



The Swazi Observer was established over 25 years ago. It has grown from a small publication to what it is today with Journalists in all the four regions. We target readers in rural, urban and international community.



NAME OF GOOD PRACTICE: Writing stories that expose segregation against young girls

PRESENTERS NAME: Joseph Zulu

CATEGORY: Constitutional, Legal rights and governance

COUNTRY SADC GENDER PROTOCOL SUMMIT

DATE: 18/19 March 2013

VENUE: Lugogo Sun

GENDER EQUALITY BY 2015, YES WE MUST!

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF MEDIA HOUSE

Swaziland

- Location (Both urban and rural)
- Type: print (News Paper)
- Circulation (More women read the paper than men. At least 60% of our readers are women)?
- Proportion of women sources
- On this particular, Story, sources were 60% female. In this particular story, nearly 80% sources were women.
- How many employees?
Between 40 to 60.
about 15 reporters, 10 female and female News Editor (Acting)
- Is the media house part of the COE process? If so for how long? Yes, there is a link with Gender Links

Swaziland

Submission

- SYNOPSIS: The article submitted is “It is illegal to expel pregnant pupils”. This is a good example because it highlights segregation between female and male pupils.
- It also created a debate that was a true test of whether the country is ready to provide the contents of our constitution as well as which is greater, our culture or the constitution. *
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HOW DOES YOUR SUBMISSION CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE 28 TARGETS OF THE SADC GENDER PROTOCOL?

PROTOCOL TARGET	ACTIONS
<p>Article 3: To provide for empowerment of women, to eliminate discrimination and achieve gender equality</p>	<p>Allowing girls to practice the same rights as boys in every aspect of life whilst at the same time recognising their physical difference</p>
<p>To address emerging gender issues and concerns. To reduce the school drop out rate of girls by year 2015.</p>	<p>To make provisions for girls to continue school after or during certain predicaments. E.g. Provide free sanitation pads.</p>
<p>Article 11: “The Girl Child: ensuring that girls have equal rights to education and not subjected to treatment that causes them to develop a negative image.</p>	<p>Give centres where girls can be counselled when facing challenges without being criticised.</p>

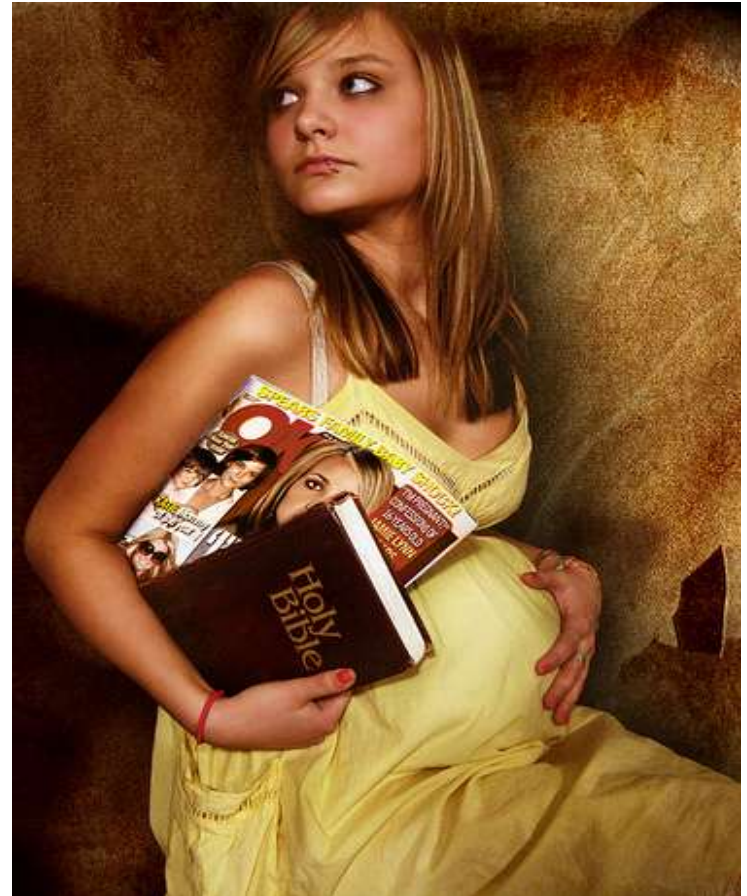
Background

- **BRIEF BACKGROUND: WHY DID YOU PRODUCE THE STORY?**

I produced this story after hearing a concern that a girl was forced to drop out of school because she was pregnant. Many girls fall pregnant but this girl was different. She wanted to remain in school.

- **WHAT PROBLEM OR CONTEXT IS IT RESPONDING TO? ***

The problem the article is responding to is segregation in the learning institutions. This is where boys are allowed certain things but not girls despite making same mistakes.



Objectives

- **OBJECTIVES: WHAT DID YOU HOPE TO ACHIEVE WITH THIS COVERAGE?**

I was looking for a lasting solution for pregnant girls at schools. No girl in her right mind would say, “I want to be pregnant and leave school”. We may afford to ignore teen age pregnancy but we may not afford to ignore the reality of teenage pregnancy.



Targets

•TARGETS: WHO DID YOU HOPE TO REACH?

I was hoping to reach Cabinet, NGOs, Parliamentarians the public, school authorities and education unions as well as the world through Facebook.

• WHAT EVIDENCE DO YOU HAVE TO ILLUSTRATE IMPACT? *

The impact is mostly illustrated on the internet and Facebook. Many other news sites such rewrote the story. Other Publications also responded to the story including the Times of Swaziland where the editor received scores of letters.

The issue was also discussed on Radio, TV and eventually at the Editors' meeting with Cabinet where the PM eventually said, the "Pro Pregnancy Education Policy should be sent back to the stake holders and reviewed".

- NGO's UNICEF, World Vision, Churches, Cabinet, International Community.
- Facebook, Twitter, Internet, Google, Magazines.

Process

- PROCESS: HOW DID YOU GATHER THE DATA, HOW MANY SOURCES, FEMALE AND MALE DID YOU CONSULT? *

Data was initially gathered through sources. I contacted SWAPOL, Gender Links, Women and Law, Human rights bodies, female pupils to hear their view as the story developed.

Internet was also used, I sent a comment from my FACEBOOK wall to hear the views of other people.

- 90% sources were female. Generally most sources are female.
- Human rights organisations and pro-women organisations, e.g, Gender Links, women and Law, DPM's office.
- From FACEBOOK comments

Feedback

- PLEASE PROVIDE ANY EXAMPLES OF FEEDBACK THAT YOU RECEIVED FROM THE ARTICLES (FROM WEBSITES, LETTERS, ETC.). ATTACH ALL RELEVANT DOCUMENTATION. *
- **Scans, quotes**
 - “Sex before marriage is wrong whether it is done by a boy, girl or teacher. Pregnancy is a result of sex and, therefore, it is also wrong. We are a Christian mission school and I don’t know what other religions would say about this but we say pregnancy is equally wrong and unacceptable”.
 - Pregnant school girls should be sent home – Cabinet
 - “We can accommodate them – Nazarene schools’
 - FACEBOOK likes were Phenomenal. In one article related to the story, about 3972 likes were recorded compared to the less than 1000 page likes.
 - **Paper sales that day sky rocketed!!!**

Follow up

- **HOW WOULD YOU CONDUCT FOLLOW UP?**

I would conduct follow up firstly from the people this affects most – the school girls. Then call on NGOs that are pro-women as well as churches and constitution experts. I would then follow up with cabinet.

- **HAS ANY FOLLOW UP BEEN CONDUCTED**

Yes, it was conducted in from teachers, principals as well as Cabinet until the Education policy was then sent back to the relevant stake holders.

- FACEBOOK Comments
- Call in readers
- Pupils, especially girls who are more affected by the issue.

SNAT, SWAPA, Ministry of Education, DPMs office.