

Contribution of Diaspora Women in Foreign Economic Policy Implementation:

Focus on Kenya Women in the United States of America

**CONTRIBUTION OF DIASPORA WOMEN IN FOREIGN ECONOMIC
POLICY IMPLEMENTATION: FOCUS ON KENYAN WOMEN IN THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

IRENE NZINGO KITI

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ABSTRACT

Women living and working in foreign countries, also known as Diasporas, are recognized in the research as key source of capital and other supports for economic diplomacy and foreign economic implementation. The study focused on Kenyan women living in the USA. Diaspora community and the women in Diaspora are becoming a significant focus of attention in transnational studies. This research aimed at investigating whether Kenyan women in the Diaspora have played any part in shaping domestic development and Kenya's image abroad. It was motivated by the realization that little recognition is given to Kenyan women in USA for their contribution in this regard. The research problem was that there is lack of recognition of Kenyan women's contribution to Kenya's foreign economic policy implementation. The research problem was addressed by analyzing contributions from women in Diaspora in supporting Kenya's foreign economic policy implementation. The contributions include; capital remittance flow to Kenya by Kenyan women in USA, Kenyan women in USA in showcasing the investment areas and opportunities found in Kenya, the contribution by Kenyan women in USA in bringing foreign investors to Kenya. The target population for this study was 46,920 Kenyan women in USA. This target population constituted of diplomats, ambassadors, Kenyan diplomat's spouses, teachers and lecturers, students, wives, athletes and various other Kenyan women living and working in USA. The researcher took a sample size of 203 of the Kenyan women in USA from the 46,920 USA women population. Using purposive sampling technique, data was collected using instruments such as questionnaires, key informant interviews and FGD. Both quantitative and qualitative data was collected through the help of the USA Embassy in Kenya, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Kenya and its missions in USA. The researcher used both descriptive and inferential data analysis. Data collected was also analyzed using multivariate regression analysis for the inferential statistics. Data presentation used histograms, tables and pie charts. Qualitative data was described and explored by transcribing interviews, developing a coding data system, linking codes or units of data to form overarching themes. The study established that Kenya Diaspora women in USA remitted money to Kenya. The study also found evidence that Diaspora women in the USA have friends in USA whom they approached about investment opportunities in Kenya. The study further found out that women in Diaspora sell Kenyan goods and services to USA. Some of the activities they engage in to promote Kenya's foreign trade are cultural festivals through dances, music and Kenyan food. The study recommends that stakeholders in Kenya's development recognize the impact of remittances transferred by Kenya women in Diaspora to Kenya being Kenyan women in USA, on pro-poor finance, poverty alleviation and for emergency needs. From the findings, the study recommends that, the Kenyan and US government should assist the Kenyan women in Diaspora by devising regulatory systems that make the transfer of remittances easy, inexpensive, tax deductible and conducive for investing in Kenya.