

# THE IMPORTANCE OF WOMEN'S ECONOMIC JUSTICE

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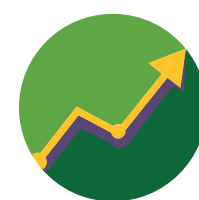


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**The Policy Monitoring and Research Centre (PMRC) is a public policy research think tank whose vision is “Unlocking Zambia’s Potential”.**

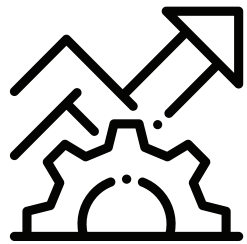
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- Promoting and encouraging informed public debate on social and economic policy issues critical to national development.



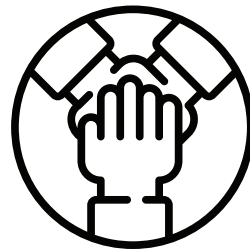
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# PMRC'S THEMATIC FOCAL AREAS



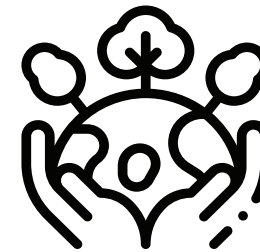
## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Taxation, Economic Diversification through the wealth creation series, Infrastructure Development, Mining, Tourism, Science and Technology



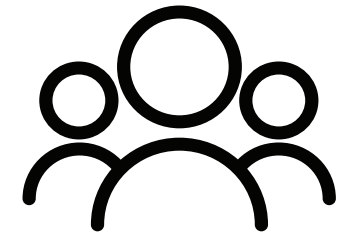
## GOVERNANCE

Parastatals Governance Work, Government Policy Series



## NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

Agriculture, Energy, Fisheries, Water, Climate Change, Land Development

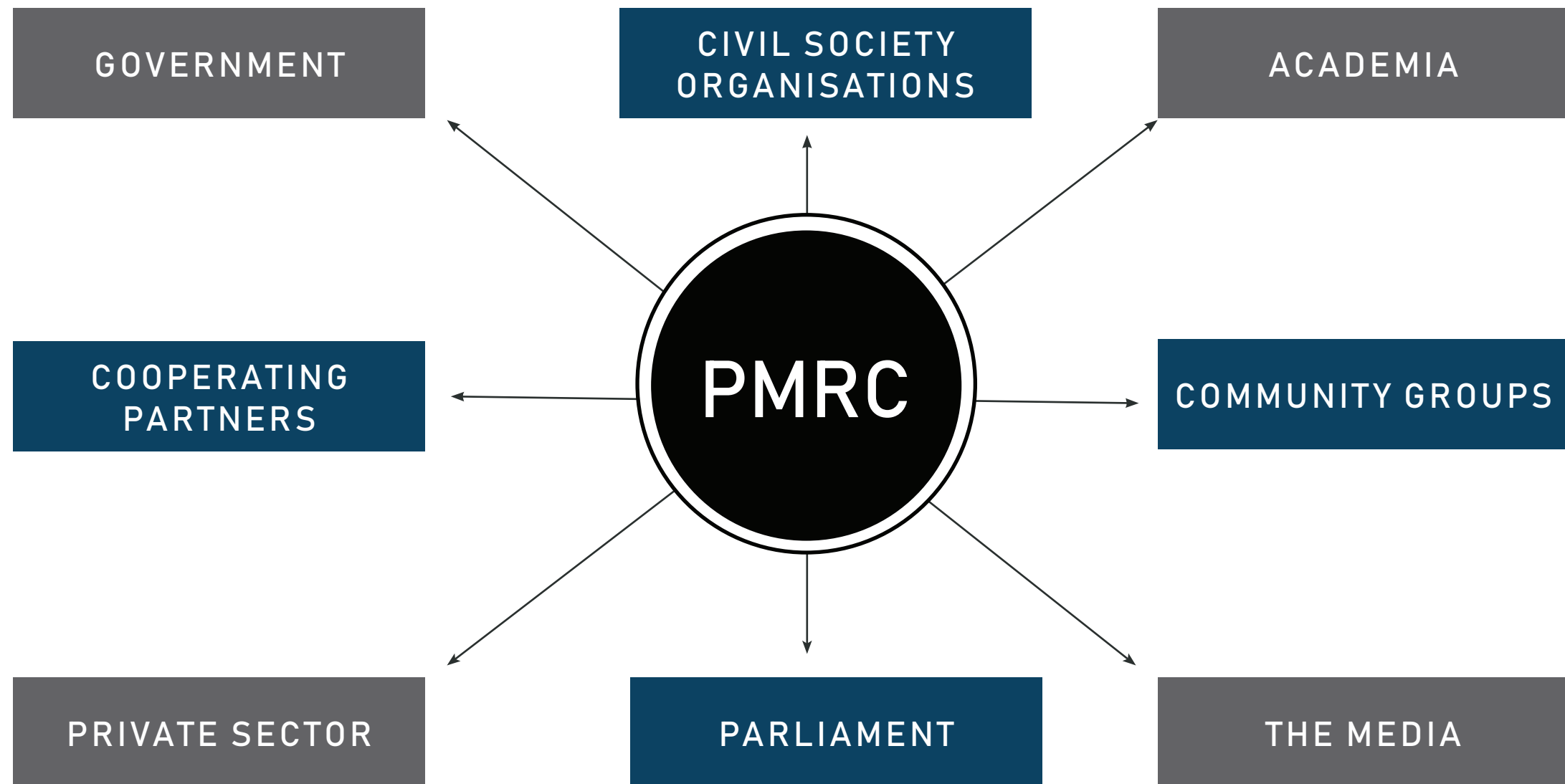


## SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT & LIVELIHOOD

Child Marriages, Social and Development Livelihood, Child Protection Social Cash transfer Education, Health, Employment and Human Development

# INSTITUTIONAL LINKAGES

## WHO DO WE WORK WITH





# OUTLINE OF PRESENTATION

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- Introduction
- The importance of Women's Economic Justice
- Status of Women's Economic Justice in Zambia
- Challenges women face in trying to attain economic justice
- Recommendations on how to improve Women's Economic Justice in Zambia

# INTRODUCTION

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- The connection between women's economic justice and development can not be overemphasized. Decades of research confirms that women's economic justice is critical to economic growth.
- Yet, despite this evidence, a range of legal barriers inhibiting women's full and equal economic participation remains on the books in countries around the world. Therefore, enhancing women's economic participation and opportunity is essential not only for achieving social justice but also for reducing poverty.
- **According to the 2022 Global Gender Gap Report**, the global gender gap has been closed by 68.1%. A review of the 146 countries covered by the 2022 index indicated that the Health and Survival gender gap has closed by 95.8%, Educational Attainment by 94.4%, Economic Participation and Opportunity by 60.3% and Political Empowerment by 22%. At the current rate of progress, it will take 132 years to reach full parity.
- Women's economic justice is the fulfilment of women's fundamental human right to economic resources and the power to make decisions that affect their lives. This requires women to have equitable access to, and control over, economic resources, including by having the time and opportunity to engage in economic activities.

# WHY IS WOMEN'S ECONOMIC JUSTICE IMPORTANT?

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## 1. It is essential for gender equality.

- When women have economic security, they are better able to improve their own lives and the lives of their families and communities.
- They are also more likely to participate in decision-making and to hold their governments accountable.

## 2. Women's economic justice is important for economic development.

When women can participate fully in the economy, they can contribute to economic growth and prosperity.

## 3. Women's economic justice is important for social justice.

When women earn a fair wage and have access to economic resources, they are less likely to be poor and hence less vulnerable to exploitation.



# THE STATUS OF WOMEN'S ECONOMIC JUSTICE IN ZAMBIA



Zambia has made notable strides in women economic participation and opportunity, this is evident from the increased number of women in key decision making positions in both private and the public sector as well as **women's participation in economic activities**. However there still exists gaps in all dimensions that remain to be closed.



# THE PARTICIPATION GAP



- The **Participation Gap is measured by the Labour Force Participation Rate**. Labour force participation rate or activity rate, measures the proportion of the economically active population in the total working-age population.
- It is a **ratio of the labour force to the working-age population** expressed as a percentage. Low activity rate implies that a large proportion of persons do not participate in the labour market.
- The 2020 Labour Force Survey (LFS) stated that at national level, females accounted for a higher percentage of the **working-age population at 52.8 percent compared to males at 47.2 percent**, however, there were more employed males than females at 60.2 percent and 39.8 percent, respectively.
- The **labour force participation rate among females is 54.1% and among males is 67.6% for 2022**.

# THE REMUNERATION GAP

- With regards to formal, pensionable employment in Zambia, **the majority of the women get lower salaries than their male counterparts.**
- According to the World Bank, women in Zambia earn on average 60% of what men earn for doing the same work.
- During recruitment, women are usually hired because they are willing to take up any job offer at a negotiated price, while men can turn down job offers if they are not satisfied with the conditions of service, including salaries.
- Women are more likely to be employed in the informal sector, where they face lower wages and fewer benefits
- Workers in vulnerable employment are the least likely to have formal work arrangements, social protection, and safety nets to guard against economic shocks
- Vulnerable employment among women is 82% and among men is 65.2% in Zambia for 2019. The rate of vulnerable employment is lower for men but higher for women in Zambia compared to the average rate in Sub-Saharan Africa.

# THE ADVANCEMENT GAP

- Data compiled between 2010 and 2022 show that women represented 39.5% of those employed in senior and middle management in Zambia

Category	Male	Female
Members of Parliament	132	19
	<b>84.6%</b>	<b>15.4%</b>
Cabinet Ministers	20	4
	<b>83%</b>	<b>17%</b>
Provincial Ministers	9	1
	<b>90%</b>	<b>10%</b>
Local Government	1,796	155
	<b>92%</b>	<b>8%</b>
Traditional Leaders	261	27
	<b>90%</b>	<b>10%</b>

# BARRIERS TO WOMEN'S ECONOMIC JUSTICE

- Globally, women continue to face significant cultural, institutional, and structural barriers to meaningful economic justice which include;
- 1. **Absence of good child care options and decent maternity leave**-The lack of childcare services is a major barrier for working women in developing countries. In the absence of affordable childcare facilities, working women have no option but to alter the amount and type of market work they engage in so that they can be able to balance it with household responsibilities.
- 2. **Low investment in women's education**-Not having a school within easy reach of home is an important barrier to girls' enrolment. Lack of childcare not only affects women but girls as well, most often girls take up the responsibility of taking care of their younger siblings. Lack of child care facilitates in such a case would result in girls dropping out of school to take care of their younger ones



# BARRIERS TO WOMEN'S ECONOMIC JUSTICE

- 3. Low investment in women's Health services-** A significant barrier to better health for women is the lack of access to the means for planning the number and timing of pregnancies. The various aspects related to maternity impose a substantial burden on women's time. In most developing countries, the incidence of HIV/AIDS is increasing more rapidly among women than men; in some countries, more than half of those infected are women. Women's low social status and economic dependence often interfere with their ability to obtain information about and treatment for AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases and their ability to negotiate for safer sexual practices to reduce their vulnerability.
- 4. Lack of access to credit-** Lack of access to credit both formal and informal is another major barrier, often restricting women's ability to smooth consumption over time and undertake productive activities. Women have a lower likelihood of borrowing from formal sources and even from other individuals because of collateral requirements, high transaction costs, limited education as well as lack of business plans.

# BARRIERS TO WOMEN'S ECONOMIC JUSTICE

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- 5. Societal perceptions-** In almost all societies, women are perceived as primary caretakers/homemakers, while men take on the role of providers. Women frequently have to withdraw from the labour market because of the demands of marriage and children. Women are therefore more likely to choose jobs that allow them greater flexibility in hours worked which often results in a drop in earnings. Women also lag behind men in the accumulation of human capital as a result of discontinuity in employment which may be one of the leading factors of low participation rates as well as poor advancement in careers.
- 6. Career and family planning-** The age at which many women begin to think about starting a family coincides with one of the most productive periods of one's career. Given women's biological clocks, most tend to start a family as oppose to advancing in their careers.

# RECOMMENDATIONS ON HOW WE CAN IMPROVE WOMEN'S ECONOMIC JUSTICE IN ZAMBIA

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Things that can be done to improve women's economic justice in Zambia

- **Pass laws that promote gender equality in the workplace**, such as laws that prohibit pay inequality and occupational segregation.
- **Make credit and other financial services more accessible to women**, so that they can start their own businesses or invest in their education.
- **Address violence against women**, so that women can feel safe and secure in the workplace and in their communities.
- **Support initiatives like Savings group initiatives** to empower rural less privileged women



# THANK YOU

**Unlocking Zambia's Potential** Response to this presentation can be sent to: [info@pmrczambia.net](mailto:info@pmrczambia.net)

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