

## Duma FM making inroads on gender equality



"I love news more than I love winning so good quality news is what I aspire for" ~ station manager, Duma FM

Georgina Gopoto is an administrator at Duma FM, who has since ventured into becoming a weekend presenter thanks to the Gender Links' (GL) training that she received that made her gain the confidence to believe that she can. She was one of the few people from the station who attended the training.

<b>COUNTRY</b>	<b>BOTSWANA</b>
<b>MEDIA HOUSE</b>	<b>DUMA FM</b>
Baseline score	57%
Latest score	60%
Audience	Management not sure
Key characteristics	Commercial radio station, Gaining popularity, Target audience – 25 – 49 years Broadcast in two languages – Tswana and English.
Contact person	Kealeboga Dihutso
Designation	Programmes Manager
Contact details	

According to Gopoto, she has always had a knack for presenting, but did not think she would go for it. At the GL training, she experienced a light bulb moment when she realised that there are few women on air. This challenged her, and she felt that she should make her voice count by going on air herself!

"So I put in a proposal that I would like to be on air, and because of that, it was taken into consideration. I started training at night, doing the graveyard show in preparation for this show. I did it every

Thursday night at 10 o'clock at night in 2011, and in 2012 I got the show I am doing now in a prime slot during the weekend.

These are some of the changes that Duma has experienced as one of the radio stations that is part of the Centres of Excellence for gender mainstreaming. It has shown improvement over the past year. The verification score improved from 57% to 60% in terms of progress on achieving some of the minimum standards required for a media house to be a model Centre of Excellence.

Duma FM is a family commercial radio station whose primary objective is to INFORM, EDUCATE AND EDUCATE! According to the station, this allows them to bring together people from all walks of life through conversation and music. They broadcast in two official languages: English and Setswana.

Duma signed a memorandum of understanding with Gender Links (MOU) in August 2011 as a sign of commitment to the COE process. It is against this background that the COE process is relevant, as it will enable the station to ensure that as they inform and educate, all their messages in various forms are gender aware, and that through the station, audiences will become gender aware through education and information from Duma FM.

Duma is one of the few stations that explicitly disaggregates their target audience. While they produce programmes for everyone, their target audience is aged between 25 to 49,

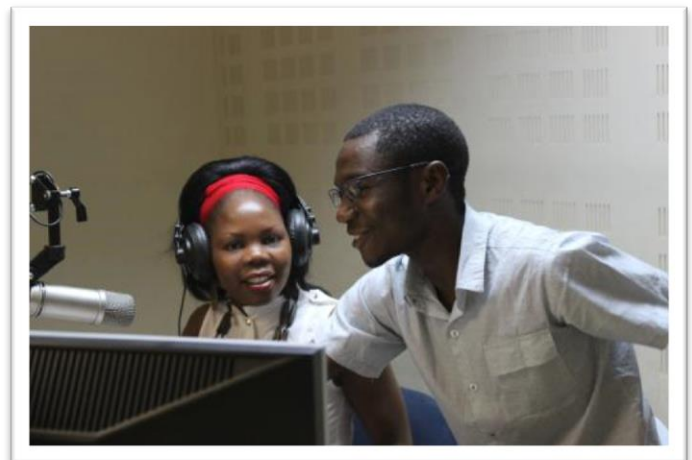
and they are an adult contemporary radio station. Duma FM broadcasts in major cities and towns around Botswana.

The station's programme manager, Kealeboga Dihutso explained that when the COE process was introduced management was conservative, but they have now bought into the idea of mainstreaming gender in the editorial content as well as in the workplace.

Dihutso has observed that the COE process has made a difference to Duma FM. "It has helped to focus. What we aspired for was in terms of achieving gender balance in the workplace or in the content produced was based on a gut feeling, but this provided a concrete plan to make things happen. We already had an obsession that women should be included in the news".

He added that the framework has helped to move implementation - at least in terms of what needs to be done to mainstream gender. For example, Duma would want to increase women's representation, currently sitting at a mere 7% according to Gender and Media Progress Study of 2010. But there are no set targets so the draft gender policy with the 30% target will help provide direction.

Gender is not yet a beat, but there is a tradition of rotating journalists to cover all forms of stories regardless of their sex. It is through their rotation exercise that they encourage women to explore other avenues. However, the Programmes Manager has ensured that at least once a week there is a programme, which covers issues of gender.



Georgina Gopoto, takes turns to demonstrate what she does on her weekly radio programme to GL verification team – Left Loveness Jambaya Nyakujarah, GL Alliance Manager and right Albert Ngosa, GL audio and visual officer.

"The training I received from Gender Links is all about change; my show is more focused on reflections on the society we live in every day. While it is a spiritual show, GL has influenced my programming", says Gopoto.

She added "There are many issues that I addressed last year, remember I spoke about abuse and I try to make sure that my show is balanced. If I have to interview someone in the studio I make sure it is always a man and a woman and not just two men or two women so that I can hear from both sexes".

She also started working with issues of HIV and AIDS as well as of single mothers and she relates from experience because she is a single mother herself. Other issues are around raising kids, gender based violence especially during the Sixteen Days campaign last year. She focused on this in December where she was looking at it from the perspective of church because I was invited by the Botswana Council of Churches (BCC) and they were launching a campaign about the story of Damaras (sic).

Gopoto says she has received a good response. For example, many women didn't know there are shelters which you can go when you are abused and the government provides help.

"I am also now more involved in many things that are happening in the society especially when it comes to issues of changing the lives of women. We are launching a women empowerment project, which involves many people starting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March. I was called to join simply because of the show".

The show has opened many other opportunities for her.

The institution sees to it that all women are multitasking and improving all the time. One of the ladies is not only a news presenter, but also now into graphic designing and is in the middle of designing the Duma FM website.

When it comes to the workplace practice, the recruitment panel is not gender balanced, because the management structure also has no equal representation of women and men.

One of the key challenges for the young station which became operational in 2007 is that there is a high turnover, as journalists obtain more opportunities at bigger media houses as well as in neighbouring South Africa. This then means any gains that would have been made through training will be lost.

Duma FM offers maternity leave and conforms to the national law that requires that pregnant women get 90 days paid leave. There is no paternity leave in the employment conditions and this is one area that the draft gender policy will be able to change. Sexual harassment is mentioned in the code of conduct, but the way it is phrased does not necessarily ensure that management and board to deal with the issue effectively.

When it comes to ensuring that coverage of key national policy issues are covered from a gender perspective, this has not been considered. The government structure being predominantly male as well as key decision making positions in public and private sector make it difficult to balance female and male sources on specific topics.

Qualitatively, Dihutso ensures that all productions carry gender sensitive language, and also designs programmes which challenge stereotypes. For example, there is a morning show hosted by a woman presenter on how discusses how to fix cars. Sexist adverts are never accepted, and there is no compromise. For example, they refused to take up an advert on "rocky condoms" which they thought denigrated women.

Most of the work that Dihutso has taken up on the COE work has been voluntary, and they hope management will include this in their performance agreement so that there is remuneration related to the additional duties.

The challenge is that there is a gender policy that all the media houses of Botswana have agreed to, and hope that this will be printed and adopted soon so that it sets the standards for mainstreaming gender equality. Gender Links assisted with the process. The station will take a cue from this and adopt it internally for their own standards.