Situation analysis report for George Municipality, Western Cape

Country: South Africa

Name of municipality: George Municipality

Synopsis

The centres of excellence for gender mainstreaming in local government seeks to ensure that councils are identified across the region, and worked with closely to ensure their process of getting gender on their councils agenda.

This process will take place through various interventions that will include policy implementation, capacity building through on the job training, monitoring and evaluation. This process will also include us working closely with our local government associations, with whom we have close links. To ensure and assist councils with gender mainstreaming within their programmes, projects, and internal processes to ensure that gender transformative practiced are implemented.

Why does this municipality have an interest in developing a gender policy?

George Municipality acknowledges the need for the council to have a gender policy to ensure good governance and the equal representation of women across all levels of employment within the council. There are currently no women who are represented on the top management structure; this is also an area of concern as transformative practices need to be encouraged.

There is no gender policy the council however the council is aware that there is a need for the development of a gender policy for the council/ municipality to ensure that issues of gender are addressed in a way that holds the council/ municipality accountable for implementation.
There is also a need to formulate a gender action plan as well as a gender policy   by the Council. This formulation of a gender policy   will ensure that the action plan is implemented and that gender is integrated into all municipal structures, policies and processes.

Strengths

The council has received a clean audit from the office of the Auditor General this is an accolade to indicate that the council has always ensured to keep above with administration standards, and ensure smooth implementation of processes internally and externally.
The council also has good governance and participation which ensures that there is development and capacitation of communities in order to effect meaning participation.

The council is also very committed to addressing the current challenges of housing backlog, service delivery in other areas and also ensuring that utilities are created, the council has managed to upgrade and renovate utilities within the various communities. There is also a clear commitment from the council to ensure that the public transport systems and infrastructural development are also aligned to the Financial Management

Act within the council, there is also a very clear system of transparency and the vision and mission of the council is also noted.

Challenges

Findings from the research indicate that the council also struggles to secure funding for infrastructure in terms of maintenance and upgrading, and also making sure that there are the correct personnel to do the maintenance.

Another main challenge is also the issue of staff there is a shortage of skilled staff in terms of engineers and mechanical controllers, the issue of the housing backlog also remains one of the main challenges in the council with the large population growth.

Results of gender score card

Area assessed	Council Score	Score GL	Agreed score
Policy framework	7	5	8
Governance	10	9	11
Gender specific programmes	7	6	6
Mainstreaming gender into existing programmes	10	7	4
Employment practises and environment	11	8	18
Gender management system	9	7	5
Overall	**54**	**42**	**52**

SITUATION ANALYSIS

Policy framework

GOVERNANCE

Representation

There is an indication from the results that there is an equal amount of representation of men and women at council level which indicates that there is fair equal representation.

REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN COUNCIL		
MEN	**WOMEN**	**TOTAL**
50%	50%	100

Participation

The results indicate that there is an equal amount of representation of both women and men in the council, and the score in this category indicated that there were equal numbers of both men and women within the council.

Public participation

The council has created platforms where there is public engagement and participation this also includes consultative processes with the formulation of the IDP Plan. Community dialogues and platforms have been created; this also includes having ward committee structures at community level which assist the members of the public to be aware of the internal council processes. These public platforms are created through the community forums, Imbizo's and Jamboree Sessions.

PLANNING

There are clear planning processes within the council the council has set up representative structures from the various stakeholders including government departments and other groups. This forum that is created also assists with receiving inputs for the IDP process and developing a clear mandate on the expected planned projects to be devised, councillors make an effort as far as possible to ensure that all members of the community are engaged with council processes and implementation programmes.

MAINSTREAMING GENDER INTO EXISTING PROGRAMMES

The economy and job creation

Procurement

The council has an established supply chain management policy which allows the Accounting officer to dispense with the official procurement process. The council is guided by the PFMA (Public Financial Management Act) which gives guidance and input to spending of public funds.

The council also ensures that deviations from the normal procurement processes have to be monitored and there are also monthly reporting systems in terms of expenditure. There is also regular monitoring and review of supply vendor performance to ensure that issues of compliance are met, and that the goods and conditions are also in order. However there is no clear indication as to the number of tenders that are awarded to women who are service providers in the council, the council has a clear and very transparent tendering process and that tenders are fairly awarded within the validity period to enhance services.

The council is also clear on their role which is to create an enabling environment for job creation for economic growth and also ensure that there are initiatives created for job creation. The council has an LED unit through the EPWP strengthens and also creates a database of employment opportunities, the main issue and area of challenge is that there is clear misunderstanding of what the LED unit should be driving. The council often faces problems of trying to support too many small scale projects with little impact success.

Housing

Housing remains one of the areas of concern within the council and the main challenge is the provision of the houses, there are plans however to ensure that there are low-cost houses developed in some of the townships. The council is not directly involved and responsible for the building and supply of houses, housing is the responsibility of the National Government.

Utilities

The council has various utilities that are available to the communities these include access to basic services and the electricity units that are given freely on a monthly basis to indigent families. The council also has recreational spaces and facilities however there is no clear indication in terms of the people who access these spaces, which are used for recreational purposes, the council also has good infrastructure roads and sewage systems.

The supply of electricity to the informal settlements remains a major challenge for the council, as it is often very difficult to ensure that all households have supply to legal sources of electricity. The ageing infrastructure also poses as a challenge and maintenance of resources in good condition is also a challenge within the council.

Developmental Challenges
- Provision of electricity to all areas- townships
- Ageing infrastructure
- Mushrooming informal settlements
- Illegal access of electricity supply

Health

The council has an HIV /AIDS policy and also committed to ensuring that the issue of those living with HIV are also addressed in addition there is also indication that points out that the council is involved with HIV and AIDS awareness campaigns.

However due to large budget cuts the ARV programme could not be fully implemented within the council, this is also a challenge as the continuous budget cuts often makes it difficult to ensure that there are funds available for implementation. The council has created and established working relationships with other stakeholders with regard to driving the HIV/AIDS agenda.

Developmental Challenges

- Lack of Funding available for HIV/AIDS initiatives
- Lack of medications at Clinics and mobile clinics
- Failure of mobile clinics to honour schedules
- Support to home based carers

GENDER SPECIFIC PROGRAMMES

The council does participate in gender specific programmes and campaigns; the human development unit is extensively involved with dissemination of information to communities with regard to human rights issues.

The composition of the Senior Management team is not gender aware the there is only one woman who is part of the team and there are only males out of a six directorates.

Gender based violence (GBV) flagship

The council has a few GBV flagship initiatives and projects that they are involved in with regard to initiatives which address GBV; often these initiatives are a partnership between various stakeholders and also other organisations. The council has a social development unit these flagship projects are often also in conjunction with commemorative days, and other campaigns.

Sexual Harassment Policy

The council does not have a sexual harassment policy in place however they are in process of formulating the sexual harassment policy which will assist them to deal with the gender dynamics within the council. Gender development is based on the Employment Equity Policy and the implementation of awareness programmes, events, projects, empowerment consultation forums to meet the municipal objective.

EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES AND ENVIRONMENT

Selection and recruitment

The council has made direct initiatives and plans to ensure that the council composition is reflective and clear about transformation and also ensuring that there are opportunities of employment offered to all staff.

To further the Municipality as an inclusive non-racial, non-sexist organisation that meets the needs of internal and external customers while addressing historical imbalances and disparities. The numbers of people from employment equity target groups employed in the three highest levels of management are also in compliance with the approved employment equity plan of the municipality; however there are also many gaps in terms of the representation of women and also placing them within appropriate levels of employment.

Employment Equity

The council uses the Employment Equity Act (1998) states that affirmative action measures are designed to ensure that suitably qualified people from designated groups have equal employment opportunities and are equitably represented in all occupational categories and levels in the workforce of a designated employer.

Analysis of the personnel profile

Gender			Coloured		White		Black		Indian		TOTAL	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	**M**	**F**

Top Management	1	0	3	0					4	0
Senior Management	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	2	1
Mid-Management	14	4	17	5	3	0	0	1	34	10
Junior Management, supervisors	76	30	30	22	22	17	1	1	129	70
Semi-skilled	136	116	26	27	97	37	0	0	259	180
Grand Total									**428**	**261**

The results from the above table indicate that there are clear levels and gaps within the various employment levels, within the council there are no women at Top Management level, there is also one woman who is at the level of a senior manager while there is a fair representation of males.

This is an alarming area of concern, women are slightly more visible within the lower levels, this is an indication that more capacity and also shifting of women needs to happen to address these large gaps, women are often hired in large numbers in the clerical positions, these are major areas of concern and would need to be addressed by the council and have a clear way to move forward.

Career pathing

The results indicated that there is a lack of a clear career pathing in terms of growth opportunities available for men and women within the council.

There is also an indication that even though the council may need to develop an affirmative action policy, there also needs to be applied oversight to ensure that there will be clear implementation. The recruitment strategies are not aligned to indicate the representation of women, as there is a large gap in terms of the presence of women in senior management. This could also be due to organisational culture, which often tends to be hostile to women's life patterns.

Developmental Challenges

- Continued development of institutional capacity
- Continued development and review of human resource policies.
- Skills development

Working conditions and environment

Findings further indicated that the council needs to be making means to ensure that there is a working environment that aims to adopt, and implement measures that will ensure positive representation of women and men.

GENDER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Gender structures

The score indication here illustrated that there is no gender structure within the Council; however there is an appointed gender focal person within the council. The council needs to also strengthen their initiatives with regard to the planned gender initiatives within the institution as there is a clear lack of direction in terms of how gender programmes will be implemented. The budget cuts and limited funding available to implement and drive the gender programmes and projects is also an area of concern.

Budgets

Research findings, indicated that the Council does not have a clear budget aimed at promoting gender equality. There was also further indication that showed that women do not always benefit from the resources allocated to mainstreaming.

Political profile and champion

The results indicated that the Council does give gender issues a high political profile, however there is no allocated gender champion within the council, who would be from the political view point. However there needs to also be much more implementation and advocacy to ensure that issues of gender in the council are lobbied for. The issue of gender transformation is also another key issue that needs to be addressed within the council.