

Physical Infrastructure and Going Green!

GL HQ is housed in two former houses which provide ample office space. The different departments are located together for good communication flow. The regular maintenance and repairs of the building keeps it in good condition, creating a conducive working environment

GL has embarked on green office and we have programmes to keep our working environment eco friendly. GL staff have been conscientised to work in a smart way keeping our working environment eco friendly by reducing on paper, water and power wastage. GL has notice in the office for staff to always switch off lights, recycle and assigned staff who is responsible to mobilise and run with this programme.

Going green!

GL has a comprehensive Green Office Policy as part of its Policies and Procedures. This states that *“the organisation has a special responsibility and role as a regional leader and consumer of environmental resources, to set positive examples of management and conservation within this area. This policy includes the carrying out of both compulsory and voluntary practices to reduce waste, further recycling, conserve energy and reduce the usage of natural resources.”* The policy is cross-referenced with the procurement, employee wellness, and office environment policies.



From the treetop: GL CEO Colleen Lowe Morna leading the going green campaign.
Photo: Gender Links

In May 2013, Diakonia, a GL partner and donor, offered training to GL staff on climate change. GL staff organise monthly team buildings walks around nature reserves. GL mounted a successful protest against the closing of Linksfield Ridge, a beautiful green space near the GL office, because of crime in the area.

Internal - Going Green policy	Programmes: Gender and climate justice campaign	
		
Organisational Policy	Alliance	Spear heads the SADC Gender and Climate Change Addendum initiative
Paperless office; Recycling	Governance	Integrated into COE gender training and action plans
More road transport	Media	
Planting of trees by Board Members	Justice	Integrated into Sixteen Days of Activism campaigns

As illustrated in the graphic, GL's Green Policy covers internal operations and programme work. GL tracks green savings as part of its VFM tracking. In 2013/2014, this amounted to over R2 million or 29% of total VFM savings: a powerful reminder that going green is also good for the budget!

Key internal measures taken include:

- Moving towards a paperless office through Share Point which allows staff easy online access to GL documentation, and Pastel Evolution, the new financial accounting system which has an online procurement module. Each GL staff member has a recycle paper box collected every Tuesday.
- GL has reduced the number of publications produced in hard copy. For example instead of printing 15 x 1000 country Barometers each year, GL now prints 100 Print on Demand (POS) digital copies and 500 CD ROMs per country (see *Going Green and Working Smart VFM case study*).ⁱ Summit newspapers that used to be printed are now done on-line, in multi-media formats.ⁱⁱ GL collected over 700 case studies for the Gender Protocol@Work

summits, including supporting audio visual evidence, online, dramatically reducing paper-based products as well as enhancing IT skills across partner networks (see *GL Summit Going Green VFM Case Study*).ⁱⁱⁱ

- GL's biggest contributor to green savings is its bed and breakfast training facility, the GL Cottages (GBP 14 061 in the year under review, or 10% of GL's green savings). This is achieved through recycling, renewable energy, using borehole water for the garden and a range of measures involving guests at the complex. GL has instituted a number of power saving measures including switching off lights and plugs that are not being used and switching off computers and printers at the end of the day.
- GL provides gas heating in winter to save electricity and fans in summer instead of air conditioners in case of excesses in temperatures.
- GL uses filtered drinking water instead of bottled water. Interior plants improve air quality. GL offices have good natural light to reduce the use of artificial light.



GL staff and interns doing a clean up outside of GL head office.

Photo: Trevor Davies

ⁱ Going Green and Working Smart - VFM case study on digitising country barometers

ⁱⁱ GL News Service VFM Case Study, GL Case Study

ⁱⁱⁱ GL Summit Going Green VFM Case Study