

ROSELINDER SIMIYU
WEBUYE CONSTITUENCY PARLIAMENTARY ASPIRANT
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Am a Kenyan lady, 42 years old residing in Webuye. I am a mother of five(5) -three(3) boys and two(2) girls and married to Mr. Francis Atwoli, the secretary general of Central Organisation of Trade Unions (Cotu). I was brought up in a family of nine (9) where I am the second born. I am a committed trade unionist who has always fought to see that there is social justice for all, especially for the under privileged in their social and economic welfare.

I attended my Primary education at Webuye D.E.B. and St. Mary's Primary School in 1977, undertook my "O" Level at Nakuru Day Secondary School in 1981 and completed "A" Level in 1983 at Lake Nakuru High School.

While in my 3rd form at a tender age of 15 yrs, I was made a school prefect and house captain. At that time I felt it was immense responsibility which I felt I could not manage considering that it was a mixed secondary school and most of the students I was to be in charge of were older than me, but I was able to do my job quite responsibly.

While in employment at Nzoia Sugar Company, I came in touch with the social injustices in the real world. I would see employees working under very poor conditions for low remuneration and getting sacked for very minor offences because of the poor leadership. In 1986 that is when my journey in trade unionist began. I started off as a shop steward and later on in 1987 I was elected to be the National Coordinator for women activities in Sugar Industry. Mainly I had the responsibility of helping to create awareness among women within the Sugar Industry to participate more effectively in trade union activities and also start income generating projects that would help them in supplementing for their meager income from employment.

In 1994 I felt that I would succeed better in achieving the above by getting involved and sitting in the decision making organs of the trade union and that is when in 1994 in a by election I was elected the Vice Branch Secretary at Nzoia Sugar Company and later on in February 1996, I vied for the position of Branch Secretary of the union and was elected. This enabled me to contest for the position of the National Chairperson Kenya Union of Sugar Plantation Workers and I was successful.

These are positions I held on and was again re-elected in 2001 and 2006. I have been the only woman holding a National principle position in the trade union in the country. In 2000 I was elected the Chairperson, Board of Governors at Tom Mboya Labour College, Kisumu; and also I have served on the executive board of the Central Organization of Trade Union as a member. I have always dedicated my life to serving the public mostly as a trade unionist which is a male dominated field. Particularly in rural based trade unions like the sugar union. In my representational work as a trade unionist I have participated at both international and national forums i.e.

I have been representing the trade union at the International Labor Organization Conferences since 2000 and participated in formulation of ILO conventions.

- (i) Attended the World Social Forum of the WABA Global forum 2 from 23rd -27th September 2002 on women and work where I represented the Trade Union.

- (ii) I also attended the 25th Ordinary Session of the OAU Labour and Social Affairs commission Ministerial meeting on Employment and Poverty Alleviation in Africa 16 – 18 April 2002 in Ouagadougou Burkina Faso.
- (iii) I also attended the 4th Regional Seminar of the ACP–EU– Economic and Social Interest groups in Kenya Nairobi from 13th – 15th February, 2002.

Being in leadership has its challenges, particularly in an Industry that has been so troubled and vested with a lot of political interferences like Nzoia Sugar Company Ltd.

VISION

Constituency with reduced poverty levels so that the constituents can meet their essential livelihood needs particularly amongst the youth and women.

- (a) Ensure that any funds allocated to the constituency are used to meet the priority needs of the people and also involve the people in the management of these funds.
- (b) Where escalating illiteracy levels are reduced and young people who are not able to continue with their education are assisted to do so through accessibility management and disbursement of bursary in a transparent and equitable manner without discrimination or favor.
- (c) I shall defend and protect the rights of the workers and farmers.
- (d) I shall take urgent measures to protect and rehabilitate our environment from pollution by the Industry.

Being the first woman to run for a parliamentary seat in the constituency, it has its challenges but the community knows and understands that girls and women play a major role in its development .A leader is judged from there performance not gender.

The thuggery and hooliganism associated with politics can be challenging for a woman candidate. That has not cowed me; if anything it's made me stronger for we need leadership that does not use violence to intimidate its

people. i.e. when people came to my home last year after I had started campaign and burnt my car.

PHOTO GALLERY

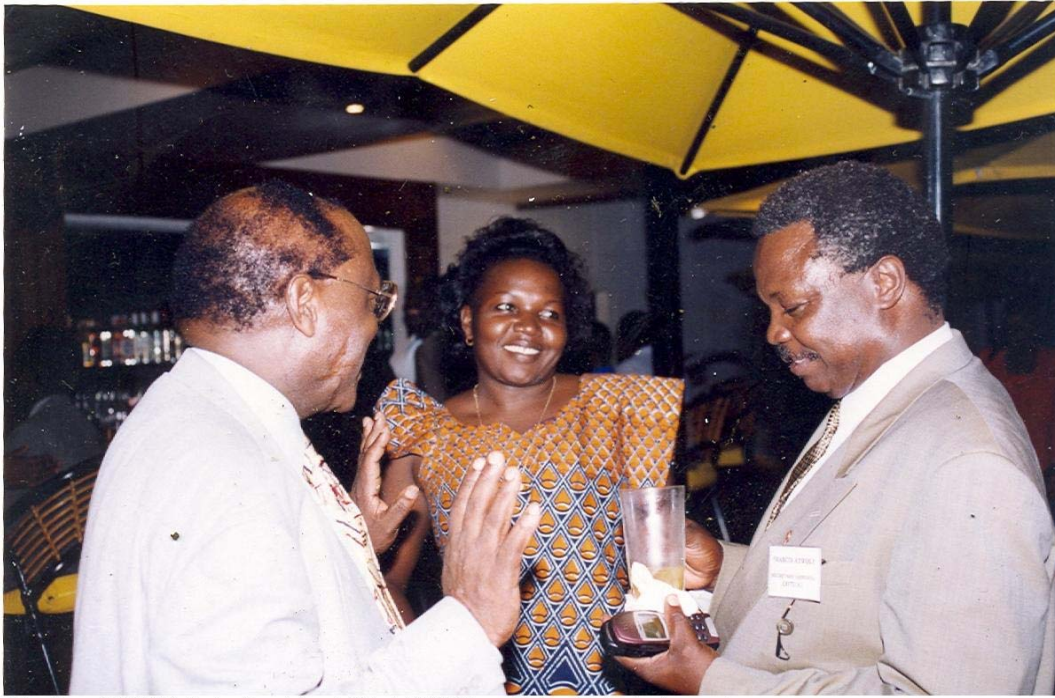
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PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATE FOR WEBUYE CONSTITUENCY

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Addressing the labour day celebration at Uhuru park May 2001 in the background labour Min. Hon Ngutu, J.J Mugalia COTU secretary General and Raila Odinga



Attending an I.C.F.T.U. Regional workshop in Nairobi 2003. Present Andrew Kailombo the secretary General C.F.T.U and Francis Atwoli secretary general



While representing Africa in Japan in 1997 with Japanese Trade Union Confederation.



Attending the OAU meeting in Windhock Namibia in 1999 with Husband Francis Atwoli.



The burnt out shell of my car when arsonist raided my home to curb my political ambition Sept 2006.





Addressing the plenary in Geneva 2000 at the ILO

[Read Roselinder's profile](#)