



MARY ANG'AWA, 1998 KENYA

Justice, High Court of Kenya

Judge Mary Ang'awa's nomination as an Eisenhower Fellow came at a critical time. Kenya was facing challenges in good governance, and experiencing difficulties within the judicial system. As a Puisne Judge in the high court of Kenya since 1993, and with dedication to a career striving for judicial justice, her fellowship aided her in making essential changes in her country.

During her program, Ang'awa visited several law school libraries, studied the various aspects of the court system, and learned about judicial training facilities. Through this extensive exposure Ang'awa realized that the problems in the Kenyan judicial system were a result of poor administration in the courts complicated by lack of financial independence.



When she returned to Kenya, Ang'awa became a resource person for the advocates dedicated to Continuing Legal Education. During her position, she gave a public lecture on "Documentary Evidence in Court", which was later published in a law magazine under the title "Tips on Evidence". Ang'awa also established a local Eisenhower Fellowships association, where she acted as the vice chair. She has aided in organizing network opportunities for Kenyans, as well as visitors, and has served as chair of the national nominating committee in the selection process of Fellows.

In 2000, Ang'awa was involved in the establishment of the Family Division of the High Court of Kenya together with the members of the Kenya Women Judges Association. She was critical in the establishment of the law of succession. This inspired the recent publication of her book, *Procedure on the Law of Succession*. During 2001-2005, Ang'awa chaired the Jurisprudence of Equality Program, a human rights program of the International Association of Women Judges used by various chapters in the world. The program puts special emphasis on the application of international human rights law, covenants and treaties. It also trains both judges and magistrates (regardless of gender), on how to apply the international law in a dualistic country, as Kenya was at the time.

Ang'awa became the Chair of the Kenya Women Judges Association in 2005. Under her leadership, she established a smaller executive committee and the association opened its doors to include the women magistrates as full members and recognized associate members who were not judicial officers but contributed to the organization significantly. Under their new constitution, Kenya now has 45 women judges out of 300, a significant change since 1995, when only five out of 50 judges were women. Ang'awa believes the fellowship taught her "to speak out when things are not going too well, to do something about what is going wrong, without necessarily waiting for formalities, which may never come". The biggest challenge she faces is to recognize corruption and to speak about it, which she has done in various articles and conferences. One example is her article entitled "Independence of the Judiciary - A View From Kenya" published in the *American Bar Association*, which examined the flaws in the judiciary system that contributed to the post-election violence of 2007-2008. Although the Kenya Judiciary still has room to improve, as the Chief Justice of Kenya vocalized in 2011, Ang'awa and many of her colleagues are dedicated to this transformation.

Leaders bettering the world around them.