

**REPORT
CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE STAGE FIVE WORKSHOP**



**Country: Mauritius
Council: Municipal Council of Curepipe
Date: 19th September 2012
Venue: Council Room of the Municipal Council
Curepipe**



http://gemcommunity.genderlinks.org.za/gallery/main.php?g2_itemId=27096

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Acknowledgement

Gender Links worked with in collaboration with the Chief Executive Officer, the Deputy Acting Chief Executive Officer and the Chief Health Inspector for the organisation of this workshop and our appreciation goes to them for inviting Municipal Councillors, NGOs and members of staff.

Gender Links acknowledges the contribution of the Council for free venue, catering and all equipment. Representatives from the Ministry of Gender Equality, Ministry of Health and Mauritius Police facilitated the sessions on GBV and HIV and AIDS while Ruben Munien of the Municipal Council facilitated the session on Climate Change

and Gender Based Violence. Bernarde Bazerque was in charge of the whole organisation for this well planned workshop.

Executive Summary

This is a report on the proceedings of the Centres of Excellence for Gender Mainstreaming in Local Government stage five – Action Planning Workshop held on 19th September 2012 in Council Room of the Municipal Council of Curepipe.

The purpose of the programme was to build the capacity of participants and empower them on the following subjects so that the Gender Action Plan and the Gender Based Action Plan can be updated:

- The importance of understanding HIV AIDS and Care Work, HIV AIDS and Sex Work and HIV AIDS and GBV
- Climate Change and Sustainable Development and Gender and Climate Change
- Gender based Violence, response and support
- Develop a Local Gender Action Plan
- Develop a Local Day Gender Violence Action Plan
- Collection of good practices on Local Economic Development, Climate Change, Care Work and HIV and AIDS

See the full workshop programme attached at **Annex A**.

The workshop was attended by one male councillors representatives of NGO, the Mauritius Police, the National Aids Secretariat and the Ministry of Gender Equality as well as high officials of the Municipal Council of Curepipe. In total 17, comprising 10 women and 7 men attended the workshop. Full workshop registration list is at **Annex B**.

The Draft Council Gender Action Plan that the participants developed is attached at **Annex C**.

The Draft Council Gender Based Violence Action Plan that the participants developed is attached at **Annex D**.

The GBV messages/slogans/posters and calendar will be done during a GBV workshop prior to the 16 days campaign against gender violence.

The participants evaluated the workshop as interesting as they have learnt a lot especially on HIV and AIDS, Climate Change and Gender Based Violence. Participants also said that they will share what they have learnt with the community. Some of them said that after the workshop they feel more empowered and responsible.

The evaluation has been put at the back end of GL website and a summary of the evaluation forms is attached at the end of this report as **Annex E**.

Background

In 2003, GL undertook the first comprehensive study of the impact of women in politics in Southern Africa. One of the key findings of "*Ringing up the Changes, Gender in Politics in Southern Africa*" was that local government is a sadly neglected area of the gender and governance discourse. Taking heed of this finding, GL conducted groundbreaking research in 2006/2007, *At the Coalface, Gender and Local Government* covering South Africa, Lesotho, Mauritius and Namibia.

A key finding of this study was that few practical steps have been taken to mainstream gender in this tier of government or to build the capacity of councillors to lead this process. The study has since been extended to nine countries. In terms of process, once the research reports have been written up, GL hosts launch and strategy workshops in the respective countries with key stakeholders and partners, ideally the local government associations of that particular country to map out a way forward of how to roll out the strategy and host Gender and GBV action plan workshops. The launches are then followed by Gender and GBV action plan workshops that are held at a provincial, regional or district, level to ensure that all councils have gender action plans.

In 2007, GL embarked on a study in Mauritius on women's representation and participation in local government to assess the conditions necessary to increase the representation of women in local government in Southern Africa, and to ensure their effective participation.

Since 2010 GL has been convening Gender Justice and Local Government Summit and Awards to gather evidence of best practices at local level as well as localities which have put in place best practices to empower women and to combat GBV.

Prior to the 2012 GJLG Summit a National Summit was held in April to choose to best entries for the Regional Summit in Johannesburg. Details as follows:

- 30 Entries were received (18 Female and 12 male)
- 27 presented papers (15 Female and 12 Male)
- 9 Categories (GBV Prevention, Support and Response, Leadership, Climate Change, HIV / AIDS, Local Economic Development, Gender and Governance and COE Institutional)
- 9 winners (5 Women and 4 Men)
- 8 runner ups (5 Women and 3 Men)

Mauritius came out with four prizes at the Regional Summit and came out first in the Governance Category

Process and activities

The training manual that Gender Links develop for the COE Gender Mainstreaming in Local Government was distributed to participants. Materials used were thought provoking and GL Facilitator encouraged participants to ask questions and to share experiences. High officials of the Council engaged with the Gender Action Plan and the Gender Based Violence Action Plan.

The full programme at **Annex A** was fully implemented

Welcome and opening

Bernarde Bazerque opened the workshop and explained that the workshop is a continuation of workshops already held so that the Gender Action Plan of the Council can be updated. She thanked Gender Links for its commitment and for continue to work with the Municipal Council of Curepipe.



http://gemcommunity.genderlinks.org.za/gallery/main.php?g2_itemId=27108

Loga Virahsawmy explained that it is a Gender Planning and GBV action plan workshop. She gave an overview of Gender Links regional summit and how the participants should mull over projects they could present at the next summit. She laid emphasis on the fact that the projects implemented have to be sustainable and change the lives of the community to the better so as to be able to compete regionally.

HIV and AIDS and Making Care Work Count in Local Government

Kamila Jagambrum from the AIDS Unit of the Ministry of Health engaged with participants on the following:

- Modes of transmission
- Conditions of transmission
- Transfer of liquids (importance and impact of liquids)
- Sexual relationship, blood transfusion and mother to child transmission
- Opportunistic infection
- Vulnerability of women

She explained that there is an HIV and AIDS Act in Mauritius and before doing any testing the person must give his/her consent first. "This applies in the case of pregnant mothers." She explained that when a test is done and the mother is found HIV positive the pregnant woman is taken care of completely by the hospital and when the baby is born the child too is on treatment of ARV through syrup until the

age of 18 months. Furthermore the baby is given free powder milk as it is not advisable for the mother to breastfeed.

Jagambrum went on to explain that among women who HIV positive the majority are home makers. "This is a sad state of affair as women cannot negotiate sex and are more vulnerable." She also explained at what period ARV is administered.

Virahsawmy and Jagambrum explained the power relationship that can result in women being infected. "Women cannot negotiate sex. The following issues on gender inequality were raised:

- Physical violence
- Sexual violence
- Emotional violence
- Economic violence
- Legal violence

Participants took note that on all the different forms of violence on women and how their voices have been silenced through discrimination and stigmatization.

Before inviting participants to ask questions, GL facilitator explained that Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) must be administered as soon as a person has been sexually aggressed and in most cases sexual assaults are done on girls and women more than boys. She explained the procedure of going to the police and how the police must refer to survivor to health centres/hospitals. This was the first time that participants heard about PEP. She highlighted that PEP as well as ARV are free in Mauritius.

Participants were encouraged to write projects that they can enter for the Gender Justice Local Government Summit.

Participants learnt a lot about Needle Exchange Programme and the Methadone Programme put in place by the Government to prevent new infection. Participants showed their appreciation for all these programmes and for free treatment in hospitals and health centres.

Gender Sustainable Development and Climate Change

Ruben Munien of the Municipal Council gave a few explanations of Climate Change and global warming, climate change and sustainable and told participants that all Mauritians have a responsibility and people should not think that climate change is not a Mauritian problem.



http://gemcommunity.genderlinks.org.za/gallery/main.php?g2_itemId=27063

He said that very often when there is a water shortage Mauritians are very careful but as soon as it starts to rain they forget about the water shortage and begin to waste water. He said the most important element which influences our environment is our actions. He stated that we cannot sustain without the environment but the environment will be much better without us.

Climate change affects every sphere of life be it social, economic and environment as well as gender. He also explained the impact of climate change in Mauritius and talked about the project he presented at the Local Government and Gender Justice Summit in April 2012.

Munien told participants that with the collaboration of the Council and other partners he has started a project on how to save water. The saving will be measured and the project will be an entry for the 2013 Summit.

Gender Based Violence

Lucilda Juspín from the Minister of Gender Equality explained the different forms of GBV, recognising signs and symptoms and the services offered by the Gender Ministry. She laid emphasis on how boys and girls are brought up differently when they are small and it is for parents to break this gender barrier.

Representatives of the Mauritius Police talked about response and support.

Outcomes

- Gender built into policy and practise at local level, and that councils identified the need to have gender built into policy and practise at local level.
- An increased knowledge and awareness on mainstreaming gender at the local government level
- Communities and councils are informed and empowered around the HIV and AIDS and Care Work, Climate Change, Local Economic Development and the 16 days campaign

- Practical good practises for the next local government and gender justice summit identified at an early stage
- Gender Action Planning and the Gender Based Violence Planning

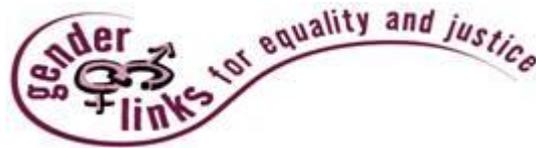
Way forward

Participants engaged in a very meaningful way in all of the activities and practical work and group exercises which ensured that the workshop was participatory. The use of group work proved to be an effective training method. There was much interaction, debates throughout the workshop, the participants felt free to express their views. Participants were ready to continue the work through the 16 Days campaign.

The updated Plans will be sent to Council for approval

Outputs

- Municipal Council of Curepipe updated Gender and GBV Action Plan.
- Project for saving water
- Caravan of Health for voluntary testing and counselling on the ground of the Council



ACTION PLANNING WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

STAGE FIVE : UPDATE OF GENDER ACTION PLAN AND GENDER BASED VIOLENCE ACTION PLAN

Municipal Council of Curepipe

COUNCIL ROOM

Wednesday 19th September 2012

DAY/TIME	ACTIVITIES	WHO	
DAY ONE:			
8:45 – 9.15	Registration	GL	
9.15 – 9.20	Opening	CEO	
9.20 – 9.30	Introductions and objectives Expectations from participants	GL	

DAY/TIME	ACTIVITIES	WHO	
Gender, HIV and AIDS and Care Work			
9:30 – 10:30	Gender, HIV and AIDS and Care Work Update Action Plan	GL and Council	
10:30 – 10.45	<i>TEA</i>		
Gender, Sustainable Development and Climate Change			
10.45 -11.15	The link between climate change and sustainable development The impact of climate change on our everyday lives What councillors and NGOs can do to mitigate the effect Projects that can be put in place – update Gender Action Plan on Climate Change Section	GL and Council	
Local Economic Development			
11.15 – 12.15	Gender and local economic development Strategies for local economic development – update Gender Action Plan	GL and Council	
12.15 – 13.00	Light lunch	All	
Gender Based Violence Action Plan			
13.00 – 15.00	Update GBV Action Plan	All	
DAY TWO –			
Prioritising the Action Plan with Chief Executive and Chief Welfare Officer			
9.30 – 12.30	Finalising the Action Plan and developing strategies	Gender Links and High Officials	
DAY THREE - Review of Action Plan by High Officials			
DAY FOUR – Adoption of Action by Council and Statement of Commitment by Council			



REGISTRATION FORM

Date: 19th September 2012
Venue: Municipal Council of Curepipe

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