

Gender and Governance

By Sifiso Dube ~ Governance Manager



Faith Manana and Mbabane ward 1 election nominee, Gabsile Siyaya-Mamba - Ezulwini, Swaziland.

Photo: Thandokuhle Dlamini



Anna Murigwa, Rusape, Zimbabwe

"The most memorable moment in my journey with Gender Links is when I won a commendation award the regional GJLGS in South Africa in 2011. The recognition made me feel that the struggles I go through to transform the council and ensure that gender is considered throughout all the work of the local authority is worth it. Receiving the commendation award gave me confidence, not only in my work but also in other areas of my life, because I realised that if I could get one thing right, then I could get many other things in my life right." *Anna Murigwa, Rusape, Zimbabwe*

"We knew GL was doing good work in gender and local governance but reading the case study makes one appreciate your interventions even more. A number of factors make your experience very valuable as a learning for policy makers and others. Linking the SADC Protocol to your work at the local level clearly demonstrates how the gap between international commitments and actions at national level could be overcome. The fact that you are bringing the Protocol down to the first level of public administration is commendable. We also appreciate that the case study highlights your programming approach which is evidence based, multi-pronged and with very clear intentions and strategy to meet women's strategic needs." *Ngoné DIOP, Chief Gender Equality and Women in Development, UN Economic Commission for Africa, which selected GL's Gender and Local Government Project as one of seven best practices of mainstreaming gender in local government in Africa for a forthcoming publication.*

"International Women Development Agency's partner in the Pacific, Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF) - Pacific participated in the Gender Links Training of Trainers on gender in Local government in Johannesburg in 2010. They have used Gender Links/UNHABITAT resources as the basis for adaptation for Pacific gender local government activities/workshops etc. As part of our FLOW project, in partnership with CLGF we would like to explore the concept of similar Centres of Excellence which Gender Links piloted and implemented (we think as part of your MDG3 fund program) as well as learn from Gender Links as a best practice organisation. We would also like to look into possibilities of an exchange and sharing resources in the future." *Emily Miller, Senior Program Manager, International Women's Development Agency Inc.*

FACT FILE

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|--------|-----------------------------|----------------------|------------|--|---------|--------------|---|--------|-----|-----|-------|
| No of Centres of Excellence | Country | | Bots | Les | Mad | Mau | Moz | Nam | SA | Swa | Zam | Zim | Total |
| | No (new COE councils) | | 22 | 20 | 46 | 9 | 9 | 19 | 13 | 12 | 21 | 21 | 190 |
| Events for the Governance programme | COE Events | | 15 | 55 | 88 | 21 | 19 | 25 | 23 | 19 | 30 | 42 | 377 |
| | Non COE events | | 4 | 7 | 23 | 8 | 0 | 10 | 3 | 1 | 8 | 6 | 70 |
| | Total events | | 19 | 62 | 111 | 29 | 19 | 35 | 26 | 20 | 38 | 48 | 407 |
| No of beneficiaries and budget | MALE | | | FEMALE | | | TOTAL | | | BUDGET | | | |
| | 3696 | | | 4833 | | | 8529 | | | | | | |
| How rated by beneficiaries in evaluations - average scores | Content | Design | Documentation | Facilitation | Group work | Output | Outcome | Learning | Networking | Admin | | | |
| | 89% | 89% | 90% | 90% | 88% | 87% | 86% | 90% | 88% | 88% | | | |
| Outputs | Reports | | Action Plans | | | Books | | | Policy briefs | | | | |
| | 135 (COE reports) | | 124 consolidation workshops | | | 2 - Mozambique COE Manual and Lesotho COE Manual | | | 2 | | | | |
| Outreach | Website hits | | Media mentions | Commentaries written | | Other events attended | | No of photos | No of MOUs with partners | | | | |
| | 27 855 | | 89 | 3 | | 113 | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 statements of commitments • 6 MOUs with local government associations | | | | |
| Outcomes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender and governance is now firmly on the agenda of local government. • A potential of 310 councils will complete the COE process by end of 2014 • Application of the COE process has improved good governance in the target localities and has become a flagship training model for gender mainstreaming. • Nearly 500 best practices on gender in local government have been shared at the six national and three regional summits held to date. • A team of gender champions and gender focal persons have been identified to carry the work forward in some countries. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Main risks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political environment - it is sometimes difficult to facilitate workshops in countries that have elections for example in Swaziland elections in November 2012 brought the COE process to a temporary halt. • Funding capacity - some countries are more expensive than others implying a need to rigorously fundraise in those countries. For example Mauritius COE workshops cost ZAR6000 while Mozambique COE workshops cost ZAR55000 per council. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Lessons | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fostering partnerships and making use of our networks makes the work on the ground easier like in Namibia where partnerships have been built with local government associations. • The annual regional summits as well as the in-country summits are drawing in more and more councils and improve evidence quality. • Using the council officials to cascade the COE process creates multiplier effects and builds sustainability. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Innovation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharepoint for real time instant communication, decisions are now made faster. • The TOTs are easing the work load on country managers helping the programme to concentrate on partnership building. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| How VFM is being realised | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In country funding is really helping us do more and gives us as GL room to put a little bit more in countries where there is no in-country funding yet like Zambia and Mozambique. • In-kind support is still high in all countries, like in Mauritius where all councils pay for catering and venue and GL comes in to facilitate the workshops. | | | | | | | | | | | | |



Sifiso Dube – Governance Manager



Nomthi Mankazana - Programme Officer

Synopsis

Described in a recent evaluation as GL's "signature programme" the governance programme grew from strength to strength in 2012. The programme is tapping into the local government niche through the rich profiles of its local government partners and the passion for gender equality by the gender champions, officers and focal persons in each locality. The programme is moving in a complimentary approach where each locality learns from another locality in various fora building a model which is sustainable and entrenched in local government institutions. The programme based on research and advocacy on gender and local government is implemented across 10 Southern African countries; see <http://www.genderlinks.org.za/page/gender-and-governance>.

Following the research on gender and local government, the governance programme aims to promote equal representation and effective participation of women in decision-making. The programme works from the ground upwards to effect change through gender mainstreaming at the local government level. Through this unique approach, the governance programme is implemented through the Centres of Excellence (COE) process; see: <http://www.genderlinks.org.za/page/centres-of-excellence>. The COE model embeds gender mainstreaming at the local level through sustained interventions in 190 localities (soon to be increased to 310) across ten countries in the SADC region.

The COE's link the concepts of gender, the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development and the local actions to mainstream gender in local service delivery whilst monitoring and evaluating the progress made in this aspect. The local action plans on gender are a blow by blow series of commitments on service delivery by the councils linked to the 28 targets of the SADC Protocol on gender and development.

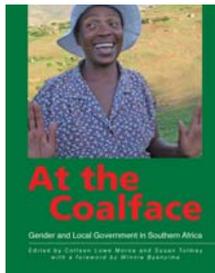
Objectives:

The governance programme aims to achieve the following:

- Combine an evidence-based approach of gender mainstreaming with policy, action planning and on-the-job training framed around the 28 targets of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development through the COE process.

- Developing gender action plans initially at provincial, regional or district level.
- Popularise and enhance application of the SADC Gender Protocol through the village workshops that accompany the COEs and incorporating the Protocol targets into the local action plans.
- To provide a knowledge generation and learning platform through showcasing good practices on gender responsive local governance shared at the country and regional annual summits.
- To build a sustainable model of cascading the COE process through working closely with gender officers, gender focal persons and gender champions in each of the localities.

Background



In 2003, GL undertook the first comprehensive study on the impact of women in politics in Southern Africa. "Ring up the Changes, Gender in Politics in Southern Africa" found that despite the lip service paid to decentralisation and its importance for women's political and economic empowerment, local government is a sadly neglected area in gender and governance discourse. Between 2006 and 2008, GL conducted research in ten Southern African countries in the series, *At the Coalface, Gender and Local Government*. This research yielded the first comprehensive data on women's representation and participation in local government in the region.

The COE process that initially was six-stages, has been expanded to ten stages to include cross-cutting modules on climate change and local economic development. The old process was merged with the new process resulting in updating Action Plans of the councils. Through support from the parent Ministries on local government and gender, as well as support from local authority associations, the

governance programme has signed six MOUs with associations, and one with a Ministry of Gender.

This has provided access through the governance programme and has been implemented in various localities.



Using the evidence-based approach, the governance programme provided a platform for knowledge generation and sharing through the Gender Justice and Local Government Summits held in six countries in 2012 that preceded the regional summit held in Johannesburg. Prior to this platform, an in-depth process of monitoring and evaluation was conducted in the different localities to measure progress made within a year. The programme reached a total 190 councils in 2012 implying that this incremental process will reach a total of 310 councils by the end of 2013.

Delivery - activities and inputs

The process involves obtaining political buy-in; conducting a situation analysis; community mobilisation; building gender analysis skills linked to action planning; implementing the plan; additional communication, IT and campaign skills; verification, monitoring and evaluation;

documenting and sharing good practises at the country and regional Summits. The process is described in detail with profiles of each COE mapped by google earth at <http://www.genderlinks.org.za/page/centres-of-excellence>. GL has developed a generic COE manual with country-specific case studies, translated into several local languages - see <http://www.genderlinks.org.za/page/governance-training>.

The COE process expanded from six to the ten stages is shown in the table below. Key changes include:

- Content of the action plans broadened to include local economic development including care work (the unwaged work of women) and climate change.
- The strategic communications module now has a specific module on IT aimed at ensuring proficiency and capacity building in this area.
- The targets of the planning framework have been aligned to the SADC Protocol on Gender and development.
- Monitoring and evaluation is strengthened through



Gender Links had made me realise the importance of gender issues; in the past, I used to take these issues lightly. Now I plan to make sure that by mid-2012, all my programmes will be in line with the ten stages of the Centres of Excellence - *Naledi Masipa, Polokwane, South Africa*

administering scorecards at the beginning and end of the process. GL now proposes to strengthen this even further by monitoring the prevalence and attitudes towards GBV at the beginning and end of the process. The aim is to show that community by community can achieve the SADC Gender Protocol target of halving gender violence by 2015.

The key activities of the Governance Programme are as follows:

| Activity | Description & Inputs | Rationale |
|--|---|---|
| COE Process | The process involves obtaining political buy-in; conducting a situation analysis; community mobilisation; building gender analysis skills linked to action planning; implementing the plan; additional communication, IT and campaign skills; verification, monitoring and evaluation; | The ten stage process is built on key principles of political support, evidence based approach, community mobilisation, context specific interventions, capacity building, application of skills a, monitoring and evaluation and knowledge creation. |
| Capacity Building | On the job training of council officials and political leaders backed by the Training of Trainers model | This is a hands on approach of applying the COE manual through real life examples and skills transfer to council officials. |
| Cascading the COEs | Through the various cascading models and Training of Trainers in each country that GL is working, this is creating multiplier effects of the COE process by strategic alliances with Local Government ministries, local associations and Gender ministries. GL is working with local government associations across the region on innovative strategies for cascading the COEs, including working through gender focal points of the associations and peer support. | The gives leverage of the COE process through building sustainable models and ownership of implementing the ten stages. |
| The SADC Protocol Summit | This is collection of good practices on gender mainstreaming in different localities through an evidence-based approach of the Protocol at work. Knowledge is shared and learning done through peer and external review. | This is a networking activity which brings a critical mass in the best practices done by local authorities and aligned to the SADC Protocol. The summits provide a vivid interface between council action planning and community benefits. |
| Monitoring & Evaluation | On-going of monitoring through update of council action plans and verification exercise which collects evidence on the ground to support council efforts. | This provides linkages to COE capacities and the Protocol expectations as well as an interface with the community in terms of the Protocol at work. |
| Advocacy and campaigns - women in local government | Imparting campaigning skills to women in local government aspirants and office holders through the COE process and raising awareness of the SADC Protocol target of 50% women in local government by 2015 | The women in local government campaigns helps women to access information and to use ICTs for campaigning whilst simultaneously holding governments accountable in providing an enabling environment for women to contest and the protocol targets. |

Targets

| Target group | Programme Intervention | How the target group has benefited the marginalised |
|--|--|--|
| Local authorities | Capacity development | The research of gender and local government shows that these are the closest to the people and yet gender neutral approaches have derailed development progress. Councillors assessing the gender compliance of their own councils and developing context specific action plans. Through capacity development linking service delivery to gender equality and the national policies, the local authorities can now link the local plans to the national plans. |
| Women councillors | Capacity development and profiling women councillors nationally, regionally and internationally | Women councillors occupy less visible roles within council and there is minimal attention to particular needs as women decision-makers. Through the COE process they gain on-the-job skills and support in gender analysis, planning, budgeting, designing and implementing campaigns. Through telling their own stories in the GL Women in Politics making a difference, they have made their voices heard, locally, nationally and regionally |
| Local Gender Champions | Capacity development and skills in new challenge areas for localities such as climate change, LED and conflict resolution. | Through the Training of trainers workshops where officers can make input and adjust content in local challenges such as conflict resolution, climate change and local economic development to suit their contexts. The workshops also provide a networking approach through peer learning and knowledge exchange. |
| Survivors of GBV | Baseline data on prevalence and extent of GBV at the local level through interaction with survivors of GBV. | Creating agency to survivors of gender-based violence who are mostly women through healing by writing of "I" stories which are first-hand accounts that give a human face to the raw data of GBV. |
| Local communities, women and vulnerable groups | Knowledge and awareness on gender equality and relevant instruments. | Taking the SADC Protocol on Gender to the community through village level workshops on the SADC Gender Protocol (Stage 3 of the COE process) and collection of changing lives stories of community members who have had their lives changed through the COE process and SADC Protocol. |

Outputs

The outputs of the governance programme include:

- 190 Councils joined the process; 310 COEs targeted up to 2013
- 124 Gender Action Plans with Gender Based Violence Plans developed
- Six country summits held in 2012 in Botswana, Madagascar, Mauritius, Namibia, Zimbabwe and Zambia see <http://www.genderlinks.org.za/page/gender-justice-and-local-government-summit-2012>
- One regional Summit held in 2012 in Johannesburg.
- 703 people reached at the summits in 2012 and 350 best practices presented.
- 151 local government COEs verified as part of the monitoring and evaluation exercise.
- Gender Based Violence Indicators Research conducted in Mauritius, South Africa, Zimbabwe and Botswana
- 1000 COE Manuals developed in Portuguese for distribution in Mozambique.
- 1000 COE Manuals developed in Southern Sotho for distribution in Lesotho.
- Five MOUs signed with Local Government Associations to date
- Ten country offices operational and registered across ten SADC countries.



Over the years, I attended several meetings, workshops and conference organised by Gender Links. One of my best experiences was the annual Local Government and Gender Justice Summit that took place from 28 to 30 March 2011 at the Kopanong Hotel and Conference Centre, Benoni, Johannesburg, South Africa. With more than 265 participants from ten southern African countries, the event served as a vehicle to end gender violence, and empower women across the region. Countries shared experiences amongst others, in how to deal with gender violence, prevention, response, support, 16 days of campaigns as well as empowerment of women. Most of all, I enjoyed networking with delegates and especially with members of the media from the region.

Pearl Coetzee, Namibian Press Agency

With 407 events involving 8529 people (44% of these men), the governance programme reaches the largest number of direct beneficiaries of any of GL's five programmes. As borne out by testimonial evidence in this report, hundreds more have been touched by the work of the COE's that includes community mobilisation.

Outreach

Local government COE population

| | Country | COE Population |
|----|--------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Botswana | 173 806 |
| 2 | Lesotho | 275 888 |
| 3 | Madagascar | 665 039 |
| 4 | Mauritius | 1 126 993 |
| 5 | Mozambique | 1 231 607 |
| 6 | Namibia | 212 196 |
| 7 | South Africa | 6 575 248 |
| 8 | Swaziland | 2 117 840 |
| 9 | Zambia | 4 438 561 |
| 10 | Zimbabwe | 4597360 |
| | Total | 21 414 538 |

The councils that GL is currently working with cover a population of nearly 22 million. The impact of gender responsive governance in these communities reaches much further than just the councils. According to the DFID

independent progress review: "As far as the evaluator could determine from the literature review and web searches, GL's work on gender and local government is the most extensive and in-depth attempt to work in a systematic way with local government in mainstreaming gender anywhere in the world."

GL also makes use of several other tools to create ripple effects in this work, for example the list serve and website, which has used google earth to map every one of the COE's on the GL website. The programme received 89 media mentions during the year under review, in the ten countries of operation. Good news from local government spreads through the well- established networks at record speed, as illustrated by the response to the increase in women's representation in Mauritius in the November 2012 elections.

News on the Mauritius quota spreads with the speed of light

When news broke that women's representation in Mauritius had increased from 6% to 31% following the quota introduced in 2012, GL received a barrage of E Mails from the region and across the globe:

«Merci pour tout le travail de terrain et de lobby! Je suis très consciente que sans votre dur labeur je ne serai pas là où je suis aujourd'hui. (thank you for your grassroots work and all the lobbying ! I am aware without your hard work I would never have been here today)."

Tania Diolle; New Elected Councillor at Municipality of Quatre-Bornes; Mauritius

"On behalf of WIN and WIP, we would like to send our warmest congratulations to you on "a great job well done"! While WIN and WIP have certainly made a contribution and added to the voice of women's' organisations present and past claiming their rights, Gender Links has been fundamental in providing the research and data upon which these campaigns have been founded. All women will benefit from this ground-breaking election. But we must not stop here. These advances can be taken away from us if we are not careful and we must now all lobbies together for the same gender neutral quota for the General



Mary Coopan, former GL Mauritius governance manager, Minister of Local government Louis Herve Aimee and GL Francophone Director Loga Virahsawmy. Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna

Elections as well as supporting these women who have been elected, encouraging those that lost or want to stand next time. Above all we need to encourage those women who have been elected to support each other as women and to form their own support groups, and where possible cross party caucuses, so that they are not split and divided so that only men rule. This will of course take time but this is great start. Let's make the most of it."

Jane Valls, Women In Networking, Mauritius.

"A big congrats. I sent this to our UN Women country rep here and to the coordination expert because it is an excellent example of how quotas can leapfrog women even in one election from low numbers to extremely high ones!!! Great story and case study. Now you can begin to track the changes a critical mass of women will bring to local government!"

Pat Made, Zimbabwe.

"Let's join Mauritian women in celebrating their victory in elevating the gender status of their female councillors from 6% to 30.5% during the 2012 local government elections. Mauritius is now in the 8th position on SADC score-card and on course to reaching the 50/50 mark and more before 2015! For details see attachment. Great achievement for entering the New Year with!" - Sara Longwe, Zambia, followed by several responses from her networks such as this: "Just more engagement to make this 2013 a year for big change in women's live and specially status. Congratulations to our Mauritian sister."

Djingarey Maiga, Zambia.

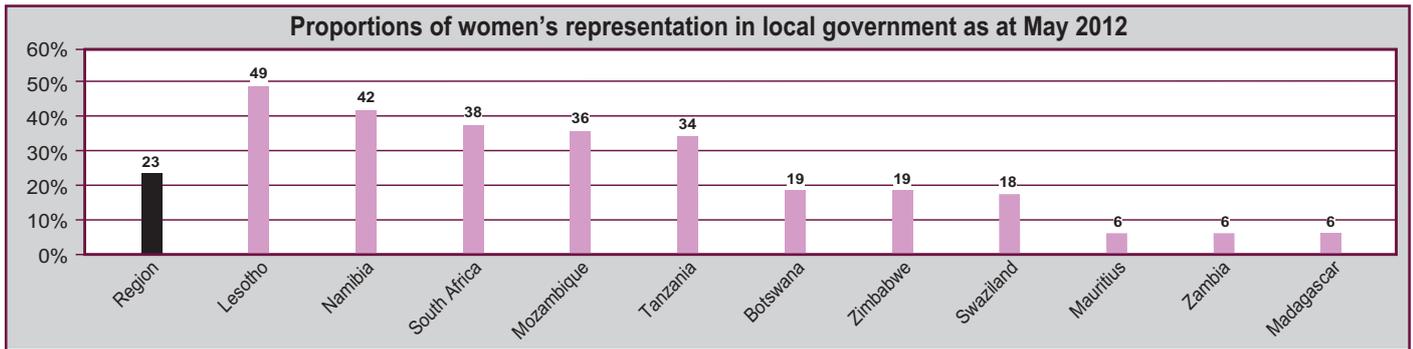
"Congratulations! Thank you for sharing this important news with us. GL can legitimately claim to have changed the course of history in Mauritius. Nothing is impossible. You now have a new baseline from which to demonstrate how the involvement of more women in local governance leads to better developmental outcomes. I have no doubt that the 50-50 target is in reach. Two more election cycles? No matter, it is a long march and worth the journey!"

Mike Macdonald, DFID, UK.

Outcomes

GL's governance programme has two major outcome indicators. At the marco-level GL seeks to contribute to the SADC Gender Protocol target of gender parity in local

government by 2015. At Council level, GL has devised a 25 point Score Card for measuring the gender awareness of Councils that is used to benchmark progress.



Women's representation in local government: Due to the dearth of data on women's representation in local government in some countries, GL has struggled to establish the overall regional figure. The August 2012 Southern Africa Gender Protocol Barometer put the regional average at 22%. Swaziland suffered a blow when women's

representation in urban councils declined from 18% to 14% in the October elections. But Mauritius registered a major gain with the implementation of the quota that earlier led to an amendment to the Constitution to allow for affirmative action.

Nothing succeeds like success - Quota victory in Mauritius

By Loga Virahsawmy, GL Francophone Director

Yes we made it ! I am saying "we" because this quota victory is a commitment from many quarters: government, gender activities and all those who believe in gender justice and in true democracy. The work started well before the 2010 general elections when gender activists asked for at least one woman out of three in each Constituency.

The marches, the bill board campaigns, media campaigns, radio and newspaper interviews did not go into the ears of a deaf. In a press release following the November elections Gender Links congratulated the Prime Minister of Mauritius, Dr. the Hon. Navin Ramgoolam and Minister of Local Government, Louis Herve Aimee for this four-fold told increase of women in local government in the December 2013 Elections. The New Local Government Act makes provision for 30% of all local government candidates to be either women or men. Mauritius rose from 14th among the SADC countries to 6th place. GL CEO Colleen Lowe Morna commented: "The challenge now is to follow through this phenomenal breakthrough. What is unique about these elections is that voters affirmed candidates. This reflects a high degree of mobilization, conscientisation and political commitment by all."

This change did not happen on its own. More than two years ago, I wrote an article in the GL Opinion and Commentary Service that struck a chord with Minister Aime. "The article came at a crucial time, as there was some grumbling going on with regard to the participation of women, as contained in the new law. Some people said that it would be difficult to get so many women candidates while others wondered whether the measures were constitutional. The optimistic and upbeat way that the article was written was definitely a great help," he commented. In 2011, following intense lobbying by the Southern African Gender Protocol Alliance in Mauritius led by GL, Media



Woman Activist and Shenaz Sooba, the leader of the women activists in Ward 4 Port-Louis. Photo: Jagoo T

Watch Organisation (MWO) and Women in Networking (WIN) Mauritius amended its Local Government Law ahead of the elections. The Act requires that political parties field a minimum of one-third of candidates of either sex for the general municipal and village council elections. Articles 12 - 13 of the Southern African Development (SADC) Community Gender Protocol aim to achieve equal representation and participation by women and men in all areas of decision-making including the use of affirmative action measures as provided for in Article Five.

Mauritius had reservations about signing the Protocol because its Constitution did not allow for affirmative action or positive discrimination. The Constitution had to be amended for the country to adopt the local quota. This opens the door to the signing of the Protocol.

On the ground, GL got on with the business of training women for political office. I took my pilgrim stick cascading the Centre of Excellence process to villages in early March 2013. I saw the change. Women village councilors brought new items on the agenda. I told them that with more women at village and municipal levels, the landscape of rural and urban Mauritius will change and gender will be mainstreamed in the everyday lives of citizens

Gender responsive governance



Buy in: Xai-xai Mayor Rita Bento Muianga and Mevasse Sibia Mozambique Country Manager during verification visit. Photo: Caitlin Bentley

GL aims to enrol at least one third of the 977 Councils for its COE process by 2015. So far GL is two thirds of the way towards meeting this target, aided by a cascading model that involves designating gender champions and gender focal persons in each council. These now drive

Changes in well-being:

Another positive change in the communities visited is that women are engaging in non-traditional trades. Women own businesses, they are employed in mines, drive buses, and win local government tenders in various areas. In Arandis town council, a woman-owned business had won “cleaning the mine tender” for the first time. The women are using their incomes to improve the conditions of living of their families.

The story of Connie Mmanni Molathegi from Botswana illustrates these changes. This mother of five children was on welfare programme offered by Lobatse town council to destitute in the town. She went to the “Mayor's High Tea” for 300 women to talk about gender equality with Mayor Caroline Lesang.

In an example of how the campaign to recruit gender champions at the local level is resulting in gender responsive governance, the local council trained this woman and she successfully established a catering business that meets the needs of her family. The photos demonstrate graphically the change in her life.

Source: GLPPA Independent Programme Review, September 2012.

the different stages of the COE model, and take full responsibility for certain tasks with the support of the GL Country Managers. GL is in the process of analysing data collected from the verification in February ahead of the SADC Gender Protocol@Work summit. Preliminary data suggests that the average score for the COE councils across all participating countries increased to 58% up from the baseline score of 47% when the programme started.

Councils' ownership of the COE process: During the verification exercise, council management and politicians worked hard to ensure that they had evidence for the progress on gender mainstreaming. Local government has shown a significant improvement in entrenching mainstreaming into service delivery. Material signifying council's ownership such clear inscriptions on councils receptions, calendars and equipment on zero tolerance to gender inequality show a step forward.

Progress in implementation: The projects submitted at the 2013 summits suggest that there is progress in implementation of the Protocol. This is also borne out in the Independent Progress Review (IPR) of GL's PPA funding conducted by a DFID consultant in October 2012.



Connie Mmanni Molathegi's original shack before getting support.



Connie Mmanni Molathegi's new house built with proceeds from her catering business.

Holistic approach to reducing GBV: COEs are increasingly involving the community in reducing GBV through awareness campaigns and provision of shelters to victims. The GBV action plans are being implemented by councils through partnerships with police, community police and civil society.

Improved documentation of service delivery: Through the technical expertise of gender focal persons, councils

have now improved their documentation of service delivery. Councils now keep records of sex disaggregated data on housing, community meetings and employment. Councils are also keeping partnership records with local business and civil society partnerships. Below is testimonial evidence of changes in service delivery gathered during the DFID IPR:

"This led me to begin working with other women in my district, to sensitise the community on climate change issues; especially on how they can protect their environment from the effects of the changes in weather patterns. Some of the women in Capricorn have started writing about their life experiences, and we aim to compile these stories into a book." (Naledi Maphisa Gender Focal point Capricorn Municipal Council CoE, South Africa).

"We had kids that were on streets but I am working with a lady to put street children back in school. We don't have many street kids now in Keetmanshoop, may be just one or two. Sometimes the kids are running away from home because of problems. But when you put them in hostels then they can concentrate." (Fiina N. Elago, Mayor Keetmanshoop, Namibia).

We have also realised that the police station is too far from the residential areas. The police stations are only in town. Whenever the women and children are facing these difficulties they have to walk long distances to the police station. It is not always that they will afford taxi money. We the council in consultation with our constituency councillor donated a plot. We took the initiative of building a police station in the community. (Mayor Outjo Municipal Council, Namibia).

The council reaches the vulnerable people in the communities through Alliance of Mayors Initiative for Community Action on Aids (AMICAALL). AMICAALL is like the health department in the municipality and it is at the local level. - All the mayors are in the executive committee - Our core business in prevention and mitigation of impact of HIV and AIDS. We also provide early childhood care and education for children less than 6 years. (Gender focal person, Siteki town council, Swaziland).



Care givers in Outjo, Namibia.

Photo: Gender Links

Dedicated gender structures: To facilitate a smooth flow of gender mainstreaming, most councils in the COE process now have dedicated gender focal persons who are twinned with gender champions to facilitate political buy in. Some councils have dedicated gender committees which are selected by departments.

Gender budgets: COEs have planned for gender budgets in their annual budgets. These budgets are mainly for awareness campaigns, health campaigns, 16 Days campaigns and HIV/AIDS campaigns. This shows the commitment by councils to implement the protocol and reduce inequality in their localities.

Improved community outreach: Councils are reaching more to the communities through capacitated GFPs and

GCs who can now implement the SADC Protocol village workshops. This enables the community to learn about the protocol and to hold the councils accountable on service deliverables.

Peer learning: Twinning arrangements between councils have facilitated peer learning. Smaller councils are being adopted by bigger councils e.g Karibib plans were drawn with the help of Swakopmund council in Namibia. This shows multiplier effects in gender mainstreaming and sustainability. Peer learning is witnessed in COE roll out as well as during the SADC Protocol summit.

Youth involvement - junior councils: Succession planning is emerging in some countries with the strengthening of junior council leadership. This transformative model of leadership encourages the youth to implement in the protocol through equal participation in the recreation facilities and early involvement in local economic development. Namibia and Zimbabwe have shown support of the junior council model. The leadership and energy shown by the junior councils encourages the succession planning and ownership of good governance models by the communities.



Gregorius Eiman, Junior councillor, COE workshop, Keetmanshoop, Namibia. Photo: Gender Links

Strengthening rural participation: Rural COEs have joined the gender equality agenda through enforcing gender equality within rural service delivery. Previously marginalised, the rural council now compete at almost similar ground with urban councils through commitment and clear cut plans. For example, Zvimba rural council has shown that gender mainstreaming is possible even in the villages through the commitment of the focal person and the support of the council.

Rural council walks away with best council award in Zimbabwe

If you find yourself in Zvimba district in the Mashonaland West Province of central northern Zimbabwe, you might just meet the Zvimba Queens. No they are not beauty queens! The Zvimba Queens are the council's newly formed women's soccer team with a budget of \$3990 out of the \$28,580 allocated by the Council to promote gender equality in the 2013 budget. For a rural council, this is a small fortune, and a firm indicator that it's no longer business as usual where gender is concerned!

Zvimba became a Centre of Excellence for Gender in Local Government in October 2011. In less than two years, the Council's gender score has risen from 64% to 80% (this score will be independently adjudicated at the March 2013 SADC Protocol@Work summit). During GL's verification visit, Gender Focal Person Fainesi Shamhu presented a fat file of evidence that included a gender policy and action plan (formally adopted by the Council in December 2012, a gender statement to go with the 2013 budget, gender disaggregated employment statistics, job adverts encouraging women to apply, minutes of community meetings).

The council combines a strong evidence and policy-based approach with visible and practical interventions that involve women and men. Gender Champion Tsitsi Mugabe, who also represents rural women in the Women in Local Government Forum, provides political leadership. Mugabe and Shamhu went through the COE Training of Trainer process. They conducted their own situation analysis of the Council.

In a relatively short space of time, the Council can point to several "before" and "after". Before the Council had no gender policy. Many other COE's have gone straight to an action plan without a policy. Zvimba has customised the Zimbabwe Local Government Association (ZILGA) Gender Policy to its needs, with many references to the provisions of the SADC Gender Protocol.

For example, the policy quotes the SADC Gender Protocol target of 50% women in decision-making by 2015, through affirmative action measures if necessary. The council is unique in that it has a relatively high proportion of women - 38% (the overall average of women in local government in Zimbabwe is 18%).

There has not been an election since the adoption of the gender policy, and women still only chair two of the seven committees (28%). However, women now constitute 42% of the vice chairpersons. The Gender Committee has recommended that Council adopt a 50/50 rule for chairing of committees, and that where the chair is male, the deputy must be female. Presently, Mugabe chairs the strategically placed planning committee, while Councillor Margaret Hoshiki is vice chairperson of finance. Women in management have increased from 25% to 33% over the last year. The council now encourages women to apply for posts (evidence provided) and the gender committee is involved in selection processes. Recently the Council recruited a female manager to run its Banket Town Board.

One of the most visible achievements concerns ensuring that women and men gain access to land (evidence provided) and keeping sex disaggregated data on land. Women councillors pointed to many well documented examples of issues they have raised in the Council, as well as those raised by women in the community, as examples of women's participation in decision-making. ZRDC has photocopied the pamphlet on the provisions of the SADC Gender Protocol many times over. From the initial stage three village community workshop, the SADC Gender Protocol is now mentioned at all community gatherings. Minutes of council meetings, budget consultations and other gatherings show gender responsive governance at work in concerns over water, sanitation, roads, boreholes, dams, schools, deforestation, electrification and mining.

Councillors in ward seven and nine have initiated garden projects to empower women. During a late afternoon visit, the women members of the Tirivamwe (we are one) Co-operative demonstrated how they have reclaimed a once empty bush and turned it into a garden under crop rotation. Produce is sold, and some used to feed orphans and vulnerable children.

A unique feature of the Council is that it is cross-referencing its gender policy with other council policies, and setting aside a budget for this purpose. For example, Zvimba has allocated \$500 for this purpose. In ward nine, women have won contracts to provide Okay bazaars with candles, and to sew school uniforms. The council often rents out the community hall for weddings. Women in the community do the décor and catering, earning extra income. Their favourite slogan is "down with poverty, forward with knowledge".

On Valentine's Day last year, the Council ran a day of voluntary counselling and testing for couples, thanks to a gender aware HIV and AIDS policy that is targeting men. The Council's 2013 budget makes a provision for refresher courses and kits for care givers, the majority of whom are unpaid women. The SADC Gender Protocol has strong provisions around the appropriate recognition of care work.



GL Zimbabwe Country Manager Priscilla Maposa (left) and DFID's Caroline Hoy (right) sample the produce from Ward Seven gardens.
Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna

Strengthening leadership: The COE verification has yielded rich testimonial evidence of women at the local level becoming finding their feet and their voice - becoming drivers of change. The following examples come from GL's rich Changing Lives, and Women in Politics Making a Difference series.

Catherine Chapeshamano, a councillor for Matanda ward in Kafue district



Council chairperson Catherine Chapeshamano taking to GBV community coordinator during a COE visit project that reflect gender awareness in Chipongwe village, Kafue. Photo: Gender Links

"I am 54 years and I am a widow. I am a trained Secretary from Zambia Institute of technology and I am also a business person. I first met Gender Links in 2008 when Kafue district council was given a chance to be participate in the gender and local government research. I also participated in the strategy workshop in 2009. I joined the Training of Trainer workshop in South Africa with my other female councillors. Since then, as a council we have a good working relationship with Gender Links. This keeps on growing stronger each and every day. As the only female councillor in Kafue district, I have been advocating for greater women representation, women must have an equal presence and voice in the Zambian politics.

Female politicians face stigma from male members of the political party to which they belong to hence, undermine the women to reach or maintain the leadership roles. Political leaders should be aware that as women are also capable of becoming leaders It is very sad that I am the only female councillor meaning, women's voices are not heard. Attending the summit in Johannesburg is the experience that I will never forget. I did not win any awards, but I am glad I had a chance to learn from other people from different countries. It was the experience that I am proud of and I still treasure the moment. The summit is a way forward to meet the 28 targets of the SADC Protocol on gender and development by 2015. I have acquired skills, values, knowledge and attitude through Gender links. My public speaking has greatly improved; I articulate issues on gender very well. I have learnt how to train people on issues of gender, monitoring and evaluation training has helped me track projects that I do in the community. I believe that M and E is vital as it will help assess the performance."

Annick Hontonirine Rabearisoa, Mayor, Bongatsara, Madagascar: I first heard of GL through Claudia Rakotonirina, Madagascar Programme Assistant, at a UNESCO meeting. Claudia did an overview of Gender Links activities in Madagascar. Bongatsara, 15 kms from the capital, joined the COE process. I put in place a Steering Committee on Gender. This is the basis for the Plan of Action. I am committed to implementing the Action Plan.

In Madagascar we talk a lot about SADC and how SADC can help Madagascar to get us out the political crisis, but never on the Gender Protocol. Yet the contents of the Gender Protocol should be our life blood.

Gender based violence is rife in my locality and yet people was afraid to talk. This has always been taboo until Gender Links gave the training. To expose the problem also means we are giving voices to the voiceless and especially encourage women to talk on GBV. The Council has put in place a Centre d'ecoute et conseil juridique (a listening centre with legal advice). Each time I take a decision for the benefit of my community I run the risk of being taken to court. I listen to grassroots women and men and this is the basis of my work. I deal a lot with litigation of land ownership.

Access to land is a basic human rights. When women have a piece of land for themselves, this is empowerment and giving them back their stolen dignity. My best experience has been to give women their ownership title for a piece of land and helping them to become owners of their own land. Gender Links helped me to get confidence in myself. Look at me now: I am not only a politician doing tremendous work for my community but I have gone a long way. I know what is happening in other African countries and I learn from that."



Verification, Madagascar.

Photo: Gender Links

Demanding accountability

As GL Board member Sara Longwe explains, through the COE process, women and men at local level demand accountability and performance by their governments.

Working with “Centres of Excellence” within local government provides a 'bottom-up' approach in the implementation of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. This cannot be easily or entirely implemented by central government. There are two main reasons why an entirely 'top-down' approach is insufficient.

Firstly, there is the problem of lack of political will. Whatever a state party may have agreed in the Protocol, there remains a high degree of patriarchal opposition to policies of gender equality within both the political and administrative levels of government, especially in areas such as marriage and family rights, and sexual and reproductive rights. There is therefore some doubt about the amount of 'push' that gender policies can receive from central government.

Secondly, there is always a need for 'pull' from the bottom as well as 'push' from the top. 'Centres of excellence' at local level can provide this opportunity to take action and to put gender issues on the agenda. In this endeavour, the state's accession to the Protocol provides a legal environment and justification for action. By the same token, local action puts a demand on the centre for national policies and action which are not only required by the Protocol, but also needed to generalize the successes being achieved at the local level.

But this COE role can only be fully realised where these centres have a high level of ability to recognise gender injustice, and to mobilise for collective action to overcome it. Then they will be truly excellent. *Sara Hlupekile Longwe, GL Board Member, Zambia*

Challenges

The major challenges of the governance programme are:

- **Political will and support of the COE process** - Local government is a highly contested terrain therefore political navigation skills are important. The COE process has achieved this through the first stage consists of getting buy-in at decision-making level in the councils and assisting councils to develop and commit to a plan for the ten stage process. The sixth stage provides a platform for public adoption of the action plan devised, and signing of a statement of commitment to implementation.
- **High costs of hosting the COE workshops** - Hosting COE workshop is usually high in most of the SADC countries. Cascading models have emerged from different countries with the key personnel in councils taking up some of the COE stages thereby easing the burden on country managers.
- **High costs of holding the Local Government Summits** - Most of the logistic costs in the Summits have been borne by GL. Through political will and buy-in, councils have started to bear some of the Summit costs thereby enhancing ownership.
- **National processes such as elections** -GL has had to play a role in increasing women's representation in local government through 50/50 campaigns and imparting campaigning skills to women in politics.
- **Partnership building and growth** - The main partners for the governance programme are the Local Government Associations who provide access to the councils. To strengthen this relationship, GL has signed MOUs with five of these associations where roles and responsibilities are defined. This provides the governance programme with a direct access line to the parent ministries and subsequently national processes.

Next steps

- To cascade the 10 stage COE process to reach 310 target councils.
- To hold Summits based on the SADC Protocol on gender and Development in 10 countries and 1 regional summit held in Johannesburg.
- To expand the local economic development module to include entrepreneurship training for survivors of GBV.
- To align old Gender Action Plans to the new Action Plans using the 10 stage COE process.
- To support partners in the 50/50 campaign in at least four countries that have local government elections in 2013.
- To build capacity of gender focal persons and champions in different localities to facilitate the COE roll out.
- To collect qualitative evidence of change in different localities through the Changing lives case studies and women in politics making a difference.
- To support survivors of GBV through enhancing agency and the healing by writing process in 10 councils per country; 100 in total.
- To build new partnerships with local government associations and parent ministries through MOUs and joint interventions.
- To document good practices in target localities through knowledge generation, learning and innovation.

**Winning the war
community by community**
The GBV indicators study, and a related one on preventing GBV, has led GL to conclude that:

- *The findings of the indicators research needs to be canvassed and used to strengthen national and local action plans to end GBV.*
- *These need to be cascaded much more systematically to the local level;*
- *The emphasis needs to shift to prevention of GBV and empowering women rather than just reacting to growing levels of GBV.*