

City of Joburg – Women Development Strategy

In 2004/05 Gender Links conducted training with City of Joburg councillors on Gender, Communications and Local Government that led to a draft gender policy for the City. The Deputy President spoke at the launch of this book which was a joint certificate awarding ceremony for councillors who had completed the course, on 10 October 2005.

In 2006 GL responded to a call for proposals by the Community Development Department of the City of Johannesburg for support in finalising the City of Johannesburg's innovative Women Development Strategy. The objective of the project was to consolidate the draft Women Development Strategy by incorporating relevant inputs from the Women's Dialogues workshops which were held in the City in 2005 and to hold consultative workshops with women in the City on the proposed strategy and incorporate suggestions made in these workshops into the plan.

"In my capacity as Speaker of the City of Joburg responsible for councillor capacity building, I worked with Gender Links on a ten module course that they provided on gender and communications to 24 councillors in the municipality, the benefits of which are evident in the increased knowledge and confidence they exhibit around gender issues. One of the significant outputs of this process was the development of a draft gender policy.

In August 2007, and in my capacity as MMC for Community Development, the City of Joburg contracted GL to facilitate consultations with women in all of the regions of the City on the Women Development Strategy. The purpose of these consultations was to incorporate the suggestions made by these women into a comprehensive planning framework identifying key objectives, actions, responsibilities and timeframes for actions in a number of thematic areas including, amongst others, health, HIV and AIDS and World Cup 2010.

Gender Links' work in the area of gender and local governance is commendable and I have no hesitation in recommending their work."

*Cll Nandi-Mayathula Khoza
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In August 2006 (women's month) half-day workshops were arranged in each of the 11 regions of the City. The purpose of these workshops was to engage with women in the City on the proposed strategy and to get their suggestions and buy-in to the plan. The premise on which the strategy is based is that women should be encouraged to meaningfully participate in their socio-economic empowerment. The strategy covered seven key areas: economic empowerment; health, safety and the environment; HIV and AIDS; arts, culture and sport; transport, housing and services; World Cup 2010 and institutional arrangements.

At the workshops in each region women were divided into groups to discuss each of the different key areas. The discussions were

facilitated by GL and officials from the City and each group completed a framework which identified strategic objectives, actions to be taken, where the responsibility lay for these actions and the timeframes in which the actions should be completed. The result of these processes was that each region developed their own strategy relevant to their particular circumstances which then fed into the main holistic strategy for the City.

No two workshops were the same and in each region women spoke openly about the issues that were affecting them in their particular area. In total about 1000 women and men (although they were in the minority) participated in the consultations which resulted in a comprehensive plan for the City to address the development of its women. One of the most innovative outcomes of the strategy was a plan to mainstream gender in the Soccer 2010 to ensure that women also benefit from this world class event.



Outputs

- A finalised Women Development Strategy for the City of Joburg based on inputs from the workshop.
- A costed Implementation Plan for the Women Development Strategy.
- A monitoring and evaluation mechanism/tool to gauge the effectiveness of the implementation of the Women's Development Implementation Plan over a five year period.

Outcomes

Increased awareness and buy-in from women in the City of the proposed Women Development Strategy.

Next steps

Close synergies have been identified between the governance and gender justice programmes and work is being done with SALGA to localise the national action plan to end gender violence by assisting municipalities to develop their own action plans relevant to their local circumstances.