educate the public, men and women, about AIDS and preventative behaviour in an attempt to alter cultural practices which contribute to the spread of AIDS. This is a huge goal, and thus far SWAAT and the other NGOs working on AIDS have been unable to make much headway. This has much more to do with the magnitude of the problem than any structural considerations in the group’s design or approach.

Udananda, Women Using Arts and Culture for Empowerment is a small grassroots and research group. An udananda is a musical instrument used by coastal women in passing of age ceremonies. This name was adopted for the group to emphasise their philosophy that Tanzanian women must know their past before they can address the present and have a vision of the future. As expressed by founding member Maria Shaba, “we are like that night when a girl is told ‘you were like this, you will be this.’” The group has done some research on Swahili proverbs, highlighting how although many are sexist, this is not in historical accordance with African culture. Their goal is to establish a school offering alternative education for rural students. Maria Shaba explained how she developed this plan:

I was humbled when I was doing research. I got into contact with these people in rural areas, they did not want to assimilate and send their children to school. I had time to discuss education with elderly people. They were saying, if we send our children to school, we want them to come back. Too much time is wasted on formal education. Children are intelligent; they don’t need to waste all that time. When a child is two or three she can take the calf to milk and feed it with those children that are five to eight and they will interact and learn from each other. A teacher can come in the rainy season,
stay for five months, and after some innovative teaching the children can teach one another and learn more. If they can learn to read and write, after that they can be interested in cattle. So education can then be to do with animal husbandry and other relevant things and children will stay at home.

Shaba was not surprised when the Ministry of Education treated the group “as if we are crazy,” as their educational plans entail a radical reassessment of educational goals and principles. However, Udananda has received financial support to begin construction of a school from a group in the United Kingdom. It is difficult to say whether such a project will have an ultimately empowering effect or not. Their emphasis on history and fostering cultural pride is promising, however their distaste for the expansion of formal education seems somewhat alarming when situated next to other women’s groups concerns in the educational sector that women are marginalised through not having enough formal education. Udananda’s approach highlights the existence of a range of empowerment avenues that can be taken within a given sector. What educational opportunities are determined to be most empowering for girls is perhaps best left for their communities and parents to determine.

One final grassroots group in my study, TAMWA, the Tanzania Media Women’s Association, merits discussion. TAMWA is one of the older grassroots women’s groups in Tanzania; although it was not formally registered until 1986 its members have been meeting since 1979. Since registering their numbers have grown from twenty to sixty. Because of its radical focus TAMWA had some difficulty in registering and feels that they get little in the way of government support because they are not simply a welfare group, an issue cited by DAWN and Caroline Moser as common for grassroots groups.

When TAMWA began they focused on developing strategies to use their positions as women working in the media field to challenge the media’s portrayal of women as,
"the weaker sex, objects of male pleasure and of reproduction, to be relegated to the kitchen to perform domestic chores" (Alloo and Sanga 1993: 92). The group's mandate has grown considerably. They have a regular publication, targeted at poor and rural Tanzanian women, *Sauti Ya Siti*, which comes out in English and Swahili versions and addresses a wide range of women's issues. *Sauti Ya Siti* aims to empower women by both keeping up their literacy skills and educating them on a variety of women's issues. Some of the subjects addressed in the magazine have been women and housework, domestic violence, women and the law, protecting the environment, and loans for women. TAMWA has also published a number of books (twenty as of 1996) for women and children, which are used by teachers, social workers, and health workers, and are available in both urban and rural libraries and documentation centres in Dar es Salaam. TAMWA assists other NGOs in publishing their pamphlets and books and provides training for women on information technology. The group produces documentaries and dramas in its video unit, which are available in its video library and also shown on television. TAMWA further produces dramatic and educational programs for Radio Tanzania. The group has a small library and documentation centre which it plans to expand into a multi-media information resource centre.

TAMWA has branched into non-media sectors by establishing a health unit that educates women through outreach workshops and runs a latrine project. This project was managed in a participatory manner with women in the target community (Chanika Village) participating in its organisation, fundraising and construction. In the future the group plans to establish a women's health clinic. A women's crisis centre is already up
and running, providing legal support for victims of sexual and domestic violence. A final role of TAMWA is as a research group.

Although TAMWA does rely heavily on volunteer and donor support (from eleven different donors), they have a number of economic projects - selling handicrafts, T-shirts, and providing publishing training – which finance the publication of *Sauti Ya Siti* and five percent of its other operating costs. In addition to relying more than they would wish on volunteer staff and external funding, TAMWA's other weakness, identified in an outside appraisal which they solicited, is having become too wide in its focus and in need of streamlining. Empowerment objectives are sometimes best achieved through a concentrated focus on a few areas, rather than spreading limited resources too thinly.

While most women's groups network with others, sharing information and working on projects together, almost all groups in my sample mentioned TAMWA as the group they worked with most often. More than any other group TAMWA is successfully addressing the cultural factors that discriminate against women, helping to shape new attitudes and raise awareness about women's issues.

vi) Research Groups

Many of the women's groups in this study carry out research. While often the central purpose of this research is to help with the group's own understandings of the issues they address, their studies are shared in workshops and made available through the women's documentation centres and libraries run by the Tanzanian Media Women's Association, the Tanzanian Gender Networking Program, and the Women's Research and
Documentation Project. Research is also passed on to policy makers at the political level. The widespread networking and sharing of resources amongst women's groups is a great strength of the Tanzanian women's movement. While some of these groups and members of others were carrying out research on gender prior to democratic openings, these openings have encouraged them to concentrate on ensuring representatives of the government are aware of their work and it can have some impact at the policy level. Furthermore, much of their research directly relates to how women are being affected by the reforms, particularly those dealing with economic restructuring.

While research groups include those groups that have additional orientations, four groups in my study may be classified as having research as their primary focus. While these groups do not always take a participatory approach in conducting their research, they still have a strong potential for empowerment as their work can be used by more action-oriented groups. Not all research areas warrant a participatory approach and groups should not be criticised when they fail to adopt one. For example, the statistical research undertaken by the Gender Statistics Group does not involve participatory methods and is focused on disaggregating government statistics. In other areas research is conducted in a manner that engages their research subjects and has a strong empowerment potential, as this research becomes a process of mutual education. This method of research is particularly suited for studies drawing on attitudes and other normative data. When addressing the empowerment potential of a group, equally important as examining the structure and the methods adopted by the group is how well these structures and methods are suited to the goals being sought.
Two research organisations operate from the University of Dar es Salaam, the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) Women’s Group and the Women’s Research and Documentation Project (WRDP). The WDRP was for a time (between 1980 and 1982) affiliated with the IDS Women’s Group but personality and political differences within the IDS women’s group and the Institute of Development Studies itself prompted a split. The IDS Women’s Group and the WDRP now collaborate and have a good relationship. Both groups conduct research on a wide range of women’s issues and the WDRP has a documentation centre at the University. How participatory their work is varies among researchers and research areas. The groups both have a political focus and use their research and workshops to pressure the government towards adopting policy changes.

The Gender Statistics Group is a government group rather than an NGO. It is not formally registered as a NGO as it operates within the Bureau of Statistics, but, as it is not associated with any political party, is not characterised here as politically affiliated. Despite its being a government group, it has a fair amount of autonomy, has some non-government membership, and interacts extensively with the NGO community. As an early member of the group, Christine Hongoke, noted, “We cater more for NGOs, but the government gets the credit.” Government studies, which document women’s position in various sectors, rely heavily on the work and participation of women in the Gender Statistics Group.

Initiated by SIDA (Sweden), the group began to compile a gender disaggregated statistical database from government statistics. This project was initially undertaken by only one woman. “Because this was a big job, a lot of data, and men make up the majority of statisticians in the Bureau and are holding the managerial positions, they
thought it was a dirty job, donkey work, so who would do it? So they gave it to a young lady, a junior statistician, said you can start and begin compiling, do what you want.” The initial draft of her work was circulated around the Bureau, various ministries, and the Women’s Research and Documentation Project. People began to take notice and the Gender Statistics Group was formed to improve on the report, published with Unicef, in 1990, as *Women and Children in Tanzania*. In 1994 the group developed a gender profile of Tanzania to take to the Beijing Conference and, in 1995, helped put together another publication, *Analysis of African Women and Men: the Tanzanian Case*. The group would prefer to be an independent NGO and avoid the bureaucracy of government, but needs to remain where they are for financial reasons. They do not take a participatory approach to conducting research, as they feel there would be no benefit to this. However, they network and share resources extensively within the NGO community. Their reports have a further impact at the government level - for example they have dispelled the government belief that the education system provides equal opportunities for women and girls. Thus their contribution to women’s empowerment, with that of other research groups, is substantial.

vii) Coalitions of organisations

This category has been added by DAWN to the previous six to account for the development of women’s movements. “Between the organisations and the movements stand networks and coalitions, some of which are permanent and other more temporary. Their goals range from direct political action to exchanges of research and information” (Sen and Grown 1987: 93). This additional category in part helps the DAWN framework
address the immense empowerment potential found in the women’s movement as a whole, as it identifies the groups that help co-ordinate this movement. There is no question that a women’s movement has developed in Tanzania, as the increasing numbers of politicised organised women attest. The high level of interaction and networking between groups magnifies the strength of this movement. While the mass-based organisation BAWATA hopes to emerge as a coalition and TAMWA takes on many coalition group functions, presently the main organisation filling this role is the Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP).

The objectives of TGNP are to contribute to the empowerment of women with a local, national, and global focus, by promoting networking among organisations active in the women’s movement; supporting groups which lobby the government for change; promoting their philosophy of animation and participatory methodology; generating and communicating information on gender issues as widely as possible; strengthening critical gender analysis; and validating cultural forms of communication used by women (TGNP nd: 1).

TGNP operates a library and documentation centre, conducts and publishes research, runs a weekly seminar series on women and development, networks extensively with other women’s NGOs and provides them with training on animation and gender sensitisation. The animation philosophy and methodology involves a participatory approach to raising awareness of gender issues and their relation to other social issues such as class, development, race, religion, and ethnicity. It uses animated workshops, role-play, case studies, songs and poetry. It is aimed at leading participants to take strategic actions by allowing them to critically examine conflicting ideas and
relationships. It also strives to increase solidarity, self-esteem, and confidence in participants, and inspire them through an enjoyable democratic process (TGNP nd: 1).

TGNP is not a mass organisation; of eleven founding members and five associate members, who work at the centre, two are full-time. It is run as an informal network evolving out of the organisations and individuals that have become active in TGNP sponsored activities. Participation in their programmes is open to all. While this may indicate a lack of a clear organisational structure, which DAWN notes as a potential constraint on coalitions, in the case of TGNP this is a strength. Neither is TGNP issue based as their focus covers all sectors that groups in the women's movement bring to them. Their seminars and workshops are heavily subscribed and TGNP provides a valuable meeting place for women involved in different groups to come into contact with one another. TGNP, along with TAMWA, forms the epicentre of the Tanzanian women's movement.

2.3 Assessment: Measuring Empowerment and Rating Groups' Contributions

i) DAWN's classification and the strategic/practical dichotomy

The Tanzanian women's movement has grown remarkably from the mid-1980s, successfully addressing strategic and practical needs and interests in all sectors limiting women's empowerment. Women's groups face many constraints and obstacles to reaching their goals and contributing to the ongoing project of gender equality. While DAWN's classification system highlights many of these, the groups in my study do not fully conform to their model's expectations. It has been used to provide a framework for
understanding the capacities of women’s groups; however several adjustments need to be made for it to apply to the Tanzanian case.

With the exception of the Albino Women’s Association, service-oriented groups are far from being gender-blind - this is a greater issue for service-oriented organisations that are not also women’s groups. The reasons for this weakness in the Albino Women’s Group are more likely to be found in the group’s lack of autonomy from the larger Albino Association. A similar constraint is faced by the Gender Statistics Group, the Women Workers’ Directorate of OTTU, the Journalist Environment Association, the Muslim Women’s Group, the Institute of Development Studies Women’s Group, the Treasury Women’s Research and Consultancy Group, and the UWT. Some of these groups have negotiated accommodations with their larger bodies, which have allowed them to operate with greater freedom while others have become independent NGOs. The best solution is specific to the groups themselves – how much space they have for manoeuvre and the (usually economic) costs of independence have to be evaluated. Organisational autonomy may be a struggle for groups existing within all classifications. An alternative classification framework could use independent associations versus affiliated “wings” to isolate potential group weaknesses.

That service-oriented groups do not address strategic interests is a weakness in terms of their overall empowerment capacity, because all practical interests can be analysed and transformed into strategic needs. The Muslim Women’s Group has huge potential in this area, but the group has become so disillusioned it is in effect giving up before it has begun. Getting Old is to Grow is struggling to improve conditions for older women in Tanzania, yet it sees only practical rather than strategic ways to do this, and
have yet to meet these. “Grey power” can be a force and there exists a potential avenue for the group to mobilise older Tanzanians to fight for better pensions or a national old age security system. However, Tanzania’s economic climate and the context of adjustment make these options seem unrealistic. Furthermore, a focus on practical rather than strategic needs may have empowering results. While this focus in unlikely to empower women as a whole, the significance for the individual women who become empowered should not be overlooked. Thus, in rating various forms of empowerment against one another, the empowerment resulting from strategic changes affects more women and has greater permanence, but a degree of empowerment may still be present when women’s practical needs are met. The exact number of women that need to become empowered for empowerment not to lose its conceptual utility is difficult to determine and open to debate. Here a programme is deemed empowering if it affects increasing numbers of women over time, as through schools and credit schemes or all women within a specific sector or profession, regardless of how small these actual numbers may be. Programs excluded from this understanding are those that empower only a small number of women within a larger group without expanding these numbers over time, such as the Muslim Women’s Group, which empowers themselves, but not Muslim women as a whole.

Financial constraints affect all groups, not only at the grassroots level. The Women’s Worker’s Directorate, and perhaps BAWATA (if UWT reports are to believed) seem to be the only groups relatively exempt from this. NGOs face a constant process of writing project proposals to secure funding from external donors. Few groups receive any government support, and when they do its usually negligible. As Christine Hongoke
of the Gender Statistics Group complained, "we wanted money, not a cup of tea and some samosas." Even the UWT, the women's group of the ruling party, is forced to operate on a volunteer basis and seek external financing for their activities. An inadequate resource base not only limits a group's project capacity, but also can create a lack of commitment and morale among volunteers, a problem almost all groups mentioned.

DAWN identified outside-initiated groups as lacking in a critical analysis of gender subordination. This was not found to be the case for the Gender Statistics Group, the Society for Women and AIDS in Tanzania, the Tanzanian Home Economics Association or the Tanzanian Association of Women Professionals in Science and Technology. This is likely because these groups are not exclusively concerned with poverty. A key weakness of the Women Professionals in Science and Technology, in addition to their (perceived?) low resource base and an inactive membership, is an unwillingness to exploit their potential to influence government policy through networking with members of the government. This is unfortunate, as getting more women into science and technology will likely require policy changes in the Ministry of Education, not only at the colleges and universities these women focus upon. Most other groups however do engage with members of the government. Similarly, the women's directorate of OTTU could increase its activities to help organise women in jobs outside of the union movement. This would reflect an expansion on how far it goes in addressing issues of women and employment. Its close ties to the male dominated union work against this.

Some other thinkers use a more limited understanding than DAWN of grassroots organisations, for example Mohamed Halfani notes:
The current prominence among registered NGOs of agencies dedicated to action-oriented research, public-education, legal-aid work, human-rights activities promotion of community development groups, and popular theatre should not be mistaken for the development and growth of grassroots organisations. Many of the former play a very important role in assisting and strengthening community-based civil associations; but they are only facilitators of a dynamic civil society. They should not be considered as a substitute for grassroots civil associations or "people’s organisations" (Halfani 1993: 202).

However, I have adopted DAWN’s wider usage rather than a meaning more focused on the structural origination of groups within the community because it is found to better address group’s empowerment capacities. While grassroots groups that directly rise out of local communities are closer to the ground - and thus have a powerful advantage in responding to their communities needs, the associations identified in this study as grassroots all emphasise participation and may have an even stronger empowerment potential due to their impact at a number of levels, including that of the state.

DAWN points to three possible “entry points” – global, regional, and local – for women’s groups to address power structures. It is more useful to adopt Caroline Moser’s suggestion of looking not at these spatial levels of power, but rather at four levels that are loci of power and control, identified as the family, civil society, the state and the global system (Moser 1993: 205). These provide the entry points for groups to challenge structures of gender discrimination. Choosing the best entry point is a challenge all groups face; most employ strategies that address more than one, and as a coalition TGNP emphasises all four.13

In addition to targeting specific entry levels to transform gender relations, grassroots organisations may be effective in initiating a “war of position”, in the Gramscian sense, by offering up a challenge to the dominant discourse of development,
subverting both its meaning and its course. John Friedmann (1992) envisions the formation of an alternative development discourse entering into a dialogue with mainstream doctrine and subverting it in a process of what he refers to as a dialectical progress. In a similar vein Arturo Escobar (1992) argues that grassroots organisations can provide an alternative to development, in that they offer up a challenge to the dominant discourse of development, subverting both its meaning and its course. The main levels targeted by the middle-class groups in this study are those of culture, the state, and civil society (through institutions and other groups). Transformation at the family level occurs more indirectly, as individual women renegotiate gender relations within their families in response to an increase in their economic opportunities or education.

An urban middle-class bias was found to be not only an issue for grassroots groups, as DAWN indicates; all groups in this survey are primarily middle-class in membership and run this risk. Middle-class membership is not a constraint in and of itself, as professional associations are necessarily middle-class and for many groups it is only middle-class women who are likely to have the skills and time to be active members. For example, the legal education services brought to communities by lawyers from Suwata and the Tanzanian Women Lawyer's Association could not be delivered by women with no legal training. Poor women are struggling to meet their economic needs, and do not have the time to engage in organisations that often have goals they rank low on their list of priorities. Furthermore many of the issues being addressed by these women's groups are not exclusively class issues. Pili Mtabalike of TAMWA addressed this issue in our interview:
The women in TAMWA have similar education levels, we have been accused of being elitist in the past, but this is not altogether valid. We had one woman with us, a lawyer with an MA in law, who was for eight years beaten by her husband and did nothing – for eight years! – before she came forward. This is an educated woman, with an MA, a lawyer, so she knew the law, the channels to go through. So maybe I can’t say I know what it is to work all day in the field, but for what we are trying to do, I don’t think it is fair to say we are unable because of our class.

Middle-class groups may also manage outreach projects in a participatory fashion, as demonstrated by TGNP’s animation methodology, BACAWA’s credit scheme, and the gender sensitisation workshops carried out by a number of different groups. A non-participatory approach is more common with research groups, but their work may still have an empowering impact when used by other groups. Having said this, middle-class groups only have the capacity to meet a small fraction of Tanzanian women, and their impact is not widely felt among women occupying lower class levels.

Participation within groups is also an issue. Caroline Moser notes, “one significant difference between many women’s NGOs and other organisations relates to internal organisational and leadership structure,” finding women’s groups to have higher levels of internal participation (Moser 1993: 204). Most groups in my sample had a clearly defined formal hierarchy with elected positions, executive committees, and delegated roles. This is necessary in order to secure funding and register as an NGO rather than exist informally as a collective. These groups do, however, emphasise inclusion and participation in designing and carrying out their projects. I attended seminars and workshops at TGNP, a meeting of the IDS women’s group, and one of BACAWA’s village bank clubs, and noted the absence of hierarchy and power struggles between members of groups. Of course conflicts do at times exist, groups are not exempt from power struggles simply because they are composed of women. In recognition of
this, TAMWA has identified one of their major problems as, "opportunistic tendencies among some TAMWA members, arising from greed and non-commitment to the cause" (Alloo and Sanga 1993: 93-94).

In addition to the categories identified by DAWN, another distinction can be made between groups that are ascriptive or voluntary in focus. In ascriptive groups membership is based around a factor such as birth, age, sex or adoption into a kin or territorial unit (Wipper 1984). While members of these groups may volunteer, these groups are vertically based. In contrast, voluntary groups are horizontally based with common interests bringing members together (Chazan 1982: 170). All women's groups in Tanzania, with the exception of religious associations, are voluntary, and as such tend to be internally more participatory and less hierarchical. The significance of this is highlighted in Chapter 5 with a discussion women’s groups in other countries, where they are often ethnically divided. Voluntary groups may strengthen civil society as a whole and contribute to the fostering of a democratic political culture (Putnam 1993). However, ascriptive groups such as the Catholic Women's Association have the advantage of not being dominated by middle-class membership and thus are better placed to address the concerns of the entire group of women they represent.

The associations in this sample fill multiple categories in DAWN's classification, showing spillovers between groups' approaches and goals. The most significant convergence is the number of groups that take a grassroots empowerment approach while also occupying other classifications. The adoption of multiple approaches accounts in part for the presence of fewer constraints and weaknesses than identified by DAWN. The framework used by DAWN has difficulty assessing the impact of groups that do not fit
neatly into one or another category – most of the groups seen here. An additional strength of the Tanzanian women’s movement is the high prevalence of networking and sharing of resources and experiences between groups. While the DAWN framework points to the significance of the coalitions, which facilitate this, it cannot account for the complementary manner in which individual groups target specific sectors, and as a whole strengthen the movement. In the case of the Tanzanian women’s movement, the whole is indeed greater than the sum of its parts. An examination of the concrete gains made by the women’s movement provides a way to assess this strength. However, failures in some areas do not mean that the groups working there are somehow structurally deficient, as some problems are by their own nature more difficult to overcome.

ii) Sectoral Achievements

The success of groups often depends on the sectors that they address and the entry points of power they concentrate upon. Some empowerment objectives are more difficult to achieve than others are. Over the last decade there have been a number of changes in Tanzania that have resulted in advances and reversals for women’s gender equality. It is difficult to measure the impact women’s groups have in contributing to the advances, as other factors such as the overall democratisation process must be taken into consideration. As Majorie Mbilinyi of TGNP commented, “It is a long-term process and it is hard to identify what is our influence.” Nonetheless it is certain that women’s groups have played a large role. Until the mid-1980s the government monopolised most associational activities through its affiliate organisations such as the Union of Tanzanian Women (UWT) and the Union of Tanzanian Workers (JUWATA). The new political
spaces allowing citizens the freedom to organise independently have substantially increased the ability of women to pressure the government for change.

How groups use the state as an entry point varies. The need to have more women represented within the state is recognised, and women's groups played a role in establishing the system where fifteen percent of parliamentary seats are reserved for women. Women's groups are active in pushing for legal and constitutional changes. However, with the exception of politically affiliated associations, groups are not organised on political lines and tend not to see themselves as "political" due to the sectarian connotations of the term. Most groups (for perceived strategic reasons) are more interested in creating a space to operate that is as far removed as possible from the state (Tripp 1996). Negotiating the most effective relationship with the state, balancing autonomy with influence, is something groups are still struggling to address. The dynamics of the emerging relationship between women's groups and the government are examined in Chapter 4.

a) Law

Strategies relating to the law that are addressed by women's groups are focused on all sectors and all power levels and meet strategic and practical gender needs and interests. Groups strive to change laws, create awareness among women of what their legal rights are, and provide women with access to legal representation. The legal environment in Tanzania has changed dramatically in the wake of democratisation and the move to a multiparty system, but it still remains problematic in a number of areas. Groups
operating in the media and legal sectors have been most influential in applying pressure on the government to continue the reform process and address women's legal concerns.

The Nyalali Report (United Republic of Tanzania 1991) recommended the change to a multiparty system, the creation of a new constitution which would conform to the 1984 Bill of Rights, and gave a ten point summary of democratic defects, one being the presence of at least forty restrictive laws. Only the first of these three recommendations has as of yet been fully met and the government has not made any official response to the Report's recommendations, saying only that it is not bound to follow them (West et al. 1994: 27). Some of these "restrictive" laws identified and the incongruencies between the new Bill of Rights and the Constitution have a detrimental effect on women. Some affect women directly, such as the Inheritance laws, others more indirectly, such as the Societies Ordinance which is in contradiction to new rights of association guaranteed under the Bill of Rights, and which grant the Principal Secretary of Home Affairs the right to decide if groups may or may not register, without having to provide a reason.

There is a lack of clarity about when customary, Islamic or "written" law applies. Constitutional rights have not yet been fully recognised as superseding customary or Islamic laws, which discriminate against women in the areas of inheritance and property rights. The marriage law has recently been changed and inheritance laws are being reviewed. Women's Lawyers associations are directly lobbying the government for action in this area and are taking on cases, which may create precedents in favour of women.

The Sexual Offences (Special Provision) Bill passed in April of 1998 marks a significant achievement for Tanzanian women. The Bill is quite strong, sentencing rape
and child abuse offenders to thirty years imprisonment plus the cane\textsuperscript{14}. The Bill does not go so far as to recognise rape within a marriage, but nonetheless represents a serious commitment on the part of the government towards addressing this problem – between ten and fifteen cases of rape and sexual assault are reported to the police daily in Arusha and Dar es Salaam, a fraction of the total, as most go unreported (Rweyemamu 1998). In 1996 the law that permanently expelled pregnant girls from the school system was eliminated; this may substantially reduce the number of girls dropping out of the school system.

Nine of the women's groups in my sample offer legal education to women and/or run legal aid centres. These activities address practical and strategic interests, empowering women through providing them with knowledge of their rights and extending services they could not otherwise afford. The limits these groups face are in reaching women and battling corruption and patriarchal attitudes within the judicial system. Media groups use their own publications, newspapers, television and radio to reach women while at the same time alter cultural attitudes towards women's legal rights. They have been highly successful in creating popular debate, however, in all areas where women work to transform cultural attitudes, it is difficult to measure their impact.

b) Health

Women's health issues are addressed in some manner by fifteen of the groups in my sample. Associations of professionals in the health field are trying to encourage more women to enter into health related occupations and at higher levels while providing grassroots health education and running health centres for women alongside other
women's groups. The health of poor women can be substantially improved when they have additional health knowledge, even when their economic conditions remain unimproved, and women's health focused groups have a direct impact in this area.

Women's health clinics address the practical economic limitations of women to obtain medical care, and expand the availability of health services, which have been severely reduced under structural adjustment. Groups are limited in the number of women they can assist, as their services are largely restricted to urban centres. Media groups play an important role here by providing health information over the radio and in their publications. While research groups have clearly documented the need for more government resources to be allocated to women's health, as of yet they have not met with any success. Maternal mortality rates have increased since 1990 (TGNP 1993: 99; Government of Tanzania 1995: 134). The rate of women infected with AIDS and HIV continues to rise, and groups that address this tragedy have yet to make breakthroughs in changing cultural attitudes towards sexual behaviour.

c) Education

Women's groups are also working towards improving women's education, not only in terms of their health and legal rights, but also in vocational schools and the formal school system. (Or, in the case of Udanada, by setting up an alternative educational model) A great deal of research has been produced on the low numbers and weak performance of female students after the primary level and in science related fields. At the post-secondary level women's enrolment is decreasing and despite affirmative action at the
secondary level their situation remains unchanged. Literacy rates are declining for males and females, but at a faster rate for women.

Women's groups' have lobbied the government for changes in curriculum and classroom materials that are gender sensitive, a support system in secondary schools to assist girls who were accepted through affirmative action, affirmative action at higher levels of education, and an expansion in girl's boarding schools. Apart from the inclusion of teaching materials supplied by the groups themselves and the teaching methods used in the schools they themselves operate concrete changes have not been made. The World Bank has in fact advised the government to abolish the affirmative action program - if this takes place, the number of females in secondary education or higher would drop dramatically. One positive development in education trends is that increasing numbers of women are entering the media field, an area of great significance for transforming cultural gender stereotypes.

d) Labour

Workplace issues are addressed by worker-based groups such as the Women’s Directorate of the Organisation of Tanzanian Trade Unions and the Treasury Women’s Research and Consultancy Group. The former group is limited by the union structure in Tanzania which remains tied very closely to the state. Both groups have had some success in raising gender issues in the workplace and compiling research on women’s employment needs.

There is little activity among women’s groups to address the gender division of labour in society at large or to provide training opportunities for women in male-
dominated sectors. The Treasury Women meet this need in a limited way, providing assistance for women to advance within the Ministry of Finance. Other groups have researched the area, but beyond running gender-sensitising workshops they have little direction in how to proceed. The employment issues surrounding women working in the informal sector are discussed in the following chapter.

e) Credit

Women’s access to credit remains very limited. A number of women’s groups offer credit to women, the most innovative being the Baby Care Women’s Association. For the most part these programs only address practical needs and do not encourage women to enter into “male” business ventures (part of the reason for this is that women want to operate projects with the skills they already have), which usually have higher rates of return. Furthermore, “despite the incredible growth over the last decade in microenterprise credit programs throughout Africa, there appears to be little evidence to suggest significant and sustained positive impacts for the supposed beneficiaries (in terms of, for example, microentrepreneurs “graduating” to higher or more sophisticated levels of operations, increasing income flows or levels of employment)” (Buckley 1997: 1091). There now exist three government administered credit sources for women; these are discussed in the following chapter.

f) Culture

Culture is addressed by women’s groups with concentrations in all sectors. Culture is understood as the shared symbols, languages and practises through which gender
relations are reproduced and changed. Increasing the numbers of women in traditionally
male fields and at the state level is not on its own sufficient to bring about cultural change
(Newman 1995). Tanzanian women’s groups have been successful in researching and
identifying the cultural factors that discriminate against women; however cultures
develop and change slowly, so this is a long-term project. Nonetheless there is tangible
evidence of success.

The proliferation and dynamism of the woman’s movement is spilling over into
the popular press. There is a new women’s magazine, *Femina*, that addresses women’s
issues as well as fashion, cooking and beauty. For example, the July 1998 issue had
articles on sexual harassment and family planning as well as lighter features on modelling
and “ideal gifts for your special partner.”

Workplace attitudes towards women are changing in some sectors. Pili
Mtambalike, a member of TAMWA noted that when TAMWA began their male
colleagues in the media field, “were not too friendly, they were sarcastic, ridiculing us,
calling us lesbians. They were threatened by a group so outspoken. Later, when it was
seen that we were serious, attitudes changed. We now have support from our male
counterparts.” Groups report that gender sensitisation workshops for men have an
immediate impact.

While the Tanzanian culture is shifting towards a recognition and acceptance of
feminist goals, this is happening primarily in the middle-class. Despite outreach work
middle-class groups only reach a tiny fraction of the population, who have little or no
awareness that a feminist movement is afoot in their country. At the political level
change is also slow. Few women hold positions of political power and their influence is
weak. It is hoped by members of the women’s movement that democratisation will have a positive impact in creating new rights and freedoms for women, which will lead the culture as a whole towards greater recognition and support for women’s concerns.

g) Poverty
Women’s groups have identified poverty as the central factor limiting women’s empowerment. Unlike the other sectors treated, poverty cannot be addressed by a specific ministry and easily targeted. The roots of poverty are widespread and seemingly insurmountable for a developing country such as Tanzania. For this reason women’s groups have been unable to find a strategic course of action to address it. Their activities may empower women in a limited fashion, but as long as women remain poor the majority remain isolated from the women’s movement. The Tanzanian Gender Networking Program and other groups are very concerned with the impacts of structural adjustment on poor women, but beyond assisting women through credit schemes and passing research on to the government, they have no concrete suggestions of how to deal with this problem.

2.4 Conclusions
The remarkable growth of women’s associations over the past decade has established a women’s movement in Tanzania that has a strong focus in a multiplicity of areas which discriminate against women, utilises a variety of strategies and entry levels, and has a strong critical gender perspective concentrating on empowerment. Groups are constrained by the magnitude of cultural obstacles – in all sectors and at all entry points
and their limited resources. Some groups continue to struggle with a lack of autonomy. Most groups have succeeded in overcoming the organisational constraints of having weak critical analysis, hierarchical structures, and a non-participatory approach. While they have been successful in meeting many of their objectives, their impact on the majority of poor Tanzanian women remains slight. Women are becoming empowered in Tanzania, but for the most part these are middle-class women. Middle-class women are also taking a larger role in determining what is empowering for women and in doing so promoting perspectives that are not all shared by poorer women. Furthermore, when poorer women are being reached and empowered through contact with the women's movement it is their practical needs more often than strategic needs that are being met. While this results in an increase in power for some poor women, for the majority their status remains unchanged.

DAWN's empowerment framework has been used to classify and analyse the structures of groups in the women's movement and the strategies they employ. There is a problem using this framework in being fair in evaluating groups' empowerment impact relative to one another. A similar problem exists when using practical/strategic distinctions. At issue here is who defines what is deemed empowering, and whether strategies which provide considerable empowerment to a few are more or less valuable than strategies which provide lower levels of empowerment to a greater number. Furthermore, when goals that provide lower levels of empowerment, for example through meeting practical needs, are more easily met than those which may result in structural transformations, can groups be criticised for adopting them? Ultimately these issues can only be resolved in the specific contexts within which they emerge. Groups are perhaps
better understood as taking on the structures and strategies that best fit the needs they have identified, which cannot all be met though the same methods. Some needs are certainly more pressing than others, but a variety of approaches leads to more being met simultaneously. Thus DAWN’s framework is useful for distinguishing the different approaches used, and at times for highlighting areas where they may be weak or face constraints, but does not serve as an adequate means for evaluating them relative to one another.

Caroline Moser has tried to develop a method for evaluating groups’ empowerment potential through her distinction between practical and strategic gender needs. However, she does not recognise the manner in which practical approaches can lead to empowerment for the women they directly assist. Women as a group do not become empowered through these approaches, but individual women who receive access to health education or legal services or vocational training or credit are empowered within their own lives. These programs are important and should not be dismissed as merely welfarist, particularly as they often are in response to the prioritised needs of the women they assist, while often strategic feminist goals requiring fundamental structural changes are not viewed as important.

Furthermore these practical activities often address areas negatively affected by economic restructuring. This process in Tanzania has made the services provided by women’s groups even more significant as they are taking over roles previously associated with the public sphere. Women’s groups have been unable to create strategies that respond to economic issues in any strategic fashion. Thus their practical initiatives in
these areas reflect a perceived lack of options rather than a failure to undertake a critical gender analysis.
Notes

1 See Appendix B for the dates of all interviews with representatives of middle-class women’s groups.

2 For a conflicting view, see Hyden and Karlstom 1993.

3 Economics can be divided into a supply side and a demand side; micro-economics examines the micro-level of supply and demand interactions between individual economic agents, macro-economics examines the macro-level of aggregate supply and demand. Meso analysis is concerned with the structures that mediate between individuals and the economy as a whole. (Elson, 1994: 33)

4 This is the most recent census.

5 There are no data available on the gender impacts of retrenchment, but as 50,000 jobs have been eliminated from the public service it is likely that women have suffered disproportionately to men. Women employees had reached 38 percent in government jobs by 1988 but have less job security than men with the criteria of “last hired, first fired.” (TGNP 1993: 62)


7 Refer Table 1 on page 35 for a summary of Moser’s classification.

8 Although they do make an effort to attract girls who left school due to pregnancy, and their inclusion of carpentry training provides women with opportunities to enter a male dominated field.

9 Their Chair, Anna Tibajjuka, was unable to meet with me because she was too busy, and no one at the BAWATA office was willing to meet with me without her present.

10 The title of the project is “Measures to Integrate the Employment, Income and Shelter Needs of Women in Programmes and Projects in the Plantation Sector.” The Swahili abbreviation stands for Mradi wa Wanawake Mashambani, (Project for women on farms).

11 While there are nearly as many research groups (12) only four of these have research as their primary strategy; the others are also grassroots, coalition, or worker-based groups.
The amount of money varies between village groups, depending on what the costs of construction are as well as what is needed to start the loan. The amount is around $4.00 per member.

TGNP actually adopts the DAWN approach of spatial entry points in their literature, but in practice they address all sites of governance as identified by Moser.

Although not so harsh as some members of the public would have liked – there were public demands for the death penalty or castration.

Only data up to 1991 are available. In 1990 the rate was 190 (per 100,000 births), in 1991 it had risen to 215.
Chapter 3
Economic Restructuring and Women in the Informal Economy

3.0: Economic Restructuring and Associational Growth

Women in Tanzania’s middle-class are not alone in organising themselves into groups for collective activities. Poorer women are also joining together in a variety of organisational forms. However, while most middle-class women are forming associations in response to democratic openings, which are seen as offering them a greater level of inclusiveness in political decision-making, poor women, self-employed in the informal sector of Dar es Salaam, are engaging in associational activities in response to practical concerns more closely associated with economic hardship and the reforms of restructuring. These women are developing collective strategies to cope with their growing role as main providers of family income and their entry into the increasingly saturated informal sector economy. Through their practical strategies some empowerment potential is emerging; however it is limited, both in terms of the range of gendered issues being addressed and how far empowering outcomes change their lives. Furthermore, the empowerment of these poorer women for the most part is not a result of processes of critical analysis of women’s gendered positions; it results as a side-effect rather than a sought-after objective and contributes to weaker levels of empowerment. While practical actions may lead to advances in empowerment, strategically oriented activities tend to result in greater gains.

Many self-employed women in the informal sector are forming groups in response to externally initiated credit programmes, participating in upato rotating savings clubs, and working in the same geographical location for sociability and security. These groups
contribute to meeting women’s practical economic needs and in addition further develop patterns of trust and co-operation among themselves. The increased numbers of women employed in the informal economy has expanded their financial autonomy and their power at the level of the family.

Examining this trend through the lens of empowerment, these women can be seen to be gaining increased levels of power at the levels of the state, society and the family. Collective strategies allow them better to cope with their entry into the cash economy, where their increased presence and resistance to government controls has had an impact on state and municipal level treatment of them. State recognition of their economic participation has also resulted in the formation of credit programmes to assist them. Women’s increased participation in the informal sector is also reshaping cultural attitudes towards women’s appropriate economic roles, and as more women take on business activities the belief that men are the prime urban income generators is shifting towards a more equitable understanding. This societal cultural shift is having an impact within families as women find they are less under the control of their husbands who have been forced to accept the need for them to work away from the home. In doing so women have increased their financial autonomy and thus power within the family unit and have access to new forums to discuss shared problems and develop collective strategies to address them.

DAWN’s classification system (Sen and Grown 1987), used in Chapter 2, identified a sub-category of worker-based groups as dominating among the self-employed.

The worker-based group usually addresses issues of employment, incomes, working conditions, and availability of credit or marketing, and is more sensitive to such issues as childcare and the demands on women’s time in the organization itself. Some of these organizations are explicitly aware of the
character of women’s subordination. But even those which do not overtly perceive themselves as feminist, are conscious of the substantive issues of both gender and class as they affect poor women’s lives. ... Such organizations also tend to be very successful in empowering poor women in their own personal life situations (Sen and Grown 1987: 91).

The worker-based groups of women in the informal sector are distinct from those found typically in formal sector trade unions in that they have a better representation of poor women. In Tanzania, unfortunately, this classification only weakly captures the nature of groups that dominate among women in the informal sector. There is little to no presence of groups like market women’s associations, prostitutes associations, etc. such as are found in other African countries, although, as will be discussed, women working in a common location often come together in informal alliances to support one another. A National Policy on the Informal Sector (United Republic of Tanzania 1994) has been created which aims to promote more formalised organisational structures for those working in the informal sector. If this is successfully implemented without excessive government control groups may increase their ability to have a voice at policy levels. However, a more likely scenario, based on a reading of this policy, is that institutionalisation and control of informal sector groups will eliminate the power these groups have to resist government controls on the sector and grant them little in the way of new powers to compensate for this.

The Tanzanian government has recognised the important contribution informal sector activities - microenterprises and survival strategies - make to the national economy and has plans to provide organisational and financial incentives for the development of associations for informal-sector operators through the development of new institutionalised structures, which include a formalisation of existing associations and the
fostering of new ones (United Republic of Tanzania 1994: 10). This process has not yet begun, and it is questionable how much influence and power such government-initiated associations would be able to exercise.

While many of the groups in this study are worker-based in the sense that women are collectively organised to secure credit or savings in order to help them start up or improve a business activity, most of these women operate independent businesses with no formal industry-specific association. Some groups in my survey may be encapsulated in DAWN's outside-initiated category, as they only formed in response to an external credit possibility and often do not continue as groups once a loan is paid back. However, an alternative classification system to DAWN's is adopted in order to understand the range of self-employed women's groups and their capacities for creating conditions for empowerment and gender transformation.

Groups of lower-income women operating businesses in the informal sector, are classified into three main categories: those that have received external assistance and have an ongoing relationship with the Ministry of Community Development, Women's Affairs and Children (MCDWAC); those that are in upato savings groups; and those who work together at the same location. Many of the women surveyed fall into two or more of these classifications. Twenty-nine self-employed women were also interviewed who are economically active but do not participate in any group.

There is not a high empowerment potential with groups in any of these categories, as their activities tend to be practical rather than strategic. While practical strategies can contribute to increases in power for women, these increases are usually limited. Empowerment involves the process of choosing between different options and altering
power relations accordingly. While poverty is linked closely to other sectors in which women are disempowered – health, education, and access to legal representation for example – credit and work environment are the two being directly addressed through practical actions.

Poor women have minimal contact with the organised women’s movement, apart from the Union of Tanzanian Women. While credit access is identified by both middle-class and poor women as central to facilitating women’s empowerment, the findings in this study indicate that access to credit, through the programmes available to women, rarely improves women’s economic positions, but rather places upon them the burden of debt. Businesses that are survival strategies seldom graduate to become sustainable and profitable microenterprises. Small amounts of credit which allow women to use existing skills to initiate or expand upon a business rarely help them in the long-term in the context of an increasingly saturated informal economy. Groups formed in this process do however create a space for women to meet and discuss their shared problems, and upato clubs provide them with a savings or insurance strategy as well as a social space, which must certainly be seen as empowering on some level. As many women reported, these forums provide them with “courage” to go on.

3.1: Tanzania’s Informal Sector

The women’s groups discussed in this chapter are composed of women working in the informal sector of the economy. Although the term ‘informal sector’ has been used since the early 1970s, it is still being defined in a number of different ways. In this study the
meaning adopted by the 1991 National Informal Sector Survey (NISS) (Planning Commission and Ministry of Labour and Youth Development 1991) has been adopted:

That the informal sector is constituted of urban and rural, or non-farm, small scale, self-employed activities, with or without hired labour. Typically they operate with a low level of organization, low capital, low technology and often on temporary premises. They usually are not supported by formal financing institutions, and are not usually measured in official government statistics (3-7).

This definition is further qualified in the NISS by limiting informal activity to private sector enterprises with five or fewer paid employees (although an unlimited number of unpaid employees is permitted), in a temporary structure, on a footpath, in the street or in an open place. Businesses that use a high level of technology or that provide professional services are also excluded (3-8 – 3-11).³

Informal sector activity is limited to numbers of paid employees in an enterprise of five or less. There are some businesses in my survey that have a greater number of members, for example in businesses making cement bricks or running a bar. These businesses are considered as within the informal sector, as the women are co-operators rather than paid employees.

This understanding of the informal sector is useful for this study because it accommodates women in businesses that are licensed, such as many hair salons and tailoring shops, as well as those that are not, such as most kiosks, genges, and beer brewers. The businesses in my sample by law should all have a license, but most do not. The fact that many of these women are registered with the government in order to receive financial assistance, yet do not have trading licences, highlights the ad hoc nature of the licensing system in Tanzania.
While the National Informal Sector Survey (Planning Division and Ministry of Labour and Youth Development 1991) identifies high numbers of women working as employees in the informal sector (See Tables 3 and 3.2), this study did not. Most women surveyed here operate their businesses alone or in co-operation with other women. Only six women in this survey identified themselves as hired employees, these worked in hair salons, tailoring shops or in small restaurants (hoteli), and unless they were part of an upato group were not treated as belonging to a women’s association. Some women selling charcoal and firewood hired men to help transport wood from the forests, and some women manufacturing cement bricks hired men to help with labour. The women interviewed who are members of groups that have received financial assistance are all operators – paid employees were not eligible for these programmes. As all women were approached in public business settings or with the assistance of the Ministry of Community Development no domestic servants were interviewed. A more significant factor accounting for the discrepancy is that the majority of employees identified in the Informal Sector Survey are unpaid employees. Reviewing the coverage of Tanzanian labour laws over workers in the informal sector an ILO report commented, “The idea of the term “unpaid employee” has little meaning. Either a person is an employee or not: the exchange of labour for remuneration (in money or kind) is intrinsic in the lawyer’s definition” (Tajgman 1995: 8). Be this as it may, women represent a high proportion of unpaid labour in Tanzania, usually working for family members. All of the women in this study however are part of the cash economy and do not work as hired labour but rather operate their own businesses.
Table 3: Total I.S. Employment / Female Employment by Type by Urban / Rural

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Persons</th>
<th></th>
<th>Females</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban / Rural</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operator</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>612258</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>287465</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>1130416</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>335631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Together</td>
<td>1742674</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>623096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>337845</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>117141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>288861</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>98049</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Together</td>
<td>626706</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>215190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>950103</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>404606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>1419277</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>433680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Together</td>
<td>2369380</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>838286</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 3.1 lists the occupations of the women identified in my survey. Numbers are higher for some groups, such as those who are selling charcoal, because greater numbers of women work together in some businesses than in others, for example at a kiosk or *enge*. These numbers are not intended to be viewed as proportional to the numbers of women engaged in such activities in the economy as a whole, as there are many more kiosks than charcoal businesses. For a list of the industries most often engaged in by Tanzanian women in the informal sector, as compared with men, see Table 3.2. Occupations highlighted indicate those represented in the present study. It should also be noted that many women work in more than one industry. The data in Table 3.2 records only their primary occupation whereas Table 3.1 accounts for all occupations identified by women. Almost half (48 percent) of women have a secondary occupation also in the informal sector (Bureau of Statistics et al. 1993: 1-88). Neither the data in my survey or in the NISS or Labour Force Survey cover prostitution. There are no available estimates on the numbers of adult women prostitutes in Dar es Salaam, but the
estimate that 5,000 prostitutes are girls under the age of sixteen indicates how widespread it is (Tanzania News Roundup 1998).

**Table 3.1: I.S. Employment by Occupation, Survey Sample**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charcoal</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maandazi, etc.</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepared meals <em>(Mama Ntalia or Hoteli)</em></td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice and flour</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bar</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tailoring</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duka (shop)</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livestock (poultry, cattle or pigs)</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cement bricks</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genge (fruit and vegetable kiosk or market stall)</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fabric and Khangas</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beer</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dried fish</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hair salon</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiosk</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handicrafts</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture manufacture</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothes</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misc. (chicken feed, oil for boats, peanuts, bread, water, herbs)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursery school</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cashew wholesale</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firewood</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3.2: Women's Employment by Industry of Employment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OCCUPATION</th>
<th>OPERATORS</th>
<th></th>
<th>EMPLOYEES</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Persons</td>
<td>Females</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager Trade</td>
<td>62146</td>
<td>4773</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager Other</td>
<td>15558</td>
<td>2307</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assoc./Prof-Med.</td>
<td>26941</td>
<td>3955</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>1839</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerks/cashier</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>639</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market/Stall Sell</td>
<td>466556</td>
<td>282370</td>
<td>60.5</td>
<td>55443</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oth. Serv./Trade Workers</td>
<td>17892</td>
<td>2975</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>48610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers</td>
<td>37109</td>
<td>8973</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livestock Workers</td>
<td>13775</td>
<td>5554</td>
<td>40.3</td>
<td>245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charcoal/Forest Workers</td>
<td>18759</td>
<td>3013</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishermen</td>
<td>84166</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>37984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpenters</td>
<td>68212</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>11798</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Building Workers.</td>
<td>111832</td>
<td>384</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>18520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metal workers</td>
<td>24432</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>9683</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanics</td>
<td>25981</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>8174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pottery Workers</td>
<td>41780</td>
<td>29170</td>
<td>69.8</td>
<td>9372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carvers</td>
<td>21225</td>
<td>895</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mat Makers</td>
<td>98323</td>
<td>43011</td>
<td>43.7</td>
<td>3108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food/Meat Processors</td>
<td>68498</td>
<td>22820</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>13806</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture Making</td>
<td>12237</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>4156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing Making</td>
<td>78304</td>
<td>16756</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>14234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoe Repairs</td>
<td>11750</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>4869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oth. Craft wkers.</td>
<td>13861</td>
<td>1159</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>1730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machine Operas.</td>
<td>26538</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>20565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Operators</td>
<td>4876</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>3255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street Food Vndrs.</td>
<td>210479</td>
<td>145664</td>
<td>69.2</td>
<td>58470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oth. Street Vndrs.</td>
<td>111902</td>
<td>45840</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>27252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Transport Workers.</td>
<td>42211</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>25269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Workers</td>
<td>27301</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>247298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1742654</td>
<td>623096</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>626706</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the areas of retail trade, restaurants, bars and domestic service there are more women working than men, where they make up between 55 to 78 percent of total employment in these industries (Bureau of Statistics et al. 1993: 1-86). In contrast, female workers make up less than five percent in repair services, fishing, mining and quarrying transport and building and construction industries (Bureau of Statistics et al. 1993: 1-86). As is the case in the formal sector, there is a gender division of labour where women are concentrated in the least skilled and lowest paying occupations. Women overall and in most occupation groups earn between 70 and 80 percent of what men earn (Bureau of Statistics et al. 1993: 1-89). Neither credit schemes nor women’s upato or locational organisations address the gender division of labour or affect the lower remuneration associated with the type of jobs linked with women.

The Labour Force Survey found that close to 65 percent of women working in the informal sector have no education and are illiterate. The educational levels in my survey were much higher. Again the absence of “unpaid” workers and domestic servants and the high numbers of women who qualified for assistance (for which they wrote proposals) account for this. Fifty-five percent of the women I surveyed had completed primary school, whereas only fifteen percent had never attended school (See Table 3). Hence this study reflects a more educated sample of the informal economy than the average, although levels of education remain low.
Table 3.3: Education Level of Women Surveyed in the Informal Sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Education</th>
<th>Number of Women</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>15.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Unfinished</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>55.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Unfinished</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary or higher</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Education</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>525</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2: Groups with credit

Women working at small projects in the informal sector have access to credit through several donor-financed grant and loan programmes for women. In addition there is the government-supported Women Development Fund (WDF). The Ministry of Community Development, Women’s Affairs and Children register all groups who have received assistance and meet with them regularly. The frequency of visits varies widely among wards and districts. Some groups go to Community Development offices; others are visited at their place of work. Groups in more urban areas have far more regular contact with Community Development than do those located in wards which are more out of the way. Dar es Salaam is made up of three administrative districts: Ilala, Kinondoni, and Temeke. Each of these regions is further divided into between sixteen and eighteen wards. There is a Community Development Officer responsible for meeting with and assisting women in each ward. There are district level Community Development Officers responsible for administering women’s credit and who may also meet with the groups on occasion. Despite weaknesses with the credit schemes themselves, these decentralised structures of contact have valuable potential for reaching lower-income women, particularly in rural wards. This potential would be enhanced if they were co-ordinated
with other ministries. As it stands now however, the relationship between women in these groups and their Community Development extension workers are infused with paternalism and the services provided by Community Development are uneven and do little to provide training, channels of governance, or opportunities for sustainable economic advancement.

All groups with credit were interviewed in the presence of either their ward or district level community development officer. While some groups were met with at their place of business, most interviews were held at their ward Community Development office.

a) Special Grant for Women

The Danida and Australian Government Special Grant for Women is made available to women, in groups with five or more members, who are working together in the same business. Table 3.4 indicates the numbers of Special Grants that were disbursed between 1984 and 1992. Three groups in this survey received a Special Grant: two in peri-urban (administratively designated as rural) wards in Temeke, the other in an urban ward in Kinondoni.5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Grants</th>
<th>Total Disbursed (T. Shs.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1,479,715</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>960</td>
<td>103,017,421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>805</td>
<td>172,266,426</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>734</td>
<td>144,136,602</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Cooperative and Rural Development Bank
The first group has thirteen members, all originally from Mozambique, who are running a bar. They started the bar in 1993 and received the grant in 1994. Before they began this business they were each brewing and selling beer independently, but the police were harassing them over not having a trading licence. The loan was used to become licensed, finish construction of their bar, and buy a cassette player. Their business has not been successful however, as other bars have opened in their area, and all members participate in some other informal sector activity to make ends meet. Initially I was told that they meet with the ward level Community Development Officer once or twice a month, but then I was told in an aside, "We have a problem with Community Development, they are not coming to see us or give us advice. We just went to the district office to tell them this. Maybe she will now come by once a month or so, I said she came more often before just to please her." They would like to have more contact with the Ministry for business advice and information on other sources of credit. Most foreign embassies in Tanzania have grant programmes for women, but these are not coordinated with the Ministry of Community Development and women I spoke with had no knowledge of their existence.

The second DANIDA and Australian assisted group, also in Temeke is the women's wing of the twenty-eight member youth co-operative Uvikiuta. This group owns and operates a farm and each member is given four hectares of land to build a house on. The grant money was used to buy some cattle, which the women take care of. The group is affiliated with the YWCA and has received other external assistance. The Community Development officer passes by only when there is a visitor who wants to see the group, but they at times visit her office for information about credit sources. This
group is successful in meeting its goals of providing employment opportunities for youth (anyone unmarried under age 30 is considered as youth) and has created a sustainable project with funding links stretching beyond those made available through government sponsored programmes. In terms of contributing to women’s empowerment, the group empowers women who are members by providing them with the opportunity to secure livelihood, but does not in anyway contribute to empowerment for women as a whole. The existence and continuation of this group is not affected by nor does it influence the reform process underway in Tanzania.

The final DANIDA and Australian assisted group is in Kinondoni. Mafere is ten women, some raising chickens and others doing tailoring. When they received the grant in 1990 they were working together raising poultry, but their business was unsuccessful so now they all work independently. They have applied for a small business loan through the Ministry of Community Development to try again. Like other groups assisted through grants, the women were pleased to receive it but the long-term effects of the grant were minimal. These grants are useful for providing start-up capital for businesses, but in the context of heavy informal sector competition often these enterprises are not sustainable or do not provide sufficient income on their own.

The presence of this credit source is unrelated to Tanzania’s reform process, although the timing of its inception coincided with the beginning of economic reforms. While women desperately need credit sources such as this to begin or expand a business, the environment in which they are operating and the type of skills they have to work with limit the long-term value of these enterprises. Some level of empowerment is certainly occurring, as these women will be economically active with or without assistance, and
every bit they receive helps, yet the overall impact of these grants on their lives is minimal.

b) Loan programmes

The Unicef financed Women and Economic Activities Programme (WEA) and the government Women Development Fund (WDF) are both administered by the Ministry of Community Development, Women's Affairs and Children. One or the other of these programmes covers all wards in Dar es Salaam. The division of wards is reportedly arbitrary, but as loans are of different amounts this points to a lack of uniformity in credit availability, which discriminates against the women living in wards under the WDF programme. Loans are disbursed to women in groups of at least five members at interest rates of fifteen percent and twenty-eight percent respectively, compounded every three months. (Both are below the commercial lending rate of thirty-five percent.) WEA loans are to be repaid by the end of two years, and WDF loans, which are of smaller sums, are to be fully repaid after one year. Collateral is not required but groups must make a five percent equity contribution. The National Bank of Commerce reviews the women’s project proposals and performs a feasibility analysis to determine the amount of credit given. It is expected that members of a group know each other before they are given credit, as they are responsible as a group for paying it back, but women are not required to be working together and they receive different amounts of money based on their individual business activities. The level of contact and support they receive from their ward and district Community Development officers varies between wards and districts, but even those groups who have contact more than once a month would like more. When
they initially receive credit they are given a seminar at the regional or district office on managing their businesses and finances. Most groups, particularly those with WEA support, report that the amount of loan was too small to make much difference to their economic activities. However, the rate of repayment is high.  

C) Other funded groups

Three other groups in my survey had received support from other external sources. The *Umoja ni Nguvu* (unity is strength) Women's Group in Mwananyamala, an urban ward in Kinondoni, are thirteen women who have been making beer together since 1972. In 1989 they were given a grant from the government Presidential Trust Fund, which provides funds to microenterprises, but is not limited to those operated by women. When they received the funding, business was successful and they were able to expand their premises and purchase a cassette player. Now, however they are having difficulties as there are too many other bars operating in the area. They would like additional funding, but have no wish to move into another field. They were vague about how they would invest new capital, as beer spoils quickly and cannot be stored.

In Somangila ward, Temeke, a group calling themselves *Kalmati Kijai* was formed in 1990 under the initiation of a Dutch doctor at a nearby hospital. The doctor provided them with the materials needed to establish a craft co-operative. When the group began they had six members, now they are fifteen. The group produces tie and dye fabric and makes baskets. "Business is only a small success, we lack a market, we are too rural. A woman takes an order from us and then takes our products to the market, so we are not selling directly ourselves."
A group of twenty-eight in another rural area of Temeke received two grinding machines for grinding flour from Unicef in 1982, under a Unifem programme. They have not yet begun to grind flour and the member we spoke with, who sells vitembua (fried rice cakes) in front of her home, said she no longer knows how many women are still in the group. They are to begin repaying Unicef for the machines three years after they begin, but they have still not taken possession of them. “We were given two machines, we have already collected one, it is at the ward office. The other is still in Mwenge with the producer. We have meetings now and then to discuss how to retrieve it. We have meetings at the place where we are going to set up.” The group aptly calls itself Vumilia, or Patience. This seems a classic case of a poorly designed project. While the women themselves may be criticised with lacking initiative, Unifem should have considered the issue of how two big machines could be moved to Temeke from Mwenge, which is in an entirely different district. The group can still be located by their Community Development officer, but is rarely visited, as they are in a ward inaccessible to the district centre by way of public transportation.

Only one group in my sample had received financial assistance from any of the middle-class women’s groups operating in Dar es Salaam. In 1992 a group of five women in Mwanayamala were given close to thirteen thousand shillings (S50 US) from the Women’s Advancement Trust (WAT). As the money was a grant the group was happy to receive it, but “the grant was too small to help, that’s all we got, so we don’t progress.” Members of the group operate their own individual businesses: two sell maandazi along the street, one has a genge selling fruit and vegetables from her garden, one sells fried fish and the other is a mama ntalia, preparing hot meals at the side of the
road. The money was mostly used to cover debts and pay for individual family expenses such as school fees and medical costs rather than invested in their businesses that rely on non-durable goods.

A number of women in Somangila ward, Temeke and Makurumla ward, Kinondoni had had some contact with the Baby Care Women’s Association (BACAWA) earlier that year but had not heard anything more about assistance from them. “The woman from BACAWA lied to us, she told us about setting up a women’s bank club, but then she never came back. I’m tired of volunteers, before I was a member of Bacawa, but not anymore.” Some women, in all three districts, had also met with representatives from BAWATA, the new National Women’s Organisation, but again there had been no follow-up. “There was a woman here last year, maybe a student, to open a group for Bawata. But then she went away and nothing happened.”

Groups that received grants are grateful and only complain that the amounts donated were far too small or that competition had grown too much to make much of a difference in their lives. Their relations with the Ministry of Community Development are largely limited to hosting tours for visitors such as myself.

Groups with loans to repay have more frequent contact with ward officers, varying between twice a month to once every three or four months. All groups are free to visit the ward offices whenever they choose however, to seek business advice and information on sources of credit. Groups in rural wards have less frequent contact on average and cannot just go and visit their development officer, because she is not likely to be at the office, if one even exists. In the past, ward-level Community Development office space was often located in CCM offices. Now that Community Development workers are
government rather than party employees some are using school classrooms or have constructed new premises. As the wards are often quite far from where the officers live they do not go to their offices daily, especially as they usually have no desks, typewriters, telephones or other basic office equipment. A member of the group Mwendepole (One who walks slowly) in Temeke told me,

Since the beginning of this year I have come to this office four times, but in vain. I am coming because of our project, to get some advice, but the Community Development officer doesn’t see us, she hasn’t been to visit us since last year and the year before I saw someone from the district office but I had to go to them because there was a problem. I would like to see them more.\(^{15}\)

One urban group which has finished repaying its loan continues to see their ward officer several times a month because their brick-making business is on her way to work. “She still comes by, its on her way, just to see our business, how its going, to give some advice and to inform us about other sources of credit although so far we have not been successful with that. ... We are grateful for that because she helped motivate us to pay back our loan.”\(^{16}\)

Some women heard about the availability of credit from newspapers and the radio and went to their Community Development offices to apply. Many more are members of the UWT and heard about the credit in this way or else were informed by their ten cell leaders. While CCM structures are a good way of disseminating information, there is a perception among some women that groups are more likely to receive assistance and support if they are involved with either the UWT or CCM. A woman selling maandazi with some others in Ilala voiced a common experience when she said,

We wrote down our names as asked by the ward officer, in order to be given credit, but this was all in vain because no one has come back, its just like taking attendance, people like you come and take names but don’t help us.
We don’t have the right contacts. The ward officer came and asked for our names and a subscription of 250 shillings each. I went and paid this at the ward office, then I was directed to another office, and then I was told to wait because this money takes time and not to be discouraged. But up to now I am disappointed because I see money being given to others but not us.¹⁷

A woman in Ubongo, Kinondoni selling bread and mineral water alongside a footpath echoed this sense of unfairness. “I applied for one of these loans. I wrote a proposal and saved some money to give to the bank. But it’s a waste of time for someone like me. If you don’t know someone you can’t be helped in Tanzania.”¹⁸

Describing women’s groups externally organised for credit purposes, an ILO study report concluded,

The weakest forms [of self-help] groups are [those] brought together by a Community Development Officer, ...an official from the Women’s Association of Tanzania (UWT) or the Youth League, or some such representative of a public institution, a donor-inspired “non-governmental” agency, or the ruling party. They see it as their duty to convince people that working in groups brings certain advantages. Often their jobs are justified by the number of groups they patronise. Equally often these groups provide some extra income for them. ... Many of them do not get together for months on end, but all can be mobilised at short notice to impress visitors. They can hardly be located without the help of the patron and do not seem to have much of a life in the absence of the patron. Their members are most certainly all engaged in some informal sector activity but that would not depend on the existence of the group. They do not share a common locality for their business. The members do not normally pay regular contributions and do not receive any services. Apart from perhaps meeting a social need, the function of these groups is almost restricted to being at the disposal of the patron (Wenga 1995: 26).

These associations provide a severely limited form of organisation, in terms of contributing to women’s empowerment. Women working in the informal sector want these programmes for the credit they provide - these programmes are filling a void in the public banking system which does not give credit to microenterprises with such low profit margins as these groups have, and further require collateral. In addition, while the
additional assistance in the form of advice and encouragement from Community Development is not uniform, almost all women with access to it are appreciative and would like more. However, most groups have not found that credit has substantially addressed their practical economic needs. One reason for this is the amounts of credit disbursed are too small. Another relates to the rapid growth in informal sector activity; there is a high concentration in many trades with the effect of self-destructive competition.

An additional reason these programmes have done so little to assist women is to be found in the nature of WID style programmes themselves. Graeme Buckley's study on microfinance in Kenya, Malawi and Ghana indicates that these programmes at most offer the illusion of a quick fix (Buckley 1997). Money donated by external donors often has the effect of keeping women in gender-typed trades and external donors are accountable to their own organisations, not the women they purport to assist. (Kardam 1995). While forming women into a group may encourage cooperative behaviour and build upon patterns of trust, these women are already working in the informal sector, hence not “isolated” in the home, and participate widely in upato groups. Furthermore, as shown by the graph below, many groups after having received credit are forced to abandon their upato activities because previously saved income is now going to service their debts. Upato groups, as will be discussed, provide important mechanisms for women to save income and have a greater empowerment effect than do credit programmes. Of women who participate in upato groups, greater numbers discontinue this practise among those women who receive loans. This is not because they no longer benefit from upato but because they can no longer afford to participate.
Women's Participation in Upato Clubs

Groups that benefit most from credit are those who need the money to construct business premises or who operate in a trade using durable materials, and thus can stockpile items such as charcoal and fabric. Women who are preparing food or brewing beer or whose market had already reached its absorption capacity spend their credit on household needs such as school fees, medical bills and food for their families. Once it is gone they are faced with debt, which limits their ability to save or continue to meet these needs. These credit schemes do not address the underlying structural conditions – such as poor education, a gendered division of labour, an absence of training opportunities, saturated markets, and a lack of linkages with the formal economy – that make so many women's informal sector activities survival strategies rather than profitable microenterprises. The credit programmes offered through the government are linked to
the reform process in that they entail a new recognition of women's role in the economy and their relatively disadvantaged place there, and represent an attempt to assist women. However, its WID style approach does little to contribute to their empowerment.

3.3: Groups without external credit

i) Upato clubs

*Upato* clubs are rotating credit associations popular among women in Tanzania, particularly those working in the informal economy. Participants range in number between five and forty; most groups have between ten and fifteen members. Each member puts an agreed upon amount of money into a kitty and the total rotates among the members. Donations are made as often as every day or perhaps only monthly. The frequency of rotation also varies among groups. Traditionally *upato* clubs used non-perishables such as *khangas* rather than money, but with women's entrance into the cash economy this has changed. *Upato* clubs allow a woman access to a larger sum of money than she would otherwise be able to save on her own, as it would be spent on small household costs, or taken from her by her husband. One woman described her club as follows:

> We are all in an *upato* together with ten to twenty members, it depends. Per day we contribute 100 to 250 shillings each. It gets rotated depending on how many members there are or how long the rotation period is - we change it all the time. We have been playing for four or five years, because a member can get about 20,000 shillings at one time, for a week. On her own this is not possible.20

Other women participate in a form of *upato* club called a *tupendane*. Josephine, a woman running a hair salon in Ilala, described the goals of her group.
A *tupendane* is for weddings or funerals or big things like this. We only make occasional contributions. Per month I contribute 1000 shillings. I have been part of this group for a year. Its only women, we are fifteen. We have meetings; there is a chair, a secretary and a treasurer. We have meetings at the end of each month. No one has borrowed, we are saving. At meetings we mobilise ourselves to make our contributions and talk about going somewhere where we can get credit, in order to start a business that can make some profit. You need money because combined with some credit you can then buy a milling machine or something big for a group. This group is still an infant, we have an estimated amount, when we reach it we will go and ask for credit. Our chair knows what is available. She has gone to get information about what needs to be done. The rest of us members don’t know exactly what is happening, but the chair has all the information.21

Thus savings groups traditionally used to help women finance ceremonies like weddings and funerals are now being used to expand women’s role in the economy, allowing them to engage in more profitable and sustainable business activities.

Growing numbers of self-employed women are participating in *upato* clubs. Aili Mari Tripp’s 1989 study of women in the informal sector of Dar es Salaam found that half of all self-employed women “play” *upato*. The present study found higher percentages. Sixty-two percent of all women surveyed participated in *upato* clubs: 70 percent of women with loans and 57 percent of women with no credit. However, ten percent of those with loans who did not belong to an *upato* group, did belong to one before they received the loan, compared to only four percent of other women who no longer participated in an *upato* (see graph above). All women with loans who were part of an *upato* group had been participating in it before they received credit. Thus a higher proportion of women who play *upato* receive funding – perhaps because they are already disposed towards collective economic strategies – but many quit their *upato* club after receiving credit. As explained by a member of the *Chochea* (Pushing) group in
Kinondoni, "We were all playing upato before but now we are taking a vacation. We get so little from business so we cannot both play upato and return money to the bank."\textsuperscript{22}

*Upato* groups, like other poor women’s associational networks, provide women with a social space to discuss shared problems and support one another. However, unlike women who come together to receive credit, these groups are sustainable and provide an ongoing supply of credit and savings. This allows women to have control over their finances without their husbands having access to it and the ability to draw on larger amounts of cash for expenses than they would be able to save on their own. Women’s empowerment is thus increased through these clubs not only by allowing them to meet practical needs but also by granting them greater financial autonomy and control.

ii) Locational Groups

Members in most, and in the most genuine, self-help organisations in the informal sector share a location in which they operate (Wenga 1995). Thirty-three groups of women with no source of external support working in a common location were interviewed. With the thirty-five groups with external support who also worked in a common location, 68 interviews of locational groups were held. Although sixty percent of the women interviewed who had received external support did not work together in the same location it is likely that many of these women worked in a common location with different women.

Women choose to work in a common location for a number of reasons. Businesses, which have a high overhead, such as brick manufacturing, bars, and restaurants, are run more effectively by a group than by individuals. Some businesses,
like tailoring shops, hair salons, and restaurants, have paid employees; in most cases these are family members. In these businesses, that women work in a common location is more an issue of industry-specific practicality that a voluntary choice, thus they are not considered as associational.

Large numbers of other Tanzanian women choose to carry out their individual trades in a common location. These include women who are selling fruits and vegetables from a genge; baked goods such as maandazi, chapati, vitembua, and samosas; dried fish, eggs, or khangas; or who are selling home-brewed beer in a back garden. "Companionship is [an] important explanation why women chose to work with a close friend or relative. Indeed, this is one reason why the sellers of certain goods sit always in the same part of the market. They tend to a friend's stall if she has to go away temporarily, and when necessary share in the care of children" (Tripp 1989: 617). Women selling the same products are often found working together and dismiss the argument that they might face less competition were they to find their own spot. A woman selling maandazi and chapati with five other women selling the same said, "We are here in this place together because this is the centre of business, although it's only a small market, but still there are many buyers. One may go to Aziza there, but then the next will choose to come to me."23 If a member has to leave her site for some reason the others can look after her things and sell them for her if a customer comes by. "Overt competitive behaviour is regarded as rude and unbecoming in Tanzanian society" (Wenga 1995: 38). An additional reason for choosing to work in a common location has to do with the licensing restrictions of business activities. Most of these women have not
obtained licenses for their activities and work together as a form of security against city council “militia”.

The Human Resources Deployment Act of 1983 required all urban Tanzanians to be registered and issued labour-identification cards. These licenses could be revoked at any time and were never fully recognised by city authorities. Many trades were refused licences (Wenga 1995: 40). “Under this act, also known as Nguvu Kazi, those who could not produce proper identification were to be resettled in the countryside. In the Dar es Salaam region all unlicensed, self-employed people, including fish sellers, shoe repairmen, and tailors, were considered idle and disorderly and treated like loiterers” (Tripp 1997: 141). In the early 1980s, when the police, national-service soldiers, and people’s militia were vigorously enforcing this act, many self-employed people gave up their projects and people were afraid to leave their homes for fear of being picked up and moved to the countryside. “Those who were declared unemployed were sent back to their home villages or to state-run sisal plantations. Three months after the campaign started, 15,611 people had been detained” (Tripp 1997: 141).

By 1984 the government recognised that this campaign was neither economically productive nor enforceable – almost all residents who were detained returned to the city within a few days – or even hours - and resumed their activities (Tripp 1989: 619). In 1985 Mwinyi came to power, with a leadership style that has come to be known as “anything goes”. In line with a changed attitude towards the private sector, the government began to give official recognition to informal sector activities by issuing them with business licenses. The Human Resources Deployment Act has been “reinterpreted” to view the informal sector as a positive part of the economy (Tripp 1989:
In 1994 a national policy was formulated which identifies the informal sector as playing "a major role in absorbing the labour surplus" and "a source of creative industriousness, bold entrepreneurial spirit and the breeding milieu for a work ethic of self-reliance that should eventually constitute a firm base for sustainable national development" (United Republic of Tanzania 1994: i).

Despite this remarkable turnabout in attitude towards the informal sector, the requirement that all business activities be licensed poses problems for those working in the informal sector. Eighty-six percent of informal sector businesses operate in premises or locations not legally recognised and (excluding home-based businesses) only one percent of enterprises have permanent structures (Wenga 1995: 12-13). Within the informal sector there is a wide range of activities ranging from survival strategies to profitable microenterprises which may provide an import substitution role. Women are concentrated in the former type of business. The licensing policy does not distinguish between these activities and requires the same licensing fee from all businesses. Aili Mari Tripp found that,

A woman with 18 cows, making 120,000 Shs. a month from milk sales, was required to pay the same licence fee as a woman who fried buns, earning about 6,000 Shs. a month. Tailors, carpenters, and masons, whose earnings were generally some of the highest in the informal sector, paid the same licence fee as a woman who made and sold paper bags in what could only be described as a low-capital, low-income project (Tripp 1989: 621).

For most women the costs of getting a license and renewing it annually are prohibitive. Furthermore the "enforcement" of licensing laws often involves harassment by city officials who may demand bribes, tear up licenses, confiscate goods, or destroy kiosks.

The new National Policy on the informal sector intends to address the issue of harassment by streamlining the procedures for obtaining a license so that they may be
obtained at the local council level, and educating officials on the importance of facilitating the business activities of those in the informal sector as, "many officials think that the payment of a license by a microentrepreneur is the least they can do in exchange for a legal authorisation to pollute the city, occupy its streets, and make a profit out of it" (United Republic of Tanzania 1994: 12). It is questionable as to whether more locally accessible licenses and "educating" city officials will make much of an impact. The new National Policy does not advocate a graduated system for Trade Licenses.

Throughout the 1990s harassment of street traders has continued in an attempt to enforce the Dar es Salaam city plan (developed in 1979) which limits the location of businesses. Although small-scale business activity is now officially supported, it is only to take place in specific areas of the city. While the city plan reserved a certain proportion of land space in each neighbourhood, community and district for business activities, in the anti-business climate of the early 1980s when Dar es Salaam's population was growing, but small businesses were playing a comparatively minor role, land was being given away for residential purposes.

As a result, when the climate became more business-friendly and the economy offered an ever growing range of opportunities for petty business, the only land left was public spaces along roadsides, fences, walls, etc., on pavements, in through fares, at bus stops, taxi stands, and on hazardous land, under power lines or in swamps, etc. To-day, these spaces are almost all taken, through individual or collective invasion, with or without the support of the respective local branch of the ruling party, but certainly to the dismay of the top administrators in the City (Wenga 1995: 19-20).

In Dar es Salaam there are only three markets, one of which is covered, that are fully legally recognised. There are sixty-two open food markets that the City collects stand fees from but that have not been formally legalised. There are countless other market "clusters", often specialised by business, for example the huge used clothing
market in Kinondoni. These are all in addition to the businesses located on shop fronts and porches, roadsides, paths, factory walls or which are ambulatory. City officials have no documentation that indicates precisely where businesses are and are not allowed to operate (Tripp 1997: 147). They argue that it is not the revenue from licences that make them necessary but rather concerns about the cleanliness of the city (Tripp 1997: 147).

An ILO report on self-help groups in Dar es Salaam’s informal sector identified numerous self-help groups formed around a common location in closed markets, open markets, or “clusters” (Wenga 1995). The majority of women’s businesses do not take place in markets, which are dominated by male operated enterprises, because they cannot afford to rent a stall. Aili Mari Tripp found in 1989 that women were nine times more likely than men not to have a licence (Tripp 1989: 621).

Women working together in a common location provide security from licence inspectors in two ways. If one sees an inspector coming she can warn the others and they can gather their wares and leave the area. Often inspectors will clear away a site during the night or in the early hours of the morning. Locational groups will sometimes pool their resources and hire a watchman to protect their property, although watchmen can do little to prevent the actions of city police (Wenga 1995: 41). There is also security in numbers if an inspector does reach their group. City officials are less likely to engage in vandalism, theft and extortion when they are faced with a group of traders rather than an individual.

Locational groups exist throughout the informal sector in Dar es Salaam and are not specific to women. However, women often choose to work with other women because they are concentrated in gender-typed trades, often located on the peripheries of
markets, can meet one another's needs of helping to watch over children, and enjoy the sociability. Thus while locational groups are not formed to address the strategic needs of women in terms of structurally altering their economic or labour placement, they are a source of women's empowerment through allowing collective resistance to city militia and facilitating women's abilities to work while at the same time watch over their children. Like other forms of women's associations they provide a group setting for women to support one another through sociability.

iv) Unorganised women

Twenty-nine women were interviewed who do not work in the same location as others, have received no financial assistance and do not play upato. Most of these women worked in small tailor shops or in front of their homes. Those working in shops did not see any need to work with others, feeling their particular business was more effectively run by a single person. Women selling baked goods in front of their homes said they needed to be there in order to look after their children. Aili Mari Tripp found that although this was changing, some women were not permitted by their husbands to work away from the home (Tripp 1989: 613). Women who did not participate in an upato club said they could not afford to, or they were able to save money on their own. These women tended to be at either end of the spectrum of informal sector activities in terms of profitability: either in very low level businesses near their homes or in licensed businesses such as tailoring or hair salons.
3.4 Empowerment capacities of self-employed women in the informal sector

Self-employed women in the informal sector of Dar es Salaam are forming into associations in order to work together to address their practical economic needs. As shown, membership in groups gives them access to external sources of credit, savings strategies, and security. These groups further develop and encourage patterns of trust, community and co-operation among women. They provide a significant social space for women to discuss shared problems. These associational activities have emerged in response to women’s greater participation in the informal sector, necessitated by an economy that does not allow family survival through male earnings alone. Reductions in public spending and public sector retrenchment under structural adjustment have contributed to the need for women to increase their economic participation. This participation has brought about some positive changes in women’s lives which associations both respond to and further, resulting in a larger number of their practical and strategic needs being met.

i) Practical economic needs

The rapid growth in numbers of women participating in the informal economy has been in response to an easing of political restrictions on such participation under liberalisation, and the associated shrinking of job opportunities in the formal sector. Cost-sharing in education and healthcare and the rising prices for food have also contributed to the need for more women to contribute to household income. Looser restrictions on imports have meant both an increased volume and variety of goods for the self-employed to sell and favourable markets for traders to produce locally made goods that are cheaper than
Women's participation in the informal sector has helped them meet the economic needs of themselves and their families. These needs are often understood in gender specific ways, as women are very aware that they carry a greater responsibility for meeting education and health costs.

Externally initiated groups were found to be the least successful organisational strategy for advancing women's economic interests, and subsequently for contributing towards their empowerment. Savings abilities for many women were decreased, and few businesses were able to make sustainable advances. *Upato* clubs provide a strategy for saving and help women meet expenses with more ease than otherwise possible. Locational groups give women security in the face of continuing harassment by city militia over licensing, and with men also working in the informal sector collective actions of non-compliance have led to some changes in how police and the state respond to informal sector workers. However, women's practical advancement in the informal sector has been limited and needs have rarely translated into strategic gender interests. Women remain concentrated in low profit enterprises that are best characterised as survival strategies. Few groups have mobilised themselves to move into more profitable industries and associations remain loosely structured with limited goals.

ii) Strategic gender outcomes: cultural impacts

Self-employed women are contributing to changing attitudes at the levels of the household and society. While they may be engaging in economic activities in order to address their immediate practical needs, in doing so they are having an impact upon their culture and achieving strategic gains within their families. Women have achieved greater
financial and social autonomy by generating their own income, an important factor contributing towards empowerment. While most married women reported that they and their husbands both contribute to household expenses, they keep their income separate and do not reveal how much they have. *Upato* clubs provide a useful mechanism for keeping their income both a secret and out of the hands of their husbands.

Most middle-class women interviewed felt the biggest problem for Tanzanian women was their poverty. While the majority of self-employed women shared this view, many also mentioned, often in the same breath, that the problem for women was men:

As a woman of Tanzania, the big problem is you wake early, go to the farm to dig and cultivate, then go get firewood with a child on your back to prepare food and care for the husband, or if you don’t have one of those you have a group of children to take care of. ... Sometimes a woman might have a husband, but if he knows you have nothing much, but something, he won’t help you, even if he is making a salary. Our life is difficult.26

In Tanzania women with families have more responsibilities than men because in the morning a man can just wash his face and go to work. Women have to stay with the children who ask for food and if the woman doesn’t have anything they suffer, we suffer more than men.27

Those women who are married have problems, its like they are in jail, they need their husband’s permission for anything. But those who are single are free.28

Women must have many jobs, they have more problems because they have to take care of the family, have the responsibilities of the house, men are just drunkards. Men leave only 500 shillings for the whole day and then expect meat for their dinner. Women pay for everything.29

Women in Tanzania work nine times as much as men. One woman works as much as nine men. We are farming, raising families, what do they do? Maybe push some paper in some office. Most you will see sitting under a tree drinking.30

Most of these women feel their situation cannot be changed, and difficulties with men are just part of life. However, attitudes are changing in families, as men have been forced to
allow their wives the freedom to work because their own income is insufficient. While
the increased burdens women have taken on in terms of the amount of time they spend
earning an income in addition to their existing home responsibilities should not be
overlooked, they now have a greater measure of financial autonomy and access to social
contact that did not previously exist. Because many women keep their incomes a secret
some men may be able to pretend to themselves that women are not making such a big
contribution to family expenses. However as women’s income becomes more and more
significant within the family unit men are starting to acknowledge its value (Tripp 1989).
Associational activities assist women in their economic lives, but in terms of changing
gender relations within the family, it is their presence as individuals in the informal sector
that has been most significant.

iii) Governance and the informal sector

Informal sector workers have created a space within civil society by acting collectively
and creating informal group structures based on location. As noted by Mohamed Halfani,

> A substantial part of the urban development takes place outside the hegemony
> of the formal system. Burgeoning squatter and unregistered settlements,
> expansion of unregulated income generating activities, increasing provision
> of basic services by community based organizations are all an indication of a
> multiplicity of central actors who determine the direction of urban
> development (Halfani 1995: 3).

Aside from a practical desire for credit, most men and women working in the informal
sector want to keep as far removed from government interference and control as possible.
The option of exit is chosen more often than that of voice. Those working in this sector
run their businesses and associations without formal state recognition or regulation. They
provide income for more than thirty-four percent of Dar es Salaam’s residents (Bureau of
Statistics et al. 1993: 1-41), set market prices among themselves, and engage in a variety of tactics to avoid trade and import regulations. While all of this could perhaps be seen in a negative light – they are after all flouting legality, and taxes and levies are necessary for national development – the informal sector is providing an alternative or co-existent governance framework that compensates for state incapacity and unjust or untenable regulations. While women’s participation in this sector contributes to this mode of governance, there is no evidence of a woman’s movement or an articulation and analysis of women’s gender specific needs within the sector, despite the presence of many middle-class women who have secondary activities within it.

The National Policy on the informal sector has not yet been implemented, but if it is the effects on the relationship between the state and the informal sector may be profound. The policy strives to institutionalise these spontaneously developed associations and in addition form a National Council for Microenterprise and Informal Sector Promotion to co-ordinate informal sector activities. This body would only have only limited autonomy from the state. This could have major implications for the currently established governance mechanisms in the informal sector, but as the policy highlights the specific needs and interests of women it may also initiate steps towards addressing women’s empowerment issues.

Women’s engagement in the informal sector has also led to new relationships at the entry point of the state. Their increased participation has led to the development of credit programmes to assist them through the Ministry of Community Development, Women’s Affairs and Children. As shown however, groups such as these do not influence the state in any way but are only recipients of funds that do little to help them.
The Ministry's relationship towards these women is paternalistic and may even foster attitudes of dependency.

A new relationship between the state and the informal sector is emerging however, but it has yet not been formulated in gender specific terms. Men and women working in this sector, through non-confrontational strategies of resistance, have had a major impact on the way in which the government perceives and treats small-business employees. Workers' continued presence in unlicensed locations, refusals to be moved to rural areas, and formation into groups in common locations to provide security against city officials have all shaped government policy - from the softening of the Human Resources Deployment Act in 1983, the recognition of small businesses under Mwinyi to the new National Policy on the informal sector. Informal sector operators still face many problems with their dealings with the state, but they are collectively and individually having a strategic impact. This impact has however, yet to be cast in gender terms.

3.5 Conclusions

Women working in the informal sector are forming associations to meet their practical economic needs. Although at times understood in gendered terms, they are not intended to result in a structural transformation of gender relations. As such their empowerment impact is limited. These women have not chosen to organise to address issues of access to education, healthcare or legal representation or to change laws, which may discriminate against women. They are addressing the needs that are most pressing and visible to them – securing enough income to take care of themselves and their families. Practical strategies are the most effective and likely means to meet these goals.
Tanzania's reform process has had an impact on the lives of these women and mediated the type of associations they are forming. The most obvious impact has been the necessity for increasing numbers of women to begin businesses. Forming associations is one mechanism they have developed to help them in the economic sphere. Most women believe their entry into the economy has signalled an improvement in their lives. Despite the fact that it is economic hardship that forced them into these activities, the gains they have made through expanded community roles and increased levels of power within family units are seen as positive. These women cite economic reforms rather than political reforms as being the most favourable – an opposite opinion to that held by middle-class women.

The reform process has also resulted in a new attitude towards the informal sector on the part of the state. Under *uczamaa* the informal sector was seen as an area to be discouraged, working against centralised policies geared towards collective and equitable economic growth. Now the government is attempting to support this sector and integrate it from being a "parallel market" into part of the new privatised economy. As part of this process the state has recognised the important role women play in this sector and established credit facilities to assist them. Although women who received credit through government programmes do not fare measurably better than women without such credit, and in fact may be worse off because they have a debt to repay, they are supportive of such programmes and desire increased contact with the officials administering them. Despite a change in the official stance towards the informal sector, those operating there are still subject to harassment from city militia and a licensing system that is often unfairly and unevenly applied. Locational groups formed among women serve to protect
them against this, providing a source of collective power against the state. While these groups are a source of power, they are not challenging gender relations and so can not be thought of as contributing to women's empowerment in more than a limited indirect fashion.

The central gains in empowerment that can be seen as resulting from poor women's associations are those that are taking place within their culture, in their social and family lives. Poor women are little affected by the middle-class women's movement, which is building upon a middle-class culture that is increasingly supportive of overtly feminist perspectives. Yet through their increased economic participation, made easier with collective frameworks supporting it, women are changing attitudes towards their appropriate economic roles and increasing the economic control that they have within household units. Lower-income women cite these changes as meaningful and granting them new levels of control and power in their lives.
Notes

1 For a discussion of these organisations, found in other countries, see Wipper 1984: 78-81.

2 For a discussion of the theoretical issues being debated surrounding the definition of the informal sector, see ILO 1990: 5.

3 “Professionals” are doctors, lawyers, dentists, chemists, accountants, consultants, and import/export clearing agents. Teachers in small private sector schools (with less than 5 paid employees) are within the informal sector.

4 Many women who are paid employees in the formal sector also work in the informal sector, but these women do not make up part of my sample.

5 The groups are 1. Maputo in Yombo Bituka, 2. Uvikiuta in Chamazi (both in Temeké), and 3. Mafere in Mwananyamala, Kinondoni.

6 Member of Maputo, interviewed on 14 March 1996

7 A number of groups however met one another at the Community Development office when there was a meeting giving information about credit availability and only pretended to have known each other previously.

8 District offices do not have statistics on the rate of repayment because the programs are so new, but they report it is high. Women in my survey were asked if they were going to be able to repay, most said yes, but they may have only said this because their Community Development officer was present. Furthermore, rate of repayment is not an accurate measure of the success of a business.

9 This means something like “Respect for black women.” It is a mixture of Swahili and Dutch.

10 Interview held on March 22 1996.

11 Member of Vumilia in Chamaze, Temeké, interviewed on March 18 1996.

12 Member of Mbalizi group in Mwananyamala, Kinondoni, interviewed on April 18 1996.

13 Member of Gezaulole (Try and see) in Somangila, Temeké, interviewed on March 22 1996.

14 Member of Kalmati Kijai in Somangila, Temeké, interviewed on March 22 1996.
15 Member of *Mwendepole* in Temeke ward, interviewed on March 25 1996.

16 Member of *Mahame* in Buguruni, Ilala, interviewed on February 29 1996.

17 Member of *Mwembe Madafu* (Mango juice coconut tree – the name of the location) in Ukonga, Ilala, interviewed on March 5 1996

18 Interview on May 9 1996.

19 For a study how this has occurred in Zimbabwe, see Stewart and Taylor 1995.

20 Member of *Mwembe Madafu* in Ukonga, Ilala, interviewed on 5 March 1996

21 Interview held on March 5 1996

22 Interview held in Mwananyamala, Kinondoni on March 17 1996.

23 Member of *Mwembe Madafu*, interviewed on 5 March 1998.

24 In the used clothing market in Kinondoni I found only one woman with a stall. This trade is itself male-dominated due to the start-up capital needed to import clothing.

25 Although this does not follow for all trades. Tailors are finding business is decreasing because of the importing of second hand clothing, which is cheaper than their products. Also women are less frequently engaged in the trade of imported goods which require greater start-up capital.

26 Member of *Muungano* (Union) in Msongola, Ilala, interviewed on February 15 1996.

27 Member of *Ujamaa* in Vigunguti, Ilala, interviewed on February 27 1996.

28 Member of *Tulieni* (We need to be patient) in Miburani, Temeke, interviewed on March 12 1996.

29 Member of *Watuha* in Tandale, Kinondoni, interviewed on 9 April 1996.

30 Member of *Salama* in Manzese, Kinondoni, interviewed on 11 April 1996.

31 Thirty-four percent of Dar residents participate in informal sector activity. As more than one member of a household may be employed in this sector, the number of individuals who benefit will be higher.

4.0 Introduction

Women's issues need to be addressed at different sites of governance and power in order for gender relations to be successfully transformed and women's empowerment goals and potentials realised. Changes in gendered power relations are occurring at the levels of the household, civil society and the state. These levels are not fully autonomous from one another; changes in one area have political and social effects that spill over into others both as they directly influence one another and coexist in shared cultures. The reform process in Tanzania is constructing new governance relationships between the state and civil society. These emerging relationships reveal capabilities and obstacles for women's empowerment as they link together strategies of addressing women's gender interests.

Reforms in Tanzania began in the 1980s with the liberalisation of the economy. In the 1990s the political process was opened up with the separation of CCM from the government, the adoption of a multi-party system, and the allowance of greater freedom of association and of the press. While these initiatives have been state led and directed, groups in society are taking advantage of political openings to push for continuing and increasing levels of reform. Aili Mari Tripp has found that although the state's and opposition parties' commitment to continued reform is weak, women's organisations are leading much of the reform initiative which is present in civil society (Tripp 1999: 15).

An obvious and direct way of creating change at the state level is to increase women's representation there, not only in numbers but also in positions where they can
exercise influence. Change at the state level may also be brought about through pressure from groups in civil society. Strategies of exit, voice, confrontation and passive resistance all have an impact and the presence of opposition parties provides an expanded area for exerting pressure. New freedoms of association are yielding additional avenues for civil society to influence the government and raise issues onto the policy agenda, both through the opportunities these groups have to lobby the government directly and through their impact on the overall cultural norms. The political and economic reforms are eliciting different reactions and strategies of effecting change. While many of the governance responses from civil society are a response to the shrinking of the state’s role due to economic incapacity, the state itself needs to be strengthened to attain greater legitimacy and for democracy to become consolidated.

4.1 Women’s Representation at the State Level

Tanzania’s reform process will be unable to adequately address gender interests without female representation within formal political institutions. Higher levels of women’s representation empowers women both by creating equal opportunities for women to participate in politics and though the greater concern with gender interests female policymakers tend to have. Although these institutions remain dominated by men, increasing numbers of women are running for office and, with the help of affirmative action, Tanzania’s present parliament has more women than ever before. The Tanzanian constitution has been amended to reserve fifteen percent of seats in parliament and twenty-five percent of councillor positions at the local government level for women. As explained by Pius Msekwa, the speaker of the National Assembly:
These new provisions were intended to give proper recognition to women both as economic producers and also as persons who provide strong stability for the household at [the] family level, in order to give them encouragement in their political participation so that they can bring to the political process the same kind of stability which they so ably provide at the household level (Msekwa 1994:10).

Female politicians feel that gender discrimination at the state level is breaking down and that they have increasing ability and space to push for women’s issues and be taken seriously.

Gendered social power relations exist in all organisations.

There is evidence from every aspect of the public and private spheres that there is a hierarchy of value and power in all relations between women and men which is gendered. Men and what men do are accorded greater value than women and what women do. This is the wider social – and gender – context in which organizations are situated and operate, so it is not surprising to find these aspects of gendered power relations institutionalized in the culture, structures and practices of organizations: reflecting, replicating, reinforcing, recreating and constructing within themselves the gendered power relations of the wider society. In the simplest terms: what happens in the wider society happens in organizations (Itzin 1995: 262).

Politics in Tanzania has long been a male domain, both mirroring cultural gender stereotypes and reproducing them in policies formulated and administered by predominantly male office holders. However, a focus on numbers alone is insufficient to bring about organisational change – this is only part of the solution. Women must also be placed in positions where they can exert influence.

Exclusionary structures work within institutions, through hierarchies of authority and the divisions of resources and responsibilities (Williams and Macalpine 1995: 234). Within political institutions women often face a culture that takes them less seriously, operates with networks they are excluded from, and with norms of aggressive
competitive behaviour that are seen as unbecoming for women. Describing local and national elections before multipartyism it was noted that,

Women politicians campaigning for constituency seats faced organised and open discrimination, led by male opponents who deliberately aroused sexist prejudice against them. ‘Fellow’ women were also ambivalent about women in high office, at village level, as well as regional/district and national level – accusing them of being arrogant or ‘masculine’. To some extent, this may reflect the way women have to act ‘like men’ to advance themselves in male-dominated spaces (TGNP 1993: 74).

In the 1995 multiparty national elections this was also the case. Women must cope with these cultural barriers both in campaigning for office and within political institutions. Within male dominated institutions, “there may … be hard choices to be made about how far to adapt to the ‘malestream’ culture which they face, rather than developing alternative ways of working and opening up the possibilities of change for other women” (Newman 1995: 12).

To reach political office women have to overcome a number of social barriers. A 1993 study on women in Tanzanian political life identified four obstacles to women’s equal participation. Women often lack the self-confidence necessary for campaigning for leadership positions; the electorate has a low opinion of women contestants; married women do not receive the necessary moral and material support from their husbands to stand for elections; and lastly, most women, along with men, believe that politics is an inappropriate career choice for women (Ndaalio 1993). In addition, in this study women were found to be less likely to participate in using bribes and other corrupt practices in campaigning than were men – limiting their ability to compete but raising additional grounds for advocating greater female participation.
The issue of corrupt campaigning practices may be heightened under multipartyism - despite its salience as an issue during the last election - because of the increased costs associated with campaigning. Shamim Khan\(^1\), the Deputy Minister of Industry and Trade discussed this issue.

Experience shows that most women have no economic power to participate fully in campaigns. It’s very expensive now, much more than with the one party system, when there were no bribes or need to spend your own money. With the introduction of pluralism we have to spend heavily – not bribe, spend. Campaign groups have to be transported, fed, made happy, that’s not cheap and it all depends on the individual. Not bribing, this is not done publicly.

Shamim Khan’s comments show that the personal expenses associated with running a campaign are considerable, even without bribing, and beyond the means of many women, particularly if they do not have the support of their husbands or family.

The new Tanzanian parliament has 275 members. Of these 232 represent constituencies, five are from the Zanzibar House of Representatives and the Attorney General is an automatic member. Thirty-seven seats (the equivalent of fifteen percent of the total) are now reserved for women under the constitution. Eight seats were won by women in constituencies in the last election, so the total number of women in the new Parliament is forty-five, 16.4 percent.

The thirty-seven seats that are reserved for women are allocated proportionally to the number of constituent seats won by the political parties. As shown in Table 4, twenty-eight of these seats went to CCM, four to CUF (Civic United Front), three to NCCR-Mageuzi (National Convention for Construction and Reform), and one each to CHADEMA (Party of Democracy and Development) and the UDP (Union for Multi-Party Democracy). The representation of women has increased over the last
government’s, from 11 percent up to 16.4 percent. Most dramatic has been women’s improved representation in constituency seats: from two to eight, an increase of 400 percent. The reserved seats for women remain important however; if they were not there women’s representation in parliament would only be 3.4 percent.

Table 4: The Participation of Political parties in the 1995 General Elections and the Performance of Women Candidates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Candidate(s)</th>
<th>Of whom women</th>
<th>Won</th>
<th>Of whom women</th>
<th>Women as % contestants</th>
<th>Women as % winners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CCM</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHADEMA</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUF</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCCR-Mageuzi</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TADEA</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMD</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TPP</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UDP</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRA</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NLD</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TLP</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PONA</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPDP</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>1,330</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: BAWATA 1995b.

There are eighteen Ministers, five Ministers of State and ten Deputy Ministers, in the Tanzanian cabinet. Of these, six are women – three full Ministers and three Deputies. This is a gain over the previous cabinet where only four Ministers were women (two full Ministers and two Deputy Ministers). In addition, one of the new Deputy Ministers, Shamim Khan, is with Industry and Trade, a typically male portfolio. CCM ran seven female candidates and they all won, indicating that the electorate had no difficulty voting for women in the last election, and it is possible that the need for affirmative action could disappear in the future if parties field greater numbers of women.
For the time being the reserved seats for women are necessary for their representation at a minimum level, but there are some drawbacks to this system. Women who are in the reserved “women’s seats” feel that they are not always taken seriously by their male colleagues and are treated as token. This seems a little bewildering in a political culture with such a strong history of patronage appointments, but it is also an institutional environment with a distinctly male culture. However, female members of parliament report that these attitudes are changing; as more women enter politics they are becoming increasingly outspoken and given greater respect. The Minister of Health, Zakia Meghi, who holds a “women’s seat,” described the changes she has seen.

Previously, attitudes were not so good from men; they saw me as taking on the secretarial roles. But with time this is changing. It has changed, especially since Beijing, this strengthened it. At independence women were involved in the government with few exceptions only at a very low level. Professional women were not so much in politics, but now there is a shift where even professional women are involved in politics, the young who go to school debate, when they look at themselves they don’t feel lower than the male population. For us it was different, and there will be more changes. Tanzania has done well in women’s participation in political activities. Women MPs are pushing for women’s interests, especially in the last five years, before men would raise eyebrows, but things are changing, women were given special places in parliament and have women’s caucuses which cut across party lines. We also have the Ministry of Women’s Affairs, Community Development and Children.

The increased representation of women and pressure from women’s groups in civil society have led to a growing recognition of the importance of women’s issues among men and women at the state level.

There are still perceptions among some women outside of politics that women politicians are unable to push feminist issues on to the political agenda. This is explained as resulting both from there being too few women in the political realm and those who are there being unwilling to address women’s issues because they are trying to advance
their personal careers in an environment where women’s concerns are not taken seriously enough. Feddy Mwanga, a member of the Tanzanian Society of Women and AIDS complained, “We don’t have a good representative for women in parliament to pressure for us. Those we have, they are too fearful to lose their jobs. Job security is number one.” Mrs. Phillips of the Tanzania Women Lawyer’s Association echoed this view: “With women’s issues, they aren’t considered much, even by those women at the top, they are just there on the sidelines but not part of the agenda.”

Middle-class women’s groups have been critical of female politicians who do not address women’s issues. “Some women who get top political positions do not identify themselves with women and gender issues. Part of the problem maybe the lack of solidarity among women voters, to support women leaders, and lobby for women and gender issues among women and men in top policy-making positions, in government or political parties” (TGNP 1993: 74). However, with a more favourable environment this is changing. The transformations in middle-class culture which are moving towards a stronger recognition of women’s issues are having their influence at the level of the state, which shares this culture.

Many women parliamentarians and politicians have become increasingly vocal about gender issues, in spite of the fact that they are few in number. Cabinet ministers are challenged to show what they are doing to remove gender discrimination in employment, education, provision of credit and farm inputs, and in other sectors. Even more exciting may be the growing number of male voices raised in solidarity with women, to denounce gender discrimination (TGNP 1993: 74).

In the past female politicians felt that they were being pushed into positions which focused on women’s issues that were given fewer resources and not considered of great importance, and they had to fight to take on more valued roles. As women’s issues are
being taken more seriously and greater numbers of women are reaching political office, female politicians are more inclined to want to speak out on them.

Women are not only under-represented in parliament; they are also few in numbers in regional and local government, the civil service, and the judiciary. Under the co-ordination of the Ministry of Community Development, Women’s Affairs and Children, Women in Development (WID) offices have been established in most ministries and several parastatals. This has increased the number of women in middle and high level employment in the government. These WID offices are responsible for identifying barriers to women’s equality and advancement and developing policies to promote change. The actual impacts WID offices have are limited by their welfare approach, which does not focus on issues of control or empowerment.

The weaknesses of WID offices are exacerbated by the manner in which they are institutionalised. The Ministry of Community Development has one of the lowest allocations of financial and human resources compared with other ministries. As a sectoral ministry it is not able to intervene in the activities of other ministries (unlike the Finance ministry). Individual WID officers are often unable to secure support within ministries and some WID offices have been closed down. Many of the WID offices and their activities are donor financed and directed, which limits their autonomy and further directs programs towards welfare goals which are more easily approved and implemented than empowering strategies, but have limited transformative potential (TGNP 1993: 76).

Through the creation of these WID offices and the adoption of affirmative action to increase women’s representation in government, it is clear that there is recognition of the need to address women’s issues from the government level. Continued pressure from
groups in civil society and changing attitudes within government institutions may allow these initiatives to develop legitimacy and genuinely transformative policies and programs.

4.2 Multiparty politics and its Impacts for Women's Empowerment

The opposition parties have an even weaker representation of women than does CCM, but this may change as they develop and gain more popular support. For the time being however, they have limited themselves to platitudes about the need for women to advance but have few suggestions as to what laws should be amended or introduced or what vision they have for Tanzanian women. These patronising comments from Mohamed Ali Ysuf, the publicity director of CUF are typical.

We must first liberate them mentally from archaic ideas; women in Tanzania are very much backward. They work hard but without a program, they are fetching firewood and tasks like this. ... They are very backward. In our party we look at educating and conscientising about women with the people who are in parliament. Education, but also drawn from the village, so we can be in touch with the village. ... Women aren’t much conscientised, they don’t have forums to discuss politics, they are directed. Whoever gives them *khangas*. Women are not enlightened. They have just been instruments. They have economic and family problems; they are very much deceived. ... In the year 2000 we will have the same thing, women and *khangas*. This wife beating is accepted. It has become the fashion in Africa, let him beat me, it shows he loves me, or he will go to another woman.

Perceptions of women as passive victims who need to be liberated through outside intervention from enlightened policy makers are common from men and women working at the state level. While these views echo the practical / strategic distinctions made in this study, they do not account for the bases of power poor women do have or the material conditions that make the adoption of practical rather than strategic goals rational. The material conditions that limit women’s abilities to address their strategic needs are
often ignored, while the focus is instead placed on their ‘backwardness’ and assumptions that they are naïve and easily manipulated. Political parties may feel that they can gain their votes with *khangas*, but in my survey poor women were attending rallies and collecting *khangas* with no intention of voting for the party who was passing them out. The cynicism these women expressed towards politicians, perceiving them as manipulative and untrustworthy, is unlikely to change if these politicians continue to try to buy rather than earn their support.

Tanzanian women are very aware of the conditions which discriminate against them – such as poverty, unequal access to education, lack of credit, and domestic violence – but poor women feel unable address their strategic needs while they are preoccupied with survival strategies. Many of the factors that discriminate against women, such as the gendered division of labour, benefit men. Assumptions that sensitisation workshops for men – a popular strategy also with middle-class women’s groups – will result in changed behaviour, ignores this.

The presumption seems to be that gender inequality is caused by ignorance – if men, for example, were aware of the harm they have caused by their gender typing behaviour and attitudes they would willingly change. If employees and management were aware of the way women were doubly or triply exploited because of discrimination in the workplace, they would promote women and pay them higher wages. The possibility that men or employers will persist in promoting gender discrimination because they benefit from it does not seem to enter the equation (TGNP 1993: 76).

These workshops may have some effect on men’s behaviour and should not be abandoned, but on their own they are likely to achieve little. Legal provisions that protect women from discrimination and policies to support women’s advancement in male dominated positions need to be strengthened where they exist and pushed for where
they do not. The opposition should be taking the lead in raising these issues onto the policy agenda.

The opposition parties all have women’s directorates, but none of them has presented a strong platform on women’s rights and gender issues. As noted by Pili Mtambalike of the Tanzania Media Women’s Association,

Women’s issues were not brought out by the political parties. Only CCM addressed it in their manifesto at the start of the election, the rcst had nothing on women. Most did create women’s wings to their parties, not to be involved in the political process but to do dances. The election didn’t really treat issues so much as focus on personality concerns. NCCR did try later to deal with issues which would get voter support, painting itself as the party of the common people, but it didn’t really address itself to the majority of Tanzanians who are not harassed by the police or the government. Issues of poverty did not come up, and it is not clear how they will be addressed - the important issues of education, water, and health.

The opposition parties had few if any references to women in their platforms. CUF had no mention of women whatsoever. NCCR-Maguezi advocated the elevation of women to higher positions at the state level (despite having few women at high levels within their own party) and the promotion of WID programs. CHADEMA supported the creation of a non-partisan organisation for women - which occurred before the election took place, but ironically seems to be supporting NCCR. Only UMD, the weakest of the four main opposition parties in terms of electoral support, had a more extensive and detailed position on women, addressing issues of education, credit, representation and aid.

During the election campaigning however, Augustine Mrema, the leader of NCCR-Maguezi, did come out at a number of rallies speaking against family violence. Mrema, a former CCM Home Affairs Minister and Deputy Prime Minister who was very vocal about corruption before he resigned from CCM is a charismatic populist whose forthright and even blunt approach to politics has made him popular with the urban
working class, while alarming others with his reputation for dictatorial tendencies and extra-legal solutions. As a savvy politician he has been the first opposition member to recognise the importance of female voters. Augustine Mrema noted that his party’s support has come from “largely the underprivileged, particularly women and youth. … And we have massive support in the working class.” Nonetheless, NCCR’s official platform has little to say with respect to women and they, like the other opposition parties, have few women in important party positions. Mrema took up the issue of women’s interests during the campaign, recognising those stronger statements on women’s interests would win votes.

Describing the opposition, Tanzanian political scientist Max Mmuya noted, “the one party system has not died. It has simply multiplied itself – eleven times in the Tanzania case” (Mmuya 1993: 13). Dr. Mmuya was here pointing out that the opposition parties are not rooted in civil society and manage their affairs with the same lack of accountability as does CCM. Furthermore a lack of real choices exists in terms of party platforms which are largely uniform with NCCR-Maguezi a bit to the left of CHADEMA, CUF, and the UDP. Corruption was the main election issue for all parties including CCM, and the opposition distanced itself from CCM by also pressuring for a constitutional debate and a reassessment of the terms of the union between the mainland and Zanzibar. Differences between parties for the most part came down to the different personalities of their leaders.

All of the parties, including CCM, have had to adjust to the current economic situation and the influence of donors who supported the emergence of multipartyism. None of them has a distinct position on the economy. Before the election CCM leader
Benjamin Mkapa was asked how socialist he was. He replied, “As a staunch CCM member I am as socialist as the CCM is” (Tanzanian Affairs 1995: 4). New parties are not constrained by having to rationalise their platforms with their historical roots, but most of their leaders have a past with CCM rather than any organic links with groups in civil society. This is likely to have an impact on the way the opposition behaves and the policies they promote. Politics has long been carried out in a top-down manner with scant accommodations for popular input or consultation. Opposition parties are continuing with this pattern within their own structures, despite their criticisms towards CCM’s slow progress with opening up the political process through constitutional reform and addressing the repressive laws identified by the Nyalali Report. Patterns of governance that had greater levels of consultation would allow women’s issues to be more easily raised to the policy agenda. Current attitudes at the state level see poor women as passive actors who need to be led rather than part of the governance process. Poor women need spaces to exercise their political voice before it can emerge.

The current parliament remains dominated by CCM and the opposition has little ability to exercise influence. The potential for women’s issues to be pushed forward into the state level political field would seem to be better in the context of multipartyism as there should be more pressure for representatives to respond to constituents concerns and more freedom for groups in civil society to pressure for change. However, members of parliament, in both the ruling party and opposition, say that little has changed with the new system. Members of CCM say this is because the parliament always had lively debates and was already democratic. For example Shamim Khan claims,

Even during the one party system, when a Minister represented a bill it was strongly opposed by others in parliament. So there is a case for saying in the
one party system there was no democracy but I say no – I was a backbencher for ten years and I was always bombarding Ministers. So now parliament has an opposition and a ruling party, they bombard us.

A situation likely closer to reality is that as CCM still dominates parliament and is governed by strict party discipline, the opposition has little influence. A member of CUF, Mohamed Ali Ysuf, commented, "The debates in parliament look the same as under one party. They are a majority; the rules have not been changed. It is a circus."

Augustine Mrema described his party’s influence as the official opposition: "We have our position as a new party but we remain a minority in parliament. The parliament has almost all CCM members of which the opposition has only a few. There are opportunities to speak out, but when it comes to a vote we are weak." Thus not only are there few distinctions which can be made between parties, the fact that CCM still dominates parliament has meant that there has been no real change in the individuals who still have power.

The issue of changing Tanzanian inheritance laws so that they would no longer discriminate against women was raised in parliament by NCCR shortly after the election. Although these laws remain "under investigation" CCM has resisted taking action. The Minister of Home Affairs, Ali Ameir Mohamed explained his party’s reluctance in terms of not wishing to upset the (male) Muslim community. "We have to act with sensitivity to religious leaders. We don’t sit with them officially, but if they come out strongly with any party, you are out. You have to try and accommodate them." Obviously women have yet to be viewed as an important constituency in the same way as more influential religious groups are.
Opposition parties in Tanzania are weakened not only by their low representation and lack of connections with civil society, but also by internal dissension. This is not surprising for such recent creations, which were still sorting out personality and policy differences at the time of the election. CCM is also coping with fragmentation as it adapts to a multiparty context and a shift from the ideology of *ujamaa* to what it now describes as pragmatism. CCM has long been divided between its administrators and those formulating the party line (Costello 1996). Party discipline, although hiding internal party differences, is also an issue of concern when evaluating the extent of democracy under multipartyism, as it further limits debate in the CCM dominated legislature (West et al. 1994: 30).

Members of CCM deny any dissension over their support for democratisation or the leadership of Mkapa, but the media and the press report a different story. Mkapa won CCM leadership by a narrow margin, and his success has been attributed to the strong support he received from former President Nyerere. Describing Mkapa’s leadership Victor Kimesera, CHADEMA’s executive secretary said,

Mkapa started well. He got rid of some old dead wood. A good beginning. He got made President under very difficult circumstances. Not with the party, the selection was from Nyerere. The party just had to take him on. Then he gets rid of all the old party die-hards, that didn’t bode well. ... There is so much resentment in the party.

Mkapa’s strength is that he has credibility in dealing with corruption issues as he has a totally clean record and lives modestly in the style of Nyerere.

Having entered into multiparty competition may strengthen CCM’s legitimacy, but greater democracy will not necessarily follow because of both party discipline in the legislature and the relative autonomy of administrators.
In essence, by giving the appearance of greater access to political processes, elections allow the state elites to narrow that access in fact, and remove the need for representation. By offering a weak form of “political development” and decentralization of authority, the state gains legitimacy in a time of reduced economic payoffs, and thus achieves the opportunity to centralize further its own operations and increase control by administrators (Costello 1996: 143).

It is as yet unclear how far internal divisions will weaken CCM, and whether reforms will continue or remain cosmetic. While the opposition is weak and parties are internally fragmented, they are united in their desire to see reforms being carried out. The homogeneity of the opposition parties may aid in co-operation between them. As noted by Augustine Mrema, “we have excellent relations with the rest of the opposition. Two days ago NCCR-Maguezi had a meeting, a big rally about the constitution. We organised it but it was also attended by the CUF Vice Chairman, we have good relations. I would be happier if any of the opposition parties were in power rather than CCM, of course.”

While the platforms of all parties are largely uniform, the opposition parties are demonstrating a greater concern with moving forward with the democratic reforms highlighted in the Nyalali Report and institutionalising behaviours of accountability. However, none of the parties have picked up on women’s issues in any sustained fashion and tried to force the government to do more in response to the concerns raised by the middle-class women’s movement. Political support for these concerns is evident, but is emerging more from members of CCM, and in particular its female representatives. For the voices of women to be heard more loudly at the state level the reforms will need to be deepened to permit a higher level of responsiveness and consultation with civil society.
4.3 Limits of Reforms and Weak Democratic Consolidation

Tanzania is still in a state of transition. While the elections have passed and multipartyism is now accepted and supported by most at the state level and in society, undemocratic features persist, most notably with the constitution but also with a continuation of authoritarian style governance behaviour. This is relevant for women’s issues as a responsive government with respect for the rule of law is necessary for civil society to increase its ability to influence policy and for individual women to exercise their rights. It is also necessary to confer legitimacy for the state, which must arrive at a balance between efficiency and consent. Without legitimacy, civil society’s relationship with the state is likely to continue as one of avoidance rather than co-operation.

Max Mmuya has analysed the relationship between the state and civil society during Tanzania’s democratisation process as reflecting a legitimacy crisis based around the state’s need to balance efficiency concerns with popular consent, rather than continue with a focus on control.

The crisis takes place in a situation of non-reciprocity between Efficiency and Consent. For the sake of good governance a careful balance has to be made between concerns for efficiency and those for consent to realize the ideal. A break down in either efficiency, consent or the elements of efficiency and consent leads to a situation of crisis (Mmuya 1993: 15).

In Tanzania the lack of institutions to accommodate citizen participation, influence, or even knowledge of state level decision-making erodes government legitimacy. Mmuya accounts for the state’s unwillingness to allow greater participation by the legacies of the single-party system and the impacts of structural adjustment measures.

The single-party state in Tanzania was heavily imbued with patrimonialism, popular demands were co-opted through the party’s mass organisations, and the party
itself was reified beyond popular control. The fusion between the party and the state assisted in the formation of a governing class that intervened directly in all aspects of civil society and business activity. Mmuya argues that this class was never fully united in Tanzania, but divided into party, civil service, political service and parastatal sector elites which were constantly battling among themselves for control over state resources, diverting public funds for personal cars and homes. As noted by Pili Mtambalike, a member of TAMWA, "Corruption is such a huge problem, it impacts on the implementation of policies and reforms. A huge part of the failure in Tanzania is planning. We didn’t do well in a planned economy and we aren’t doing well in a mixed one – people are just trying to make themselves rich in a short amount of time. We have lost the vision of Nyerere’s days."

By co-opting all organs of public voice the party rendered the regime unaccountable. An inept bureaucracy was a further feature of the single-party state, relying on patronage appointments and frequent shuffling of the same individuals between bureaucratic and political positions. “This mingling, juxtapositioning, conflating and fusing of bureaucratic roles with the politics of the single-party system has resulted in a strange bureaucratic personality whose performance falls far short of at least minimal bureaucratic norms necessary for development policy initiatives” (Mmuya 1993: 9).

Under the single-party system the state chose to rule without consent and established itself in a fashion that proved inefficient. The adoption of structural adjustment measures, an attempt to address efficiency concerns, served to undermine the state’s authority by separating the economic and political spheres.

The leading role of the political sphere whereby the only party used to direct, order, show the way in all areas of society, was now given a competitor, the
economic dimension which in our view promptly exploited the opportunity faster than the ageing political sphere to transform society. So this differentiation split the unity of the authority system of the state which depended upon an intricate integration of the state economic sector and the political spheres. This as can be envisaged led to the creation of separate locations of power and authority one based on economic clout and the other on political power (Mmuya 1993: 10).

Structural adjustment undermined the authority of the state by effectively eliminating its ideology of ujamaa and replacing it with the less compelling pragmatism. It also contributed to widening class divisions in Tanzanian society (Kaiser 1996), higher unemployment in the formal sector, and increased informal sector activity (Lugalla 1997), which is carried out in the absence of state control. The introduction of multiparty politics and limited democratic reforms has allowed a greater public awareness of issues surrounding leadership, which were previously kept secret – this has also undermined legitimacy as mechanisms for allowing real participation have failed to evolve.

While democratisation should present space for the government to focus on issues of consent and adopt more transparent, accountable, and ultimately more efficient governance practices, the government has instead limited these options in a bid to retain control and ensure compliance. While addressing concerns of efficiency, the government’s adoption of structural adjustment has resulted in a shrinking of the state, which undermines consent, as it is unable to meet social demands in employment. While officially supporting the informal sector, they state has used coercive and corporatist measures to attempt to regulate it. The presence of opposition parties goes some way to presenting an image of a democratic system, but, as discussed, the opposition in Tanzania is not rooted in civil society and parties are managed with little consent from their wider membership.
The entire reform process has been carried out in a top-down fashion, not only without popular participation, but often with a great deal of secrecy. The process began with the Nyalali Commission, which found that the majority of Tanzanians did not even want a multiparty system. While the decision to go ahead was taken anyway, the recommendations of the commission on constitutional changes that would limit the power of the executive and make parliament more accountable and democratic have been ignored.

The Nyalali Report recommended a thirteen-step reform process to coincide with the transition to multipartyism. While not advocating a national constitutional conference, as are the opposition parties, it did call for the establishment of a constitutional commission to draft a new constitution, which would then be debated by the elected constituent assembly. This has not occurred, although there have been some constitutional amendments. The process of amending the constitution is easily dominated by CCM as they continue to control parliament. The 1992 Political Parties Act was passed without public debate and with decidedly undemocratic features such as a government appointed elections Registrar whose decisions may not be appealed, and a prohibition against independent candidates, which is unconstitutional under provisions found in the Bill of Rights. The Bill of Rights was passed in 1984, but other laws in Tanzania have not been amended to bring them into conformity with this Bill, as advocated by the Nyalali Report. "This inaction in itself could be construed as lack of respect for the rule of law and the centrality of the Constitution. The practical implication is that the legal underpinning for an open public realm is weak, so that, even if a government behaves without repression, its behaviour is at its own discretion and not
legally enforceable” (West et al. 1994: 34). The implications of this for women’s empowerment concerns is a state which remains unaccountable is unlikely to respond to any pressures to address women’s issues which may either conflict with structural adjustment goals – such as investing more heavily in public services like health and education – or are perceived as limiting the power held by men in the male-dominated political institutions. Furthermore an unresponsive and unaccountable state does not have the institutional frameworks to even allow many issues to be brought to the attention of policy makers, let alone ensure that they are addressed.

Some of the weaknesses of Tanzania’s democratic consolidation can be seen by examining the elections. The elections were fraught with problems, and although many of these can be accounted for by the logistical challenges of running a first national election, there were tampering with results and serious problems with the National Electoral Commission (NEC). The thirteen members of the NEC are appointed by the President and are assisted by a staff of civil servants and organised as an independent department under the President’s Office. Along with monitoring the elections the NEC oversees and monitors the registration of voters and investigates and sets constituency boundaries. Constitutionally the NEC cannot be considered as a non-partisan body, which raises questions about how fairly it can make decisions about constituency numbers and boundaries (West et al. 1994: 31). Making the Registrar of political parties a government appointee raises further questions regarding the fairness of the elections. The Registrar is not required to make public financial information such as parties’ accounts and has kept this information secret and removed from the possibility of public scrutiny.
The election in Zanzibar was grossly mismanaged, international observers have called it unfair and the Civic United Front, who lost by a margin of two percent refused to recognise CCM's victory until August 1998, after a number of their members had been detained under charges of treason for several months. Political unrest continues in Zanzibar. There were also irregularities in Dar es Salaam, where voting had to be repeated the following week. Many of the problems in the Dar polls were administrative – some polls had too few ballot papers, others did not open on time, some stayed open later than the closing time while others closed before voters who had been standing in line waiting had voted. Observers noted some discrepancies in matching the number of voters registered with higher numbers of votes cast. Opposition parties were outraged and considered boycotting the repeat elections. Victor Kemesera, the Executive Secretary of Chadema described his impression of the election.

What election? It was an absolute farce. I stood for a constituency in Arusha and 35,000 were registered to vote and they got 36,000 ballot papers. But come election day, not enough papers. Also, the day after the election I was required to go to France for a meeting. As soon as I left, two days after the election took place, papers appeared. The political polling agents were only paid for the day with no papers. So the next two days there were no representatives to take care of you. In one area here in Dar there were so many papers counted, there were 4,000 more than the number of people who voted. Pressure was on for CCM to stay in. People feared we were there to replace the civil service.

It is likely that individual CCM supporters were responsible for 'assisting' their party, but there is no evidence to support the view that this was in any way encouraged or condoned by the party itself. Nonetheless, clearly standards of fair electoral procedures are not accepted within Tanzania's political culture.

The opposition has been very vocal about abuses during the election and the slowing of democratic reforms. Although they have limited influence in parliament, their
complaints are widely covered in the press and may force changes at least with the NEC before the next elections take place. And while the opposition has limited time allocated to them for speaking in parliament, they are putting their complaints into writing. Victor Kimesera described how the opposition is responding to the election results.

None of us believes Amour [CCM President of Zanzibar] won the election. But we have this situation where we say once the electoral commission announces the result, there is to be no more discussion. But does that give the NEC the right to announce something it knows not to be true because it can’t be questioned? Surely something is wrong there. When Mkapa says the opposition should stop writing, there is no way – he will get many more letters. As long as we are in opposition that is the role we are going to play. We will, as opposition, keep on the pressure. But without support from the institutions and organs that can make a difference the government will ignore it without any financial pinch and throw our letters in the bin.

Election issues were hotly debated in the media, which at times was openly critical of CCM. Discussing the media Ali Ameir Mohamed, the Minister of Home Affairs said,

I am a journalist by background. I used to edit *Uhuru*. I think the press is extra free here. Sometimes I wonder if all Tanzanians were conscious of our libel laws these papers would be out of business because they over-exercise their freedom here in Tanzania. Just before and after the last party meetings, the things in the papers concerning us coming from Zanzibar. “Ali Amer Mohamed Not Fit for Home Affairs Minister” – in that editorial they were saying I committed treason. This is an offence with a heavy penalty, if I did this I wouldn’t be a Minister, not even an MP, you can’t qualify for office if you are a criminal. I went to lawyers, but decided not to waste my time with foolish people. The editor is so irresponsible, he thinks he is free to say anything.

Members of the opposition do not view the press in the same light. According to Victor Kimesera, “The media is scared. They can be got at. They want to sell their papers, so scandals go under the carpet. Editors get locked up. Or they are in and out of court for months and then the story just dies.” Since the election a number of newspapers have been banned and editors detained for stories discussing the ongoing Zanzibar crisis and for criticising the government. This does not indicate willingness on the part of the
government to allow public debate on issues it views as sensitive. The Newspapers Act, cited as unconstitutional in the Nyalali Report, remains in effect and the Ministry of Information has proposed a bill to further regulate the media. This bill, which for the time has been shelved due to pressure from journalists and donors, would establish a Tanzania Media Council with the authority to register journalists, shut down any paper and jail reporters without the right to legal representation (West et al. 1994: 99). The media is an important linkage institution between the state and civil society, and its freedom is intrinsic to supporting democracy.

While problems with the elections should not be overstated and observers agree that, at least on the mainland, they were conducted in a free and fair manner, elements which indicate an unwillingness to relinquish undemocratic controls have disturbing implications which affect the abilities for women to have an impact at the state level. An undemocratic climate is less conducive to raising issues at the policy level where they may be without support among political leaders. The democratic reforms, which have allowed greater levels of freedom of association, have encouraged the development of the women’s movement, but if this movement were to criticise the government too strongly and be seen as a political liability it, could be silenced. However, at present this is not the case.

4.4 Middle-class women’s strategies

Despite the limitations to Tanzania’s reform process, there is no question that the environment for organising groups in civil society has improved dramatically. This can be observed quantitatively by the increase in both the numbers of groups and in their
rising membership. Women's groups have been especially active, organising to address a wide range of issues with a variety of strategies. Many of these groups are interested in influencing government policies, one of the most promising levels for reaching strategic empowerment goals. Groups are composed of women who support different political parties and they all see their groups as non-partisan. A member of the Women's Advancement Trust (WAT) explained, "I wouldn't like people to be involved in politics with this group, that would involve conflicts with people going for various benefits for themselves. It's better to be neutral so that everyone can benefit, if you involve politics there will be a separation of people." Although the Chair of WAT is an MP for CCM, the group does not associate itself with any political party or feel party affiliation is relevant to their activities. Even the Union of Tanzanian Women (UWT), which is the women's wing of CCM perceives itself as non-political in many of its functions. A member of SUWATA, a branch of the UWT stated, "I'm not political, it is the intercourse with the people in their activities that is important. When we go into the communities we make sure from the start that people should not take us a political entity for CCM, we are for everyone."

This non-political approach has advantages and disadvantages for furthering women's empowerment issues. Opposition parties are not rooted in civil society and will remain unresponsive structures unless they become more engaged with groups in civil society. Aligning themselves with opposition parties is one way women could pressure for their concerns to become central at the political level. Instead women focus their lobbying efforts on the current government, which gives them an audience, but it is uncertain how much real pressure they can exert. By remaining non-politically aligned
however women avoid conflict within their group and have more appeal to the women in communities they hope to assist. Furthermore, operating with networks which are not based on ethnic or political differences, women’s groups may contribute to the formation of an alternative gender focused discourse within society which could challenge that operating at the state level through indirect means.

Aili Mari Tripp has argued that women’s organisations, because of their autonomous non-political nature, are well placed to challenge clientelistic practices tied to the state.

The very existence of independent women’s organizations opens up new possibilities for women’s movements that have been historically dominated by associations (women’s wings, women’s leagues, etc.) created by and/or controlled by the ruling party or the state and fuelled by patronage. The new associations allow for an expansion of programs of action that can accommodate not only economic mobilization and welfare concerns but also new efforts to increase the number of women involved in politics and to promote women’s legal rights, human rights, and various political freedoms (Tripp 1996: 34).

Women’s groups have members that cut across particularistic social cleavages often exacerbated by patronage networks in formal political parties and operate with high levels of participation among members. Middle-class women’s groups are building a broad based women’s movement with a non-patrimonial character which has the potential to challenge and break down clientalistic ties of women to state organs.

In their assessment of the democratic transition middle-class women feel that although some positive developments have occurred, many problems remain. Feddy Mwanga, a member of SWAAT, commented, “the multiparty system is incorrectly implementing its plans and policies. It is much too young, it is still early. It is comprised of people with different approaches and strategies. They need to be better co-ordinated.”
Middle-class women strongly support the transition to a multiparty system, but feel that as of yet little has changed. The opposition is weak, ineffectual and ignores women and the government is not committed to furthering reforms. However, most women are optimistic about future reforms and believe that the opposition will become stronger in time. Hambasia Maeda, chair of the women's group Growing Old is to Grow, already sees signs of positive change.

With the multiparty system there will be changes for the better, this makes a challenge, it’s different from just running things as boss. Even if you listen to the first parliamentary meeting, it really impressed me. The members were just thrown in, the opposition member was saying that something was being done in the procedure illegally, and explained why, and the speaker agreed. I like his response, they are not blind anymore, before nobody would have said this, like the speaker saying, yes you are right, we have to swear in again, starting with me, I was very happy about that. CCM is trying to pick as much as possible at those things that are frustrating the people and correct them. Even Mrema says he is happy with the policy the CCM is taking. Now the CCM is doing this, it’s what we wanted. There will be good changes. Tax collection measures have been started. It is going to be slow but changes will arrive from somewhere. Even things like with the state house. Now people do not just march in, now you must go respectfully with an appointment, before it was just used as someone’s house, this is a good change. Not that I’m pro CCM, these changes are needed whichever party is there, what we want is progress. Even a change in cabinet is change, new blood.

While most shared this optimism, a number of women did not expect any change from multipartyism. Cathleen Sekwao from the Tanzanian Association of Women Professionals in Science and Technology (TAWOSTE) is one of these. “From the multiparty system I expect talk but no changes. There are no actions to back these statements. We can’t just move by talking, and it is not even indicated in the budgets that they are trying to move seriously. Women are far behind despite the fact that the President was once Minister for Science and Technology.” In terms of the economic
reforms in the direction of structural adjustment and privatisation most women were very critical, but felt the situation was unavoidable.

In the early to mid-eighties groups faced some difficulties with registering, and felt that the government was resisting the expansion of both their groups and the democratic rights in general. Most however were optimistic that this would alter with time due to pressure from civil society, the opposition, and foreign donors. Many, such as Maria Shaba from Udananda felt that changes had come about too quickly and Tanzanian society was still unable to respond.

The whole idea of multipartyism is good, but its like we did it to please others, not ourselves. We should have gone through two or three years of voter education. People should know and discuss all of the system options, advantages and disadvantages and know what accountability means so people will know what to do with multipartyism. Then participation would be more real. Everything went too fast and many ideals were not reached.

Women's groups recognise that they have a role to play in pressuring the government to continue reforms, but feel they are not yet experienced enough to know how to exert this pressure or what balance to strike with establishing a relationship with the government. Increased opportunities to organise and be heard are seen as positive developments, but women question the government's commitment to allowing them the space to affect real transformations.

A member of the Journalist Environmental Association (JET) believes that the momentum of reforms cannot be stopped. She commented with reference to the freedom of the press, “It has made a big difference, especially with so many journalist NGOs catering to different interests. The government is not happy with this, but they can't stop it now, it's too late.” Another media organisation, TAMWA, had a difficult time
registering in the mid-eighties, but now feel that the government not only accepts them but also supports them.

Initially the government was suspicious of us, and there was a delay in registration. They wrote to the Tanzania Journalist Association asking why there was a need for another. They did security checks on our members and they wanted to know why we had to be all women. ...We have a healthy relationship with the government, at least now. It took us one year to register. The government perceived journalist organisations as a danger.

Middle-class women have mixed views on how much difference the multiparty system will make, but they are all supportive of the idea in principle. Their concerns are related to CCM’s commitment to the reform process and the weakness of the opposition. Most are strongly critical of economic liberalisation however, and believe structural adjustment is having negative effects, particularly for women.

Women feel their level of influence is weakest when it comes to economic policy. They are strongly critical of structural adjustment, but feel these measures are beyond the influence of civil society as external forces are dictating them. Marjorie Mbilinyi of the Tanzanian Gender Networking Programme sees a strong connection between structural adjustment measures and political issues.

There is a real issue of the lack of a political voice, which is undermining especially women and youth. I think it is related to issues of structural adjustment, which is undermining the whole capacity of the economy. It becomes hard to say what is economic and what is political. Issues of women’s access to resources, decision making, all the problems of transparency, accountability and the democratisation of government at local levels – we have to look at international issues, UN agencies, USAID. This is the issue. We here feel the impact of global politics much more than people in the North.

Few women had anything positive to say about economic liberalisation. Mrs. Mrutu, chair of BACAWA summed up a common view:
This free market, no, I hate it. I was a businesswoman in tailoring. I borrowed a T-shirt print machine, but now a T-shirt from Taiwan is cheaper so I can’t sell in the market. I have seen this in Kenya; you can get everything from outside, even second-hand underwear. We need to make an adjustment on that free market.

With the exception of the Tanzanian Gender Networking Programme, which tries to link global issues, including structural adjustment, into their analysis, middle-class women’s groups are not attempting to influence the state’s economic policies. Their strategic concerns are limited to the political realm and they do not link the two reform trajectories together as part of the same process.

The central reason for this is that they do not believe the government has any control over economic policy. Pili Mtambalike of TAMWA explained this position.

The economic reforms have been based on the wishes of the World Bank and the IMF, all this open market. A growth in GDP doesn’t represent the common person. ... When we lobby the government their response is usually to agree, be complacent and do nothing. It is not a threat to them if we criticise these reforms, they know the impacts, it’s not a secret, they have been well documented. There have been so many studies; the implementers know what the consequences are, so they are not trying to silence groups like ours.

Middle-class women’s groups focus their efforts at altering state behaviour on political issues, such as increasing women’s representation, amending the constitution and laws that discriminate against women (such as the marriage and inheritance laws), and pushing women’s issues into political discussion. They attempt to do this through strategies of lobbying and raising public awareness. Both of these strategies may result in strategic gains for women in the long terms, but it is a slow process and it is often difficult to pinpoint the sources of changes that do occur.

Few groups bother to try and obtain financial support from the government and those that do rarely succeed. As explained by Feddy Mwanga of SWAAT, “We have
applied to the government for assistance. We had an educational program in secondary schools and got a small amount for that. But the government is also constrained. How can you go to a hungry person to ask for food?" Groups rely on donor support and membership fees to carry out their activities. While they would not turn down government assistance were it available, they want to remain as autonomous as possible. While engaging in lobbying activities, women’s groups stress the need to remain autonomous from the state.

The most common strategy for influencing the government is by inviting representatives – usually ministers or officials with the Ministry of Community Development, Women’ Affairs and Children – to attend workshops and seminars organised by women’s groups. This is done in the hope that the information they provide and the issues they raise will be acted on voluntarily by the government. It is uncertain, however, whether the government attends these workshops and meetings in order to become informed or rather they attend in order to monitor group’s activities.

Most groups believe that the government is genuinely interested in their input, and even reciprocate by inviting them to government workshops, but they do not think they are having a great deal of impact. Some groups feel that since there is little impact from lobbying techniques, it is not worthwhile to bother. A representative from the Tanzania Women Volunteers Association explained, “We don’t lobby the government. It is more effective for specific individuals to do this. We would just be seen as a pressure group for women, and they don’t take women’s groups seriously. Few things happen, there is not real action when women’s groups submit proposals.” Some groups, such as the Medical Women’s Association, have found they get a better response when dealing
with women in the government. “We can lobby but we are not a strong voice, we need to
do more but we do lobby for some things. But the government is not that democratic,
they don’t listen to us. The Minister of Health is a woman, she is more helpful, she has
given us some money to look at some routine data collected at clinics to look for specific
gender problems.” Groups also recognise that their success in lobbying the government
is limited by their own inexperience with this role. Feddy Mwanga of SWAAT admitted,
“if you use lobbying skills by influencing opposition parties you can succeed, but these
skills are still limited in the country, we are not that strong and we are scared.”

A large number of groups have members who are part of the government, either
as civil servants or elected representatives. Groups do not see this as at all relevant to
their influence at the state level. For most groups direct lobbying is only a small part of
their activities, they rarely receive financial assistance from the government and they
prefer to run their projects without government involvement, feeling that this would
impinge on their autonomy and limit their effectiveness. Ideally they would like to see
the government respond to women’s issues by making legal and constitutional changes
and demonstrate a greater concern for women’s needs, but they do not want their
activities to be too closely linked with the state. While the state is clearly a central
component for actualising strategic interests, women’s groups are weak when it comes to
having a direct impact upon it.

Women’s groups have some influence on the state indirectly, either through
raising public awareness of gender issues or challenging legal discrimination in the
courts. Media groups like the women’s desk of the Journalist Environmental Association
(JET) and the Tanzania Media Women’s Association (TAMWA) raise women’s issues in
the media and write editorials on what action the government is and is not taking to address them. By this strategy they hope the government will be forced into action because of public awareness of the issue. In addition, raising public awareness of the activities of women's groups has an influence on overall cultural attitudes, which affect those holding public office as they participate in the same cultural milieu. Groups which operate women's legal aid clinics not only provide services that the government is unable to, but select cases which may set new precedents in favour of women. There are wide discrepancies in Tanzanian law, as the constitution has not been amended sufficiently to conform to the new Bill of Rights. Women lawyers attempt to argue cases that will increase judgements in favour of the more democratic Bill of Rights.

A number of groups were also involved in voter education programs, to raise women's awareness of political issues. Some of these programs concentrated on identifying where the different parties stood on women's issues. Others, such as those undertaken by the Baby Care Women's Association (BACAWA) in their women's bank clubs, encouraged women to vote for women candidates, regardless of which party they were standing for.

BACAWA did a voter education program for the women in this village. We did it independently of other programs. These women were quite mixed in terms of political affiliation. I am a member of NCCR. There were many NCCR supporters. We encouraged them to vote for women. Voter education made a big difference in letting them know they have a choice, they are empowered, they like to say how they feel. Our voter education ran three days a week for two weeks, two and a half hours per session. We did it with our own methods, discussions were relaxed, we were not trying to scare them, not like other programs where they all sit facing the board.

Larger programs, such as the one organised by the Tanzania Gender Networking Program in conjunction with the Eastern and Southern African Universities Research Programme
(ESAURP) focused not only on issues of voting, but educating women about their rights within the new political system.

This program outlined five approaches. Firstly it sought to encourage discussion among women on the issues that concerned them and which contestants would likely be most responsive and accountable. Secondly it explored with the women strategies of networking, lobbying and advocacy with intermediary organisations. Thirdly it encouraged women to organise within their communities to establish a gender perspective on local issues. The program distributed voter education materials produced by a number of organisations, such as ESAURP (ESAURP 1994). And finally, using a participatory approach, the program tried to help women identify community-based resources and skills to enhance development (Mosha 1995). This voter education program went beyond issues of the coming election to attempt to draw women into the broader political interests of gender and development. Within communities they discussed problems identified by women – culture, health, corruption – and attempted to identify strategic solutions that would help women encourage democracy at the local and household levels, as well as from the state.

Thus women's groups, while firmly autonomous, are confronting the state through strategies of direct lobbying and raising public awareness. While it is difficult to measure their actual impact, most observers see the government as taking a greater interest in women's issues. There have been some changes to the Marriage Act (raising the legal age of marriage for women) and the introduction of new laws against sexual offences with a new Sexual Offices Bill. Laws that limit the government's power however, such as constitutional amendments granting greater rights and freedoms, are not
forthcoming. Amending laws that would displease groups whose support the government finds more significant are also being resisted, as in the case of the inheritance laws. Women’s groups are achieving some strategic gains at the state level, but they remain limited. The project of creating an oppositional public discourse, which would challenge patrimonial and unaccountable state practices is a long-term strategy and has yet to be realised.

4.4 Informal Sector Strategies

While middle-class women are trying to pressure the state to continue reforms and deepen democracy, women working in the informal sector are also having an impact at the state level. These women are less interested in increasing political freedoms, and more concerned with the economic conditions, which affect their daily survival strategies and business activities.

Two main perspectives were evident regarding the transformation to a multiparty system. Most women, like their middle-class counterparts, were in favour of the move and were hopeful that there would be positive change. For example, a member of the Gezaulole women’s group stated: “Multipartyism is good because the opposition brings a challenge to CCM so whenever there is a mistake it can be rectified because others can watch and tell CCM when they are wrong.”

While the switch to a competitive party system was supported, most of these women felt that CCM should stay in power and that the opposition’s value was to be found in keeping them in line, not replacing them.

Forty percent of women felt that multiparty politics was either unnecessary or would only bring problems. Many of these women believed the change was only the
result of foreign pressure and was not suited to Tanzania. "We just want a single-party, you can’t change the people, you should just change the person not the party, nothing can be changed. ... If we were really independent we would not have these parties, not as our policy. We are forced to adopt it from donors." Some of these women felt that the change was merely unnecessary because there were no differences among the parties.

It is better to have just one party and if change is needed then change the leader because the parties are all the same so it is just too complicated and not necessary, with multipartyism nothing will be changed. CHADEMA blames CCM, but we don’t see that anything is different with them. Others believed that opposition parties would have a negative effect. "I’m against the opposition because it brings misunderstandings, there will be conflict and the opposition parties don’t know what they are doing."

Many women continue to support CCM out of loyalty or because they are the party most familiar to them. "It’s not a good idea, its better to stay with CCM. CCM has given us assistance and since we started this business it’s been CCM. Before that it was TANU. The other parties have no place here." This support was often combined with cynicism about the viability of alternatives. "The opposition can’t bring any changes. If you are rich you are rich. If you are poor you are poor. With CCM you can just get on with your life and get up and find food. We don’t expect, even in ten years, to change to another party. We are with CCM." Despite the belief among some of the opposition that women are naïve and can be easily swayed, women were unconvinced that the opposition had anything new to offer or could be believed. "The other parties are just making empty promises, just shouting at CCM, they use bad language which leads to misunderstanding. NCCR is promising to give loans to women so that they can get more members for their party. It’s just a play."
In terms of the reform process as a whole, poor women find the economic reforms most significant, and tend to support them, in contrast to middle-class women. Those women who support multiparty politics often do so because they see competitive politics as part of the same process which brought changes in the economy.

There will be changes from multipartyism for the better. There will be pressure from the opposition parties and they will push for development and every party will be working to compete for the next election and CCM will also change. CCM is very strong and the opposition is weak, that is how they are different. With Nyerere there were not clothes and no food and people were chasing after cars for food. With Mwinyi all this ended. It’s too early to make a judgement about Mkapa but I expect that there will be more changes for the better.9

When women were asked what changes they would like to see, they mentioned economic progress, fewer restrictions on carrying out their business activities, increased credit opportunities, and a greater availability of items such as televisions. Few mentioned any changes that were related to gender concerns.

In the mid-1980s, coinciding with Mwinyi’s administration, the economy was significantly liberalised. This was the time when most of these women began to enter into business and see improvements in the availability of commodities. A woman selling baked goods in Tabata with five others described how she felt Tanzania had changed.

Under Nyerere there were queues, we had to fight ignorance, disease and poverty. People were given education, established industries, but were not co-operating in business and industries collapsed, but the policies of Nyerere were good. With Mwinyi he ended that policy of Nyerere that there should be a closed economy. Nyerere sent students abroad for education so they could return and run their own industries. But people were dishonest. So in the Mwinyi administration these things we lacked under Nyerere became available: soap, clothes, good rice and maize flour. Mwinyi found the economy of the country totally distorted, so he had the task of recovery, that’s why he sold the industries at such cheap prices, so he could help, he allowed people to import, anyone with the money can import and see the commodity also. Mwinyi was polite and left people to be responsible on their own without supervising, with Nyerere he was supervising them.10
Women's support for economic reforms is focused on greater freedoms to carry out business activities and a greater availability of goods. While women did mention that costs were rising and they had to struggle to make ends meet most felt the benefits of change outweighed these factors. The reforms they most supported were those that gave them greater distance from the state and created an improved environment for running their businesses.

Women were more critical about reforms when issues of licensing or taxation were raised. The following comments were made by a woman living in Kinondoni.

There have been no changes since the election, only problems. It's the fourth month but nothing has been done. Only taxation is high. There is a flood every year in this area, so what is the importance of paying taxes, but we still are. Prices are rising and when it rains the whole house floods, two feet high. But I pay tax. The government needs to come and make trenches. Every rainy season we have to shift ourselves, we have already made plans for next year. I have told my MP, but she has done nothing. When I was chair of our UWT I went and told her, but it was I not our MP who helped move people when the rains came.¹¹

Appealing to the government is seen as futile and women tend to rely on their own efforts to meet their needs.

Women who had received financial support from the government saw this as an indication that the government was showing an increased interest in women's issues, but while they take advantage of these programs they do not exert any influence over their adoption or their management. Women in the informal sector are in no way attempting to directly challenge or influence state policies, economic or political. They exercise strategies of exit rather than voice and only engage with the state if they feel they can secure financial assistance. Furthermore, the relationship between women with loans and
the Ministry of Community Development is strongly imbued with patrimonial ties, favouring women with UWT connections.

Where women do have an impact on the state, resulting in some strategic gains, is with forms of passive resistance or non-confrontation based around strategies of exit and non-compliance. By organising into groups to avoid city militia and licensing restrictions women, along with other informal sector actors, are forcing the state to rethink its attitude toward this sector. Aili Mari Tripp has shown that the informal sector in Tanzania is made up of numerous groups based on common trades and locations that have created governance mechanisms which operate outside of state controls (Tripp 1997). However, these groups do not consciously pursue gender based strategies, and the gender interests that have been addressed by the government – such as credit programs for women – are practical rather than strategic. The real impact informal sector activities have had on the state is a reorientation from controlling this sector through coercive means to plans to adopt corporatist structures of control.

The new National Policy for Microenterprise and Informal Sector Promotion indicates that the government recognises the importance of informal sector employment, but promotes a new strategy for controlling this sector rather than including it in the process of governance. The successful outcome of plans to institutionalise groups whose whole purpose is to avoid the state is dubious. Placed in a framework with little independent power, these groups are likely to be coopted out of existence, while new ones may emerge outside of the state controlled framework to take their place. At best informal sector groups would have a similar structural position as middle-class organisations – the government would listen to their concerns but implement reforms
only when their own control is not threatened. As the priorities of poor women are directly linked to economic policy it is unlikely that they would be able to successfully challenge government policies.

4.5 Conclusions
Tanzania’s reform process has created possibilities for new governance relations to emerge between the state and civil society, with implications for the empowerment of women. Cultural attitudes are shifting towards a greater awareness of women’s issues and acceptance of women holding higher positions in the government. As women’s representation at the political level increases and the activities of the women’s movement are publicised women’s concerns are being addressed more seriously than in the past. However, problems remain with the government’s lack of commitment to furthering democratic reforms, the weakness of the opposition, and an economic climate that is moving the government towards policies of greater control at the expense of fostering a legitimacy based on responsiveness and consent. Women’s interests have not yet been recognised by opposition parties, with the possible exception of NCCR-Maguezi, as a salient issue worth pursuing.

Both political and economic reforms have created new spaces for women to organise. Political reforms have had the greatest impact for middle-class women who are joining together to address women’s practical and strategic gender interests. The achievement of strategic interests will require transformations at the level of the state. While women have been successful in empowering themselves, their ability to pressure the state to broaden participation and change laws and practices which discriminate
against women have been limited by the state's unwillingness to relinquish control. The growth in women's representation at the state level and acceptance of gender issues as important may result in more action being taken. Middle-class women may also be able to increase popular pressure for reforms through their networking and use of the media and court system. Their autonomous non-ascriptive style of organising may further challenge structures of patrimonialism.

The activities of women in the informal sector are best characterised by state avoidance and non-compliance. These women are primarily trying to meet practical rather than strategic gender needs. Nonetheless, the rapid growth in numbers of women working in the informal sector, along with the growth of this sector in general, has resulted in new government responses. New relationships emerging between the state and the informal sector are still founded on the state's desire for control however, and do not address gender in any strategic fashion.
Notes

1 See Appendix B for dates of interviews.

2 Member of Gezaulole (Try and see) in Somangila, Temeke, interviewed on March 22 1996.

3 Member of Kalmati Kajai in Somangila, Temeke, interviewed on March 22 1996.

4 Member of Kaloleni (Go and See) in Somangila, Temeke, interviewed on March 22 1996.

5 Member of Fadhila (Thank you) in Manzese, Kinondoni, interviewed on April 11 1996.

6 Member of Umoja ni Nguu (to be together is strong) in Mwananyamala, Kinondoni, interviewed on April 17 1996.

7 Member of Chagamoto (Challenge) in Tuangoma, Temeke, interviewed on March 20 1996.

8 Member of Mbalizi in Mwanayamala, Kinondoni, interviewed on April 18 1996.

9 Member of Mama KU in Tandale, Kinondoni, interviewed on April 9 1996.

10 Interview on March 7 1996 in Tabata, Ilala.

11 Member of Huruma (Sympathy) in Mwanyamala, Kinondoni, interviewed on April 18 1996.
Chapter 5
Democratisation and Women’s Empowerment: A Comparative Analysis of Kenya, Zimbabwe and Zambia

5.0. Introduction

The reform process in Tanzania is having a tangible impact on the opportunities for women to develop and address issues of gender-based empowerment. Comparing this case with other countries that are also undergoing some measure of political reform helps to reveal important variables which make the Tanzanian case unique and which facilitate or limit the formulation and achievement of empowerment objectives. The theoretical frameworks used by DAWN and Moser, which strive to make sense of what structures and strategies lead towards empowerment for women, are unable to fully capture the significant gains in recasting gender relations which Tanzanian women of all classes are making. Not only do these frameworks fail to account for the manner in which practical strategies can lead to empowerment, but they cannot provide assistance in understanding the significance of the political, economic, and cultural environments within which women are organising.

This study of the empowerment potentials found in Tanzanian women’s associations in the context of political and economic liberalisation has traced two lines of understanding the factors which condition women’s empowerment. Firstly the theoretical understandings of empowerment employed by DAWN with Moser’s distinctions between practical and strategic gender interests have been used in order to understand the forms women’s organisations take and assess how far they go in helping women attain greater levels of empowerment. Secondly, the actual experiences of
Tanzanian women's organisations, as they work together and operate in the context of Tanzania's reform process, have been analysed in order to both point to weaknesses in these theoretical frameworks and to highlight additional variables impacting on women's abilities to address and meet empowerment objectives.

Although multiparty elections were not held in Tanzania until 1995, political restrictions on organising and on the media were eased in the mid-1980s, coinciding with the presidency of Mwinyi and the adoption of structural adjustment policies supported by the IMF. During this period a remarkable growth occurred in middle-class women's associations. High levels of co-operation and cohesion among groups and frequent contact with representatives from the government characterise the middle-class women's movement. While the government may often ignore the recommendations of these groups, they have been successful in getting women's issues into mainstream public discourse and are likely responsible for some of the existing state level support, among men as well as women, for the need to address women's concerns. Even the UWT, most closely comparable to women's wings of ruling parties in other countries, exercises a high level of autonomy and feels free to criticise government policies and run projects with strategic and well as welfare oriented goals. However, despite the emphasis of many middle-class groups on the position of poor women, the women's movement is unable to reach most of these women, grants priority to different empowerment objectives, and is primarily focused on those in urban areas. Insofar as these limitations stem from insufficient finances, the situation is unlikely to improve. So while some of the practical needs of poorer less educated women are being met through these
associations, it is middle-class women who are becoming most empowered through this movement.

While middle-class women have spoken out against those structural adjustment measures that have negative impacts for women, they have had no success in influencing the government to address these concerns. They do not put much priority on attempting to lobby the government in this area as they feel the government has no space to alter structural adjustment due to pressures from the IMF and donor community. More success has been achieved in having legislation passed that addresses women's legal and political issues

Poor Tanzanian women have been more greatly affected by economic reforms than political developments, and many of these women do not even support the change to a multiparty system. On some levels economic reforms have assisted them, and in contrast to middle-class women, they are widely supportive of the changes in the economy which began under Mwinyi's administration. Women and men in the informal sector have been able to influence policy through strategies of non-compliance, but these struggles have not been cast in gender terms. While they still face harassment over business licences, this has lessened and they have much more freedom to take on economic roles than they did under Nyerere. The negative aspects of women being forced to increase their workload and provide services once seen as the domain of the state should not be discounted; however, women working in the informal sector feel that the benefits of financial autonomy and the increased availability of consumer goods indicate an overall improvement in their lives. These women are forming into associations to secure loans, to assist with savings, and to support one another at work,
often in response to licensing restrictions. Poor women's practical needs are being addressed through increased participation in the cash economy and group strategies of savings and credit procurement and some strategic success is evident through a restructuring of relations at the household level. In addition, their increased presence in the economy may be contributing to an overall change in social attitudes reflecting a greater recognition of the important economic role played by women. Nonetheless, poor Tanzanian women remain largely excluded from the women's movement that has emerged among middle-class women.

Political democratisation has facilitated the development of a middle-class women's movement while economic liberalisation, despite increasing women's workload and financial insecurity, has led to a greater ability among some poor women to manage their own business activities and alter gender relations at the family level. At the same time, pressures on the government to meet structural adjustment commitments limit women's groups abilities to exert much influence over the shape of these reforms and women are unable to develop viable strategic responses to economic conditions.

Women remain underrepresented at the state and government levels, despite affirmative action programmes, but the Tanzanian political climate is becoming increasingly gender-sensitive. Women candidates have been successful in electoral competition - proving the electorate is willing to vote for women running for CCM and opposition parties. Women's groups are encouraging this by advocating voting for women. Women who hold government and state positions are increasingly vocal in speaking out on gender issues. Although opposition parties remain weak in addressing women's concerns, the main opposition party, NCCR-Maguezi, is popular among women.
and may build on this support by emphasising women’s concerns in parliament and in the next electoral campaign.

The theoretical framework developed by DAWN is unable to incorporate factors related to the political environment in which groups operate, which mediate women’s abilities to address and meet empowerment goals. By attempting to provide a framework which can be applied generally to all women’s groups in the developing world the DAWN model does not take into account differences and changes in political environments. As the case of Tanzania shows, political environment is a central factor in the strength and capacities of women’s groups. In addition this framework describes only middle-class women’s organisations, despite DAWN’s stated objective of raising the profile of poorer women’s voices and addressing their concerns.

Furthermore, the DAWN classification framework and the characterisations of strategic and practical gender interests are insufficient to account for the many of the strengths of women’s associations. While individual groups may have structurally-based weaknesses, because they operate together as a movement and many groups take on more than one role the weaknesses identified by DAWN often do not exist or are overcome by the movement as a whole. The use of practical and strategic distinctions help differentiate between strategies’ likelihood of achieving empowering outcomes, but this dichotomy, as formulated by Moser, does not recognise that practical strategies may also have empowering outcomes. As such, it undervalues the activities of poorer women, which are more often practically based, as well as some of the practical strategies undertaken by middle-class women.
Introducing a comparative analysis into this discussion provides a means for better elucidating the social and political variables that contribute to and limit women’s empowerment potentials. The countries of Kenya, Zimbabwe and Zambia have been chosen for this comparison because of their range in levels of democratic consolidation – with Kenya as the least democratic example, Zimbabwe showing some signs of a return to a single-party state, and Zambia most closely equivalent to Tanzania in terms of institutionalising a multiparty political system, although less willing to grant freedom and autonomy to groups in civil society. Women in all of these countries have active associational lives, although with the exception of Kenya, women’s urban associations have received little research attention, particularly as they relate to issues of democratisation. Examining these cases reveals the importance of Tanzania’s newly re-established right to associate together for women’s organisations to reach empowerment objectives. In addition this examination highlights the significance of co-operation and shared objectives among groups, which can be undermined by ethnic, class, and politically partisan divisions.

There is a dearth of research material available linking women’s empowerment to political reforms, particularly with regard to urban class differences in women’s empowerment understandings and experience. This makes it difficult to compare these cases in terms of the numbers of groups operating, increases in women’s involvement in such groups, or adequately discuss the more informal organisational approaches among poor women operating outside of mainstream women’s movements. However, some factors can be pointed to which affect the capabilities of women’s organisations to achieve higher levels of empowerment.
The main features of the Tanzanian women's movement which distinguish it from those in Kenya, Zimbabwe, and Zambia are not the high levels of group involvement, the issues they take on, or the structural forms of their groups. It is both the remarkable cohesiveness and co-operation of the middle-class women's movement and the political autonomy and support groups have which allow Tanzanian women to overcome some of the problems evident in other countries.

5.1 The Women's movement in Kenya: Disunity in an unfavourable political environment

Research on women's groups in Kenya has found that women's abilities to reach empowerment goals remain limited, despite continued high levels of Kenyan women's participation in gender-based organisations (House-Midamba 1996; Udvardy 1998; Nzomo 1994). Urban women in Kenya face similar problems to those in Tanzania. They are concentrated in marginal positions within the labour force, are over-represented in the informal sector and under-represented in the formal sector of employment. Even in the same types of work, women consistently earn less than men (Njiro, 1993: 74). Women are under-represented at the political level and have difficulty in having their concerns addressed. Despite President Moi having presided over Kenya's return to multiparty competition, he has resisted democratisation and it would be a stretch to characterise Kenya's system as even representative of a "limited" or "fragile" democracy. High levels of state control and manipulation, often involving violence, characterise the electoral process and activities of groups in civil society. The most significant development for women in Kenya has been the state control over women's organisations, which were once
more free to organise autonomously than was the case in Tanzania. As noted by Bessie House-Midamba, "...rule under Moi has led to a deterioration of both the strength and effectiveness of a host of voluntaristic associations, and their autonomy has been seriously reduced" (1996: 293).

The oldest and largest women’s group in Kenya is *Maendeleo Ya Wanawake* (MYWO, Progress for Women). The history of this group demonstrates the significance of political environment for organising women. The group was formed in the colonial era by British women and emphasised women’s welfare and family roles. After independence the group suffered from a decline in membership, but in the 1970s was revitalised and became quite militant in its attacks on marriage and divorce laws and the legal status of women. In addition it had some success in pressuring the government for economic assistance to finance programs for women.

In 1986 MYWO faced a financial scandal and a government probe found evidence of financial mismanagement and corruption. The government response was to dissolve the group’s executive committee and place the group under the control of the Ministry of Culture and Social Services. Thus MYMO was integrated into KANU and its ability to criticise the government curtailed. Although MYMO was made autonomous again in 1992, its leadership remains supportive of the government despite its grassroots reach through its women’s clubs. Furthermore, it has an unsupportive and competitive relationship with other women’s groups, indicative of the fragmented character of the women’s movement in Kenya. This can be contrasted with Tanzania, where the UWT works with other groups (with the exception only of BAWATA) and despite being affiliated with CCM is able to exercise a fair level of autonomy.
The National Council of Women in Kenya (NCWK) was founded ten years after MYWO in 1964 to co-ordinate the activities of women’s groups in Kenya, including those of MYWO. Like MYWO this group has experienced a gradual decline in its effectiveness, with its most vibrant period being in the later years of the Kenyatta administration. The reasons for its decline in effectiveness are varied. Firstly it is perceived by many as an elitist organisation with predominantly Kikuyu membership. (Issues of ethnicity permeate the Kenyan women’s movement, unlike in Tanzania where they are absent. However, a class division among women’s activities is present in both countries.) Secondly, the government-established Women’s Bureau has taken over many of its functions. Finally, the rivalry between NCWK and MYWO led to a break in their affiliation in 1981 and the resignation of Wangari Maathai from NCWK’s leadership reduced both the group’s visibility and effectiveness. The group’s decline may be traced to the Moi regime’s involvement in heightening dissension among women in the two national groups, favouring MYWO, increasing distrust towards the Kikuyu in general, and harassing women like Maathai who are vocal in their criticisms of government policy.

Thus the Moi regime neutralised MYWO through co-optation and NCWK through repression and discrediting its leadership, and in the process exacerbated overall fragmentation and disunity within the women’s movement. Maria Nzomo is not optimistic regarding the future for women’s groups in Kenya:

The strategy of focusing support on one or two women’s organizations and denying it to others, is likely to weaken and further fragment an already divided and fragile women’s movement in Kenya. The conflicts and rivalries that have been so common among the leadership of the national women’s organizations are likely to increase, thus postponing indefinitely the development of a relatively cohesive women’s movement that could form the
basis of effective women’s participation in public decision-making (Nzomo 1994: 211).

While Kenyan women have a long history of organisation, political and ethnic factors undermine their ability to work together and address strategic interests.

Another prominent women’s group in Kenya is the Green Belt Movement, which emerged from NCWK under the direction of Wangari Maathai in 1977. While the central purpose of this group is to address the environmental issue of desertification, the group also works towards income generation for women and trains women to cultivate seedlings. While these may seem fairly benign apolitical goals, the group has come into confrontation with the government on many occasions. This is due to its focus on empowerment for women - which has led to the challenge of political and social institutions - and because its environmental concerns are often in conflict with government policies, such as dam construction, evicting forest dwellers, or clearing forests (House-Midamba 1996: 299).

Although a grassroots organisation built around predominantly poor rural women, the Green Belt Movement is closely associated with Maathai, the most recognised figure in the Kenyan women’s movement. Her activities, within the NCWK, the Green Belt Movement, as part of the opposition FORD party, and as an independent figure, have put her in direct confrontation with the state on many occasions. Despite receiving death threats and facing numerous instances of intimidation and arrest, she has had some successes. However, these successes can be attributed to her personal commitment and determination rather than the strength of a national women’s movement, as she has rarely had the support of women’s groups she is not directly involved with. MYWO was even instrumental in having Maathai evicted from KANU in 1989.
As in Tanzania, Kenya has a number of other middle-class women’s groups, such as the African Women’s Development and Communication Network (FEMNET) which focuses on broadening gender awareness in Kenyan society and the Kenyan chapter of the research-oriented Association of African Women in Research and Development (AAWORD). The Kenyan chapter of the International Federation of Women Lawyers provides legal aid, challenges discriminatory laws, and advocates legal protection for women and children. The League of Women Voters provides voter education programmes for women, and the Anti-rape Organisation runs educational and policy programmes dealing with violence against women and provides support for victims of assault. Despite the existence of these groups, the Kenyan political environment is a major constraint on the operation of women’s organisations and precludes them from involvement in matters seen as political, further limiting women’s political participation (Nzomo 1994).

For example, while some voter education did take place in Kenya, as in Tanzania, because women’s groups in Kenya are prohibited from being “political” they were unable to advocate voting for women candidates, as was the practice in Tanzania. Nzomo (1994) lists a series of opportunities where women’s organisations could have made an impact in the decision-making arena, yet instead responded with passivity. Most recently Kenyan women have failed to respond in a unified manner to: (i) the Law of Marriage and Divorce Bill, which would increase women’s rights over property and wealth but has twice been defeated in parliament; (ii) the law that denies housing allowance to married women in public service; (iii) the lack of paid maternity leave; (iv) the 1986 government directive that women teacher trainees who became pregnant refund government money
spent on their education; and (v) in 1987 Wambui Otieno’s legal battle seeking the right to bury her dead husband. On similar issues in Tanzania, women’s groups, although not always successful, have been very vocal and at have created higher levels of public debate.

In Kenya middle-class women’s groups are fragmented and undermined by the state, but a strength of the Kenyan women’s movement, and the area where it has received most widespread recognition, is with the self-help groups among poor, particularly rural women. Claire Robertson (1996) shows that there is a continuity to be found in the type of local organisations created by Kenyan women, although they have become transmuted from gerontocratic groups into peer-based environmental, savings, and market associations. A similar argument is made by Stamp (1986), in her description of the way rural Kikuyu women have retained and reshaped sources of traditional power in the face of capitalist transformation. In both Kenya and Tanzania however, despite historical foundations to women’s organisational forms, their recent growth and the ways in which they have changed is best seen as a response to current political and economic environments. In Kenya, as in Tanzania, women’s greater participation in informal sector employment has led to an increasing number of urban women becoming involved in rotating credit associations. The more widely discussed forms of women’s organisation in Kenya however are harambee (self-help) groups, which are most frequently located in rural areas. These groups are not exclusively women’s groups; in fact Robertson finds that they are often male-dominated and less significant for women than savings and church groups (Robertson 1996: 635).
Betty Wamalwa (1991), who also traces women’s *harambee* groups back to their pre-colonial roots, views them as important associational frameworks for women, albeit with some reservations. She sees these groups as significant for achieving rural development objectives, but contributing little to women’s overall empowerment as the poorest of women are often excluded from participation, lacking the finances and time to participate. Furthermore, Wamalwa believes mobilising women through women’s groups without adequate political support for women’s overall development marginalises women further from participating in mainstream development. Stamp also expresses reservations regarding the empowerment potential of women’s *harambee* groups, citing evidence of the state trying to channel and co-opt women’s activities (1986: 41).

The Kenyan state involves itself in *harambee* groups through its Women’s Bureau, a division of the Department of Social Services, in much the same manner as does Tanzania’s Ministry for Community Development, Women’s Affairs and Children. Created in 1976, the Women’s Bureau took over many of the functions previously carried out by the NCKW, which was beginning to be seen as too radical a group for the comfort of the government. “The Bureau initiated the formation of an enormous number of women’s groups. In 1976 there were 4,300 registered women’s groups with a membership of 156,892; by 1984, the number of groups had risen to 16,500 with a total membership of 630,000” (Wamalwa 1991: 247). Although the Bureau has four policy mandates – research and evaluation; communication and liaison; assistance to organised women’s groups; and training and education of members of organised groups – as in Tanzania the assistance programmes receive the bulk of the Bureau’s resources. Similar problems of paternalism in access to government support pertain (Udvardy 1998: 1757).
In addition, the Bureau has been criticised as having led to an overall sidelining of women’s interests in other sectors of the government by being responsible for the coordination of all women’s activities. The Bureau is unable to handle this mandate as it is located in a ministry with little government influence and is allocated insufficient finances (Kameri-Mbote and Kiai, 1993: 14).

The landscape of poor women’s voluntary associations in Kenya is similar to that currently present in Tanzania, despite its longer history and greater publicity. While greater numbers of women in Kenya are organised into such groups than in Tanzania, over sixty percent of Kenyan women are excluded on grounds of their sociological composition and finance and resource capability (Wamalwa 1991: 249). The fact that these groups experienced levels of growth in membership of 68 percent between 1978 and 1983 under government support indicates that the numbers of such groups in Tanzania may also grow rapidly, as they were only initiated in the late 1980s. A limit to the growth of such groups in Tanzania is the urban bias presently existing in support given to women.

However, the political significance of these groups is questionable. Wamalwa sees these groups as quite politically significant,

Women’s groups can ... be of great importance in the local political equation. In electoral campaigns in some constituencies their support, or lack of it, can mean the success or failure of a candidate. For example in Kiambu, where women form a significant majority, their votes are organised. These groups can empower women in participation in public life by giving them collective confidence, bargaining power and pooled resources (Wamalwa 1991: 247).

Maria Nzomo takes a more critical stance towards these organisations. With the same women in Kiambu, Nzomo finds that “it is difficult to assess the extent to which women are benefiting, in the course of trading favours with male politicians, and the extent to
which they are being used to achieve broader political goals of a local MP” (Nzomo 1994: 213). However, any political influence these poor women have through collective activities is likely greater than that which presently exists in Tanzania. However, as with the groups of poor women in Tanzania, Kenyan harambee groups are principally organised for practical rather than strategic purposes. As such, their empowerment potential, while not entirely absent, is limited to the empowerment attained by individual women in these groups who have a forum for discussing shared problems and supporting one other.

A significant distinction between associations among Kenyan women and those found in Tanzania is that Kenyan women’s groups tend to be organised on ethnic lines and in coastal areas Muslim women have minimal involvement in associational activities (Suda 1996). While the non-ascriptive nature of Tanzanian women’s groups should not be overstated in its significance towards promoting a democratic political culture, it is a positive feature that is lacking in Kenya.

Udvardy (1998) uses the distinctions between strategic and practical gender interests to argue that women’s groups in Kenya were more empowerment-oriented before colonial Western penetration, in part because of the greater levels of ethnically based associations. Her historical discussion of indigenous women’s groups among the Barabaig, Gikuyu and Giriama concludes that the public/private paradigm of the West, which has been imposed on these cultures, has eliminated traditional sources of women’s power. This imposed public/private ideology assumes male dominance in the public sphere, devaluing and reducing women’s public and political activities and replacing them with heavy workloads the domestic sphere. Udvardy argues that present-day
Kenyan culture is less empowering for women and groups are left with only practical strategies.

Compared to Kenyan women’s collectivities of the past, modern women’s groups lack some key features that enable them to uphold women’s strategic interests. First, unlike those of the past, today’s groups are not the visible expression of a deep-seated and commonly-held cosmology and worldview in which the female gender maintains exclusive control over certain fundamental spheres of existence. ... Second, women’s groups today lack a pansocial organizational structure that emerges from women’s culturally-defined gender attributes. Kenyan women’s groups have been organized under the umbrella of the Kenyan women’s Bureau, part of the national government administration, and *Maendeleo ya Wanawake*, a pan-Kenyan women’s organization started by the colonial government and which most rural women consider to be most strongly allied with urban women’s interests. ... They are ... not structures with which most women identify, and thus would not lend themselves to serve as conduits in defense or promotion of a common women’s issue (Udvardy 1998: 1757).

Udvardy understands strategic interests as being those which already exist within a culture, and can be drawn upon through collective activities. Her account of present-day Kenyan culture presents a picture where not only are political conditions unconducive to women’s empowerment objectives, but the culture itself grants women no space for manoeuvre to construct new bases of power. Where women are successful in addressing strategic gender needs Udvardy finds that they are emerging from women who are holding onto ethnically-based associations rather than from government or externally supported women’s groups. For example she cites the case of the successful hunger strike of the Mothers in Action in protest to the detention of opposition supporters, as an example of women drawing on traditional notions of gender to shame the government into releasing political prisoners.

While Udvardy points to ways in which groups organised on the basis of ethnicity can develop strategic rather than purely practical gender strategies, she does not address
how this mode of organising further weakens the already fragile women's movement as a whole and in fact plays into the lack of support many grassroots women have for national women's groups. Udvarty sees this lack of support as stemming from an out-of-touch urban and Western-penetrated movement but rural women also distance themselves from these groups out of antipathy for the ethnic groups which predominate in them. Furthermore, while highlighting the sources of power women held in traditional cultures Udvarty does not address how these cultures themselves discriminated against women in many ways and how women might be able to use strategic strategies to influence culture, rather than simply draw upon the culture as it exists.

Tanzanian women have had greater success than have Kenyan women in exerting influence at the state level. While much of the credit for this should go to the activities of women's groups, which are more cohesive than in Kenya, their success in gaining political representation is also important. This in turn is facilitated by a political culture that is demonstrating a greater commitment to democracy (at least on the mainland) and to gender inclusiveness. Unlike Tanzania, Kenya has no affirmative action programme in place to increase women's representation in parliament, although beginning in 1982 a practise of presidential appointments of women to some decision-making positions began. The first woman judge of the high court was appointed in 1982, a second one in 1986 and a third in 1991. In 1983, two women were appointed to head public parastatal organizations and at least fifteen others were appointed in 1986 - seven as heads and eight as members of boards of parastatal bodies. Also in 1986, President Moi appointed two women to senior diplomatic positions (Nzomo 1994: 214). Despite the potential for these women to raise women's concerns at the policy level, Nzomo has found that they
have not done so. Along with the few female elected representatives, Nzomo concludes, “individual women in public decision-making roles have not significantly influenced social change in favour of the majority of disadvantaged women in Kenya” (Nzomo 1994: 214).

Part of the reason for this may be found in the low numbers of women represented in the government. In the 1992 second general multiparty elections six women were elected to parliament out of 188 possible seats – all but one were members of the opposition. Thus even though political pluralism in Kenya is minimal there have been some gains for women in the limited space provided for multiparty competition. Nonetheless, this level of representation is hardly cause for celebration. Along with the need for party support (lacking in KANU) Nzomo finds three reasons to account for women’s poor representation. The first two of these – women’s multiple roles, which consume all their time and energy and the lack of adequate capital to invest in the election campaign – are also present in Tanzania. However, the third reason, lack of support from interested groups such as women’s organisations, goes some way in explaining the greater success of women contestants in Tanzania where the women’s movement actively supported women candidates in their voter education programmes. In addition to this however, Tanzanian women have the advantage of not only an affirmative action policy to grant women greater representation, but also a political culture within state institutions which is growing increasingly supportive of women’s representation and women’s issues. Such attitudes among men in Kenyan politics are markedly absent.
5.2 Women’s groups in Zimbabwe: State Control and a Revolution Betrayed

Zimbabwe has also made moves towards adopting a multiparty system, although some observers see the nation as on a course to a return to a single-party system, clearly the preference of President Mugabe. Heavy political restrictions over civil society continue, perhaps due to Mugabe’s declining political legitimacy. Democracy in Zimbabwe may be seen as having been undermined by the merging of the only real opposition, (PF)-ZAPU, into the ruling party, ZANU-(PF) in 1990. Pierre du Toit finds that “the merger (or rather incorporation) of (PF)-ZAPU into ZANU-(PF) is part of the project of establishing a one-party state, which is part of the larger project of merging state and party” (1995: 134). Mugabe’s recent detention and reported torture of journalists and his subsequent interference with the judicial system lend credence to this view. However, Masipula Sithole (1997) has a more optimistic take on this merger, claiming it has resulted in a decline in authoritarianism in Zimbabwe. Sithole credits the merger with moderating the ruling party, seen in the abandonment of socialism and resisting Mugabe’s desire for institutionalising a single-party state (Sithole 1997: 134). Although Sithole recognises that the opposition in Zimbabwe is fragmented, made up of too many parties, and garners little public support, he identifies a strong civil society in Zimbabwe capable of holding the government in check. In his discussion of this civil society Sithole refers to human rights organisations, students and workers, but does not mention the many women’s groups active there.

Despite the significant role played by women in Zimbabwe’s nationalist independence movement, as noted by Lloyd Sachikonye, “Zimbabwe was not an exception to the general trend of the demobilisation of social movements at
independence, even though it never formally authorised the installation of a one-party state. As in other African countries, the tendency was for the state to seek to co-opt these key movements ... into the state apparatus. In that way, the autonomy of these movements would be compromised and neutralised" (Sachikonye 1995: 130). Before independence the nationalist movement used party structures to mobilise women, and these structures were maintained and strengthened after independence. While the state has not been fully successful in co-opting the women’s movement, it has played a role in weakening it.

Over 10,000 women guerrilla fighters participated in Zimbabwe’s protracted struggle for independence in the 1970s, a number holding positions of high command (Geisler 1995: 551). The precursor to the current Women’s League was formed in 1972 and Mugabe asserted that the Party had created a “process generative of forces that will result in the total liberation of the women” (Geisler 1995: 551). For the women who participated in the liberation struggle, their goals of equality appeared to finally be being met. However, after independence they were rudely awakened to a situation where little had changed for women. Women combatants felt rejected by their post-war society: “In ‘real’ life the virtues of being an independent woman were again undesirable, to parents, to men and it seemed to the new government” (Geisler 1995: 552).

Following independence in 1980, the Zimbabwe government did enact several important pieces of legislation benefiting women. The 1982 Legal Age of Majority Act granted all citizens, male and female, full majority rights at age eighteen, and gave women full jural rights, which they had not held previously. The 1985 Matrimonial Causes Act made civil marriages dissoluble on no-fault grounds and introduced maternity
leaves of up to ninety days. Also in 1985, the Sex Disqualification Removal Act forbade barring qualified women from holding the same offices and positions as men (Parpart 1996: 149-150). However, women’s groups and observers have noted that this progressive legislation has for the most part been undermined and in practice remains largely symbolic (Parpart 1996: 150).

During the first term of office between 1980-1985 only 11 out of a total 150 parliamentarians in Zimbabwe were women, and in the 1981 district council elections women made up only 22 of a total of 1182 councillors. By 1994 the number of women councillors had further dropped to five, nationally (Geisler 1995: 552). The Women’s League, the main forum for organising women, also changed its mandate after independence, to social welfare projects and party mobilisation. Professional women in Zimbabwe do not involve themselves in the Women’s Wing, which is composed mainly of older less educated women. The Women’s Wing is seen by professional women as not only limited in its ability and inclination to effect change for women, but there “to even marginalise us more” (Geisler 1995: 554). This is an interesting class dynamic which is absent in Tanzania and Kenya where the women’s movement is dominated by educated women, even groups such as the UWT which have a grassroots membership. Professional women in Zimbabwe have formed a number of their own associations, but Geisler finds that to influence state level policy makers they must work through the Women’s League.

A Ministry of Community Development and Women’s Affairs was established in Zimbabwe in 1981, headed by a government appointee from the Women’s Wing. The role of the Ministry was stated as being a forum for the articulation of women’s demands
and initiates, administering development programmes for women and communities. As is the case with these ministries in other African countries, including Tanzania, its activities were focused on income generating projects and it was chronically under-funded, which, along with its close links with the government and the Women’s League undermined its capacities to fulfil even its limited mandate.

In 1982 the government began “Operation Clean-up”, rounding up unaccompanied women under the pretext that they were prostitutes or vagrants.

During ‘Operation Clean-up’, which targeted mainly young single women, squatters and vagrants, thousands of women over the whole country were detained under the vagrancy act. Those who could not produce marriage certificates were sent to a resettlement area in the Zambezi Valley, deprived of courts and lawyers. Far from being prostitutes many of the affected women felt targeted ‘because they were young, single and showed evidence of earning their own living’. The operation was interpreted as an attempt to control women, who had become too independent (Geisler 1995: 557).

The Department of Women’s Affairs, Zimbabwe’s main institution for voicing women’s concerns claimed that it was unaware of this operation before it began, but never publicly condemned it. In response, middle-class women, to protest against this and other government actions seen as repressing women, formed the Women’s Action Group (WAG). Despite being denounced by the government and the Women’s League this group continued to exist and was joined by an increasing number of similar women’s groups from 1984 onwards. Although Geiser finds that these groups are largely ineffectual due to government control over their activities, these groups have not been outlawed and by their own reports are making some advances. The Women’s Action Group freely provides legal and health information to women in Zimbabwe, has a
quarterly magazine, *Speak Out*, and claims to now have a good relationship with the government (Mumbengegwi 1993).

To counter the growth of women's associations, the government initially proposed the establishment of a National Women's Council, as part of the Women's Ministry, through which all external funding would have to pass. Instead however, the Department of Women's Affairs was moved even closer to the party with functions that overlapped with the Women's League. President Mugabe then appointed all of the leadership of the League with his wife at the head. The new department for women was initially made part of the Ministry of Political Affairs with a reduced staff. In 1992 it was again moved, this time into the Ministry of National Affairs and further reduced to just a co-ordinator. Although professional women’s associations continue to exist in Zimbabwe, they are prohibited from securing external funding without clearance from the government, and to be politically heard they have to work with some degree of cooperation with the Women’s League, which has never been interested or supportive of empowerment objectives.

Women’s groups are certainly active in Zimbabwe, but their ability to meet empowerment objectives is severely constrained by their political environment. While a number of progressive laws exist on the books, these groups have found it difficult to ensure that they are being followed in practice and are constrained from taking on strategies which may be seen as too political or in opposition to the government by the necessity of attaining government support before they can receive donor assistance. While independent women’s groups work together and support one another, the movement is fragmented by the necessity of working with government controlled groups.
which do not share their objectives. The low levels of women's representation at the state level further exacerbate their limited political voice and impact.

5.3 Zambia: A fragmented women's movement and reversals in political openings

Zambian women's groups are in a similar position to those in Zimbabwe, despite a arguably higher commitment to political pluralism. As an early example of sub-Saharan Africa's now common embrace of multipartyism Zambia was initially celebrated by observers as a model of success. However, the second round of elections, in 1996, resulting in another victory for Chiluba and the MMD, was cause for concern as the opposition was effectively wiped out by constitutional changes which prevented Kaunda from standing for presidency. In addition there were problems at the time of the last election with the registration of voters, leaving almost half of the potential electorate without registration cards; a government manipulated electoral commission; and an unfair control over state media on the part of MMD (Baylies and Szeftel 1997: 114). While MMD won with a large majority, as was the case in Zimbabwe with ZANU, low voter turnouts and a high proportion of spoiled ballots raise serious questions as to the popular legitimacy of both these governments. Furthermore, there is widespread disunity within the MMD as a result of members of the party only having come together initially to oppose Kaunda, with their differences now emerging. While the opposition is also weak in Tanzania, the government there has greater popular legitimacy than in either Zimbabwe or Zambia, and has granted more autonomy to groups in civil society, including women's organisations.
Multiparty politics in Zambia began with an initial rise in women’s participation in organisations emphasising empowerment and social and political advancement. A key example of this was the formation of the Women’s Lobby Group in 1991, in direct response to constitutional amendments allowing for multiparty elections. “It was the promise of change from the constraints of over two decades of one-party rule and the emergence of a new political climate of openness and reform, exemplified by the Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD), that encouraged Zambia’s educated women to seek greater and more equitable political representation” (Geisler 1995: 559).

A number of other women’s groups had made submissions to the constitutional commission and contributed to the MMD party constitution. These groups successfully secured the up-grading of the women’s unit with the National Commission of Development Planning (NCDP) so that it was able to influence other ministries.

Professional women were encouraged to join the new party, and at the MMD’s first party congress a number of women were elected as chairs of committees. The party initially had no women’s wing, although a Committee for Women and Development was later established, building on the UNIP government’s previously institutionalised Women’s League. Educated women had distanced themselves from the League, choosing instead to remain in the main wing of the party. As in Zimbabwe, the League was made up primarily of older less educated women and politicians’ wives (Geisler 1987). During this period women’s NGOs increasingly took on an empowerment focus, and the women’s Lobby Group emerged as a coalition for the women’s NGO sector, co-ordinating a campaign to increase political participation of Zambian women, irrespective of political affiliation.
This approach of supporting women candidates created a negative reaction from all political parties and their women’s wings, which accused the Lobby Group of supporting the opposition. Their meetings were boycotted and disrupted and very few women actually ran for election – within the MMD only ten of nine hundred applicants were women (Geisler 1995: 560). Seven candidates ran for MMD and seven for UNIP, none receiving much practical campaign support from the Lobby. When none of the eight women parliamentarians elected was appointed to cabinet level, and it was seen that women’s representation had decreased from that under the previous government, lobbying did eventually lead to the 1992 appointment of three women to cabinet, and the Lobby Group began a civic education program for local government elections. As was the case in the general elections, meetings were disrupted and many women who came forward to stand were intimidated into withdrawing their candidature (Geisler 1995: 561).

Unlike Tanzania, the support of women’s groups for female electoral contestants harmed rather than benefited these women. This is due to both a less cohesive women’s movement, a political culture more strongly in opposition to women’s advancement, and the attacks on this group made by all political parties.

In April 1992 the president “called on all faithful members of his party to stop associating with the activities of [this] movement” and the MMD government was reported to have threatened to expel all members of the Lobby Group from the party (Geisler 1995: 561). UNIP also spoke out against the group and advised voters against supporting candidates sponsored by the Lobby. The Lobby was further denounced by the women’s wing of MMD, who spread the view that Lobby women were nothing more than elitist women frustrated that they were not given patronage positions within the
MMD. The Lobby Group has almost totally disappeared, not only under pressure from the government, but also after being criticised by professional women’s groups who felt it had not done enough to support women candidates. The Zambian women’s movement is now without a coalition organisation supported by women’s groups. “The women’s movement is again disorganised, failing to analyse the underlying reasons for women’s absence from politics, and stagnates in its protected and defended, if not defensive, corner” (Geisler 1995: 562). Geisler finds the Zambian women’s movement to have been “relegated to a women’s wing” alienating professional women. However, Zambia does still have high numbers of women’s organisations in existence, including a National Association of Business and Professional women, Women in the Media, and the Zambia Alliance for Women” (Jere 1993). It is evident however, that political support for these groups, which is increasing in Tanzania, is lacking in Zambia, and as in Kenya and Zimbabwe the middle-class women’s movement is fragmented to a higher degree. Moreover, since the 1996 election the government has produced legislation to further regulate the activities and finances of local NGOs (Baylies and Szefiel 1996: 125).

5.4 Conditions for Women’s Empowerment: Political environment, unity and culture

The framework established by DAWN to understand the capacities of women's organisations to effect strategic change focuses on the structural features of the organisations themselves. However, the environment within which these organisations operate and their relations with one another all have an impact on how likely empowerment goals are to be formulated and realised. As this study of Tanzania has
shown, moves towards greater democracy have led to increased freedoms for women to organise and a political system more responsive to their political concerns. The cohesiveness of the women’s movement, where groups work together and for the most part are not divided by political partisanship or ethnicity, and operate with autonomy from the state all contribute to the strength of the movement.

In Kenya, Zimbabwe and Zambia women are also organising into associations in order to address similar issues surrounding women’s political and professional representation, legal status, issues of health, education, poverty, labour force participation, and their culturally defined roles. Poor women in all of these countries are adopting survival strategies to meet their practical economic needs and are being organised into groups under the direction of government ministries for women’s affairs. While the forms these organisations take are significant for their ability to meet their objectives, and indeed for the kind of objectives they attempt to address, still more important is the environment within which they exist.

For example, in Zimbabwe the abilities of groups to operate is severely constrained because women’s groups can only secure donor support with the approval of a government regulated body, which does not support empowerment objectives. When the government takes an active role in discrediting women’s associations and fomenting dissension between them, as has occurred in Kenya, Zimbabwe, and Zambia, it is more difficult for a movement to be built. When issues of ethnicity permeate women’s organisations, bringing them into competition with one another, as is occurring in Kenya, women’s movements are further undermined. When women are not supported in running for political office, in the ruling party or in the opposition, as has occurred in Zambia and
to a lesser degree in Kenya and Zimbabwe, political institutions and culture remain male-dominated and the women who do hold public offices are constrained from speaking out on women's issues. The autonomy and oftentimes support the Tanzanian state grants to women's associations goes a long way in allowing the women's movement there to develop and in turn strengthen popular and political support for their activities though strategic strategies aimed at transforming institutions, laws, policies and their culture.
Notes

1 For a detailed account of the history and goals of the Green Belt Movement, see Maathai 1988.

2 For example, Maathai’s involvement with the successful protest of the mothers of political prisoners arrested for supporting multipartyism; her lawsuit against government plans to construct a skyscraper with a thirty-foot monument to Moi in front of Uhuru park; and her opposition to queue voting, which has been abandoned. Maathai is also credited with being a strong force in the adoption of multiparty politics.

3 More in-depth discussions of these and other groups can be found in Chesaina 1994; Wamalwa 1991; House-Midama 1996; Tibbets 1994; and Nzomo, 1994.

4 This latter case involved the incongruity between customary and common law, which also exists in Tanzania although in that country receives a great deal of attention and lobbying from both women’s groups and opposition parties. It is notable also that while Wangari Maathai actively lent her support to this case, Otieno did not support Maathai in her 1989 case against the construction of the Moi monument. For a comprehensive discussion of this case see Tibbets 1994.

5 Sachikonye (1995, 157) claims that women’s movements have been entirely coopted by the state, as opposed to the partial demobilisation of labour and student movements. This is an overstatement, I believe, as Zimbabwean women are still defining their interests outside of state control. Nonetheless their abilities to actually address their interests are limited due to heavy state influence.
Conclusions

The past decade has witnessed exciting changes in Tanzania. The nation has embarked upon a political and economic reform process, with implications for its future political, economic, and social development, which are yet to be fully revealed. One area where these changes are having an effect is women’s organisational lives and their empowerment concerns. Political and economic reforms are shaping, and in turn being shaped by, the collective strategies of women of all class levels and women’s increased levels of political participation and representation.

This study set out to explore what impacts on the organisational capacities of women the reforms are having, and what new opportunities are emerging for women to formulate and meet their empowerment goals. Tanzanian politics and society are being altered as increasing numbers of women become organised, economically active, and represented in government. Transformations within the culture and the economy and new policies responding to areas women identify as of gender concern are resulting in an overall increase in the number of women’s empowerment objectives being met at the levels of the family, civil society and the state. However, while important changes have occurred as a result of women’s collective activities and political reforms, concerns remain with the limited nature of political reforms, which has implications for a continued and sustained deepening of both democracy and the potential for women to formulate and realise empowerment goals.

The reforms in Tanzania are having important effects for two discernible groups of women: professional women organised in the middle-class and lower-income women
working in the informal sector. Middle-class women identify different perceptions of reforms as well as concrete different effects that reforms are having on their lives, than do poorer women employed in the informal sector of Dar es Salaam. Consequently, their collective responses, and visions of what constitutes empowerment for them, also differ on a class basis.

Women's empowerment expands with an increase in power options which they can use and which they rate more highly than sources of power that might be lost through securing or exercising new powers. Empowerment is understood to be women's empowerment when power specifically tied to gender needs and interests is made available and used. What is ultimately considered empowering varies among women, thus to determine if an event or new set of power relations is in fact empowering the actual women affected are the best judge. Empowerment is necessarily 'self-empowerment' as the individual or group empowered must engage in some level of analysis in order to be able to secure and utilise their power options. However, for an individual or group to become empowered, it is not essential that they themselves participate in the struggle to secure these sources of power. Women may become empowered through the struggles of other women or even through the voluntary granting or relinquishing of power by men or institutions. This latter transfer of power may be conditioned or controlled, but power is not an absolute and an increase in overall power, however limited, is preferable to its absence.

Moser's distinction between practical and strategic gender interests investigates the empowerment potential of different organisational approaches chosen by women. The relationship between this dichotomy and empowerment in Moser's analysis finds that
strategic approaches lead to renegotiations in the structures and relations that have worked against women. Thus strategic outcomes, for Moser, can be equated with empowerment. When this understanding is mapped onto the experience of organised Tanzanian women, a problematic class understanding emerges. For the most part poor women are turning towards practical strategies to address their gender needs. Does it then follow that the activities of these women, undertaken to address their economic vulnerability and work environment, do not contribute towards their empowerment? When women are developing mechanisms for greater financial security and value the increased community roles they are taking on, is it accurate to say this is not empowering for them?

This study has identified a number of areas where poor women do report strategic changes, which have resulted from their collective activities and their increased presence working in the informal sector. Practical strategies can have strategic outcomes, which challenge gender roles and translate into empowerment. Women's strategies to facilitate their integration into the informal sector, to save their income, and to attract credit have increased their economic autonomy with the family, raised the profile of women within the informal sector, and assisted in transforming cultural attitudes about the appropriate roles of women. These changes can be seen as empowering because poor women themselves identify them as positive and as resulting in increased levels of power within their households and the community. Furthermore, the growing presence of women in the informal sector, facilitated by their collective strategies, has led to a recognition of their significance at the state level and the adoption of new policies and institutions to assist them, such as the new sources of credit available to women.
In addition, some of the practical activities undertaken by lower-income women may not be resulting in structural transformations, which have the potential to empower large numbers of women, but should still properly be seen as contributing to empowerment. When women participate in strategies, which assist them in overcoming or lessening their economic vulnerability, it makes little sense to not consider the results empowering. However, insofar as these strategies do not empower large numbers of women or contribute to transforming structurally inequitable gender relations they are less significant than those activities which do.

Middle-class women also utilise practical approaches as well as more strategically defined initiatives in their organisations. Whether they choose to use a practical or strategic approach is more dependant on their analysis of the best method to effect change and have a beneficial impact than on having the “correct” gender analysis. A more useful characterisation, in the Tanzanian case, of strategic and practical options is that of whether economic or political conditions are being addressed, rather than attempting to isolate one as the best approach for empowerment. Although strategic approaches do have the most direct link to empowerment – as it is their stated goal - women at both class levels take on practical initiatives in response to economic conditions and these initiatives often empower the women affected by them. Practical approaches are not chosen because women would not like to see structural alterations in the economic realm which disadvantage women removed, but because they recognise they have limited ability to effect these kind of changes and their best strategy for coping with their economic vulnerability is through practical approaches. Thus middle-class women undertake a variety of grassroots welfare-style programmes and lower-income engage in
collective activities which can be characterised as survival strategies. However, it is important to note that these activities can have empowering results, and that they are of higher priority to lower-income women than are the political issues strategically targeted by the middle-class women’s movement.

The difference in empowerment that comes from practical rather than strategic approaches also has to do with the number of women affected. For a programme to be considered empowering in any meaningful sense the numbers of women who benefit must be reasonably substantial. Successful strategic initiatives have the potential to empower all women. Programmes initiated from the middle-class to assist women in income generation or to provide legal, educational and health services do not, but assist only those who have access to these programmes. Because of financial limitations most of these programmes only reach a small number of women and are available only in the urban core. Nonetheless, these services are heavily subscribed and over time assist substantial numbers of women. Lower-income women’s collective strategies again only directly affect the women involved, however non-organised women may form similar groups after seeing how helpful they are for others. Thus it is fair to characterise lower-income women’s groups as assisting considerable numbers of women in the informal sector as these groups become more widespread and as they prompt new responses from Tanzanian culture and the state.

The political reforms in Tanzania have had a number of impacts for middle-class women and have led to new opportunities for them to address their strategic gender interests. The most direct impact is the increased freedom these women now have to form into associations. In 1985 restrictions on the formation of groups in civil society
were eased, and the high numbers of women's associations which formed after this time attest to the desires of women to form into groups to address their gender concerns. These women are not only forming into groups because they are free to do so, but because they believe that the new environment of political pluralism and democratic reform has the potential for them to push for greater inclusiveness in this process to ensure that women's issues are being addressed.

Women's groups have formed in a variety of types which loosely conform to DAWN's classification method - service-oriented, politically-affiliated, worker-based, outside-initiated, grassroots, research, and coalitional. In doing so they are responding to a wide range of gender concerns in the areas of the law, health, education, labour, professional and political representation, access to credit and women's poverty and their cultural positioning. Through these groups women are striving to alter gender relations through targeting institutions within civil society and the state, addressing both practical and strategic gender needs, and increasing the profile of women's concerns in their culture as a whole.

Middle-class women are supportive of the moves towards political pluralism and democracy and are attempting to take advantage of the reform process to ensure that women's concerns are given greater attention. This appears as an outcome of the increasing number of women occupying positions of power in the state. In the economic realm, however, with women's poverty concerns ranked by women's groups as being most pressing, middle-class women have been unable to have any significant influence, with their activities limited to practical WID-style programmes and approaches. Middle-class women are for the most part opposed to structural adjustment reforms because of
the negative effects they are having on women, particularly poor women. Because these reforms are viewed as being the result of external pressures and not open to modification, they have been unable strategically to respond beyond voicing their concerns.

While the variety of organisational forms groups have taken cover the range identified by DAWN, there is little correlation between this classification scheme and the groups' empowerment-fulfilling capacities. This framework accurately describes the structural types of groups found in Tanzania’s middle-class women’s movement, but does not account for the type of organisations found among poor women. Thus, although this approach is intended to address the empowerment of all women organising in developing regions, it leaves out the strategies and perspectives of the most marginalised group of women and could be read in a manner which privileges middle-class understandings, or treats them as representative of women in general. DAWN’s approach has two additional weaknesses, as shown by the case studies of Kenya, Zimbabwe and Zambia. Firstly, this approach is unable to take the political and cultural environment within which groups operate into account. Secondly, its structural focus on individual groups prevents it from adequately exploring the significance of networking and co-operation among groups, which provide the movement as a whole with the tools to overcome some of the weaknesses which might otherwise exist in individual groups.

DAWN correctly identifies a number of areas where groups may be weak in addressing empowerment concerns: group autonomy; gender blindness; financial constraints; and an urban middle-class bias. However, these weaknesses often do not correspond to the groups with which DAWN identifies them, and they are not at all times
weaknesses. In addition, groups often take on more than one role, and therefore do not fit neatly into the organisational categories.

In the Tanzanian case, a number of groups are constrained by a lack of autonomy. Some groups that are wings of larger non-gendered organisations are faced with this weakness, as are groups that are politically affiliated or dependent on external support from bodies that do not share all their concerns. For example, the Muslim Women’s group feel they are unable to develop in the direction they would like because of the control that the larger Muslim association, Bacwata, exercises over their activities and resources. The UWT feels it has considerable autonomy from CCM, but its affiliation has had an impact on the support it receives from outside donors and other women’s groups. Yet the political environment in Tanzania grants greater autonomy to women’s groups than in some other African countries, where the state plays a more active role in monitoring, controlling, and even terminating their activities when they are seen to be oppositional. This is the case in Kenya, Zimbabwe, and Zambia, perhaps due to lower levels of popular legitimacy enjoyed by regimes in these states as well as a lower demonstrated commitment to democracy.

Gender-blindness was not found to be a significant issue amongst organised women in Tanzania. While some groups provide services that do not question or at least attempt to alter gender relations, most often these service-provision functions are only one part of the group’s mandate. The women’s wing of the Albino Association does not attempt to address women’s strategic concerns, but nonetheless plays an empowering role for Albino women by recognising that these women might be better provided with the tools to manage their illness through consultation with other women, rather than men.
Practical strategies of service provision may have empowering outcomes, for example when they provide women with access to credit or training that may reduce their economic vulnerability and dependence on men. While discriminatory structures such as the division of labour may remain unaltered, the women who benefit from these programmes experience higher levels of empowerment that can be understood in gendered terms.

Financial constraints limit the ability of most women’s groups to take on all the activities they would like, regardless of what organisational model they conform to. Writing proposals for assistance take up much of their time and groups are unable to have as wide a reach as they would like. Groups rely heavily on volunteers, being unable to pay for full-time staff, which lowers morale and results in a high turnover of membership, imposing new demands when new members must be trained. The state in Tanzania rarely provides financial assistance to women’s groups, but nor does it control their securing such support from external sources as is the case in both Zimbabwe and Zambia (where groups must first seek approval from government ministries). Women’s groups are finding ways to operate in an environment of financial scarcity though subscription fees, business ventures, volunteer positions and a careful channelling of their resources into the programmes they view as most worthwhile.

These women’s groups are composed of urban middle-class women, and as such the threat of a bias limiting their potential to address empowerment concerns is real. Groups are sensitive to this, and most try to develop participatory frameworks for their grassroots and research programmes. Women in these groups further argue that just because their membership is drawn from the middle-class, they are not prevented from
understanding the concerns of poorer women and developing strategies to address them. While many of these groups work on behalf of their own middle-class professional membership, trying to improve their working conditions or access to political positions, they also focus on some areas of concern for all women, for example by addressing legal, education and health issues and through service provision. Some objectives do not need the participation of other women in order to be met, such as the work done by the Gender Statistics Group, which is compiling a data base of gender statistics from government records; the middle-class character of this group is not particularly relevant. However, the strong differences in opinion between middle-class and poor women with regard to what issues are most pressing for women indicate that middle-class groups not only need to work towards greater equality in the areas they have identified but also need to listen to the concerns raised by poor women.

Other potential weaknesses, not addressed by DAWN, are the choice of power structures to challenge and the extent of co-operation among groups. While DAWN looks at the level of interaction of groups in terms of local, national and international reach, a more useful analysis, following Moser, is to examine the sites of power they engage with at the levels of society, the state and the international environment. Some of the groups attend international conferences, some are branches of international organisations, and they all recognise the significance of international issues, particularly with regard to their economic concerns. However, these groups nonetheless focus their efforts on domestic institutions and power structures, where they feel they have the best chance of effecting change. But are groups targeting the right level for effectively realising their objectives? Ultimately this question can only be answered by the groups
themselves; women within these organisations are best placed for determining what their capacities are and how effective various strategies are likely to be. Because these groups work closely together there is an ongoing process whereby they can learn from one another's experiences and develop the strategies best suited for their goals. Some groups, such as the Tanzanian Association of Women Professionals in Science and Technology have chosen to operate as far removed from the state as possible and take on no lobbying role. While this may appear as a missed opportunity, concerns of autonomy place groups in a situation where they feel they must carefully balance their relationship with the government.

Through networking the movement as a whole is able to addresses societal, cultural and state level power structures. Co-operation is a central strength of the Tanzanian women's movement, enhanced by the political environment, the presence of two strong coalition groups, and the non-ascriptive nature of women's groups. While individual groups may not target all possible arenas for contestation, in its entirety the women's movement addresses the whole range of domestic possibilities. Attempting to rate the success of groups relative to one another is not a worthwhile exercise; not only because it is then difficult to take into account the co-operative aspects of the movement, but also because some problems are more difficult to address or can only be altered as part of a long term project.

Poor Tanzanian women's groups have also emerged in response to the changing political and economic environment, but these women are experiencing the reform process differently than are middle-class women, and are thus developing different collective strategies in response. Unlike middle-class women they do not feel political
reforms have made nor are likely to make much difference in their lives. Women in Tanzania do not have strategic options available to them for addressing poverty concerns, which intertwine and contribute to women’s disadvantaged positions in other sectors. Poor women are addressing their economic vulnerability through practical strategies. Although most women now feel that the transition to a multiparty system is positive, many are sceptical that changes will follow, or are fearful that it will lead to conflict by heightening religious and ethnic tensions. They are less likely to support opposition parties, preferring to stay with what they know. The main changes they cite as having an influence on their lives have been the economic reforms of the past decade.

As a part of structural adjustment reforms the Tanzanian state is trying to reach new accommodations with the informal sector. At the same time, increasing numbers of women are entering this sector in response to eased restrictions for operating small-scale businesses and in order to meet their families’ economic needs in the wake of widespread retrenchment, rising food prices, and user fees introduced in health and education. These women are organising into groups to gain access to credit in programs administered by the Ministry for Community Affairs, for savings in traditional upato clubs, and in location-based groups which provide security against local police as well as creating valuable social spaces for women. While these groups are formed in response to practical economic needs, they are nonetheless creating avenues for women to reach higher levels of empowerment. Unlike middle-class women, those engaged in informal sector activities are by and large supportive of economic reforms, which they associate less with rising costs and a decline in the quality of service provision than with new opportunities
to earn income, an increased availability of consumer goods, and less government interference.

Despite being organised for practical purposes of income generation and security, these groups do have some empowering outcomes for the women involved. When women’s economic needs are met, they have a greater degree of financial autonomy, which confers on them more control within their household over resources. As such, relations between men and women within the family are being altered. While their entrance as individuals into the informal sector also contributes towards their empowerment in the same manner, collective strategies to acquire savings and credit provide them with additional sources of capital. These groups also grant women gender-based social spaces for meeting to discuss shared problems. The support that arises from these spaces can be empowering for women, in contrast to the isolation of trying to manage on their own.

Coinciding with the state’s revaluation of the informal sector in the mid-1980s, the Ministry of Community Development, Women’s Affairs and Children began organising women into groups to receive credit disbursements from the government and Unicef to help begin or expand informal sector businesses. This ministry had already been involved in assisting some other agencies in locating women’s groups for grants. While the rate of repayment is high, it is questionable how successful these programmes are for either improving women’s informal sector businesses or increasing their levels of empowerment. The women assisted rarely work together and only meet to organise repayment. Many find that the amount of credit is too small to make much difference for their businesses, most of which are in low-return female-dominated-trades with high
levels of competition. However, the women themselves are both happy to have access to these sources of credit, and despite the evidence of paternalism, for contact with their Community Development officers. Most of these women also participate in either or both *upato* or location-based groups, although many have had to discontinue playing *upato* because income that could have been directed towards savings was going to repay their loans.

*Upato* rotating credit groups are a valuable means for women to save money without risk of it being taken from them by their husbands, thus increasing their financial autonomy and providing them with a way to meet costs, such as those associated with education, health or unplanned expenses like weddings or funerals. Some groups are saving in order to begin a business requiring expensive start-up capital, for example by buying a milling machine. These groups provide women not only with strategies to reduce economic vulnerability, but foster patterns of co-operation and trust, important tools for strengthening civil society. The non-ascriptive membership of groups also contributes to this goal.

A third type of group of women working in the informal sector is those based around a shared trading location. As with *upato* groups, such associational networks provide women with a sense of community and the benefits than accrue from social interaction with others with shared interests. Women trade in the same location for a number of reasons. Along with enjoying the company of others, women in these groups can watch over one another’s children and goods when needed. An additional benefit of these groups is that of security. Most women working in the informal sector do not have trading licences and work on the fringes of markets or along roads and pathways.
Despite an official policy supportive of the informal sector, traders are subject to harassment by city militia. Even if traders have licences, they may be taken away or goods may be confiscated by militia seeking bribes. Working in a group provides security from this as militia are less likely to harass groups than individuals and women can take turns watching for their approach and leave the area if necessary. Locational groups provide a collective response of passive resistance to regulations that interfere with their abilities to carry out their businesses.

Increasing numbers of women are entering into the informal sector, and location based groups provide one means to ensure that they are able to do so despite their inability to earn enough income there to operate with a trading licence. The growing importance of this sector towards meeting the practical needs of Tanzanians has been recognised by the state, and it is responding, although slowly, to the presence of women there. The availability of credit to women is one response, others have been formulated in the yet to be implemented new National Policy on the Informal Sector which intends to make licences more accessible by selling them in municipal offices and institutionalising market groups, including those of women, in a framework where they can have more direct access to the government. While it is uncertain how much difference this policy will have for women – the cost of licences will remain prohibitive and new groups formed in response may be too controlled to be effective – this recognition of women’s role in the economy is new and likely a response to the collective non-compliance towards regulations that women have engaged in.

It is with the examination of poor women’s organising strategies that Caroline Moser’s distinction between strategic and practical gender interests can be seen as useful,
but ultimately inadequate. Moser’s distinction fails to account for the manner in which practical strategies can be important for women’s empowerment. While strategically based approaches do have a higher likelihood of leading to empowering outcomes, this study has shown that practical strategies, used at the middle and lower class levels, can contribute to increasing levels of empowerment for women.

As shown, both middle-class women and women working in the informal sector have had some success in influencing government policy. Middle-class women are directly lobbying them to introduce new legislation to address women’s concerns while poorer women’s presence in the informal sector combined with collective strategies of non-compliance have contributed to efforts to recognise and support their economic contributions. State level transformations related to women are also occurring as a result of increasing numbers of women holding public office and being appointed to high level positions. This is in marked contrast to Kenya, Zimbabwe and Zambia where women’s representation is declining. The greater presence of women in policy making positions, combined with the higher profile women’s issues are receiving through the activities of middle-class women’s groups, is allowing more attention to be paid to the concerns identified by women. Women at the state level report an improved environment for raising gender concerns than was the case in the past.

However, despite the gains made for women, there remain limits to both the pace and the scope of democratisation in Tanzania that impact on the ability of empowerment goals to be realised. While the government enjoys a high level of legitimacy on the mainland and is prepared to grant space for groups in civil society to organise and speak out, it remains dominated by CCM and has acted to restrict the press when its reports are
viewed as attacking the government. The opposition is weak, fragmented, without clear platforms distinguishing itself from CCM, and has insufficient representation in parliament to greatly influence further democratic reform. It is not evident the groups in civil society, including those of women, have enough power to hold the government accountable and continue institutionalising democracy. International organisations such as the IMF and World Bank are exerting pressure on the government to deepen democracy, but they have mainly demonstrated concern with the course of economic liberalisation, corruption, and the presence of a competitive political system. Opposition parties have yet to include women’s concerns in their party platforms at a meaningful level and women are not yet targeting them as a means of ensuring that they do so. Thus, while women, through collective organising and higher levels of representation, are most certainly altering their political, social, and economic environment in ways which are increasing their overall empowerment, the slow pace and incomplete nature of democratic reform and women’s ongoing poverty create constraints in this project which are difficult to overcome.
Appendix A

Questionnaires

1. Interview format for middle class women’s groups

When was your association formed? For what reasons? Can you give me some background on how it came to exist?
How many members were there when it formed? And how many are there now?

How is it funded?

How often are meetings held? How many members usually attend? What sorts of things are discussed?

Are there both Muslim and Christian women in the group? Do you know how many of each? Are there any Asian women?

What ages are the women in the group?

Would you say most are married or single?

What is the average level of education?

Are members all in Dar es Salaam? Do you hold meetings outside of Dar? Have you undertaken any projects outside of Dar?

Have you been involved in any campaigns to educate or mobilize women from outside of your group?

How often do you meet with or correspond with government officials? Do many of your members work for the government, as civil servants, in ministries, etc.? What government ministries or offices do you deal with? For what reasons?

Do you lobby the government?

Do you get funding from the government? Have you tried?

Are you happy with the amount of contact and kind of contact you have with the government, or would you like to see it changed? How? Is it the same as when your group began? If there are problems, how are you responding to them?

Has your group been successful in terms of meeting its goals?

Did your group play any role in the October elections? Did you encourage or support women candidates, get involved in voter education, etc.?
Do you think the new government and new multiparty system will result in any changes for your group? What about in general, have you seen any changes, what do you expect from the future with this new system?

Would you say most of the members in your group support the same political party?

Do you have any contact with other women’s groups or other NGOs? What kind?

What economic changes have you seen in the past 5 years or so? What do you think of the current economic reforms, or the shift to a freer market?

Do women in Tanzania have more problems than men? What are the biggest problems they face? Do you see any solutions for these problems?

2. Interview format for informal sector women’s associations

Does your group have a name? What is it? What does it mean? Why did you choose this name?

How many members do you have? When was your group formed? Why was it formed?

What businesses / projects are your members engaged in? When did you begin these businesses? What were you doing before?

What are your member’s names? Ages? Levels of education? Religions?

Are you married? If married, do you or your husband pay more of the household expenses? Who pays for school fees?

How did you decide on positions in the group, who was to be chair, etc.? Did you vote or just agree amongst yourselves?

Do all of you come from Dar es Salaam? For those who do not, where are you from and why did you move to Dar? If for employment, for yours or your husband’s?

Do you have meetings? How often? When was the last one? How many members attended? What do you discuss?

Are your projects a success?

Have any of you had any contact with any NGOs coming around, such as voter education programs, women’s groups, AIDS education groups or BAWATA? Does the UWT have any activities in the area that you know about? Are you members of the UWT?
Did you attend any political rallies at the time of the election campaigning? For which parties? Are you members of any of the parties? Which ones? Did you vote? In both polls? For which party? How are the parties different from one another?

What do you think about the change from a single party system to a multiparty system? How will a Multiparty system change things? How did things change with Mwinyi, compared with Nyerere? Have you seen any changes since the election? What do you expect from the future, what do you think of the Mkapa administration?

Do Tanzanian women have more problems than men? What are the biggest problems Tanzanian women face?

Do you play upatu? If so, with the members of this group, or with others? For how long have you played?

*Additional Questions for groups with funding and Community Development support*

Who did you receive funding from? When? How much? How did you hear about this funding? Has it helped your businesses? How did you spend it? How much have you repaid? How often and where do you make payments? Do you think you will be able to pay it all back?

How often do you meet with someone from the ward level community development office? For what reasons?
How often do you meet with someone from the district level community development office? For what reasons?
Have you ever met with anyone from the regional office? If so, for what reasons?
Are you satisfied with this contact, or would you prefer to see some of these people more or less often, or for different reasons?

*Additional / Alternative Questions for Women not in Associations*

What sort of business are you doing? With how many others?
Is it successful?
Have you ever thought of going into business with other women?
Have you ever been part of an upatu? Would you like to now? Why?

Have you ever tried to get a loan? Do you know any women with loans? Would you want to have a loan? Have you heard that loans are available? If so, where did you hear this? Have you ever visited your community development office or any other government office? Do you think they can help you? Has anyone from the government ever come to visit you? If so for what reasons?
Appendix B

Middle Class and Political Level Interviews

1. Interviews with middle class women’s groups

Albino Association (Women’s Wing)
Mohamad Ali, Member of executive of association and Pili, chair of the women’s wing,
February 2 1996

Baby Care Women’s Association (BACAWA)
Mrs. Mrutu, Chair, February 8 1996 and Anna Mloka, Women’s Bank Club village level
Chair (Temeke), February 16 1996

Catholic Women’s Association
Olive Luena, Chair, May 21 1996

Gender Statistics Group
Christine Hongoke, January 26 1996 and Mrs. Mwasha January 31 1996

Getting Old is to Grow (GOIGO)
Hambasia Maeda, Chair, February 8 1996

Institute of Development Studies (IDS) Women’s Group
Rose Shayo, May 7 1996

Journalist Environmental Association (JET) Women’s Desk
Astronaut Bagile, Assistant Co-ordinator, January 16 1996

Medical Women’s Association of Tanzania (Mewata)
Dr. Masawe, April 4 1996

Muslim Women’s Group
May 6 1996

Organisation of Tanzania Trade Unions (OTTU) Women Worker’s Directorate
Phillipina Mosha, January 16 1996

Society of Women and AIDS (Tanzania Branch) (SWAAT)
Feddy Mwanga, May 7 1996

Suwata
Margaret, April 2 1996

Tanzania Association of Women Professionals in Science and Technology (TAWOSTE)
Cathleen Sekwao, January 31 1996
Tanzania Gender Networking Association (TGNP)  
Marjorie Mbilinyi, May 7 1996

Tanzania Media Women’s Association (TAMWA)  
Pili Mtambalike, January 16 1996

Tanzania Midwives Association  
Mama Safe, Chair, January 22 1996

Tanzania Women Lawyer’s Association (TWLA)  
Mrs. Phillips, February 2 1996

Tanzania Women Volunteers Association (TAWOVA)  
Edda Mariki, Director, January 22 1996

Tanzanian Home Economics Association (TAHEA)  
Pauline Kisanga, Assistant Chair, January 30 1996

Treasury Women Research and Consultancy Group (TWRCG)  
Mrs. Buudala, January 31 1996

Udananda (Women Using Arts and Culture for Empowerment)  
Maria Shaba, May 14 1996

Women Advancement Trust (WAT)  
Anna Shayo, April 1 1996

Women’s Research and Documentation Project (WDRP)  
May 6 1996

Other groups contacted:

BAWATA (National Women’s Council of Tanzania)  
The Chair of BAWATA was unable to meet with me but I was given some literature on the organisation.

Country Women Group  
We could not arrange a time to meet, but all of my prepared questions were answered in writing.

SERO Enterprises  
I was unable to arrange an interview but the group loaned me some material about their activities.
2. Political level interviews

Victor Kimesera, Executive Secretary of Chadema, April 22 1996

Mohamad Ail Ysur, Director of Publicity for CUF, May 4 1996

Augustine Mrema, Chair of NCCR-Maguezi, May 14 1996

Rhoda Kahatono, National Chair of UWT and MP with a woman’s seat (CCM), May 30 1996

Zakia Meghi, Minister of Health, May 30 1996

Shamim Khan, Deputy Minister of Industry and Trade, May 22 1996

Ali Ameir Mohamed, Minister of Home Affairs, May 27 1996.
References


Honey, Mary. 1992. NGO and Public Sector Co-operation: When there's a common will, there's a way. Africa Insight. 2: 116-120.


Nyerere, Julius. 1967. The Arusha Declaration and TANU's Policy of Socialism and Self-Reliance. Dar es Salaam: Publicity Section, TANU.


Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP). Nd. *Tanzania Gender Networking Programme. Mimeograph.***


