



**CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT
COUNTRY OPERATIONS AND PREPARATORY SUMMITS FOR THE ANNUAL GENDER JUSTICE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUMMIT AND AWARDS**

Synopsis



This concept note concerns the cascading and strengthening at country level of pioneering work on Centres of Excellence (COE's) on Gender Mainstreaming in Local Government carried out by Gender Links (GL) in partnership with local government associations in ten Southern African countries.

An important immediate focus of the concept note is the proposal that from 2012 the annual Gender Justice and Local Government Summit begin with country level summits to cater for the increasing response; broaden profile and participation at country level; increase competition and quality of entries; strengthen partnerships and ownership of the process.

Looking to the future, the concept note incorporates suggestions from the second Gender Justice and Local Summit in March 2011 on expanding the 100 COE's

through a variety of strategies, including existing gender focal points, gender champions, peer educators, and twinning arrangements. GL has mooted (and received a positive response) to the idea of a UN Seal of Approval for COE's that stay the course and prove beyond the ten stages of the COE that they have incorporated gender into all institutional practices and norms.

The COE approach includes a unique blend of research and evidence, applied to strategies and action planning, with on-the-job capacity building and applied learning, vigorous Monitoring and Evaluation, affirming of good practise, and sharing of learning at the annual summits. Emerging evidence suggests that this is an effective and sustainable model.

Learning from the first phase has been incorporated in the second phase that has expanded the original six phases to ten phases. The gender violence component will be strengthened through monitoring of the incidence of GBV at the outset and after implementation. The GBV indicators at local level will be gathered using the prevalence/attitudes methodology

pioneered by GL in the Gauteng province of South Africa and will be gathered in such a way that these local level studies can be aggregated into one overall national survey.

Action plans are being strengthened through additional content and practise on climate change and sustainable development; care work and local economic development. GL is also strengthening the IT skills of councillors as part of the communications component.

Objectives

GL is canvassing the concept note with donors and partners to:

- Raise support for in-country Gender Justice and Local Government summits to be held in March each year, starting in 2012, leading to the regional summit in April.
- Raise support for the roll out of the COE's to at least half of the 882 councils in the region by 2015, the deadline for the achievement of the 28 targets of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development.
- Popularise and enhance application of the SADC Gender Protocol through the village workshops that accompany the COEs and incorporating its targets in the local action plans.
- Test GBV indicators at the local level and use these to measure the impact of gender and local government initiatives, as well as build up data bases that can be used to gauge the level of gender violence at national level. This information is vital for measuring the extent to which countries and communities reach the SADC target of halving gender violence by 2015.



Organisational background

Gender Links (GL) is a Southern African NGO founded in 2001 that envisions a region in which women and men are able to participate equally in all aspects of public and private life in accordance with the provisions of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Gender and Development adopted in August 2008. This unique sub-regional instrument that GL and 40 partner organisations campaigned for is a global best practise of civil society engagement with a regional institution for which GL has won several awards. It provides a road map for the attainment of MDG 3 – gender equality – by breaking this overarching goal into 28 specific targets by 2015.

With its headquarters in Johannesburg, South Africa, GL has satellite offices in Mauritius (covering Francophone countries) and Botswana (home of the SADC Secretariat), Mozambique (covering Lusophone countries) Lesotho and Madagascar; as well as project sites now being registered as full offices in Namibia, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Mozambique. GL coordinates the work of the Southern African Gender Protocol Alliance that produces an annual barometer of performance by countries against gender protocol targets. GL has also integrated the targets of the Protocol into its core governance, media and justice programmes. With strong linkages from local to national, to regional and international level (see diagram), GL works at the macro (policy) and micro (workplace and local) level to promote the empowerment of women who constitute the majority of the poor, the unemployed and the dispossessed in Southern Africa. GL has won the Top Women Award in the civil society category; was a runner up in the Driver's of Change Award in 2009 and in 2010 won the *Mail and Guardian* "Investing in the Future" award for its Gender Justice and Local Government Summit.

With 15 of the 28 Protocol targets relating to economic empowerment, GL has expanded its gender justice portfolio (that previously focused primarily on ending gender violence) to include economic justice in its strategy for 2010 to 2015. Through the Alliance, GL is at the forefront of a campaign to incorporate stronger provisions on climate change in the SADC Gender Protocol. GL has strengthened its own strategy for 2010 to 2015 by adopting climate change as a cross cutting theme. The strategy also strengthens the linkages from the ground up to international level: the COE's at local level and in media houses; policy work at national and regional level and the overarching goals of the MDG's.



Over the last three years, GL has worked with partners in the gender justice sector to formulate a methodology for measuring gender violence. The main tool is a prevalence and attitude survey that involves in-depth interviews with a representative sample of the population. The survey tool provides far more accurate data on gender violence because 1) most cases of gender violence especially sexual offences are not reported to

the police or they get withdrawn. 2) police statistics do not disaggregate domestic violence and femicide. 3) There are no police categories for many types of domestic violence including emotional and economic violence.

Gender justice and local government project

In 2003, GL undertook the first comprehensive study of the impact of women in politics in Southern Africa. "*Ring up the Changes, Gender in Politics in Southern Africa*" found that local government is a sadly neglected area of the gender and governance discourse. Since 2006/2007, GL has conducted research in ten Southern African countries in the series, *At the Coalface, Gender and Local Government*. The research has been followed by:

- Launching the research reports;
- Strategy workshops with key stakeholders and partners;
- Gender action plan workshops initially at provincial, regional or district level to ensure that all councils have gender action plans;
- Moving to council level through the COE process; and
- Convening two Gender Justice and Local Government Summits to share good practices.

What GL has learned and how this is being applied

The first phase of the project involved a broad- brush approach in which among others GL sought to ensure that gender and local government is placed firmly on the agenda. During this period GL also worked on developing a model with the City of Johannesburg for sustained support to a Council on developing and implementing a policy through on-the-job support.

In December 2009, GL held an evaluative workshop with Hivos, one of its donor agencies, and Akina Mama wa Afrika, an East African partner, on "Support to women leaders: lessons learned and strategies for the future." This explored different models of support that have been tried including short courses on site and offsite, in-country and in regional venues. The

meeting concluded that a key failing by NGOs in seeking to support women in public office has been a) ignoring local government b) being supply rather than demand driven c) providing training in a vacuum d) providing once off training with little regard to local process and context. Following this watershed meeting, GL's annual board meeting and annual planning meeting in early April 2010, the organisation took a fresh look at how to go forward with the work at local level in the most efficient and effective way.

Working from the ground up:

The Centres of Excellence process arose from the realisation that the only way to make a difference at the local level is to start council by council. GL identified ten councils in each of ten countries for the pilot phase of the COE's. This began with six stages, that expanded to ten stages with the following important additions:

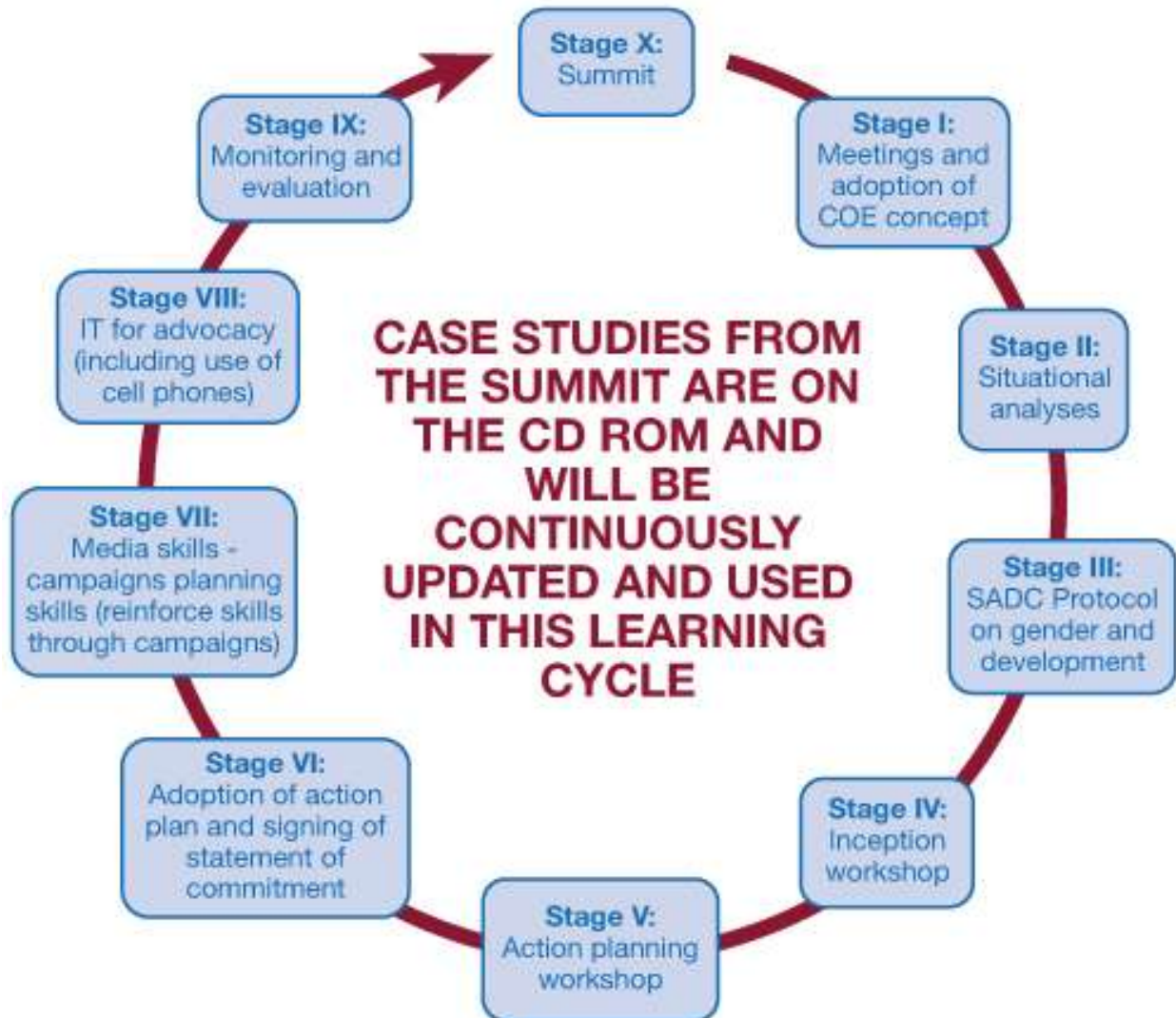
- Content of the action plan has been strengthened to include local economic development including care work (the unwaged work of women) and climate change.
- The strategic communications module now has a specific module on IT aimed at ensuring proficiency and empowerment in this area.
- The targets of the planning framework have been aligned to the SADC Protocol on Gender and development.
- Monitoring and evaluation has been strengthened through the administering of a score card at the beginning and end of the process. GL now proposes to strengthen this even further by monitoring the prevalence and attitudes towards GBV at the beginning and end of the process. The aim is to show that community by community the SADC Gender Protocol target of halving gender violence by 2015 can be achieved.

The COE process

The stages covered are illustrated in the diagram. Key principles include:

- ***Political support:*** Getting buy-in at decision-making level.
- ***An evidence-based approach:*** Conducting a situation analysis that is council-specific and will help to address the needs of that council.
- ***Context specific interventions:*** Conducting council-specific gender and action plan workshops that localise national and district gender policies and action plans.
- ***Community mobilisation:*** SADC Gender Protocol village level workshops that familiarise communities with the provisions of the sub-regional instrument and empower them to hold their council's accountable.
- ***Capacity building*** through on-the-job training with council officials and political leaders.
- ***Application of skills:*** Assisting councils and communities to apply these new skills through running major campaigns, e.g. 365 Days to End Gender Violence; the 50/50 campaign etc.
- ***Monitoring and evaluation:*** Administration of score cards and other monitoring and evaluation tools that can be used to measure change in the immediate, medium and long terms.
- ***Knowledge creation and dissemination:*** Working to gather and disseminate best practises, case studies, etc. that can be presented at the annual gender justice and local government summit and awards that provide councils and communities with a platform to learn from each other on empowering women and ending violence at the local level.
- ***Cascading the COE's:*** GL is working with local government associations across the region on innovative strategies for cascading the COE's that include working through gender focal points of the associations and peer support.

Stages in the Centres of Excellence



Partners

GL's most critical partners in the local government work are local government associations including ALAN – Association of Local Authorities Namibia; ARDC – Association of Rural District Councils (Zimbabwe); BALA – Botswana Association of Local Authorities; LGAZ – Local Government Association of Zambia; SALGA – South Africa Association of Local Authorities; UCAZ – Urban Councils Association of Zimbabwe; ZILGA – Zimbabwe Local Government Association. GL has also worked closely with associations in the process of being formalised in Swaziland and Mauritius. Regionally GL works closely with the SADC Gender Unit and uses the targets of the SADC Globally GL belongs to the 50/50 campaign and has worked closely with UNHabitat, especially on materials development.

Ownership and impact

The evidence-based and process-driven approach adopted by GL has resulted in a high level of ownership among the local councils. At the 2010 summit GL held a round table meeting with all the local associations. The City of Johannesburg, with which GL has developed a six

stage process for backstopping and on-the-job-support, presented this process and played a key role in the decision to focus over the coming period on an average of ten councils in each country that show promise as centres of excellence in gender mainstreaming. The 2011 summit displayed an even stronger demonstration of results as local associations shared how they became COEs; gaps and challenges faced. The Namibian council of Arandis is one such example:

Equality pays off for Namibian Council



!Hoeb and Kavendjii show off their report to the Council from the summit

If you blink on the straight road from Namibia's capital Windhoek to the coastal resort of Swakopmund you might miss the turn to the mining town of Arandis which has a mere 6000 residents.

Not to be missed in the council chambers are the three certificates that the council walked away with at the second Gender Justice and Local Government Awards and Summit. The Council walked away with three awards: for leadership (deputy mayor Isabella Kavendjii) an innovative Sixteen Days of Activism campaign (communications officer Andrew Harold !Hoeb) and for completing the six stages to become a

Centre of Excellence in Gender Mainstreaming. "We were overjoyed, on behalf of Namibia to have our efforts recognised in this way," beams !Hoeb.

Namibia is a signatory to (and has ratified) the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development.



Winning team examines the COE certificate

"Namibia is committed to halving gender violence by 2015," notes Deputy Mayor Kavenjii. "At Arandis we are proposing zero violence by 2015. We are also determined to end poverty."

With a municipality displaying all the trappings of a small mining town (almost all the formal jobs go to men; women dominate in the informal sector or as sex workers and there are high levels of gender violence) the council has its work cut out.

Starting from within, the council has four women and three male councillors; a gender balanced management team and woman CEO.

Armed with the council's gender action plan developed as part of GL's Centres of Excellence initiative, Arandis has formed a gender justice committee that includes community members and for which the council has allocated a budget.

Arandis has embraced plans by GL to add another stage to the COE process on gender and local economic development, including care work. Already, discussions have been held with local uranium mining conglomerate Rossing on opening job opportunities to women. In the

Industrial Site Service area run by the Council, 80% of the stands have gone to women. The Council is helping these entrepreneurs to source finances for catering, accommodation and transport ventures.

Kavenjii says economic empowerment for women is key to ending violence and reducing HIV and AIDS infection. Arandis is a likely candidate for a further stage of work at the local level that GL hopes to undertake with the support of UN Women. This will involve adapting the GBV indicators research methodology to a local community; intensifying the COE process and enriching it through economic initiatives; and then measuring if this has helped to reduce violence.

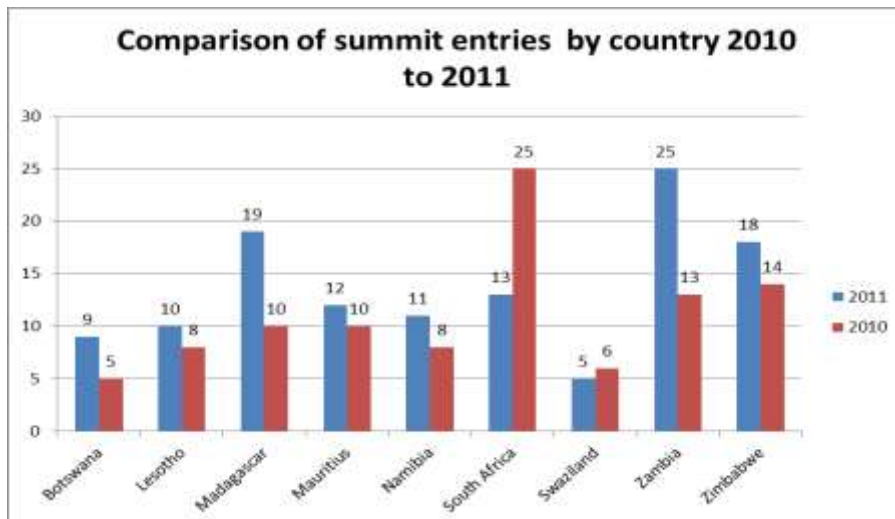
Underscoring its commitment to a future free of violence, HIV and AIDS, the council has enlisted the support of junior councillors (two boys and two girls) to conduct peer education, especially at shabeens (illegal liquor stores). "If we can win the youth over, half the battle will have been won," says !Hoab.

Councillors here have mastered and readily join in the slogan of the Southern African Gender Protocol Alliance, also a mantra of the Gender Justice and Local Government Summits: *"2015, yes we can! Yes we can, the time is now!"*

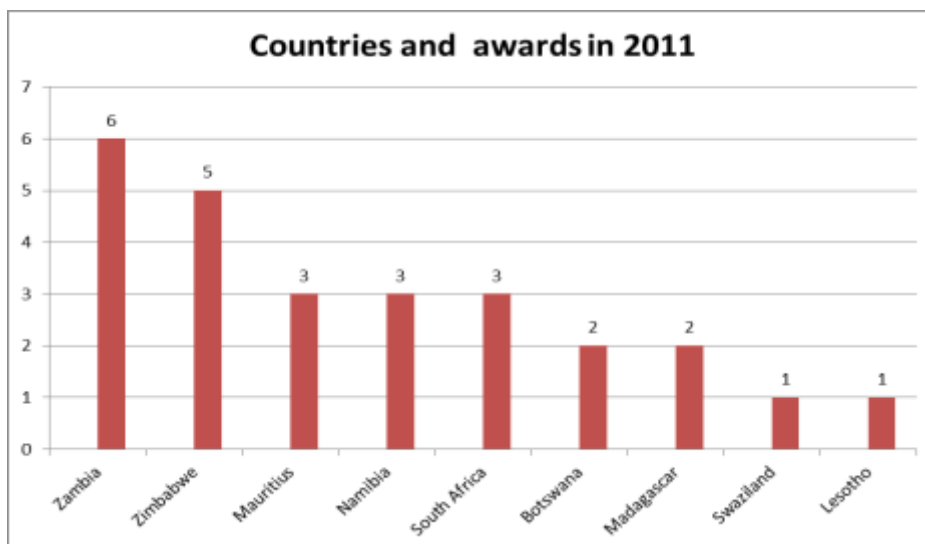
Rationale for in-country summits

Quick facts about the Gender Justice and Local Government Summits:	
2010	2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 206 participants (151 females, 65 males) • 103 entries, 69 by women, 34 by men in 7 categories • Submissions from 10 countries. • Winners from nine countries: Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritius, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe. • 3 women and 2 men got special commendations • 6 women and 3 men are runners up • 5 women and 4 men are winners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 231 participants (168 females, 63 males) • 124 entries, 86 by women, 38 by men in 8 categories • Submissions from 9 countries. • Winners from nine countries: Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritius, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe. • 7 women and 2 men got special commendations. • 5 women and 4 men are runners up • 6 women and 2 men are winners

Interest in the GJLG summit and awards has grown dramatically over the two years. GL received 25% more entries in 2011 than in 2010. Entries in the 2011 summit consisted of Centres of Excellence (22), women empowerment (21), leadership (18), and support (16). Compared to the 2010 summit, the largest numbers of entries were for the support category (23) followed by prevention (20), response (18), and institutional good practise and specific GBV campaigns (13). The table shows that the majority of best practices in 2010 summit were in combating GBV while mainstreaming gender in local government through the centres of excellence emerged as the main area with the greatest numbers of best practices in 2011.



In terms of representation per country, the largest numbers of entries in 2010 came from South Africa (25). In 2011, the largest numbers of entries came from Zambia (25). The numbers of entries from Madagascar doubled in the 2011 summit even after an initial country pre summit (see below).



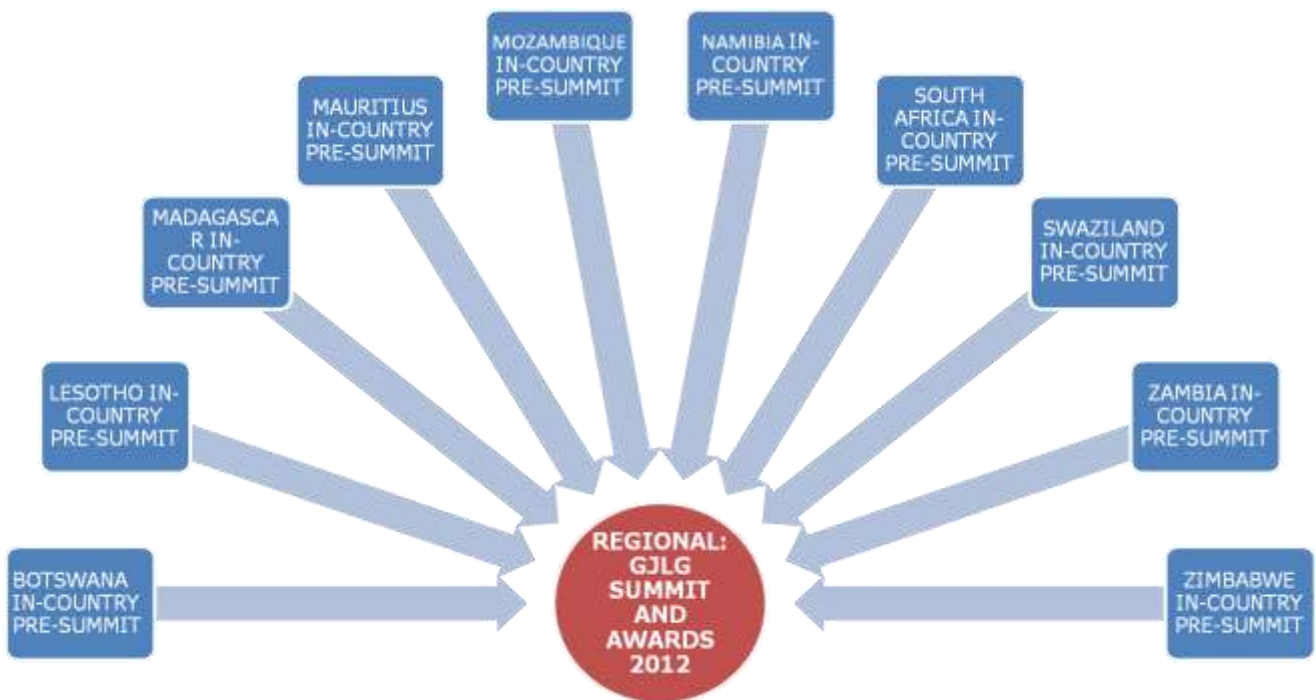
In 2011 summit Zambia emerged with the largest number of winners (6) followed by Zimbabwe (5). Mauritius, Namibia and South Africa got three winners each while Botswana and Madagascar got two each. Swaziland and Lesotho each got prizes. What is

significant is that all participating countries got prizes. At the time of the summit GL had just started work in Mozambique. It is envisaged that Mozambique will be an important new participant in the 2011 summit.

In 2011 GL piloted the idea of in-country summits preceding the main summit in Madagascar where we received 49 entries, to short list these down to 19. This opened our eyes to the advantages of hosting country level summits before the main summit as a way of broadening participation and ownership. In-country summits have several advantages at national level:

- Broadening participation and sharing of knowledge within each country;
- Raising the COE profile;
- Strengthening ownership and partnerships;
- Increasing competition for the regional summit as only the winners at national level proceed to the regional summit.

The diagram below shows the envisioned process:



Process

- Each country that GL currently works in and that has entries, will host prestigious in-country pre-summits
- 10 country based pre-summits will take place prior to the regional summit
- One winner in each category from each country will be selected
- Winners in each category will attend the regional summit hosted by GL in Johannesburg South Africa
- Country pre-summits will be done in partnership with other key partners from in-country networks
- GL will host the regional summit in JHB and will pay for travel, accommodation and conferencing of winning national entries.

Funding sought for pre-summits

This includes:

- Documenting the case studies in multi-media formats so that these can be fed back into the training and learning process.
- Travel by delegates to a central venue, and accommodation.
- Venue costs.
- Honourariums for judges and prizes.
- Administration, management and coordination of the process.

Cascading the COE's within each country



Attached at Annex A is list of the 882 councils in the ten countries that GL is working in. GL has set a target of reaching half these councils by 2015. GL has canvassed several avenues that for cascading the COEs. These involve working with and through the existing structures of local

governments and councils through Training Trainers who would consist of:

- **Gender focal points**, where these exist, in provincial or district offices of local government associations;
- **Gender champions**, who have emerged from the first phase of COE work. By having gender champions that function within these councils it becomes possible and also easier to sustain the COE activities and hold partners accountable for ensuring the cascading and ownership of the COE process.

From mid 2012, the strategy for cascading the COE's will be reviewed to include:

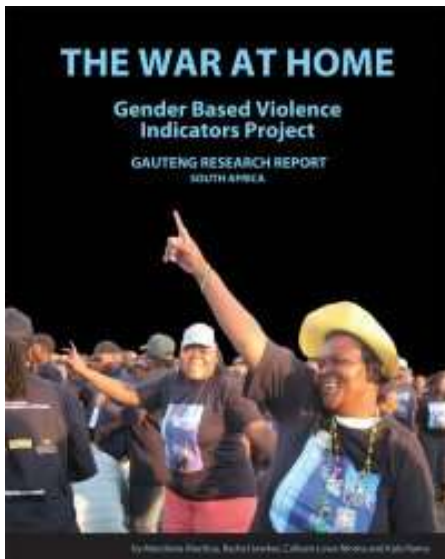
- **Peer learning** amongst councils, both vertically and horizontally, as it is important for councils to be able to learn from each, use each other as resources as well as transferring skills from one council to another in light of the fact that each of the 10 countries are made up of so many councils. Although GL will not be able to reach all of these councils, each council can reach another through peer learning and should be advocating for peer educators to reach the other councils within the countries.
- **Twining arrangements** between larger and smaller COE's. These details are being worked out within each country.

Funding sought for the cascading of the COE's

This includes:

- Training of trainer workshops.
- Logistic costs for the roll out per stage.
- Facilitator costs for the roll out per stage.

GBV indicators at the local level contributing to national surveys



GL is seeking funding in-country to run the GBV indicators research in each of the COE localities to strengthen the M and E component. The theory of change being tested here is that by instituting a holistic approach to gender equality at the local level that includes the empowerment of women and changing the attitudes of men, gender violence will deescalate. This is perhaps the most important measure of the success of the COE process. The added advantage is that if the full attitude/prevalence survey is administered in enough communities, this will add up to an overall national GBV prevalence survey. The research thus serves a dual purpose: understanding the specific dynamics at a local level as well as building up a national picture. For a national survey, there are other components of the research methodology that can be added: including

media monitoring and political discourse analysis. The flagship tool of the research is, however, the prevalence/attitude survey.

Funding sought for administering the GBV indicators research at the local level includes:

- Translation of the questionnaire into local languages.
- Programming of the PDA's that are used to administer the research.

- Training researchers (it is hoped that partnerships will be forged with national universities).
- Administering research
- Analysing and publicising the results.

Institutional strengthening

All of these developments also require that GL's skeletal field offices in the 10 countries be upgraded with the necessary infrastructure, equipment and human resources to cope with the expanding work. GL is at advanced stages of registering the remaining project sites in Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Swaziland to ensure that these become full satellite offices and can manage the expanded load.

Funding sought for institutional strengthening includes:

- Small offices and infrastructure.
- Staff.
- Capacity building.

Monitoring and evaluation

GL has developed several tools including:

- A scorecard administered at the beginning and end of the process.
- The GBV prevalence and attitude survey.
- Testimonial evidence and beneficiary analysis.
- Case studies and their application to ongoing learning and training.



Outputs

- A manual on the revised and expanded COE process.
 - Substantial annual increases in the quantity and quality of entries for the summit and awards.
 - Gender champions trained as trainers that will ensure sustainability of the COE process in councils.
 - Councils committed to the peer learning initiative by identifying councils or peer educators are trained and they will be transferring skills to through peer education.
 - Signed MOUs with local government stakeholders as well as NGOs that support the implementation of the COE activities.
- Local level GBV prevalence and attitude surveys that can be aggregated into national surveys.
 - All field offices registered in countries where GL has country facilitators
 - Funders identified in country as well as funding secured for GL activities.

Outcomes

Tangible evidence at the local level that gender mainstreaming:

- Contributes to more responsive, accountable government through the active participation of citizens, especially women;
- Can help to reduce climate change and gender violence and contribute to the economic empowerment of women.
- Is a strong contributory factor to local economic development.

Impact

Evidence and case studies of the SADC Gender Protocol being implemented in a comprehensive and measurable way at the local level, including contributing to the SADC target of halving gender violence by 2015.

ANNEX A: Number of councils in the ten countries that GL works in

Country	Breakdown as per the ATC and updated post local elections	Updated local authorities as of May 2012
Botswana	10 district councils 6 urban councils 19 sub-district councils	36
Lesotho	1 city council 10 districts councils 64 community councils	85
Madagascar	6 provinces 22 regions 119 districts 1549 local councils	119 districts
Mauritius	5 Municipal Councils 7 (instead of 4 District Councils) since the New Local Government Act 134 Village Councils	9 (134 villages form part of the District Council + 5 Municipal Councils)
Namibia	13 regional councils 3 city councils 13 municipal councils 17 town councils 19 village councils	56
Mozambique	10 provinces 43 councils	43
South Africa	8 metros 44 districts 226 local councils	284
Swaziland	4 districts/ regions 2 City Councils 7 Town Boards 3 Town Councils 55 tinkhundlas	67
Zambia	10 provinces 4 city councils 15 municipal councils 62 district councils	91
Zimbabwe	8 provinces 60 rural councils 32 urban councils	92
Total		882 (excludes the 1549 councils in Madagascar and 134 villages in Mauritius)