

Mainstreaming gender at National broadcaster

By Jethro Kwenani

Namibian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) highlighted its commitment to gender equality at the Gender Protocol Summit held in Windhoek in April, 2013 stating that the corporation promotes gender mainstreaming in the recruitment process, in production and reporting. Gerson Kamatuka, NBC's Chief of Organisational Development, explained that in a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Gender Links, NBC agreed to undertake a gender mainstreaming situation analysis and to put in place a gender policy. "The NBC and Gender Links have committed to sharing interests in promoting gender-responsive reporting in the media."

Gender Links has support NBC with capacity-building in gender mainstreaming including for NBC radio managers and producers. "It is always an advantage to train people involved in the production aspects, since editors have the final say as to what is said or not," said Kamatuka.

Kamatuka highlighted that NBC has access to specially designed systems on telephones for radio phone-in programmes so the corporation is able to monitor which topics receive the most responses from their female viewers and listeners compared to male listeners or viewers. This informs the national broadcaster about which issues the public finds important and monitors whether NBC radio is reaching both

women and men equally. NBC aims to give a voice to the "voiceless", many of whom are the children and women. NBC's role in gender mainstreaming is also to disseminate relevant information for socio-economic development of Namibia.

The partnership with Gender Links has helped NBC make significant progress towards gender equality targets in the media by 2015. NBC has equal number of women and men as news editors and in some areas women feature more prominently than the men. For example women make up only approximately 58% of the presenters in domestic programmes.

However, women only make up 17% of executive posts. According to Gender Links' Glass Ceilings research publication on women and men in Southern African media houses, women are often denied access and excluded altogether from top jobs.



Gerson Kamatuka during the Official Opening of the Summit, seated alongside former Windhoek Mayor, Elaine Trepper

"Women have mentored me"

- Jeremiah Ntinda

By Salome Nzuma

Jeremiah Ntinda says that women have always had a strong influence on his life which has made him active in gender equality advocacy work both in his personal life and as the Namibia Country Director of the Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders on HIV/AIDS in Africa (AMICAALL).

"Women have mentored and continue to mentor me. They have played and still play a big part in shaping and influencing my life."

"As men we need to support and empower our women in order to develop the country as equal partners. I think one common thread is the commitment to and passion on the part of women who have touched my life, their determination to improve their lives and that of others."

"My mother worked so hard to ensure that her six boys would get a better life; she is amazing and invaluable. I resolved that once I grew up, I would have to do something to change the status quo of women, and recognise and appreciate their contribution to shaping the world. Men's attitude towards women has been

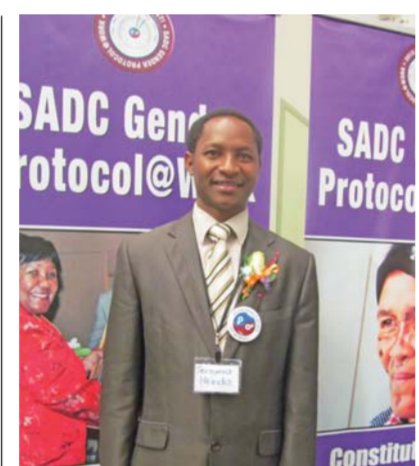
a matter of concern to me very early in life. I grew up seeing my mother struggling to ensure that we had a roof over our head, food on the table and that we went to school.

A lot has happened since I was born to better the lives of women. We have the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development targets, which we need to recognise as the link between poverty reduction and women's empowerment, and gender equality. We have worked hard together with many of the stakeholders to implement gender mainstreaming. But I don't think we can say the battle is over. We can only say it has begun. Mainstreaming gender and empowerment of women, are still a key priorities. I pledge to continue to fight this battle.

I became more aware of the links between these issues and gender justice when I got the opportunity to work at AMICAALL on issues of health, gender, education and economic empowerment. This experience made clear to me the discrepancy which exists sometimes between my broad dream of social liberation and my day-to-day life as a man. Subsequently, I began interactions with Gender Links, working on women's empowerment. This helped me understand gender issues. I also came to know myself better as a man and felt that the opportunity I was being given to question and discard harmful norms of masculinity, was a rare one which should be available to all men. This strengthened my commitment to bring men to the same understanding of women and help them play a constructive and effective role in a society where both men and women have an equal opportunity to live their lives.

Men, as partners, need to learn from the women's movement on gender justice struggles.

My work at AMICAALL involves me in community awareness and sensitisation programmes, lobbying and advocacy, capacity-building and community mobilisation, all with the aim of bringing about social transformation geared towards the attainment of gender parity and respect for human rights. I'm



Jeremiah Ntinda

passionate about the work I do because it provides a platform for advocating gender parity.

I am very honoured to be working with Gender Links in an effort to create a fair and just society in Namibia. Gender equality, gender mainstreaming and the empowerment of women are not the responsibility of the government alone, but every citizen in Namibia. It has to be mainstreamed; a commitment must be made; it is the responsibility of all of us, wherever we sit, whatever our responsibility. The concept of gender is very delicate and, in most African countries, is often misunderstood to mean going against tradition - something that is being done against men.

I stand not to reinvent the wheel but to join the women and men in the fight to realise total gender equality in our societies. I commend the work being done by Gender Links in this regard as they play a major role in contributing to the shaping of our understanding of gender-related issues in the SADC region."

Gerson Kamatuka: Gender on the broadcast agenda

By Jethro Kwenani

Dressed in a suede jacket and sporting a huge smile, Gerson Kamatuka is known for being the man behind the gender agenda at the Namibian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC).

Kamatuka is one of the gender focal persons as well as a member of the National Gender Task Force, which is appointed by the Minister of Gender Equality and Child Welfare. The Task Force works in collaboration with Gender Links Namibia.

In African culture, women are stereotypically considered inferior in many communities and cultural practices. One practice, as Kamatuka points out is the wedding ceremony, where men would relax in the shade discussing current

affairs, while the women are the "busy beavers" cooking, cleaning and feeding. "Men are primarily involved when it is time to slaughter a cow or something of the sort," said Kamatuka.

Initially, when the presence of Gender Links started to be felt in Namibia, Kamatuka thought it was "just a women's empowerment movement". At the time he was still in the human resource department of the NBC. However, after attending events organised by Gender Links his outlook on gender, has changed.

As a gender focal person at the NBC, Kamatuka soon started to share information to build a gender database. Furthermore, he was involved in the three significant steps towards mainstreaming gender in NBC: sensitising the public on gender issues; signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Gender Links; and facilitating gender-based workshops at the workplace.

Kamatuka said, with time, all the perceptions of women being inferior to men should and will disappear. "Provided that there is more advocacy on gender issues, the problem will certainly be solved."

He added that men feel threatened at the workplace and so they believe that women cannot do male-dominated jobs in the media, for example camera- and lighting-work. Kamatuka said that this is no longer the case at NBC which employs women in these so-called male jobs. The tide is changing, said Kamatuka.

SADC GENDER PROTOCOL @ WORK

Produced during the first SADC Gender Protocol Summits and Awards 2013



NAMIBIA

April 2013



Minister urges action to meet gender targets



Minister Rosalia Nghidinwa delivering the keynote address at the Namibia SADC Protocol Summit.

By George Moncho

The second Namibia SADC Gender Protocol Summit under the banner "Yes We Must" brought together 99 participants from local authorities, municipalities, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), faith-based organisations (FBOs) and representatives of Ministries of Gender and Local Government, civil society and donor organisations.

The Minister of Gender Equality and

Child Welfare, Rosalia Nghidinwa, highlighted the Namibian leadership's commitment to gender equality in political, economic and social spheres. In her keynote address she urged civil society partners to "rally with the government in domesticating, implementing and popularising the Protocol."

The Minister said that the country was making particularly good progress in the area of education, where the enrollment figures of boys and girls are either equal or are higher for girls.

The Minister praised Gender Links for its gender mainstreaming work at local government level. She urged local government officials present at the Gender Summit to embrace this process and work with Gender Links in achieving the targets of the Protocol.

The Minister pointed out that gender inequality is deeply ingrained in all sectors and areas of society, especially at local government, which is the "Coalface" of service-delivery. She said that addressing inequalities at local government level involves internal transformation as well as integrating gender considerations

into key tools of governance. She committed her Ministry to working closely with all stakeholders to ensure that gender equality is achieved.

Minister Nghidinwa also applauded Gender Links' baseline research in the SADC region. She assured Gender Links that her Ministry - together with other focal Ministries - were working together to do away with gender-insensitive laws.

The Spanish Ambassador to Namibia, Carmen Diaz, stressed the Spanish government's commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment saying they are fundamental rights and necessary for the achievement of growth, employment and social cohesion in the country. The Ambassador said although there is progress in international policies towards addressing gender inequality, the policies need to be visible in the communities.

She reiterated her commitment to working with Gender Links to promote gender equality especially during the remaining almost 1,000 days before the deadline

for the 2015 SADC Protocol and MDG targets. The Ambassador urged Local Authorities to use the 2014 Namibian elections as an opportunity to strengthen gender equality, participation and representation in the electorate.

Diaz pointed out the need to strengthen gender-awareness and the capacities of women and men, politicians and civil servants. She highlighted the importance of increasing women's participation in politics and the Centres of Excellence (COEs) model to build the capacity of the regional gender officers, gender focal persons and gender champions. She also conveyed her gratitude to Minister Rosalia Nghidinwa for her commitment to gender-related work since taking office late last year.



Carmen Diaz Spanish Ambassador of the National Gender Summit Namibia

Awards showcase talent!

The second Namibia SADC Gender Protocol Summit under the banner "Yes We Must" closed in Windhoek at the Polytechnic of Namibia Hotel School on April 4 2013 with a memorable Gala in which individuals and organisations received awards for their outstanding work towards gender equality.

Twelve women and seven men won awards in various categories including Gender-based Violence and Conflict Resolution, Sexual and Reproductive Rights; Health and HIV and AIDS, Education and Economic Development; Climate Change and Sustainable Development, Media and Local Government institutions' leadership. Sebastian So-Oabeb from Project Harmony, an organisation working with people living with disabilities, in Outjo in

the Kunene Region, won a special award in Education and Economic Development.



Remembering GBV and HIV/AIDS victims and committing to SADC Gender Protocol targets.

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Namibian Broadcasting	Media COE
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Nikodemus Aoxamub (City of Windhoek)	Constitutional and Legal Rights - Local Government
Dorkas Shikongo - Okahandja Self Empowered Women	Constitutional & Legal Rights - Alliance
Outjo Municipality	Local government - best COE
Rehoboth Town Council	Most Improved COE
Otavi Town Council	
Aroab Village Council	Best Rural COE

A call to end gender-based violence as cases continue to rise

By Salome Nzuma

The two-day SADC Protocol on Gender and Development Summit held in Windhoek April 3- 4, 2013 took place as reports of gender-based violence reportedly increase.

Delegates at the Summit took the opportunity to express their concern over the increase in gender-based violence (GBV) cases and urged stakeholders to intensify their actions against it.

The Secretary-General of the Council of Churches in Namibia (CCN), Rev. Maria Kapere, drew attention to the increase in the number of young girls and women who are raped and murdered in Namibia.

Windhoek's Mayor, Agnes Kafula added, "Namibia in general, and the City of Windhoek in particular, have witnessed an increase in gender-based social evils, such as passion killings and violence against women and children."

Rev. Kapere said GBV awareness campaigns are important to reduce the number of cases by 50% by 2015 as stipulated in the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. "We should increase collaboration with the community leaders, faith-based organisations and men in the hope that as more people take notice, we will erase gender-based violence in our communities. I am optimistic that a collective effort can eventually end gender-based violence," she said.

The Minister of Gender Equality and Child Welfare, Rosalia Nghidwa, reiterated the need for united efforts to eradicate gender-based violence. "Let us unite against gender-based violence," she told the delegates. Sarry Xoagus-Eises, the country manager for Gender Links, pointed out, "Without combined efforts on the part of all partners addressing GBV, and continuous sensitisation of the community on human rights and laws, it would be very difficult to eradicate gender-based injustice and violence." Kapere urged summit delegates to be



Sarry Xoagus-Eises, Country Manager Gender Links Namibia Photo by Salome Nzuma

agents of change. "In our various communities we should help change the mindsets and develop plans that can reduce gender-based violence," she said.

Johan Gamatham, an 'I Stories' Consultant for Gender Links Namibia, added that ending GBV might seem like an ambitious agenda, but with support from individuals and organisations, Namibia could work towards that goal. He urged organisations, government and various stakeholders to scale-up policies for women and gender equality in their programmes. "Gender-based violence has become a global epidemic that has an effect on communities and even entire countries around the world. We must join hands and work together and eliminate this evil from our society," Gamatham said.

Namibia is party to key international and regional instruments on women's rights including the Beijing Declaration, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), SADC and AU protocols on gender, all of which oblige member States to take measures to address GBV.



Children say no to GBV!

From Victim to Victor

By Jethro Kwenani

Twenty-five-year-old Sebastian So-oabeb is now a vibrant young man from the beautiful town of Outjo. A few years ago, it was a different story.

While growing up, So-oabeb was discriminated against because of living with a disability, which deeply affected his self-esteem and general outlook on life. So-oabeb said that people often thought just because he had a physical disability, he was also mentally impaired. So he dropped out of school, feeling he had nothing to offer the world. He turned to liquor as a means of 'coping'.

However, So-oabeb has overcome his disability and the prejudice. In Outjo and its surrounding areas, he has

become known as a young entrepreneur, who is also a founder of "Project Harmony". This project provides people who are living with disabilities the opportunity to be artistic and productive by sewing bags, painting and making lanterns, which are designed for gifts appropriate for particular times of the year, such as Christmas.

The project is not only about generating an income, but also serves to uplift the living standards of people living with disabilities, especially those in wheelchairs. He is a true hero in the eyes of many.



Sebastian So-oabeb, founder of Project Harmony in Outjo, Namibia

Barometer: One step forwards, two steps backwards?

Namibia has both signed and ratified the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Gender and Development. So far it has made significant strides towards meeting the 28 targets set out in the Protocol, but challenges remain as shown by the 2012 Barometer.

The Alliance uses two measures to rate each SADC State's performance towards meeting the 28 targets: the SADC Gender and Development Index (SGDI), and the complementary Citizen Score Card (CSC). The SGDI is an empirical measure based on 23 indicators for the six sectors that have accurate data in the 15 countries. The six sectors are Governance, Education, Economy, Sexual and Reproductive Health, HIV and AIDS, and Media. By contrast the CSC gauges the perceptions of citizens who have been part of reference group meetings, village workshops and other protocol-related activities, who rate the achievements

of the country across all the sectors.

Namibia achieved a score of 75 %, 1% below its 2011 score according to the overall SGDI but well above the regional average of 66%. Citizens rated the country an overall score of 60% down from 74% in 2011, but again above the CSC regional average of 57%.

Namibia has one of the world's most progressive Constitutions and the country has performed well regarding women in leadership showing commitment towards achieving gender equality.

Parliament has passed and reformed many laws to promote gender equality. Recent law reforms include the 2003 Criminal Procedure Amendment Act, the 2006 Children's Status Act and the 2007 Labour Act.

Currently, the country has an affirmative action clause at the local authority level.

Women make up 42% of all councillors compared to a lower proportion at national level of 25% women parliamentarians and 20% women in Cabinet.

In education and training, Namibia scored 99% on the SGDI, almost achieving gender parity at primary level. Girls outnumber boys at secondary school and women outnumber men at tertiary level. Namibia has a pregnancy policy to reintegrate girls who become pregnant into the education system. All schools have a life-skills programme that includes gender and HIV and AIDS.

Namibia has also responded well to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. For example, at least 75% of HIV-positive pregnant women access the prevention of mother to child transmission of HIV programme (Ministry of Health and Social Services 2008).

Namibia has performed well in promoting



Girls outnumber boys in secondary school

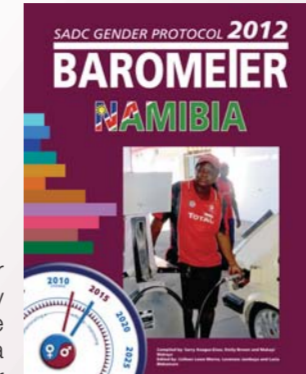
gender equality in the media sector and ranks fourth in the SADC region.

However, one of the main challenges for the country is that most people continue to use customary laws. Some customary laws discriminate against women, especially widows and divorced women. These laws are largely unwritten, vary depending on the ethnic group and tolerate unequal power and gender relations.

The economic sector is another area that needs urgent attention. Women are predominantly found in the low paid and precarious informal sector. Namibia has one of the regions lowest proportions of women in formal employment and in economic decision-making positions within the public sector.

Although no SGDI scores are available on gender-based violence (GBV) due to lack of accurate statistics, media reports and anecdotal evidence, along with police reports, suggest that GBV is widespread in the home and in schools. Teachers are often responsible for GBV in schools. Teachers often resort to corporal punishment for poor grades and bad behaviour. They have also got pupils pregnant, but many of the cases are difficult to prove.

Despite the challenges, Namibia is performing relatively well in the region and the political commitment is there to push ahead to reach the targets set out in the Protocol.



COEs highlight gender challenges



Participants at the National Gender Summit came from various parts of Namibia

By Salome Nzuma

At the opening ceremony of the Gender Protocol Summit in Namibia in April this year, Agnes Kafula, Mayor of the City of Windhoek, said that despite the progress, local authorities need to improve their efforts to advance the gender equality agenda.

"Close to 20 Local Authorities have qualified to take part in this national summit; this in itself is a big achievement for Namibia and a step in the right direction," said the Mayor. But she stressed the importance of the local authorities urgently addressing local challenges that they are still facing in terms of gender equality. "The local government is close to the people and is the catalyst of development, and is thus strategically positioned to best advance the gender equality agenda".

The presentations on local government Centres of Excellence (COEs) provided an opportunity to review, analyse lessons learnt and discuss future directions for their local strategies on gender mainstreaming and empowerment of women. The programmes and projects of COEs specifically address women's economic empowerment, women's participation in decision-making and equal access to opportunities.

However, the COEs' presentations all showed that gender issues are given low priority; men dominate posts in the local councils; few women employed by councils are in managerial positions; and in some Councils gender budgeting is still absent.

The Local Authorities COEs all agreed that there is a need for clear goals, stronger leadership, accountability and more resources need to be earmarked for additional training on gender mainstreaming.

Most presenters called for increased support for women's inclusion in the decision-making processes of local authorities and for women's empowerment initiatives.

Selma Nelago, who represented the Usakos Local Government authority, began her presentation by highlighting how much progress had been made in gender mainstreaming. But she too acknowledged the challenges being experienced by the Usakos Council, of which funding for gender equality issues and a lack of women in managerial positions, are central.

The Gobabis Town Councillors Ignasia Glazer and Councillor Elizabeth Kamboua cited lack of funding to support their gender mainstreaming

activities and the need to bridge the gap between policies and practices.



Commenting on the presentations, Michael Conteh, one of the judges, acknowledged that, "Namibia as a member of SADC, with the help of local authorities, has to work hard in ensuring that women are not sidelined in terms of the political and economic activities of the country".

Ms Agnes Kafula, the Mayor of the City of Windhoek, applauded the recent signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between Gender Links Namibia with both the Associations of Local Authorities in Namibia (ALAN) and the Alliance of Mayors' Initiative for Community Action on AIDS at Local Level (AMICAAAL). "I am appealing to all partners to implement programme areas identified in their MoUs," she said. Furthermore, she highlighted the need to establish systems for coordination and information-sharing amongst local authorities to continuously raise awareness of gender equality within communities.

The COEs for Gender in local government-concept is a follow-up to the local government research, strategies and roll-out of the Gender and gender-based violence (GBV) Action Plans that took place from 2007 - 2010 across municipalities in the SADC region. The COE process involves sustained interventions that serve to bring together policy, implementation and capacity-building. Gender Links hopes to have all 51 local government authorities become COEs.

Gender Mainstreaming Promotes Economic Development

By Salome Nzuma

Addressing delegates attending the Summit on the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development held in Windhoek recently, Linus Sinvula, the Local Development Manager of the Mariental Municipality, called on all local authorities to note the importance and benefits of gender mainstreaming at local government level.

"Local economic development in Namibia is slowly making its mark reducing gender inequality and improving the economic status of many communities," Sinvula said.

He explained the ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality at all levels of economic activities."

Despite progress made in mainstreaming gender and advancing gender equality in Namibia, there are still gender disparities, especially in the economic sector, and that requires immediate attention if Namibia is to meet the economic targets of the SADC Gender Protocol by 2015.

Sinvula urged local governments to develop economic empowerment initiatives. He said local Authorities have to ensure that the local investment climate is functional for local businesses. This includes supporting small- and medium sized enterprises; encouraging the formation of new enterprises; attracting external investment (nationally and internationally); investing in physical infrastructure; supporting informal and newly emerging businesses; and targeting disadvantaged groups.



Economic empowerment garden project

Sinvula emphasised the need for local governments to adopt an agenda that drives rather than reacts. This is particularly important for ensuring women participate in local developmental activities. "Local Governments should focus particularly

on women because addressing inequalities and strengthening the capacity of women to perform their productive roles more effectively has a major impact on poverty-reduction and economic empowerment Sinvula remarked."

Local Authorities persue sustainable dream areas

By Jethro Kwenani

Authorities and Town Councils are tackling climate change, cleaning up their areas and promoting sustainable development.

For example, Ellie Nowases, a representative of the Arandis Town Council, explained her method of gardening known as "hydroponic". "It's gardening without soil and very little water is used. The project gives income to 10 men and women since local supermarkets and restaurants purchase their produce.

Kleofas Geingob, Mayor of Outjo, said that Outjo is a town heading for "greatness", they work together to reach the "Outjo dream" of having a beautiful and clean town, which every individual will be proud of. The council seeks to develop a culture of "community responsibility".

Namibia Housing Action Group (NHAG) a non-governmental organisation (NGO)

which supports the Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia (SDFN) focuses on improving the living standards of communities. According to the project technician, Royal Mabakeng, "NHAG supports the building of houses by the community, the design and layout in the community, and also negotiates with local authorities regarding the provision of affordable service solutions for communities."

Affordable housing is vital for Namibia, not only to achieve the development goals of Namibia through Vision 2030, but also the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Good housing not only puts a roof over the heads of people, but also has a positive impact on sanitation. Hanna Witbooi, a resident of Mariental, sums up how she appreciates improvements in her living conditions. "It is dangerous for women who have to go to the toilet in the bushes, and it is so difficult to bend one's knees. I am happy because we have our own toilets in the house now. The households have been provided with water taps and we can grow



Ellie Nowases, a representative from Arandis Town Council uses a special kind of gardening.

vegetables. We generate income from small gardening projects and pay school fees for our kids."

Despite NHAG not having a gender policy in place, Mabakeng said that they provide equal opportunities for both women and men. The SDFN supports women's empowerment due to the high number of female-headed households. The NHAG also provides training on data-collection, verification and analysis services for participants. "Data serves as a tool to initiate discussions on the upgrading of informal settlements," said Mabakeng.