


# Botswana Editors meet to discuss Gender issues

## Objectives



- To discuss the ethical requirements for gender-fair newsroom management
- To gain an understanding of the gender dimensions of newsroom and leadership

NEWSROOM LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT: Powerpoint Presentation

## OBJECTIVES

### Botswana Media Gender Policy Booklet

- To discuss final Botswana Media Gender Policy
- To adopt the policy
- To sign the Statement of Commitment

**A MEETING** was convened for editors and media owners to discuss the final Botswana Media Gender policy.

A presentation on Newsroom Management and Leadership was made which was interactive and editors all participated. They expressed that the breakfast meeting was long overdue and a good forum for editors to meet and discuss issues.

They shared that since their media houses signed the Memorandum of Understanding with Gender Links they have been sensitized about gender issues.

Beata Kasale-Kabango shared that media personnel really migrated. For instance some of the task

force members that initially crafted the Policy had moved somewhere else. However, whoever took part in the Policy was given credit.

She shared: "This policy was done by media houses, and when I read it I felt quite proud of all of you. The Gender Policy is something that we all did together; we had a Memorandum of Understanding signed with the seven Centres of Excellency being; Echo, Mmegi/Monitor. The Voice, Duma FM, Ya Rona fm, Gabzfm and Sunday Standard/The Telegraph.

This was a very long journey and I am proud to say that the Task Force members came up with a very good policy and apparently I am told Gender Links Head Office love it.

"It has now come to a finale and from all the meetings we have had we have come up with a final product that Printing and Publishing Company of Botswana has volunteered to print.

"I hope that we are going to put this Policy into effect. It should be incorporated in our Company Rules and Regulations and new staff members should be orientated about it. Most of the participating media houses have an HIV Policy which most people do not know about.

# Newsroom Management and Leadership



## Leadership



NEWSROOM LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT: Powerpoint Presentation

- Leadership – “guiding from the front”
- Providing the vision and example that others to follow
- Leadership involves some management skill

We have all these policies, we know they are there, but have we always forget about them after putting so much time and effort in crafting them.

The HIV&AIDS Workplace Policy and Code of Conduct will soon be coming out of the drawers as the Department of Labour and Home Affairs is visiting companies asking about HIV&AIDS workplace policies for employees.

Gender is also taking centre stage, because most countries are saying that it is high time gender is mainstreamed into institutions, governance and politics.

When we talk about gender we do not refer to women, but because there is a disparity in the newsrooms regarding women we shall always lean towards them, not that we are saying that women should hold positions of power simply because they are women.

The Voice has women in management positions, but this just happened and was never deliberately planned that way. But these women proved themselves to be in those positions.

I have heard people complaining about women and motherhood that is, taking care of children, taking them to see a doctor, having to stay at home when the Helper is absent etc, and the point is, we take it for granted that the woman is the one who should provide care for children. Where are the men?

On the other hand women should also find ways that enable them to cover stories at remote parts of the country without presenting a fragile personality. They should also strive to cover other beats as politics, business and sports.

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# Management



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Presentation

- “Taking charge or control”
- Bringing diverse strands together into one successful enterprise
- Management involves some leadership skill



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## Management

- “Taking charge or control”
- Bringing diverse strands together into one successful enterprise
- Management involves some leadership skill

## Gender Mainstreaming

- Leadership and management have a powerful gender dimension
- Consciously engaging with the gender dimension is an important part of learning to build, sustain and improve effective teams in the newsroom.
- New managers replicate the behaviours they find
- Transforming faces does not automatically transform attitudes

## Decision making

- Decision making does not always happen in formal meetings
- This is a natural creative process, neither good or bad
- Problems arise when informal decisions, outside a regular process are implemented without going through any process
- Also when formal decision making processes happen in places or time that preclude full attendance

## What is your attitude to Gender mainstreaming?

- To create a conducive working environment taking into consideration gender diversity (i.e. maternal leave, breast feeding, paternity leave etc)
- To engage women in hard beats
- Women in Leadership positions (through fair assessment)

## News content?

- News makers
- Content
- How are women and men portrayed
- Photographs
- Audio and visual
- Avoid stereotypes

## Sexual Harassment in the workplace

### What is sexual harassment?

- Is it an issue?
- ^s there an existing Policy?
- Unwelcome conduct
- Physical conduct
- Verbal conduct
- Victimization
- Sexual favouritism





**PRESENTING THE FINAL DRAFT OF THE POLICY:**  
Beata left with Kelefilwe Kasale taking notes of the proceedings

## WAY FORWARD

### The Nine Steps to a successful mainstreaming of Gender in the media house

**ONE:** Set goals or targets for the achievement of gender balance among media personnel

**TWO:** Establish policies and transparent procedures for recruitment, remuneration, promotion, etc etc

**THREE:** In view of the growing evidence that many women are dropping out of media professions conduct research to find out why

**FOUR:** Recognise the existence of negative gender-based attitudes and behaviours, including sexual harassment in the workplace, and create a gender-friendly work environment.

**FIVE:** Establish more flexible work schedules, not as a special concession to women

**SIX:** Provide management, negotiation and leadership training for women to help them succeed in media companies

**SEVEN:** Ensure diversity among media personnel through recruitment and training that addresses the specific needs of women

**EIGHT:** Foster gender-awareness among women and men in the media by conducting workshops and training.

**NINE:** Establish mentoring systems and other supportive strategies to enhance women's capabilities and potential for advancement in the media.

**Leadership** is guiding from the front providing vision. Leadership involves management skills.

Management and leadership are two different issues even though they are also one, it is a bit confusing just like gender because management is more like taking charge or control and you have to be leader in order to be a manager.

A woman in leadership should show others so as to have a gender dimension especially at the top because new managers replicate the leaders they find, you can transform the faces but that does not mean that everything is going to change.

# Comments from Editors



EDITORS: Mike Olivier left with Spencer Mogapi



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## **GABZ FM FORCE NEWSROOM EDITOR,**

**MIKE OLIVIER:** I think sometimes we tend to focus too much on gender like at the moment my boss says that there are too many women newsreaders but personally I don't count how many women or men we have it has to be on merit.

**THE VOICE EDITOR, EMANG BOKHUTLO:** Maybe his boss has a point because maybe some listeners would prefer to hear a male voice while others would like to hear a female voice so there has to a balance.

## **SUNDAY STANDARD/THE TELEGRAPH EDITOR,**

**SPENCER MOGAPI:** I think we should take it as a complement for Gabzfm that they have so many women doing the job.

## **Decision making**

**FACILITATOR:** Decision making does not necessarily have to happen in a formal environment, you can be sitting in a pub or somewhere and something very important comes up and decisions are made.

Problems arise when informal decisions reached outside are implemented without going through the usual processes. It is not a good or bad thing, it is just that the process should take place so even us women it is crucial that we should strive for merit and not let ourselves to be used.

There is a lot of talk about sexual harassment and I sometimes say that we need to be careful because there used to be a lot of talk about incest. It used to be such that almost every girl child claimed to have been molested by their fathers.

On the other hand in our culture, grandmothers used to touch children's private parts, sniff and feign a cough playfully. It was no big deal, but nowadays my mind is set that I cannot even think about doing that to my grandchild, because things have changed.

We should look at the aspect of where we are coming from and where we are going and when we look at gender and management it should not be something that we would divorce from reality.

We should still have our norms and improve them where we can. So if for example after five years we find that the positions of power at The Voice are held by men, we should not feel that there has been a change we should recognize that they may have gotten there by merit .

On the other hand let's give women more beats and more management positions and even as we come up with new policies let us not forget our own cultural matters.



It all depends on your own performance management as well, how you promote people, do you promote them because they are good performers or do you promote them because they are women, that is what we mean when we talk about 50/50 balance. This is crucial because when you promote people to leadership positions it means that they are going to be leaders so when they are not promoted they will never get a chance to be leaders.

**MOGAPI:** You know I am very passionate about the issue of gender and I still maintain that we need our women journalists to talk more about this issue in newsrooms, to sensitize others especially their counterparts about it so that it becomes a culture.

This is because we come from a background that is really male dominated and entrenched and it is only in shifts that we can talk about it casually, to just take a group of maybe three male journalists and tell them the importance of them being more sensitive when there are female journalists among them. To sensitize them about the language that they use when they are in the newsroom because sometimes they talk as if they are men only and it is not good and when they swear the women feel humiliated even when the swearing is not directed at them.

**FACILITATOR: Do they swear at women?**

**MOGAPI:** Yes, they use swearing words that relate to women and it is not right and there are people who are just comfortable with doing it.

**FACILITATOR:** I think that it depends on people as individuals because if you have that type of a person maybe very little can be done about it but as women we should also stand up and say no, because that kind of thing translates to verbal sexual harassment.

**FACILITATOR: Do they also direct swearing to other men?**

**MOGAPI:** It is not right even to do it to other men, because if they do it in the presence of a woman it presents a situation where the woman would question that type of behavior by men.

**FACILITATOR:** The other big thing regarding women is not think that 'I am a woman amongst men'. I always advise not to sleep with men for favours.

If you sleep with a politician with the aim of getting inside stories at parliament. The minute you sleep with him you become old news. You are used goods, you are finished and it is over, so don't do it even for getting a story.

We have to fight the misconception that women get to the top only when they sleep with men. We need to look after ourselves and not abuse our bodies.

**FACILITATOR:** For instance if women are not in decision making positions how are they even going to think about introducing paternity leave? The responsibility of taking care of children always solely fall on women but ironically it is men who make decisions on laws regarding maternity issues, so they may not readily pass laws concerning paternity leave because they may not want to be stuck in that situation of changing nappies.

**OLIVIER:** We have paternity leave at Gabzfm, and we allow the guys when the time comes to take some time off.

**YARONA FM NEWS EDITOR BOINEELO HARDY:** At Yarona fm paternity leave is about one week or something like that according to Labour laws and is far from being enough.

**OLIVIER:** Paternity leave at our workplace is two months on full pay and this was brought about by staff members.

**MOGAPI:** We are always sensitive to the imbalances in the newsroom especially since Ruth came in because our newsroom has always been almost exclusively male and the guys were quite relaxed about it but since Ruth came in there has been some changes and they are now more sensitive.

**FACILITATOR:** Impressive. I think there should be that sensitivity that if we don't bring women aboard a lot is going to be lost.

I always mention that when elections come up male politician befriend a lot of women who campaign for them but it is very difficult and rare for women to campaign for other women and we have to remove that and the only way to do it is to have women in leadership, they have guide from the front.





EDITOR: Boineelo Hardy makes a point



On the other hand women should prove themselves to be capable because most of the time women go on leave, they become ill, etc.

**SUNDAY STANDARD/THE TELEGRAPH, Ruth KEDIKILWE:** Sensitizing men in positions of power about these issues would also help because maybe we sometimes assume the worst of them but if they are aware of the issues they would be in a better position to address them.

**MOGAPI:** May I say something, especially about women journalists you know they need to be more assertive, they should be able stand up to the politicians that they interview.

Personally I get really sad when I see a woman journalist just giving in to a politician and allowing him to take them for a ride in one way or the other. Honestly it's a cultural issue that started many years ago especially with the coming in of BTV when there was a congregation of women journalists and ministers were having a field day at the newsroom at BTV.

We need women who can really stand their ground in the media, as journalists, that is very important because if women journalists are not able to stand

their ground, other women will take them for granted and not respect them

**HARDY:** I agree with that because I have seen the same thing happen in my days when I used to do Miss Ed and had to interview ministers. For instance after the interview it would be the issue of, 'so, can we catch a coffee, can we catch tea, ga kere its nothing' and when I get these calls I would feel that they do not take my works seriously or me seriously because I'm a woman and they know that eventually I'll give in or something. And it is the manner in which it is said that would make me feel like it has already been laid down, it has been set that women are not serious, when a woman interviews you it is not a serious thing.

**MOGAPI:** They should not use our women journalists as toys like they do in the advertising campaigns, and that is basically what politicians do when they see a nice beautiful young girl coming to interview them. They are already thinking beyond the interview and then as the journalist becomes closer to the politician that undermines her profession. I always call for a detachment between journalism and socializing.

**BOKHUTLO:** But women also ask men interviewees for coffee etc...



**MOGAPI:** It is very important as a woman journalist especially one in the leadership position to should show the younger ones that it is very important to be assertive.

**FACILITATOR:** I like this debate because if you look at the policy, sexual harassment code of conduct is the longest topic as it occupies three pages of the overall report and it is an issue that really needs to be addressed. Some people say that even in the media houses some women say that they get victimized for not sleeping with the boss.

**HARDY:** Women have that hurdle to deal with which male journalists don't necessarily have. And just to add on to this, it is just that you find that people have a certain perspective about women, that if a woman is given a certain position based on their merit it now becomes an issue of 'who is she sleeping with' and that is something that is really hard to swallow or even escape but it is up to us to ensure that people understand that women can perform based on their own merit.

**FACILITATOR:** We must sensitize women not 'sleep their way up the ladder' but we should not drive it too much because then we will always conclude that a woman was using 'thigh power' to gain positions of power.

**HARDY:** I think we should raise it like that but people have to know that it doesn't necessarily have to be an issue of 'I'm sexually attached to whoever it is in that position'.

**BOKHUTLO** But if you are sexually attached to those people what can you do about it?

**KEDIKILWE:** But it could be a coincidence that I am a capable woman who is also sexually attached to this senior person.

**HARDY:** Don't you think that it is not fair that when a woman goes up the corporate ladder it is interpreted that it is the issue of having slept her way up?

**OLIVIER:** What kind of ethics do you have at the workplace? Do you allow men or colleagues to be sleeping together or what?

**GENDER LINKS BOTSWANA PROGRAMME OFFICER, ROOS VAN DORP:** I think it is a very interesting discussion, and I think that it shows that as women we are our own worst enemies.

**FACILITATOR:** Women, yes they are sometimes their own enemies. It is a matter of priorities. And yes, we have a long way to go.





ADVERTISING AND EDITORIAL MEET: Tebogo Kethamile from the Voice advertising with Ruth Kedikilwe head of news (Sunday Standard)



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### Maternity leave –

Some bosses are skeptical about women and pregnancy. But when you are a Boss and fall pregnant work until due date and take your maternity leave after the baby is born so that you can spend three months with the child. That is if you are not sick. These are the things you should talk and also write about, you should also talk and write about leadership positions, paternity as well as content.

It is quite important to engage women in hard beats, and also to promote them because they do very well as leaders and we also have to look at who make the newsmakers. I like the fact that there is so much passion about gender issues because when we started in 2009, people did not talk, they did not want to discuss women issues per se.

**OLIVIER:** I have a serious problem regarding content in women magazines I can't remember the names but they speak about celebrities, about fashion and beauty and what have you but there are no articles about positive women.

**KEDIKILWE:** The thing is you probably just skim through magazines, I subscribe for Cosmopolitan and it's got articles about women managing businesses, it's got features about women who come from nothing and it's got loads of motivational stuff.

**OLIVIER:** But even then if you wanted to find what happened with the Zimbabwean voting you go to a male political analyst you don't go ask a Zimbabwean woman what happened.

**HARDY:** Just take your recorder and go out into the streets to talk to people, men will talk to you but a lot of women will just say 'no comment'.

**KEDIKILWE:** Also, the fact that a lot of women are not in positions of power also hinders women's voices because you get to talk to a regular party follower and they will say 'I am not the official spokesperson', and then you will end up ultimately having a man's voice.

**FACILITATOR:** We have to acknowledge that as media the knock we are taking from social media is huge, I mean the distribution figures are low, everybody have dropped very low and maybe we should work on the audience survey, it is very crucial because that's when we can find out about women and how to interview them as well.

**Is there a need to strike a balance in gender in the news, or do you think it does not matter therefore the more the merrier?**

**HARDY:** I am a bit of both because as much as I would like to strike some form of balance it should all be on merit, really on somebody's ability.

**FACILITATOR:** But before we get there we need to have the women first, because at the moment they are not there.

**BOKHUTLO:** Besides you need different perspectives from a male perspective so there is a serious need to have a balance because you need both perspectives besides I can't think like a man so we do need both perspectives.

EDITOR: Tshireletso  
Motlogelwa (Mmegi)



**FACILITATOR:** This issue is no longer about boMmant-sabana and boBeata, it is a situation that needs to be addressed

Our youth should know that they can actually be up there without fearing that 'I might be thought to have slept with a boss to get here'. These things are so old fashioned and I don't even know why they should go to people's minds just as I referred to earlier on. But also it is us the media the way we portray women even when they talk about these issues saying look, the youth must know that we do not get into these positions by sleeping with men.

**MMEGI EDITOR TSHIRELETSO MOTLOGELWA:**

There is a question that is always asked and that is, 'whether it might be that the issue of merit supersedes everything because it might be that if you are considering other dynamics, you might say it is on merit but also because we have set ourselves these roles so we then try to balance them looking at the other roles. For example there is a young woman reporter on our UB program who writes for us and she has this idea that she cannot write for the Friday edition. When I ask her why she does not do it she says it's because it is not for

people like her. I asked what she meant by that and she explained that she was of the view that it takes a long time to find information for the Friday edition and that it is also complicated.

So I was thinking that this is a smart lady but I can see that she has a certain point of view that is made up of certain experiences of what she was going through, whether we were assigning boys more but something has developed in her that tells her that there are certain editions or even certain desks that she can write for and that she cannot write for investigations or analysis or something like that. But you can tell that she could write it if she could put her mind around it so that is why you could also say that we are products of our own experiences.

So I think it is very important for us to also think about how we can support someone like that because it is important to have people like her writing about these issues because men certainly have a certain interest, a certain direction and a certain point of view and we need people like that to write these pieces.

I think the issue of merit for me has to be a part of a



EDITORS: Tsaone Basimanebotlhe, Echo (left) with Kealeboga Dihutso from Duma Fm



general calculus of sorts that you add to the pot to say 'okay there are other considerations alongside merit'.

Facilitator: I think you are talking more about mentoring. From what you say if we have such a lady who says 'that is not for me' but you realize that she is smart and has a command of good English and that she is a journalist in the making then you need to find a mentor for her possibly a woman mentor. Ask her to shadow the mentor for a day to find out how she became a woman editor. It is important that people should grow and this is where the issue of merit comes in because we want to see women doing politics, business etc.

**FACILITATOR: Women don't last in newsrooms they drop off, why is that?**

**BOKHUTLO:** I think deadlines are hectic especially when you are raising children so at least a woman can drop off then come back to the newsroom after some-time because your children need you, your family need you and you need to create a balance at least find a job that is more routine.

**HARDY:** I want to add that what has just been said makes sense because it basically means is that really for women in media and in the newsroom there is this limitation that will always put us at a lower performing level. We have had the same argument in sport that at some point in their careers women have to quit because of other commitments while a man will continue even if he has children

Facilitator: The reality of what we are saying is that these are part of the challenges that we face and that is why we need to conduct a research to find out why and how we can enhance our work because you should not think that we are talking only about women in media.

We are also talking about women in different professions and it does not mean that they have twenty four hours with their children they also work long hours if you take the example of banks. So I think it is more about flexi hours and that is what we should be looking into as women.

So when you fall pregnant sit down with your boss talk about it, go an extra mile as well to show what you can do, have internet at home, file your stuff in time if you are a journalist and if you do that, personally I would not mind if I don't see your face as long as the stories are there.

**KEDIKILWE:** I believe that in any profession the more responsibility you get the tougher it will become so it is a matter of prioritizing. There was a time when I used to knock off at five o'clock and then I got more responsibility which meant staying later than I usually would so it is just a matter of choice and how you handle your priorities at your workplace to come up with a workable solution whether you are a bank, private sector or public sector as you go up it becomes tougher.



EDITOR: Kealeboga  
emphasizing a point



**FACILITATOR:** These are important deliberations and we are all learning and this is why I like these types of meetings because it never occurred to me that the reason for women dropping off work in the media is because of the issue having babies, because since I had children when I was young they lost out on spending time with me unlike at present as people are having children when they are older and want to give them quality time which is what I really prefer.

**DUMA FM NEWS EDITOR, KEALEBOGA DIHUTSO:** I am curious and it is not that I want to talk about flexi hours but in the set up like Botswana where you need to make peace because a lot of us have a very cultural approach to most things for instance, Duma fm is a perfect example.

I want to step down as editor and the most automatic person to take after from me is a woman who guess what, happens to be pregnant now.

I want to step down around November and that is the time she will be leaving. All this time she works twelve hours a day and sometimes files stories from home but when you try to talk to management that one, you want to put her on half salary and two, she can actually do

the job it becomes a bit of a challenge because they still insist that people should sign in at eight o'clock when they come to work and at five o'clock when they knock off despite the fact that she files stories at eight o'clock at night. But how do you get through to management in a situation like this?

**FACILITATOR:** It is a tough one. Personally I like flexi hours and I have seen it work, but here it depends because if you tell me that you are doing flexi hours and there is nothing to show for it, I would not agree but if someone is delivering on that I won't have a problem.

**OLIVIER:** It is all about delivery and productivity. The problem is we don't have that culture that when you have finished your work you are done for the day and free to go.

**FACILITATOR:** We have to look into mentoring and coaching. It is important for upcoming leaders to be directed and assisted in their career roadmaps.

With new media and other challenges facing media today, there is need for innovation, and there is a need to give women a chance to balance the playing field in the industry.

LISTENING  
ATTENTIVELY:  
Roos van Dorp  
from Gender Links



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**Your last words:**

- Motivational and inspirational
- We need more interactions
- Reduce contempt
- Press clubs – press council
- Editors forums
- Thought provoking
- In depth reporting - ability to do the job
- Overhaul media
- Women advancement
- Flexi hours



# Participation list

**GENDER LINKS BREAKFAST MEETING PARTICIPANTS LIST**

Name	Sex M/F	Organisation	Designation	Phone	Email
Onalenna Selwe	M	The Voice		7227 5110	<a href="mailto:leonza84@yahoo.com">leonza84@yahoo.com</a>
Mike Olivier	M	Gabz FM		7604 2273	<a href="mailto:mike@gabzfm.co.bw">mike@gabzfm.co.bw</a>
Ruth Kedikilwe	F	Sunday Standard	Section Head	7247 3368	<a href="mailto:rbkedikilwe@gmail.com">rbkedikilwe@gmail.com</a>
Tebogo Kethamile	F	The Voice		3161 5851/7223 4851	<a href="mailto:teboqo@thevoicebw.com">teboqo@thevoicebw.com</a>
Tsaone Basimanebotho	F	Echo	Reporter	390 3222/7264 2305	<a href="mailto:btsaone@yahoo.com">btsaone@yahoo.com</a>
Emang Bokhutlo	F	The Voice	Editor	7447 5884	<a href="mailto:emang@thevoicebw.com">emang@thevoicebw.com</a>
Boineelo Hardy	F	Yarona FM	News Editor	391 2305/72750589	<a href="mailto:boineelo@yaronafm.co.bw">boineelo@yaronafm.co.bw</a>
Spencer Mogapi	M	The Telegraph	Editor	7211 0101	<a href="mailto:spencer@thetelegraph.co.bw">spencer@thetelegraph.co.bw</a>
Tshireletso Motogelwa	M	Mmegi	Editor	7130 4484	<a href="mailto:motogelwa@mmeqi.bw">motogelwa@mmeqi.bw</a>
Kealeboga R Dihutso	M	Duma FM	Editor	7418 8984	<a href="mailto:rdihutso@gmail.com">rdihutso@gmail.com</a>
Roos van Dorp	F	Gender Links	Programme Officer	318 8250	<a href="mailto:progbotswana@genderlinks.org.za">progbotswana@genderlinks.org.za</a>
Beata Kasale	F	GL Consultant		7130 6944/7230 6444	<a href="mailto:beatak@thevoicebw.com">beatak@thevoicebw.com</a>
Kelly Kasale	F	Inhouse Creations	Logistics Officer	7122 1318	<a href="mailto:kelly.kasale@gmail.com">kelly.kasale@gmail.com</a>
Alfred Busang	M	Duma FM	Station Manager	7446 3729	<a href="mailto:busangalfred@yahoo.com">busangalfred@yahoo.com</a>
Godfrey Ganetsang	M	Echo	Editor	3903222	<a href="mailto:gsganetsang@hotmail.com">gsganetsang@hotmail.com</a>