



Arandis Town Council

Fact box

COUNTRY	Namibia
COUNCIL/ MEDIA HOUSE	Arandis Town Council
Baseline score	75
Latest score	50
Population/audience	8 000
Key characteristics	Uranium Mining Town
Contact person	Aune Gebhardt
Designation	HR Manager
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The town of Arandis was established in the late seventies (1976) to house close to five thousand workers who worked on the mine. The town totally depended on the mine which subsidized all the services to the inhabitants, hence the economic responsibility rested with the mining authorities. Shortly after independence the town was handed to the Namibian government and in 1994 it was declared a town. The scope of operations and the fact that it was now managed by a town council came with its own problems viz; the payment of rates and taxes was now the responsibility of the community members a transformation that nearly crippled the economic activities of the town. The history of mining towns becoming ghosts' towns was the order of talk amongst community members and it painted a very bleak picture when it comes to trying to convince investors to invest in Arandis Mining Town, Dac, and Led Arandis is one of the top centres of excellence

This was worsening because most of the mine workers were affected when the mine retrenched close to half of their workforce during 1990. Vigorous interventions to boost economic activity has to be introduced to save the town from becoming a ghost town and ways of trying to filter the economy to at least sustain the livelihoods of the few people who remained in Arandis.

The continued escalation of the towns economy was a real threat to the developmental goals for Namibia as set out in Vision 2030 as well as investors whom lost faith to invest in Arandis, this led to the birth of the Local Economic Development

Strategy/Intervention, that had extensive consultation with stakeholders and the community to look at ways and means of transforming and diversifying the economy which was male dominated by the time.

More women started to form groups and associations to try and become financially independent from their partners. It was imperative to support and empower the women so that they are able to withstand the onslaught of the economic discrepancy that was

negatively affecting family's dependency on the male counterparts.



These programs included training to women in dressmaking and tailoring, hospitality, food production, business



entrepreneurship mentoring, community peer education programs, plus life skills coaching programs to mentions but a few.



One can congratulate the efforts of council to empower women in leadership positions from business women to the corporate world, one can see that women are being given the lead to address



the issues of women empowerment during public as well as social gathering, this made Arandis as one of the top centres of excellence champions.

Mayor interventions were introduced and it had positive economic results as per beneficiary's testimonies to date:

Interviews:

1. In her own words Ms. Elly Nowases owner and manager of Ellies Flower Garden had this to say:

'She is also of the opinion that the local business's needs a mind shift to become more

competitive and add value to their products and services, business opportunities are wide and needs to be taken up by the locals especially women in business. She further added that she had confidence that local business's run by women would bring about change that will open more avenues to enhance the efficiency of their business ventures". Food security is very vital for our country and she is happy to be one of the few in Arandis that can proudly say that she is feeding the town of Arandis with pride.

2. Maria, owner of Maria Hair Salon was overwhelmed with the support that she received through attending trainings and being exposed to different markets and the potential she reached by having a large customer base not only in Arandis but managed to expand with branches in the north of the country, she said that she invests some of the income into adding value to her products as well butting bread on the table for her siblings.

3. Emma Naoxas: Managing Director and owner of Uibasen Services

She has a workforce of 150 plus employees under her cleaning company, the road to success was not an easy one because as a women she had to work double to secure tenders from within the mining sector which had no room for women entrepreneurs, but she always believed that with determination she will overcome the stereo types and today most of the male entrepreneurs are consulting her for advise with certain if not all business related principles.

It is thus very important that council has created a viable business environment that allows for government involvement to create the synergies that result in investors to have confidence to make smart partnership with local women entrepreneurs.

Challenges:



The road for women to penetrate the market was not that rosy they had problems with having space to operate their business's from but

because council had a vision of making sure that they



get preferential treatment, council made sure that funds were sourced to construct an Informal Market for the hawkers plus a trade centre for the Middle Class Entrepreneurs.

- From the above information we can conclude that ten years down the line the gap of women taking ownership has drastically increased and they have become employers of note, one can only congratulate the interventions that were introduced to take a serious look at noticing the contribution of women towards economic emancipation. Their overall contribution to drive the economy speaks volumes base on investors' confidence and private sector investment in our town.

Performance strengthening: Women have proven to break the ice when it comes to vigorously address bread and butter issues as compared to their male counterparts whom are more into taking up employments rather that engaging into self employment initiatives, hence council will strongly look at empowering women to have self confidence and take up income generating projects, so that we drive away poverty, unemployment and not depend on their husbands or boyfriends for their survival.



