

# PARTNERSHIPS

By Sifiso Dube, Alliance and Partnerships Manager



Namibia partners gather at the Gender Links strategic planning meeting, 2014.

Photo: Gender Links

Programme	Partners		Geographical location	Partners	
	2014	2013		2014	2013
Media	85	84	Angola	1	1
Alliance	31	29	Botswana	13	12
Governance	25	25	DRC	5	5
Justice	4	3	Lesotho	5	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>141</b>	Madagascar	14	14
<b>Type</b>			Malawi	8	8
Alliance National Focal Networks	15	15	Mauritius	9	8
Alliance Theme clusters	11	8	Mozambique	7	7
Interest Groups	9	9	Namibia	5	5
Local Associations & NGOs	7	7	Seychelles	1	1
Councils	12	12	South Africa	14	14
GMDC	47	46	Swaziland	6	6
Media houses	38	38	Tanzania	11	11
Government	5	5	Zimbabwe	13	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>141</b>	Africa-Kenya	6	6
			International	9	8
			<b>Total</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>141</b>

Often described as a “small organisation with large footprints,” GL has strategically developed a programme delivery mechanism based on partnerships, networking and collaboration. The partnerships span from national government, local government, civil society, faith based organisations and media fraternities.

The outreach achieved through the partnerships is evidence of the commitment on the ground by activists, policy makers and drivers of change to ensure that the region achieves gender equality. GL's work spans across 15 countries but with the post 2015 gender agenda on everyone's lips, GL is reaching out to global partners to make a mark.

### Who are GL Partners?

The comparative statistics for GL partners in 2013 and 2014 show that the number of partners with whom GL has formal partnerships (i.e. Memorandum of Understanding) increased from 142 in 2013 to 144. With 85 formal partnerships, the media programme, GL's first programme, has the largest number of formal partnerships. With 14 partners in each, Madagascar, Zambia and South Africa are the countries with the largest number of formal partner-

### Types of partners

Programme	Local government	National government	Media houses	Civil society	International	Multilateral	Private sector
Alliance		✓		✓	✓	✓	
Media			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Governance	✓	✓		✓	✓		
Justice	✓	✓		✓	✓		
Entrepreneurship	✓			✓			✓

The table shows how GL's four programme areas link across different types of partners. Strategies for partnerships include:

- **Alliance** - Building a coalition of regional and national NGOs that promote gender equality, substantially influencing the global gender agenda at international level.
- **Media** - Direct approaches to media houses to join the Centres of Excellence for gender mainstreaming in media; building long-term institutional relations with media regulators and training institutions.
- **Governance** - Formalising links with local government associations and/or gender/local government ministries; approaches through these to over 400 COE municipalities.
- **Justice** - Formalising links with gender and justice ministries for the GBV indicators project.



“Gender Links taught me how to fly. I was encouraged to encourage others and was empowered to empower myself. I want to tell everyone that they can overcome, just like I have. My business is still growing and I know it will keep growing. Gender Links has provided me with the platform and the freedom to be the best that I can be.” *Susan Swart, a survivor of gender violence from Cape Agulhas Council, South Africa, speaking at the 2014 SADC Protocol@Work summit.*

ships. The number of international partnerships increased from eight to nine due to increased advocacy around the post 2015 agenda. Media is now part of a global media alliance, the Global Alliance on Media and Gender (GAMAG) whilst the Alliance is now part of *Beyond 2015 and Women's Major group*.

- **Entrepreneurship** - local government actions to promote economic empowerment for survivors of gender based violence and referrals with private sector.

**Local government:** Through the Centres of Excellence for Gender in Local Government, GL has built relations with local government line Ministries and associations whilst attracting key allies from civil society.

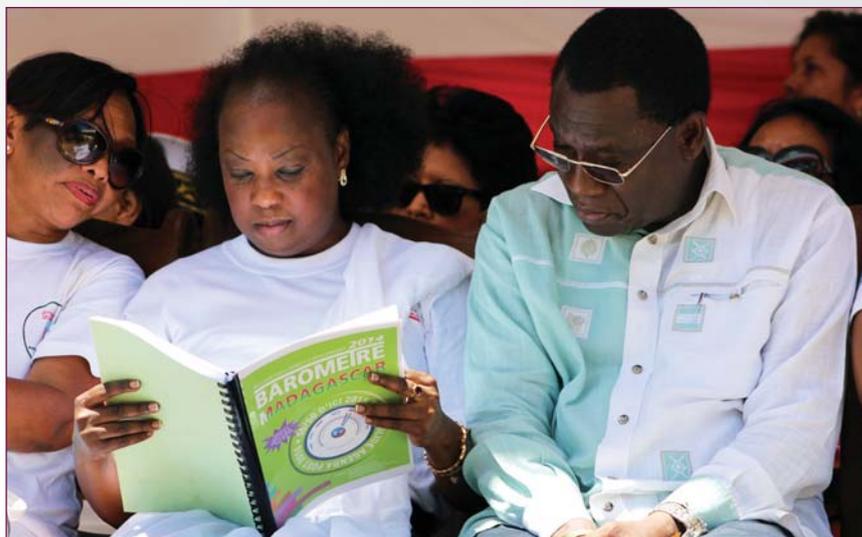
**Media:** The work with media houses involves direct MOU's signed with these organisations. GL also has several MOU's with media education and development organisations through the Gender and Media Diversity Centre (GMDC). GL is currently chair of GAMAG (see media section).

**Women's rights and gender equality networks:** The work of the SADC Gender Protocol Alliance (the Alliance) takes place through national focal networks and theme clusters at regional level with whom GL

has Memorandum of Understanding or MOU's. The FPPE in Mauritius is an example of how GL works with these focal networks.

### Passion for gender equality drives coalition building in Madagascar

The *Federation Pour La Promotion Feminine et Enfantine (FPFE)* is a federation of associations that work for the protection and promotion of women and children in Madagascar. It aims to help assist members of various associations in their daily lives, and to empower these women by informing them of their rights as full citizens, participating in the social and community life, and how they can contribute to the development of the country. The FPFE has organised information workshops about the rights of women and children for gender equity.



A participant goes through the SADC Gender Protocol Barometer at the launch of the 2014 Madagascar barometer during the Women's Day celebrations, Madagascar. Photo: Zotonantenaina Razanadratefa

FPFE started working with Gender Links and the Gender and Media Southern African Network (GEMSA) on newspaper monitoring - an eye opener for most of us. We had never thought that media can be scrutinised in such a way. It also provided us an opportunity to learn more about how women are viewed and treated in society. This motivated members to join the popularisation of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Protocol and the implementation of the 28 targets. FPFE is now the Alliance focal point in Madagascar. There is still much to be done including the popularisation of the Post 2015 agenda, enrolment of new members and especially the basic training on strategies including IT skills!

As a member of the Alliance for the implementation of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, the peace and security cluster has undertaken workshops on UN Resolution 1325. At community outreach level, FPPE has conducted village workshops in the six provinces of Madagascar in tandem with

the Centres of Excellence for Gender in Local Government Programme. These workshops introduced basic gender basic concepts to the target population, including the differences between sex and gender, and the role of women in public and community life.

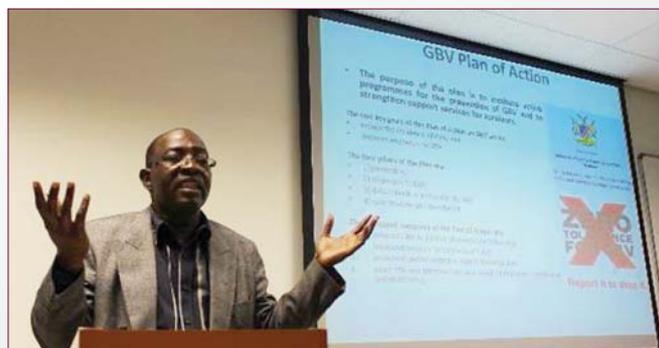
Another part of the collaboration with Gender Links FPFE has been the drafting of the National Barometer. This is a reference for policy makers because it can measure progress and simultaneously provides the perception and appreciation of the citizens of government actions in different sectors. One cannot ignore the massive participation of members of civil society at National and Regional Summit organized by Gender Links. Gender activists and defenders of gender equity want to share good practices and disclose them at national and regional levels. FPFE is ready to do more to empower women and girls in the respect for human rights, for a harmonious and peaceful social life. Yes, we can! Yes we must!

Source: Partnership feedback FPFE, FPFE Institutional profile

**Governments:** GL is also working with gender ministries in Mauritius, Zambia, Lesotho, Botswana, Seychelles and Zimbabwe on the VAW Baseline studies. Donor funds have provided the “yeast” for these studies, with governments and their partner agencies contributing 78% of the resources required. GL's overall VFM analysis of this portfolio shows that in addition to sharing the cost burden of major research

projects, these partnerships with gender ministries in the region have been key to enhancing ownership, putting gender violence on the political agenda, and building the capacity of key functionaries. GL has also worked with gender ministries in Seychelles, Namibia, Zambia, Swaziland, DRC, Mozambique and Malawi to align their gender policies to the SADC Gender Protocol and cost implementation.

## Namibia leads by example



Victor Shipo Director of Gender, Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare, presenting the ministry case study at the SADC Protocol@Work summit.

Photo: Gender Links

The SADC Gender Protocol@Work summit and awards featured entries from government for the first time in 2014. The Namibian Ministry of Gender Equality, one of the first to develop a Gender Policy and National Action Plan aligned to the provisions of the SADC Gender Protocol, together with DRC, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe walked off with the top prize. Victor Shipo, Director in the Ministry of Gender Equality described how this started with a situational analysis. A consultative workshop to validate the information and prioritise areas of concern followed.

“Overall, the assessment of achievements of gender equality efforts in Namibia provided a mixed picture of the progress and obstacles encountered during the implementation of the first National Gender policy,” Shipo reflected. To date, significant progress in the advancement of gender equality has been made in education and training, trade and economic development, decision making and political empowerment, and legal affairs and human rights. He said this is a clear indication of increased recognition of the need to address gender issues in Namibia. “Despite the national effort in rooting out GBV in our society, GBV remains at increase.”

Since their adoption, the Gender policy and the Plan of Action have been used as tools to train and build the capacity of ministerial staff on gender mainstreaming. This has increased the knowledge and awareness on gender issues in various sectors. Gender focal points have been trained to create awareness in their respective sectors. Information dissemination on gender policy and plans of actions has been intensified in all sectors.

The Ministry has funded community income generating projects covering crop production, small livestock, and brick laying, catering services. Supported kinder gardens and pay care givers; Supported women groups to participate in international Expo.

The Ministry has used both printed and electronic media to popularise the national gender policy and Gender Based Violence Plan of Action, customised SADC gender mainstreaming resource Kit, the SADC protocol on Gender and Development and the work on gender equality through various programs on national television such as Good morning Namibia, talk of the nation and Tataleni; other media outreaches used through National Radio on special programs by various staff members in different languages.

“Often times in society we don't realise what is gender equality and some people tend to have an emotional understanding of gender equality. Gender equality is not only about women but both women and men”, said Shipo. He said he hopes that one day everyone in Namibia will get to understand the importance of gender equality in any given society.

*Excerpt from Victor Shipo Driver of Change, 2014, by Lucia Makamure*

**Faith based organisations:** The Alliance Network has 15 country networks, eight thematic clusters and two cross cutting interest groups, faith based organisations (FBOs) and Men's Groups. FBOs wield significant influence and power in communities and in the home. One of the findings of the GL's Violence Against Women Baseline research from six countries is that people go to their religious leaders for guidance in handling cases of gender violence.

FBOs play a major role in promoting attitudes and beliefs about the role of women and men in society. These can sometime be problematic and promote negative gender stereotypes. At the same time, some religious institutions are working to change gender

relations. FBOs are a key mobilising platform for gender equality given their power, influence and reach.

The Norwegian Church Aid (NCA), a long-standing partner of the GL, supported this initiative to empower FBOs to run gender awareness campaigns, link them to national Alliance structures and local government Centres of Excellence.

To sustain the momentum of the inception workshops, GL is in the process of signing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Fellowship of Christian Councils in Southern Africa (FOCCISA). Through FOCISSA GL will raise awareness of the SADC Gender

Protocol within church communities, and sensitisation on gender mainstreaming within the church. This will contribute to increased knowledge on the gender equality discourse by FBOs.

Even as the MOU is in process, GL collaborates with FBOs during the Sixteen Days campaign, with one campaign day dedicated to “The role of the FBOs in addressing gender-based violence.” GL worked with FBOs in the *Score a goal for gender equality* campaign in the build-up to Soccer 2010 World Cup hosted in South Africa.

At policy-level GL engages with FBO leadership on the targets and provisions of the SADC Gender Protocol. This creates safe spaces to discuss gender mainstreaming in FBOs and its curricula.

This led to the Christian denominations including Christian Council of Zambia (CCZ), Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia (EFZ), and the Zambian Episcopal Conference (ZEPF) coming together to form an Alliance of churches for gender equality. In addition, one of the major denominations in Zambia,

CCZ started to mainstream gender in all church activities including training of the clergy in the denomination's Bible College. Gender is integrated in the syllabus of CCZ theological college. The United Church of Zambia (UCZ) is working on a gender policy and has conducted gender clinics for bishops, clergy, and the lay leaders on gender awareness. In South Africa, GL has been reaching out to FBO's through its Alliance partner South African Women in Dialogue (SAWID).



ST Pauls Apostolic Faith Mission marches for gender equality in Botswana.  
Photo: Vincent Onthusitse

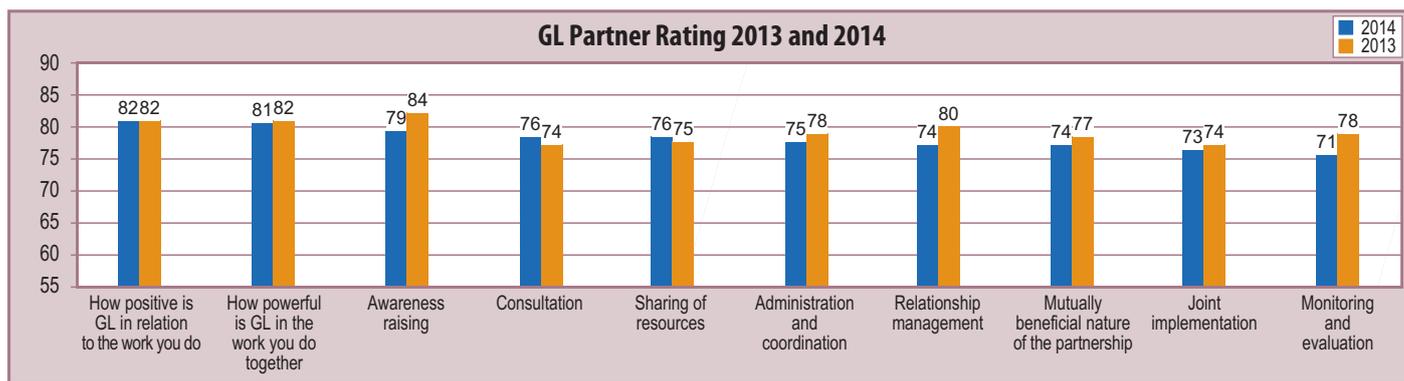
### Faith based organisations come to the gender equality party

During the 2014 South African SADC Gender Protocol@Work summit SAWID sought to gather the voices of women from a variety of different churches and religions on issues of priority concern to women during the remaining seven years of the African Decade of Women; and towards a post-2015 gender agenda with the support of the Norwegian Church Aid. Fifty women from diverse faith structures including, Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Jewish, African Traditional, Bahai, Brahma Kumaris, and Buddhist women attended. Young and older women took part in intergenerational dialogues.

Source: South Africa summit report 2014

Tool	How GL gathers feedback
Website (hits)	Monthly comments gathered and classified.
Feedback section the GL website	GL has instituted a mechanism on the home page of the website to gather comments, complaints and suggestions.
Evaluation forms	Analyses feedback on process; content and administration.
Evaluation and planning meetings	Using SWOT analyses (Strengths; Weaknesses; Opportunities and Threats) and other evaluation methods to adjust programming to ensure greater impact.
“I” stories	First- hand accounts by survivors of gender violence analysed and used to inform the VAW Baseline Study adding a “human face” to the research.
Changing lives	GL has drawn up indicators and key words linked to its ToC and used these to analyse the interviews with direct beneficiaries gathered over the year (see Annex F).
Summits	Over the last year GL reached 2363 people and 5667 people over the last five years from 13 countries. <sup>i</sup> In addition to the Summit there were 23 bilateral meetings with country delegations, partners, and GL Board and donors. <sup>ii</sup> The meetings gather feedback from partners and plot the way forward for GL programmes at country level and with strategic partners. <sup>iii</sup>
GL prepared summative “ <i>Learning through listening</i> ” reports from the local government and media Centres of Excellence verification. These papers are shared with the 400 institutions that GL works with and inform the constant refining and improvement of this process.	

Each year, GL also does an online survey of partners to gather feedback for the annual report, and benchmark progress. The graph summaries comparative results for 2013 and 2014.



Source: GL Partnership feedback form online.

**Positive and powerful work:** In both 2013 and 2014, GL Partners ranked GL highest in being positive in joint work followed by the strength that GL has in the work done (81% to 82%). The following are some of the comments made by partners:

- Gender Links has enabled many local councils and civil society in Madagascar to mainstream gender in their Action Plans. This is a way to empower women and foster equality at grassroots level. It should go on, since we are still far from reaching targets set - FPFE.
- We partnered with GL to enforce issues of gender balance, sensitivity and fairness etc. in our content and coverage of news. We worked together to develop a gender policy for our institution.
- Giving business skills training to the survivors of GBV is the best thing you have done.
- You have done so well in training and lobbying for gender sensitivity to many groups of people in our country.

**Awareness raising:** At 79%, awareness raising comes next, though this is lower than the 84% achieved in the prior year. Comments made by partners reflect ways in which they feel GL has helped to raise their awareness:

- Gender links has done very well and if resources allow they should extend there to more councils. As an individual I have learnt and benefited a lot as leader within my community and at our COE. One of the critical issues I learnt through GL is campaigns to end gender based violence and how

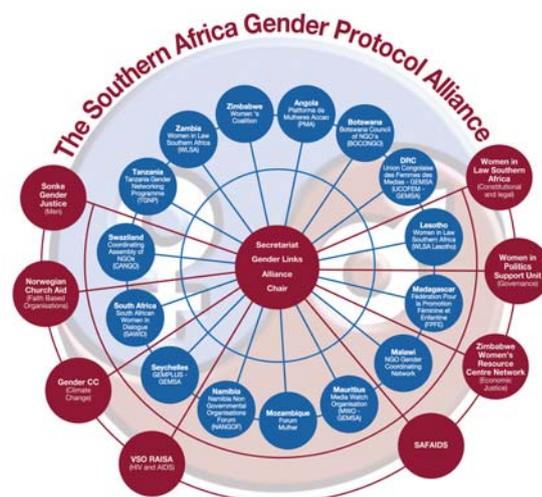
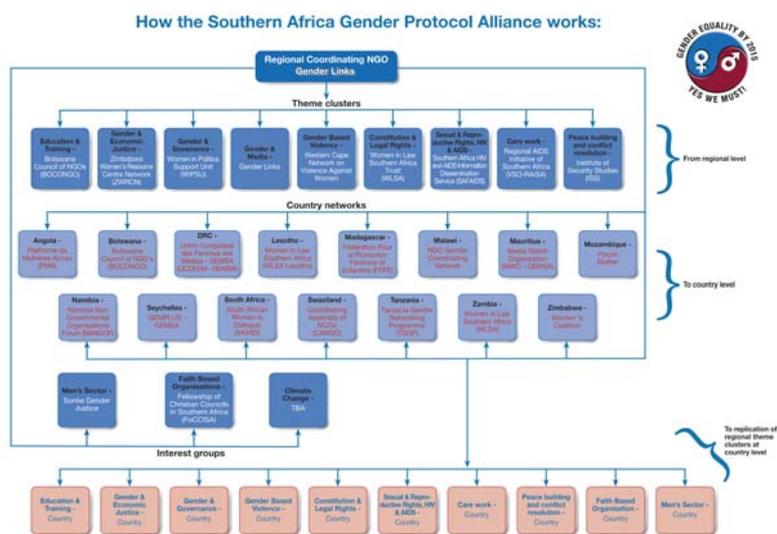
to involve both men and women in the fight against GBV and a lot more. Being a gender champion I have held workshops and awareness on issues to do with gender at grassroots level and institutions. Through GL our COE has now put in place a gender action plan which is working very well.

- Information dissemination and knowledge sharing has been very great. Put pressure and raise the bar on democracy in autonomous countries like Swaziland to ensure laws, Bills and policies are developed to safeguard all citizens particularly women who have lagged behind in developmental initiatives in the country. Form collaborations with the different structures that Gender Links works with in every country to put pressure on Government to redress challenges that hinder development in our societies.

**Consultation has improved:** GL's score on consultation (76% in the year under review) improved by two percentage points. One partner said: "Gender Links has been consistent during the course of the year in updating its partners on research developments in the area of gender."

**Joint implementation, M and E of partnerships need to improve:** In both years these areas received the lowest scores (73% and 71% in 2014). These are important areas as GL devises new ways of cascading the Centres of Excellence, and works towards more sustainable programming.

## How feedback from partners is used to improve programming



The following examples from each of GL's four programmes illustrate how GL uses beneficiary feedback to inform programming. Over the last year the **Southern African Gender Protocol Alliance** conducted a SWOT analysis to assist in finding more effective ways of working. The network of country and regional networks identified ownership; resources; roles and responsibilities as challenges. This resulted in a redrawing of the hierarchical structure into a circular one.

A meeting of the **Gender and Media Diversity Centre** in November 2013 resulted in Southern Africa forming a strong caucus in the newly formed Global Alliance on Media and Gender (GAMAG), lobbying for strong gender and media provisions in the post 2015 agenda. This meeting also resolved to extend the media Centres of Excellence concept to media training institutions in the extended PPA period. GL and partners used the 2014 summit to design this exciting new process.



Naledi Masipa

In the **Gender and Governance** programme, Mossel Bay council took the summit idea home and held a local level summit in 2012. In 2013, local government winners attended the now annual Mossel Bay summit as prizes. The feedback inspired GL to cascade summits to district level for the first time in 2014, with 15 district summits, to be up-scaled to 30 in 2014/2015. Naledi Masipa from the Capricorn District Municipality, Limpopo, South Africa comments, "From the study visits, we learnt how to organise and conduct our own local summits as a way of starting at the grassroots level." The Mossel Bay Municipality continues to innovate and

implement its gender action plan. The council won the award for the Best COE council in the 2014 SADC Gender Protocol Summit.

Listening to survivors of gender violence speaking about going back into abusive relationships due to poverty in the "I" stories project of the **Gender Justice** programme led to GL embarking on entrepreneurship training for GBV survivors in fifty COE councils in ten countries. *Taking charge!* provides participants with life and applied entrepreneurship skills. In this project, supported by the Netherlands government FLOW Fund, but closely linked to the governance programme, GL is testing the hypothesis that increased agency and economic independence will result in a reduction of GBV.

In its pioneering work on measuring gender violence, GL continues to be guided by its partners - six governments in the region. For example, after enthusiastically taking up the results of the study at cabinet level, the Government of Botswana has asked GL to assist in increasing the sample size and cascading the research to district level. This will facilitate local profiles and advocacy. During the 2014 SADC Protocol@Work summit GL held a high level round table of all partners in the measuring VAW project attended by the gender ministers from Lesotho and Mauritius. The Lesotho minister pledged to take the results of the study there to a cabinet briefing. During the bilateral meeting with the Lesotho delegation at the summit, partners proposed that in Lesotho the launch of the report be accompanied by a Strategic Communications plan and capacity building.

### Challenges to partnerships

- **Sustainability** - Funding crises have a negative bearing on partners and partnerships. It is promising that local government partners are making efforts to dedicate funds for implementation. Joint fundraising and innovative ways of doing things has sustained the Alliance over the years but this needs to be strengthened as the DFID PPA feedback report of March 2015 notes. The resources may result in competitiveness between GL and partners.
- **Post 2015 alignment** - Although GL has started to engage partners and governments on the post 2015 agenda and reviewing of the SGP, the pace is quite worrying due to many external factors. The new global development framework in the form of Sustainable Development Goals is overtaking gains made in the current SGP and GL and partners need to pick up the pace through alignment.
- **High turnover among partners** - The continuous change in contact person for some partners has resulted in non-implementation of activities. This is due to varying capacities by partners to institutionalise the partnership with GL. In some cases the change can bring new energy whilst in others it may need GL to directly implement thereby reducing ownership of processes such as tracking progress made through the barometer. A frequent audit of GL partnerships is required to ensure that the partnerships grow from strength to strength even with new personnel on board.

“GL used the PPA funds to foster joint working with its partners, based on existing networks. GL explained during the in-depth research that they were not a grant-making institution and therefore did not use the PPA to directly fund partners' projects or capacity. What the PPA was invested in was rather the work at the Alliance level, and the activities such as workshops and trainings were funded using the PPA in order to bring the Alliance members together. We understand that this may have implied building the capacity of partners in gender mainstreaming, but the question remains as to the sustainability of some of these partner organisations, some of which are small-scale organisations surviving on limited resources.” - GL DFID PPA Evaluation Report

### Next steps - strengthening partnerships for post 2015

Partners identified some key areas that Gender Links could improve:

- Revive alliance country focal network MOUs to incorporate the post 2015 gender agenda.
- Share knowledge especially on documentation to improve evidence of the SADC Protocol@work at the 2015 summits.
- Improve communication with formal partners through scheduled avenues.
- Gather news from different partners to feature in the monthly newsletter.
- Joint resource mobilisation especially on national specific issues.
- SGP review through the country level advocacy strategies.
- Increase level of engagement through participation at partner events.
- Deepen implementation through documentation with current partners in governance and media.



Alliance Chairperson Emma Kaliya, former Secretary General of the Fourth World Conference on Women Gertrude Mongella, and GL CEO Colleen Lowe Morna.  
Photo: Gender Links

i Summary of costs district, national and regional summits  
ii Regional summit programme  
iii Record of Summit parallel meetings