



**LAVUMISA  
TOWN  
BOARD**



***NAME OF GOOD PRACTICE***  
***PRESENTERS NAME: THOBILE JELE***  
***CATEGORY: LOCAL GOVERNMENT COE***

**SWAZILAND SADC GENDER PROTOCOL SUMMIT**  
**DATE : APRIL 2013**  
**VENUE : INDABA HOTEL JOHANNESBURG**

**GENDER EQUALITY BY 2015, YES WE MUST!**

# BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF COUNCIL

- Lavumisa is one of the oldest but one of the smallest towns in Swaziland and located in the South East tip of the country in the Shiselweni District.
- Lavumisa is a high traffic boarder town linking Swaziland and Kwazulu Natal, Republic South Africa.
- The town is approximately 175 kms from Mbabane the Capital of Swaziland.
- It is linked by road to the sugar-producing town of Big Bend.
- The population of the town is about two thousand people estimated to be 60% females and 40% males with 300 estimated to be orphaned and vulnerable children (OVCs).
- Lavumisa town does not have any major industries or job opportunities, people work in sugar cane fields opposite the town and some work in far away places like Manzini, Mbabane and Pongola (RSA).
- Management is 50/50 whilst the rest of the staff 41.6% are males and 58.3% are females. The town also provides equal opportunities to temporal jobs when ever they become available.
- The Town's political leadership consists of five male Councillors. These councillors were elected from a list of 17 candidates.4 were females while the rest were males.

# KEY GENDER AND SERVICE DELIVERY CHALLENGES

- Most homes are left with women and children since men work in far away places.
- HIV/AIDS hit hard because of the town location; border gate.
- Lack of commitment from investors to set up business in the area.
- Poverty which is caused by lack of economic activities contributes to the low level of education.

# GENDER CHAMPIONS

- We do not have a gender champion, however, there is still going to be an induction workshop of the newly elected councillors on how to mainstream gender.
- However, we have Councillors who already have knowledge on Gender issues even way before the induction process.



# HOW HAS THE COE PROCESS CONTRIBUTED TO ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES?

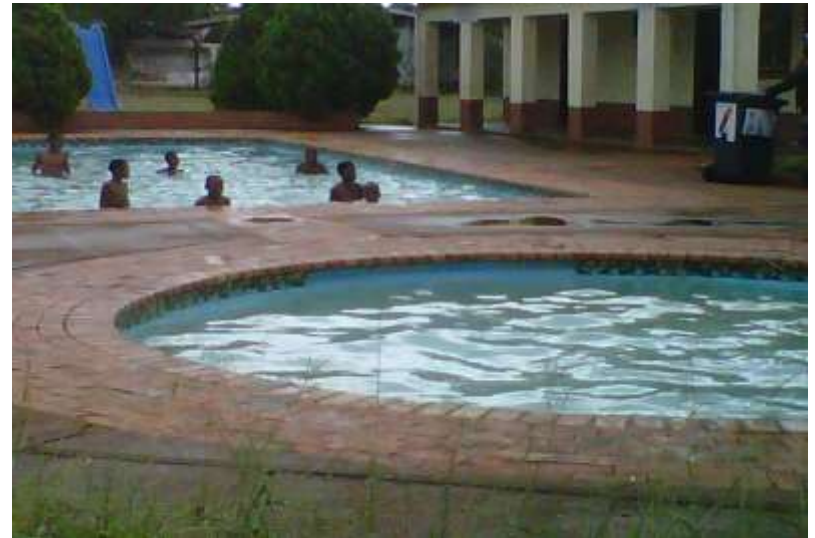
- The COE process, conducted a walk against crime and abuse where information on the gender issues was disseminated during the walk and during speeches. The town in collaboration with other organizations working within the urban area which includes RSP, LATICC, PSI, MSF, participated in the walk.
- Public participation is also encouraged through meetings and commemorations of special days i.e. valentines day through the town's integrated HIV/AIDS program.
- A budget of E15 000.00 is allocated to the integrated HIV and AIDS program that also work on issues of gender.
- Women are not represented in the council but they participate equally in community meetings and there are no barriers for their involvement in any activity or development





# HOW HAS THE COE PROCESS CONTRIBUTED TO ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES?

- Council through the integrated HIV/AIDS program supports a group of people living with HIV/AIDS and they are 10 females and 5 males ; they were assisted to establish and run various Income-Generating Projects (IGPs); Poultry project(currently they rearing 100 indigenous chickens) vegetable production and a car wash that is run only by women.
- The council is a signatory to the bank account of the support group which is at FNB and currently they have a balance of E6 576.89, for the sustainability of the projects close monitoring is done by the council who help them to solicit market. The support groups shares their profit once year.
- Council operates a swimming pool which targets mostly the youth to cool themselves and to create forums to discuss HIV/AIDS issues, gender issues and positive behavioural change through poolside community dialogues.
- The council has so far transported 2 female members of the support group to Hospice at Home in Matsapha; 1 lady had cervical cancer and the other one had abdominal cancer symptoms.
- Council has done a lot to promote LED in Lavumisa, 2 markets were constructed for both women and men vendors to sell their wares.



# HOW HAS THE COE PROCESS CONTRIBUTED TO ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES

- Economical empowerment to disadvantaged women in the town; the council through the HIV and AIDS integrated program has established 4 savings and credit schemes known as ASCAS. Each group has got 10 members and they contribute E100 per month. Each member is allowed to loan from the saving and repay after 3 months with 20% interest. At the end of the year they share according to their saving. They also contribute E60 each towards social responsibility wherein they identify a needy family or an individual and buy him/her food commodities.
- The HIV/AIDS program conducts 1 HIV/AIDS awareness campaign per quarter and commemorates special days like valentine's day and they distribute about 10 000 male condoms on a monthly basis from 23 condom outlets and sometimes join police during roadblocks to supply motorists and truck drivers.

# HOW HAS THE COE PROCESS CONTRIBUTED TO ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES?

- Council has since appointed a Gender Focal Person to take up gender issues for council and facilitate gender mainstreaming within all departments and to the entire communities.
- Currently, Gender budget is in the HIV/AIDS program allocation.
- Monitoring and evaluation is done through monthly reports submitted to council meetings and quarterly progress reports.



# HOW IS YOUR COUNCIL CONTRIBUTING TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE 28 TARGETS OF THE SADC PROTOCOL?

PROTOCOL TARGET	COUNCIL ACTIONS
Articles 12-13 : Governance (representation and participation)	The 50/50 campaign before elections to ensure that women are ready to stand for the elections as well as gender discussions during voter education sessions.
Article 20-25 : Gender Based Violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•The town through the HIV/AIDS program have established 5 anti-abuse teams each in the 5 wards and 1 in the local primary school. The teams won an award in the Urban Legend awards for their outstanding performance.</li> </ul>
Article 26 : Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The council through the integrated HIV and AIDS program has trained 15 volunteers to provide HIV/AIDS information to urban residents in the 5 wards and to reduce cultural barriers to early HIV/AIDS diagnosis.</li> </ul>

# HOW IS YOUR COUNCIL CONTRIBUTING TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE 28 TARGETS OF THE SADC PROTOCOL Contd...?

## Article 27 : HIV and AIDS

- Council has trained 8 female volunteers to mobilize urban residents for VCT and treatment adherence so that women and children access treatment.
- The Council integrated the HIV/AIDS program and provides full support. The town through this program won an award in the Urban Legend Awards for its outstanding performance.

# HOW IS YOUR COUNCIL CONTRIBUTING TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE 28 TARGETS OF THE SADC PROTOCOL Contd...?



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# IMPACT

- The impacts that can be pointed out so far is the decline in reports of women and children abuse cases by the anti-abuse teams.
- Women and children are now free to walk during the night.
- Women are empowered and have money to spend on their daily needs.



# CHANGING LIVES

- Community is now able to start backyard gardens because the Council has constructed a pound since livestock have been a great challenge to them. The facility provides 24hrs security for the animals and is managed by a Pound master.
- The council also constructed a toilet at the cemetery as operating without toilets was a big challenge especially to the women.
- Through the ASCAS saving and credit scheme women now have spending money to buy their necessities.



# CHALLENGES TO GENDER MAINSTREAMING

- Lack of understanding from other departments is a challenge, needs buy in for harmonious implementation of the programme.
- Lack of financial resources when it comes to expanding to areas outside the town
- Absence of gender champion to work with focal person because councillors are relatively new in office.

# WAY FORWARD

- Continuing the COE stages up to stage 10.
- Appoint gender champion (Councillor)
- Collect and have a reliable data which is gender disaggregated.
- Establish a fully fledged gender unit with all necessary resources to make it function accordingly.