

SOUTH AFRICA



Thoko Mpumlwana - Board member



Mbuyiselo Botha, Board Member



Judith Maneli - Programme Officer



Ntombi Mbadlanyana - Country Manager

15 years of service

- Completed “At the Coalface” Research in South Africa in 2008 - this informed work on increasing women's participation in local government.
- Completed and launched the Gender Based Violence Prevalence Studies in Gauteng, Limpopo, Western Cape and Kwa-Zulu Natal Provinces in South Africa.
- Rolled out the Centres of Excellence Programme to 20 councils in three provinces.
- The programme produced two best performing COEs in Southern Africa, Mossel Bay and Capricorn Municipality councils.
- Mossel Bay successfully hosted peer learning and study visits for top performing council in Mauritius - Grand Port.
- Mossel Bay and Capricorn have hosted and funded their own district level summits with minimal technical support from GL over the past three years.
- GL conducted and completed the Entrepreneurship programme in 10 councils in the three provinces with 128 women GBV survivors.
- GL works with 15 community media COEs on influencing media's sensitivity to reporting and gender.
- **Key partners:** South African Women in Local Government (SALGA) and South African Women in Dialogue (SAWID).

Over the past three years, GL South Africa has focused on implementing work funded by the UNWOMEN Fund for Gender Equality in Gauteng, Limpopo and Western Cape Provinces of South Africa. The project that closed in 2015, aimed to: “enable women and girls in 15 localities of South Africa to gain equal access to economic opportunities.” 15 local authorities in the three provinces participated in the project. The Norwegian Council for Africa (NCAID Council) funded the participation of an additional five councils, bringing the total to 20 COEs. In 2015 GL geared up and successfully completed the implementation of this project, including a final audit and evaluation.

Key achievements

Centres of Excellence for Gender in Local Government: GL South Africa has helped the tier of government servicing the majority of the populace in each of the provinces, to develop and improve their gender and GBV action plans, setting milestones and costing these for effective implementation. GL has not managed to change legislation or influence the development of policy, but has attracted attention to the model. GL South Africa upscaled the capacity of 20 local authorities to become active and committed COEs with 40 committed cadres trained in the COE process as Gender Focal Persons - GFPs (technical persons) and Gender Champions - GCs (councillors). The GFPs and GCs assist the councils to devise best practices with remarkable testimonies shared at annual summits. In 2015, councils contributed R1 218 750 towards gender responsive governance, promoting gender equality, mainstreaming and specific projects. All 20 councils have signed MOUs with Gender Links and statements of commitment to ensure that their 20 costed gender and gender based violence action plans are implemented.

Empowering women, ending violence: GL successfully completed the entrepreneurship and life skills programme in 10 selected councils in the Gauteng, Limpopo and Western Cape provinces. Through this project, GL showed that economic empowerment can significantly contribute towards ending GBV community by community. The Entrepreneurship project created an enabling environment for emerging entrepreneurs to start and grow sustainable businesses. GL trained 128 women on entrepreneurship and life skills and assisted them to increase their agency, self-confidence, self-reliance and belief in their ability to achieve economic independence. An impact assessment conducted in the third quarter of 2015 showed that 74% mentioned experiencing less or much less gender based violence in their lives and sphere of influence. The percentage of women who owned a business increased from 56% in 2013, to 71% in 2015; 65% opened a bank account; 72% grew their businesses and added new products while 69% found new markets. The average increase in income per month for participants in this programme rose from a negative figure to R532 resulting in an average annual increase in income of R542, 892.

GL has been approached by the Department of Small Business Development (DBSD) to implement the programme in the mining sector. In turn GL has approached Cheri Blair Foundation for mentorship and support for entrepreneurs, created linkages with the African Development Bank (ADB) for synergies between GL programmes and ADB goals and objectives.

South Africa SADC Gender Protocol @ Work Summits: A total of 173 best practices were presented at the summits from 2014 to 2015. These included best practices from Non-

Governmental organisation (NGOs), government, and other stakeholders. South Africa has two of the top performing COE councils regionally. Capricorn and Mossel Bay Municipalities have implemented and adopted gender mainstreaming and gender equality initiatives effectively within their councils. Mossel Bay (Western Cape) and Capricorn (Limpopo) councils have taken ownership of the Gender Links Summits Model and over the past two years, have organised their own summits with only technical support from Gender Links.

Protocol@Work Summit facts

- In total **108** people participated in the summit, **14** males and **94** females, the participants included representatives from local government, different NGOs and the Commission for Gender Equality and SALGA and SAWID representatives.
- **3** councils represented.
- **10** categories including Emerging Entrepreneurs (Start-up and Existing), FBOs, Economic Justice and Education, Climate Change, Governance, SRHR, GBV, Leadership, Media COEs, Local Government COE.
- **20** winners - **15** female (75%) and **5** males (25%)
- **1** media COE entered.

Capricorn won the Best Performing Urban council at the Regional Summit from 2012- 2013. At the Regional Summit in 2015 Capricorn District municipality won the overall Best Performing Council. Capricorn also hosted their first district summits using Gender links model, taking ownership of the processes. The Entrepreneurship project as anchored within 10 local councils in Gauteng, Limpopo and Western Cape provinces was pivotal in creating an enabling environment for emerging entrepreneurs to start and grow sustainable businesses.

As part of the Local Government COE process, GL South Africa conducted 3 provincial COE verification workshops, in Gauteng, Limpopo and Western Cape. These workshops were aimed at monitoring the progress councils were making in promoting gender mainstreaming, equality and ending GBV. GL also used the learnings from the workshops to strengthen the action plans. The pre-summit verification workshops led to the second national gender summits in Kopanong Gauteng where 100 people participated.

Sixteen Days of Activism: Under the theme “End Violence Empower Women” GL South Africa successfully organised an active 16 days of activism campaign collaboratively with one of GL's strategic community based partner organisation, Let Us Grow from Orange farm. Collaboratively, both organisations held a march against gender based violence and raised awareness of sexuality and diversity within Orange Farm. The campaign primarily demanded an end to violence through a signed petition to the local police to be more vigilant and enforce the law on perpetrators of violence and, raised aware about the level of GBV, emphasising the urgency of changes in attitudes and behaviour towards tolerance, peace and security in private and public spaces. GL also partnered with the Vhembe municipality in Limpopo on the 1 December 2015 on the Awareness to Prevention, End Stigma, on HIV and AIDS Campaign.

Key challenges

- Administrative dynamics in councils make the situation unstable as political buy in can be difficult. Gender not being explicit in staff key performance indicators and areas limits commitment to advance gender issues and the promotion of gender equality by council staff.
- Sustaining enthusiasm for the work COE Work within local authorities in a highly volatile political context ahead of the 2016 local elections. The imminent local elections and uncertain leadership outcomes affect focus and commitment to promoting gender issues within councils and communities.
- Minimal engagement within local authorities due to human and financial resource limitations to sustain the momentum of the COE process.
- Limited funding opportunities available in country due to the middle income status of South Africa.

Key priorities for 2016

- Robust fund raising and looking onto the non-traditional funders.
- Backstopping the 20 COEs worked with to review the action plans.
- Cascade the Entrepreneurship project and focus on the younger generation in a bid to “Stop Violence Before it Starts.”
- Effectively implement the next phase of the Entrepreneurship programme in South Africa.
- Conduct a provincial strategic workshop in the Western Cape to disseminate the GBV studies and lobby for ending violence community by community.
- Work collaboratively through strengthened partnerships. Forging new partnerships especially in the new projects GL may not have adequate capacity and experience in implementing.
- Promote diversity and disability rights and strengthen focus on men as change agents in promoting gender equality.
- Strengthen collaboration with other GL programmes and engage media and especially new media as a means and toll for promoting women's rights, gender equality and mainstreaming.



Susan Mogari in Vhembe Municipality and 16 Days of Activism in Vhembe. Photo: Judith Maneli