

Gender and Media Diversity Centre

By Tarisai Nyamweda, Senior Media Programme Officer and GMDC Coordinator



University of Botswana media students participating in a gender and media workshop.

Photo: Keitsemanang

FACT FILE

Programme	GMDC																
No of Centres of Excellence	Country	Ang	Bots	DRC	Les	Mada	Mal	Maur	Moz	Nam	SA	Sey	Swa	Tan	Zam	Zim	Total
No			1	1			2	1	1	1	1			1		1	10
No of events during the year	Country	Ang	Bots	DRC	Les	Mada	Mal	Maur	Moz	Nam	SA	Sey	Swa	Tan	Zam	Zim	Total
No			2	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	3		1	2			18
No of participants	MALE					FEMALE					TOTAL						
	77					85					162						
Outputs	Reports			Action plans			Books			DVDs			Pamphlets/posters				
	8			0			0			0			0				
Outreach	Website hits		Contacts generated			Media mentions			Other events attended			No of MOUS with partners					
How rated by partners in evaluations - average scores	Content	Design	Documen-tation	Facili-tation	Group work	Outputs	Outcomes	Learning	Networking	Admin	Overall						
	79	85	85	84	68	81	55	85	66	74	78						



Tarisai Nyamweda

Synopsis

This report covers the work of the Gender and Media Diversity Centre (GMDC) in 2014. The centre continues to be a strong coalition of gender and media institutions; gender activists; media activists; media academics;

journalists; media students; the media; national, regional and international organisations. It continues to create diverse, responsive and analytical media cadres. The GMDC does this through three strategies: knowledge creation and dissemination; investing in future media producers and through public debates on issues of gender, media and diversity. As it continues to reposition itself, the GMDC is now an integral part of the overarching Gender Links (GL) media programme.



Objectives

The GMDC aims to:

- Contribute to the SADC Gender Protocol targets of gender equality in the media through embedding gender in journalism and media training.
- Contribute to more gender aware and sensitive journalism and media training institutions through rolling out the COE project to institutions of higher learning.
- Promote critical, analytical, diverse and gender aware journalism cadres.
- Promote and steer debate and dialogue on fundamental gender and media issues arising in the region.
- Provide resources that make the relevant links between media theory and practice.
- Revive the gender and media movement in Southern Africa.
- Contribute to the Global Alliance on Media and Gender (GAMAG).

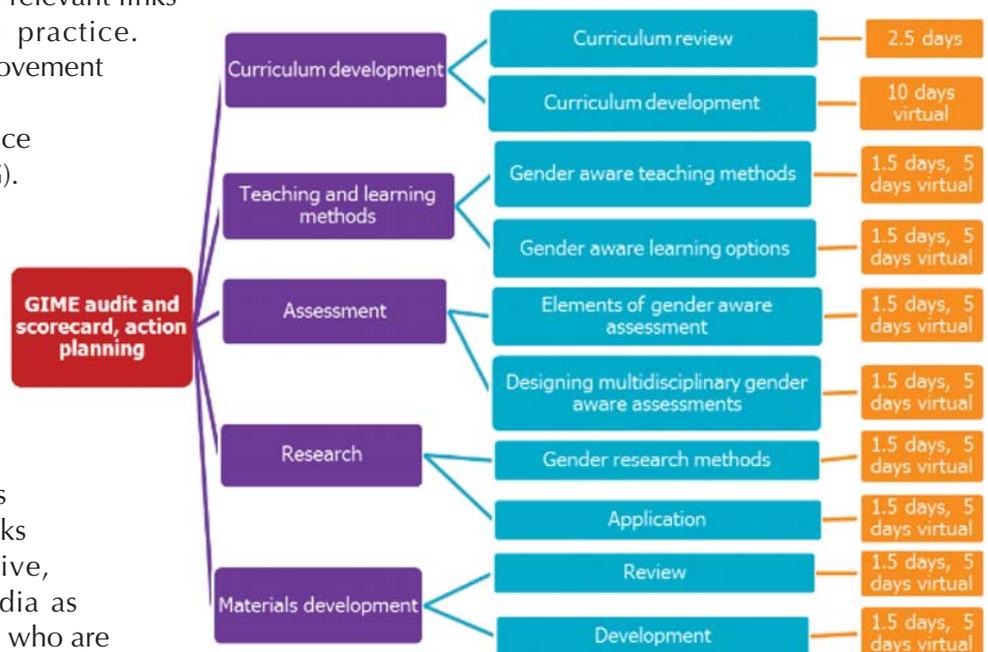
How the GMDC works

The GMDC is a GL partnership project working with like-minded media institutions; media training institutions; media trainers; media development NGOs and media researchers among others. This alliance works to create “a more representative, responsive and professional media as well as citizens, women and men, who are

empowered to critically engage with developmental issues.” The Centre achieves this through creation, collection, connection and dissemination of existing knowledge and resources, as well as collaborating on new research and exchanges. It hosts two advisory group meetings every year to discuss its governance and possible areas of work. The GMDC has previously been involved in projects like, media literacy, GL Opinion and Commentary, internship programme amongst other. Its major project is now the Gender in Media Education (GIME) Centres of Excellence (COE) process that is trying to rectify the existing disparities in media training institutions and present a better informed and more systematic approach to gender mainstreaming which includes working with management, training personnel as well as students. The GMDC acknowledges that reaching and transforming journalism and media studies students while they are still in training is a more effective strategy in achieving the media targets of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development.

The COE process

The GMDC through its partners in institutions of higher learning conceptualised the idea of Gender in Media Education (GIME) Centres of Excellence (COE). This process is informed by the innovative GIME audit (2010), which revealed gender discrepancies that exist in journalism and media training institutions. The GIME COE process is based on the GIME findings. GL is offering media training institutions a modularised gender-mainstreaming package that draws from the 2010 GIME audit. This research pointed to the need for a more systematic approach to gender mainstreaming with includes working with management, training personnel as well as students.



The GMDC is proposing a flexible intervention that will take into account context specific needs and possibilities thereby offering adaptability to the situation on the ground, existing interventions and progress made in gender mainstreaming. This project is aware that media training institutions are at different stages of gender mainstreaming. To kick start the process - five of institutions of higher learning have completed the GIME scorecards and action plans reflecting which modules they will take up.

Links News Service (GLNS) producing online newsletters at the 2014 country and regional SADC Gender Protocol summits. This has empowered young journalists in training to report from a gender perspective. Twelve summit online newsletters were produced with all the stories written by student journalists most based on the summit and presentations. The student journalists came from institutions that the GMDC has been working with in Botswana, DRC, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Tanzania and Zambia. Wezzie Nungu a students from the University of Malawi, The Polytechnic shares her experience:



“GMDC has empowered our aspiring new journalists to face the challenges of applying the 'gender lens' to all the work that they do. The work it continues to do with our students will ensure in future we will have more analytical, responsive and professional journalists who will contribute to enhancing a fairer, more balanced, media in Botswana”. - *Richard Rooney, Head of Media Studies Department, University of Botswana*

“I came to know about Gender Links through my lecturer in varsity. The national and regional summits were first of that kind for me to attend. Covering the summits as a student journalist was initially nerve wrecking considering I was just a month out of college. I learnt on the job news reporting and writing. I had to be quick on my mind and feet, come up with comprehensible news ideas, and deliver the stories as the event unfolded. The regional summit brought together participants and media students from across SADC. The various languages - Bantu, French, Portuguese, and English - meant networking and improved interpersonal communication skills. I made new friends some from whom I learnt a lot in terms of academics, culture and media skills. Not to mention the basics on promoting girls' and women's rights in our societies. I now work with organizations (Plan International, Timveni, and National Girls Education Network) that promote the rights of girls thus eventually creating a society of women that are empowered.” *Wezzie Nungu, University of Malawi.*

Summit

The GMDC provides journalism and media students' practical training opportunities, through the Gender

Governance

Representatives from academic institutions and Gender and Media networks met in May 2014 to share their expectations of the GMDC and devise better ways of engagement.

The meeting discussed several issues regarding the role of both the GMDC and its key stakeholders to ensure there is continued engagement. One of the key issues discussed concerned the governance of the GMDC.

The members of the GMDC formed an interim committee that consists of six members, one from each category of partners. It helps to review progress,



Madube Pasi Siyauya, Albert Ngosa, Virginia Muwanigwa, Sikhonzile Ndlovu and Gladness Munuo at aGMDC Consultative Meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

provide guidance, quality assurance and ensure that the Centre is adequately populated with relevant and up to date information and materials. Above all, it will ensure the GMDC continues to contribute immensely to gender and media in the region. Although the committee has not done much up to date it is hoped that in the coming year it will begin to be more active. Other key topics of discussion included, seminars and internships. The GMDC issued a press release on gender, media and the post 2015 agenda submitted to the Global Alliance on Media and Gender (GAMAG).

Gender media and elections

GL, in collaboration with GIME COEs offered training on gender, media and elections in countries that held local government and national elections in 2014. This training was followed by a field trip to gather stories published in an online newsletter. GL distributed the news to subscribers via list serves, on social media as well as country media for republishing. At the end of the training, students were equipped on knowledge and skills on how to cover election with gender eye. The results of the training are seen in the articles they produced.

Country	Institution of Higher Learning	Participants	
		Female	Male
Botswana	University of Botswana	16	12
Mozambique	University Eduardo Mondlane	20	13
Namibia	Polytechnic of Namibia	4	8
Tanzania	University of Dar es Salaam	12	8



Zuhura Selemani is a journalism lecturer at the University of Dar es Salaam.
Photo: Google Images

“The participation of students in the training was interesting as they attended and participated from day one to the last day. Again, some of the students were already attached to some news media houses for their practices on writing news and articles; but this training added value to them on gender knowledge compared to what they knew before. They were not aware of different conventions and protocols on women's rights such as the Maputo Protocol, the SADC protocol, the AU Declarations, CEDAW, and the Beijing Declaration.

Therefore, during training, students were introduced to the protocols and conventions and tasked to imply one or two of them in their articles. There is a need to engage more students from SJMC in gender related studies. Training on gender will benefit more students to develop their knowledge and skills on gender and the media. It is recommended that more students from SJMC to participate in GL events such as the Summit because during big events students will be

exposed to professional journalists and other potential professions in gender.” Zuhura Selemani- lecturer, University of Dar es Salaam Tanzania

“In October 2014 my colleague, Fiona Letshapa, and I covered and reported on the Botswana general elections. It was my first time for both us to cover such a national event and it was very exciting and a huge learning experience especially meeting high profile people and even the general public. In the process I also put into practice what we had learnt from the workshop. I had a wonderful time meeting with other journalists from around the country during the press releases. More to all that, covering the event opened me up to the truths of how we need more women to join our parliament and councils as we also need to hear their voice because they have a lot to offer for our country.” Levi Mberego, University of Botswana student.



Levi Mberego.

<https://levimberego.wordpress.com/about/>

Media alerts and highlights

The GMDC issues news alerts and highlights at least twice a week on trending news topics directing audiences to what is hot in the news. A short comment is given and a link to where the article has been produced online is given. It helps to stimulate debate and provoke thoughts on what is happening around us.

Seminars

The GMDC has started to realise its goal of decentralising the seminars. Its partners are taking full ownership of these and are proving to be better placed as knowledge hubs within their different contexts.

University of Limpopo leads gender and media debates

The Department of Media, Communications and Information Studies at the University of Limpopo introduced a Gender in Media Studies course in 2014 offered to 2nd year students. The course was inspired by the work of Gender Links including media literacy training, Gender in Media Education and the Media COE project. The department incorporated gender in the existing curricula. After a series of engagements with GL and other stakeholders the department decided to introduce a stand-alone gender course and seminars that would assist students to gain a much better understanding of gender at entry level of journalism.

As part of extramural activities students who are enrolled for this course nominate a gender task team yearly to facilitate an interactive and fun learning environment through organising seminars, peer learning and sharing sessions and debates on gender. The team organised a total of four gender seminars in 2014. These seminars add to the GMDC vision of creating a platform to discuss and engage with issues that advance gender equality in the region and beyond.



Madikana Matjila assistant lecturer.

Photo: Tarisai Nyamweda

Topics included:

- Portrayal and gays lesbians in the local soapies (Generations, Muvhango, after 9)
- Gender in investigative journalism
- The naked truth: Sexual advances in academia
- Sexual harassment in universities (part of GIME)

Results

The GIME project aims to have at least seven media training institutions become COE's; establish baselines through a score card and a questionnaire. It also sought to have at least two media training institutions complete elections training and produce four election newsletters through the GLNS. Major achievements include:

- Nine training institutions with gender mainstreamed into teaching curriculum and assessments.
- Baseline data on gender mainstreaming for 5 training institutions. The data collected was from a repre-

sentative sample of people in the journalism and media students departments and at different levels these included; Head of department; One senior staff member; Staff member; Technical staff; Six students (three female and three male representing different levels of study).

- Five entries for the SADC Gender Protocol @ Work summit and awards.
- Four reports on gender elections and media training workshops.
- Three election newsletters.

Malawian journalist walks the talk

Dyson Mthawanji is an intern at Nation Publications Limited and a student at the University of, Malawi, The Polytechnic. He is an innovative young man who is committed to going forward in discussing gender issues using the media as a tool to drive change. Mthawanji knew of GL through one of his lecturers Dr. Francis Chikunkhuzeni who used the GL website as an example of how new media is being used to spread news to the whole world. He also involved in 16 days of activism and contributed through the cyber dialogues.



Dyson Mthawanji

“The most memorable thing I have learnt with GL is to realise that men are also championing gender equality. In the past when I heard about gender equality I thought it was a fight by women especially in the media. The most vocal voices were women for example Emma Kaliya and others but then when I started interacting with GL I realised that they are some men involved,” said Mthawanji.

Mthawanji took his first trip by air to a foreign country to attend the SADC Gender Protocol@Work Summit in South Africa in 2013 where he won the prize for best student writer. The experience resulted in him running a column titled Gender Walk at his university. “I talk about gender equality issues but in connection with the situation on campus. We had student union elections for example one column focused on our student union constitution, how it is structured which guides our affairs and us in elections. I challenged it to change some of their policies. Over the years I have been at the University, I have not seen a female student competing to be president,” he noted. Through this column, Mthawanji has sharpened his writing

skills and created a platform for debate and discussion amongst the youth at his school. This has also helped him advance his understanding and appreciation of gender issues. “The column is a popular tool. At first when I started it when I commented about something it would be as if I am on the side of women.

Therefore, people would go on our Facebook page and say nasty things like why I am on the side of women. However, with time it does not receive a lot of criticism male students have realised times have changed and we need to treat each other equally. I have been promoting gender equality and I have overcome gender inequality through my column.

“With most of the people at the newsroom or at school when there is a workshop whose target is to overcome GBV they always push me to go which is an indication that they know about my gender activism. I remember at school we had a gender assignment people came to me for assistance they not only passed but they were informed. Even people in my village know about gender because I travelled to SA because of it.

“GL has changed my view on women,” he reflected. “Women should have a space to contribute on issues of national importance and doing businesses. Since I started interacting with GL I am gender aware in my stories. I try to bring that element of enlightenment. With the knowledge I have I tell audiences that women can be on top. ”

Next steps

- The Gender in Media Education (GIME) baseline study is being repeated in 2015 as part of the Gender in Media Progress Study.
- This will be used to strengthen the flexible and modularised Gender in Media Education Centres of Excellence for Gender in the Media (GIME).
- This will also be more closely tied to the GLNS and its special projects.



Focus on the future.

Photo: Zotonantenaina Razanandrateta