

The Centres of Excellence (COE) for Gender in Local Government:



What we have learned in Lesotho OCTOBER 2020



Councils Secretaries posing with winners during the COE #VoiceandChoice Summit and awards at Avani Lesotho Hotel in 2020.

Photo: Ntolo Lekau

The Centres of Excellence (COE) for Gender in Local Government is a visionary programme run by Gender Links, a Southern African NGO, in partnership with local government associations across Southern Africa. The programme aims to ensure women's equal and effective participation in decision-making, and to translate this into gender responsive governance through gender action plans whose progress is measured by the Gender and Local Government Score Card.

In Lesotho the COE programme has been running since 2010 and covers 50 councils - 10 urban and 40 rural. Nineteen COE councils are implementing the *Sunrise Empower Women End Violence Campaign*. Ten COEs are implementing Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) campaigns. The programme covers a population of 1,153,024 which represents 35% of the total population of Lesotho. It reached 3221 direct beneficiaries between 2016 and 2020. This analysis compares progress across the 50 COEs in the programme for the period 2016 to 2020.

Key indicators in the 50 councils (details overleaf)

Outputs				
No. of COE's Baseline 2016	50			
No. of COEs follow up in 2020	50			
No. of Gender Action plans	50			
No. of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Action Plans	10			
No. of councils supporting the entrepreneurship programme	19			
No. of SRHR Action Plans	10			
Beneficiaries	Male	Female	Other	Total
No. of beneficiaries - 2016	321	574	0	895
No. of beneficiaries - 2017	206	389	16	611
No. of beneficiaries - 2018	332	405	12	749
No. of beneficiaries - 2019	487	459	20	966
Total	1346	1827	48	3221
Outcomes	Baseline (2016/17)	Follow up (2019/20)	Variance	
Women's political representation				
% women councillors overall	49%	40%	-9%	
% women councillors in COEs	47%	40%	-7%	
Political and public participation				
% women mayors	8%	5%	-3%	
% deputy mayors	46%	26%	-20%	
% women chairing committees	34%	36%	2%	
% junior councils	0%	0%	0%	
Gender Progress Scores - attitudes (%)	44%	60%	16%	
Gender management system and budgeting				
Gender and Local Government Score (%)	53%	58%	6%	
Community Citizen Score (%)	55%			
Highest score (%)	85%	87%		
Lowest score (%)	15%	32%		
Gender responsive budgeting	M22 595 470	M25 717 600	14%	
Workplace policies and practise				
% women employed in COE councils (2016)	53%	50%	-3%	
% women managers in COE councils	54%	56%	2%	
% councils that provide maternity leave	100%	100%	100%	
% councils that provide paternity leave	76%	82%	6%	
% councils with sexual harassment policies	40%	59%	19%	
Infrastructure and social development				
% women accessing land	34%	42%	8%	
% women allocated housing	0%	0%	0%	
% councils with streetlights	22%	28%	6%	
% women on water/sanitation committees	57%	53%	-4%	
% of water and sanitation committees chaired by women	54%	52%	-2%	
Economic power to end violence	2015 cohort	2019 cohort		
No. of women who completed the course	130	119		
% women completed a business plan	99%	87%		
% women implemented a business plan	92%	72%		
Monthly income in USD	42	229		
Relationship control score (%)	60%	67%		
% women experiencing less or much less violence	93%	84%		
% women using a computer	49%	12%		
% women that have an email address	44%	12%		
% women surfing the Internet	44%	28%		
% women that have a Facebook account	5%	85%		
% women that have a Twitter account	3%	1%		
% women that have a website	3%	1%		

Key results

- **Women's political representation has decreased** by seven percentage points and mirrors the national average of 40% councillors in the country overall. Women make up just 5% of mayors and 26% of deputy mayors and 36% of those who chair of committees showing the need for more women in political decision-making.
- **The Gender Progress Score which measures gender attitudes, has increased** from 44% to 60%. This is a reflection of changing attitudes as a result of the programme.
- **The Gender and Local Government Score, which measures 25 indicators for gender-responsive governance**, has increased from 53% to 58% over the period. The lowest score increased from 15% to 32% while the highest score has increased from 85% to 87%. This too reflects a positive trend towards more gender responsive governance.
- **Despite limited budgets, councils are allocating dedicated budget towards gender responsive programmes:** The 50 COEs allocated M 25 717 600 to gender specific programmes, a 14% increase, showing the commitment of councils to gender mainstreaming.
- **Women in management** increased from 54% to 56%. The proportion of women employees decreased slightly from 53% to 50%.
- **Councils workplace policies are gender aware**
All councils offer maternity leave and nursing hours for breast feeding mothers. 82% of councils (compared to 76% before) offer paternity leave to male employees. The proportion of councils with sexual harassment policies increased from 40% in 2016/2017 to 59% in 2019/2020.
- **Infrastructure and social development:** Land allocation to women increased from 34% in 2016/2017 to 42% in 2019/2020. Provision of street lighting still needs to be improved with 28% councils providing street lighting. Community councils do not have street lights at all.
- **Economic power to end violence** - GL trained 130 survivors of GBV in the first phase of the Sunrise Campaign, an innovative programme to provide entrepreneurship training to survivors of gender violence linked to council Local Economic Development (LED) programmes. Despite budgetary constraints, councils trained 119 entrepreneurs in the second phase involving handing over the programme to COEs. Monthly income increased from USD 42 to USD 229 in the second phase. The relationship control score increased from 60% to 67%. 84% of participants reported experiencing less or much less violence compared to 93% in the first phase. The overwhelmingly positive results in the second phase reflect the commitment of councils to the Sunrise Campaign despite limited budgets.

Best performing rural COE - Mamants'o Community Council



Gender Focal Person Rethabile Mothibi Mamants'o Council Assistant Administration Officer during the SRHR action planning workshop.
Photo: Ntolo Lekau

Mamants'o Community Council joined the COE programme in 2012. The Gender officer in the Mafeteng district facilitated all the COE stages as part of the memorandum of understanding between Ministry of Gender and Gender Links.

Mamants'o Council first participated in the SADC Protocol@Work district summit in 2015, winning the runner up award for overall rural award and that was the start for better things and the council never stop working hard. In the 2020 COE #VoiceandChoice summit and awards the Council again won the overall best performance for a rural council.

The chairperson of the council, Moeketsi Phakisi, together with gender focal person, Rethabile Mothibi, have made sure that the council developed a gender policy and action plan that incorporates the Post 2015 SADC Gender Protocol, SDGs and other relevant targets as the tool that guides them in their council work. The council has worked very hard to see that the entrepreneurship programme survives even without a dedicated budget. Mamants'o trained survivors on all modules and mentored them after.

Mamants'o has led on SRHR campaigns. One of the male councillors, Mohlomi Setlaba, champions safe abortion. The Council trains "Nkukele groups" (Bring for me) support groups in which people living with HIV/AIDS take turns to collect medication for members, reducing stigma and discrimination.



Photo: Ntolo Lekau

"I have learnt to be kind-hearted woman so that it will be easier for everyone to approach me when there is a need for help. Motho ke motho ka batho."

Manoosi Khetsi, a councillor at Likila Council and chairperson of a social service committee believes she can't do much in community development if she doesn't respect and accommodate people. She believes people succeed in life because of other people.

"I became stronger and more confident to claim my rights"

Councillor Masekoati Masupha is a local chief who was elected in to the council to represent chiefs. Her daily work entails providing services to people from maintenance of social norms to provision of basic social amenities and creating political awareness. She opens herself-up to all the people whose rights have been infringed on by others and tries to resolve conflicts amongst them.



Photo: Ntolo Lekau



Photo: Ntolo Lekau

"I have never been this confident with councils and community work and all thanks to Gender Links."

Macolese Setaka is a councillor in the Ts'ana Talana Council, and the chairperson of the social services and gender committees. Both committees have made her a better person and she is always looking at things in a more gender sensitive way. She attests that her confidence has improved since working with Gender Links and heading those two committees as her daily work requires her to engage with people.

Lessons learned and how they will be applied

- **Women's representation needs to be maintained** the decrease in women's representation as councillors, mayors and deputy mayors shows how fragile the gains are and that councils should continue with 50/50 campaigns and ensure that government honours the quota for women councillors.
- **There is a need for more consultation with the Ministry of Local Government** to develop a clear strategy for ways of working in order to help councils. Councils should work hard and show the ministry of local government the importance of COE programme to them as councils and the community they serve.
- **Gender responsive budgeting is very important and should be strengthened** and therefore councils need to fight harder to ensure that they have budget, not only on paper but concretely, to make their work possible. Financial regulations for councils should be formulated and implemented to allow councils to implement their financial resolutions. Gender budgeting should be encouraged at the ministerial budgeting level.
- **There is need for a sustainability strategy** including a funding strategy to carry out ongoing training and mentorship. Councils need regular refresher courses especially for new councillors and staff, this should be planned and budgeted for. Motivate the Ministry of Local government to take COE programme on as its own programme so that it will entrenched in councils as a required programme.
- **Peer learning and sharing is key:** Councils should have clear plan on how they can implement study visits amongst themselves. The Voice and Choice SADC Protocol@Work Summit is an important learning space and should be continued. Councils will encourage Ministry of Local government to allocate budget to hold districts summits that will enable peer learning and sharing amongst the councils.

Indicators by Council

[Baseline is in brackets]

Council	% of W Cllrs	% Mayors	% Deputy mayors	% of women chairing committees	% Overall score	Community score card	GRB	Gender progress score	% women employees	% women in management	% land allocated to women
Berea Urban	(29) 31	(0) 0	(0) 0	(50) 25	(61) 39	47%	(591,000) 662,000	41	(53) 42	(59) 50	(28) 35
Bokong	(46) 57	(0) 0	(0) 0	(33) 25	(52) 38	54%	(377,000) 429,000		(50) 50	(25) 0	(17)
Botha-Bothe Urban	(57) 36	(2) 0	(0) 50	(68) 0	61%	51%	(679,600) 772,000	48	(42) 45	(38) 50	(21)
Hleoheng	(38) 46	(0) 0	(0) 100	(17) 0	(46) 44	56%	(408,000) 447,000		(59) 43	(50) 25	(24)
Hlotse Urban	(39) 31	(0) 0	(100) 0	(29) 0	(48) 49	49%	(616,000) 654,750		(63) 67	(75) 86	(24)
Kanana CC	(57) 57	(0) 0	(100) 0	(17) 33	(60) 49	40%	(617,000) 629,000	65	(71) 86	(100)	(23) 44
Khoelenya	(56) 56	0 (0)	(0) 0	(50) 75	(46) 39	61%	(358,000) 405,000		(61) 88	(55) 100	(47)
Koeneng	(29) 35	(100) 0	(0) 0	(0) 0	(72) 38	40%	(617,000) 514,000		(43) 17	(50) 67	42
Likila	39 (37)	(0) 0	(100) 100	(33) 25	(38) 59	50%	(461,000) 494,000		(44) 44	(50) 50	(16) 16
Lilala	(33) 33	(0) 0	(100) 0	(75) 67	(66) 69	68%	(380,000) 508,000		(61) 50	(45) 67	(53)
Litsoetse CC	(29) 25	(0) 0	(100) 0	(75) 100	(52) 36	49%	(485,000) 415,000		(54) 44	(58) 50	(53)
Mafeteng Urban	(46) 38	(0) 0	(100) 0	(65) 67	(62) 74	71%	(666,600) 750,000	41	(56) 42	(47) 50	(53)
Maisa Phoka	(41) 46	(0) 0	(100) 100	(17) 67	(46) 42	57%	(474,800) 555,000	63	(55) 57	(59) 100	(24) 31
Makhoarane	(46) 62	(50) 0	(0) 100	(57) 67	(56) 60	73%	(432,000) 470,000	60	(67) 57	(74) 67	(34)
Makoabating	(35) 45	(0) 0	(100) 100	(33) 33	(13) 32	72%	(473,170) 540,000	52	(33) 33	(67) 67	(21)
Mamants'o CC	(36) 33	(0) 0	(100) 100	(33) 50	(85) 87	70%	(461,500) 527,000	52	(64) 63	(84) 100	(39) 37
Manka	(46) 56	(0) 0	(100) 0	(33) 33	(45) 34	51%	(297,000) 335,900	58	(41) 43	(25) 25	(7)
Maoa-mafubelu CC	(50) 46	(0) 0	(100) 0	(17) 25	(48) 40	44%	(285,000) 331,900		(43) 46	(33) 0	(25)
Mapoteng	(40) 46	(0) 0	(0) 0	(20) 33	(76) 49	44%	(367,700) 423,000		(38) 44	(50) 50	(27)
Mashaleng	(36) 38	(0) 0	(100) 100	(50) 50	(45) 36	71%	(452,000) 495,000		(64) 75	(71) 80	(30)
Mazenod	(45) 27	(100) 0	(0) 0	(100) 33	(70) 56	68%	(367,500) 510,000	(46) 56	(43) 43	(25) 0	(35) 55
Menoaneng	(33) 0	(0) 0	(0) 0	(29) 58	(38) 58	49%	(371,800) 415,000	55	(30)		(22) 38
Mohales'hoek Urban	(50) 54	(0) 0	(0) 0	(50) 50	(44) 36	62%	(606,130) 667,000	(47) 61	(38) 36	(25) 40	(29)
Mohlakeng CC	(36) 36	(50) 0	(50) 0	(17) 0	(62)	78%	(395,600) 465,000		(72)	(84)	(45)
Mokhotlong Urban	(33) 36	(0) 0	(0) 0	(50) 0	(59) 57	49%	(530,170) 607,000		(62) 62	(73) 71	(18) 38
Motanasela	(44) 44	(0) 0	(50) 100	(34) 67	(74) 70	38%	(462,250) 543,000		(53) 55	(25) 50	(40) 48
Mphaki	(38) 38	(0) 100	(50) 0	(20) 40	(41) 78	46%	(447,350) 485,000	48	(59) 40	(48) 50	(26)

Council	% of W Cllrs	% Mayors	% Deputy mayors	% of women chairing committees	% Overall score	Community score card	GRB	Gender progress score	% women employees	% women in management	% land allocated to women
Ngoajane	(46) 48	(0) 100	(0) 0	(33) 33	(47) 42	48%	(427,500) 464,650		(57) 60	(67) 50	(16)
Nts'upe	(55) 57	(0) 0	(100) 100	(17) 50	(52) 40	44%	(354,250) 395,000	44	(55) 31	(0) 50	(43)
Phuthiatsana	(50) 47	(0) 0	(100) 0	(84) 33	(72) 43	40%	(460,000) 516,000		(47) 43	(25) 33	(37)
Qacha'snek Urban CC	(47) 36	(0) 0	(0) 0	(50) 0	(54) 0	52%	(505,800) 637,800		(68) 73	(66) 0	(15)
Qanya	(52) 50	(0) 0	(0) 0	(0) 33	(23) 55	54%	(460,350) 522,000		(44) 45	(100) 100	(50)
Qibing	(46) 31	(0) 0	(50) 0	(59) 33	(82) 87	71%	(391,050) 487,000	63	(50) 50	(64) 50	(41) 60
Qomo Qomong	(28) 36	(0) 0	(0) 0	(13) 33	(53) 44	62%	(341,000) 390,000		(27) 17	(25) 0	(42) 53
Quthing Urban	(39) 21	(0) 0	(0) 100	(33) 33	(43) 39	60%	(518,000) 655,000		(50) 55	(50) 40	(56)
Ramapepe	(48) 43	(0) 0	(50) 0	(50) 0	(62) 63	48%	(320,600) 365,000	71	(65) 56	(75) 100	(41)
Sanqebethu	(64) 47	(0) 0	(100) 0	(33) 33	(3) 82	53%	(379,600) 434,000	51	(38) 44	(25) 0	(50) 44
Seate	(43) 34	(50) 0	(50) 0	(59) 33	(66) 66	49%	(355,450) 409,000	32	(60) 56	(88) 100	(54) 57
Semonkong	(43) 27	(0) 0	(0) 0	(17) 0	(70) 43	66%	(526,700) 615,000	40	(41) 46	(41) 60	(53)
Senekane	(44) 53	(100) 100	(0) 0	(50) 67	(53) 55	49%	(399,000) 430,800		(60) 25	(100) 100	(46)
Sephokong	(50) 33	(0) 0	(50) 0	(38) 0	(51) 51	56%	(461,000) 555,000	(47) 64	(50) 57	(33) 75	(11) 20
Siloe CC	(44) 41	(0) 0	(100) 0	(33) 25	(42) 49	68%	(364,500) 463,000	65	(63) 37	(50) 67	(22) 41
Tenesolo	(50) 39	(50) 0	(0) 0	(67) 0	(43) 78	47%	(450,600) 559,000		(33) 40	(59) 50	(26) 27
Thaba Mokhele	(55) 0	(0) 0	(0) 0	(63) 33	(15) 61	65%	(296,000) 323,000			(60) 63	(100) 75
Thaba-Tseka Urban	(21) 29	(0) 0	(0) 0	(25) 0	(58) 72	54%	(513,000) 570,000		(54) 36	(60) 0	(13)
Tosing	(51) 46	(0) 0	(50) 100	(42) 67	(62) 63	52%	(329,400) 370,000	53	(57) 63	(59) 100	(29)
Ts'a-le-moleka CC	(47) 39	(0) 0	(50) 0	(17) 33	(45) 51	53%	(468,000) 498,000		50	67	17
Ts'ana-Talana	(40) 43	(0) 0	(100) 100	(67) 50	(64) 76	56%	(483,300) 586,800	55	75	35	31
Tsoelikana	(63) 46	(0) 0	(50) 0	(58) 25	(66) 68	45%	(358,600) 395,000		(66) 78	(58) 67	(61)
Tsoili Tsoili	(58) 33	(0) 0	(50) 100	(33) 33	(44) 58	47%	(450,000) 480,000		(55) 67	(42) 50	(20) 40
Lesotho	40	5	26	36	58	55	(22 595 470.00) 25 717 600.00	60	50	56	42

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