

Annex F: Situation analysis report- Keetmanshoop

Country: Namibia

Date:

Name of municipality: Keetmanshoop Town Council

SITUATION ANALYSIS

The Keetmanshoop Municipality is one of those councils that are a step ahead judging from the many policies and guidelines in place for its employees and residents. It boasts a strategic plan that spans from 2009 till 2013, which some council don't have. This is an indication that this Council has foresight and would work on this plan with set deadlines and outputs/ Furthermore this plan is in live with the country's vision 2030, National development Plans, the SWAPO manifesto as well as the millennium development Goals which have already acknowledge women as equal partners in all spheres of development.

Furthermore the plan seeks to work with regional councils and organisations with similar goals. The strategic plan also outlines a budget and in there states that it would facilitate the establishment of effective interest group forums and appropriate staff development programs to ensure that existing skills gabs are eliminated. Such a budget, the council states would identify and mobilize appropriate resources of funding both externally and internally. However there is no specific point on gender budgeting and the understanding is that these monies would be spent fairly in the interest of both sexes.

From documents obtained at the council, a commendable effort has been made to join the African Platform on Access to Information. It is clear that the Keetmanshoop Municipality is a frontrunner in ensuring these declarations are met. One of them is the obligation to publish information that states" Public and private bodies should be obliged to pro-actively release information about their functions, powers, structures, officials, decisions, expenditure, and other information relating to the activities of the bodies which is of public interest. The dissemination should use all reasonable means of communications, including ICT's to maximise access to all communities and sectors of society. This is a further indication that the Council is open to hear the views of both women and men and is ready to receive criticism if may be.

Policy framework

GOVERNANCE

Representation

There is an indication from the results that there is an unequal representation of men and women at council level which is four men to three women.

REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN COUNCIL		
MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL
4	3	7

Public Participation

Overall there is an indication that all stakeholders including residents are consulted on issues that affect them. The Keetmanshoop Municipality in its strategic plan highlights Stakeholder Perspectives as one of their key objectives. This deals with asking communities what their top 5 priorities are, and to assess the level of their satisfaction on issues of governance, development, housing, safety, environments and service provision through surveys as well as regular meetings. These types of interventions are mainly geared at all residents and not necessarily at women as a priority or vulnerable group. However the council on a regular basis review and evaluate community development needs and this could be an initiative by the council to reach to those vulnerable groups, although it is not stated clearly. It also states that it would develop a tracking system which among others would evaluate the functioning of interest group forums. This in itself is an opportunity for groups to organize themselves and so bridge the gender divide. I believe the Keetmanshoop town council although it does not have a meeting attendance register or list, to ensure parity, makes some room for women to speak out and be heard.

The Council under its strategic plan has outlined community involvement and participation high on its agenda. This would be done through consultations, community platforms, surveys and questionnaires as well as inclusion in community projects.

Projects like the street cleaning project in Keetmanshoop have mostly women as team leaders. Although other members are replaced every two weeks to give community members a chance, these team leaders are not changed. They also appoint their own cleaners for this project. This shows that women have more say over the cleanliness of the town and how this project should be managed.

Quarterly meetings are held with the community on crime prevention where they request the relevant stakeholders and organizations to execute certain tasks.

Community meetings are a good platform to gauge people's views, however there is no indication who attends these meetings, and if women raise more concerns than men.

PLANNING – The council's strategic plan is guided by the wishes and needs of the community. Therefore it has high on its agenda stakeholder involvement which seeks to address the needs of this specific community.

As also found earlier, the council's strategic plan is in line with the global millennium development goals, national development plans and the ruling party's manifesto. All these plans have underscored gender equality as prerequisite for development and poverty eradication. Thus it is assumed that when planning is done, due consideration will be given to ensure that women are not left behind during planning.

On the down side though, it is not clearly stated when the council speaks about community or stakeholder involvement that women and the vulnerable are given preferential treatment or how these groups would be reached for greater participation.

Although the council's budget cuts across all areas of development, no gender budgeting is visible. It is thus assumed that when council reviews and analyse its programs, some of these gaps are identified during these surveys.

MAINSTREAMING GENDER INTO EXISTING PROGRAMMES

The economy and job creation

The Keetmanshoop town council runs two excellent programs to empower disadvantaged communities, especially women. The first is a street cleaning project which consists of four teams. Every two weeks, the teams are replaced with new cleaners, except for the team leaders who are mostly women. These team leaders appoint their own cleaners. This clearly is a commendable achievement by the Council to empower disadvantaged women in the Keetmanshoop district.

Secondly the council runs a Municipality Assisted Training Scheme which has thus far trained 11 young people in skills to enter the formal job market. From the brochure, seven young girls were trained from a total of 11.

These are clearly deliberate efforts by the council towards gender parity.

Procurement

The Council has no Procurement Policy in place. There is little information on who does work for the council and if there is a data base of companies, SME's or individuals what do projects for the council. There is thus no way it can be determined if women and men benefit equally when tenders are awarded by the council.

However in its strategic plan, the council adheres to specific values such as transparency, trust and honesty, which allows any member of the community access to all public information. Hopefully the council can be taken to task by community or stakeholder groupings when work is tendered out.

Assumptions are thus further made that the Council will adhere to the provisions in the country development strategies that allow women and men equal access to development and thus empowerment.

Housing

The Council manages a build together programme for residents in need of housing and has thus far allocated 472 loans to the tune of about six million dollars. It is also to develop 263 erven and had made 5,8 million dollars available for this purpose. However there was no list of beneficiaries, thus making it difficult to determine how many men and or women benefited through this and if at all, if women were sub contracted in any way to work on such huge housing projects.

As for council staff, they receive housing benefits, such as allowances and subsidies in relation to their salaries.

Utilities

In terms of the facilities provided by the Keetmanshoop Town Council, there is no indication or clear data to determine who uses which facilities most, why and when and if they are to the satisfaction of the residents. However the council does surveys on community needs on a regular basis as well as community meetings. Interest group fora are also supported and encouraged. Thus such data needs to be documented by Council. As it is now, no official data is available or captured.

On the service provision side though, the council has a credit control policy which looks into compliance of electricity and water bills, refuse removal, sewerage removal, sewerage and rates, land sales, property tax, housing loans as well as letting and leasing of property and debt management.

It furthermore has in place by-laws which lay down minimum requirements and standards within its local authority. These laws apply to all, except for public buildings, theatres, construction sites, meeting places, assembly, schools etc where strict requirements are in place to cater for women and men as well as boys and girls sanitary needs.

Transport

In its personnel rules, there is provision made for motor vehicle and transport allowances for staff members depending on their rank. Travel allowances are also part of benefits to all staff.

Health

The Council makes provision for sick leave and maternity leave as well as a medical aid for its employees. It went a step further and designed an hiv-aids workplace policy to ensure their staff are well informed and supported in this regard. It also includes aspects of occupational health and safety as well as education and awareness which are commendable. These policies are continuously reviewed and assessment tools are in place. It is worth mentioning that council's hiv-aids workplace policy is in compliance with the ALAN declaration on hiv-aids which serves as a guiding tool in this regard.

Despite these progressive measures, the research found no breast feeding corners/child friendly areas at the council offices or generally in the town's planning.

Environmental health

The Council has public health by-laws in place which are aimed at protecting residents from harmful health practices, discrimination, or conditions in their natural environment and these are in addition to regulations in force within the local authority. These laws deal with issues such as premises and dwellings, the keeping of animals, birds and poultry, butcheries and abattoirs, transportation and import of meat, supply of products and food, restaurants and food outlets, hawkers, manufacturers and suppliers, factories, service providers, tourism enterprises amongst others.

These are commendable laws and council has a communication strategy in place for awareness raising of such issues. Some of these laws date back from the 1970's and need to be reviewed and engendered to highlight the needs of special groups such as the disabled.

Social development

The Council has very good sports facilities and these are used to the advantage of all residents. However the Council does not keep sex and age disaggregated data on the usage of these existing facilities. During their stakeholder consultations, the council was urged to upgrade their sports fields and to further establish and maintain recreational facilities.

However many challenges remain such as the increasing number of street children, care for the elderly, Hiv-aids, poverty, unemployment, crime, housing needs, community development and orphans and vulnerable children. The council in its strategic plan is seeking ways to address these challenges through economic development initiatives. These still have to bear the much needed fruit.

GENDER SPECIFIC PROGRAMMES

The council does participate in gender specific programmers and campaigns. It runs a street cleaning service benefiting mostly women, and it also addresses gender based violence in collaboration with other stakeholders such as the Police and Defense Force. These are commendable efforts and a start to look at all spheres of development with a gender lense.

Educare

Except for bursaries to personnel which they can apply for, the Council has committed itself to support at least one full time private student at a university or college. It currently supports a female student that is pursuing her masters in town and regional planning at a South African university.

Furthermore Council also runs a Municipality Assisted Training Scheme for young school leavers and sofar 11 youths have benefitted. The scheme aims to equip young school leavers with the necessary working skills and experience require to enhance their chances of future permanent employment. Four of these trainees have sofar received permanent employment.

Gender based violence (GBV) flagship

According to the findings, there is a strong relationship between the Council, Police and community on crime or anti GBV programs. Quarterly meetings are held with these stakeholders. A senior female employee represents the Council at this platform.

There is however no indication of specific council campaigns and the assumption is thus made that the different stakeholders collaborate during country campaigns aimed at addressing GBV.

Sexual Harassment Policy

The Council has no sexual harassment policy in place to protect women and men; however it has under its personnel rules clear regulations on discipline. One of the punishable offences is sexual harassment, thus it is covered in that context. This is however vague as it is unclear what sexual harassment constitutes. A stand alone policy could be preferred or existing policy strengthened to make it easy to deal with such cases. Most of the time sexual harassment is difficult to prove as it happens between two people, without any-one noticing. This is even harder to prove when it affects male employees.

EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES AND ENVIRONMENT

Selection and recruitment

The Council has no recruitment policy and are guided by government personnel rules. Since it is a public office one assumes that all national laws such as those contained in the Labour Act will apply.

Council representation	Women		Men	TOTAL
Female	3			
Male	4			
				7

Composition of Staff

CATEGORY	No of women	%	No of men	%
Top management	0	0%	4	100%
Senior Management	2	28%	5	72%
Professional	3	60%	2	40%
Secretarial/ clerical	10	91%	1	9%
Semi skilled	0	0%	25	100%
Unskilled	4	5%	82	95%
Overall Total	19	14%	119	86%

Capacity building- training

The council offers bursaries to its full time staff. How many these are is not stated.

It has furthermore highlighted employee learning and growth as one of the key pillars to the council's success. Council has committed itself to implement appropriate staff development programs aimed at ensuring that existing skills gaps are eliminated.

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.

However under its strategic plan, the council has committed itself to develop and organizational structure that would support its strategy. Council would furthermore carry out a skills audit and then fill vacancies. It also commits itself to update all its personnel policies.

It is furthermore assumed that country laws such as Affirmative Action laws will apply.

Working conditions and environment

The Council is guided by personnel rules of the local authorities Act. It furthermore has its stand alone Hiv-Aids workplace programme policy, and contained in that are occupational health and safety measures.

The Council provides a range of benefits to its employees which are commendable.

These must be understood also in the context of existing country laws such as the Labour Act, Local Authorities Act, Employee Compensation Act, Social Security Act, and Medical Aid Funds Act.

GENDER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Gender structures

The Council has no gender structures in place for gender programme implementation and there is no appointed gender focal person within the Council. However the Council has proven itself through some programmes that it does prioritize women as a core group.

Budgets

Our research found that there is a clear budget for operational and capital programmes. One however does not see any specific allocations of funds to improve the living conditions of women and vulnerable members of society. Council did point out that these are challenges and plans are being made to address them.

Monitoring and evaluation

Since there is no specific gender program, there are no mechanisms in place whatsoever. The Hiv-Aids workplace programme however has mechanism of monitoring in place and these are done by the human capital division through an appointed working team.

Political profile and champion

Although the Council has made positive strides in promoting gender equality through its programmes, there is no gender desk. The council's traffic unit deals with gender based violence issues and the community development office deals again with job creation. There appears to be no coordination towards one purpose, although different departments do their share.