

## Sunday Standard

### Watching the watchdog.



"We promise to stay awake to the dangers of discrimination against women; and any such discrimination being furthered by the media"

Sunday Standard News paper Editorial team. [http://gemcommunity.genderlinks.org.za/gallery/main.php?g2\\_itemId=33721](http://gemcommunity.genderlinks.org.za/gallery/main.php?g2_itemId=33721)

#### Fact box

<b>COUNTRY</b>	Botswana
<b>MEDIA HOUSE</b>	Sunday standered
Baseline score	54
Latest score	41
Population/audience	Country wide.
Key characteristics	Weekly Human interest newspaper
Contact person	Kali Muluzi
Designation	News Editor
Contact details	<b>Sunday Standard</b> Postnet Kgale View Private bag 351, Suite 287, Gaborone Tel: +267 31 88 784 Fax: +267 31 88 795

The Sunday Standard is a weekly newspaper that is published in English. The newspaper's media focus is on general interest stories. Its ownership falls under the monopoly associated

media group Dikgang Publishers. The media house, under its editorial policy, has committed itself to strive to cover national policy issues, development and economic issues, gender issues and environmental issues. It also seeks to fearlessly give every Motswana an opportunity to use the newspaper as a platform through which they can advance ideas, opinions and aspirations.

The Newspaper's Editorial Policy is based on strict principles of fairness, accuracy, independence, integrity and balanced reporting. While maintaining an independent Editorial Policy, Sunday Standard does not publish articles, pictures, items or any such excerpts that undermine the country's culture of tolerance, mutual existence and discrimination based on either sex or race.

The Sunday Standard is a member of the Botswana Press Council, and fully subscribes to the country's Media Code of Ethics. The Chief Custodian of the Sunday Standard Editorial Policy is the Editor of the Newspaper. Key among the objectives of the Editorial Policy of the Sunday Standard is to contribute towards an open and democratic Botswana in which government is based on the will of the people.

Sunday Standard and Gender Links signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in August 2011 to work together in promoting greater voice and access for women to the mainstream media. The media house is now one of the seven Centres of Excellence which Gender links is working with in Botswana. Sunday Standard has so far completed the first four stages of the centres of excellence process and has drafted a gender policy waiting to be adopted.

The media house is aware of the interests of the country's vulnerable groups such as women, and has come a long way in reflecting the daily struggles of women, such as including poverty and gender based violence. In other words, the paper has been quite sensitive in publishing stories that are likely to further marginalise or entrench the status of such groups.

Since the signing of the MOU in Gender mainstreaming with Gender Links, the newspaper has put in place policies of ethical checks and counter checks to ensure that the newspaper's editorial staff lives up to the promises and principles made in their editorial code, which has been aligned to the draft gender action plan. Sunday Standard does not accept gifts, favours, special treatment or privileges that could compromise their integrity and independence. The paper does not allow sexist advertising, commercial or political considerations which may influence their editorial decisions.

The media house has performed poorly in trying to represent the views of men and women equally. So far, most of the stories being run are single sourced. The newspaper has however made it mandatory to seek balance by presenting all sides of the story, and this has been included in their editorial policy. The different effect of policies on women and men are now being explored in all topics. However, achieving this in a single story article may not always been possible, therefore the newspaper ensures that follow ups are made within a reasonable time.

Gender is not yet considered a beat, but the newspaper ensures that the topic is covered extensively. At the moment, Gender stories are covered by a male reporter, Tsaone Segathso.

This is a deliberate move made to ensure that women cover other topics, such as economics and politics.

The newspaper has put in place a team that is responsible for coordinating, monitoring and evaluating gender mainstreaming. The team is headed by the News Editor Kali Muluzi and Ruth kedikilwe.

One major challenge identified by the media house in trying to mainstream gender, is that of limited financial resources. The Standard has not carried out any recruitment since 2012. Conducting specific gender programmes has been a difficult owing to the same.

Having low female representation in the board and management has also been a setback in that decisions being made are not in the best interests of women. There has been good will however from the management regarding the gender mainstreaming process. And the media house is optimistic that management will increase women's representation within the media house.

"We promise to stay awake to the dangers of discrimination; and such discrimination being furthered by the media. We therefore shall do everything to avoid promoting discrimination on the basis of gender, race, language, culture, political persuasion, class, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, marital status or disability."