
Giant
footprints
gender links
for equality
and justice

VISION AND MISSION

GENDER LINKS FOR EQUALITY AND JUSTICE

VISION

GL is committed to a region in which women and men are able to participate equally in all aspects of public and private life in accordance with the provisions of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Gender and Development.

MISSION

GL achieves its vision by coordinating the work of the Southern African Gender Protocol Alliance formed around the sub-regional instrument that brings together all key African and global commitments for achieving gender equality. The annual barometer produced by the Alliance measures progress by governments against the 28 targets for the attainment of gender equality by 2015. GL has integrated these targets into its three core, closely linked programme areas: the media, governance and gender justice. Working with partners at local, national, regional and international level, GL aims to:

- Promote gender equality in and through the media and in all areas of governance.
- Develop policies and conduct effective campaigns for ending gender violence, HIV and AIDS.
- Build the capacity of women and men to engage critically in democratic processes that advance equality and justice.

This mission is achieved by:

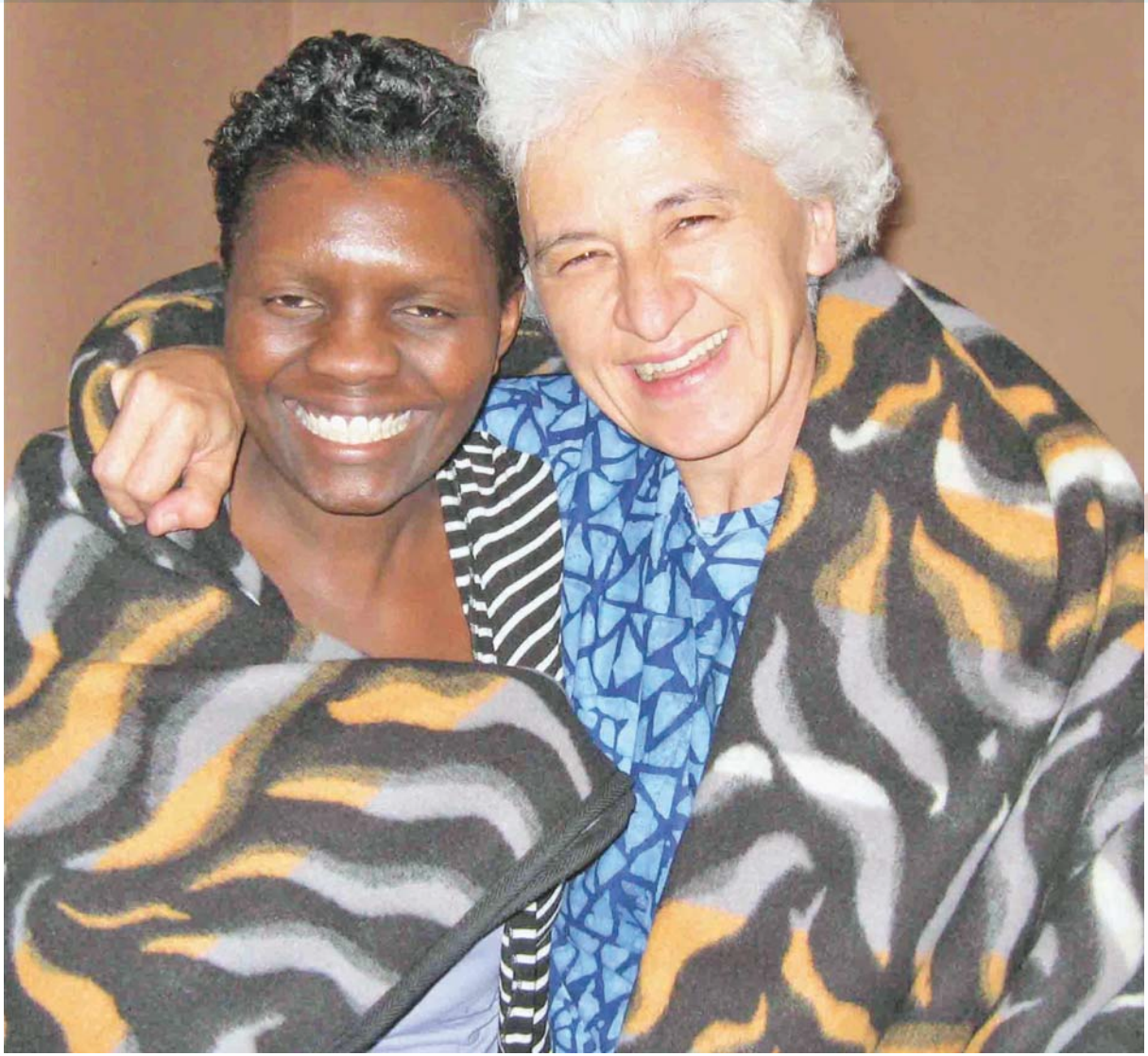
- Identifying gender gaps in our areas of work.
- Conducting research.
- Focusing on key strategic issues.
- Running pilot projects with a view to cascading these across the region by working with a broad range of partners.
- Developing training and advocacy materials in a collaborative way.
- Building regional, national and local capacity and action plans.
- Creating synergies to sustain the work.
- Responding to requests for assistance through the advisory services portfolio.
- Monitoring and evaluating progress using appropriate regional and international instruments.

Gender Links (GL) is a Southern African NGO that is committed to a region in which women and men are able to participate equally in all aspects of public and private life in accordance with the provisions of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Gender and Development.

Giant Footprints: GL @ TEN
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ISBN 978-0-9869880-8-0

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Mpho Mankimane with GL founder and Executive Director, Colleen Lowe Morna. *Photo: Mukayi Makaya-Magarangoma*

GIANT FOOTPRINTS: GL @ TEN

In our first organisational evaluation at age five, a partner referred to GL as "a small organisation with large footprints." When we commissioned Angel Films to put together an institutional video three years later, the team that visited six Southern African countries tracing our work entitled the video: *Giant Footprints*, the title we have borrowed for this book.

Giant Footprints, GL's "I" Story and herstory, is dedicated to the over 50,000 people who have worked within and with Gender Links over the last decade, sharing our dream of a Southern Africa in which women and men are able to realise their full potential in both their private and public lives.

"Growing up knowing my 'place' as an African woman, I never believed in equal rights until I started walking alongside Gender Links' Giant Footprints. I must say I have really undergone personal conviction of who I am within society and in my culture. Gender Links has helped me to fine tune my research abilities and gender training skills. Most importantly, Gender Links has changed my views on how women and men, girls and boys should co-exist."

- Mpho Mankimane, GL Lesotho Local Government Country Facilitator

The writing and editing team



Colleen Lowe Morna is executive director of GL. She began her career as a journalist specialising in economic and development reporting. Among positions she held were coordinator of the Africa office of Inter Press Service in Harare; correspondent for South Magazine and Africa Editor of the New Delhi-based Women's Feature Service. She joined the Commonwealth Secretariat as a senior researcher on the Africa desk in 1991, and later served as Chief Programme Officer of the Commonwealth Observer Mission to South Africa. She subsequently served as founding CEO of the South African Commission on Gender Equality (CGE). A trainer, researcher and writer, Colleen has written extensively on gender issues in Southern Africa. She holds a BA degree in International Relations from Princeton University; Masters in Journalism from Columbia University and certificate in executive management from the London Business School.



Kubi Rama is Deputy Director and Director of Programmes at GL. Prior to joining GL, Kubi served at the Department of Journalism (Durban Institute of Technology) as a senior lecturer. A critical part of her work involved restructuring the journalism curriculum, including the mainstreaming of gender as part of the curriculum. Past work experience includes coordinating the Durban Media Training Forum, marketing manager of the Career Information Centre and the chairperson of the regional South African Health Workers Congress. At these NGOs Kubi trained, developed materials for adult learners and managed organisational activities. She holds an honours degree in Cultural and Media Studies and a Bachelors degree in law, both from the former University of Natal.



Danny Glenwright joined GL in July 2010 and is the Communication Manager and editor of the GL Opinion and Commentary Service. He has a background in human rights journalism and media training, and a Masters in International Cooperation and Development from Italy's University of Pavia. Danny previously spent time in Southern Africa as a human rights trainer at the Media Institute of Southern Africa's Regional Secretariat in Namibia. He has also worked as a media trainer and human rights campaigner for Journalists for Human Rights in Sierra Leone and for UNAIS in the occupied Palestinian territories. His writing has been featured in guidebooks, international magazines and newspapers.



Mona Hakimi is a recent graduate who is finding her place in the working world as a feminist activist. She first worked with Gender Links in 2009 when she contributed to the eighth issue of the Gender and Media Diversity Journal, *Gender and Soccer 2010*. In December 2010, Mona joined GL as the Communications Officer. She has a Bachelor of Social Science in Social Anthropology and Gender Studies and an Honours in Social Anthropology, both from the University of Cape Town.



Hunadi Ralebipi is Communications Intern at Gender Links. She completed her degree in Communications Studies at the University of Limpopo in 2010. At university, Hunadi was part of the Debate Society, the English Society and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of South Africa Student Organisation. In 2009 she took part in the Future Journalist Programme initiated by Highway Africa. In 2010 she worked for the Host Broadcasting Service during the FIFA World Cup. Gender Links is an eye-opener for her; a reality check that there is gender inequality and that change begins with her. Hunadi continues to learn the importance of women in society and is willing to be a part of the change for a better world.



Mercilene Machisa is the Gender Violence Indicators project manager and data

analyst at GL. Prior to joining Gender Links, Mercilene worked for the National Institute of Health Research in Zimbabwe as a Medical Research Officer. She has considerable research experience with a bias towards public health. She holds a BSC (Hons) degree in Biological Sciences from the Midlands State University and is currently studying towards an MSc (Med) in Epidemiology and Biostatistics degree with the University of Witwatersrand.



Shau Mudekunye was the Monitoring and Evaluation intern who conducted the Beneficiary Analysis that forms the backbone of this book. She has just been appointed GL Gender and Governance Programme Officer. Her main interests are the economic, physical and psychosocial empowerment of women in Africa. Before GL, Shau conducted research on women who have sex with women and the implications for HIV and AIDS, as well as issues of labour migration and the on the ground effect on women. Shau currently holds an Honours in Gender Studies and a Bachelor of Political Science in International Studies, both from the University of Pretoria. Her next step is to complete her LLB and to undertake a Masters degree.



Vivien Bakainaga is the Human Resource and Asset Manager at GL. Before joining GL in 2009, Vivien worked for Women's Feature Service on a part time basis. Her work experience spans over 15 years in administration including in international institutions like the Commonwealth Secretariat, UN and USAID. She also served as an Administrative Officer with the South African CGE. Vivien has a Diploma in Business Management, Project Management and is completing her BBA with UNISA.



Thato Phakela is a 21 year old Mosotho woman, born and bred in Lesotho. She studied Mass Communication at the National University of Lesotho at the Institution of Extra Mural Studies (IEMS). Thato has always had a passion for media, because of its potential positive impact on society. She ventured into media at a tender age of 17 as a continuity presenter at Lesotho Television. It is only since she joined GL as an intern in 2011 that she now wears a gender lens everywhere she goes.



Mukayi Makaya joined GL in late 2008. She manages the Southern Africa Gender Protocol Alliance and Partnerships Programme. She holds a BBA (Marketing) degree from the Institute of Marketing Management and is currently studying towards an Honours in Communication Science with the University of South Africa. Prior to joining GL, Mukayi worked for the Southern African Research and Documentation Centre (SARDC) in Zimbabwe for over five years as Marketing and Communications Coordinator. Her career began in 1997 in the private sector, working in the travel and tourism industry, before moving to the fast moving consumer goods (FMCGs) industry. Her areas of interest include counselling and support to victims of gender-based violence as well as empowerment of women and the girl child. Her hobbies include walking, travelling, reading, singing and dancing.



Lindiwe Makhunga joined GL in January 2011 as the Southern Africa Gender Protocol Alliance Programme Officer. She has a firm commitment to gender justice on the African continent and addressing the intersection between poverty, violence and gender inequality through intellectual advocacy. She currently holds a Master of Arts in Gender and Development from the Institute of Development Studies, Sussex University. She completed her undergraduate degree in Political Science at Wits University and has been working in the area of gender-based violence since early 2008 as a researcher and activist. Her specific interests are violence against women in post-conflict settings, gender justice in Sub-Saharan Africa, masculinities and gender-based violence.



Sikhonzile Ndlovu is the Media Programme Manager at Gender Links. Since joining GL in 2007,

she has participated in a number of media research, advocacy, policy and training initiatives. She has coordinated and compiled reports for *Gender and Advertising in Southern Africa* (2007), *Gender and Tabloids in Southern Africa* (2008) *Glass Ceilings in Southern African Newsrooms* (2009) and more recently, the *Gender and Media Progress Study* (GMPS) (2010). Ndlovu's research experience is grounded in the three years she spent as a researcher at the Media Monitoring Project Zimbabwe (MMPZ). Before taking up her current post, Ndlovu managed GL's media training portfolio. She has also had a brief stint in mainstream media having worked for Zimbabwe's *Financial Gazette* in early 2001. Ndlovu holds post-graduate qualifications in Media Studies from the University of Zimbabwe and the University of the Witwatersrand. She is a native of Bulawayo in Zimbabwe.



Saeanna Chingamuka is the Gender and Media Diversity Centre Manager. She joined GL in December 2008 after completing a Masters in Journalism and Media Studies at Rhodes University in South Africa. An outgoing people's person, Saeanna is a gender and media activist who enjoys doing media campaigns and advocacy related work. She manages the knowledge centre at GL which brings together the work of all departments under the banner "collecting, connecting and collaborating." She has a strong passion for media work and mentoring young people who come to GL for internships. Saeanna enjoys reading, writing, discussing pertinent regional topics and just having fun. Her dream is to bungee jump.



Daud Kayisi is a Malawian journalist and media intern at GL. He holds a Bachelors degree in Journalism from the University of Malawi. Since he started his career as a journalist in 2009, he has always had an interest in media for development, girl child education and women's rights in Africa. He believes the media is a powerful tool to help bring development to marginalised Africans; to empower women through the realisation of their rights and to help African girls to access and enjoy their right to education. Daud has worked with Blantyre Newspapers Limited (Malawi) as an intern reporter and with Action Aid International Malawi (AAIM) to collect and analyse data on women's rights. His experience at GL is solidifying his knowledge and equipping him for his career.



Abigail Jacobs-Williams joined Gender Links in July 2009 as Manager of the Local Government and Gender Justice Programme. In May 2010 she became the Gender and Governance Manager. Abigail came to GL with experience in both the government and NGO sectors. Prior to joining GL, she worked for the Western Province's Department of Social Development at their Head Office as an Assistant Director in the Directorate: Social Capital Formation. She also worked at the Department of Health in the Community Development division. Abigail was also a member of the Provincial Government of the Western Cape's Women's Forum. She represented the Western Province on the National Department of Social Development's Women's Task Team. Abigail holds a BA degree from the University of the Western Cape in Women and Gender Studies, Psychology and English. She is currently studying towards a Masters degree in Public Administration.



Ntombentsha Mbadlanyana joined GL as the Gender Justice and Local Government South Africa Country Facilitator in March 2010. Before she joined GL, she worked for the Provincial Government of the Western Cape in the Department of Social Development Directorate: Social Capital Formation. Ntombi is a researcher, facilitator, gender activist and an academic with qualifications in Social Sciences. She holds a BA Degree in Women's and Gender studies as well as an Honours Degree obtained at the University of the Western Cape, majoring in Social Science, Anthropology and English. After completing her studies, she worked as an intern at RAPCAN - an NGO that deals with the eradication of child abuse and neglect. Ntombi also volunteered at the Triangle Project, an organisation that deals with Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Trans-gender, Inter-sex (LGBTI) issues.

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ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ANC	African National Congress
ARDC	Association of Rural Development Councils
BA	Beneficiary Analysis
BOCONGO	Botswana Council of Non-Governmental Organisations
CANGO	Coordinating Assembly of NGOs
CGE	Commission on Gender Equality
COE	Centre of Excellence
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
DAC	Development Action Committee
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GBV	Gender-based violence
GEM	Gender and Media
GEMSA	Gender and Media Southern Africa
GEMSWA	Gender and Media Swaziland
GEMZi	Gender and Media Zimbabwe
GIME	Gender in Media Education
GJLG	Gender Justice and Local Government
GL	Gender Links
GMBS	Gender and Media Baseline Study
GMDC	Gender and Media Diversity Centre
GMPS	Gender and Media Progress Study
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HIVOS	International Humanist Institute for Cooperation with Developing Countries
IWMF	International Women's Media Foundation
MAP	Media Action Plan
MEGEN	Men for Gender Equality Now
MISA	Media Institute of Southern Africa
MOU	Memorandum of Agreement
MWO	Media Watch Organisation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NGO-GCN	NGO Gender Coordinating Network
NUST	National University of Science and Technology
OSISA	Open Society Foundation of Southern Africa
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PON	Polytechnic of Namibia
NAP	National Action Plan
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SADC CNGO	SADC Council of Non-Governmental Organisations
SADC GU	SADC Gender Unit
SADC HOS	SADC Heads of State
SANEF	South African National Editor's Forum
SAEF	Southern African Editors Forum
SAfAIDS	Southern Africa HIV and AIDS Information Dissemination Service
SARDC	Southern African Research and Documentation Centre
TOT	Training of Trainers
UN DAW	UN Department for the Advancement of Women
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
LGA-SARO	Local Government of Africa-Southern Africa Regional Office
VFM	Value for Money
VRC	Virtual Resource Centre
VSO-RAISA	Voluntary Service Overseas Regional AIDS Initiative of Southern Africa
WIFP	Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press
WiPSU	Women in Politics Support Unit
WJEC	World Journalism Educators Congress
WLGF	Women in Local Government Forum
WLSA	Women in Law Southern Africa

Foreword

"Work never betrays the worker" - my mother's favourite saying.



This is a moment in Gender Links' life that is incredibly special. For all of us it should lead to some reminiscence and, of course, lessons and taking stock as to where we are in the fight for gender equality and a world free of gender discrimination.

In ten years Gender Links has grown into an internationally recognised player in gender rights and the advancement of women. It has grown from the humble beginnings of a small office at the back of Colleen Lowe Morna's house, with one employee and one computer, to its own office space and 50 employees; regional offices in Botswana, Mauritius, Mozambique, Madagascar, Lesotho, Namibia, Swaziland, Zimbabwe and Zambia. The growth alone is a big story and a lesson in how to develop an organisation.

GL has spearheaded the development and adoption of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Gender Protocol on Gender and Development. It has developed multiple programmes and trained thousands of gender activists and media personnel. GL has trained grassroots organisations in its constant efforts to build capacity at the local level to eradicate gender discrimination. By any account and standard this is a remarkable achievement. Its achievements can only be described as breathtaking and inspiring. I would go as far as to say the story of Gender Links is one of the most significant growth stories of an NGO in Southern Africa and equals the best elsewhere in the world.

Thanks to the work of gender activists and organisations like GL, it is now indisputable that women and men are entitled to the same rights and that the intricate web of those rights, equality, and peace is correlated with development. The world is experiencing unprecedented strides in gender rights, and gender dynamics continue to undergo rapid social, political, and economic changes. Now more than ever, women are represented in almost every facet of social, economic, political and civil life. In many African countries, women now have the right to own land and real property, to vote, to assembly, to redress wrong, and to run for offices previously held only by men. It is also generally accepted that women's rights around the world are an important indicator of global well-being.

Despite these advances, there is still much more to be done. In many parts of the world including our own region women work more than men, yet are paid less. Gender discrimination affects girls and women throughout their lifetime, and women and girls are often the ones that suffer the most poverty. While many countries have ratified international and regional agreements guaranteeing women equal rights and protection from discrimination, these agreements have not translated or have not given rise to better living and working conditions. Women still represent the majority of the poor and the uneducated in Africa. Young women are trafficked, forced to work as sex slaves and face the threat of HIV and AIDS infection.

There may be more women in leadership positions but that does not necessarily translate into gender equality or equal and active participation in decision-making. Both women and men face the *tri facti* burden of unemployment, illiteracy, and violence.

Gender Links serves not only to shine light on these conditions but to help alleviate obstacles to the achievement of equality between the sexes. It is committed to providing gender equality in every area of society in accordance with the provisions of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Develop-

ment. Unparalleled in its work in the Southern Africa region and beyond, Gender Links has earned a reputation for tirelessly educating, enabling, and creating paths for equality where none existed or had only begun to bud.

This year, Gender Links celebrates its 10th year of working towards the promotion of gender equality and the eradication of gender violence. Over the years, it has served as a beacon and an instrument of instruction and change. Though physically headquartered in South Africa, GL's reach spans the globe. By its pioneering Sixteen Days of Activism and community work, GL has been instrumental in helping to combat gender violence and to create an enabling environment where both sexes can work towards the development of sustainable equality policies.

No doubt GL has had some setbacks. In the nature of things life cannot simply be a series of successes. The road to success is always under construction so it has been and will continue to be with Gender Links.

As we celebrate the achievements of Gender Links, we should not forget to give credit and thanks to those who have made this dream possible. Colleen Lowe Morna, the founding executive director, and Thenjiwe Mtintso, my predecessor and founding chair of GL, deserve our congratulations and heartfelt gratitude.

The importance of leadership and the role it has played in the development of GL should not be underestimated. No organisation can succeed without leadership. How well an organisation develops depends on the idiosyncratic characteristics of the people involved. Success is not a straightforward function of auspicious conditions and of clever choice of programmes suited to the context. Personalities and the quality of leadership influence outcomes.



Colleen Lowe Morna and Thenjiwe Mtintso. *Photo: Mukayi Makaya-Magarangoma*

The Gender Links staff - the men and women who plan and execute the numerous Gender Links programmes - the donors and partners of Gender Links all deserve our thanks.

GL must keep its contacts and networks. It must always remember the wise saying: *"if you want to go somewhere quickly travel alone. If you want to go far travel with others."*

I would like to close this short article on a personal note. I have been associated with GL from its inception. It has been ten years of personal growth, incredible friendship and personal satisfaction. Gender links has been my mentor in gender issues. Much of what I know in gender studies I owe to Gender Links. I shall forever be grateful. I wish Gender Links great success.

Let us all join in celebrating the remarkable story of GL; its growth from 67 Eckstein Street, Observatory Johannesburg to 9 Derrick Avenue, Cyrildene, Johannesburg; its successes and achievements. As I have said often to GL staff - wisdom passed down from my mother - work never betrays the worker. Keep up the good work through this decade and beyond!



Muna Ndulo*
GL Chair

* Dr Ndulo is Professor of Law at Cornell University Law School and Director of Cornell University's Institute for African Development. He is also Honorary Professor of Law, Cape Town University. Former Dean of Law at the University of Zambia, Muna has served in a variety of posts with the United Nations, including as political advisor to the head of the United Nations Observer Mission to South Africa (UNOMSA) in the period leading up to and during the 1994 elections in South Africa. A regular contributor to newspapers and academic journals in the region, Muna is a highly regarded scholar, notably in the field of regional integration. He has also written and lectured on gender justice. Muna has served on a number of state and academic boards in Zambia.


linked



GL Executive Director Colleen Lowe Morna climbing the Andes. *Photo by K. Morna*

Chapter 1

Climbing every mountain: The origins of Gender Links

By Colleen Lowe Morna, past and present GL Board Members

"GL is a learning organisation and its achievements can be summarised by a culture of excellence, accountability, transparency and transformation. The organisation has effectively carried out its advocacy, lobbying and partnership management, working around and with the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Gender and Development and related issues in the region."

- GL External Evaluation 2010

Fact box

- Gender Links (GL) is a Southern African NGO founded in 2001 that is committed to a region in which women and men are able to participate equally in all aspects of public and private life in accordance with the provisions of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Gender and Development.
- GL has ten board members from seven Southern African countries and one from the UK/Ghana.
- With its headquarters in Johannesburg, South Africa, GL has satellite offices in Mauritius, Botswana, Lesotho, and Mozambique and a presence in Madagascar, Namibia, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

"My journey with Gender Links has been rich. I have learnt firsthand how humble beginnings can lead to bigger and greater achievements as long as there is passion and commitment. I am happy to still be on the Gender Links journey."
- Ruth Ayisi, GL Board Member



Colleen Lowe Morna jubilant after finishing the 30km *Radio 702 Walk the Talk* fun walk. *Photo: Gender Links*

I[1] am not a professional climber, literally or figuratively. But, growing up in the mystical highlands of southeast Zimbabwe, I have had an enduring love affair with mountains. There is so much about climbing that is a metaphor for life itself.

As you start a climb, there is always that sense of the impossible. Then, eyes to the ground, one step at a time, the impossible becomes possible. There are thorns, stony patches, and steep inclines: each tests your endurance. But as you look back on where you have come, blights on the landscape become mere dots compared to the panoramic view unfolding.

Distance gives you perspective. As you reach the peak you are overcome by a sense of achievement. Yet at every peak you are reminded that there is always one more peak till you get to the top. It is unlikely you will ever get to the summit! But you have the satisfaction of knowing, as they say in West Africa, that without pain, there is no gain!

As the founder and first executive director of GL reflecting on the first ten years of the NGO once described as a small organisation with large footprints I feel like a climber who has scaled that first peak. When I lodged the registration papers in March 2001, nothing could have prepared me for what lay ahead, especially given the rather unlikely and ironic beginnings of this venture.

An unlikely start

It all started soon after I unceremoniously lost my job as CEO of the South African Commission on Gender Equality; locked out of my work place by political appointees who, floundering in their more strategic functions, became embroiled in undermining the head of operations. It is not an unfamiliar story in the new South Africa: almost all the administrative heads of Chapter Nine institutions have had tussles with their political principals as have many Director General's (DG's) and their ministers. My successor would suffer a similar fate to mine a decade later.

Still, nothing prepares you, after you have worked your soul out for a cause, to wake up one morning without a job. For three years from 1998 to 2001 I fought my case in court; painfully coming to terms with the limits of sisterhood as many kept their distance, waiting to see which way the judge's gavel would fall. I lived in semi-exile, falling back on my skills as a journalist, working for the most part away from home to pay my legal bills.

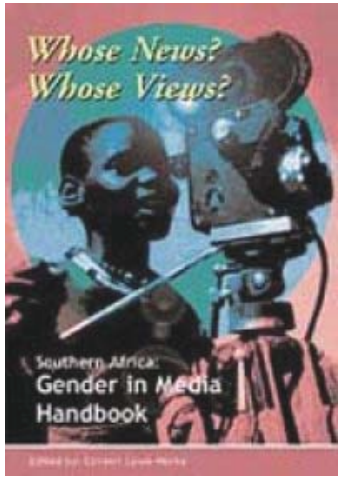
One Saturday morning a group of my former staff sat with me around coffee in my office at home and convinced me to start something new. No matter what happened in court, they said, South Africa and the region needed strong gender NGOs. Kubeshni Govender, former communications manager at the CGE and a founding board member of GL gave this new venture a name that we all drank to with our coffee and croissants: *Gender Links!!*

Between my frequent shuttles to the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa

[1] Colleen Lowe Morna is Executive Director of Gender Links

(UNECA) in Addis Ababa where I had landed part-time work as a speech writer, I put pen to paper, furiously spewing out all my dream projects, most notably my passion, gender and the media. At first donors would not budge; one of our biggest donors now saw it all as part of a sinister plot in my fight against the CGE and wrote a terse letter saying in South Africa they only funded the Commission. It was one of those first stony patches you wonder if you will ever pull through. Ouch!!!

But, as the consultancy work continued to come, I gained the confidence to employ GL's first staff member, a former CGE staffer, Zohra Khan, whose youthful enthusiasm helped me take another step each day. She called GL the phoenix, the bird that would rise from the ashes. And one day we got our chance, when a sympathetic individual within the said donor organisation tipped us off about a donor next door who needed to spend R250 000 before the end of the financial year in two months time. Who could pull off this miracle? Colleen and Zohra! she advised. So we rushed off to Pretoria with application in hand, and got our first grant to run a workshop and produce a gender in media handbook.



Over 100 research reports, books and publications later, I still regard *Whose News, Whose Views* with the greatest of fondness because of the sheer impossibility and triumph of this task. We had to do it! And we did.

Success in hand, our previously sceptical donor gave us our next grant, to run a regional workshop on covering gender violence alongside a SADC workshop for governments to report on the Addendum to the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development on Eradicating Violence Against Women and Children in Lesotho.

Working out of the back room at my home to set it all up, Zohra and I put out a call for the gender and media activists who would become the foot soldiers of the movement. I rejected one applicant, Loga Virahsawmy from Mauritius, as she had no media experience, being a retired university administrator. But she had been so keen, she would be heart broken! Zohra interceded. I relented: after all we needed people with energy, maybe even more than expertise, I said.

Whew! My guardian angel must have been somewhere nearby, as Loga would go on not only to become a board member and director of GL's Francophone office, but to reinvent herself at sixty as one of the most forceful voices in the gender and media movement!

Writing on 27 November, 2010, her 66th birthday, **Loga Virahsawmy** recalled: My God! Where do I start? It has been such an enriching journey that I did not realise that I started with black hair. It is now all shining silver (not to say grey). Little did I realise that *"il n'y a pas d'age pour apprendre quand on est avec Gender Links"* (there is no age limit to learning when one is with Gender Links).



Grey is the new fad: Loga Virahsawmy speaks at the launch of the audience research. *Photo: Gender Links*

Yes, trust me! It is not only babies that grow but the over 60s as well. If you want to grow at any age then join the University of Gender Links. Success is guaranteed although with lots of challenges going through very tough times including some crying.

It all started when I received an invitation from Gender Links in early 1999 to attend a workshop in Lesotho. Gender Links wanted

to train journalists of the region. The outcome was a special supplement that was distributed to participants at a Regional Workshop on Gender-Based Violence. Apparently Gender Links was looking for a participant from Mauritius who could write articles in English. They were desperate and even sent a letter to the Ministry of Women's Rights but the latter did not respond. Doing a search in the region they came across a few of my articles and the rest spoke for itself. But the organiser, Zohra Khan, did not take any risk and asked me for a letter from *L'Express* where I was a freelance journalist. This was the first time I travelled to Johannesburg and spent a night at a hotel near the airport.

Very early the next morning Ferial Haffajee came to get me so that we could travel to Lesotho by car. I did not know anything about her except that we were going to the same place. It was when the training started that I realised the greatness and the humility of this great lady. She was the one who coached us in writing good articles on gender-based violence. I also had a warm welcome from Colleen Lowe Morna.

During the memorable workshop in Lesotho that paved the way for in-country workshops in twelve SADC countries, I got the phone call that I had waited three years to get: I had won my case in the Labour Court, back pay and full costs included! Zohra and I danced around the workshop room at the Maseru Sun as my cell phone started to ring off the hook.

Had it been a pyrrhic victory, one reporter asked. What kind of price tag, I retorted, would you put on clearing your name? With that I knew I had closed a chapter and could move on.

This chapter covers the early origins of Gender Links, as told by its founders. Whether our preference is by foot, bus, train, sea, or air, all of us have been on an amazing journey over the last decade: of self discovery; organisational growth and development. Unusually in the life of a busy organisation we have taken this moment to pause, and piece together our collective memories of these early days. The chapter is narrated by the founder and first executive director of GL Colleen Lowe Morna, drawing on the rich memories of past and present board members.

The Gender Links Board

My former boss and mentor at the CGE before the trouble started, then Deputy Secretary General of the African National Congress (ANC) Thenjiwe Mtintso, agreed to chair GL. Athalia Molokomme, a well known human rights and gender justice activist, then moving from being head of the SADC Gender Unit to High Court Judge in Botswana took on the role of Deputy Chair.



"First, I must say that I love trains! Nothing soothes me more than listening to the whistle of a train blow and it is one of the most pleasurable forms of travel for me. I once took a business trip on trains all the way from Rome, Italy to Copenhagen, Denmark. So, comparing my journey with Gender Links (GL) to a memorable, enjoyable train ride seems most natural in describing my learning journey with the organisation.

I have been part of GL's governance structure as a member of the Board for eight years with some of the most amazing, gifted and humble women and men. But here I want to write about my journey in using my skills and knowledge, when called upon throughout the past eight years. This journey has given me an invaluable education. If institutions of higher education did award doctorate degrees for knowledge gained through hands-on experience, then I am sure my train journey with GL would put me at the head of the class!"

- GL founding Board Member Pat Made

Table 1.1: The GL Board over time							
	Board member	Country	Field of expertise	Founder	Joined later	Left	Still serving
1	Thenjiwe Mtintso	South Africa	Gender and politics	✗			✗
2	Ruth Ansah Ayisi	UK / Ghana	Gender and media	✗			✗
3	Muna Ndulo	Zambia	Law	✗			✗
4	Kubeshni Govender Jones	South Africa	Media	✗		✗	
5	Chris Vick	South Africa	Media		✗	✗	
6	Patricia Made	America / Zimbabwe	Gender, media and education	✗			✗
7	Loga Virahsamy	Mauritius	Gender, media and politics		✗		✗
8	Athalia Molokomme	Botswana	Gender and politics		✗	✗	
9	Ferial Haffajee	South Africa	Gender and media		✗		✗
10	Charles Chisala	Zambia	Media		✗	✗	
11	Pinky Mekgwe	Botswana	Gender politics and education		✗		✗
12	Scholastica Kimaryo	Tanzania	Social policy planning and participation		✗		✗
13	Eduardo Namburete	Mozambique	Gender, media and education		✗		✗
14	Colleen Lowe Morna	South Africa / Zimbabwe	Gender, media	✗			✗

Table 1.1 shows that GL has, at different times, had 14 board members (always the required minimum of eight) and that four of the founding board members are still serving on the Board. Four board members have left and four have joined along the way. The current 10 member board (including the ED who sits on the Board ex officio) has representatives from seven Southern African countries (Zambia, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Mauritius, Botswana, Tanzania, Mozambique) as well as from the UK/Ghana.

GL has had two leadership changes. In 2007 founding chairperson Thenjiwe Mtintso, then South Africa's ambassador to Cuba, now to Italy, stepped down. The Board elected Dr Muna Ndulo, former Dean of the Law School at the University of Zambia, and currently a professor at Cornel University to take over. In 2008, Dr Athalia Molokomme, who had been appointed attorney general of Botswana, stepped down as deputy chair due to her heavy schedule. Scholastica Kimaryo, former Deputy Assistant UNDP Administrator and Deputy Regional Director for Africa took over as deputy chair. **Athalia Molokomme** left a lasting legacy and has many fond memories of GL:

Down memory lane

When I heard that Gender Links was turning ten years of age, my first reaction was typically to move quickly to correct the error. Colleen must have been working so hard that she had lost count of all the years of lobbying, writing, persuading threatening and simply preaching. It can't possibly have only been ten years, no way. Then I read Colleen's foreword and realised that she had in fact checked her dates and was strictly speaking correct; GL was indeed registered as a legal entity ten years ago, and like a marriage, its official anniversary is counted only from the point of legal recognition. So the lawyer in me was at ease, but the gender activist at my core kept gnawing at my conscience, refusing to surrender.

This feeling kept eating at me until it developed into a full fire in my belly which I recognised from many years ago; I had to tell the world the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth about GL. So I decided to make that the theme of my contribution to this 10th anniversary celebration of Gender Links. So here we go.



Athalia Molokomme, Pat Made and Loga Virahsawmy. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

As we all know, many great ideas, organisations and relationships develop and mature over time, and by the time they take on a formal, legal existence, they have matured and are ready to take off. Such, in my view has been the path of GL, and Colleen, as the brains and the womb that conceived and delivered GL, may be too close to the process to recognise this long and winding path. Allow me, as one of the proud midwives, to jog Colleen's memory in this regard.

Gender Links is firmly rooted in, and was an inevitable product of the Southern African regional women's movement, and I am convinced that it began to form in Colleen's mind, albeit sub consciously, long before her time at the CGE. It was in the mid-1990s after we returned from the Fourth UN World Conference on Women (AKA Beijing) and we were all fired up by the slogan: think globally, and act locally that we added a new one in the middle: network sub regionally. And that is exactly what we did.

As a follow up to Beijing, a number of gender activists who had been working at national level in NGOs and academia forged a rare alliance with bureaucrats in National Gender machineries and IGOs such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and UNDP. The SADC Secretariat organised various meetings and workshops to coordinate the monitoring of the Beijing Platform of Action at regional level. There was the Randburg Declaration, which preceded the SADC Gender and Development Declaration, the result of many days of meeting in preparation for engendering our regional organisation, SADC, which produced *"Into the Future: Gender and SADC"* in 1997.

Before SADC knew it, a new item - the institutionalisation of gender into SADC - had found its way into the agenda of the SADC Council of Ministers meeting. The following week, SADC Heads of State and Government found themselves signing a Declaration on Gender and Development, amid chants of *'oo saena...'* in Blantrye, Malawi.

GL's first chair **Thenjiwe Mtintso** picks up the story: The story here is a beautiful one, and we never tire of telling it - we always tell it. Of how Colleen and others started in Gaborone, and then went to Namibia where there were a number of various meetings happening, and then they went to Malawi. The famous Malawi Declaration on Gender and Development: here we were not invited of course. We came as gender activists representing the SADC women. How we found our way there I do not know, we found ourselves at the summit. Not only did we find our way to the summit, we found ourselves into the hall itself.

And on the tables where the Presidents were going to be sitting, they found our documents in front of them- the Declaration on Gender and Development. How they got there they did not know: they were just there. Now you know the Heads of State will sit there and open to read. The one outstanding one was President Robert Mugabe - apparently he is an ardent reader - he just sat down and started reading and reading. We had been smuggled into the hall. The Malawi women had composed a song.

We stood up when (South African Public Service Minister) Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi read the declaration on behalf of the presidents. We just stood up as the women and started singing: *la la la la "wosigna!"* We didn't even know what it meant, we were just singing with the women from Malawi. We just heard you must sign. And they signed. It was a huge victory for us - that's why we went and split a bottle of wine off the shores of Lake Malawi afterwards. Although Gender Links came much later, I think that is really where it all began.



Mwenda Yeta Mkhize, Janine Moolman and Thenjiwe Mtintso. *Photo: Gender Links*

Athalia Molokomme continues: A long line of suspects and accomplices who will remain unidentified were involved in this process, but if truth be told, Colleen was the visible hand and driving force behind the whole thing, and the main suspect. As we say, the rest is herstory, which is where Gender Links comes in.

Networks are by nature fluid and often temporary liaisons which bring people of similar principles and ideas together. They often dissipate and their members scatter in different directions to pursue their various dreams and causes. And so it happened with all of us, some went back to run their NGOs, government jobs, politicians to run their parties and academics to teach their courses; the SADC Gender Unit was set up to monitor the implementation of the Gender Declaration.

The following year, the SADC Addendum on Violence Against Women was moved primarily by the same line of suspects, some operating from new terrain, with the main accused - Colleen, now operating from the South African Commission on Gender Equality. The policies and institutional frameworks were now in place, at national and regional levels, and it was now time for implementation, time to walk the talk, and to ensure that the portrayal of women in the media matched these lofty statements of principle.

Clearly, there was need for an organisation outside the bureaucracy to play a watchdog and capacity building role at regional level.

That organisation was none other than Gender Links, led by none other than the chief suspect, Colleen, and some of her accomplices naturally became the inaugural board members, serving from wherever they were.



Sisterly support: Athalia Molokomme has remained a source of strength and inspiration.
Photo: Gender Links

It has been a pleasure to be associated with the tireless work of GL over the years, until my current responsibilities left me no choice but to let go, ever so reluctantly. I am proud of the many achievements of Gender Links, and learnt a whole lot from the challenges.

I am not surprised that GL has become a household name at national, regional and global level. I especially like the fact that while GL pioneered entry into the hitherto unchartered waters of gender and the media, they have remained at the frontline of lobbying for gender equality in all areas of public and private life.

I was therefore not surprised that a couple of years ago, GL played a key role in the adoption of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, once again, with some of the usual suspects. I have no doubt that GL's role in the struggle for gender equality will continue unabated for another decade, and many decades to come. Happy 10th Birthday GL, you really do look and behave older than your age. I am proud to have been present at at your conception and birth.

Vision and mission

As deputy chair of GL, Athalia played a key role in crafting its vision and mission. She insisted on the big picture - gender equality - and her legal mind made sure we specified that this is to be achieved in both the public and private space. With the adoption of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development in 2008, and as GL's programme of action expanded from media into governance and justice, the vision and mission also evolved, as reflected in Table 1.2.

Vision 2020

In a vision exercise at the 2010 Board Meeting in which the Board and staff members wrote down where they would like GL to be ten years from now, the following were some of the responses:

- An independent, strong, vibrant, principled self-sustaining organisation guiding Southern Africa to a free, democratic region based on equity for all.
- A leading African NGO and globally renowned centre of excellence on gender mainstreaming and the empowerment of women for development.
- An organisation that is represented in all the countries of Southern Africa and reaches out to all the corners and villages where the majority of women are found.
- A champion of justice internally and externally.
- An organisation with deeper roots, so that our foundation will stay solid and carry us into the next 20 years with the strength to weather any external or internal storm.
- An organisation with two wings: one not for profit and the other generating revenue to help sustain the organisation.

Table 1.2: Evolution of GL's Vision and Mission	
2005/2006	**2010/2011**
Vision	
GL is committed to a Southern Africa in which women and men are able to realise their full potential and participate equally in all aspects of public and private life. (SADC Protocol was not there).	Gender Links (GL) is committed to a region in which women and men are able to participate equally in all aspects of public and private life in accordance with the provisions of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Gender and Development.
Mission	
GL's primary area of focus is the transformation of gender relations in and through the media by: • Conducting research on gender disparities in the internal structures and editorial output of the media, as well as working with media institutions to develop corrective policies. • Developing gender training materials for the media, and assisting media training institutions in applying these. • Creating and sharing content that demonstrates how a gender perspective can be integrated into media coverage. Taking advantage of opportunities presented by information and communication technologies for advancing gender equality. Strengthening the media and communication skills of gender activists and of men in decision-making.	GL achieves its vision by coordinating the work of the Southern African Gender Protocol Alliance formed around the sub-regional instrument that brings together all key African and global commitments for achieving gender equality. The annual barometer produced by the Alliance measures progress by governments against the 28 targets for the attainment of gender equality by 2015. GL has integrated these targets into its three core, closely linked programme areas: the media, governance and gender justice. Working with partners at the local, national, regional and international level, GL aims to: • Promote gender equality in and through the media and in all areas of governance. • Develop policies and conduct effective campaigns for ending gender violence, HIV and AIDS. • Build the capacity of women and men to critically engage in democratic processes that advance equality and justice.
Planning cycle	
From 2001-2009 the organisation had a two year strategic process.	2010-2015: With more secure funding, the organisation has expanded its triennial strategic planning framework into a five year strategic plan 2010-2015.

The GL logo and slogan





Kubeshni Govender, one of GL's founding board members, who played a leading role in branding the organisation and helping it develop its IT systems, bequeathed us the wonderful, simple name, Gender Links. A graphic designer we used at the time came up with the male and female symbols linked. When we moved offices from my back yard to Bruma Lake, our neighbouring enterprise, which specialised in helping shed cellulite, came and made a proposition. Believing that Gender Links was a dating agency, they said if they helped women look beautiful, GL could help them find men! If nothing else this goes to show that we have always been open to partnerships, and joint ventures of all kinds!

GL had as its first slogan: gender equality in and through the media! As our work expanded, again thanks to Athalia's sharp legal mind and general wisdom, we changed

our slogan, and our logo, to Gender Links for equality and justice. In both logos and slogans, links remains the key word. The excerpt below from a piece written by Board Member Pinkie Mekgwe in the 2009/2010 report reflects how linkages run through all of GL's work:



Pinkie Mekgwe. *Photo: Gender Links*

I am fresh out of a week-long Julius Nyerere Pan-African Intellectual Festival of ideas, accolades, critique, debates, book page-turning, music, poetry, and pure joy - a revival of hope for an Africa characterised by one-ness.

Convened by the Mwalimu Nyerere Professor of Pan-African Studies, Professor Issa Shivji, it is an occassion graced by luminaries such as Nobel laureate Wole Soyinka who is the 2009 Dinstinguished Nyerere Lecturer; Kofi Anyidoho, that African literary stalwart whose footprints match those of any Nobel recipient; Olivier Frantz Fanon, son of the acclaimed philosopher-doctor and revolutionary, Frantz Fanon; our Pan-African knowledge production revolutionary of the current generation, Adebayo Olukoshi.

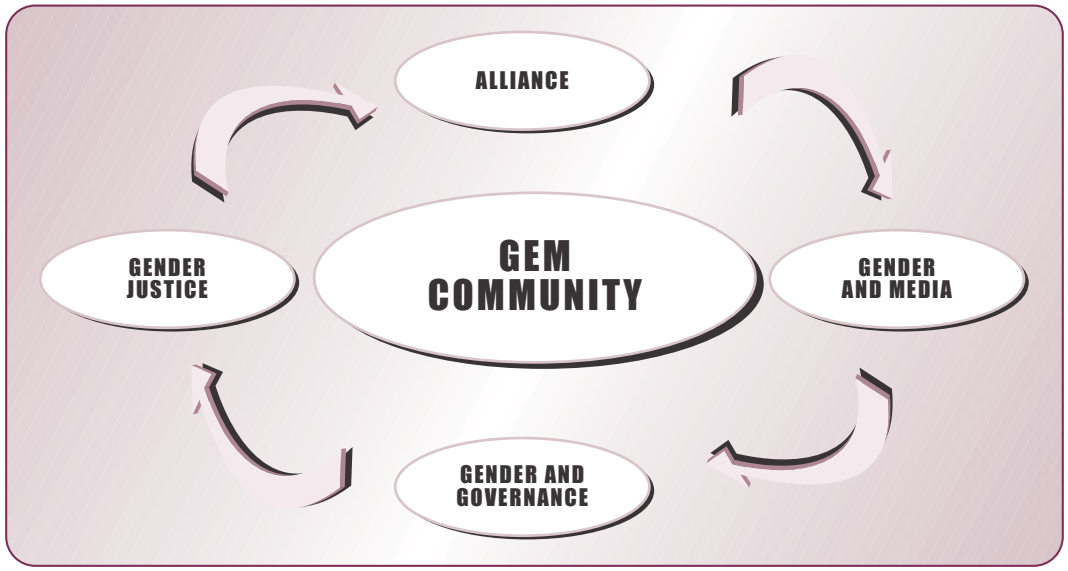
As I beam with pride that our own Thenji Mtintso is mentioned in Anna Tibaijuka's talk about women organising for Pan-African change, it occurs to me that this Pan really needs more women s accounts, women s participation, women's visibility, for the part they have played in the past, and parts they continue to play, and will play if the Pan-African ideal is to translate into a working, breathing spirit. We need a true revival of the Pan-African Women's movement to enable women to organise better across all borders, on their own terms, and on terms that will move the agenda of a United States of Africa that works for all forth.

We need forums of the nature of the Julius Nyerere - Mum Rose week that will be dedicated to the works and victories of the many talented women of Africa who accompanied their men in the fight for liberation; who worked single-handedly; who worked with other women; and who continue to work for change - for a better life across all of life's boundaries.

The links do matter. Infinitely. I am glad that Gender Links is forging ahead in the journey of razing down gender, justice, and geographical borders in the quest to create enabling links. A gender-linked United States of Africa, anyone?

Programme of action

The GL programme is by its nature visionary and strategic. Daring to tread where others have hesitated, a small but focused organisation has used its base in a progressive SADC country to start a movement for social change that is evidence-based; creates linkages from local through to international level; builds alliances and coalitions and has successfully negotiated the fine line of when to be critical of, and when to co-operate with, governments. In its programme areas GL has chosen to focus on critical gaps within gender advocacy that include the media (both as a tool and site for transformation); local government and gender justice (including economic justice) and how to measure gender violence. These criss-crossing programmes (referred to within GL as a spider's web) demonstrate the links between gender equality; rights; voice; citizen participation; responsive governance and poverty reduction.



From 2005 to 2008, GL worked with civil society partners in the campaign to elevate the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development into a Protocol with 28 targets to be achieved by 2015. GL coordinates the Southern African Gender Protocol Alliance that brings together over 40 NGOs at national and regional level in six thematic clusters for advancing gender equality in the region. In the coming year a seventh cluster on women and peace-building will be formed.

A key GL area of focus is the transformation of gender relations in and through the media. This is achieved by conducting research; training; creating and sharing content that demonstrates how gender can be integrated into media outputs; taking advantage of the opportunities presented by information technology and strengthening the communication skills of gender activists as well as women in decision-making. GL has pioneered gender and media literacy courses that aim to watch the watchdogs .

GL is a founding member of, and for several year hosted the secretariat of the Gender and Media Southern Africa (GEMSA) network. Together with the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) the partners mount a Gender and Media (GEM) Summit every two years to showcase what is working. Through its gender justice programme, GL links activists and the media in campaigns to end gender violence. Together with government partners, the thrust now is to progress from campaigns to action plans with concrete targets, time frames and indicators for achieving the SADC target of halving gender violence by 2015. GL is co-ordinating a cutting-edge pilot project to develop indicators for measuring gender violence to enhance these efforts.

In 2003, GL embarked on a gender and governance programme that combines research and advocacy on women in decision-making with media training. Local government has emerged as a specific area of focus. The governance and justice



Ferial Haffajee with GL's study on local government at a Board meeting. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

programme come together in a unique initiative to localise national action plans to end gender violence with best practices shared annually.

GL's Write about Rights programme provides the glue to its different programme areas through its flagship Opinion and Commentary Service that links activists and decision-makers with the mainstream media. The I Stories or first-hand accounts provide an avenue for voices seldom heard in the media, such as those caring for people living with HIV; survivors of gender violence and women councilors to speak out. The Gender and Media Diversity Centre (GMDC), launched in 2008, brings together media development NGOs and training institutions in a bid to collect and connect knowledge as well as collaborate in advancing gender equality and diversity.

All programmes are organised around the Gender and Media E-Community which includes GL's list serve, website, database of close to 5000 contacts and the cyber dialogue facility that enables GL to hold online discussions with participants in the region and across the globe.

The lion in its den: Gender equality in and through the media

As the brief profile of GL's POA shows, media is at the core of all we do. That may sound logical now, but at the time it was brave new world for gender activists. **Thenjiwe Mtintso** recalls:



Thenjiwe Mtintso takes a call from the media during a GL Board meeting. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

When Colleen and I worked together at the Commission on Gender Equality we talked about gender in the media. She came up with this idea of trying to transform the ideas of gender in the media. The rest is herstory - as you know once Colleen has an idea she runs with it and doesn't let it go. She came up with some sort of a concept paper. I coined the phrase meeting the lion in its den. We saw the media not as a passive transmitter of ideas but as an active agent of change. As we explored this further, we found that we could do two things simultaneously. We needed to change gender relations in the male-dominated media; but we also needed to use the media to transform gender relations - so it could itself be our agent of change.

This was a radical idea. The question was who watches the watch dogs? They had never really been challenged on the question on their attitudes to women and gender relations. When we looked into it, we found this was a strong area that needed to be worked on. We were not only talking numbers - of women in media as well as numbers of editors - we were talking attitudes too.

Gender Links was born after Colleen did a lot of work and put together a focus group. I must say that from the time that we launched GL I had a feeling that we were headed for rocky ground. I was frightened because I thought the idea was going to be attacked, whether by feminists from the left or your conservatives from the right. Funding at that time was getting very difficult for NGOs and we were a non-entity, no one knew us, not even Colleen really. Colleen's passion and resilience is what got Gender Links off its feet. As the saying goes - when one door closes, another door opens.

Prying open every door

After GL's first workshop to create a handbook on gender and the media, and with the additional funding that started to trickle in, we looked for every avenue to take the message on gender to the media.

Loga Virahsawmy recalls: Soon after this workshop Colleen asked me to organise a launch in Mauritius for the handbook *Whose News Whose Views*. I took up the challenge and contacted Jean Claude de L'Estrac, former Chair of Media Trust and a senior manager at *L'Express*, one of the largest daily media houses in Mauritius. When I told Jean Claude that Thenji Mtintso, former Deputy Secretary General of the ANC would be present he immediately agreed.

Media Trust covered all the expenses for the launch and the great cocktail party that followed. I will never forget how my legs turned jelly when I had to introduce Thenji, Colleen and the other panellists. The butterflies in my stomach were multiplying and playing tricks on me; I could hardly stand up. This was the first time that I talked in front of an audience. The launch was a great success followed by dinner in the presence of the South African Ambassador as well as another great man, Colleen's husband Kofi Morna, at my home.

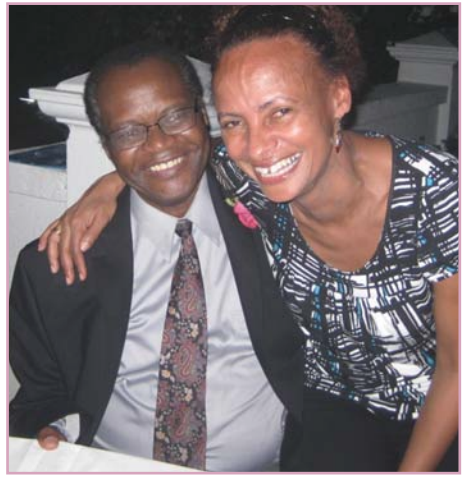
In March 2002 Colleen asked me to organise a national workshop in Mauritius on How to report on Gender-Based Violence . The challenge was too tempting to refuse. I negotiated with Finlay Salesse who had taken over from Jean Claude as Chair of Media Trust and soon a whole machinery started for panellists, participants, field visits, printing of a special supplement and all the logistics.

We made history as I got the former President of the Republic, Karl Offman, to open the workshop and to make the keynote address. We also had very high profile people on the different panels including Sheila Bappoo, now Minister of Gender Equality and Shirin Aumeeruddy Cziffra, now Ombudsperson for children. I counted my blessings for the sixth time when I met this other extraordinary woman Ruth Ansa Ayisi who helped Colleen in the facilitation of the workshop. They both stayed at my place and we found time for some fun around a glass of wine in the evening.



Jean Claude de L'Estrac shows members of Media Watch Organisation around his newsroom. *Photo: Gender Links*

I have not stopped counting my blessings since!!!



Muna Ndulo and Ruth Ayisi. *Photo: Gender Links*

Ruth Ayisi recalls co-facilitating both the Mauritius and the Zimbabwe covering gender violence workshops: At the time I was based in Maputo. I flew to Johannesburg, where I left for Harare with the co facilitators early in the morning from Gender Links' first office - the garage belonging to Colleen Lowe Morna, the executive director and founder of Gender Links. A wealth of materials for the workshop emerged from that garage which we piled into Colleen's car. Due to budget limitations, Colleen drove us to Zimbabwe.

Although I had worked in the area of gender for many years, it was this workshop that really focused my interest on gender-based

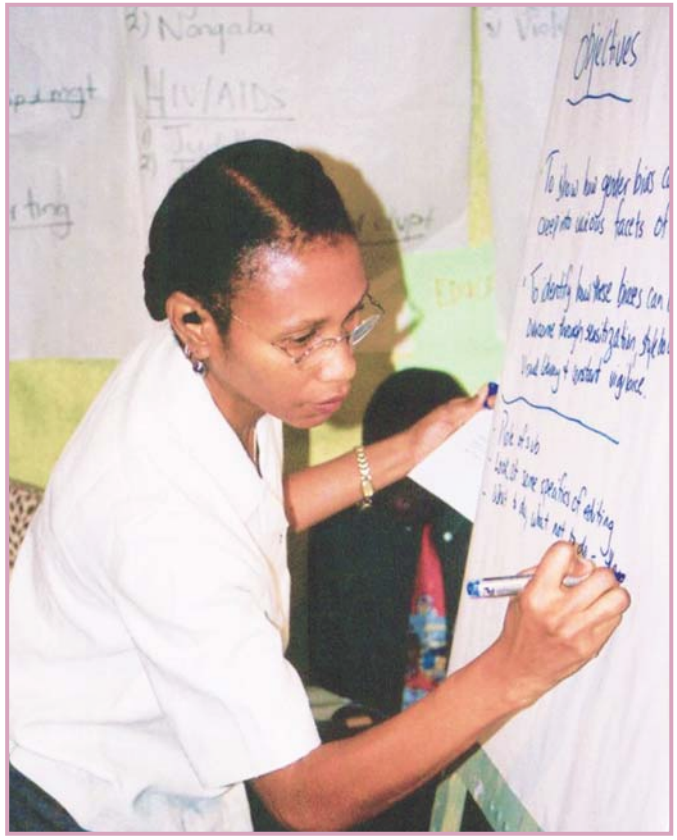
violence and made me realise campaigning against it and raising awareness about gender inequalities did not have to be ghettoised to committed women. Male journalists were keen to learn about the issue and to express their own ideas - some of which were not too progressive admittedly - but others were.

I have also welcomed the opportunity to be a board member of Gender Links. It has given me the unique opportunity to learn from and exchange ideas with a diverse, vibrant and a highly experienced team.

Pat Made, former director general of Inter Press Service, now a well known independent media researcher and trainer, recalls: My GL journey began earlier than the GL we know today. Colleen Lowe Morna and I worked in the same international news agency (IPS) for years and while I was still at the news agency in the early 2000s, Colleen and Zohra Khan in the early days of GL worked with IPS Africa to produce manuals for the media on Gender, Religion and Culture and Gender-Based Violence. I think GL has always been Colleen's destination and she took me amazing routes to get to it.

I became more involved in the organisation's areas of work in 2002 when I decided to step out in faith and left the international news agency where I had been employed. It was a time when I harboured many questions inside about 'what could I do' and 'what would I do' without the security blanket of a full-time job.

GL and the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) were in the throes of putting together teams of country researchers for the first baseline study on gender in the media in Southern Africa. Gender and the media had been a core component of my management work within the international news agency and the then Federation of African Media Women - SADC office in Zimbabwe asked



Pat Made, the media trainer. *Photo: Gender Links*

me to help coordinate and do the research for the Gender and Media Baseline Study (GMBS) in Zimbabwe.

This was the beginning of my research journey with GL which flourished into my being a part of several gender and media research projects and products. I have learnt how to not only develop research methodologies and methods for shining a gendered lens on the media, but my writing and analysis skills became sharpened. The gender and media research projects I have been associated with in GL helped me to identify a passion and love for research that I did not quite realise was in me. And in 2006, I applied for and was accepted into an MPhil programme in Social Science Methods at Stellenbosch University in South Africa to academically train at a graduate level to be a researcher. I can say with certainty that it was GL that sent me towards this particular degree, because through the organisation's work, I found one of my passions.

But gender and media research was not the only part of the ride. Colleen and her team thought I had something else to offer, and I became involved in the conception and production of training manuals for the media and non-governmental organisations on various issues, and I began a journey throughout Southern Africa facilitating and training media and civil society groups. This journey has taken me to 11 of the 15 countries in SADC and to almost every province in South Africa. Tertiary institutions

in the region with media and journalism education programmes such as the Polytechnic of Namibia (PON) and the Zambia Institute of Mass Communications (ZAMCOM) became second homes for me. Amazingly, I first met the current ZAMCOM Director when he was a lecturer in photography at the institute.

The best learning on my journey with GL has been the knowledge, inspiration, the grace of acceptance and sharing of information from the multitudes of people I have encountered in every country. Just as one example, during my jaunts to conduct communications and media workshops with civil society on gender and HIV and AIDS, and gender-based violence, I remember many lunch-times where South African women and men shared their hopes and dreams for their country and even gave me insights into their daily lives and work. It is a privilege when people invite you into their lives.

From research, to training, GL began to ask the tough questions about gender policies in newsrooms. **Thenjiwe Mtintso** recalls:

Another thing is that we were able to name and shame in our first five years, just by asking what their gender policy is. I remember clearly one media house that I will not name, telling us they had a gender policy, we asked for it, and they could not find it, six months later they still couldn't find it, and we were still waiting for it. We were sure they didn't have one, and they could not even give us key elements of the policy, except to say that sexual harassment was prohibited. When we asked for a definition of sexual harassment they could not give one. If nothing else we have continued to be a thorn in the flesh of the media!

In 2004, soon after Kubi Rama joined as Deputy Director of GL and had one of her famous idea moments, GL was unexpectedly catapulted into the limelight with the *Strip the Back Page* campaign (see Chapter Nine) for daring to suggest that on one day of the year the media substitute back pages and page three girls with content that celebrated women in all their diversity. Kubi and I were called names in the media, and I had the honour of being the *Sunday Times* Mampara of the Week . We stayed our course, gave interviews about why women deserve to be seen and heard in all their shapes and forms and wrote furiously on the subject (see one excerpt below):

Time for editors to walk the walk of gender equality

There's a story about two English farmers having a debate about socialism soon after the Bolshevik revolution. The unconverted asked the (supposedly) converted: If you had fifty chickens, would you would give me twenty five?

Of course, came back the reply. And if you had ten horses, you mean you would give me five? Yes, said his mate. And if you had twenty pigs, would you give me ten?

You knows I raises pigs! came back the indignant response.

I thought about my grandfather's favourite comment on life as I read the story about South African editors giving the thumbs down to the strip the back page campaign while insisting that they believe the South African media needs to become more gender sensitive (*Sunday Independent*, 22 February).

It's all very well for editors to talk the talk of gender equality. The question is: are they willing to walk the walk?

Since the campaign started a week ago, it has evoked unprecedented response from all quarters: upwards of 200 signatories supporting the campaign to drop the back page or its equivalent page three babe during the week leading up to International Women's Day on 8 March; the inevitable accusations that the campaign has been sparked by sex-starved lesbians; editors who say they don't want to be dictated to; and those who say the very notion of stripping any page is a violation of free speech.

It's a welcome debate; one long overdue; and surely a healthy sign as we take stock of ten years of democracy in which the one area on which we still fall far short is equality between the sexes.

To situate the campaign in context, there is a tradition worldwide for the male dominated media business to hand over the making of the news to women on 8 March. At its AGM last year focusing on gender and the media, the South African National Editor's Forum (SANEF) pledged to conduct an audit of newsrooms and report on progress this International Women's Day.

One of the most important and missing elements in this debate is the long-term effect of images that overwhelmingly portray women as mere objects of men's sexual pleasure. Is it little wonder that our society has such high levels of gender violence - one of the most devastating reminders that ten years of democracy has meant little for women in their daily lives? Does the media have anything to answer on that score?

These are some of the less comfortable questions that the media needs to ponder in the run up to 8 March, lest it be like the pig farmer who talked the good talk with no intention of walking the walk. - *Article written by Colleen Lowe Morna for the Sunday Independent.*

Social movements and GEM Networks

During a retreat in Tanzania, Hivos (one of GL's long time donors) challenged us to reflect on the role of NGOs in creating social movements. Our growing work with the media prompted me to think that we should start a gender and media movement. The Open Society Foundation of Southern Africa (OSISA), another donor, had given us funding to start country networks. This is how Gender Links became involved in starting Gender and Media (GEM) Networks, that later came together at the first Gender and Media Summit in 2004 to form the Gender and Media Southern Africa (GEMSA) Network:

Loga Virahsawmy recalls: Soon after the covering gender violence workshop Colleen suggested that I should start an NGO in Mauritius focusing on gender in and through the media. This saw the birth of Media Watch Organisation (MWO) and I have remained the Chair of this organisation.

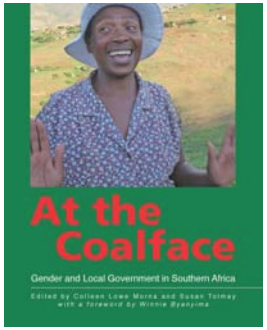


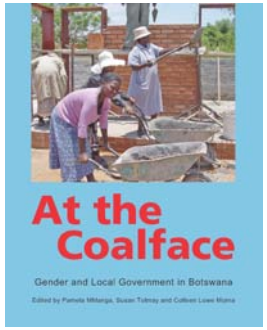
Sharon Thelemaque at a meeting of GEM Plus. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

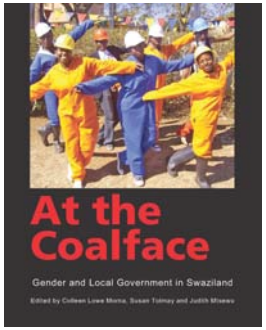
Colleen did not let go of me and asked me to organise the same workshop in the Seychelles. What a challenge! I did not know anybody in the Seychelles. Each time somebody from the Seychelles came to Mauritius I invited that person home. They all promised to help but not a single one kept their promise until my husband became desperate and asked me to write to the President of Seychelles giving his name as a reference.

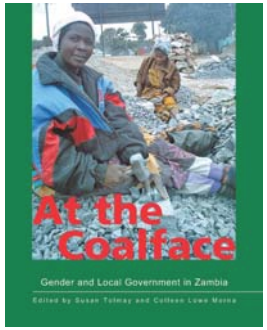
It worked! We can be gender activists but we still need to rely a lot on our partners. The response was overwhelming. I soon got the whole Ministry of Social Affairs under Michel Rosalie to help. I went on a pre-workshop mission and met with my partners as well as the *Daily Nation* which was going to run the supplement. When Colleen and I went to facilitate the workshop everything was so well planned that we even had some free time in the evening.

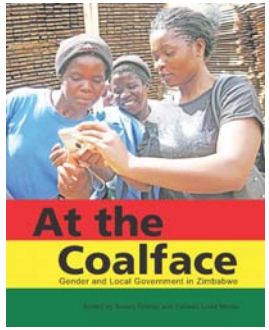
Colleen went on her walking spree up the mountains while I swam in the most magnificent blue sea. We got massive media coverage; so much so that when we went to a restaurant and there were no tables the owner found us a table because we were very important visitors to Seychelles. For the first time in my life I became a star as everywhere we went people would stop us to say that they saw us on television and thanked us for the work we were doing.













Thenjiwe Mtintso takes up the story about how we expanded into governance work:

During the first five years, we were small but we had a great impact. We then expanded to include governance - which was more my passion. I decided it was very difficult to talk about women in media, and not talk about women in politics. I had done research for my Masters and it was on whether women in politics do make an impact. I used the ANC as my study. Gender Links had started to use my access, participation and transformation framework in its training. You need access to enter. But once you enter it s important that you create the environment in which women can participate, like having child care centres for instance.

At that time the South African parliament was meeting until 10 pm. Even as women enter you have to create an environment where they can participate, numbers alone will not help you. You need to look at what are the likely obstacles, and it came up in the research: for instance not having education. Quantitatively the women are there, but they are not speaking. Transformation needs to be ensured.

Driving change

With a few staff, a wing and a prayer, GL Board members gave what support they could. The early days were tough, but they were also fun:

Thejiwe Mtintso recalls: Colleen and a group of us drove to Lesotho in Colleen's rattling Tazz. We rattled along into Lesotho, in the middle of the night. She drove the whole way there. She was everything including the driver. I went straight to sleep, and Colleen had presentations the following day. Colleen writes all these beautiful speeches for me to say when we go somewhere; I of course always forget to read them. We were doing some training for something. When we go to the training, and I saw these baSotho women, I just thought,

We just need to chat really. I didn't want to read the speech that Colleen had stayed up writing the night before.

What I found most interesting was that this person was up driving until midnight, and then working all night, and then in the morning running a workshop, and then driving back again in the evening - within two days, everything was done. Now we can talk about staff, but what has sustained GL is Colleen. I am not sure if her drive is normal. In those days, Colleen would drive to Lesotho and Swaziland for training in one week.

Ruth Ayisi adds: I learnt too that to collaborate with Gender Links, you need to be robust! After a long, but rewarding day in the field with Zimbabwean journalists gathering stories showing the different types

of gender violence, we worked at the *Daily News* media house with the layout staff until 3am. Fortunately the next day, was only a half day before we drove back to Johannesburg. Colleen still as fresh as a daisy, drove us home! Despite my efforts not to, I slept for most of the journey.

Since that workshop, Gender Links has given me the opportunity to co-facilitate workshops on gender-based violence in Angola, Mauritius, and Mozambique. I also have had the opportunity to work in the governance area, working on a cutting-edge research project on gender and politics in Mozambique as well as facilitating another workshop; this time on how women politicians in Mozambique can relate better to the media. I was struck by how enthusiastic the women politicians were and appreciative.

Spread your wings and fly away

A favourite theme song at GL Staff and Board meetings is I believe I can fly. Over the last ten years, we have opened satellite offices in Botswana, headquarters of SADC, and Mauritius, our Francophone headquarters. Field offices in Lesotho and Madagascar are being upgraded into satellite offices. An office was opened in Mozambique on 17 March, GL's official tenth birthday. We also have a presence through our governance work in Namibia, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.



Mary Coopan and Ialfine Papisy: Believing we can fly. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

Francophone offices

Loga Virahsawmy recalls: When Madagascar and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) joined SADC Colleen did not waste time and wanted GL to have programmes in these two countries as well. There was no problem with Madagascar as *L'Express* has a daily there and Jerome Boulle the then Editor in Chief is a good friend of Marie-Annick Savrip ne, editor of the GL Francophone Opinion and Commentary Service, and myself. During one of our many workshops in Mauritius, Colleen and I had the chance to meet Ialfine Tracoulat. The very same evening she was my dinner guest and showed great interest in the work of Gender Links. This laid the foundation stone for GL's work in Madagascar.

But DRC was a real challenge. Colleen shared a couple of e-mail addresses. I was advised to contact Aziza Bengwene, Country Director of PANOS. The University of Mauritius gave me the address of Tiefolo Banza, Director of High Authority of Media. But nevertheless the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from which I wanted an official letter advised me not to go to DRC. It was also difficult for them to give me a letter as I was not working for the government. On my insistence and because

I told them they would be responsible if they see my dead body flown back to Mauritius, they gave me copy of a letter that they sent to the authorities in DRC. We also got letters from PANOS and Haute Autorit des M dias (HAM) to facilitate visa procedures.

Marie-Annick and I thought that with all our documents all should be fine. But when we touched down in DRC we were asked to give $100 to be shared with two Customs officers. I told them that at GL we cannot give money without a receipt. But I am glad to say that after the teething problems this is one of the countries that I like best. People are so humble, modest and grateful for everything that they get, be it the workshop or the food at the workshop. I once again count my blessings for having known people who know how to say thank you . Dorothee Swedi and Anna N'gemba Mayimona have since been among my best friends.

In September 2008, Mauritius became a satellite office. It has been a *"parcours de combattante"* (a fighter's journey) with its own joys and pains. Very uphill at times but we have been able to climb the mountain!

The Lusophone office

GL's Board Member in Mozambique, **Eduardo Namburete**, explains the importance of the office opening on 17 March 2011 (coincidentally on GL's 10th birthday): Gender Links has since its establishment managed to get recognition from various sectors from government offices, public and private media to civic society organisation throughout the region, yet it still had to authenticate its status as a regional organisation that covers all the diversity that represents the Southern Africa region.



Monitoring the media at PANOS offices in the DRC. *Photo: Gender Links*

For many, GL is still perceived as a South African organisation working in other Southern Africa countries through subcontracts with its local partners. This impression has, in some cases, made it difficult for local governments and institutions to engage with GL in an open way. This is even stressed in the Portuguese speaking countries where, apart from the lack of a systematic presence in these countries, the language barrier has been a serious blockage for the full engagement of these countries in GL's activities and for benefiting from the knowledge produced by GL.

GL has taken a right step in establishing satellite offices in Mauritius and Botswana which gives it a true image of regional organisation and, by establishing a physical presence in a francophone country; it amplifies the language diversity that comprises the Southern Africa region. In the same direction GL has a unique opportunity to systematically engage the Portuguese speaking countries which, because of language barrier, have felt left out in the knowledge sharing process within the region. Recent studies conducted by GL -

the Gender in Media Education (GIME); the MAP process for the development of Gender and HIV and AIDS policies; the *Glass Ceilings* research and other research projects have shown that the Portuguese speaking countries are facing similar problems faced by the other Southern Africa countries, and for that reason special attention should be paid to these countries which comprise a population of 40 million inhabitants.

After establishing a satellite office in Mauritius, covering the Francophone countries, a more systematic presence in the Portuguese speaking countries would make GL a true regional organisation in all dimensions - geographically and in terms of language.

Mozambique, which has been engaged in almost all major GL research projects, offers a better opportunity for GL to make an entry point in the Portuguese community in the region. A field office in this country can serve the purpose of engaging both Angola and Mozambique, and through these two countries GL can make a sound presence in the world-wide Portuguese community of over 250 million people.

As the demand for GL support is growing in the region and in the two Portuguese speaking countries, in particular Mozambique, where the major public higher education institutions have shown commitment to carry out activities toward bringing gender into their curriculum and policies, and have also indicated the need for GL's support in this process, it is time for GL to contemplate the possibility of strategically positioning itself in these countries by establishing a field office in Mozambique, and through this country reach out to Angola. By doing so GL would have achieved a milestone in raising its profile as regional organisation and transcend all geographic and language barriers.



Mevasse Sibia, Danny Glenwright, Mukayi Makaya, Colleen Lowe Morna, Eduardo Namburete, Sikhonzile Ndlovu at the opening of the Mozambique office. *Photo: Gender Links*

The elusive basket

Our first five year organisational evaluation made a strong plea for donors to pool their resources and offer GL basket funding against our three year strategy and annual plan. This has been the mantra for some time now. In our first few years we worked with over 25 donors, with grants ranging from $1000 to several thousand dollars a year. Each of these grants requires just about as much administration and reporting, no matter how big or small. We have since been able to attract two key bilateral donors, DANIDA, through the Women in Africa Fund, and DFID through the Governance and Transparency Fund. These resources account for the substantial growth of GL over the last three years (see next section). But no donor yet has been willing to go into a basket funding arrangement. Rather than wait for that to happen, GL has become adept at piecing together project funding. I am frequently asked whether we are donor driven. I respond that no one can drive your car if you are firmly in the driver's seat!

More bang for the buck

I smile when I hear our donors hammer home the message on Value for Money. The Americans call it more bang for the buck , a popular saying around GL. Here are some of the ways we have done that:



Meeting of GL donors in Copenhagen facilitated by DANIDA. *Photo: Gender Links*

Administrative costs: Administrative costs are kept to strictly 7% or less of the total budget through:

- Purchase of two adjoining houses with office rights using money obtained from reclaiming VAT as permitted for NGOs that pass the South African Revenue Service's rigorous audits. This eliminates no rent costs. GL has added a conference wing periodically rented out to partners to offset maintenance costs. A guest wing reduces accommodation costs. For example, two independent evaluators conducting a month-long review of the organisation stayed in the house.
- Partnerships with local government associations that have resulted in office space being provided free or at reduced cost in four GL field/satellite offices.
- Monthly monitoring that includes telephone print outs, Internet usage charts and a car log book. Use of email, cyber dialogues and skype reduce communication costs.

Economy in purchase of programme outputs:

- Three quotations are obtained for all purchases and tenders put out for larger procurements.
- Quantity discounts are negotiated with hotels and airlines for big events and workshops.
- GL saves thousands annually through in-kind logistic support. For example in Mauritius the Media Trust, and in DRC, PANOS provide conference facilities free of charge. All workplace activities (e.g. gender policies and action plans in 100 newsrooms and 100 local councils) are conducted on-site at no cost. This also enhances ownership and application.

Taking messages home is both cost effective and politically savvy:

For example GL handed over the SADC 2010 Gender Protocol Barometer to the SADC Executive Secretary at a high profile function in SADC House, Gaborone on 25 October 2010 at no cost but with great publicity and mileage to the Alliance.

- GL has recently employed a logistics and marketing coordinator to compile a database of services and service providers, and to source cheap tickets online.
- Through its regular donor forums, GL has succeeded in getting all but one donor to align their reports to the GL financial year so that one overall audit can be performed annually. Getting donors to collaborate in five yearly institutional and programme evaluations based on the DAC guidelines yields greater depth; cost savings and synergies.
- Staff rules require that every GL functionary carry at least 12kg of publications when they travel: this has ensured efficient, hand to hand distribution of publications.

Rates of return and cost effectiveness:

- A cost benefit analysis is conducted for all fixed assets to determine the cost effectiveness of buying versus renting.
- New staff posts are assessed against the costs (and benefits) outsourcing. GL has a database of over 100 experts and organisations in the region. Human resource costs are split about 2:1 staff versus consultants/associates/partners.
- Quarterly plans and calendars are used for identifying possibilities for dovetailing events so as to cut travel and venue costs and maximise synergies. For example, GL launched the Zimbabwe Centres of Excellence for Local Government training manual together with the *SADC Gender Protocol 2010 Barometer*, making the link between local, regional and international (MDG 3).

Appropriate financial management systems:

- Duties are strictly segregated. Staff raise requisitions; the finance assistant processes payments; the finance officer performs a first check; and finance manager the second check.
- All payments require two signatures (the Executive Director, Deputy Director and a senior manager other than the finance manager are signatories to the account).
- All transactions are recorded by donor in Pastel. Bank reconciliations are done monthly; checked by the finance manager who prepares management reports.

Robust financial accountability and auditing arrangements:

- The internal auditor checks the accounting reports versus the accounting records once a month.
- The Executive Director, Director of Programmes and Finance Manager meet monthly to review expenditure on all budget lines. The variances are analysed and rectified.
- An independent external audit is conducted annually.

"Colleen also had that ability to make GL accountable: showing very clear, concrete and realistic plans. Every year she would force us to do the planning: to say this is where we are going, this is how, and once we have done that, to report. This is what we have done, these are the resources we have used and these are the results. The monitoring and evaluation was not strong in the beginning. But as an organisation, we were evaluating ourselves. Looking back we may have been too harsh on ourselves sometimes. As a board, we were harsh on Colleen, and also harsh on ourselves. We expected a lot of Colleen, and she has never let us down." - Thenjiwe Mtintso

Managing change







Who moved my cheese? by Spencer Johnson is popular reading at GL. We have come to know the mice and how they responded to change: those that wanted the cheese never to move; those who moved with the cheese and those who sniffed ahead and moved before the cheese! No day is ever the same at GL. The three photos tell a story about change: the constant movement and growth.

Table 1.3 (overleaf) tells the story in numbers: the budget and staff have tripled; number of offices increased tenfold; number of people at GL events increased twentyfold. GL is starting to generate some of its own income, through the buildings it has purchased, consultancy services, and the Gender Links training institute. Change is exhilarating, but it is also demanding. When the going gets tough, the tough get going or they find it too much and opt for other courses. The management challenge is to keep enough people on the same track to see the journey through. It is no simple balancing act.

People power

As this book will show, behind GL are its ten Board members; the 57 staff who have come and gone, some still with us; the 87 associates and consultants; and the nearly 50 000 beneficiaries. These people are the foot soldiers of the cause, the heart and soul of Gender Links. Not all have gone the distance. Some staff have found the standards and demands too high, or they have moved on for personal or professional reasons. But we also have many examples (see Chapter three) of staff who have grown tremendously; found themselves and their potential.

Thenjiwe Mtintso reflects: It must be said that an organisation like Gender Links can either build or destroy. I kept saying let us not squander our human resources - though if staff think they are being squandered now, they should have seen us in those formative years. It is important, what GL is doing now - the wellness. Wellness is very important. We don't have a lot of resources, but the resources are our personnel. I am so happy as a founding member, to have seen so many young people walking through the doors of Gender Links, and some of them still write to say where they are and what they are doing. At times young people get angry, they think they are not being treated well. It is only after they leave that they realise that Gender Links was right. You know normally NGOs are very *laissez faire*, so employees there are not expecting much work. At

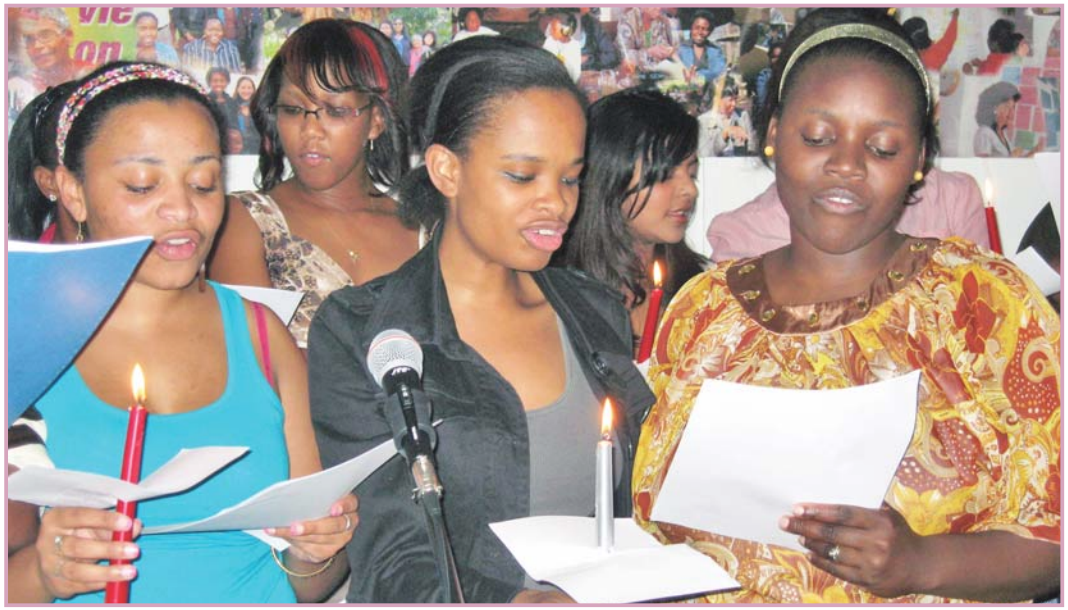
Table 1.3: GL growth 2005/2006 to 2010/2011			
Selected KPIs	**In 2005/6**	**In 2010/11**	**Comments**
Strategic positioning and planning	Every two years - the focus was on strengthening the media.	Currently a three year (2010-2013) strategic plan is in place and a frame-work is being established for five year strategic plan.	The organisation is converting its current three year plan, 2010 to 2013 to a five year plan, 2010 to 2015, incorporating the recommendations of this evaluation.
SADC Gender Protocol	Was not signed in 2006 and GL focus was on limited aspects of the instrument then.	It has become an integral part of GL's ideology.	GL's organisational efforts and activities revolve around the SADC Gender Protocol because they complement each other and GL has been facilitating its adoption and ratification behind the scene.
No. of countries GL operational	One.	Ten.	Satellite and field offices.
No of staff	Ten full-time and two part-time = 12.	36 full time and 14 part time/interns/ volunteers = 50.	A four fold increase in staff.
Partners	40	77	Nearly double.
Budget	R 5.7 million	R 27.6 million	381% increased.
Donor diversification	15	13	Three bilateral donors, providing multi year funding.
Local income generated	None	R 3 136 572.00	10% of the total budget.
Institutional consultancy	None, because it was not quantified in the previous evaluation report.	34% of total local income	A new development.
Training	GL ran non-accredited training.	Training is being institutionalised through accreditation and its functions to be continuously visible.	Training is going to contribute to GL's work in two significant areas 1) impact of GL service on beneficiaries 2) as a source of revenue generating to support sustainability.
Number of participants	1 646	20 515	The number of participants in GL activities in any given year has grown twenty fold over the five years.

Gender Links we run a very tight ship. Business is business. Everybody has a clear job description and a clear performance agreement and of course sometimes we stretch further above the agreement, but there is an appraisal. Many staffers before felt that the appraisal was harsh. I always feel it is better however to be harsh on ourselves, than it is to be lenient.



Lessons learned

Thenjiwe Mtintso: We started basically with what is gender, what is sex. We took on the media, we had to avoid the jargon and coin new terms. And we trained them - because they would not change the article, they would just put red pen marks on the paper. I am proud of where we are. The ability of Gender Links to produce toolkits is great. The best thing we have been able to do is to publish these tool kits. The other day I went to visit my niece at her place of work, and there was our tool kit. It was dated, but it was ours.



Singing to the same tune. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

Ruth Ayisi: Gender Links taught me how to make the issue of gender engaging, lively and relevant to both men and women from all backgrounds. It was not just a workshop of talking heads; we devoted an entire day to field work which resulted in our producing an informative supplement, with moving stories, for a local newspaper; it was a strategy I would repeat again when I was facilitating workshops, not just for Gender Links, but also for organisations that focused specifically on HIV and AIDS and malaria.

Pat Made: I have met amazing women on my journey in GL who are at the top of their game working on issues of gender justice, gender governance and women's human rights. Keabonye Ntsabane in Botswana, Loga Virahsawmy of Mauritius and Sarry Xoagus-Eises of Namibia, among many others, have taught me that a woman with will and a vision for herself can indeed climb a crystal staircase to her dream even amid trials and tribulations; a lesson no book can tell as good as the evidence of the life stories of these women.

I have met men and women in the media on this journey who are committed to media that is democratic and just; where freedom of expression for women and men is integral to a free and independent media; and where the media is always conscious of 'doing no harm'. And, my belief that training is one of the keys to media professionalism and change has been enhanced by the women and men students I have met in media training institutions who show a eagerness to learn how to be the best that they can be when they finally enter the media sector.

All of these audiences I have met on my GL train journey; a journey where I have found many women and men committed to a future of equality, justice and peace for not just some, but for everyone. While my own research, writing, training and editing skills have strengthened because of my association and work with GL, it is the social capital that I have built along the way that is the greatest treasure I've gleaned from my GL journey.

Loga Virahsawmy: My experience at Gender Links has been so rich, meeting so many great people and great minds, learning so much that I will never stop counting my blessings. It is true that I am the oldest one at Gender Links but I am still growing and still learning. It has been a long and fruitful journey.

Home truths

This book is full of much of the formal learning that GL has gained through its monitoring, evaluation and reflection. For me, the last ten years have largely been about affirming the home grown wisdom passed down by my parents, that I have only

grown to appreciate in later years. Last year I celebrated by 50th birthday by walking the 100 mile South Down Way from Winchester to Eastbourne in the UK. I took some time to reflect on the lives of two white South Africans who rebelled against the system they were born into; found themselves in a remote corner of South East Zimbabwe in the tumultuous years of liberation struggle: mobilising communities, fighting for justice, being deported to Botswana, returning after independence in 1980 and eventually both losing their fight to cancer.



Getting out of the box: My father, John Lowe, taught me never to look for obvious answers. A scientist, dreamer, philosopher, teacher and singer, he dared to vision a different kind of Southern Africa long before it came to happen. He challenged norms and hated straight jackets. He loved to walk and would often disappear for many days on his own into the mountains where we grew up. Every time I feel I am at the end of the road I hear him say: get out of the box. It is a phrase I use often at work. Yes we have deadlines, and deliverables and reports must be done, and every donor has its own format. But within that there is so much scope for innovation.

Perhaps one of the greatest marks of GL's achievements is the whole new vocabulary that we have created: 365 Day workshops, Business Unusual ventures, cyber dialogues, and I Stories to name a few. I smile when I hear CNN inviting I Stories as citizen journalism takes the world by storm. I am very sure that it is the then editor of the GL Opinion and Commentary Service Jan Moolman who invented that term, not CNN! Today, there are so many ventures promoting gender equality in and through the media and seeking a region in which women and men are equal in both their private and public lives. Whether they credit Gender Links or not, this is our out of the box thinking, and that will always be our largest footprint.



Getting your ducks in a row: The trick I learned from my mother Joy Lowe is that very soon after you get out of the box you need to get your ducks in a row. The first and at the time only woman maths student at the then University of Natal, my mother was a master planner, mobiliser and logistician. Each day she had a master checklist accompanied by several detailed sub lists all held together with a clothes peg. She arranged her spices in alphabetic order (cinnamon, coriander, cumin, curry and so forth) and did not take kindly to these being disordered! All I know about good systems I learned from my mother. A place for everything, and everything in its place, she used to say. How simple, yet how seldom is this little home truth practised!

Common sense that is not always so common! My mum had a favourite story about how my brother used to love bathing when he was a baby. One day when he was fretting she asked our housekeeper to put the baby in the bath. Minutes later she heard him howling even louder and went to find out why. The baby was in the bath with no bath water! It s one thing to throw away the baby with the bath water, another to have no bath water at all!

The more we have introduced a web of systems, Monitoring and Evaluation tools, the more it strikes me that it is really just the simple things that make a difference, like E Mail headers; giving directions to venues; correct addresses and contact

numbers; data bases for all the things we do so that we do not need to keep reinventing these. Sensible? Of course! Common? No!

Damned if you do, damned if you don't: An academic who spent some time studying GL summed up the dilemma of an NGO such as ours as being the creative tension between being an activist NGO that needs to deliver or die, publish or perish, but at the same time be spontaneous, responsive, able and willing to be flexible (managerialism versus activisim). The media sees us as being radical; many of our feminist friends say that we are not radical enough. Evaluators would like to see more men involved in GL work (we aim and usually achieve about 30% among our beneficiaries). Some feminists say this is a cop out: why should we make overtures to men? We have tried to work through smart partnerships with other NGOs; some say this is empowering; others say we are domineering. My father was fond of saying, damned if you do, damned if you don't ; I find that so true of every day in a manager s life. You offer support, you are micro-managing. You pull back, the work does not get done and then it becomes your headache anyway. So life becomes one long series of negotiating fine lines. Sometimes we get them right; other times we get them so wrong. But then, as my mother would have said, you live and learn.

If you fail to plan, you plan to fail: This is another of Mum's several pieces of wisdom that has carried into my work space. Over time we have tried it all: one year planning, three year planning, five year planning, quarterly plans, monthly plans, bimonthly reports and plans, weekly and even daily plans. She stands over my shoulder every Sunday as I vision my week and every morning as I vision my day.

Life is what happens while you are planning the next move: Yet even as we plan, it remains so important to be open to the unplanned: the unexpected consequences as DFID might say. As the writing and editing team for this book retreated to the Cottages to work on our manuscript for example, we learned that this favourite GL hideaway and training centre was on sale at a bargain price. Within a week the GL decision-making machinery had gone into swing and GL is now the proud owner of a retreat centre that will contribute to sustainability, especially since we became accredited as a training institution.

Do what you can, can what you can't: So much to do, so little time! Whoever said that must have had GL in mind. As I write this on 17 March 2011, GL's actual tenth birthday, my mind is racing. I am catching a flight to Maputo in a few hours to open our new Lusophone office. We are racing the deadline to get the book out before the big party on 30 March. The auditors are starting their annual audit today. We have the second Gender Justice and Local Government Summit coming up. There is a Board meeting, an Alliance meeting, the Cottages to be managed. I hear Joy Lowe saying: do what you can and can what you can't. It's a comforting thought. Then again, as I recall and reminisce, I try to think of any time she put something she wanted to do into a can and I can't think of any!

Maybe in 2015 we will have gender equality and we can all hang up our boots (I tell my daughters that mine is a rare kind of job in which you work to work your way out of a job). I have a sneaking feeling though that come 2015 GL will still need to be around, being a yes we can kind of organisation, and soldiering on!

Aluta continua!!



"Lastly, I would like to see GL not only sustaining where it is at, which is very critical- but going further up. The thing about success is it that it is dangerous, you cannot afford to go lower. When you climb a mountain - and you can ask Colleen, she is the climber of mountains - you never get to the top. At the last board meeting we were flying, we believed we could fly and we flew. And that's the thing about Gender Links, we have to keep going. Where is the top for gender? And when can we say we have achieved gender equality?" - Thenjiwe Mtintso


DIADORA
KAY MOTSE
PEOPLE OPPOSING WOMEN ABUSE
TAC



Who benefits? GL M and E intern Shaudzirai Mudekunye at a Take Back the Night March. *Photo by Colleen Lowe Morna*

Chapter 2

Herstory - Background and methodology

By Colleen Lowe Morna, Shaudzirai Mudekunye and Gladys Muzirwa

"Gender Links is good at linking personal stories to social trends. For example they linked stories coming out of the World Cup in South Africa to sex work, informal trading, and human trafficking. Gender Links has an eye for what others do not see."

- Dr. Samantha Yates, Social Development Adviser, DFID Southern Africa, Pretoria, quoted in GL's External Evaluation

Fact box

- Over ten years GL has organised 1 159 events.
- 48 984 people - 39% men and 61% women have directly participated in GL events.
- GL's Justice programme has had the highest number of beneficiaries overall, likely due to the regional success of the 16 Days of Activism Campaign, which brings in hundreds of people every year.
- 209 beneficiaries responded to the Beneficiary Analysis (BA) questionnaire: 29% men and 71% women.
- 19% of BA respondents can be considered GL's inner circle (staff, board members, interns). The remainder are participants in GL's events over the years.
- Overall, all beneficiaries (inner and outer circles) gave GL a score of 82% across all areas of learning.
- The Governance programme gave the highest ratings to GL's work and what they had learned from it (86%), followed by Justice (85%), the inner circle (81%), Alliance (80%) and finally media (79%).



"My name is Tafadzwa Roberta Muropa, but most people call me "Taffy" or "Faffy", a nickname for Tafadzwa (which in Shona means we have been pleased or blessed). I was born in 1978 in Harare, Zimbabwe towards the end of the liberation war. My father tells me that curfews during this period were rampant as he used to teach at a Salvation Army Mission, known as Howard Mission, Chiweshe, in Mashonaland Central.

I guess that explains why I am so passionate about history, and increasingly about herstory. I attained my Bachelors Degree in economic history and philosophy at the University of Zimbabwe in 2002, worked in the public sector just after completing my degree programme, and in civil society organisations for the past eight years. I am a single mom with a young daughter, Rutendo Ashleigh, who inspires me to become a better person and strive for gender justice in Zimbabwe, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and beyond.

GL is no stranger to intergenerational exchanges and learning. My first encounter with GL Executive Director Colleen Lowe Morna took place at the SADC Gender Protocol Alliance meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa, in August 2008. I noted that even though she is my mom's age, Colleen still has the zeal, energy and determination to centre women's rights in the democratic processes of all our countries. Her command of Shona made me immediately comfortable and at home with her. For any young woman who wants to learn about the story of the women's movement in the region and beyond, GL is the platform for engaging with women from all walks of life. Believe me: knowing GL you will not be deficient in wisdom or love.

Since I have got to know GL I have written a number of articles on issues related to gender justice in Zimbabwe through the Gender Links Opinion and Commentary Service. Even though I have no journalism background, the fact that I have some research background and had some of my stories published online (GL website), boosted my confidence in writing on anything that speaks to gender issues.

I joined the Gender and Media Southern Africa (GEMSA) Zimbabwe chapter in late 2006, and got to be empowered with more writing skills and using ICT in gender justice through the cyber dialogues. Being part of the GEMSA Zimbabwe team has helped me realise that more work needs to be done in ensuring that policymakers in Zimbabwe understand the gender dynamics in the media and the need to promote gender equality in the media sector as part of the democracy agenda!

I have used GL publications in my daily research on gender issues, especially relating to the media and the economy, since these sectors really need transformation, for lack of a better word. My participation as a Gender and Media Zimbabwe (GEMZi) representative at the Fourth Gender and Media (GEM) Summit (held from 13-15 October 2010), inspired me to really work with other media organisations in ensuring that the media sector in Zimbabwe commits itself to gender equality as stipulated in the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development and other protocols that address media freedoms and gender equality."

Taffy's testimonial is one of hundreds that GL has gathered as part of its organisational Beneficiary Analysis (popularly known as the "BA"), conducted to commemorate its ten-year anniversary and help fine-tune strategies for the coming decade. Her story is apt for several reasons. She is a young woman, interested in history and increasingly in herstory, which is what this book is about. Like many GL participants, she has come into contact with the organisation through working around issues related to the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development: a document GL was instrumental in drafting.

Taffy is part of the region's gender and media movement, which GL is strongly associated with, through its roots in media work. Yet she is not a journalist by trade. She is an engaged citizen who has joined her local branch of GEMSA, writes for the GL Opinion

and Commentary Service, and observes the world through a gender lens. She does not necessarily go to every GL event, but remains Gender Linked through the organisation's list serve, website and new publications as they come out.

Perhaps most important, Taffy is a young mother who dreams of a better life for her daughter. She sees instruments like the SADC Gender Protocol not as an end, but a means to an end. She is one of the growing army of activists who share GL's vision of a Southern Africa in which women and men are able to realise their full potential in both private and public life. The direct and indirect contact which she has had, and will continue to have, with the organisation reinforces her resolve.

When Samantha Yates (opening quote to this chapter) says that Gender Links has an eye for what others don't see, she is really referring to thousands of eyes: 48 984 to be precise. This is the exact number of direct beneficiaries of GL's work over the past ten years. GL is an organisation that has touched, and changed, the lives of thousands of people throughout Southern Africa and the world. And these thousands of people have also touched GL, making it the successful organisation it is today. This book celebrates some of those people. Who are the almost 50 000 people that GL has interacted with directly over the last decade? Which countries do they come from? Are they women or men? Through which programme has GL met them? How are these links sustained? What other ways do we interact with them? What institutional links have been made through this process? How is this leading to change, at individual, institutional, national and regional level? How can this momentum for change be improved and sustained?

These are some of the questions GL set out to answer in this ten year commemorative book. This chapter provides a brief background to the organisation, its programmes and methods of working; statistics on who has been reached and the methodology adopted for conducting the Beneficiary Analysis. The chapter also provides the main findings of the study, which are then broken down and interrogated in greater detail in the subsequent chapters.



Asking the big questions: GMDC Manager Saeanna Chingamuka. *Photo: Gender Links*

Regional context

Southern Africa must confront a myriad of challenges as it attempts to address effectively the needs and aspirations of its 100 million people: 40% of whom live in extreme poverty with per capita incomes ranging from US$256 per annum in Zimbabwe to US$5099 in Mauritius. The greatest challenge of SADC continues to be the need to build a life for its people free from poverty, disease, human rights abuses, gender inequality and environmental degradation.

The status of women is closely linked to the political context within each country. In Southern Africa, this context includes colonisation, decolonisation, the switch from one-party to multi-party politics, liberation struggles from white minority rule and occupation, as well as the ideological inclinations of dominant parties.

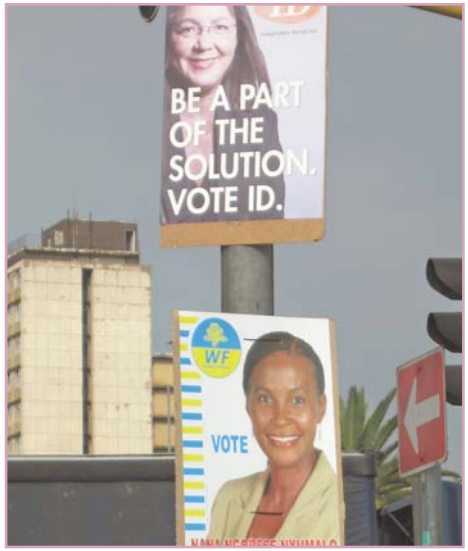
Table 2.1 Historical country divisions in SADC							
Category	**New liberation**	**Older liberation**	**Older liberation and civil war**	**Old democracies**	**One party - multi-party**	**Monarchy**	**Conflict**
SADC countries	South Africa Namibia	Zimbabwe	Angola Mozambique	Botswana Mauritius	Tanzania Seychelles Zambia Malawi	Swaziland Lesotho	DRC Madagascar
Features of each category	Constitutions crafted around the time of the Beijing conference	Gender tangential to liberation war.	Women emerged strongly in second wave struggles.	Socially conservative Democratic traditions	Progressive tendencies over-shadowed by social conservatism except Tanzania and Seychelles.	Socially conservative	Flux
Women in parliament	High (30% and above has been reached)	Low (15% and below)	High (30% and above)	Low (20% and below)	High only in the Tanzania and Seychelles	Low (15% and below)	Low (15% and below)

Table 2.1 places the 15 SADC countries into six categories - from those that are newly liberated to those in conflict - and links these to women's representation in parliament. Although the political representation of women is just one indicator of gender equality, it is a useful reflection of whether a country has an enabling environment for the advancement of women.

The table shows that the most progressive provisions for gender equality are in the "new liberation" countries which emerged just before or after the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. Both countries have had 30% or higher women in national and local politics. However, in the case of Namibia, 2009 elections saw the country move backwards as far as women's representation, from a high of 30.8%

The older liberation countries are divided into the two that experienced further civil war (Mozambique and Angola), in which women have found their voice in the second generation struggles, and Zimbabwe, in which women's rights have receded as political repression has mounted. Mozambique and Angola currently have among the highest proportion of women in parliament in SADC (36% and 34% respectively).

The other countries, ranging from the two old established democracies; to one party turned multiparty states to monarchies and countries in conflict all have one common feature: relatively low levels (15% or less)



Election posters in South Africa, which has the highest representation of women in parliament in SADC.
Photo: Gender Links

women in parliament. The dominant factor here is conservative social and cultural forces that constantly claw back gains made by women.

Tanzania, whose ruling party is rooted in strong social democratic traditions with close links to the Nordic countries, is a notable exception. Tanzania is the only SADC country that has a constitutional quota of at least one third women in political decision-making. Seychelles, the Indian Ocean Island of just 80 000 people of mixed race origin, with many men living as migrants abroad and a strong matriarchal tradition, is the other exception. Women have consistently had a strong showing in decision-making positions in Seychelles without resorting to quotas or special measures. As reflected in the annual Southern Africa Gender Protocol Barometer, the following key challenges confront the region:



Poverty has a feminine face in the SADC region. *Photo: Trevor Davies*

- **On the health front**, the HIV and AIDS pandemic has become one of the major obstacles to sustainable development. This includes erosion of productivity in the work place, food insecurity and the livelihood asset base, decreased access to education and other productive assets, thereby exacerbating poverty. Women constitute the majority of those infected by the virus, as well as those whose time and effort is now called on, with no compensation or remuneration, to provide care for those living with AIDS.

- **At a social level**, migration has become an important and divisive issue in the region. The major economy in Southern Africa, South Africa, was host to nearly two million asylum seekers in 2008. The ongoing crisis in Zimbabwe continues to generate mass movements of people within the region, while thousands of Southern Africans seek other opportunities in the UK, US and elsewhere.

- With regard to **women's rights**, despite numerous commitments to gender equality in Southern Africa, women remain under-represented in all areas of decision-making and constitute the majority of the poor, the voiceless and the dispossessed.

Under the customary law that continues to govern the daily lives of most women, contrary to the provisions of modern laws, women remain minors all their lives, unable to own or inherit property.

- **Economically**, Southern African countries continue to struggle with the challenges of economic development and most of them will not meet the targets set by the Millennium Declaration for 2015. External and internal policies have combined to generate unsustainable debt burdens for some of the Southern African countries, undermining their capacity and their ownership of strategies for development. Poverty remains a major challenge for the region, especially among women and children.

- **Women also lack a voice in the affairs that affect their lives**. The *Gender and Media Baseline Study* (GMBS) conducted by GL and the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) in 2003 showed that women comprise a mere 17% of news sources in the region and are portrayed in a limited range of roles, most often as sexual objects or victims of violence. Despite commitments to freedom of expression, women's views and voices are systematically excluded from debates and decisions that affect their lives. The 2010 follow-up *Gender and Media Progress Study* (GMPS) found that this number has only gone up two percentage points to 19% in seven years. This continues to be an area of concern.

As GL's 2004 study, *Ringing up the Changes: Gender and Politics in Southern Africa* shows, this exclusion undermines accountability, transparency, responsiveness and good governance. Gender equality is both a fundamental right as well as a pre-requisite for more effective governance.

Organisational context

Gender Links is a Southern African NGO founded in 2001 that envisions a region in which women and men are able to participate equally in all aspects of public and private life in accordance with the provisions of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, adopted in August 2008. This unique sub-regional instrument that GL and 40 partner organisations campaigned for is a global best practice of civil society engagement with a regional institution, for which GL has won several awards. It provides a roadmap for the attainment of MDG 3 - gender equality - by breaking this overarching goal into 28 specific targets to be attained by 2015.

With its headquarters in Johannesburg, South Africa, and satellite offices in Mauritius (covering Francophone countries), Botswana (home of the SADC Secretariat), Mozambique (covering Lusophone countries) and Lesotho, as well as field offices in Madagascar, Namibia, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe, GL coordinates the work of the Southern African Gender Protocol Alliance that produces an annual barometer of performance by countries against the Gender Protocol targets.

GL has also integrated the targets of the Protocol into its core governance, media and justice programmes. With strong linkages from local to national, to regional and international level (see Figure 2.1), GL works at the macro (policy) and micro (workplace and local) level to promote the empowerment of women who constitute the majority of the poor, unemployed and dispossessed in Southern Africa.

GL's "way of working" (see Figure 2.2 overleaf) involves the use of evidence-based research in its programme work; advocacy in multi-media formats drawing from GL's core media strength; corrective action plans; capacity-building through on-the-job support, soon to be expanded to include peer learning; documenting; drawing out lessons learned and good practices through summits such as the Gender and Media, as well as the Gender and Local Government, summit described as "market places of ideas."

Figure 2.1: Reaching out from local to international

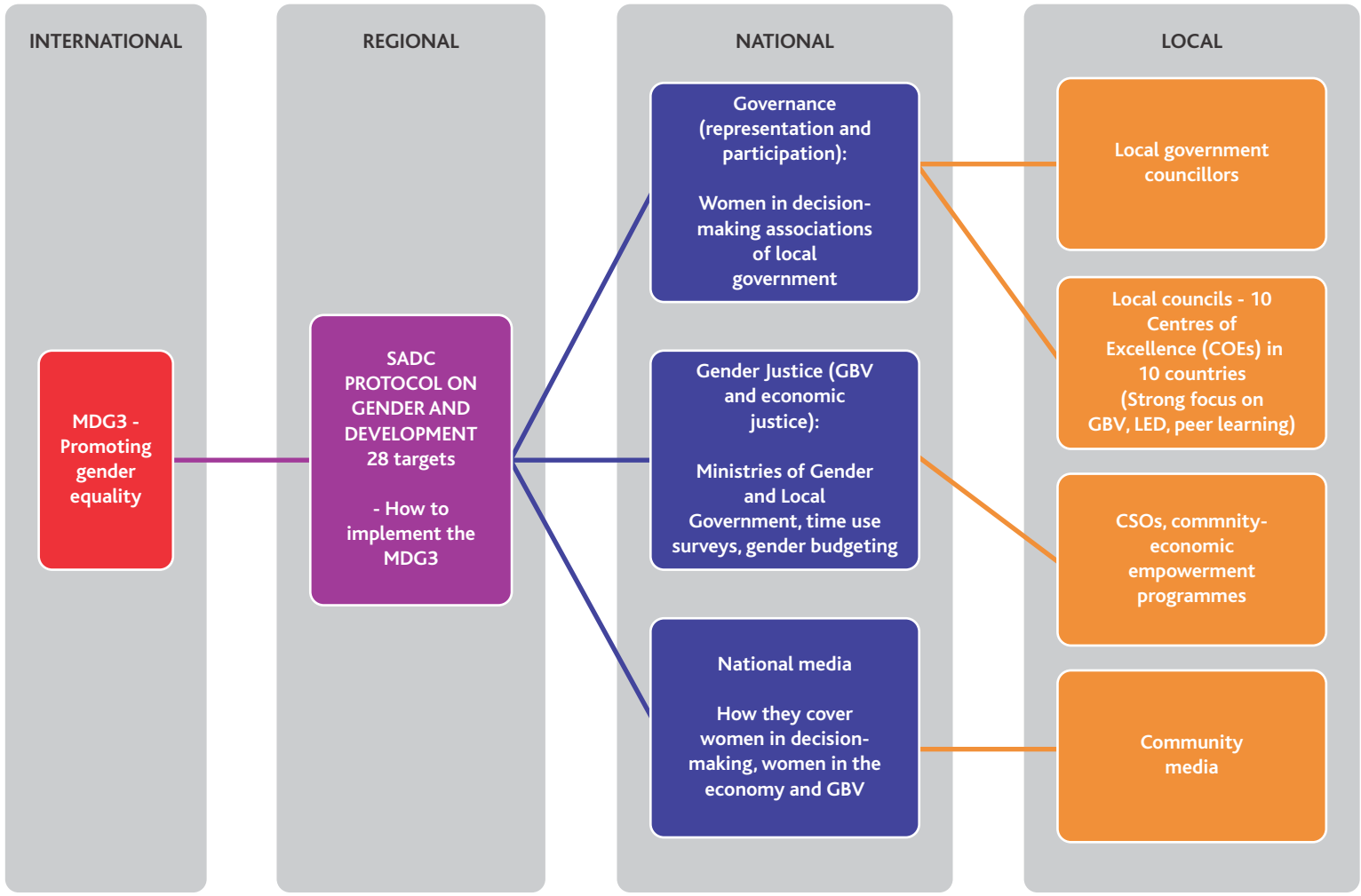
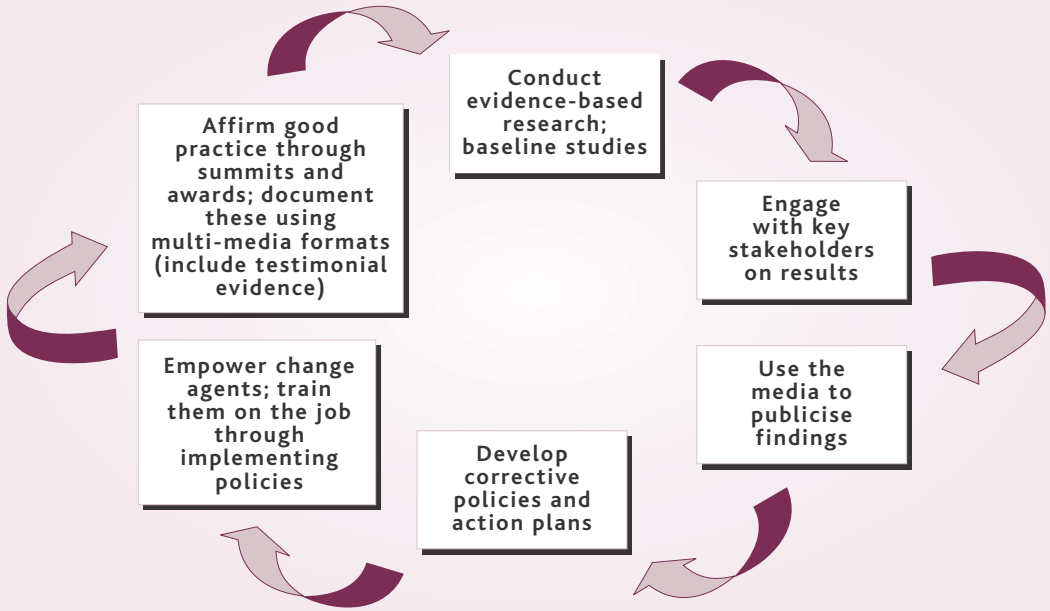


Figure 2.2: GL's way of working



Key achievements

In 2009 GL was a runner-up in the *Drivers of Change Award* administered by the Southern Africa Trust and also won the *Top Women Award* administered by the South African private sector in the non-profit category. In 2010, GL won the *Mail and Guardian* newspaper's *Investing in the Future* Award.

Key achievements that the organisation can point to include:

Adoption by Heads of State in August 2008 of a strong sub-regional instrument for attaining gender equality that enhances existing international commitments (especially MDG 3) through specific, time-bound targets and time frames: The GL-led Gender Protocol campaign is recognised globally as a strategic and ground-breaking intervention demonstrating the agenda-setting power of civil society and its critical watchdog function. No SADC protocol has been adopted in such a short time (three years) or with the same degree of publicity. Although there were some losses in the negotiations, these are far outweighed by the gains that include the requirement that all countries enshrine gender equality in their constitutions and that these not be contradicted by any custom, tradition or practice.

Strengthening the women's movement and civil society in Southern Africa: The Protocol has provided a framework for gender organisations to organise across themes and within each country. While this is an area that requires constant management, the Alliance *Roadmap to Equality* case study and DVD have been shared at dozens of forums in Southern Africa and globally. The SADC Congress of NGOs has invited the Alliance to represent the gender sector within this broad umbrella that lobbies the regional body on a range of issues from poverty reduction, to climate change, to support for fragile states. The Alliance clusters are also being mainstreamed within all SADC Council of Non-Governmental Organisations (CNGO) sectors e.g. peace and security.

Holding governments accountable: The campaign around the SADC Protocol moved quickly from adoption to implementation, through an initial Baseline Barometer, followed by a Progress Barometer launched at the SADC Heads of State Summits in DRC (2009) and Namibia (2010) and presented to the SADC Executive Secretary at SADC House, Botswana, in a highly publicised event in October 2010. The Progress Barometer

and country reports were launched by alliance focal networks in all SADC countries in the period up to December 2010, using the tenth anniversary of the MDGs to sustain momentum.

Developing sector-specific strategies in GL's niche areas for achieving the Protocol targets: GL has worked with stakeholders across sectors to develop strategies and policies to ensure that the provisions in the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development are achieved by:

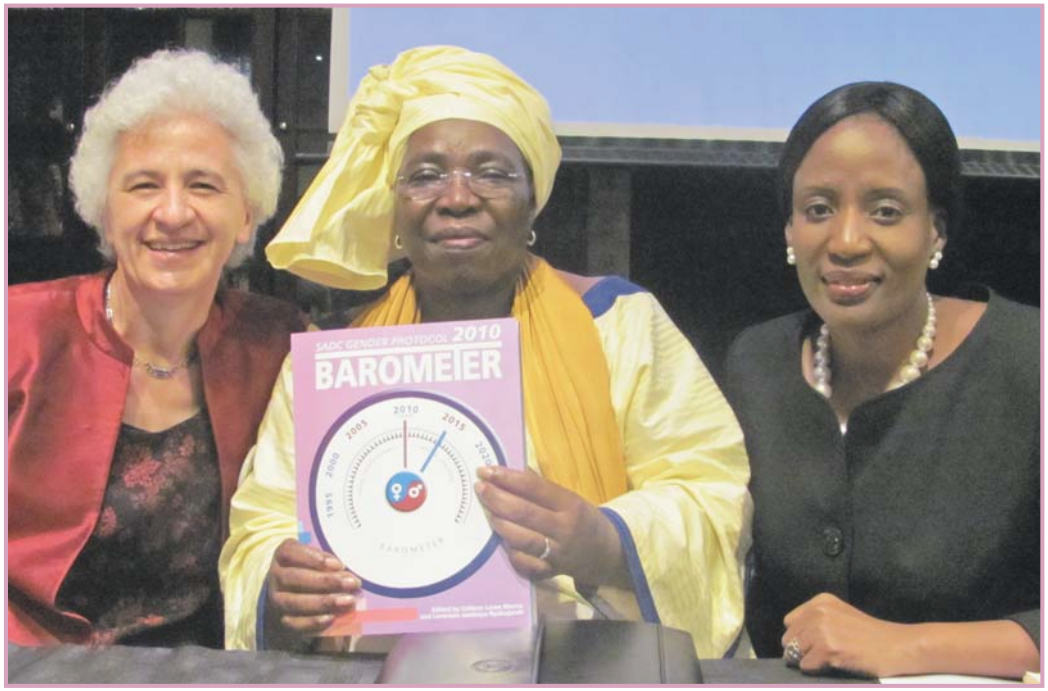
- Starting a gender and media movement; conducting ground breaking research on gender and media content, composition and audiences; creating a physical and virtual Gender and Media Diversity Centre (GMDC); working with 27 media education institutions on mainstreaming gender in media curriculum; working with ten self and statutory media regulators on gender codes of practice; working with media partners in ten countries to produce 148 gender-aware HIV and AIDS policies in 2008/2009 and following up with 100 gender policies in newsrooms in 2010/2011.
- Putting gender violence on the political agenda through strategic and well-publicised 16 Days of Activism campaigns; working with governments and civil society to develop nine national action plans to end gender violence that are now being used by the UN Department for the Advancement of Women (DAW) as models in the UN Secretary General's UNite campaign (GL is one of three African NGOs that sit on the UN Secretary General's Africa advisory committee for the campaign).
- Developing indicators to measure gender violence including piloting a prevalence survey that the UN Economic Commission for Africa Centre for Women wants to replicate.
- Putting gender and local governance on the agenda; working with partners in eight countries to develop national strategies for mainstreaming gender in local government; developing district gender and GBV action plans in 2009/10; following this up with 100 Centres of Excellence for gender mainstreaming that focus cross-programme inputs in specific localities to achieve measurable outcomes.



Anna Beukes, Colleen Lowe Morna and Sarry Xoagus-Eises at an Alliance strategy meeting in Namibia. *Photo: Mukayi Makaya*

Evidence of the Protocol@work in policies and practices: The *2010 SADC Gender Protocol Progress Barometer* provides emerging evidence of how the SADC Gender Protocol is being put to use. These include an audit by the South African Business

Women's Association of women in the private sector using the Protocol targets as a benchmark; advocacy for strong constitutional provisions for gender equality where constitutions are being reviewed (notably in two fragile states, Zimbabwe and Madagascar); the campaign to remunerate the unwaged work of women who care for those living with HIV and AIDS using Protocol provisions; a new 30% quota for women to access land instituted by the Zambian government; and policy directives by governments in Mauritius and Zambia that all budgets be reviewed for gender responsiveness before they are approved by parliament. These daily developments are also tracked in the monthly *Roadmap to Equality* newsletter produced with input from Alliance partners.



GL Executive Director Colleen Lowe Morna, South African Foreign Minister Nkosozana Dlamini-Zuma and SADC Gender Unit Head Magdalene Madibela at the launch of the 2010 Southern Africa Gender Protocol Barometer. *Photo: Mukayi Makaya*

GL events

GL events over the years have ranged from book launches, to training workshops, to research, strategy and action plan meetings, cyber dialogues, on-line chats, marches and advocacy workshops.

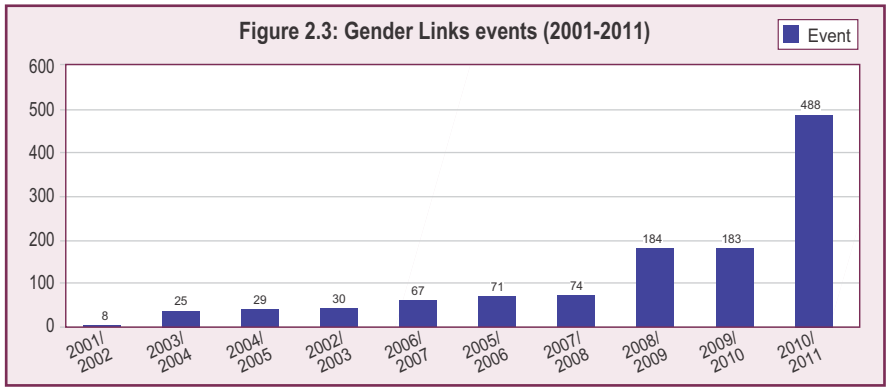


Figure 2.3 illustrates that over ten years GL has organised 1 159 events. As the graph shows there has been an increase in the number of events since the inception of the organisation, increasing from 183 to 488 between the financial years of 2009/2010 to 2010/2011. This reflects that as programmes develop, they are able to reach more people. The development of the Governance programme, for instance, has ensured that more people are reached by the activities of field officers stationed in different countries throughout SADC.

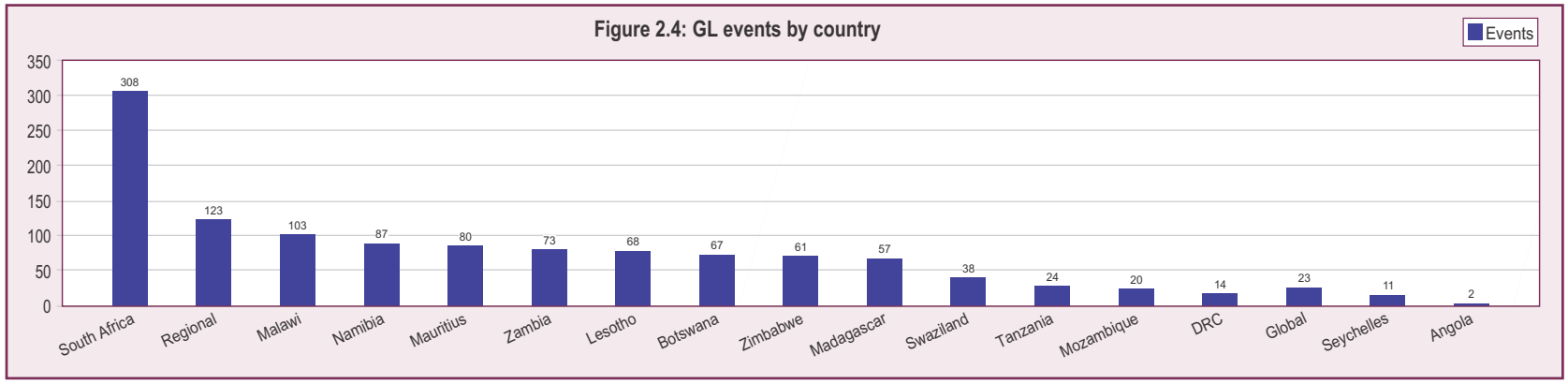


Figure 2.4 shows the breakdown of events by country. South Africa is the home base of Gender Links and Johannesburg is the regional hub. It therefore has the highest number of events over the ten year period. This is followed by regional events, which are events that have taken place in any SADC country but include participants from all over the region, for example regional summits or meetings. Interestingly, Malawi comes in third place, ahead of countries where GL has satellite offices, with 103 events, likely due to the high number of village-level workshops held in the country through the Alliance programme. Despite GL not having a formal office in Malawi, this shows the organisation nevertheless able to reach out to all SADC countries. GL has also hosted international events, logging 23 in the "global" category. These include annual events held during the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) conference in New York and at other international platforms.



French Opinion and Commentary Service Editor Marie-Annick Savripène. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

Finally, these statistics show that GL needs to improve its visibility in Lusophone and Francophone countries, including Angola, where only two events were held in the last ten years. Although Angola is a difficult country to work in, there are hopes that with the launch of GL's Lusophone Opinion and Commentary Service as well as a new satellite office in Mozambique, the organisation will soon have a bigger footprint in Portuguese Southern Africa. GL's work in countries like the DRC and Madagascar continues to grow, despite the struggles on the ground in these conflict-prone states.

Partnerships

"GL has made significant progress in collaborating with governments in the region, the organisation is gifted in managing partnerships; it has made progress in Francophone countries, and its publications are high quality and are used by many organisations and individuals across the board."

Ammu Joseph, member of the Network of Women in Media, India; her contact with GL goes back to 2002. She attended Gender and Media Summits in 2004, 2008 and 2010.

"Gender is the least addressed issue in DRC due to prevailing political and security problems this important issue has not received adequate attention and GL's approach through PANOS International, an international French organisation in 2007 was a welcome opportunity for the country to work with GL. Four universities have expressed their interest to work with GL and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been signed and they are waiting for launching of a project."

Dorothée Swedi, UCOFEM, DRC.

As its name suggests, Gender Links is an organisation built on partnerships. Long before GL had staff or offices in any of the SADC countries, it had links with a wide variety of partners. As the organisation has matured, it has become more adept at formalising these partnerships and organising them into networks and other formations that increase leverage and assist with effective management.

Table 2.2: Partnerships

PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY	REGIONAL PARTNERS	INTERNATIONAL LINKAGES
SADC Gender Protocol		
Building a coalition of regional and national NGOs that promote gender equality	MOUs with 7 regional NGOs to lead theme clusters: MOUs with 15 national coalitions of gender NGOs e.g. BOCONGO in Botswana; the Women's Coalition in Zimbabwe; the Gender Coordinating Network in Malawi. The Alliance represents the gender sector in the SADC Congress of NGOs (SADC CNGO). The Alliance also enjoys a close working relationship with the SADC Gender Unit.	GL is a member of FEMENET which convenes the Africa caucus at the annual meeting of the UN Commission on the Status of Women; GL convenes the Southern Africa caucus on behalf of the Alliance at CSW; produces hard copy and online newspapers and conducts cyber dialogues. GL has applied for ECOSOC observer status, and has observer status with the World Bank and IMF.
Media		
Direct approaches to media houses for developing gender policies; building long term institutional relations with media regulators and training institutions.	125 media houses working on gender policies in ten countries. A letter from management and report of the stage one management meeting are filed at head office before policy work proceeds. MOUs with eight media studies departments of universities as part of the Gender and Media Diversity Centre (GMDC) that "collects, connects and collaborates" in research, curriculum development.	International partners of the GMDC include the International Federation of Journalists based in Brussels; the International Media Women's Foundation (Washington); the World Association of Christian Communicators that conducts the Global Media Monitoring Project (Toronto); University of Gothenburg Media Studies Department; Network of Women in Media, India.
Governance		
Formalising links with local government associations and/or gender/local government ministries; approaches through these to 100 COE municipalities.	MOUs agreed or in final stages in ten countries where GL is working. Some of these cover the ten municipalities in the country that have signed up as Centres of Excellence in Gender Mainstreaming (COEs); others have direct MOUs with GL.	International partners with whom GL regularly interacts on governance include the Inter Parliamentary Union (Geneva); International IDEAS (Stockholm); the DANIDA Women in Africa fund grantees; the DFID Governance and Transparency Fund (GTF) Grantees.
Justice		
Formalising links with gender and justice ministries for the GBV indicators project.	MOUs with gender ministries in Mauritius and Botswana; the Mauritius Research Council; Medical Research Council (MRC), South Africa.	MOU with the UN ECA Africa Centre for Women; member of the UN DAW Expert Group on National Action Plans to End GBV; member of the Secretary General's Africa UNiTE campaign advisory group.

Table 2.2 shows how partnerships have been built around key programmes, regionally and internationally. Gender Links' key partners are media organisations, academia, research organisations, government ministries, and local government associations in the region. Partnerships with these organisations have grown overtime. Gender Links has taken steps to strengthen partnerships with the various organisations with the view of ensuring sustainability and encouraging these partners to take greater ownership of work. These include formalising the partnerships through the signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) and forming strategic alliances. Some MOUs are agreed while others are in final stages or being negotiated. For the SADC Gender Protocol work, GL has signed MOUs with seven regional NGOs to lead theme clusters and MOUs with 12 national coalitions of gender NGOs such as BOCONGO in Botswana; the Women's Coalition in Zimbabwe; and the Gender Coordinating Network in Malawi.

GL has also signed MOUs with: ten local government associations and with municipalities that have signed up as Centres of Excellence in Gender Mainstreaming (COEs) in ten countries where GL is working; eight media studies departments of universities as part of GMDC that "collects, connects and collaborates" in research, curriculum development; MOUs with media houses, and media regulators; and MOUs with gender ministries in Mauritius and Botswana; the Mauritius Research Council; Medical Research Council (South Africa) for its gender justice programme. As the coordinator of the Alliance Secretariat, GL has developed strategic alliances with the SADC Congress of NGOs (SADC CNGO), with the SADC Gender Unit, and with VSO-RAISA that is well connected to the SADC Parliamentary Forum, and some former and current Heads of States and first ladies to take forward the care work campaign. GL has developed other strategic alliances with the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) and South Africa National Editor's Forum (SANEF).

Managing from behind

The strategy of partnerships allows GL to manage from behind while making others shine or take the limelight at the national level. For example, the strategy for the SADC Gender Protocol is to build a coalition of regional and national NGOs that promote gender equality. GL's strategy for its gender and media programme is to develop direct partnerships with individual media houses and institutional relations with media regulators and training institutions. For its governance and gender justice programmes GL has formal links with local government associations and gender/local government ministries through the approach of 100 Centres of Excellence (COE) with municipalities across the region.

Involving partners in planning

As the coordinating NGO of the Southern Africa Gender Protocol Alliance, GL involves alliance members in developing and



GMDC advisory group. *Photo: Gender Links*

implementing the annual plans. The local government associations plan the training workshops together with GL and they co-facilitate some sessions. The associations have also met some of the training costs, such as provision of transport in the rural councils and meeting the cost of catering in urban councils especially in South Africa.

Other examples of how partners influence programming at GL is the suggestion made at the GMDC advisory group meeting in February 2009 that GL conduct a *Gender in Media Education* (GIME) Audit to identify strategic entry points in media training that have long term, multiplier effects. This research, canvassed at the World Conference of Journalism Educators and then the GEM Summit has led to a new initiative, supported by UNESCO, to mainstream gender in media education through a Community of Practise that involves peer learning and support among media trainers. Similarly, during the Gender Justice and Local Government Summit in March 2010, local government authorities worked with GL to conceptualise the Centres of Excellence in Gender Mainstreaming in now being implemented in 100 councils across the region.

GL also creates reference groups for all its research and holds partner consultative meetings to engage with findings before the final product is published. For example, before publishing the GMPS at the GEM Summit in October 2010 GL conducted workshops of editors, journalists, media analysis and gender activists in all 15 SADC countries to reflect on the findings of this study that involved analysis of 33 000 news items. In addition, CSO coalitions at the national level make input into the draft national barometers before they are published.

"GL is a unique organisation which sees partnerships positively and empowers the partners to become visible and relevant in their ways and facilities them without competition. While some organisations are competing and trying to outdo others, GL finds it important to empower others and that practice has earned the organisation respect and reputation".

- Perkins Francis Duri, Urban Councils Association of Zimbabwe.

"Gender Links sees potential in a person; trains them and gives them backing to deliver. As a result the person becomes passionate and committed to Gender Links' work".

- Pushpa Jamieson, Gender Policy Country Facilitator Malawi.

Empowering partners

GL's 2010 external organisational evaluation observed that: "GL is largely known for its empowerment of others rather than competing with them, according to several partners. The respondents included local government personnel, national broadcasting corporations, government ministers, university instructors, UN staff and international partners, who separately confirmed that GL is an organisation of very high integrity and partnership. The partnerships are built on mutual benefits. GL is a generous organisation in sharing its publications and allowing others free access to its web site.

Once a potential strategic partner is identified and becomes a willing partner, an MOU is signed. These partnerships are built with different groups, individuals, organisations, each reflecting the uniqueness of the partnership."

Communication and feedback

GL provides essential information to its partners; these include training facilitation, networking, sharing important and appropriate publications and information of common interest.

GL has three monthly newsletters: *Gender Linked* for staff, Board and associates; *Diversity Exchange*, the newsletter of the Gender and Media Diversity Centre; and *Roadmap to Equality*, the newsletter of the Southern Africa Gender Protocol Alliance.

Annual questionnaires are sent to partners and an internal assessment of partnerships is conducted at every Board meeting, following recommendations made in the first five year evaluation report. This form is also found online.

GL's Beneficiary Analysis provided a further opportunity for partners and beneficiaries to feed back to the organisation. The two

five year organisational evaluations are also an opportunity for partners to express themselves freely through a third party.

The GMDC advisory group and the Alliance steering committee meet twice a year. These meetings include a SWOT analysis where there is open and honest feedback.

Challenges

Managing partnerships is an ongoing challenge. Strengths can also be weaknesses. For example, in the excerpt from the Alliance SWOT in August 2010, some partners perceived having a powerful Secretariat as a strength while others saw this as "dominance of the coordinating organisation." Excerpts from the Alliance SWOT, August 2010:

Strengths

- Powerful Secretariat.
- Strong commitment by the Secretariat.
- Strong coordination and organising skills.
- Good communication skills and follow up strategies.
- Good at organising partnerships.
- Good at utilising available resources.
- Expertise on gender issues to influence regional change.

Weaknesses

- Dominance of the coordinating organisation.
- Lack of accountability and transparency by the lead organisations.
- Lack of country assistance to lobby for Protocol signing/ratification.
- Limited resources - inadequate funding for the regional programme.

The 2005 organisational evaluation identified the catch 22 that GL found itself in the partnership with GEMSA. On the one hand, the region (and NGO history) is resplendent with examples of networks inspired by a particular event (in this case the Gender and Media Summit) that get formed, do not have a support base, and collapse. On the other hand, if GL hosted and supported the Network, it ran the risk of being accused of dominating its affairs and the Network not developing its own identity.

GEMSA is a wholly autonomous network with registered chapters in ten SADC countries. Some of these, for example Media Watch Organisation in Mauritius and GEM Plus in the Seychelles, predate the regional network. GL helped to found these now strong national networks before the inauguration of the regional networks. In other cases, for example UCOFEM in the DRC, are existing networks affiliated to GEMSA. In other countries such as Tanzania, GEMSA helped to found new national networks. Generally, long standing national networks have performed well, while the new networks and the regional secretariat have had high staff turnover and have failed to raise funds for their operations.



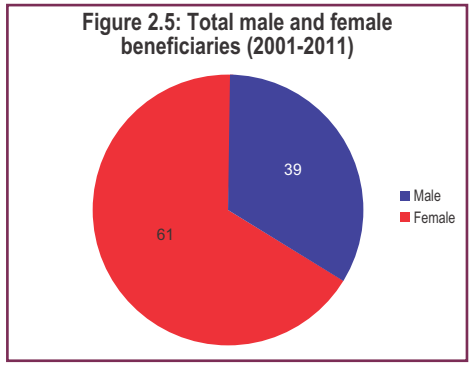
Alliance partners: Jennifer Mufune of GEMSA and Fanny Chirisa of WIPSU. *Photo: Mukayi Makaya*

An evaluation of GL work funded by DFID found that capacity constraints in the GEMSA regional secretariat were hampering joint projects. While GL is a research, advocacy and training institution with a reputation for high quality products and services, GEMSA is a membership network that has good mobilising power but is often fraught with network politics that hinder delivery.

The management of partnerships is an on-going challenge, in work as in life. It requires constant review, negotiation, restructuring and repositioning. What is clear is that these links are essential, and greatly leverage any work with individuals. Partnerships are the means to much wider circles of influence. That is why each of the programme chapters of this books begins with an analysis of institutional linkages, before going on to examine the individuals reached.

Beneficiaries

Figure 2.5 represents the total percentage of female and male beneficiaries over ten years. The actual number of beneficiaries stands at 48 984, of which 39% have been men and 61% women. Part of Gender Links' work lies in changing the attitudes of men, this includes involving men in all aspects of Gender Links programmes, while maintaining a steady involvement of women.



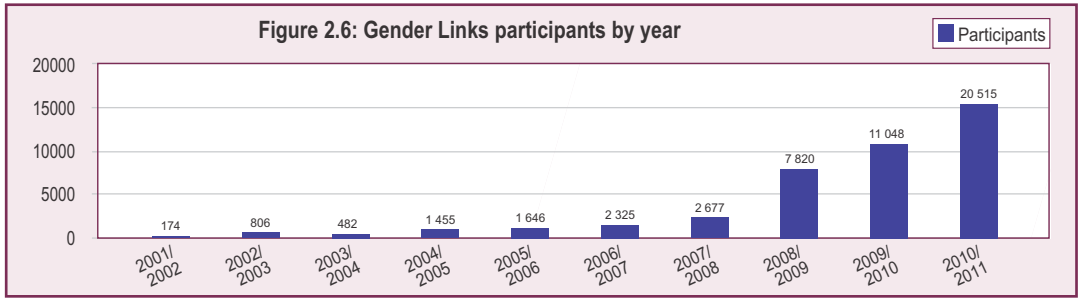


Figure 2.6 illustrates the incredible growth in Gender Links over ten years. From 2001/2002 when the organisation had just 174 event participants to 2010/2011 when it had more than 20 000, GL has grown dramatically to reach thousands more people than it did just a few years ago.

Table 2.3 illustrates the number of GL beneficiaries broken down by programme area and percentage of men and women. Some statistics were not broken down by sex (e.g. large village meetings), so the percentages of women and men participants are based on only the numbers where sex is known. GL advisory services (86%) has had the highest number of women beneficiaries, while GL's Justice and Governance programmes have had the highest number of men beneficiaries (both 41%).

Table 2.3: GL beneficiaries by programme

Programme	M	F	U	T	%women*	%men*	%Total
Media	3 601	5 761	525	9 887	62	38	20
Justice	4 428	7 584	4 617	16 629	63	37	34
Governance	3 425	4 921	122	8 468	59	41	17
Alliance	1 336	1 904	10 420	13 660	59	41	28
Advisory Services	49	291		340	86	14	1
Total	**12 839**	**20 461**	**15 684**	**48 984**	**61**	**39**	**100**

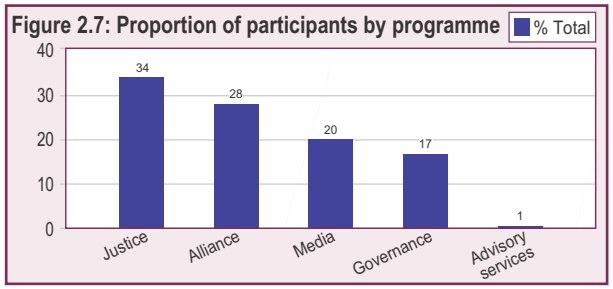


Figure 2.7 shows that GL's Justice programme has had the highest number of beneficiaries overall, likely due to the regional success of the Sixteen Days of Activism Campaign, which brings in hundreds of people every year. The Alliance programme has also posted high numbers of beneficiaries due to the importance of village-level workshops throughout the region in order to publicise the SADC Protocol. Although the Media programme is GL's longest-running programme, its beneficiary numbers are likely lower because of its more targeted interventions with specific SADC media houses and practitioners. These beneficiary findings will be discussed in further detail in subsequent chapters.

Beneficiaries by country

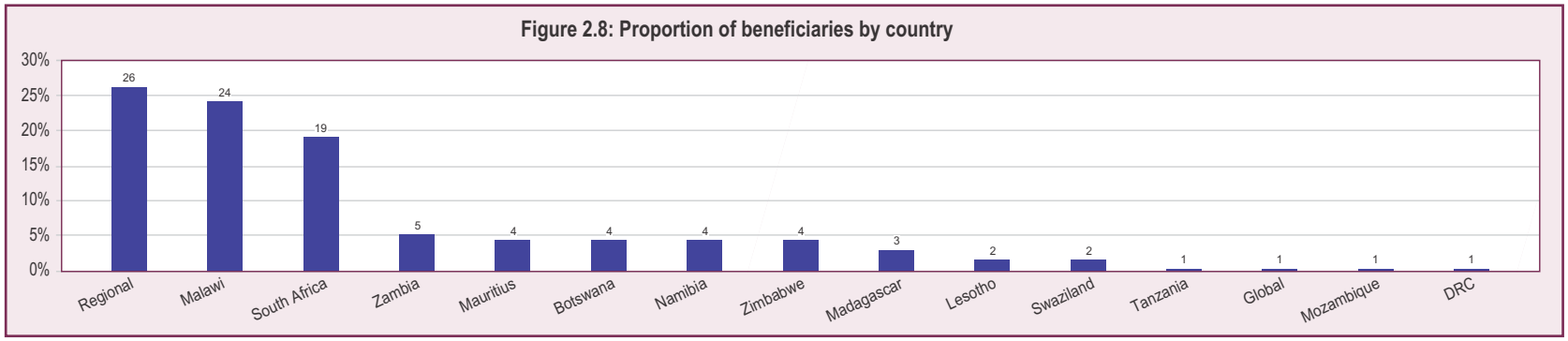


Figure 2.8 illustrates that the highest number of beneficiaries is in the regional category, which means beneficiaries who have attended events where there was a regional presence. The second highest is Malawi (24%) where the most village-level SADC Protocol workshops have been held and conducted by an Alliance partner there, followed by South Africa (19%) home to GL's head office. The other countries all have similar numbers of beneficiaries, ranging from 1 to 5% of the total.



Village-level workshop at Baie du Tombeau, Mauritius. *Photo: Loga Virahsawmy*

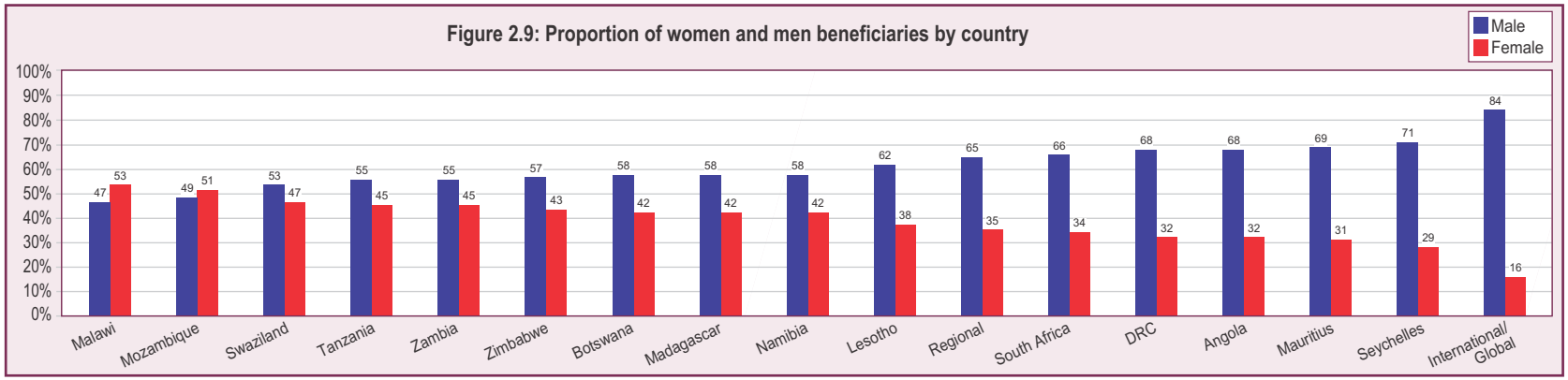


Figure 2.9 shows, in descending order, the percentages of women and men beneficiaries per country category. The highest number of women beneficiaries was reached through international events (84%). More women were reached in almost every country except Malawi (53% men) and Mozambique (51% men).

Beneficiary analysis

The BA sought to collect information from a sample of beneficiaries who have worked with GL consistently over the past ten years. This feedback will be used to assess how the programmes and interventions undertaken by GL have benefitted organisations and individuals and how they have enabled beneficiaries to promote equality and justice for women and men in their countries. GL also sought through the BA to find ways of improving our interventions and sharpening areas of focus.

The BA study took place from August 2010 to February 2011. The study took researchers to all corners of SADC in order to reach as many of the sample's shortlisted group as possible. These people came from both the upper-most echelons of government, to the grassroots level.



Former M and E Manager Susan Tolmay and Gender and Media Diversity Centre Manager Saeanna Chingamuka during a GL planning session. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

GL has categorised these beneficiaries into five main categories:

Gender Links: this category covers people who have been directly involved with Gender Links and includes:
- Staff and former staff
- Board members
- Interns

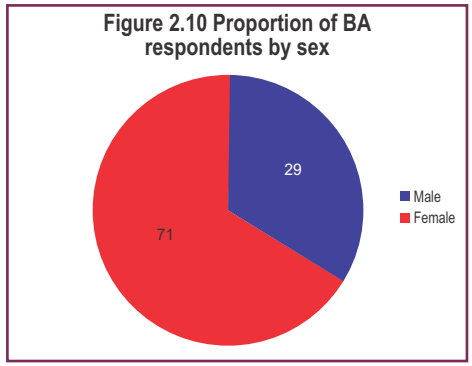
Consultants: These are people GL has contracted to do work over the years and includes:
- Researchers
- Facilitators

Partners: Organisations and individuals that GL has partnered with in its work.

Participants (at events): People who have taken part in workshops and events organised and hosted by GL, including:
- Media practitioners (journalists, editors, regulators)
- Politicians (MPs, local councillors)
- Trainers (media trainers, training institutions)
- Civil society
- Commentary writers
- "I" Stories participants
- Individuals

Individuals reached indirectly through outreach mechanisms: these are individuals and organisations GL has reached indirectly through various outreach mechanisms it employs, including the GL website, list serve, commentary service, social networking, cyber dialogues, publications, etc.





Who responded?

Figure 2.10 illustrates that out of a total of 209 BA respondents, 29% were men and 71% were women. As Gender Links aims to work with at least a 30% men in its work this is a fair representation of GL's work and regional goal.

"GL should be commended for its good work in Southern Arica and the rest of the continent, I must say. The challenge is to ensure that every woman, especially at the local level, gets empowered with the information that GL produces on a daily basis and becomes part of the process. The war is not yet over, but at least through collaboration with grassroots women's organisations, we can surely kick gender inequality out of SADC. Secondly, if Gender Links can facilitate the participation of more women's organisations and movements in the SADC region at the African Union level, then our voices will be amplified and our issues as SADC will also be taken abroad and this also gives us an opportunity of networking with our sisters in West, North, Central and East Africa.

I only have two words to describe Gender Links: "perseverance" and "energy". For any gender activist who would really want to network and get to learn about the daily struggles of gender activists in Southern Africa, Gender Links is the place to be and believe me, you can never go wrong. Gender Links is the home of gender activists in Southern Africa and will continue to be for years to come, through supporting its initiatives, and I must say, I am proud to be associated with Gender Links!" - Tafadzwa Muropa

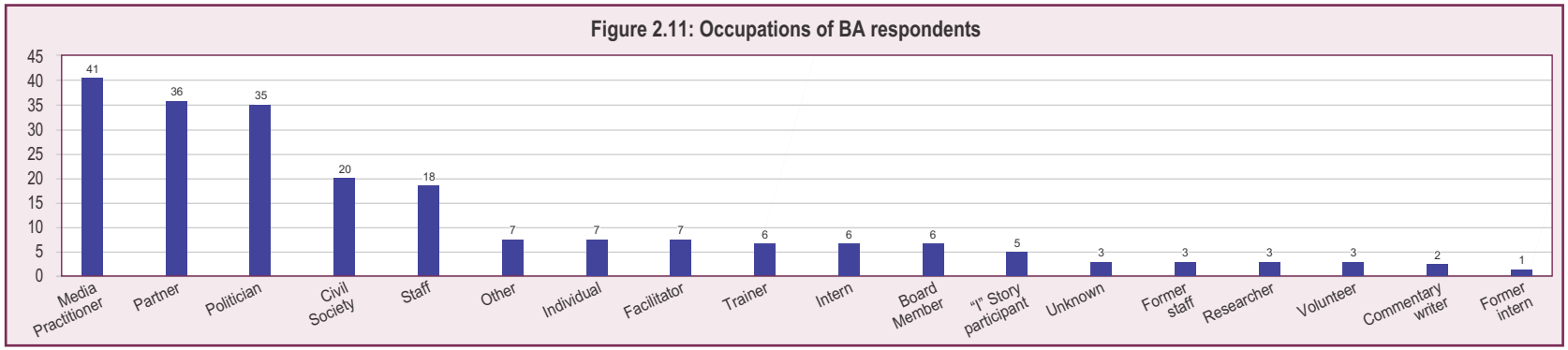


Figure 2.11 illustrates the occupation of BA respondents. Media, as the oldest GL department, had the most participants. The Governance programme came in second likely because it deals with many participants at the local level. The collective group of board members, staff and volunteers had the third highest number of respondents.

Both Justice and Alliance are newer programmes and as a result do not have as many long-term beneficiaries as the others. However, Gender Links reaches out to many of the same people in different departments which ensures a wide variety of knowledge amongst participants. Some participants who benefit from Media may have also benefited from Alliance work, etc. For the purposes of this study, however, one category was chosen per participant in order to disaggregate by programme.

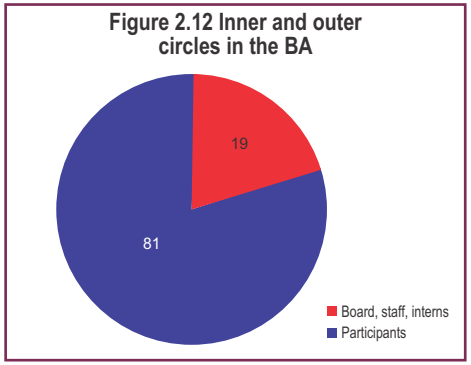
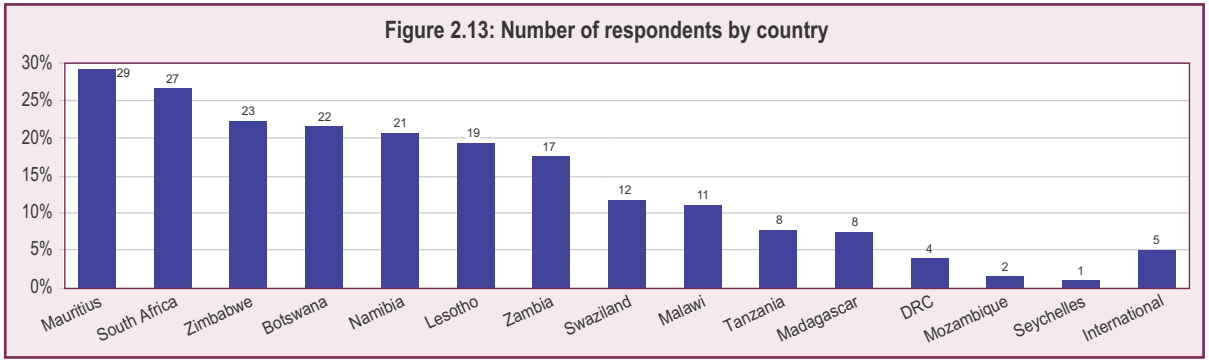


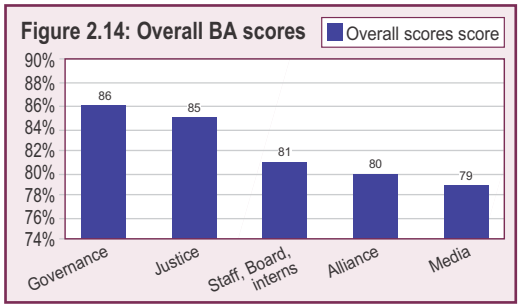
Figure 2.12 illustrates that 19% of BA respondents can be considered GL's inner circle (staff, board members, interns) while the majority of respondents were participants in GL's events over the years, what GL thinks of as the broader, outer circles of its work.

Figure 2.13 illustrates the number of BA respondents by country, finding that beneficiaries range from the SADC region to parts of East Africa and beyond.



Mauritius has the highest number of BA respondents (29). Since the establishment of the Mauritius satelite office in 2008 it has since been a strategic country through which GL has been able to access other Francophone SADC countries. The next highest number of participants was South Africa (27), followed by Zimbabwe and Botswana, where GL's second satellite office was established in 2009.

The lowest number of respondents came from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Mozambique and Seychelles. GL is currently working to expand its work in these countries.



Each participant was asked to score Gender Links' services based on key learning areas, as well as provide an overall score. The scores include areas such as policy-making; advocacy; research; networking abilities and designing and development of training materials. The questionnaire is available on GL's website. Figure 2.14 shows that respondents linked to the Governance programme gave the highest ratings to GL's work and what they had learned from it (86%), followed by Justice (85%), the inner circle (81%), Alliance (80%) and finally media (79%). Overall, all beneficiaries (inner and outer circles) gave GL a score of 82% across all areas of learning.

Growth and development

While some of GL's beneficiaries have been reached in one-off workshops or events, working in the region for ten years means many more have taken part in GL activities more than once. This means beneficiaries have been able to take part in sustained learning and skills-building, ensuring a greater possibility they have internalised key learning points and messages. This not only contributes to the long-term growth and development of individuals but also, through these individuals, to the wider SADC region.

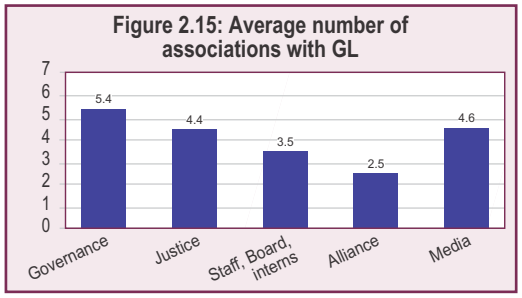


Figure 2.15 illustrates the number of times BA respondents have been reached through GL programmes and interventions. Each respondent was asked how many times they had attended a GL event and these scores were then averaged based on GL programmes. Overall, respondents had participated in an average of four to five GL events. The Alliance programme respondents had the highest number of associations with GL (5.4), while the Justice programme had the lowest (2.5). Alliance is the most cross-cutting programme in Gender Links and thus although it is a newer programme, it has more recurring attendees.

Gender Linked!

Tafadzwa Muropa is an example of a beneficiary who has been reached numerous times, over time, through the Alliance and other GL programmes:

"My first encounter with Gender Links was during a briefing meeting in Lusaka, August 2007, when I attended the SADC People's Summit alongside the annual SADC Heads of State Summit," she said. "Sara Longwe, one of the SADC Gender Protocol Alliance members came to the SADC People's Summit meeting and informed the participants about the SADC Gender Protocol, the efforts that gender activists had made in ensuring that SADC heads of state sign the Protocol, the challenges met and opportunities that were present. She advised participants to become part of the process at country level, and like most people say, the rest is history.

"Since 2007 up to the present day, I participate in SADC Gender Protocol Alliance meetings at country level and now that I am based at the Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe as a Peace Building Officer, it helps me to work with the Protocol in an enthusiastic way focusing on women in governance and peace building. The documentation that I have received from key SADC Gender Protocol Alliance meetings that I attended in August 2008 and March 2009 helped me to understand the road that my sisters travelled in ensuring that the Protocol becomes a reality. It also gave me more zeal to work harder in being part of the process that carries forward the struggle for gender equality, and ensuring that SADC becomes a safe region for women to enjoy their human rights!"

GL staff learning on the job

Conducting this research was a learning experience for all GL staff involved, especially those working on the monitoring and evaluation team.

Shaudzirai Mudekunye says: "They never said it would be easy, though at the same time they never alluded to it being this hard. I have to start my learning journey with a phrase: Deep end.

I learnt to swim when I was three. My grandfather took me to the local hotel swimming pool, and for the first time ever, floaters on my arms, threw me in the deep end. My journey with Gender Links is much the same as that very event more than two decades ago.



Mukayi Makaya and Shaudzirai Mudekunye at Beijing Plus 15. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

I first experienced this working environment when I was lucky enough to go to the 2010 Commission on the Status of Women (CSW or Beijing Plus 15) meeting. I was excited to be going for my first time, however I knew it would be a challenge. I packed up all my school work, a mass of reading material, hopped on the plane, and off to New York I went. The running around for sometimes 12 hours of the day proved difficult, draining, physically and mentally exhausting. What I did not know was this is what Gender Links is like almost every day. Exactly that. A frantic deep end! One needs to paddle hard to keep above the water level, because if you fail to do that you drown. It is as simple as that.

I started as a volunteer in August 2010. My first assignment was to go to Zimbabwe to interview participants for BA that would take me six months to see through. What began as a good idea fast became a period of pressure, tears, anxiety and frustration. It did not take me long, however, to realise that the more you seek help the more you will find it, and what for me was a whirlwind of negativity, had to be changed into positivity by talking to the right people and remaining open-minded. So even though they don't tell you it will be this hard, they also don't tell you that there is always light at the end of the tunnel.

More often than not members of staff are more than willing to lend a helping hand. I have learnt the power of speech and the power of diplomacy. I have learnt that there are times when the fight for what you believe in is a rocky path all the way to the summit and sometimes a hard fall right back into the deep end. I have learnt that where there are tears, there is sunshine, and that when all else seems to fail, there is ALWAYS a helping hand. I have learnt that the working world is not easy, and to look inside for enrichment, and when that falters, to look to peers. I have been in every department

in Gender Links, in various capacities ranging from the driver to an assistant. The amazing feeling about that is that everyone has too, and in that the appreciation of everyone else's work is a practical experience, you will never formally learn.

I have met many people from all walks of life, who have indirectly benefitted me through their accounts of how Gender Links benefitted them. I have swum with all members of the chain. Sometimes we just barely made it; sometimes we came out of the pool far ahead of expectations, and quickly ran to the shallow end to start again.

I have seen the world and taken in the experiences of other women just like me: experiences one can only learn from swimming in the pool. It is highly inspiring to see the strong individual personalities that make up this chain.

Gender Links is definitely a place of growth. The lessons are never easy to learn, and more often than not I find myself feeling the overwhelming feeling of water surrounding my entire body and being unable to breathe. Many times the tears have welled up in my eyes, and on rare occasions perhaps with a slight whimper to accompany them.

As sure as the sun rises, that incredibly liberating feeling of my fingers meeting the wall, and my head coming above the water will follow: after an hour, a day or even a week. In those moments, characterised by laughter and a pure sense of achievement I am that three-year-old that just figured out how to swim, the hard way. The moments of triumph and defeat will always feel the same- and in turn so will character and the will to succeed. They may not have said it would be this hard, nor that it would ever get easy, but I find it's true what they do say: *"Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose."*



Lessons learned

- Interviews and questionnaires are an effective way of acquiring information from a large number of people at once.
- Similar studies should be conducted more regularly to improve monitoring and evaluation and build on statistical data.
- The questionnaire was too long and as a result some interviews had to be rescheduled or continued over two sessions. As many interviews were completed in the spare time during one of the many Gender Links functions, time was always of the essence.
- The BA was a very effective way of accessing people from Gender Links' past, in order to find out where people are and what they have done since their last encounter with Gender Links.
- The questionnaire was put together very quickly and was not well conceptualised for the information GL wanted to learn.
- A few participants expressed concerns that Gender Links only contacts them when it needs them, this is a concern GL should address in order to maintain lasting relationships.
- Many participants had important feedback that needs to be discussed and followed up beyond the BA analysis period.
- Reaching out far and wide to people who have come to be part of GL's extended family is a rewarding experience for all involved.



Next steps

- Take the Beneficiary Analysis forward to become a regular output.
- Use the BA to better target and conceptualise GL interventions throughout the region.
- Use the information and research from this study as highlights in GL's 10-year events in March 2011 and throughout the year.
- Incorporate research from this book onto the GL website.
- Explore various types of learning, including mentoring and peer learning as part of GL's five-year plan and further programme work.


CRICKET
SOUTH AFRICA

Chapter 3



Stirring up the paint: Saeanna Chingamuka and Sean Marango (son of finance manager Bridget Marango) at a GL community service activity on Nelson Mandela Day.
Photo by Colleen Lowe Morna

Inner circle: GL staff and associates

By Vivien Bakainaga and Thato Phakela

"The power of branding and the effective use of e-marketing is something that I have practically experienced at Gender Links. This is one brand that is well positioned as evidenced by the fact that whilst the economic downturn is taking its toll on other NGOs this organisation is growing from strength to strength. The Gender Links brand is made up of efficient internal systems, monitoring and evaluation, and strong internal marketing that ensures that every employee articulates the vision and mission of Gender Links in everything they do and the overall result is excellence."

- Mpumelelo Mlilo,
GL Finance and IT Coordinator

Fact box

- Over the past ten years GL has worked with 57 full-time staff members and 87 associates from across the SADC region. GL currently has a staff of 50, including interns, volunteers and part-time staff.
- Men constitute 8% of GL's full-time staff, and 20% of part-time staff. This is an area that GL needs to work on.
- GL's work hard and play hard philosophy has yielded many examples of personal growth, development and movement, but some staff still struggle to cope with the fast pace. GL is seeking to address work-life balance concerns through its wellness programme.
- Over the next five years GL will continue to expand and grow, recruiting staff and interns for its newest offices and ensuring the wellness and growth of current staff.



Nancy Padare leads the staff walk up Linksfield Ridge in Johannesburg . *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

When I[1] walked into the GL offices in Cyrildene in January 2009 the familiar, smiling face of Nancy Padare greeted me. I could immediately see the transformation that had taken place in Nancy's life since I had last seen her in 2001 when she worked as a housekeeper. She was now the GL receptionist and house manager!

I had known Nancy years earlier when I worked with Colleen Lowe Morna at the Commission on Gender Equality. At the time she was Colleen's house-keeper.

Although Nancy had been around since the inception of GL, it took several years before she became inextricably personally linked to the organisation.

Nancy had been working for Colleen's family for two decades and had watched and helped as her two beautiful daughters grew into young women. Nancy also stood by as GL came to life in Colleen's back yard and later helped with cleaning when GL moved to offices in Bruma Lake. From day one Nancy helped with newspaper clippings for GL, as she still does today.

Her involvement went from cleaning the office part-time to slowly spending more and more time at GL. She took an interest in photocopying and answering the phone, always impeccably polite and on the mark with assisting visitors. Colleen has always said that behind every great woman is another woman and credited Nancy with making it possible for her to have a career. She knew Nancy's ability, despite her lack of formal education, and wanted to give her the chance to flourish.

When GL moved offices in 2008, Colleen put it to the then small GL team that she wanted to offer Nancy a post as full-time receptionist, but sought their views before doing so, wanting the move to be transparent and supported by all concerned. GL staff, who like me loved to see Nancy each morning, readily agreed not just to have Nancy join the staff but to support her learning journey. She quickly became a pro at emailing and is now one of the most diligent in responding to emails. She also reads and contributes to the weekly planner; is one of the best at multi tasking in GL (with duties ranging from catering to publication stock taking) and never fails to deliver on time.

Nancy, who has since been promoted to office manager, can now also repair broken generators, fix malfunctioning office appliances, replaces bulbs and advise builders and electricians. Nancy is generally the go-to person for almost anything which needs doing. She has become one of GL's most valuable assets in a very short time. Nancy has time and again been nominated for and won staff prizes for team player, innovation, problem solving and others. When, in March 2011, GL took the plunge and purchased the Cottages to use as a training facility, Nancy came up in everyone's mind as the perfect person to run the show - there was no question she was the right, and only, person for the job.

[1] Vivien Bakainaga is the current GL Human Resources Manager

Nancy's story is inspirational for so many reasons. She is one of a few over fifties at GL who have invented and reinvented themselves, giving real meaning to the phrase: you are never too old to learn. She is also an example of the boundless life skills that so many women possess but that are often overlooked in work environments for want of paper qualifications.

Her story is one of many that demonstrate how GL gives staff the space to grow, improve their skills and also challenges them to achieve to their highest potential. Indeed, Nancy's personal learning journey posted on the GL website spurred another employee, Finance Manager Bridget Marango, to apply for the job. After Bridget was hired she recalled reading this story and said it convinced her that GL was an organisation where someone could grow and be encouraged to strive to their full potential.

"Colleen, I am aware you are away at the moment, so please do not feel concerned enough to respond while you are away. Your switchboard lady is wonderful. I told her so. She was bright, sunny, helpful and professional and did not give away a thing should not have given away! Everything one would want in a front-person for any entity. You are a lucky being!"

Farooq Mangera,
Colleen's former classmate

"Everybody has a moment of sitting down and bringing back the memories of how she or he came to join the Gender Links family," says Nancy in her most recent learning journey. "We have different reasons. Some people were impressed by Gender Links work and decided to join. This organisation started when there were two people, but this year when celebrating its 10th birthday Gender Links has more than 20 staff at the head office... Working with Gender Links has been a long journey which gives me advanced education, skills and helps me to cope and work under pressure. Helping GL for ten years makes me proud, especially seeing how people respect each other; it shows that this organisation is going to grow a lot in years to come."

I'm sure, like me, Nancy often wonders where the time has gone. This year GL celebrates 10 years: an organisation that has grown from one person in 2001 to more than 50 people in 2011. GL has re-invented itself time and again and is a force to be reckoned with, regionally and internationally.

When I first walked into GL's office that day back in January 2009, greeted by Nancy's familiar smiling face, I could immediately tell GL was successful because of its staff, because of people like Nancy whose smile brightened the mood of other employees, eventually reflecting back at her from their faces.

And I was right. Soon I was working for GL, in a new human resources post, in an office that was growing and expanding, becoming a small family, a bit like a tiny beehive.

In my first three months I had to recruit and fill five more positions. I worked on GL Policies and Regulations and saw the staff contingent grow from 17 to 50 people - talk about hitting the ground running! However, having worked with Colleen before, this was no surprise to me. It has been a journey of excitement and one in which I have enjoyed participating. For like Nancy, I am yet another employee who is forever touched and changed by their time at Gender Links.

This chapter will cover GL's staff and associates over the last ten years, from inception to the present day. It will give a breakdown by age, sex and country of origin, going on to also look at GL associates. Following that it will look at some of the ways GL has helped staff grow, through institutional capacity-building, peer-learning and job promotions. This chapter will then discuss some of the personal learning that has occurred in GL's staff contingent, noting some of the problems encountered over the years and how GL has helped staff cope with them. The GL wellness programme will be discussed, as will GL's new work to ensure the "green" wellness of the environment it works in. Finally, this chapter will look at some of the human resources lessons GL has learned as well as what's next for this organisation on the move.

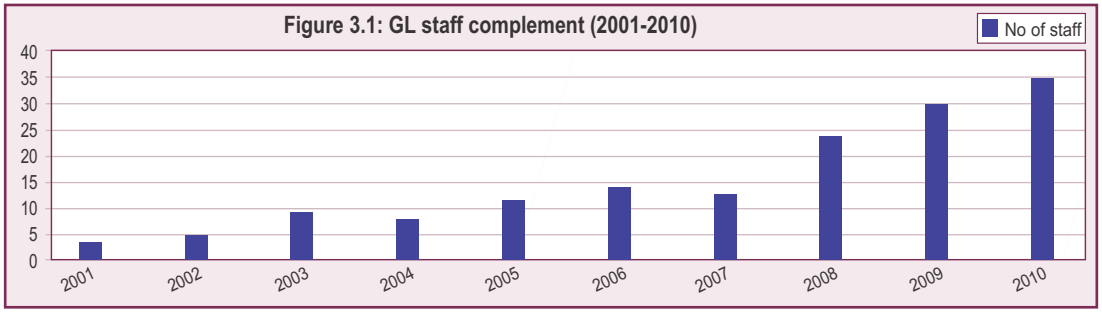
Background

GL began on a wing and a prayer with one staff member and the Executive Director working out of her home office. Over the years the GL staff has grown incrementally, closely resembling the growth in its budget. In the past three years, with large growth in funding and organisational finances, including the UK Department for International Development's Governance and Transparency Fund (GTF) grant, the staff complement has tripled. This has also come as a result of the growth of GL throughout the SADC region.

The organisation now has offices in nine countries in addition to the head office in South Africa, including satellite offices in Botswana, Lesotho, Mauritius and Mozambique. The opening of these field and satellite offices has led to rapid growth over the last three years.

Beneficiaries

Over the last ten years GL has had 57 full time staff members. Some have come and gone and others are still with the organisation today.



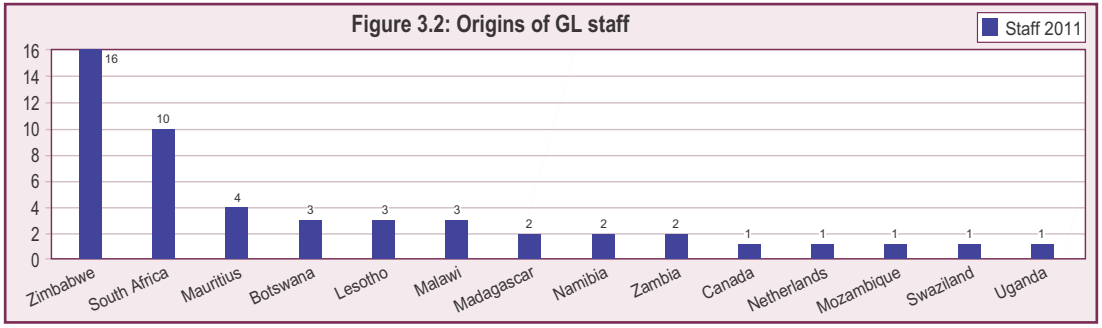


Figure 3.1 illustrates how GL staff has grown over the years, tripling over the last three years alone. Currently, GL has 36 full time staff and 50 staff in total; this includes part time staff, interns and volunteers.

Figure 3.2 shows that the current GL staff complement comes from 14 countries, 11 in Southern Africa; one from East Africa; and two from outside Africa.

Table 3.1: Staff profile

Category	Men	Women	Total	% Male	Average age	Av length of service
All staff	10	40	50	20%	32.5	1.4 years
Full time staff	3	33	36	8%	36.5	2.2 years
Managers	1	11	12	8%	38.5	3.4 years

Table 3.1 shows that there are currently 36 full-time staff and 14 part-time staff; volunteers and interns. The latter category has increased substantially in the last year because all field offices now have interns. This also accounts for the lower average age of overall staff (32.5 years) compared to full time staff (36.5 years). The new interns also account for the lower average length of service of staff overall (1.4 years) compared to full time staff (2.2 years). It is also significant that the average age of managers (38.5 years) and average length of service of managers (3.4 years) is higher than the averages of staff overall, and of full time staff.

Still, as our external evaluator observed, "the organisation has a young and rather energetic team. A majority of team members are activists



GL managers at a 2010 writing and planning retreat. *Photo: Gender Links*

and do their work with passion, showing ownership and commitment to what they are doing. They work late, and some work during weekends."

With regard to gender balance, men constitute 20% of all staff (as a result of a relatively high proportion of male interns). However, the proportion of men among full time staff and managers is only 8%. This is a concern, given that GL aims to have at least 30% men among its staff and beneficiaries.

GL associates

GL currently works with 87 associates who assist all programmes with projects, technical expertise and specialised skills.

Figure 3.3 illustrates the diverse origins of GL associates and partners. GL works with many people in South Africa (27) because of its base there, but also from a variety of countries in SADC and beyond.

"Whilst laying out the pages, I come upon this page and see a note from the author: "Quote from Debi" and Colleen adds "YES PLS ADD DEB?" (CAPITALS.... AND IN RED) so I thought, "Ooops, better write something!" Where do I start? I have been working with GL for so long (off and on since 2004) that I eat 'n sleep Gender Links as I know everything is needed... yesterday. More nights than I can remember, like tonight, I'm burning the midnight oil and I thank heaven for my considerate hubby, Mark, who sets his alarm (every 2 hours) to get up to make me coffee - to me, Gender Links means 2 C's - Coffee and Colleen.

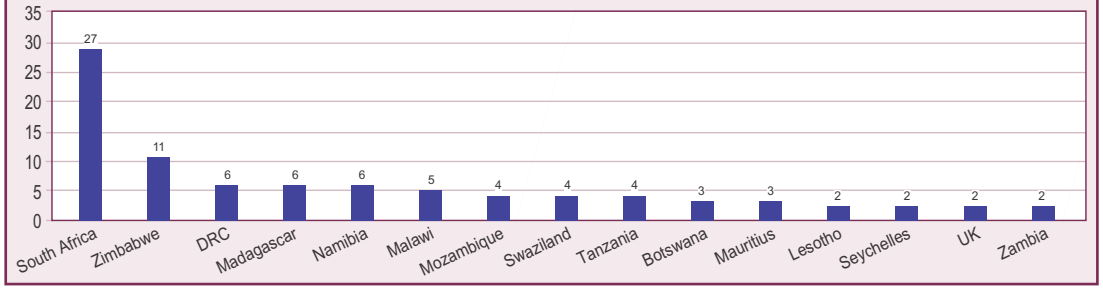
PANIC! I am a layout artist, not a writer - so I email Loga Virahsawmy and this was her reply: *"I have never seen anybody as helpful, charming and smiling as Debi. She goes out of her way to help and indeed works under pressure as very often deadlines are very short and there are lots of publications. Be your own self all the time Deb. We love you as you are".*

So I thought, "why not use a compliment or two": (from Eduardo Namburete) *"I must say that it has been such a pleasure working with you. With all this back and forth work, you never showed any sign of getting upset or whatsoever. Your kindness is something I take high note of. Warmest regards, E."*

(From Vivien Bakainaga) *"Thanks Debi you should get into MacDonald business except you Design Layout - MacDonald - fast printing!!!"*

I could write more about my GL roller-coaster ride of six years but didn't leave much space for myself so, suffice to say, *... GL, Happy 10th Anniversary, keep doing what you are doing as you have the right recipe!...* - Debi "Designer"

Figure 3.3 GL associates by country



Benefits

Working for Gender Links is a constant learning journey with many benefits, both practical and personal. Many personal testaments from GL associates about the benefits they've received from working with GL can be found throughout this commemorative book. For instance photographer and activist Trevor Davies discusses his learning journey in Chapter 7 and Media Action Plan facilitators Bheki Maseko, Pushpa Jameison, Arthur Okwemba, Eduardo Namburete and Emily Brown recall their GL lessons and journeys in Chapter 6.

GL is devoted to helping build the potential of all staff, encouraging them to expand their skill set and challenge themselves. This is done through capacity-building and on-the-job training. GL staff also spend time helping one another, daily engaging in peer learning in order to assist each other, and the organisation, reach for the stars.

Capacity-building

In December 2009, GL conducted a staff training needs assessment, which identified several skills which GL staff wanted to improve:

- Attitude (gender, diversity, self presentation/assertiveness);
- Knowledge (content related to programme work);
- Life skills (communications, time management, conflict resolution, personal finance, health and nutrition);
- Training materials development and facilitation;
- Management training (planning, leading, organising, controlling and facilitation);
- Linguistic skills training (French, Portuguese).

Since the needs assessment, GL has taken steps to ensure these areas were addressed in regular staff capacity-building sessions during office time and on evenings and weekends.

GL has undertaken regular IT training for staff since its inception and offered a beginners French course in 2009. Managers have been through a vigorous in-house training workshop and continue to get feedback from the Executive Director who is passionate about good writing and publications, as well as GL's editor and communications manager. Several finance staff have upgraded their skills. As part of a new venture to get accredited as a training institution, GL piloted a basic gender training course with its staff in 2010/2011. The course especially focused on non-programme staff.



Pinkie Mekgwe, Bridget Marango, Mukayi Makaya and Mpumelelo Mlilo taking part in training. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

Each year GL staff write their Learning Journey, what they have learned on the job. This is reflected in the annual report, on the website, and in this book. Within its ranks and in its work GL is a firm believer in learning by doing. While formal training can make a difference, every day at GL is a learning experience. Staff who have left the organisation are proud to highlight the brand in their CV's and job interviews as they helped to create this brand, and they take part of GL with them wherever they go.

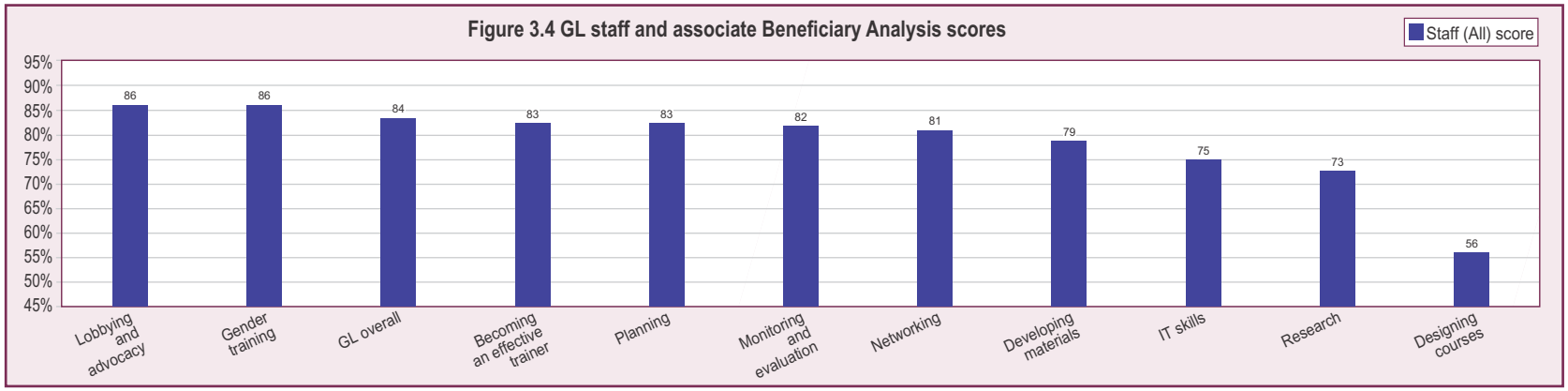


Figure 3.4 illustrates that GL staff found the best learning experiences came from lobbying and advocacy (86%) and gender training (86%) while the weakest area of learning was designing training courses (56%), likely because this is a specialised area not linked to most work in GL's diverse programme areas.

Lobbying and advocacy - 86%

GL staff rated this area as the strongest learning area, likely because it is a key component of work and also one of the organisation's successes. GL has been at the forefront of the 16 Days of Activism campaigns for many years and this is one of the largest annual advocacy campaigns involving all staff.

Director of GL's Mauritius and Francophone office and one of GL's best lobbyists for gender equality, **Loga Virahsawmy**, said she learned many of her lobbying skills through



From administrator to national hero: Loga Virahsawmy receives an award of honour from the Prime Minister of Mauritius Navi Ramgoolum.
Photo: Gender Links

GL. "I have benefitted tremendously from Gender Links and I will always be grateful. Gender and gender concepts were new to me when I first met Colleen. I never thought I would become a researcher, a trainer, a lobbyist and a staff member of GL."

Gender training - 86%

GL's 2010 gender training empowered staff and featured prominently in the 2010 Leaning Journey:

Executive Assistant **Gladys Muzirwa** said before working at Gender Links she used gender terminology every day not really knowing what it meant and how to apply it in everyday life.

"Gender training was an intense but exciting learning experience," she wrote in her learning journey. "I work for a gender organisation and get to use terminology around gender and sex every day of my life but it dawned

on me that I did not really know what these meant and how they apply in everyday life. From the training course I have learned to always have a gender lens in my pocket and use it when confronted with scenarios and to analyse them.

"Our group analysed clippings concerning the (athlete) Caster Semenya saga. Through this exercise I learnt how to analyse newspaper stories with a gender lens, how women and man are viewed in news, how women and men are used as sources, how sex and gender was used interchangeably in the stories, how pictures are captioned in a wrong way to the media's advantage, how women are seen as minors and are only asked for views as victims while men are seen as experts. I learnt how culture and tradition contribute a great deal to gender stereotypes and how women who challenge these are given names by the media and people surrounding them."

GL Justice Programme Officer **Kelello Tekateka** said, "When I joined the GL justice team I had no experience working in gender-based violence. I don't even think I fully comprehended the impact gender-based violence can have on socio-economic development. Not really knowing what to expect, the emotional learning journey that ensued was surprising. Gender Links has opened my eyes to the many aspects of development that many development practitioners forget."

Madagascar country facilitator **Ialfine Papisy** said through GL: "I learnt what gender is and in the same time how to train basic gender. I trained nine councils about basic gender."

Zambian country facilitator **Faides Nsofu** said: "I had the privilege to be part of a gender training course that enlightened me of the cause that Gender Links is fighting for. This made me not only a purely finance person but also able to understand how our work and behaviour as the future leaders can impact the issues of gender. It further gave me a clear understanding of Gender Links work."

Nancy Padare noted: "2010 was a successful year for me - I did the gender training course, it helped me a lot and to know that there is no women's or men's jobs and we are all equal. Gender links is helping men and women across the region to know their rights."



Kelello Tekateka (centre) takes part in a GL gender training skit. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

Planning - 83%

Planning is one of the most important skills in an organisation as complex as GL, with offices in many countries and staff speaking many languages and spread out over a very large region. Considering how busy GL staff often get, it is not a surprise planning was ranked as a key area of learning.

Finance and IT Coordinator **Mpumelelo Mlilo** sees the importance of planning and what he calls its "awesome" results. "There is a weekly plan that feeds into a monthly plan to a quarterly plan and a yearly plan and finally to the three year plan. This is measured through monthly reports and ensures that one knows what they have to do and how they have to do it so as to achieve the organisational goals."

Long-time GL employee **Loveness Jambaya Nyakujarah** has seen the importance of planning at GL and how it has impacted the organisation's work over the years. She says planning has also helped in her programme work, "planning and time management skills imparted to me by my senior managers have emerged as cornerstones for becoming a good manager. While this is still an area of growth, the foundation skills have been laid and the ball is in my court to continue working at it until I get it right. I am yet to see or hear of an organisation that has such comprehensive planning processes supported by relevant tools developed over time."

Namibian country facilitator **Sarry Xoagus-Eises** says "planning work is very essential, especially in the Centres of Excellence process. It started with the identification and mapping of some councils we went to work in during the implementation of seven stages leading to the Summit in 2011. As time progressed I got to experience the power of prioritising work and planning."

As manager of the Gender and Governance Programme, **Abigail Jacobs-Williams** manages field staff in ten SADC countries, more than any other manager. She says planning her daily work in a coordinated way helps her administer her programme with ease. "During May of 2010 the Gender and Governance programme of GL reflected on our work done over the last couple of years and then decided to change our approach through the new Centres of Excellence (COE) approach. These activities really help to apply more sense to me and all other parties who would eventually become part of the COE process."

Monitoring and Evaluation - 82%

Despite the fact strong monitoring and evaluation processes are still evolving they have become fundamental to the organisation in a short time. According to GL staff, they are also a key learning area and a strong organisational asset. This book is a testament to the necessity of organisational M and E. While writing her chapter on GL's IT work, Communications Officer **Mona Hakimi** noted how vital GL's M and E had been to ensuring a rich chapter. "The years before there was proper monitoring and evaluation are so sparse," she said. "I've really seen how important it is and I now know why we spend so much time logging these things."



Field staff team. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

Executive Assistant **Gladys Muzirwa**, resident GL M and E expert, said: "Moving to M and E meant a whole lot of new things to learn but it was all exciting. For the first time I consolidated a report and was so terrified when the formats were vexing me and changing at every turn and I would gnash my teeth but through all of this I learnt something new every time. As I write I have been taught how to generate a lot of monthly systems reports which I feel very excited about because I now have a sense of fulfilment, I feel valuable and powerful as I have knowledge of my work and can make sense of what is going on in other programmes as well."

Loveness Jambaya-Nyakujarah said: "I have learnt the importance of organisational systems and procedures that are well documented and accessible to all staff. This has set Gender Links apart from many NGOs and as a growing manager I have learnt to

appreciate the value of this. Even if I were to move on from Gender Links this is another value add to my professional life that I will forever cherish.

"I remember going to a donor meeting in Nairobi, Kenya to discuss monitoring and evaluation of programmes - and I can proudly say that I could pull out policy guidelines or a systems report at the click of a mouse for every single issue raised at that meeting and demonstrate this to the group. I resolved at that meeting that this was the space I needed to dwell if I am going to grow into senior management level some day."

Networking - 81%

Networking and building new relationships has helped GL to grow and spread in Southern Africa and other parts of the world. Even though it is not top of the staff rating, it is one of the key areas according to GL staff.



Faides Nsofu, left, at the launch of the SADC Gender Protocol Barometer in Zambia. *Photo: Gender Links*



Loveness Jambaya-Nyakujarah and Ntombi Mbadlanyana at a staff M and E workshop. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

Ntombi Mbadlanyana says as a country facilitator she has the opportunity to meet people from different backgrounds. "One also forms a bond with the participants and it also brings such a great sense of positive reception when the participants leave the workshop feeling empowered."

Networking has also helped those working in field and satellite offices. **Faides Nsofu** says, "I have had the opportunity of exploring my beautiful country, chatting with politicians and also sharing experiences with young and old people on gender and GBV issues. In particular the COE process has brought a new dimension of gender mainstreaming in local government."

Finance Officer **Fanuel Hadzizi** agrees, noting that working outside the office has helped him a lot. "Apart from the day to day office work, I was introduced to workshops, meetings and conferences just to get an understanding of the impact of our work outside number 9 Derrick Avenue. It is empowering to interact with politicians and to attend meetings with people of high reputation."

Loveness Jambaya Nyakujarah says working in forums outside GL has helped her grow as a manager. "My public presentation skills have improved as I have spoken at various local, regional and international forums and this continues to improve because of the faith management has placed in me to take on these responsibilities. This has also improved my networking flair and given me skills of how to address different levels of audiences."

Same for **Mukayi Makaya**, who was able to visit New York with GL. "I had never been to New York," she said. "The whole experience was exciting. It was of course a lot of work, contributing to the paper *Daily Links @ CSW*, strategic distribution of the paper, showcasing and profiling GL publications. The exposure was great; I really enjoyed the whole experience."

Developing materials and writing - 79%

Gender Links has produced more than 150 various publications, from fact sheets to research papers to pamphlets. Through this, GL staff have learned many important skills, which is why this is also a key area of learning. Gender and Media Diversity Centre Manager

Saeanna Chingamuka says she embraced her time at GL and seized the opportunity to bring in new ideas to the media programme, including developing materials for publication. She also learned how to develop a media sense for herself. "This is what I would term growth and it can only happen in an environment where you are given the space to explore: Gender Links. I can confidently profile the work of the organisation in front of cameras and heavy lighting at television studios and also give radio interviews."

In 2010 with the creation of a communications department, GL also embarked on a series of ongoing writing workshops in order to help staff build their writing skills. New managers and any interested staff attend monthly writing workshops facilitated by Communications Manager Danny Glenwright and Executive Director Colleen Lowe Morna. Staff can even get nostalgic about their school days as they are regularly given quizzes highlighting editing errors picked up by Colleen and the communications department during the many hours they spend perfecting GL's publications output, which also includes monthly newsletters.

The communications department also recently compiled an editing and communications manual for the organisation, which was finalised in March 2011. With templates for everything from business cards to press releases, as well as rules on spelling, grammar and photography, the 200-page manual will be invaluable to GL staff in the years to come; ensuring the quality of GL publications continues to improve. It will join GL's finance and monitoring and evaluation manuals as a vital guide to working in the organisation.

Human Resources Manager **Vivien Bakainaga**, who also writes the monthly *Gender Linked* newsletter, said GL "is a school of learning." She says she is not a fan of writing but her writing skills have improved in the past year because she's been given more chances to work them. "I have had to sharpen my writing skills. In my new position I was put in charge of the *Gender Linked* newsletter as editor. Yes - I have also been asked to contribute to the GL 10 year book!! At GL you are given the space to grow, so you crawl, try and walk, stumble, fall, get up and run. That is what GL is all about, pressing on and never giving up. I salute GL leadership for the 10 years of sheer hard work and tenacity."

GBV Indicators Manager **Mercilene Machisa** said: "The journalistic skills I have accumulated thus far have proved a personal advantage and have allowed me to broaden my capacity and scope of work. Not only can I conduct research but I am now better able to present research findings in a simplistic manner that the public can engage with. I have also been exposed in my inadequacies, for example the communication skills necessary for effective advocacy work. Through my engagement and presentations at different platforms I have seen the need to improve my spoken English and even a desire to learn some of the local languages."



Keabonye Ntsabane and Mercilene Machisa outside the Botswana satellite office.

Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna

IT skills - 75%

Many staff members say that they were not technologically savvy before they came to work at GL: it was daunting and frustrating. However, many of those same staff members are now IT experts, often people others go to for technological advice.



Finance phobia: Danny Glenwright is learning a lot from finance manager Bridget Marango. *Photo: Gender Links*

Challenging my worst demons

By Danny Glenwright

Header rows repeat, please Danny.

Please use header rows repeat.
DANNY - I insist on header rows repeat!

But what did it mean? What was header rows repeat?

It was the question foremost on my mind in my first two months at Gender Links.

What exactly did Colleen mean when she stated that three-worded request in cryptic emails?

At two months in I had managed to successfully navigate the stormy seas of spelling wars, typically preferring UK over American spellings anyway. Being a Canadian I'd spent my life straddling these two identities. I had added my *u's* and doubled my *l's*, ensured my organise and trivialise never had a z. I had even grown to love Tahoma. But I just couldn't sort out my formatting.

Editors get sloppy too. In my case I neglected formatting in favour of other things. But at Gender Links there are no short cuts, no brushing of anything under rugs. It was time for this journalist to confront the formatting bogeyman, time to learn how to make those header rows repeat. Well, quite a bit past time, truth be told.

One such staff member is **Gladys Muzirwa**, who said she did not have it easy with technology when she first arrived at Gender Links. "Timid was me at that time, I would sit at my computer, I didn't even know that I had to open my Outlook to see emails. I remember on my third day after starting the job, my manager came to my computer and asked me to open my Outlook to check emails. I told him I didn't know where Outlook was and oh my, he was more shocked than disappointed at my response."

Oarabile Monggae an intern in Botswana's satellite office says, "My period with GL also helped me to me improve or sharpen my IT skills in the likes of data capturing, uploading M and E tools, media clipping, the photo library and other IT related stuff."

What's special about Gender Links is that although Colleen insists on the rows at the top of tables repeating on subsequent pages to ease reading, there isn't much other repetition. It is an organisation that keeps me guessing, a work plan that is always changing and an organisational atmosphere that, aside from those header rows, is not based on repeating itself or what others have done, but rather on paving new roads and leading the way in difficult terrain.

Working these past six months at Gender Links has meant I've had to confront more bogeymen than I might like, but it's all in the spirit of personal growth. Who can complain about that?

So although my job entails many things I love, from working with journalists and editors throughout the region to writing stories that matter and bring about change, it is also full of those frustrating daily challenges.

Yet it's those things that stand out. It's what I will take away. Because where other jobs have allowed me to skirt issues I don't like and avoid work I don't find appealing, my job at Gender Links has forced me to wade deeper into such work.

So although I'd probably still rather clean a toilet than design a budget or an Excel spreadsheet, at least I now know how to do it. And I still don't love creating complicated tables but you can bet that when I do I use header rows repeat. There's simply no other way to do it. *Danny Glenwright - Communications Manager*

Research - 73%

GL is known for its impressive, comprehensive research, including many region-wide studies on various gender-related issues, from media practice to gender-based violence to gender and local government.



Loveness Jambaya at a planning workshop.
Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna

Gender and Media Diversity Centre Manager **Saeanna Chingamuka** says working at GL has helped improved her research skills. "The Gender In Media Education Audit (GIME) was perhaps the most rewarding work conducted in 2010. It covered 25 institutions of higher learning in media and journalism training in 13 countries. Organising and compiling research from this sample was no small feat. I was able to apply and enhance my skills on gathering data, managing consultants and editing content. There were certainly hiccups along the way, yet the end result was a successful piece of research."

Designing courses- 56%

Although Gender Links has been involved in training for many years, this is also one of its more specialised areas which usually involved senior staff and external partners and consultants. Much of GL's training has also taken place outside South Africa, where most of GL's staff are based. These are likely reasons why GL staff scored this area lower than others.

However, with the launch of GL's new Training Institute in 2011, staff members will become much more involved in GL's training, both in designing and facilitating training courses.

Not your typical classroom

Events such as publications or office launches, fund-raising functions and the annual holiday dinner and dance mean staff have a chance to let their hair down and socialise outside the office. Pulling together these large-scale events is also a learning opportunity.

Botswana Programme Officer **Roos van Dorp** remembers the anxiety she once felt while planning a huge GL book and office launch.



Botswana office dinner dance and fund raiser. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

"We launched the media research we had undertaken, GIME, GMPS and Glass Ceilings in media houses. In the midst of our busy schedule, the time had also come to officially launch our office and raise funds for our activities, for which the coordinator of our office pushed for a dinner dance event in August 2010. Initially I thought we would never be able to pull of such an event next to our schedule of workshops and activities, and I pleaded with our coordinator many times to change the plan. But there was no



Keabonye Ntsabane and Roos van Dorp at International Women's Day, 2011. *Photo: Iris Breeman*

turning back and support came from different corners of the society and eventually we held a successful launch of our office and with the support of more than 300 people we also managed to raise funds for the office. After that we went into the launches of the regional and national SADC Protocol Barometer, which were launched at the SADC Secretariat by the Executive Secretary of SADC. This was a great honour and it was very encouraging receiving that kind of support from the SADC Secretariat and working with the Gender Unit. Preparations for the GBV Indicators research were also ongoing and I got a much better understanding on how to undertake research and the many different practical and theoretical aspects that come with such extensive research."

Peer learning

Learning at GL doesn't only happen in front of a computer, a flipchart or in meetings. Many GL staff claim their greatest learning experiences have been when staff come together in groups and get to share experiences with one another. GL staff range in age from the late teens to somewhere in the sixties, which means there are endless stories and lessons to be shared, by young and old alike.

Mercilene Machisa says GL team spirit helps bring about good results, "when the access issues became a concern I learnt how to steer morale and encourage the team. Working with that group allowed me to become a better team player. This is also true on a day-to-day basis as a member of the justice team and the greater GL team.



Loveness Pfumbi, Ntombentsha Mbadlanyana and Nancy Padare at a Take Back the Night March in Johannesburg. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

One cannot work in isolation and this has been one of my major lessons."

"Since the time I asked for advice everything changed and I was just doing my work without complaining and that really helped me," wrote GL receptionist and former cleaner **Loveness Pfumbi**. "I have learnt the only way to make life easier not only here at Gender Links, but everywhere I go is to be organised. Thanks again to Gender Links for the patience you had for me throughout my learning journey. I was sometimes asked to do administration work such as receiving calls, scanning, photocopying, managing faxes, receiving visitors and managing equipment and courier services not knowing one day I can be moved to that department. Now I am the Gender Links receptionist."

Mentorship

GL has had many successful cases of mentorship. The GL Opinion and Commentary Service discussed in Chapter 11 attests to that. Many staff members who had never written before have put pen to paper and produced an opinion piece for the Service. By working with the GL editor, who mentored them around writing skills and techniques, many staff have since been published in regional newspapers and magazines.

GL has several examples of staff employed because they displayed potential but still needed to develop

certain skills. Finance Manager Bridget Marango is one such example. Hired as GL's first full time finance manager, who took over from Michael Havenga, a part time Chartered Accountant, Bridget took on the job just as GL's finances increased substantially with major new funding from the UK's Department for International Development. Havenga and the Executive Director agreed that the young woman they interviewed had immense potential but needed to be eased into the job. They agreed on a six month mentorship plan. Bridget tells the rest of the story in her own words:

My Three Year Degree Programme with Gender Links

There are many degree programmes out there and they surely can teach us a lot but no degree can equip one with the practical "on-the-job learning" that is fundamental to every working human being's existence. No place can better equip one with institutional systems as Gender Links. Once one has been Gender Linked, a great amount of self discipline follows.

My journey with GL began three years ago when I joined as the new full-time finance manager. Michael Havenga, my predecessor, was a very competent accountant with big shoes to fill. I found myself nervous at many times, not sure if I was going to manage but I soldiered on. My manager, Colleen Lowe Morna was very welcoming and took her time to explain things to me. In the second month I thought I was going to fail my probation as the going got tough. I am a hard worker but sustaining the 100% excellence standard for everything in a very demanding environment proved challenging. At one time I shared with my family what I was planning to do after my three months stint at GL but three years later I am still here, growing in leaps and bounds. My learning journey is divided into three phases over the three years, more like a degree programme with modules as summarised below.

Year one: technical learning: good organisational systems like planning, reporting, monitoring and evaluation, checklists and forms. My mentor Michael Havenga assisted with building my technical competence. He taught me all about the GL accounting system. Amazingly my boss, Colleen, who is programmes oriented with a journalism background had a lot to teach me regarding practical financial management. She taught me everything about project funding and reporting, tracking expenditure, complying with donor requirements and enforcing policies and regulations. Colleen had more confidence in me than I had in myself. When I doubted myself sometimes she would encourage me, teach me and let me run. Now I can stand on my own feet and run my own unit.

Some of the skills I acquired through peer learning from colleagues like Loveness Jambaya, Dumisani Gandhi and Susan Tolmay



In 2010 Bridget Marango won the staff awards for exceptional performance and team player of the year, a rare and telling combination. *Photo: Albert Ngosa*

to name but a few. I recall a lot of mini mentoring sessions from interpreting emails to learning how to do a Performance Agreement (PA) and the famous bi-monthly planner.

In my second year, GL grew exponentially. The budget went from R8million to R26million. At this point it became imperative to understand GL programmes in depth. Colleen gave me the platform to learn, exposing me to how programmes function, where the funds really come from and how that feeds into the annual work plan and cascades into trimester plans and the relationship with spending patterns. My mind

shifted from a bean counter to a finance strategist who can add value to the design and implementation of programmes. This wasn't at all easy as I still had the accounting side to run. I needed time management, multi tasking and self organising skills. Almost at that point, Colleen conducted a time management course that gave me valuable insight into how important one's time is and how to guard it. I learnt all about prioritisation and taking care of tasks that are important before they become urgent to avoid being in a crises mode. Not only did I apply this valuable skill to my work but also to my personal life. I preached the same principles to my poor family and everyone started to plan around important but not yet urgent things like taking the car for service before it breaks down. Being a finance-oriented person, this principle worked amazingly in my personal budgeting. Paying traffic fines or dental bills on time saves on interest, penalties and emergencies.

Third year: I found myself moving to greater heights alongside the GL growth curve. The finance and admin work expanded as a result of the establishment of more satellite and field offices. My duties shifted from implementation to those of assisting the strategic planning process, planning for the unit, oversight and managing staff. They say "Management is the art of working through others". This was hard for me at first as I was used to doing things myself and doing them well.



Futuristic family: Bridget Marango with her sons Michael and Sean. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

The art of delegation is something Colleen had to push me to learn. We would argue about my performance agreement which I populated with direct responsibilities rather than management tasks. She helped me to understand that my higher level calling is to set the framework for others to do things and leverage my skills by guiding them through implementation. Many times she sketched the management triangle on the back of a piece of paper, reminding me that as you go up the ladder your technical skills become less and less important as your people, strategic and conceptual skills come to the fore.

With six staff members in the Corporate Services Unit, I had to learn how to manage staff from diverse backgrounds with different competence levels, attitudes and personalities. Balancing the organisation's and the staff interests, being firm but affirming, building people without breaking them, identifying their strengths and weaknesses and getting the best out of people is part of what I have been learning this past year and it's not easy. I am still learning on this front drawing from my mentor Colleen. Nobody can ever get it absolutely right but one can only strive to be as close to achieving this balance and I am looking forward to the HR course that is scheduled in the new fiscal year.

Moving along, I believe I am going onto my post graduate or should I say the Masters level with GL. I am looking forward to more exposure as more challenges lie ahead. GL never stops to grow and with its growth we also grow. It is a blessing to be with such a futuristic family.- *Bridget Marango, Head of Finance and Administration*

Growth and development

GL believes in growing people and encouraging its staff to strive to aim high, in the organisation and beyond. When potential is identified, individuals are given the space to take up more responsibilities and possibly grow into new and more senior positions. Staff are encouraged to stretch and "think out of the box". GL is a performance-driven organisation where hard work is rewarded.

The organisation uses a performance appraisal system whereby staff performance is evaluated and scored. GL is committed to fostering this performance culture in pursuit of high standards of service delivery and tangible results. GL sees itself as a people-centred organisation, placing a strong emphasis on training, mentoring and coaching (on-the-job training). Evidence shows that GL is an organisation willing to believe in people, to take chances, and to help shape careers.

Table 3.2 Gender Links staff promotion and transfers (2006-2011)

Staff member	Starting position	Position promoted to	Quote from Learning Journey
Nancy Padare	Cleaner	Office manager	*"As a receptionist I used to tell myself that I am not fit to do this type of work. GL empowered me with skills like scanning, printing and photocopying. I even teach other staff members how to use the equipment without damaging the machines. I conquered all these fears of being at the reception."*
Susan Tolmay	Office Manager	Monitoring and Evaluation Advisory Services Manager	*"Learning how to write, communicate and present information in more accessible and comprehensive ways has been another, sometimes difficult learning curve, but after almost five years of writing, editing and rewriting I know that there has been a great improvement in this area of my work."*
Mwenda Mkhize	Administrator	IT Systems Administrator	*"There has never been a dull moment in my area of work here at GL. I have always loved my job because challenges bring tremendous growth in my career."*
Agnes Murungi	Intern	HIV and AIDS Manager	
Rochelle Davidson	Intern	Senior Researcher	*"Multi tasking is the nature of the environment and if you are not naturally gifted with simultaneous thinking and doing many things, you are urgently natured into this very vital skill."*
Judith Mtsewu	Programme Officer	Protocol Alliance Manger	*"But in as much as the ED gave me support, she also let me make my own decisions as to how I was going to proceed - I had to form and cultivate good working relations with my counterpart in the City, I had to know and acknowledge all Personal Assistants because they were the possible stumbling block between me and getting an appointment with their Director, and I had to keep meticulous records of all the processes happening concurrently. This allowed me to grow in the role and to act in a way that said 'I owned the process.'"*
Sikhonzile Ndlovu	Intern	Media Programme Manager	*"This exercise presented me with vast learning opportunities because it meant that I had to read as well as "apply my mind" as the ED would say."*
Bridget Marango	Finance Manager	Head of Finance and Administration	*"Joining Gender Links has proved to be one of the best highlights of my career. My quest for personal growth has been met with satisfying opportunities."*

Staff member	Starting position	Position promoted to	Quote from Learning Journey
Abigail Williams Jacobs	Gender Justice and Local Government Manager	Gender and Governance Manager	*"This learning journey has encouraged me to explore other swimming styles and techniques so that I am not only able to help others along my next journey but also so that I simply do not drown!"*
Mukayi Makaya	Executive Assistant	Alliance and Partnerships Manager	*"I feel indebted to many within the GL community especially to the Executive Director, Colleen Lowe Morna who is also my manager. You have all touched my life in a positive way and shaped who I am today. So true is the saying that 'when you stop growing: you start dying' I have grown over the past year and look forward to further growth."*
Saeanna Chingamuka	GMDC Coordinator	GMDC Manager	*"I feel I have developed excellent public relations skills, thanks to some difficult partners that I have had to work with. I enjoy working with people, talking to them and listening to their stories. It just gives me strength to look forward to the next day and days to come."*
Vivien Bakainaga	HR and Admin Officer	HR and Assets Manager	*"GL gives you back as an organisation, opportunities to grow, get focused and setting clear goals."*
Mpumelelo Mlilo	Finance Officer	Finance and IT Coordinator	*"The first lesson in this journey was the testimony of what great things women can do if they are presented with equal opportunities as men in Finance, which is predominantly considered a man's area."*
Fanuel Hadzizi	Intern	Governance Programme Assistant	*"I believe GL has been able to challenge my potential in as far as finance is concerned. This experience has been enriching and has helped widen my career prospects."*
Kelello Tekateka	Intern	Gender Justice Programme Officer	*"In fact, I can confirm that I have worked longer hours and slept less in my time at GL than I did while completing my Masters dissertation. But, despite the stress, and the aforementioned blood sweat and tears, I'm still smiling because it has been an amazingly fulfilling journey."*
Mercilene Machisa	Intern	GBV Indicators Research Manager	*"Being at GL has been an opportunity to work on and improve my people skills. Through the research work I have engaged with many diverse cultures and this is true especially to the different researchers we had."*
Gladys Muzirwa	Intern	Executive Assistant	*"Through GL I have learned to make each day count by being gainfully employed. My knowledge of gender issues has increased awesomely. My computer skills, and confidence are higher than before."*
Danny Glenwright	Editor	Communications Manager	*"Working these past six months at Gender Links has meant I've had to confront more bogeymen than I might like, but it's all in the spirit of personal growth. Who can complain about that?"*
Roos van Dorp	Programme Assistant	Programme Officer	*"My dearest memories are of meeting and interacting with people who work in the field and who are supporting. In those moments I am reminded of why we are working so hard in the office."*
Davinah Sholay	Programme Assistant	Programme Officer	

Table 3.2 provides examples of 20 staff members who have been promoted at GL over the past five years. This group includes seven interns who went on to become permanent staff. Sikhonzile Ndlovu's may be the most famous case of upward movement. Skhoe started as an intern and is now the manager of GL's media programme. Several staff have also moved from administration into programme work, including Susan Tolmay, another great example. Susan went from working as office administrator to become the Gender and Governance Programme Manager, and later the Monitoring and Evaluation Manager. Comments from staff in Table 3.2 reflect the personal growth most have experienced.

Learning on-the-job

Two examples, Mauritius Programme Officer, Davinah Sholay and GL Alliance and Partnerships Manager Mukayi Makaya show what is possible when staff believe they can fly.

The University of Gender Links: Learning out of the box

Mauritius Programme Officer **Davinah Sholay** wrote in her Learning Journey: " The first thing that comes to mind after those seven months spent at Gender Links is: Growth. It might indeed sound as too short a period to say so but Gender Links has undoubtedly opened the doors to new and unprecedented opportunities that have been an incredible boost to me as an individual and a professional. On top of providing a platform to implement everything, not to say more, that I have learnt at University, Gender Links has also expanded my field of knowledge by offering the opportunity to take care of the Mauritius Satellite Office finances.

As a communications person, I was this classic bird comfortably locked in my classic cage and had never considered the possibility of allying words and letters. Today I am glad to say that this intersection is not only possible but an also very interesting one and I enjoy working finances as much as the other responsibilities allocated to me. On a wider scale, Gender Links has broadened my view and opened my mind when it comes to this "out of the box" thinking, more especially when addressing gender equality, HIV and AIDS, gender-based violence and other still sensitive issues.

It is amazing how the Maslow's hierarchy of needs were fulfilled in a blink at Gender Links. As I conclude the beginning of my long journey at Gender Links, I have faith that this is only the tip of the iceberg."

GL Alliance and Partnerships Manager **Mukayi Makaya** adds: "It all began in December 2008 when I joined GL as Executive Assistant to the Director. January to December 2009 had me in my comfort zone; even though the workload was heavy I still managed to stay in control. I was amazed by the volume of work done by very few programme staff. The number of publications that were produced, wow! I was intrigued by the different programmes, Gender and Governance, Gender Justice and Gender and Media. I have always felt strongly about gender equality, so being in an environment that promotes gender equality was really gratifying.



That's what friends are for: Davinah Sholay and Shau Mudekunye.
Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna

2010 saw me moving into marketing and communications, I was very excited about the move, which is really my area of study. I was so excited and quickly acquainted myself with the many GL publications... Towards the end of 2010 I was offered a promotion to manage the Alliance and Partnerships portfolio. Even though I was ecstatic, I was also somewhat scared. It was a big leap, and way out of my comfort zone. I wondered if I would cope, it was a whole new area of work, this is quite intimidating. I convinced myself that I could and would do it."

Staff movement

Table 3.2 showed rapid growth of staff over a short space of time. Given that GL has only operated at its current staff levels for the last three years, the average length of service of two to three years among staff and managers is reasonable.

Table 3.3 illustrates staff turnover since 2008. Human resources best practice is that there should be about 10% movement within any given organisation in any given year. GL was below that mark in 2008, but above in 2009/2010. Although reasons for leaving included medical and family reasons, GL needs to work hard to retain staff, especially now that the organisation is on a more sound financial footing.

Table 3.3: GL staff movements and turnover

GL staff turnover between 2008-2010	2008	2009	2010
Total staff	24	30	35
Left for medical reasons	0	1	1
Left for family reasons	0	1	1
Left for professional reasons	2	3	3
% turnover	8%	16%	14%
Failed to make probation	0	0	2



Breaking up is never easy: Mukayi Makaya bids farewell to Susan Tolmay. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

Coping with stress

GL is a busy place and its demanding work environment means staff will only succeed if they are able to cope with frequent stress. Because GL recognises this, regular attempts are made to assist staff become better at handling stress. This is one of the most commonly cited areas of "life learning" among GL staff.

"I arrived at Gender Links in 2010 expecting business as usual," said Justice Programme Officer **Kelello Tekateka**. "However within days it became clear that this relatively small organisation does an amazingly large and impressive amount of work. GL has a very high work ethic, something that every member of the GL staff - both past and present - will attest to.

"It would be a lie to say working at GL has been all fun, games and the fulfilment of long held passions, or to suggest that even for a second, my experience thus far has been easy. In fact, I can confirm that I have worked longer hours and slept less in my time at GL than I did while completing my Masters dissertation. But, despite the stress, and the aforementioned blood sweat and tears, I'm still smiling because it has been an amazingly fulfilling journey."

Many staff write in their Learning Journeys about what they are doing to improve work life balance, allowing many to keep up with a busy job they love and still find time for loved ones outside of work.

Media Manager **Sikhonzile Ndlovu** says "As a young professional mother of two, balancing personal and professional demands has been a major challenge. What this has taught me though, is to check my priorities everyday without comprising the lives of those that are close to my heart."

For Gender and Governance Manager **Abigail Jacobs-Williams,** doing something as simple as closing her office door more often to block out distractions has helped keep a balance.

"My journey, through my work at GL has taught me that it is important to take some time out regularly in my work and personal life (even if it means closing my office door) to reflect on processes that change the way I do things and also think about things. This will only benefit me as an individual but it will also benefit those that I am responsible for and who I manage as well as in my personal relationships and friends, as I constantly need to give them my best to ensure that I always get their best."

Finance Officer **Fanuel Hadzizi** harnesses the power of positive thinking to help him get through stressful periods.

"I have learnt that work as part of life comes as a mixed bag of experiences. Some are good, some bad, some challenging, some empowering, some deflating and some really thrilling," he says. "Choosing to remain positive, level headed and optimistic even in the midst of a storm makes a person stronger and wiser. Real character is built from exposure to tough conditions the same way clear diamonds are processed under extreme temperatures. The audit period is always the most challenging in the Finance and Administration Department. I am proud to say that year after year our audit has passed the ultimate test and has always been without blemishes."



Fanuel Hadzidzi with his nephew during a staff wellness walk .
Photo: Gender Links

Wellness Programme

GL recognises the stresses that come with working in the non-profit sector and because of this puts great importance in ensuring its human capital is taken care of. From 2006 GL embarked on a Wellness Programme with the aim of creating a healthy team that strikes a balance in all areas of their life. A committee comprising of representatives from all GL departments and the two satellite offices was formed and works to ensure the wellness of all GL staff.

In Johannesburg, GL has religiously continued to provide staff with fresh water and fruit. It also believes that family is an integral part of wellness and to this end, has tried to include family members in all wellness activities. Highlights during the year, and a favourite to GL staff members children, is the regular walking club, which is normally followed by a treat! GL has had many successful walks, one of which was deliberately organised at a time when satellite office staff and field officers were present. This was a walk at the Walter Sisulu Botanical Gardens; followed by a "chisa nyama" and Jacuzzi treat for the kids, graciously hosted by Mark and Debi Lucas.

Staff increases in 2009/2010 meant more people needed to be accommodated in the institutional wellbeing programme. These developments meant that a wellbeing plan that included and benefited all GL staff had to be developed. In order to cater for satellite offices and Field Officers, a decision was

taken to break down the wellness budget to a "per person" allocation. Satellite offices and Field Officers were thus tasked to develop their own wellness activities. However, as head office, we continue to acknowledge field officer birthdays by doing something special on the day.

GL's Board Members frequently take part in wellness activities. Within the board Deputy Chair Scholastica Kimaryo champions the programme, has helped to shape it, and will run a key workshop in April 2011.

"I am birthday 'boy' at this month of writing this learning journey and want to thank the impressive wellness programme that Gender Links has put in place. I was touched when the first birthday wish came from none other than the Executive Director. This makes one have a sense of belonging and motivation, and produces the best from an employee. I can testify that this had a contagious effect to the extent that my family, not to be outdone, organised an impressive surprise party!"
- Mpumelelo Mlilo



Scholastica Kimaryo at the Tanzania Gender Festival.
Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna

Body, mind and soul

by Scholastica Kimaryo, Deputy Chair of Gender Links

As I celebrated my 61st birthday - and one year of retirement from the United Nations after some 31 years of service -- I decided to pursue my life-long passion for and conviction that mind, body, spirit, well-being and happiness are the foundation for true personal empowerment and authentic leadership. I enrolled at the Chopra Wellness Centre in California, USA where I am studying for my Verdic Master Trainer & Consultant (Life Coach) Programme.

Upon my brief return to South Africa in April 2010, I keenly shared my newly acquired knowledge with the Gender Links head office staff. We watched one of Deepak Chopra's DVDs titled *The Happiness Prescription: The Secret to Experiencing a Joyful Life*. This enabled staff to be aware of the foundations of the theory behind the hypothesis, as well as raise each one's awareness of their own issues and in their own minds. A plenary discussion followed and staff members showed a lot of interest in taking the 8-fold Path of the Happiness Prescription further. I also had an opportunity to present the same concepts - this time in the format of a custom-made power point presentation - and stirred very interesting discussions with the GL field staff in May. Thereafter, I worked with the wellness team on the formulation of the 2010/2011 annual wellbeing plan which is divided into two themes.

The first theme of the plan focuses on encouraging and supporting staff to lead a healthy and balanced lifestyle. Ongoing activities such as aerobics, wellness walks, recognition of staff birthdays, unit lunches and other fun activities are undertaken with the objective of supporting staff with physical exercise, nutrition, team building and entertainment.

The second theme of the plan focuses on encouraging and supporting staff to strive to attain a better mind, body and spirit balance to be able to manage stress and to strive for a higher self. The objective of this theme is to enable staff to be aware of their potential so as to harness the power within and ultimately evolve to more enlightened and happier beings, from within and independent of whatever happens around

them, including the perceived or real whims of their bosses, colleagues, spouses, relatives, friends or others human beings. The GL Staff decided to frame this around the eight-fold path by Dr. Deepak Chopra and tackle one main topic per quarter. They also chose three out of the eight topics: meditation, correct thinking and spontaneous right speech. The other five will be tackled in the next fiscal year.

These sessions should also empower staff as they will learn, among others, meditation and other techniques for quietening the turbulence of the mind; thereby making their thoughts work better for them. Recognising that happiness lies within and being able to better manage rather than unconsciously reacting to situations should also put staff in a position where they should be better able to manage their emotions, their thinking and their interactions. By the same token, happier, calmer staff members should be better able to realise their full potential as well as to execute their duties more effectively and efficiently.



Higher beings: Loga Virahsawmy and Doreen Gaura celebrate the end of a long year. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

Ultimately, GL seeks to enable staff members to evolve to the level of "Authentic, Internal Self Empowerment & Enlightenment" that makes for the best results in what they do and who they are, bearing in mind that they are human BEINGS and NOT human DOINGS. Gender Links can only lead transformation agendas if they, themselves, are transformed! Tall order, you say? Of course! GL has achieved and been recognised for many of its DOINGS! Now is the time for GL to move to the stage of becoming HIGHER BEINGS! It can be done! You just have to dare to dream and decide to visualise/envision HOW to get there!

Green office

GL is also strengthening its internal policies on environment and climate change. These include recycling and waste management. Staff capacity building in these areas is important.



GL is active in promotion of environmental awareness and therefore requesting staff to socially be responsible by not disposing empty cartridges in the dust bins. Separate waste bins for paper, plastic and glass are used at GL head office. They are later recycled locally. Staff are asked to be mindful of paper usage.

Staff awards

GL has also begun awarding staff for good effort in various areas of work. The first ever Staff Awards took place at the Annual Dinner held on 26 March 2010 at The Houghton Boardroom. The event was attended by members of staff, spouses, GL board, GL services providers and partners. The awards are now an annual event and staff members nominate one another and go to the ballot box together when all field and satellite staff are in Johannesburg.

The organisation strives to get the right balance between reward and discipline. Table 3.4 provides a summary of the 13 annual staff awards; six voted on by staff and the others based on specialist knowledge or objective criteria.

Table 3.4: Gender Links staff awards criteria

Award	Criteria
Exceptional performance	Average of 95% and over.
Excellent performance	Average 90% and over
Improved performance	Two staff whose performance scores have improved the most over the period worked.
Long service	Five years and over
Team player - staff	Nominated and voted for by staff
Team player - management	Nominated and voted for by staff
Innovation, staff	Nominated by and voted by staff
Innovation, management	Nominated and voted for by staff
Resource mobilisation staff	Nominated and voted for by staff
Resource mobilisation manager	Nominated and voted for by staff
Website	Most inviting, interactive and innovative section of the website as voted on by all staff, relevant associates and partners.
Financial administration	The best requisitions and reconciliations, finance staff vote
Gender Justice Summits	The field officer who in the assessment of the ED comes up with the most innovative examples of relevant and replicable local level



Lessons learned

- Staff members need to be continually encouraged to build on their skills and to help others develop, both within the organisation and in working with partners and beneficiaries.
- GL needs to continue to implement coherent monitoring and evaluation processes into its work in order to ease reporting and promote transparency.
- GL must continue to harness the power of technology and social media in order to grow its audience and allow staff to expand their skills.
- Staff members perform better and are more likely to remain loyal to the organisation if growth and upward movement are encouraged. Motivating GL staff with regular training activities and job promotion following exemplary performance will ensure staff retention.
- Wellness activities need to be considered vital to the wellness of the organisation and all staff should be encouraged to take part in group activities and to maintain their personal wellness.
- It is important to maintain a diverse staff.
- Managers should strive to strike a balance between positive and constructive negative feedback when dealing with junior staff.

This is important to ensure staff morale remains high.

- GL needs to keep up its current energy and make an effort to keep growth under control. Managing the rapid growth of the organisation can be a daunting task. GL needs to keep reinventing and adapting quickly to the changes in the environment.
- Recognise potential problems in advance and plan for them.

Exit interviews

To ensure that internal mentoring succeeds, it is important to develop a brief exit interview for those who may leave the organisation for various reasons. This will enable the HR to make recommendations to management. The following are some of the examples to be considered in exit interview:

- Remuneration/more-attractive professional opportunities.
- Management style
- Family and personal reasons
- Professional niche
- Job security
- Policy/ideology related differences



Next steps

- There is need for a comprehensive staff development plan linked to the Performance Management System, by which each staff member is evaluated on a regular basis. GL also sets aside part of its annual budget for staff development. The organisation will soon move forward on management training plans which have been in the pipeline for some time. In particular, all managers will undergo HR management training.
- Drafting of a human resource development and retention strategy, envisioning organisational growth within the next five years and beyond. The proposed human resources strategy is based on GL's experience and in anticipation of the growing organisational profile.
- Narrowing the gender gap in staff composition: GL should attempt to recruit more men as well as ensure staff continues to be hired from all parts of SADC and beyond.
- Preparing a succession plan and assign various short term leadership and management opportunities within the organisation.
- Incorporating the recommendations arising from recent institutional evaluations and the writing of this commemorative book into GL's five year strategy 2010-2015.
- Maximising learning from work with partners and internal evaluations.



Having a blast: Bridget Marango and Loveness Jambaya..
Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna


acer



Current GL interns: From left to right: Hunadi Ralebipi (South Africa); Thato Phakela (Lesotho) and Daud Kayisi (Malawi).

Photo by Saeanna Chingamuka

Chapter 4

Investing in the future - the GL internship programme

By Saeanna Chingamuka and Thato Phakela

"During my internship at GL, I had to do programme, finance and administrative work. This was a huge challenge, but it taught me to be flexible and versatile and to face my fears with a brave heart. It was through my experience at GL that I realised that education only taught me to think and apply logic and reason whereas work in itself is something that can be learnt and perfected through experience. The secret is only to give it your best shot and see how it goes".

- Fanuel Hadzizi, Intern, 2008

Fact box

- GL has been offering internship opportunities to young women and men since 2004.
- There have been 47 beneficiaries from 19 countries in this programme: 77% women and 23% men. All GL departments have benefitted from the internship programme.
- Internships have had a profound impact on the interns' career paths and have helped strengthen relationships between academic institutions and the Gender and Media Diversity Centre (GMDC).
- In the next decade, GL will launch an alumni association of past interns who can assist in profiling GL's work in the region and beyond.



Rebecca Masinde facilitating a BU workshop during her term at GL. *Photo: Trevor Davies*

"I[1] really couldn't summarise my experience at Gender Links in a paragraph - it would be injustice, but I will try. Working at GL was my very first internship experience and it was nothing short of a blessing. From day one I was never treated like your typical intern but more like an equal employee.

I learned the ropes quickly and almost immediately GL Executive Director Colleen Lowe Morna entrusted me with a significant amount of research responsibility. I was baffled by her faith in me to get the job done. It is amazing what you can do when someone puts their faith in you. Colleen was and still remains a large inspiration to me - the tenacity, ambition, motherly-nature yet aggressive approach to business, penchant for perfection, structured-mind yet free spirit, have left a lingering influence on me as a career-woman, an advocate for women's empowerment and a person: besides, who can say that their boss wrote a thesis on Bob Marley!?

Above all, being able to play an integral part in the "Business Unusual" (gender, election and media) training in South Africa was an amazing experience, expanded by travelling to Namibia and Swaziland with Colleen and GL training associate Trevor Davies. Gender Links listened to every suggestion I made. More important GL highlighted every mistake I made and addressed it with a kindness and attention that made me a better employee and a better person.

I keep up with the growth of the organisation regularly and every time I am in South Africa with my family GL is in the news. I am so proud to have been a part of such a unique and successful organisation and would move back in a heartbeat and work at GL. To all future interns, Colleen and her team are an absolute delight to be around. So settle in, be comfortable and trust that all that hard work is only a testament to the talent that you already possess - perhaps you just do not realise yet!"

Rebecca Masinde's memories provide a small sketch of an intern's experience at GL. This chapter is about the vibrant GL internship programme. It aims to provide perspectives from previous interns and look at some statistics, including the total number of interns that have passed through GL, their country of origin and where they are today. The chapter looks at interns who have risen through the ranks at GL and are still with the organisation today, as well as those who left to pursue work with other organisations. Some previous interns also reflect on their personal interest in gender and development since working for GL, something which has prompted some to conduct further research on gender. This chapter also looks at scores from former interns based on different areas of learning and growth. In the conclusion we draw on some lessons GL has learned from several years of the internship programme and map the strategy of how we will take the programme going forward.

Background

Little did GL know back in 2004 - when it hosted its first intern - that seven years later, in 2011, the internship programme would be one of its flagship projects. Today, GL sums up the internship project as one in which it is making efforts to "invest in the future." But what is "investing in the future" about?

In October 2010, GL received the prestigious "Investing in the future" award from the *Mail and Guardian* newspaper for pioneering a new kind of leadership through its Gender

[1] Rebecca Masinde was a Gender Links intern in 2007

Justice and Local Government Summit. However, it is not only through this programme that GL has been investing. The award was just a tip of the iceberg as far as the huge investments the organisation has been making towards the overall development of SADC. One of these investments is the internship programme, which is implemented by the Gender and Media Diversity Centre (GMDC). Through this programme, GL is building the next generation of gender, media and development advocates.

The GMDC is the knowledge centre of GL, so it is only natural that it assists in passing knowledge along to the next generation. With this ideal in mind, the centre facilitates a process whereby GL actively engages with youth by offering them a platform to put theory into practice for a period of six months.

Internships provide an opportunity for students to relate information from their formal courses to the world of work. Interns get the opportunity to observe, participate and perform independently in a supportive environment. The experience offered at GL is especially useful for students who have never worked before, or who would like to move from a more generalised area of study to a focused subject. GL also has short term volunteers, some who come for as little as two months to gain working experience during school breaks.

Objectives

The objectives of the Gender Links internship programme are to:

- Provide students or future professionals with work experience under the supervision of an experienced professional;
- Provide students with practical experience in applying their knowledge of gender, media, communication, politics, governance and journalism;
- Add value to the work of the organisation;
- Give students an opportunity to work in an NGO environment that works across Southern Africa;
- Give students confidence in their ability to move into the world of work;
- Provide an understanding and experience of the administrative and financial systems which operate in a work environment;
- Add to the media education training and curriculum of the institution;
- Guide student journalists and media practitioners to incorporate and factor in gender and diversity angles in their work;
- Facilitate networking opportunities to meet professionals and role models in the field.

The six month internship programme continues to grow; both at Gender Links headquarters, at our satellite offices in Botswana and Mauritius, and most recently interns have been incorporated in field offices in Lesotho, Madagascar, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The Mozambique satellite office and the Swaziland field office do not yet have interns. Interns are assigned to a depart-ment and a supervisor in that department. The supervisor provides continuous feedback and liaises with their institutional supervisor. In addition, the intern is given specific projects and work which is most appropriate to their field of study.

Institutional links

The GL internship programme evolved over the years and GL learned new lessons with every new group of interns. As part of the in-house monitoring and evaluation procedures, GL conducts exit interviews with interns at the end of their contracts. At the same time, GL had started a conversation within the GMDC on how to strengthen partnerships with media training institutions.

The result is that GL is now offering internships to students from these departments. Although GL cannot accommodate all institutions every year, an annual rotation process has been developed to allow all institutions to be accommodated. GL is also working hand-in-hand with institutions to tailor-design internships to suit experiential learning requirements. For

instance, Zimbabwe's National University of Science and Technology (NUST) requires that third-year students are placed in a work environment for at least eight months. Though GL internships are usually a maximum six months, NUST students have been accommodated for longer.

The variety of GL academic linkages also helped fine-tune the work of interns. This is because their work contributes to a certain percentage of their academic mark. In certain instances, work plans have been agreed by the student's supervisor and GL. This is a welcome move as it has also meant the internship programme has approval from institutions of higher learning. The interns are then assigned to a GL manager who oversees and guides their work as well as reports to their supervisor on a weekly basis. Through this internship, the students develop a body of knowledge, in the form of a portfolio, which they take with them once they leave. Thus we have added to our internship objectives:

- To establish more substantial partnerships with learning institutions;
- To add to the media education training and curriculum of the institution.

As illustrated in Table 4.1, six students have taken part in the GL internship programme through institutional links. Of these six, four (Polytechnic of Namibia, NUST, University of Limpopo and National University of Lesotho) have signed MOUs with the GMDC and internships have been established as a way of strengthening partnerships.

The role of GL in this process is to:

- Provide a supervisor to give day-to-day guidance to the student and monthly reviews;
- Provide the intern with a monthly stipend and secure and convenient accommodation;



GL Botswana intern Vincent Galatlhwe with former intern, now Programme Officer, Roos van Dorp. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

Table 4.1: Strengthening institutional links

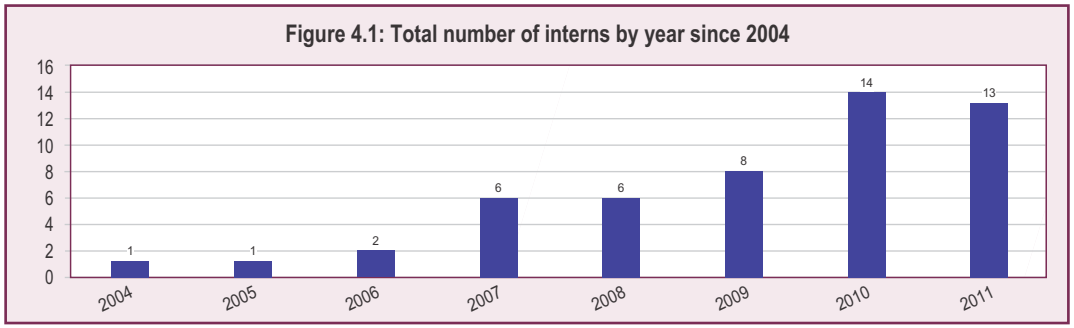
Year	Name	Sex	Nationality	Institution	Qualification
2010	Albert Ngosa	Male	Zambian	Zambia Institute for Mass Communication	Diploma in Journalism and Public Relations
2010	Emsie Erastus	Female	Namibian	Polytechnic of Namibia	Diploma in Journalism and Communication
2010	Tarisai Nyamweda	Female	Zimbabwean	National University of Science and Technology	Bsc (Hons) Journalism and Media Studies
2011	Daud Kayisi	Male	Malawian	University of Malawi	BA Journalism
2011	Hunadi Ralebipi	Female	South African	University of Limpopo	BA Communication Studies
2011	Thato Phakela	Female	Mosotho	National University of Lesotho	Diploma in Mass Communication

- Provide substantive assignments for the student as well as being open to receiving feedback from him/her as to activities that will complement his/her interests and abilities;
- Teach the student and to allow them to learn on-the-job, while simultaneously expecting that the student will be eager to participate and learn and that they will display self-confidence, initiative, and a strong work ethic;
- Provide full time work (40 hrs per week) for all interns;
- Provide specific goals for the internship and specify the duties that will be performed;
- Evaluate student based on: accuracy; dependability; willingness; quality of work; initiative; maturity; promptness and punctuality.

Beneficiaries

Like any success story, the internship programme has grown incrementally over the years since it began in 2004, both at GL headquarters, and satellite and field offices.

As illustrated in Figure 4.1, the number of interns in the past decade has been growing every year. At the time of writing, GL had a total of 13 interns. Five more interns will likely be added to the 2011 pool. Three will be for the second 2011 phase whilst two will be recruited for the new Mozambique and Swaziland offices.



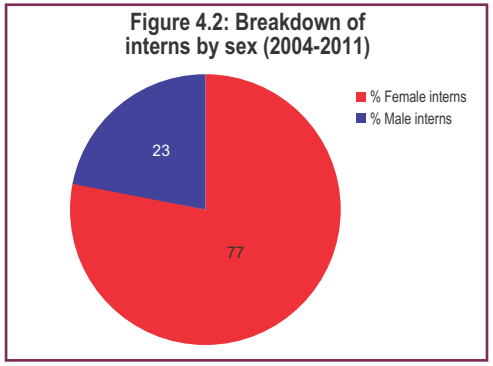


Figure 4.2 shows that of the 47 GL interns, 77% (36) have been female and 33% (11) male. The proportion of male interns is higher than GL staff (8%). The 2009-2010 GL Annual Report notes: "due to the nature of the work, it is to be expected that there are more women than men at GL." As an organisation that seeks to empower women in society, it is natural that the internship programme is seen as one way of creating opportunities for young women in the region. However, as GL's staff policy is to aim for 30% participation by men in all its activities, we continue to strive to attract young men to come and work with us.

"Partnerships result in great things! Thanks so much for the opportunity afforded to Emsie. When I saw her portfolio submitted for assessment (Experiential Learning) I thought, what an experience for this young woman - she will remember this for the rest of her life. Thanks to your visionary leadership and a talented team, Emsie's semester has been a truly memorable and educative one."

- E Mail communication from Emily Brown, Head of Media Studies, Polytechnic of Namibia, following the return of former GL intern Emsie Erastus

Figure 4.3: Breakdown of interns by country of origin

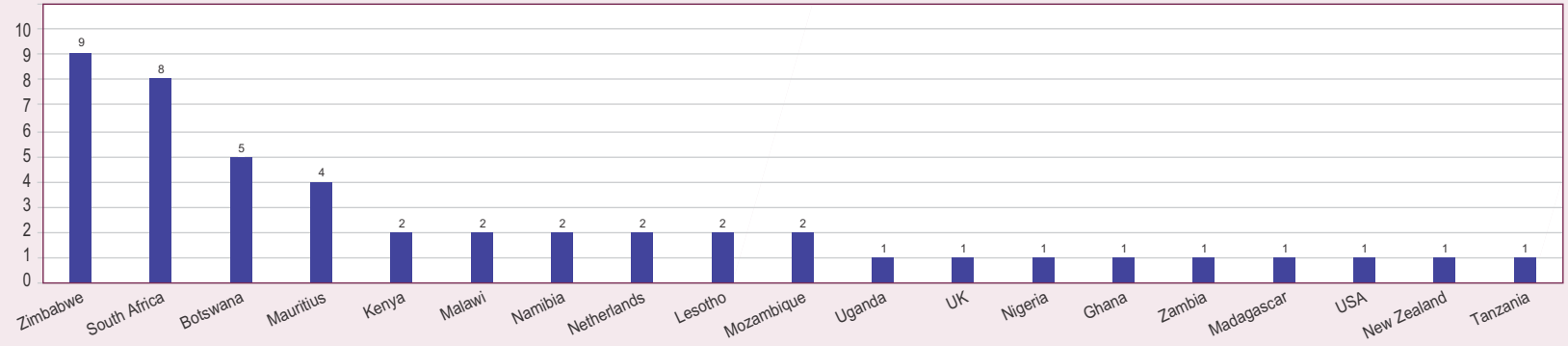


Figure 4.3 shows that GL's 47 interns have come from all over the world: 19 countries in total. Of these 19, 11 are SADC countries: Botswana; Lesotho; Madagascar; Malawi; Mauritius; Mozambique; Namibia; South Africa; Tanzania; Zambia; and Zimbabwe. The highest numbers of interns have been from Zimbabwe (9), followed by South Africa (8). This mirrors GL's staff profile and is common in regional organisations as a result of the current political and economic challenges in Zimbabwe.

The satellite offices in Botswana and Mauritius have also had a high number of interns. This is because these offices are involved in all GL projects and they have the capacity to supervise interns, as well as the space to accommodate them.

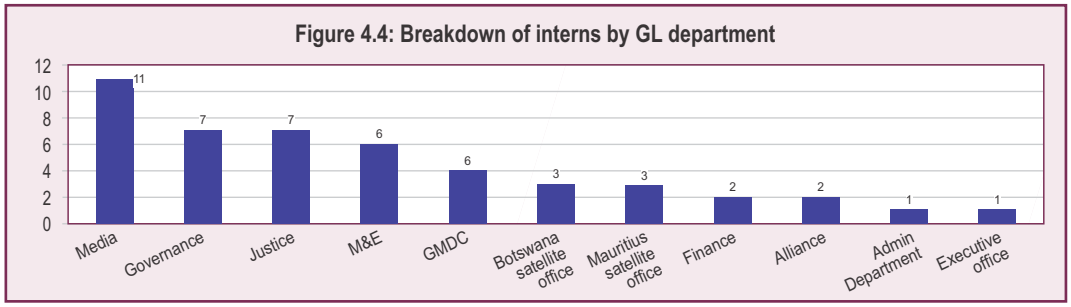
In 2010, GL upgraded part time interns in the field offices to full times posts. This has resulted in greater diversity. GL has also had interns from far and wide, but Africa remains in the lead.

The internship programme has attracted students from overseas including from the Netherlands, New Zealand, United States of America and the UK. The GMDC seeks to promote diversity and students from overseas bring new skills and ideas to GL's work.



"It's crazy to think that my experience at GL happened so accidentally, just by typing the words "gender NGO Africa" into Google, but I'm so glad I did. My time at GL has taught me so much and has been the perfect platform to launch what I hope will be an equally interesting and fulfilling career."

- Naomi Blight



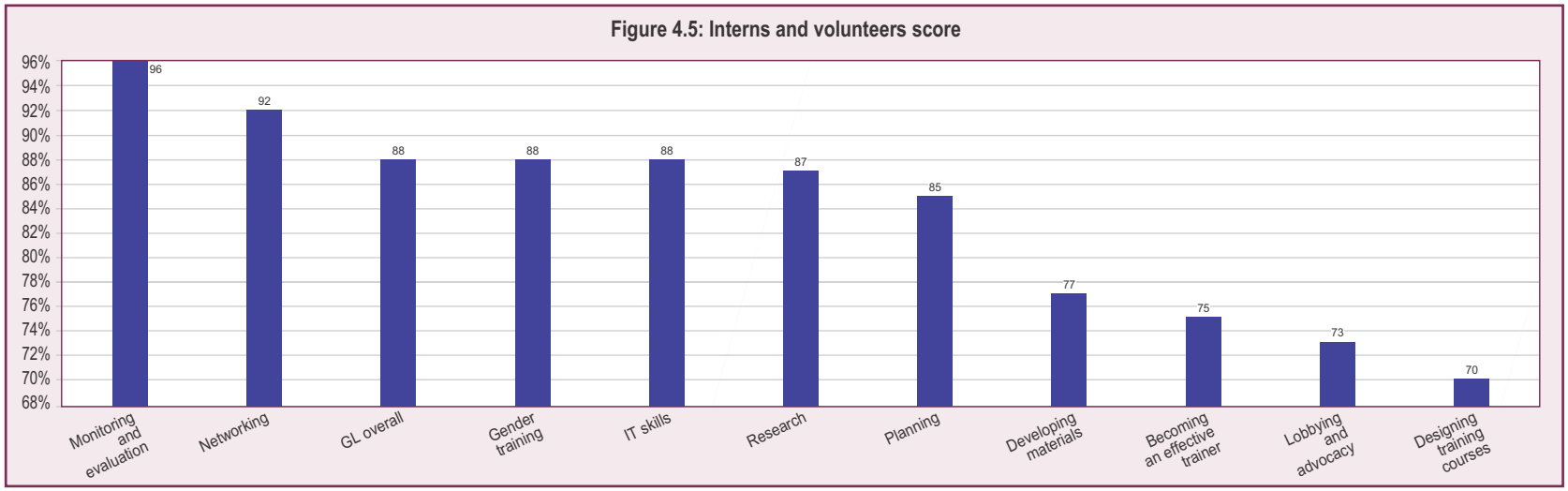
The media department has attracted the highest number of interns as shown in Figure 4.4. This programme has been in existence since GL's inception in 2001, thus more interns have been placed in this department. More recently students are being placed in this department as a result of the institutional partnerships mentioned earlier.

Key benefits

GL can boast of having positively impacted the lives of 47 young women and men, providing mentorship and important life and learning skills. This is a benefit for both GL and the 47 lives it has touched.

As part of GL's longitudinal study on its beneficiaries over the past ten years, interns and volunteers were asked to score key areas of learning from their time at GL. Figure 4.5 shows that overall the interns and volunteers scored GL 88%. Monitoring and evaluation got the highest scores at 96% followed by networking at 92%. This is heartening, as the interns, especially in the field offices, have become the backbone of GL's work. The areas in the range of 70%, which were the lowest, like lobbying, and designing course materials, are areas of work interns have not usually been intensively involved in.

Monitoring and evaluation - 96%
Monitoring and evaluation is a new area of work for GL and has attracted interest from interns. Initially, the current interns attached



with field offices were brought on as M and E volunteers. They would assist the field officers to collect different evaluation and other M and E forms at workshops. They were eventually upgraded to interns and continue to do the work. They have done this effectively and efficiently and this beneficiary study shows that it is definitely an area in which they have realised learning and growth, as reflected in the testimonial below by the Botswana M and E intern.

Networking - 92%
Interns and volunteers are often intensively involved in training and advocacy workshops organised by GL. These workshops have afforded them an opportunity to network with representatives of like-minded organisations and they scored this component of growth at 92%.

"Since joining GL, I have grown a lot at personal and professional level. I have acquired more skills and learnt how to communicate with different people at different levels. I have learned professional networking with different stakeholders," said **Ntolo Lekau**, who is currently a GL intern in Lesotho.

Roos van Dorp, a former GL intern and now programme officer in Botswana said: "Networking has helped me build strong relationships with various stakeholders. My expertise in networking enables me to mobilise the media among other stakeholders and get them to attend our events."

Gender training - 88%
GL provides media training to citizens so that they can critically engage with the media. The interns and volunteers have also participated in GL gender training which is now extended to all staff. Supervisors are expected to mentor junior staff and there has been extensive internal mentoring through one-on-one guidance and feedback given on certain assignments.

Staff members, including interns and volunteers, are encouraged to contribute to knowledge creation at GL. This is done through writing Opinion and Commentary pieces and analysing newspaper clippings to produce case studies, among other things. Testimonies from past interns are proof of



"In early 2009, when I was invited to attend a GL workshop on GBV, I was given the full workshop package with some documents to read and that was an eye opening tool for me. The message I got from that was what I have been concerned about for some years: gender and gender relations.

Well, when I got home after the workshop I took stock of the objectives discussed by groups. I just told myself that now I will become a gender activist. The following week I visited the office and asked the office coordinator if I could start volunteering for the office, and she agreed. That was when I started committing myself to be in the office on a daily basis, which I have been doing up to this day. I am very happy to share that I am now in the position of M and E intern.

It gave me the opportunity to engage in all issues of concern in the office and understand more of the issues that affect my society and that could also possibly affect me. My period with GL also helped me to me improve and sharpen my IT skills in the likes of data capturing, uploading M and E tools, media clipping, photo library and other IT related stuff. I am very grateful and thankful to the GL family and want to be with this family in future. GL, I wish you more success and more returns".

- Vincent Galatlhwe - Botswana Monitoring and Evaluation Intern.



Zambia field office intern Albert Ngosa. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

the positive impact that gender training has had, both on the interns and other in-country trainees.

"In every workshop attended there are two or three men who have stereotype mentality but their mindsets changed after three days of training," said **Albert Ngosa**, an intern at GL's Zambia field office.

Géraldine Aubeeluck, an intern at GL in 2009, agrees, noting: "I learned about gender blindness and stereotypes in most aspects of life and how they affect women. This has prompted my desire to critique issues, media content in particular and suggested possible and gender aware alternatives."

Lucia Makamure, a 2009 intern noted that, "I must confess that no institute or professor could have taught me what I have learnt from the Gender Links and the Southern African Gender Protocol Alliance family. However for me the best accomplishment has been knowing that I have contributed to causes that I truly believe in."

Research - 87%

Interns and volunteers also take part in GL research projects, in particular collecting and analysing data. Anyone who contributes to research is acknowledged in the final product. GL undertakes research which allows interns to move from the academic realm and apply theory into practice.

"I now have a deeper understanding of what gender and sex are. To demonstrate my understanding of these two mostly confused terms, I managed to apply the knowledge in writing VRC case studies for GL."

- Carla Prayag, Intern, 2009

Mercilene Machisa, a GL intern in 2010 and current manager of the Gender Based Violence Indicators project, said: "Joining the GBV Indicators project was my initial opportunity to exercise and gain experience in the research skills that I had already acquired from the academic field. Gender was a subject that I had not engaged with, mainly because of my academic orientation. Being at GL has changed this. I have had to brush up on my knowledge of the issues and part of this has also been through gender training. I have acquired a 'gender lens' that I previously did not have.

"Little did I imagine that the opportunity I was given by GL would entail growth in many other diverse aspects. Not only can I conduct research, I am also able to present research findings in a simplistic manner that the public can engage with. This is something many academics fail to do".

Jamaican **Rochelle Davidson-Mhonde**, who joined GL as an intern in 2006 and went on to become a researcher, wrote: "I received rigorous experience and it broadened my professional and academic interests. I knew that I wanted to work in the area of gender and development and GL helped solidify where I could concentrate my energy. My professional goal is to continue to do important research for gender equality. My favourite part about working for GL is when I met truly inspiring women with 'herstories' of abandonment, abuse and violence, yet they were survivors of the highest calibre. These women have more purpose and vigour than the minority of us who have stable jobs and 'power' in our lives. My lessons learnt came from them. In honour of these women, I promise to continue to take my choices seriously. After all, that is freedom. Whether it is in the role of nurturer or researcher, I am a woman who is proud to be one!"



Rochelle Davidson-Mhonde. *Photo: Gender Links*

Tarisai Nyamweda, a 2010 GL Intern from the Zimbabwe National University of Science and Technology (NUST) became a star monitor and contributor to the Gender and Media Progress Study (GMPS) and is featured on the back cover of the report. Her learning journey is found in Chapter Six, on GL's media work.

Planning - 85%
"If you fail to plan, you plan to fail": so goes one of the popular mottos at GL. In other organisations, planning is left to senior staff only. However, at GL every idea counts, no matter how big or small. GL also believes that through planning, staff can create synergies between activities and those who implement to ensure everyone understands the process. Process and planning has also been highlighted as one of the learning areas that has most contributed to the interns' growth. The interns and volunteers scored this area of learning at 85%.

In **Roos van Dorp**'s words: "There is always much to be done and the pressure is always high, so there is simply no time to think twice and you have to just jump into the deep end and start swimming. You will face many winds and waves but then one day you reach the shore and you can't believe you actually made it all the way! What is great about GL is that they always include all levels of staff in their planning and capacity-building initiatives, so you learn about what happens at management level and you understand how this impacts on your work and vice versa."


Former intern, Roos van Dorp, with current intern, Vincent Galatlhwe and Keabonye Ntsabane.
Photo: Gender Links

Lobbying and advocacy - 73%
Advocacy campaigns are a major component of GL's work in the region. Interns and volunteers actively participate in advocacy workshops and campaigns. In 2010, interns Nyamweda, Ngosa, Tinashe Padare and Shevan Rama assisted in running an advocacy seminar on youth, gender and perspectives on soccer 2010. They filmed the event and produced a report for the GMDC.

Kelello Tekateka (Intern, 2010) participated in the 2010 Sixteen Days of Activism campaign. It had a profound impact on her. She pointed out that, "The 16 days Activism campaign has influenced my career. I now have the desire to become an advocate for women's rights. Though the career demands full commitment, I feel the outcome is my ultimate goal; seeing more women empowered in all sectors of life."

Growth and development

Unlike interns at other organisations, and as reflected in the opening story by Rebecca Masinde, GL interns do not come to the organisation to make tea for staff! The internship is well-structured and interns are expected to produce tangible outputs. They also have Performance Agreements and are evaluated against these outputs every assessment period.

Tarisai Nyamweda did her experiential learning at GL in 2010. She came at a time when the media department was undertaking *Gender and Media Progress Study* (GMPS) research and she has reflected on her experience working on the project. "What first pops in mind is the amazing team work and unending fortitude the media department displayed. It made it all exciting and worthwhile even in times when we thought GMPS was never going to end because of the countless newspapers that had to be monitored, needless to mention the spreadsheets and databases that had to be consequently updated."

Oarabile Monggae is a volunteer with the Botswana Satellite Office. He highlighted that his experience at GL has afforded him

Table 4.2: Interns who have risen through the ranks				
Year	**Name**	**Sex**	**GL Department**	**Current position**
2007	Sikhonzile Ndlovu	F	Media	Media Programme Manager
2008	Fanuel Hadzizi	M	Finance	Finance Officer
2008	Roos van Dorp	F	Botswana Satellite Office	Programme Officer
2009	Gladys Muzirwa	F	Executive Director's Office	Executive Assistant
2010	Mercilene Machisa	F	Justice	Gender-Based Violence Indicators Manager
2010	Kelello Tekateka	F	Justice	Justice Programme Officer
2010	Shaudzirai Mudekunye	F	Governance	Governance Programme Officer

an opportunity to apply theory into practice. "I came into contact with Gender Links Botswana when I was doing my Social Work Degree with the University of Botswana. I studied a course on the Theories of Gender-Based Violence and I participated in the GL 16 Days of Activism cyber dialogues. It was a great opportunity for me to engage on the regional chat, sharing my knowledge on GBV and applying it to my context. Since then, I have volunteered my services to GL and have been given the opportunity to further explore GBV issues in Botswana. I assist to run the gender and local government workshops and I have closely interacted with the local representatives of different councils on their efforts to halve levels of GBV by 2010."

Of the 47 interns, 12 moved into full-time positions as a result of open vacancies at GL at the end of their internships. Meanwhile, seven are still GL employees as officers and managers of various departments. Table 4.2 shows current GL staff members who were once interns. Some, like Sikhonzile Ndlovu, have made great leaps in the organisation, moving from the position of intern to a management or executive position.

Sikhonzile Ndlovu tells how she moved from being an intern to a manger of the media programme:

"As a media student I never used to think or see anything wrong with media until I did the media literacy course with Gender Links. I did not know how to use a map book. After the course I was able to design and publish training and pamphlets. Through the IT training I learnt how to use the computer, photoshop, internet and designing brochures. Training helps to form part of the socials network forum. I could log on cyber dialogues and communicate with others on the internet.

The words 'Skhoe, you don't average percentages' still rings fresh in my mind when I reflect on my professional journey at Gender Links. I still remember my first week at GL vividly. It was the week of 15 January 2007 when I found myself with raw data on advertising from four countries. This was after I joined the GL research department as an intern. Yes I did make mistakes and quite a number of them. Fortunately, there were willing colleagues and management who afforded me the space to learn and grow on this front.

2009 saw me being thrown into the deep end once again when I assumed responsibility for GL's media training programme. I had been doing media literacy training but had never done any work around governance issues, especially elections. Coordinating the media literacy training project had also been made easier by the fact that the training manual was already there when I joined Gender Links.

The Gender, Media and Elections project therefore presented me with enormous challenges and opportunities for growth. First, I had to try and understand different electoral systems in the region. Whilst I had followed political happenings in SADC before then, I had done so from a distance, not really getting into the finer details. Elections in Zimbabwe and South Africa, however, awakened some level of interest in me, 'Zim' being the land of my birthright and South Africa, now my home away from home.

My first task as I took over the Gender, Media and Elections project was to develop training materials for the Namibia workshops ahead of that country's November 2009 election. The fact sheet gave me enormous challenges



Proud manager: Sikhonzile Ndlovu (left) with GL Deputy Director and Director of Programmes Kubi Rama.
Photo: Gender Links

because I had to read and understand the Namibian electoral system. And being Zimbabwean where we use the "first past the post" system, it took a lot of time for me to grasp this whole new idea of "proportional representation". This exercise, however, presented me with vast learning opportunities because it meant that I had to read as well as 'apply my mind', as the ED would say.

I moved from developing fact sheets, to developing the training manual. Although there were templates that had been done by my predecessors, I learnt that training manuals are not necessarily, 'one size fits all'. I had to understand the country context as well as find country-specific examples. I am grateful that this project forced me to go back to basics... that is, reading because we can only make sense of our work if we create time to read and contextualise our work.

Monitoring and Evaluation has also been another key learning area for me. It is always a source of joy to be able to measure the difference that Gender Links is making in people's lives; otherwise we 'labour in vain.' I started 2010 as Media Training Manager and ended it as Media Programme Manager. That in itself has come about as a result of the numerous learning curves I have gone through over time. As a young professional, I constantly reflect on the way we work and the numerous learning opportunities that Gender Links presents. Through that experience gained over the years, I am now a proud manager of the Gender Links Media Programme and responsible for media research and policy work in 14 SADC countries!"

Most interns have carried the gender torch after leaving the organisation. Some have sought to continue working on gender and development issues, for instance Masinde, who pursued Gender Studies and Micro-development at Villanova University. **Lydia Keenao** had a three-month internship at the Botswana Satellite Office. We tracked her down and below is her story:

"I gained experience as a GMDC intern at the GL Botswana Satellite Office. I became familiar with the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development and the status of women in Southern Africa. The meetings that I attended during the three months internship programme with stakeholders, Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA), Women's Affairs Department(WAD), to name a few, intensified my knowledge and understanding of the issues that affect women not only in my country Botswana, but the women in Southern Africa.

At present, I am carrying out a research project on 'Communicating the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development: Perspective of Batswana women' as part of the requirements under my Bachelor's Degree in Media Studies at University of Botswana. It is the knowledge I got during the three month internship which deepened my interest in gender issues. GL was my first journey to gender issues and hopefully will not be my last, as I intend to study gender issues further.

I am currently studying two gender courses in my third year; Language and Gender; and Introduction to Gender Issues and in the last year actually sat for exams on two others, Gender, Sex and Ethnicity; and Politics of Gender. The courses give an introduction to some contemporary issues on the role of men and women in development as well as dealing with issues of integrity of both men and women as equal characters on the world's development stage."

Nandipha Sephuma, an intern from 2007, highlighted that, "More importantly, while collecting and cataloguing gender and HIV and AIDS related media content, I realised - from my privileged position as an educated woman in the 21st century - that the fight against gender violence and inequality continues. This has led to my keen interest in Gender Studies, and while I am now pursuing a Master's degree in English Studies, my dissertation focuses on the contentious issues surrounding feminism and race, and specifically, the role of race and racism in the development of South African feminist literary discourse. I believe my experience at Gender Links has engendered a life-long commitment to achieving gender and social justice."

These examples demonstrate how the gender equality discourse that dominates the GL environment has had great impact on its interns. After leaving the organisation, many have chosen to broaden the knowledge acquired at GL by engaging in further research at different levels of higher education.

Impact on career-path

There is a long history of successful internships at GL, with many interns moving into important or influential positions after interning at the organisation. Judith Mtsewu, a GL intern in 2006, is now the Gender Focal Manager at the City of Johannesburg. GL has a long-standing relationship with the City on gender and local government work and Executive Director Colleen Lowe Morna jokes that Mtsewu is now her boss. Mtsewu is the contact person for the organisations' projects with the City and GL reports to her.

Another former intern, **Lydia Byarugaba**, developed a keen interest in IT and content management while interning at GL. She is currently working at Prefix, the company which designed and maintains the GL website. Byarugaba handles the GL account.



Former intern Judith Mtsewu (left) is now the Gender Manager at the City of Johannesburg. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

In her "I" Story after leaving GL, Emsie Erasmus tells how she went from being an intern to receiving an award for gender aware reporting:



Emsie Erastus practices her news gathering skills at a rights of trader's demonstration on the eve of FIFA Soccer 2010 in South Africa.
Photo: Jennifer Elle Lewis

From intern to award winning journalist
By Emsie Erastus

I remember arriving at the GL office on 15 January 2010. I was told that there will be other interns from two other countries, but it appeared like I was far ahead of them on arrival. I was taken around the office and Jennifer Lewis, the then GMDC Manager, introduced me to everyone at GL. At first I thought all these people were South Africa nationals. I later came to discover that GL is an international organisation and almost every culture was represented.

But before I can give more of what I learnt at GL, let me give a little background of where I came from. Back at home I was a student at the Polytechnic of Namibia and a journalist for a weekly newspaper. My stories involved working with the community, mainly women, who are either abused or whose voices are underrepresented in the media. I first heard of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development during the Namibian presidential election in 2009. It was at this time that I learnt that women were not moving to higher politics and decision-making positions because of the way media practitioners, including myself, report on them. The fact that society was ghettoising them based on gender did not seem right.

So my newspaper manager Willie Olivier and I took the initiative of questioning why the government signed the Protocol on Gender but was not adhering to it. We interviewed a couple of gender activists and that was the beginning of Emsie and gender! For the first time the *Namibian Sun* had a front page story all dedicated to empowering women, and mind you this paper only has two front page stories a week, so for a gender story to hit tops was thumbs up. Little did I know that that story would usher my way to GL. Our Head of Department at the Polytechnic of Namibia's media department, Emily Brown, saw the article and when she

approached me to go for a six month internship at GL, she mentioned that article and I thought to myself "Wow, is this fate?" I cannot remember her exact words though.

And now on that fateful 15 January 2010, I was standing in front of the people who assisted in the drafting of the Protocol on Gender that helped me to see gender and politics in a different light. I was assigned to be a GMDC Intern and worked in that department with Jennifer and Saeanna.

Working as an intern at GL I learnt discipline, learning to do the little work and bigger work was an unforgettable experience. I also managed to take advantage of GL's library and grab all gender books I could find. I spent most of my evenings reading GL "I" Stories and journals at the interns' apartment.

But one thing I will always remember was helping to organise the GIME regional conference that GL hosted. Hearing different media educators making decisions on how gender could be mainstreamed in media education made me feel like I was part of a new evolution that was evolving in this modern age. The evolution of gender and the media!

The learning experience was just too much that it will take too many papers to write it all down. Other highlights of the internship were working with Sarry Xoagus-Eises in Namibia, the Gender Justice and Local Government Summit (GJLG) and covering the informal traders protest at Soccer City Stadium (Johannesburg) with Jennifer and Albert just before the 2010 FIFA World Cup. At the Summit I met and interacted with people from different countries in SADC who have all dedicated themselves to change the world's history and create a new "herstory": One that titles women on the basis of their achievement and true positions, one that gives a woman a voice to speak for herself and one where the *meme* and *tate* of the house considered equal.

I have learnt a lot through GL and in 2010 I was awarded the best gender reporter award by the MISA in Namibia. It was the first time that the MISA Namibia journalist awards had a gender category and it so happened to go to a young journalist who was an intern at Gender Links in the same year. So is GL helping people through their work you might ask, look at my story and you will get the answer.

Willie told me when I left the *Namibian Sun* for GL that I should not get too gender inspired by GL Executive Director Colleen Lowe Morna. But too bad to say, Willie I think you should have prayed harder because I have been GENDER LINKED!



Jennifer Lewis flanked by Albert Ngosa (left) and Emsie Erastus at Soccer City in Johannesburg.
Photo: Gender Links



Lessons learned

"I think the greatest impact has not been professional but personal. GL has taught me a great deal about myself and my role as a woman within a society where gender inequality and gender-based violence are the norm. I have learnt that there is a need for me to be self aware and reticent of my contribution to the 'status quo.'"

- Kelello Tekateka, Justice Intern, 2010

Through the internship programme, GL is like a relay race for gender issues and is passing on the baton to the next generation. The experiences over the past decade have taught GL that:

- The programme should be extended to journalism and media training institutions in the region as a way of strengthening the partnerships established with the GMDC.
- Programme managers should craft job descriptions for interns to ensure that they have tangible tasks to work on and complete during their experiential learning at GL.



Next steps

In the next decade, the GMDC will:

- Create a Gender Links alumni page that acknowledges the contribution of past interns. Through this page, GL will communicate opportunities to past interns and ensure they profile the work of the organisation wherever they are.
- Intensify efforts around mobilising financial resources for the programme. At one point the internship programme became popular with students from Europe and United States who had other funding to come and intern at GL. Although this cushioned a strained internship budget, GL had to step back and ask if this was appropriate considering the many young women and men in the SADC region who often do not have the privilege of a fully-funded internship. Thus it is important to find resources for the programme so it is available to those who need it most.
- As interns leave, GL will write a recommendation letter for them to use in applying for further studies or as they begin seeking employment.
- Create partnerships with departments that offer local governance and social work so that students in these fields can be allowed to intern in the gender and governance programme and the gender justice programme.


adidas


Maitlamo a SADC
mo dikgannye
Tsa bong le
ditlhabololo



GL SADC and Botswana office co-ordinator Keabonye Ntsabane (left) explains the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development.

Photo by Colleen Lowe Morna

Chapter 5

United we stand: The Southern Africa Gender Protocol Alliance

By Mukayi Makaya Magarangoma and Lindiwe Makhunga

"The SADC Protocol Alliance led and coordinated by Gender Links is a best practice as it has demonstrated that through a coordinated, collective and pro-active evidence-based strategy, governments have no alternative but to respond to the advocacy for a more focused and deliverable strategy to achieve the gender equality commitments made over the years."

- Elsie M Alexandar, University of Botswana

Fact box

- GL played a pivotal role in the campaign to get the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development elevated to a Protocol with 28 targets for the attainment of gender equality by 2015.
- Since the campaign started in 2005, 13 660 people have participated in Protocol related events organised by GL: 59% female, 41% male.
- The Southern Africa Gender Protocol Alliance - a network of gender networks across Southern Africa - has as its slogan: "2015! Yes we can!"
- Over the next five years GL hopes to ensure that enough SADC states ratify the Protocol for it to come into force; align their action plans to its goals; cost and implement its provisions.



From left: Constance Bangani, Mukayi Makaya and Carolyn Munjoma, councillors from Chimanimani, Zimbabwe . *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

"I'm leaving on a jet plane; don't know when I'll be back again!" With these joyous words Constance Bangani and Carolyn Munjoma, councillors from Chimanimani, Zimbabwe, reminisced about their first experience on a plane when they flew to Johannesburg to attend the 2010 Gender Justice and Local Government Summit. The Summit was the first of its kind, held under the banner "365 Days of local action to end gender violence". Councillors from across the region shared good practices on ending gender violence and empowering women at the local government level.

Bangani and Munjoma first came into contact with GL in 2009 during research for Zimbabwe's *At the Coalface: Gender and Local Government*. They later attended a workshop in Kadoma, where they learned more about GL and the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development during a gender training workshop.

The Protocol has a specific target to ensure that 50% of decision-making positions in all public and private sectors are held by women by 2015. This has given rise to the 50/50 Campaign, which aims to see this target become a reality in the region.

Bangani and Munjoma are the only two women in the 26-member council. Ironically they come from different sides of the political divide: Bangani is a councillor for the Zimbabwe African National Union/Patriotic Front (ZANU/PF) and Munjoma with the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). During the tumultuous 2008 elections in Zimbabwe Munjoma had her house destroyed and it has taken courage for her to remain in politics. But she and Bangani have struck up a lasting friendship: so much so that at the Kadoma Ranch Hotel workshop they opted to share a room rather than have single rooms because they had "so much to catch up on."

Through their work with Gender Links, women councillors and leaders throughout SADC are fighting inequality and taking great strides - and flights - to help them achieve the goals of the SADC Protocol. "It was amazing what we learnt at the Kadoma workshop. Now we know about the SADC Gender Protocol and about what gender equality really means," said Bangani. "Our capacity in work and personal skills has been built; we are implementing what we learned."

Reflecting on their participation in the Gender Justice and Local Government Summit Munjoma said: "I didn't even dream of having a passport, let alone getting on to an aeroplane! I have since travelled to Mozambique as well!"

Taking off is an apt theme for this chapter on GL's ground-breaking efforts to build coalitions for the adoption and implementation of the SADC Gender Protocol. Although GL's work is rooted in gender and the media, the Protocol campaign that began in earnest in 2005 has provided an overarching framework and an opportunity to build lasting partnerships. This chapter traces the history of the campaign; its challenges and successes; the key institutional linkages; the beneficiaries; benefits; the ways in which GL has grown in this process, lessons learned and next steps.

Background

The SADC Gender Protocol Alliance is a network of national and regional non governmental organisations that promotes gender equality through research, advocacy

and capacity-building towards the achievement of the 28 targets of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development by 2015. The Alliance vision is of a region in which women and men are equal in all spheres.

The Alliance began in 2005 as a collective pool of expertise from various sectors to undertake an audit of the extent to which SADC member states had begun to deliver on commitments - through regional and international instruments that they had signed - towards advancing the rights of women and achieving gender equality. Since then, it has been running a campaign for the adoption, ratification and implementation of the SADC Gender Protocol.

From the beginning this "coalition of the willing" came together as a network campaigning for gender equality and women's rights across national boundaries. The SADC Gender Protocol brings together in one legally binding regional instrument all the commitments to gender equality that have been made through the various international, continental and regional Protocols by SADC Heads of State. Amongst others, these include the Beijing Declaration and its Platform for Action, the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

All the MDG targets are to be achieved by 2015 and MDG3 concerns gender equality. The Gender Protocol - a global first - enhances commitments such as this through setting 28 realistic, measurable targets, time frames and indicators for achieving gender equality. The Gender Protocol adopted by SADC Heads of State at the 2008 Summit provides a "roadmap to equality" that provides focus and is a key mobilising tool for governments and civil society alike.



The SADC Gender Protocol Alliance team. *Photo: Gender Links*

The history of the Alliance is well documented in the lessons learned booklet, *Roadmap to Equality*, as well as a DVD by the same name. The programme to support the work of the Alliance includes:

- **Research and information:** The 2005 audit led to a paper called"Rationale for the adoption of the Southern African Protocol on Gender and Development" that formed the basis of drafting

notes for the Protocol. After its adoption, the Alliance produced a baseline Barometer of key data on women's rights in the region in 2009. The Barometer is now an annual report, gauging progress and accompanied by a citizen score card to rate government performance. The alliance has a monthly newsletter that among others gathers examples of the "Protocol@work" and profiles champions of gender justice around the region.

- **Lobbying and advocacy:** Following the adoption of the Protocol in three years (record time by SADC standards) the Alliance has moved ahead full steam to get countries that have not signed (Mauritius and Botswana) to do so, as well as get all countries to ratify. At the time of writing eight of the 13 countries that signed had ratified. Only one more needed to ratify (to bring the proportion to two thirds) for the Protocol to go into force.
- **Action planning and costing:** With the focus now on implementation, GL with the support of UN Women has convened an expert group meeting on aligning national action plans in each country with the provisions of the Protocol and costing these. The intention is to hold national level workshops in each country over the coming year.
- **Capacity-building:** The campaign has been one big learning exercise in lobbying, advocacy, drafting, use of media, new media and awareness raising. Since the adoption of the Protocol, GL and partners have been running village level workshops across the region to raise awareness. Monitoring and evaluation tools include a Protocol quiz, attitude quiz, various score cards and the annual barometer.

Institutional links

Table 5.1 Alliance partners

Overall coordinating organisation : Gender Links - Johannesburg/Gaborone

Regional thematic clusters		National Alliance focal points	
Thematic cluster	**Organisation**	**Country**	**Organisation**
Constitutional and Legal Rights	Women in Law Southern Africa (WLSA Regional Office) - Lusaka	Angola	TBC
Governance	Women in Politics Support Unit (WIPSU) - Harare	Botswana	Botswana Council of NGOs (BOCONGO)
Education and Training	Botswana Council of NGOs (BOCONGO) - Gaborone	Democratic Republic of Congo	Union Congolaise des Femmes des Medias (UCOFEM-GEMSA)
Economic Justice	Zimbabwe Women Resource Centre Network (ZWRCN) - Harare	Lesotho	Women in Law Southern Africa - Lesotho (WLSA - Lesotho) on behalf of Lesotho Council of NGOs
Gender-Based Violence	Western Cape Network on Violence against Women - Cape Town	Madagascar	Federation Pour la Promotion Feminine et Enfantine (FPFE - GEMSA)
Sexual Reproductive Health, HIV and AIDS	Southern Africa HIV and AIDS Information Dissemination Service (SAfAIDS)-Pretoria	Malawi	NGO Gender Coordinating Network (NGOGCN)
Care Work	Voluntary Service Overseas - Regional AIDS Initiative of Southern Africa (VSO - RAISA)-Pretoria	Mauritius	Mauritius Media Watch Organisation - Gender and Media Southern Africa Network (MWO-GEMSA)
Women's Peace and Security Cluster	Institute for Security Studies (ISS)- Pretoria	Mozambique	Women in Law Southern Africa - Mozambique (WLSA Mozambique)
Gender and Media	Gender and Media Southern Africa (GEMSA) Network	Namibia	Namibian Non-Governmental Organisations' Forum (NANGOF) Trust
		Seychelles	Gender and Media Plus (GEM Plus)
		South Africa	Western Cape Network on Violence Against Women
		Swaziland	Coordinating Assembly of NGOs (CANGO)
Interest groups		Tanzania	Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP)
Faith-Based Organisations	Norwegian Church Association (NCA) and Partners - Pretoria	Zambia	Women in Law Southern Africa - Zambia (WLSA - Zambia) on behalf of Zambia NGO Coordinating Council (NGOCC)
Men's sector	Men for Gender Equality Now (MEGEN) - Lilongwe	Zimbabwe	Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe



Alliance Secretariat and representatives from Botswana Council of NGOs signing an MOU at the 2010 Alliance strategy meeting in Windhoek Namibia. *Photo: Gender Links*

The Alliance works through thematic clusters, interest groups and country focal points, all of which form a Steering Committee.

The Alliance has a total of 21 MOUs with nine regional cluster leaders, and 12 of the country national focal points. The goal, however, is to sign MOUs with the three remaining SADC countries: Angola, Swaziland and Tanzania.

GL 10-year anniversary message

GL and the Women in Politics Support Unit (WiPSU) that coordinates the governance cluster of the Alliance are celebrating their 10th Anniversary together. These two organisation have been partners for quite a long time now . . . During this period WiPSU has seen Gender Links growing from strength to strength in the support of women, gender and development issues. Their publications have helped us and other partners to shape and re-shape some of our programme activities to suit the environment and trends. . . Our common aim as partners is to create spaces for women to exercise and enjoy their human rights and participate as equals in all political processes with full citizenship rights' and to strengthen democracy and governance practices through the effective participation of women in gender and development programmes.

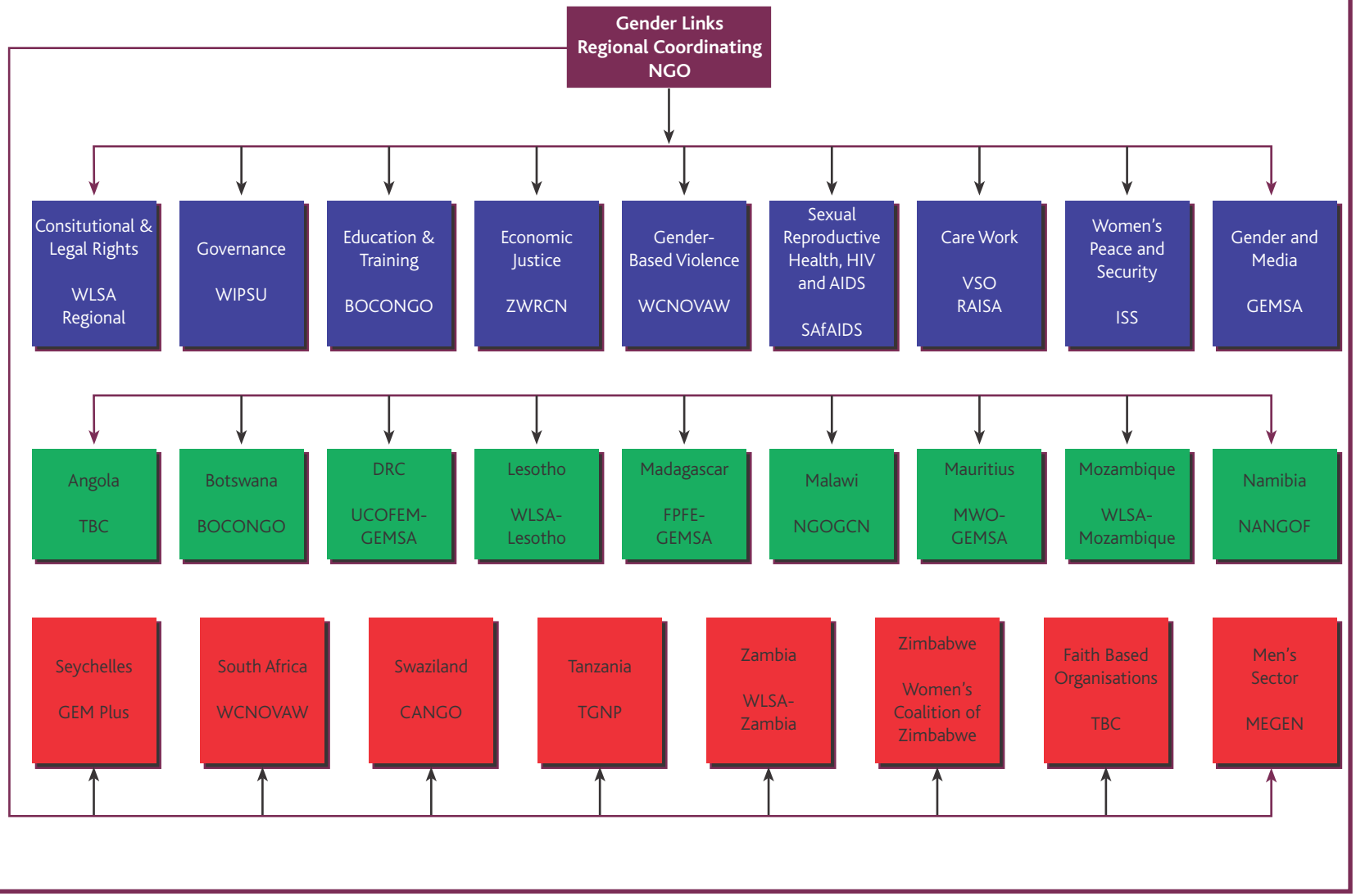
The number of thematic clusters keeps growing in relation to need and demand. Faith based organisations and men's groups are two critical interest groups that have recently joined the coalition, and are helping to broaden participation.

Broadening the coalition

The work of the Gender Protocol Alliance to broaden partnerships through a meeting with faith-based organisations on 7-9 October 2009 is beginning to bear fruit. The Alliance is targeting faith-based organisations as a network within SADC countries to be strengthened to help support the Alliance work at country level. For example the Christian denominations including Christian Council of Zambia (CCZ), Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia (EFC), and the Zambian Episcopal Conference (ZEC) have come together to form an alliance of churches for gender equality with the support of the Norwegian Church Aid (NCA). Women in Law Southern Africa (WLSA) did a gender audit in 2007/8 to find out the level of gender awareness in the churches. The audit revealed stark gender gaps but also identified potential for change.

The SADC Gender and Development Protocol is also being used by men's networks to promote gender equality in Southern Africa. Involvement of men in gender equality has been a major gap, not only in Southern African countries but a concern the world over. In Malawi, the NGO GCN is collaborating with Men for Gender Equality Now (MEGEN) to implement two clusters of the Protocol: Gender Based Violence, and Health, HIV and AIDS. MEGEN is a regional movement of men who engage in community sensitisation and education work, advocacy and campaigning to challenge unequal power relations between men and women and put an end to GBV - *Excerpt from Mid-term Evaluation of the Protocol work funded by the DFID Governance and Transparency Fund.*

Figure 5.1 SADC Gender Protocol Alliance organisational structure



SADC Gender Unit

From the very beginning of the movement towards a Gender Protocol, women civil society groups and the SADC Gender Unit (GU) became close and important allies.



Magdeline Mathiba-Madibela of the SADC Gender Unit. *Photo: Gender Links*

This relationship between civil society organisations and the SADC Gender Unit began in 2005 when hands were joined in a collaborative effort to put gender equality in the spotlight in the run-up to, and during, the SADC Heads of State Summit in Botswana. The SADC GU had plans to put two key commendations before the summit: (1) that the target of women in decision-making be increased from 30 to 50% in line with the African Union's (AU) decision; and (2) to elevate the 1997 SADC Declaration on Gender and Development to a protocol.

Consultations between several civil society groups and the SADC GU in early 2005 led to the idea of independent audits of various aspects of the 1997 Declaration. These could then be used to bolster the GU's recommendations to Heads of State. Thus began a relationship where gender activists became the strategic allies who gave the SADC GU the independent strength and knowledge it needed throughout the protocol process.

The SADC GU brought the institutional muscle, credibility and support of the SADC Secretariat; an understanding of the legal and administrative steps necessary for developing a protocol and getting it onto the agenda of SADC summits; the mandate to convene key players at regional level such as the ministers responsible for gender and women's affairs and the ministers of justice; and a direct link to influential national decision-makers.

On the other hand, the Alliance brought the research; media, monitoring and evaluation technical expertise; a wealth of knowledge on gender equality and women's human rights across a diverse range of areas; campaigning, lobbying and advocacy skills; and a reach to the voices and perspectives of women across the region who often are not seen and heard by governments.

As strategic allies, the Alliance, representing civil society, and the SADC Gender Unit, representing governments, formed a relationship based on mutual cooperation and a clear understanding of what each partner could bring to the process. It is a healthy balancing act of knowing the distinctive roles of each ally: while the SADC GU works to strengthen the efforts by member states to achieve gender equality, the Alliance works to keep the SADC GU, as well as member states, accountable to the equality, equity and human rights entitlements of the region's female citizens.

> *"Gender Links has provided top-class technical support in all our endeavours to publicise and facilitate the discussion for the Gender Protocol, and have worked tirelessly as an organisation to earn respect in this circle. Gender Links showed us that NGOs really have the power - through unity - to ensure the ratification of the Protocol, including popularising it by printing it in different languages for ease of distribution. It is refreshing to see an organisation such as Gender Links taking the lead in such important matter, spearheading the process and ensuring that the Protocol works. With the costing of the Protocol project we can see that Gender Links is on top of the game- 'the time is now!'"*
>
> - Magdeline Mathiba Madibela, Head of SADC Gender Unit

This relationship sought to challenge the history of engagement between civil society and state actors and to reconfigure it, especially in terms of civil society engagement.

The SADC GU, in partnership with UN Women, Gender Links and the Alliance, is partnering in a regional project to align national Gender Action Plans with the Protocol provisions. It will also cost the implementation of the Protocol provisions at national level. This is strategic as the region makes progress towards ratification of the Protocol and prepares for the Protocol to come into force.

"The major output of the long collaboration between the two organisations, and of course the others, is the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, it is a collective success. Linked to this is the Barometer, which contributes a lot to the work done by SADC GU - so we can see the civil society perspective, and can map clear ways of taking plans forward. SADC does its monitoring and evaluations bi-annually, so the Barometer serves as a check on progress every year, which is always something very useful to have."

- Magdeline Mathiba Madibela, Head of SADC Gender Unit.

SADC Parliamentary Forum

The Alliance has also worked with the SADC Parliamentary Forum, including in Namibia in 2005. This cooperation occurred during the process of conducting an audit to find out how far countries had gone in realising the objectives of the 1997 SADC Protocol on Gender and Development.

Over the years, the SADC Parliamentary Forum has attended Alliance advocacy and strategic planning meetings. This relationship remains strong.



Janah Ncube. *Photo: Gender Links*

"One of the strong points of the Alliance, I find, is that you never hear them crying for glory, their goal is more important than that. For example, they accredited themselves as media just to get into a Heads of State (HOS) meeting, not to profile themselves but just to be there to lobby for the cause. That's where civil society often misses the mark and the region should be grateful for this type of lobbying and they have benefited from it, also press and government."

- Janah Ncube, Senior Policy Advisor, SADC Parliamentary Forum.

The SADC-CNGO

Since 2005 the Alliance has been represented at the parallel civil society forum organised by the SADC Council of NGOs (SADC CNGO) at the Heads of State Summit. The alliance has on several occasions shared its experiences and strategies of working with a regional inter-governmental organisation to bring about changes in the lives of women. The Gender Protocol Alliance first began its engagement with SADC-CNGO as observer and was then requested to assist in gender mainstreaming of the NGO coalition's programmes. This opened an opportunity for the Alliance process and case study materials to be used to inform similar campaigns for social change in the region. The SADC-CNGO has invited the Alliance to represent the gender sector within the broad umbrella group that lobbies the regional body on a range of issues from poverty reduction, to climate change, to support for fragile states. The Alliance clusters are also being mainstreamed within all SADC-CNGO sectors such as the peace and security sector.

Beneficiaries

Table 5.2 Beneficiaries

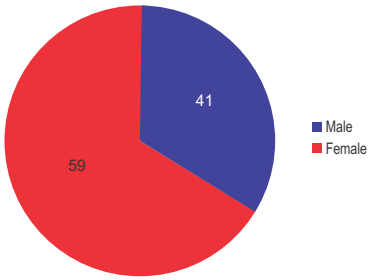
	Total
Research	59
Advocacy	13 511
Training	90
Total	**13 660**

Table 5.2 shows that by February 2011, 13 660 women and men had participated

in activities organised by GL linked to the SADC Gender Protocol. Most of these (13 511) have been involved in advocacy activities.

Figure 5.2 shows that 41% of those involved in Alliance activities for which gender disaggregated data could be collected (this is not always possible at village level meetings) have been men, and 59% women. The programme's most extensive outreach has been achieved through open-air village meetings. These meetings draw women and men from various communities and the platform is used to educate people on the 28 targets of the SADC Gender and Development Protocol.

Figure 5.2 Women and men involved in Alliance activities (2005 - 2010 beneficiaries)



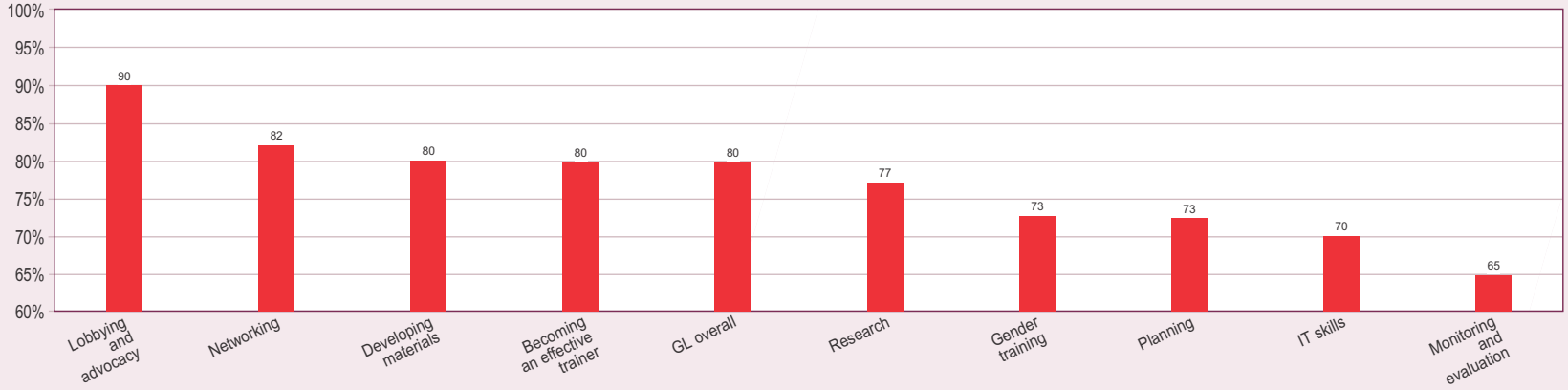
As these meetings are grassroots-level, they are attended by ordinary men and women who are often not familiar with the workings of government and civil society. To date, a total of 261 village meetings have been held in 11 SADC countries, including Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritius, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe. These meetings have helped ensured knowledge of the SADC Protocol grows throughout the region. They have also led to the translation of the simplified SADC Protocol pamphlet into 23 indigenous language pamphlets which are widely distributed at village-level meetings.

In Malawi alone, the lead organisation of the Men's Sector and Alliance National Focal Point, the NGO Gender Coordinating Network (NGO-GCN), held 37 village workshops in 2010. A total of 33 communities were mobilised for the workshops, with 66 constituency workshops conducted.

Benefits

The benefits of the Alliance have been wide and far reaching. Through GL's 2010/2011 beneficiary analysis, some of the key areas of learning were rated by beneficiaries.

Figure 5.3 Alliance beneficiary analysis scores



Not surprisingly, as reflected in Figure 5.3, beneficiaries found lobbying and advocacy to be the strongest learning area. Monitoring and evaluation was the weakest area of learning at 65%, an important marker for forward strategies. Other key findings include:

- Overall, the Alliance programme areas of learning had a strong score of 80%.
- Other strong programme areas are networking (82%), developing materials (80%) and becoming an effective trainer (80%).

Lobbying and advocacy - 90%

The SADC Gender Protocol campaign is acknowledged internationally as a best practice in civil society lobbying of their governments to bring about change in the lives of citizens. Early in the process, members of the Alliance recognised that the best way of influencing SADC processes is through lending expertise to governments and getting onto government delegations.

In excerpts from *Roadmap to Equality* Emma Kaliya from Malawi (recognised in 2009 as a "Driver of Change") and GL Namibia country facilitator Sarry Xoagus-Eises describe how they worked through their governments to get strong provisions in the Protocol.

Engaging government at national level



Emma Kaliya (second from left) receiving the Drivers of Change Award. *Photo: Gender Links*

Emma Kaliya of the Malawi NGO Gender Coordinating Network says: "Malawi's government realises the need to address gender disparities through broad-based partnerships, committed leadership, multi-sectoral strategies, and strong involvement of stakeholders at every level in our society so that they share what they have learned through many decades of support and policy advocacy. This broad consultative approach enabled gender activists in Malawi to actively participate in all the processes to craft the SADC Gender Protocol at national level; and, this approach also gave a chance to most Malawians to understand the Protocol well before its adoption.

Although the ministry responsible for gender was not represented at the 2005 Gaborone SADC Summit, CSOs from Malawi attending the parallel SADC NGOs meeting had an opportunity to lobby the Malawian ministers present to support the 50/50 target of women in decision-making adopted by the Heads of State and Government during the Summit. This marked the start of my personal involvement in the SADC Protocol processes.

My involvement at the Gaborone meeting gave me strength to start advocating for the 50/50 target at the national level, long before our gender machinery made their official statement. The ministry officials waited for

official communication from the SADC Secretariat before taking action, while I began to mobilise my fellow Network members to join me in this initiative. My involvement in the Alliance also gave me so much information to share at the national level, even though it was in its early stages of the (Protocol) campaign in 2005.

Through my leadership, the NGOGCN and the Ministry of Women and Child Development jointly organised the first National Consultative workshop, with financial support from the SADC Alliance. The aim was to give Malawians a chance to discuss and comment on the (earlier) draft Protocol. The national machinery did not have resources to finance this kind of workshop, and solely depended on the financial support that the NGOGCN secured from the Alliance.

At this point, government recognised the substantive contributions from the NGOGCN around the Protocol, and the government included me on their delegation to the subsequent SADC Protocol meetings. They knew that I would make meaningful contributions to the process, because of the vast ideas that I had from the Alliance.

The NGOGCN was a valuable resource to the government in this process. This was proven when they technically supported our second National Consultative meeting in preparation for the SADC Senior Officials meeting in Namibia (2008). The government was quite aware that I had an institutional memory of all the processes, because my representation at national and regional level meetings remained consistent, while government kept changing its officials. I soon had dual representation - in the Alliance and government forums.

The mutual understanding, as well as the trust, that developed between the NGOGCN and government enabled our relationship to remain intact throughout the process. Due to this relationship, we again agreed to jointly design and implement a National 50/50 Programme around the 2009 Presidential and Parliamentary Elections, even before the Protocol was adopted. This joint initiative further illustrates the honest relationship that prevails between us. The government continues to rely on my technical advice on issues regarding the Protocol, and there are times when the ministry officials engage us to lobby on sensitive issues with other high-level authorities.

This helped us a lot, because they gave us some insights on the processes and how we could avoid touching on some sensitive areas. We got the blessing of most departments and they did assure us of their support at the (2008) Summit in South Africa."

Sarry Xoagus-Eises, GL Gender Justice and Local Government facilitator in Namibia adds: "On a number of occasions, I personally travelled with the Namibian government delegation to various destinations to protect civil society interests in the document. Let me share some of my findings with you. It was not easy to be part of the government delegation, as you travel as one team to conferences. It depends on your group's leader, which in this case is a senior government official, to allow you to contribute to any of the debates. These heads of delegation are always very careful not to allow civic groups to overtake these debates. Furthermore, things are done on consensus and civil society is aware of these limitations. But at the end of the day, both civil society and government reached consensus for the benefit of all the women in the region. Namibia was no exception."



Sarry Xoagus-Eises gives her view. *Photo: Gender Links*

Roadmap to Equality documents the power of drafting the Protocol and how activists learned that by constantly being available to draft and redraft they could get strong provisions into the document. Activists also learned that negotiations consist of give and take to reach a win-win position. In this excerpt from *Roadmap to Equality*, **Emelia Muchawa**, a lawyer and women's rights activist on the Zimbabwe delegation, analyses the loss and gains:

Taking stock

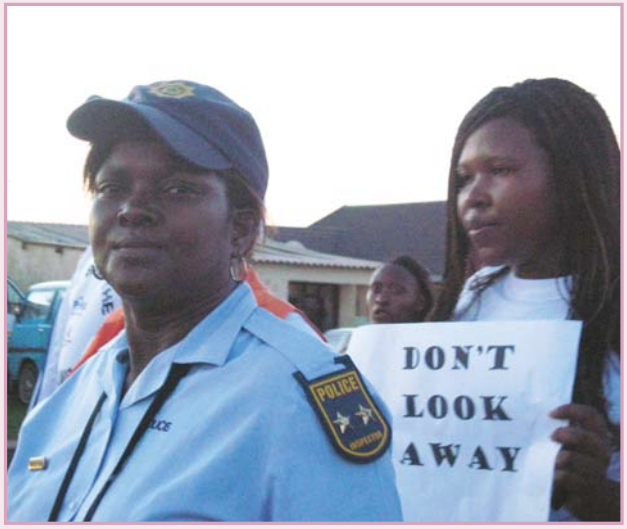
"*The supremacy of constitutions over customary and religious laws:* The final version of the Protocol in Article 4(1) provides that 'State Parties shall endeavour, by 2015, to enshrine gender equality and equity in their constitutions and ensure that these rights are not compromised by any provisions, laws or practices.'

The originally proposed text had read 'States Parties shall ensure that by 2015 their constitutions state that the provisions enshrining gender equality will take precedence over their customary, religious and other laws.'

This was removed and modified as countries, such as Mauritius, indicated that the proposed clause would go against their constitution as religion was more supreme. The region has a mixture of positions on such clauses at domestic level. Botswana, Lesotho, Zimbabwe and Zambia are examples of constitutions that have claw back clauses, which whilst guaranteeing equality for women, negate this by allowing discrimination in issues of personal law or customary law.

South Africa and Tanzania are examples of countries with constitutions that make the constitution supreme over customary laws and this leads to enhanced protection of women's rights. Though not specifically stated, this modified clause can still be interpreted to imply the supremacy of constitutions over customary and religious laws and practices.

Early marriage: The original version of the protocol provided in Article 4(8) (b) that no person below the age of 18 marries. This was initially removed in between and resurfaced as follows in Article 8(2) (a) providing that no person under the age of 18 shall marry unless otherwise specified by law, which takes into account the best interests of the child. The return of this clause was as a result of the realisation that removing it was ignoring the lived reality of most African societies of the early marriage of girls. If no age of marriage was set, it would imply that the region was condoning this and leaving girls susceptible to early marriage. Some of the researched and known effects of early marriage highlighted included the denial of education for girls leading to economic dependence, and health complications, such as maternal death, due to early pregnancy. Increased risk of HIV infection and susceptibility to violence were also identified as resulting from early marriage. The strongest persuasion came from the fact that this was out of line with international and regional frameworks, such as the Convention on the Rights of The Child and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, as well as the Protocol to this on Women's Rights.



"Don't look away!". *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

Marital Rape: Marital rape was specifically identified as an act of gender-based violence in the original version of the text, which read in Article 8(2) (1) (a) that member States shall by 2015, enact and enforce legislation prohibiting all forms of gender-based violence including marital rape. In its final version the protocol reads as follows: '*By 2015, enact*

and enforce legislation prohibiting all forms of GBV.'

Some member states were clearly repulsed by having such a provision arguing that it did not reflect African customs especially as *lobola* was paid in most of the countries and this was interpreted to mean consent to sexual intercourse in the marriage. Such a position clearly ignores the reality of rape in marriage and the HIV infection implications of this. This position is also against international standards of model laws on gender-based violence. Some countries such as Zimbabwe, South Africa and Namibia have already criminalised marital rape in their domestic legislation. Further, the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development already recognised marital rape as a form of gender-based violence.

The removal of the explicit mention of marital rape as an example of a form of gender based violence does not exclude its inclusion, however. This was traded well knowing that if the need for interpretation arose, marital rape could very easily be read to be one of 'all forms of gender-based violence'" - *Emilia Muchawa of the Zimbabwe Women Lawyers Association and Chair of the Women's Coalition.*



Mukayi Makaya (left) with Emelia Muchawa. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

As illustrated in Figure 5.4 overleaf, the Alliance had a four prong advocacy strategy: banding the campaign; creating its own media; making use of new media as well as working with and through the mainstream media. In the modern era, giving any campaign or product a distinct identity is key. Materials such as posters and brochures were important coupled with using the media to reach and influence a wide cross-section of stakeholders. Media coverage has the power to sway both public opinion and policy priorities. Activists who are able to engage with media, both in terms of producing content and encouraging journalists to be more aware of certain issues, are more likely to see their issues at the forefront of national, and international agendas. Engaging with media was central to the SADC Gender and Development Protocol Campaign, and included media capacity building for Alliance members, producing content, and sensitising and encouraging journalists to write on the campaign.

Branding

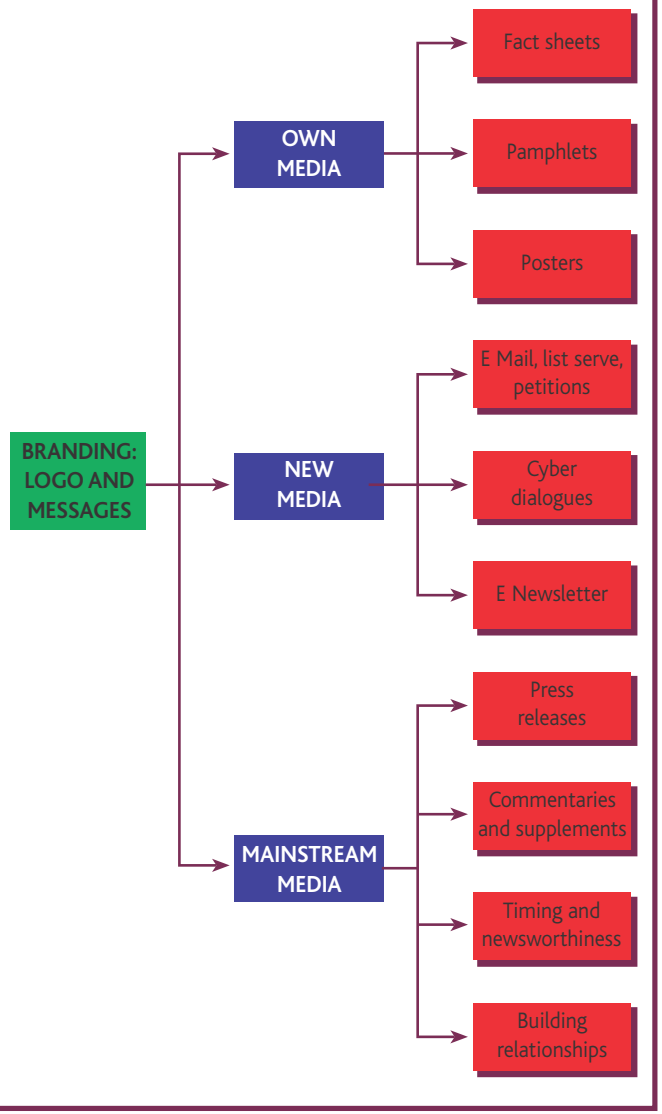
In a campaign with a wide scope (as in the diverse provisions in the Protocol), many campaigners make the mistake of trying to diffuse too many messages. This can be confusing, and significantly lessen the impact of a campaign. It is important to identify a few key messages and symbols, and allow those diverse issues to come out as part of this key message. Of course, agreeing on symbols and messages relevant to the diverse country settings is a challenge.







Figure 5.4: Alliance advocacy strategy



The earlier and later versions of the logo tell an interesting story about the evolution of the Alliance. In the early meetings, as the momentum grew and it became apparent that we needed a logo, Alliance members agreed on the use of the 50/50 logo, a campaign that many members already belonged to. The Alliance also adopted the slogan "accelerating gender equality in SADC" as a tactic to affirm governments for progress made, but making it clear that the pressure would be mounting.

As the campaign progressed, further scrutiny of the logo led to some key changes. First, some members objected to the male symbol being above that of the woman. They wanted these symbols side by side. Second, members wanted greater urgency to be reflected in the slogan. They also wanted it to use simple and easy to remember words, as any good slogan should. Borrowing from the catchy slogan of the African National Congress in South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994 (now is the time, the time is now) the Alliance chose the slogan: "Gender equality in SADC: the time is now." Then after Obama-mania hit the region and with 2015 fast approaching, the slogan became: 2015, Yes we can!



"Greeting from the Communication Initiative http://www.comminit.com. I am writing to let you know that we are featuring information about "Roadmap to Equality: Voices and Views Radio Programmes" on our Home Page. This feature will remain there for at least the next week, if not longer. Please see http://www.comminit.com.ind regards," - Deborah Heimann, 25 August 2010

GL and members of the Alliance have produced pamphlets on the Protocol in 23 languages; newspaper supplements about the Protocol during HOS meetings; and a series of radio programmes. In 2008, the Alliance produced a handbook and DVD of lessons learned during the campaign for the SADC Gender Protocol. A total of 1442 copies have been distributed to Alliance and other civil society partners, including at meetings such as the CSW sessions in New York (March 2010 and 2011); the 2010 Africa Women's Leadership Conference in Lusaka, Zambia; to GL's Gender and Media Diversity Centre partners; to NGO participants attending a meeting in The Gambia; and to donor partners. The Alliance has also made good use of the mainstream media in its campaign:



Successful relations with the media

Keabonye Ntsabane, GL Coordinator, Botswana and SADC liaison office states that: "The BOCONGO Gender Protocol Sector in collaboration with the Gender and Media Southern Africa (GEMSA) Network, Botswana Media Women Association (BOMWA), GL and other civil society organisations held two seminars targeted at editors and reporters to solicit their involvement in lobbying and advocating for the signing of the Gender Protocol. Media professionals were also briefed on the critical issues of concern as well as articles in the protocol. The information pack on the protocol was availed to them and this gave them more knowledge on the Gender Protocol. Furthermore, the media came to understand the emerging issues in the Protocol as well as the need to lobby the government of Botswana to sign it. This resulted in the media playing a critical role in lobbying and advocating for the signing of the Gender Protocol even though Botswana is yet to append its signature.

The sensitisation seminar for reporters and editors included participants from the electronic and print media. The seminar ended with a statement of commitment by the media. The result was that in the print media, free columns were made available for feature stories. Producers in the electronic media informed gender activists about availability of programmes that could be utilised to disseminate information on the Gender Protocol. The publicity on the Gender Protocol was not as extensive as we had intended, but it was commendable overall, all thanks to the commitment of the media. The media followed most of the events planned for publicising the Gender Protocol."



Keabonye Ntsabane .

Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna

Networking and building relationships - 82%

Early on in its development, the Alliance recognised that technical skills and expertise alone were not enough to mount a regional campaign that had as its main focus Southern Africa's male-dominated governments. The growth of the Alliance's membership has been based on a set of agreed criteria.

Membership has grown from six in 2005 to more than 41 in 2010 and the Alliance has been pro-active in targeting new members, such as faith-based organisations and the men's sector through Men for Gender Equality Now (MEGEN) in Malawi, and Sonke Gender Justice Network in South Africa. This has helped to broaden the Alliance's profile, geographic reach and expertise.

Building the coalition - what Alliance members say



Elsie Alexander and Judith Mtsewu. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

Elsie Alexander, University of Botswana says: "Civic groups in Southern Africa have played an instrumental role in the promotion and advocacy of gender-sensitive policies and legal reform over the last three decades. In the past five years, a strong network of NGOs coordinated and led by Gender Links has demonstrated that coordinated collective action can make a difference to holding governments accountable to a gender and development agenda.

There are significant lessons to learn from the SADC Protocol Alliance's advocacy strategy over the last five years. The following are some of the experiences that indicate that the Alliance is a best practice in the region:

- Gender Links is one of the pro-active and powerful networks that have advanced gender equality by ensuring accountability by all SADC member states. The efforts to promote gender equality since the Beijing Plus Ten has demonstrated the power of civil society to promote legal and policy reform through a consistent, persistent, collective and pro-active strategy.
- Gender Links has provided the political space for coalition-building and sharing of experiences of like-minded women's rights and development organisations. These organisations came together to maximise their knowledge, expertise and practices to contribute to a regional process that culminated into the adoption of the SADC Protocol in 2008.
- As a result of the effective coordination and leadership of Gender Links, a strong women's movement continues to hold governments accountable as part of the Protocol's monitoring and evaluation process.
- Through the development of partnerships, the Alliance is a strong solidarity that has identified innovative strategies and opportunities in order to address the numerous challenges that hamper the achievement of gender equality.
- The SADC Protocol is a unique policy and legal instrument as it embraces all the relevant international and regional instruments that have been signed and ratified by most SADC governments. It has measurable indicators and targets that facilitate the monitoring and evaluation of achievements and challenges. It is evident from the regional and national Barometer reports that SADC countries are at different levels and have a long way to go to realise the goal of gender equality.
- A milestone achievement is that the Alliance has revived the power of the women's movement in the region by initiating a common agenda through ownership of the process as well as meaningful and active participation.
- The lessons learnt and experiences will make a long-term difference to the gender

agenda in the region and globally as the SADC Protocol is a unique, best practice and advocacy model to be shared and replicated globally.

As a member of SADC, Botswana has not signed the Protocol - a decision that indicates a lack of political will and commitment to gender equality. Despite the fact that the Botswana government has not signed the SADC Protocol, it has provided an opportunity for the women's movement to strengthen its advocacy strategy as well as revive the capacity of the NGOs to act pro-actively and collectively. It has provided an opportunity for the women's movement in Botswana to unite and rally around a common agenda. The women's movement continues to use the SADC Protocol as an advocacy and research tool in order to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the national gender policy and development framework."

Ialfine Tracoulat: FPFE Madagascar and GL country Facilitator states: "The Alliance network is inter-dependent, it is a considerable asset, and with the dedication of each and everyone, we will make a success of our objective by 2015."

Patience Zirima, Southern African Research and Documentation Centre (SARDC) adds: "For me, more than anything else, the Protocol process was a lesson in engaging SADC... Despite the long road that the region travelled towards the signing of the Protocol, there is better understanding of these processes, and organisations are better placed to undertake lobbying activities at the national and SADC level."

Abby Taka Mgugu, Women's Land and Water Rights in Southern Africa (WLWRSA) also added: "The road to the adoption and signing of the Protocol was not an easy one; a number of hurdles were encountered and some were easy to surmount, while others took a longer time. It was also important that the Alliance, as the coordinating body, develop strategies that were powerful and engaging to the policy makers to draw their attention to take cognisance of the issues that were presented."



Alliance meeting in Lesotho. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

Managing differences

As a "coalition of the willing", the Alliance has principles of working together such as: valuing the voices of the different members, creating space for sharing ideas and constructive dialogue, acknowledging and valuing diversity, and efforts are made in workshops/meetings, to design processes that will ensure effective participation, frankness and experiential learning.

One example of democratic participation within the Alliance is when a member raised serious concerns about whether the Protocol campaign advocated for a set of women's human rights standards that were lower than those that existed in the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights Optional Protocol on Women.

The member was asked to put this position in writing and circulate it to all members for their comments, including the SADC Gender Unit. A tele-conference of the members and partners (including the SADC Gender Unit) was set up to discuss the issues, with the member who had raised the concern leading the discussion. After hearing several perspectives, members took a consensus view to continue with the campaign but with a stronger lobby on the areas where the Alliance had not laid emphasis before.

We did not always agree!

Matrine Buuku Chuulu, Women and Law Southern Africa (WLSA), Zambia emphasises: "From the outset, the process of coming up with the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development was a negotiated one between different stakeholders and groups. The art of harmonious negotiation with others was one of the first lessons that members of the SADC Gender Protocol Alliance had to learn in getting the SADC Gender Protocol off the ground.

In the parallel civil society meeting during the 2005 SADC Summit, the newly formed SADC Protocol Alliance pledged to broaden ownership of, and to get support for, the elevation of the 1997 Declaration to a Protocol through concerted consultations at national level. Early on in this process, the Alliance met the divergent views of civil society; and, the art of balancing different interests not only of governments, but of those working in the same gender activism landscape, began.

Those who participated in the 2005 meetings strongly supported the elevation of the 1997 SADC Declaration on Gender to a protocol, while other gender equality and women's rights organisations in the region believed there was no need for a SADC Protocol after the African Union (AU) had adopted the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa. These organisations felt that some groups had started to put pressure for the SADC Protocol without adequately consulting or including them.

As a way forward to ease this tension, the Alliance sought to bring into the earlier drafts of the SADC Protocol the same language used in the AU one. We believed that since the SADC Heads of State had already adopted and started to ratify the AU Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa, the proposed SADC Protocol should not have weaker language. This would compromise the gains achieved in the AU Protocol and other international instruments like CEDAW.



Matrine Buuku Chuulu. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

But we hit another set of tensions, this time with governments. Any attempts to retain some of the language and rights issues in the AU Protocol were resisted by government stakeholders - more especially issues such as marital rape, women using their maiden names after marriage or combining their maiden surnames with those of their husbands.

If we were to see the Protocol adopted by the Heads of States, we had to drop the insistence on strong language and go along with the negotiated process. A strong case however, could be made that the push towards weaker language should not be accepted, because governments had already committed to this language and issues when they signed the AU Protocol. To now demand that the issues be removed and the language changed was seen as sabotage to the process.

As the Alliance sought to enforce the credibility of the constitutional states in the region by pushing for language and issues in the Protocol to achieve fairness and social and gender justice, the rules of the game in the negotiations with government were no longer fair, and friction entered the process.

This friction was deeply rooted in the power relations endemic to civil society-government relations. At times, in a bid to flex their power, governments excluded civil society from some of their processes, leading to a fixation of particular interests by both groups. Political participation had to be forced out of the power holders throughout the process.

The SADC Protocol Alliance members, therefore, had to learn tolerance throughout the negotiations with governments for the Protocol which brought to the fore the collision between those clinging to traditional cultures and those seeking more socially inclusive societies based on gender equality and justice.

The relationship between the Alliance and governments throughout the process was a fragile power relationship where concessions had to be made. Fortunately, in the interest of rendering or providing legitimacy to public institutions, the frictions were ironed out by seeing the process as an opportunity to achieve a balance between diverse interests."

Managing creative tensions

Re-negotiating roles and mandates between governments and civil society organisations involved in the Alliance proved to be a delicate balancing act throughout the five years of activism for a SADC Protocol on Gender and Development.

While there were times at the beginning of the process when the Alliance ran ahead with its armoury of information, skills, research capacity and mandate to advocate on behalf of its constituency of women, it quickly learnt to slow down, take a back-seat and transfer its speed by putting its knowledge and skills into governments' hands. This posture led some governments to include Alliance members as part of government delegations to key meetings, which provided the Alliance with first-hand, insider information on the Protocol process and red flags along the way.

"We also had to learn the negotiating art of using the process of consensus on each and every point. If we reached consensus on a point, language or issue raised in the Articles that have come to form the Protocol, we moved," noted **Emma Kaliya**. "After the 2007 summit in Lusaka where Council of Ministers changed the document, when we started the negotiations to get back on track, we strategised as an Alliance through consultations on what we could compromise on, what was non-negotiable and what we could live without. We compromised on some issues, but we gained a lot on others." The inclusion of 28 targets in the adopted Protocol with key targets in the areas of decision-making, education, HIV and AIDS, media, information and communications, gender-based violence, among others, was a huge gain for activists. They now had the basis to measure governments' performance more uniformly and for strengthening evidence-based advocacy for governments' delivery on and accountability to gender equality and women's human rights.

Strategic planning, developing policies and action plans - 80%



Sizakele Hlatshwayo at an Alliance Strategy Meeting in Namibia.
Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna

The Alliance meets annually for strategic planning based on the three-year Action Plan developed in 2008. Work plans and performance and implementation of work plans are reviewed at these meetings and cluster leaders also draw up action plans to inform and guide implementation of work plans.

Conducting research, audits, analysis - 77%

Emma Kaliya of the NGO Gender Coordinating Network (NGOGCN) said that her organisation utilised the Barometer as a resource and advocacy tool for promoting the SADC Gender Protocol when civil society contributions for the formulation and development of National programmes addressing gender equality, were solicited from government. The Barometer also enabled her to identify gaps and address these gaps in future programming.

The SADC Gender Protocol Barometer was envisaged as a resource to enable SADC member states and other relevant stakeholders to measure change at regional and national levels. Through a matrix of indicators, it maps out the current state of various social, political and economic markers in SADC countries and is intended to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation component of the Gender Protocol.



Its objectives are: (1) to collect baseline data on the key provisions of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development; (2) to use this accurate and updated baseline data to develop lobbying and advocacy tools targeting national governments and regional bodies to deliver on Protocol commitments; and (3) to use this research to enable civil society to track the progress made by SADC member states towards achieving the set targets in the SADC Protocol.

The quantitative and qualitative data provides information on the status of women relative to men in each of the sectors, but also allows for comparison of information across countries in all key areas. It is designed as a user-friendly tool to further interface this process with other efforts, such as those developed by the SADC GU and its partners (e.g. SADC Gender Monitor).

Fanny Chirisa of Women in Politics Support Unit, the Governance Thematic Cluster, uses the 2009 Barometer for background information in her advocacy work, especially around poverty alleviation.

The target is to produce five issues of the Barometer over five years to ensure citizen engagement and ownership. So far two issues of the Barometer have been produced and launched at Heads of State Summits: the 2009 Baseline Barometer and the 2010 Progress Barometer.

In 2010 GL and country partners launched the Barometer in 11 countries: in Namibia at the parallel civil society forum to the SADC Heads of State Summit (August 2010); Lesotho (September 2010); Zimbabwe; Zambia; Botswana (at SADC head quarters) and Mauritius (all in October 2010); South Africa (November 2010), Malawi (December 2010); Madagascar (February 2010); South Africa, Johannesburg (February 2011); at a parallel event during the CSW Conference in New York (February 2011) and in Mozambique (March 2011). An April 2011 launch is planned in the DRC.

Claire Mathonsi, Director of Operations at the Western Cape Network on Violence Against Women which leads the Gender Violence cluster in the Alliance sais that the Barometer had an invaluable role to play in facilitating the process of reporting back to the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) based on the Protocol's implementation in the SADC region as well as around other international obligations including the Millennium Development Goals.

Training - 73%

The Alliance can be best described as a "learning" coalition of organisations and individuals. This has translated into a collective that recognises that growth, change and transformation must be informed by reflection, dialogue, skills-building, expert inputs and sharing of knowledge. Opportunities have been created to support this approach to learning, and can be categorised into three distinct areas: formal approaches, peer learning and on-the-job learning.

The Alliance has held capacity-building workshops on media, new media, lobbying and advocacy linked to the annual meetings that have taken place parallel to Heads of State summits since 2005. The number of participants has ranged from 20 to 30 at each meeting.

What Alliance members say they learned

"I learnt the ability to contextualise definitions of gender concepts and utilise these for work and advocacy; how to identify gender issues in thematic areas for analysis, enabling the organisation to produce a report on the 2005 constitutional analysis audit. I gained knowledge that enabled the Swaziland NGO network to conduct gender audits for regional and national organisations."- *Sizakele Hlatshwayo, Coordinating Assembly of NGOs (CANGO), Swaziland*

"I got good experience on working together with GEMSA Mozambique and other organisations, where I learnt how to implement (activities), translate (ideas) from theory and practice". - *Azarius Muchanga, Christian Council of Mozambique*

"Gender Links has woken me up to a new challenge, the Church and women's rights". - *Rev. Rosemary Nsofwa, Zambia Council of Churches*

"We have learnt how to produce our own material as women and to document our knowledge and experiences".- *Loveness Jambaya Nyakujarah, Gender Links*

"I have seen how people can wield an amazing amount of power. This (Alliance) process has resulted in women within SADC claiming their own agency."- *Kubi Rama, Deputy Executive Director, Gender Links*.

Monitoring and evaluation - 65%
This is clearly an area that the Alliance needs to work on. Clusters and county coordinating networks need to disseminate the score card and engage with the results. They need to be more involved in administering the Protocol quiz and attitude test. In the 2011 Barometer, the results will be disaggregated by sex, age and country and used to fine-tune future campaigns. Country barometers need to be more actively used for directing action at country level. The planning and costing exercises will help to facilitate this process.

Growth and development

The relevance of training and learning opportunities created through the Alliance can also be seen in the impact this has on the work members undertake in their own careers and in activities beyond the Alliance.

Feedback from members about how they use the expertise they learned is impressive. Members have used strategic planning skills and tools in their own organisations, training on gender issues and sharing strategic information on the Protocol with partners. For example, Azarius Muchanga of the Christian Council of Mozambique noted: "I share what I have learnt at church. I sensitise people at church, university and community level. I, together with other organisations, organise some workshops where we address people on gender issues, especially as regards the empowerment of women."

One of the most gratifying areas of growth and development is on the ground floor. GL has used the Protocol as a tool for mobilising in its local government work, where it seeks to mainstream gender in the work of councils. GL runs village level workshops on the Protocol as part of this process.



Alliance caucus at the Beijing Plus 15. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

Taking off on the wings of the SADC Protocol



Wendy Chirira and Clara Makwara. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

In a focus group discussion for an external evaluation of GL's work, Zimbabwe local government councillors talked about the skills they acquired during training on the SADC Gender Protocol and its provisions. This learning impacted on their private lives as well as their communities. It is only through continuous growth and development like this that the Gender Protocol can make a "real" difference to the lives of women and men in the SADC region. The following are some excerpts from the discussion:

"I had the privilege of travelling to Johannesburg; this was such an eye opener for me. I received a first prize for my community-based organisation that focuses on giving care and support to orphaned children. I got a silver award and a laptop. I share my laptop with colleagues in my ward; we are now able to do powerpoint presentations during workshops. This laptop has changed how we work and it has made such a difference to my work. I'm now even learning more about computers since I won the laptop at the Gender Justice and Local Government Summit in Johannesburg. I'm grateful to Gender Links for this. Now I've been able to expand the organisation to include less privileged women and men in the Chitungwiza community. I'm encouraged that even at my age I'm learning how to use the computer." - *Wendy Chiriri, Councillor, Chitungwiza Municipality.*

"Before being exposed to gender training conducted by Gender Links, I really did not know much about gender-based violence, or care too much about it. After the lessons on gender-based violence, my whole outlook changed. I understood that it was not right, and that victims need to receive counselling support. Now I'm confident enough to counsel people exposed to gender-based violence. I know that this is a sensitive area, and confidentiality is key. I'm now confident even to council my own daughters, and speak freely to them on issues of abuse and gender-based violence, I've broken the silence in my own house on this matter, this is something I would never have discussed with my daughter before my learning at the Summit with the goal to halve gender-based violence by 2015." - *Clara Makwara, Councillor, Chitungwiza Municipality.*

"I've come to this meeting in Harare with my husband, this is such an improvement. Ordinarily my husband would never have travelled with me because he did not take gender and women empowerment issues seriously. Because of the constructive things that I've learned from Gender Links and shared with him, I won his confidence and respect. He now supports me in everything I do; this has made my work so much easier. I've been able to share and impart knowledge on mainstreaming gender to the council structure. Although there was resistance from male councillors initially, I'm slowly winning them over. Before I was never given a car and driver to take me round for meetings, I always had to use public transport. Now they respect me, and I'm enjoying the same privileges of getting a car and a driver when I go for meetings. Even in my home, my husband respects me more!" - *Holly Dzuda, Gweru Councillor and Women in Local Government Chairperson*

"I've been truly empowered. Before the gender training, I had very little communication skills, nor did I know anything about networking. Now I know that I'm not limited because of my gender. After the gender training, I could speak with confidence and authority during council meetings. I'm now receiving recognition and support from the men. Men used to harass me in the chambers. I remember a particular occasion when my female colleague was told to shut up and sit down. I stood up for my colleague; I could not allow such ridiculous conduct to continue. Now we are being taken seriously. Even in my community, I can now speak out against social injustice."
- Anna Murigwa, gender focal person, Makoni District Council

GL staff learn on-the-job

All GL staff have at some stage been involved in the work of the SADC Gender Protocol campaign. They have drafted press releases, edited commentaries, fielded phone calls; helped to write and proof read the Barometer; hosted dozens of partners; and mainstreamed the Protocol targets in their work. DFID funding has made it possible to hire a full-time manager for the job. In the excerpt from the 2010 staff Learning Journey, current manager **Mukayi Makaya** shares her experience of managing this challenging portfolio:

Sinking or swimming? Being thrown in the deep end is a fast way to learn!

"Towards the end of 2010 GL promoted me to manage the Alliance and Partnerships portfolio. Even though I was ecstatic, I was also somewhat scared. It was a big leap, and way out of my comfort zone. I wondered if I would cope: it was a whole new area of work; quite intimidating. I convinced myself that I could and would do it. I also knew that I would have to read extensively about the programme.



Mukayi Makaya. *Photo: Gender Links*

During the 2010 December holidays I had lots of bedtime reading, not of the usual novels: the Barometers, the SADC Gender and Development Protocol, *Roadmap to Equality*, the DVDs. It was totally crazy, but I needed to inform myself. My husband and kids even began to complain! Any free moment I had, I found myself reading. I realised that I was actually enjoying what I was reading about. It really was a lot of learning, about the SADC region, gender and development.

I'm not one for the limelight; I'm actually quite shy and this post threw me right into the limelight. From the time that I assumed my new post, we launched the SADC Gender Protocol 2010 Barometer in Zimbabwe, Zambia, Botswana and Malawi. At all those launches I had to make a presentation on the Alliance. Now that I look back I laugh, boy was I nervous! Talking in front those big crowds was indeed intimidating. And sometimes I would say the "wrong" or "politically inappropriate" things. Often I recall GL Executive Director Colleen Lowe Morna pulling me aside, and sounding a gentle caution! Geez I thought, what an "off-side", how embarrassing.

I also learnt that being a new manager is not always easy; people have to gain confidence in you. I remember one of our donors asking the ED to come and make a presentation at a Pan-African Gender Conference they were hosting. Colleen was

not available to go, and told them that I, as the manager of the programme, would make the presentation. This was not well received by the donor organisation, they wanted Colleen! As I was new to the programme they feared I would not be able to handle questions from their group! So there was a bit of an exchange, but Colleen, being Colleen, insisted that it would be me or no one! I went over-prepared for the session. The session went well, the group indeed asked a lot of questions, and we had such a good discussion! I later received an email from the big boss of that organisation, thanking me for a "wonderful" session. Mind you she wasn't even there, but said she had received very good feedback. That made me feel good!

But that was not even the worst! In early December the SADC Gender Unit had asked Colleen to give a presentation at a regional gender training workshop. We had just come back from Malawi. When I got home, I noticed a missed call from her: had I known what she was going to say, honestly, I would not have returned the call. To my shock she had decided she could not make it, and asked me to go and make the presentation! Oh my goodness, I thought, what can I possibly say to those government officials! Believe me I tried in vain to wiggle out of it, but she wouldn't budge.

Everything that could have gone wrong that morning went wrong. I was stuck in traffic, arrived half an hour late. The programme had to be rearranged to accommodate my late arrival. When I finally arrived, Magdeline Madibela, Head of SADC Gender Unit, gave me an astounding welcome and introduction. That increases the pressure for an excellent delivery. I could see the participants were tired, and somewhat bored. My mind raced around for an icebreaker. Thank goodness for the times I had seen Colleen facilitate, so I knew a couple of her tricks. I asked the participants to join in a massage exercise (rub my back and I will rub yours). Wow, it did wonders, they enjoyed it! Their mood lightened and they engaged with my presentation. They were very impressed by the work of the Alliance and the Barometer.

There was so much discussion after that session, I felt so good about it, and it did wonders to my confidence! Only then did I appreciate being thrown into the deep end. When we are challenged enough, our true colours shine.

This is just the beginning of more learning; these past five months have been amazing, and I've learnt so much, through my mistakes and just persevering. I've grown professionally and as an individual. It hasn't always been easy, the pressure is high, and working hours are often long. The consolation for me is the continuous growth and development. I've changed in the past two years: for the better. I haven't done this on my own; I owe it to the wonderful team that I work with, and to those who saw in me, what I never thought I had." - *Mukayi Makaya, Alliance and Partnership Manager*



Lessons learned

The lessons are drawn from feedback made by partners as well as GL's own analysis.

General

- There needs to be a clearer distinction between Gender Links and the Alliance. The Alliance needs to function more autonomously from GL, which would give it more ownership within the SADC region and allow other organisations within the Alliance to receive recognition.

"There needs to be an enhancement of planning around intensive issues like the updating of the Barometer and some processes require ample time. Gender Links needs to focus more issues related to regional integration, sexual and reproductive health rights and environmental issues".

- Matrine Chuulu

- Gender Links must connect with the grassroots levels and conduct gender training. Many at this level do not know about Gender Links or the good work being done. In order to meet the target to halve gender-based violence by 2015, Gender Links must work with the people on the ground. This is where the majority of the people are: perpetrators and victims.
- Gender Links must expand the Centres of Excellence process to all the councils, not just ten, there are 91 local authorities, and

it is a challenge for GL to reach out to all of them.

- The importance of "perfect timing". In December councils in Zimbabwe were drafting budgets, it was an opportune time to train and build capacity around gender-responsive budgeting, and conduct training in a systematic way the benefits the councils.
- Whilst cross-border activism implies focusing on a regional strategy to support trans-border campaigning, it will not take root unless there is a clear process of translating this into a national strategy, supported by well-defined, country-specific and flexible structures.
- One size does not fit all; allow for different operational models at national level, provided they stay true to the vision and mission of the campaign.
- Map out points of entry at national level, and promote the "value add" of bringing the region to the national to influence transformation where it matters most.

Research

- Conducting good quality research and having all the facts from the start is an essential first step.
- The initial audit was a situation analysis and equipped the Alliance with the crucial baseline information from which to plan its work.
- Developing a checklist at the start of the process to ensure that nothing is left out meant that there was a framework within which to work.
- National consultations with civil society organisations and governments were organised in each country and it was in these forums that civil society engaged in meaningful negotiations with governments about content. This is where positions were won and compromises reached. These positions informed gender officials meetings and moved the process forward.
- Having representatives from a number of the SADC countries ensured that there was group collaboration across all countries and that the Alliance was represented on a number of different fronts, including as representatives on Government delega-



Emma Kaliya being interviewed by Television Malawi after the launch of the Barometer 2010 in Lilongwe. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

tions at regional forums. This became very important especially in identifying some of the national reservations to contested provisions.
- Monitoring and analysis tools were critical for tracking the negotiations and lobbying at regional and national levels.

While this is an area of strength for the Alliance, the following lessons have been learned to date:

"Gender Links needs to focus on broader, long-term capacity building, rather than short-term activities."

- Emma Kaliya

Media, information and communication
- It is important to include the media as partners.
- Gender activists must involve media professionals in the planning process and training plans.
- Civil society must understand how the media works, know their schedules and what makes something newsworthy.
- Multi-media is important to reach diverse audiences.
- Ensure a key message and slogan, but embrace diversity in the details.
- Be pro-active and organised, have media lists and keep them updated. Keep the media informed in between major events.

Training and capacity-building
- A knowledge-building process in the coalition needs to be multifaceted, and periodic reviews of members' needs are essential.
- Innovative ways of learning need to be explored, for example group mentoring.
- Linking formal structured training to other processes, such as planning meetings, has proved effective and helped in managing costs.
- A structured feedback mechanism on the learning within the Alliance needs to be periodically documented, reviewed, and the lessons integrated into further training
- Designing training so that it serves a number of purposes is the key to making a lasting impact. For example, the training on engaging with the media produced a concrete product (news supplement), built a good information base on the issues under discussion, built the research skills of the members, provided the base for a good advocacy tool, and paved the way for strengthening the writing skills of the activists involved.



Next steps

- *Intensify campaigns for ratification and domestication of the Protocol:* Gender Links and members of the Alliance should use the Ratification Tool Kit to intensify campaigns in Zambia and South Africa to push them to ratify the Protocol so it can come into force. All countries that have signed need to ratify and domesticate the Protocol in order for it to take legal effect within their countries: efforts need to be stepped up in this regard.

- *Accelerate the costing initiative:* The pioneering work on aligning national policies and action plans to the Protocol and costing its implementation with the support of UN Women and other donors should be encouraged as this is a significant step towards implementation. GL's success in working with government to develop and cost National Action Plans for ending gender violence serves as a useful precedent that can be built on in this exercise.

- *Strengthen national focal point networks through assigning responsibility for the achievement of certain targets:* All members of the Alliance should use the Protocol as a framework of reference for their programme work. The Alliance should also learn from Malawi and Zimbabwe models of working with thematic clusters at country level. In addition, Gender Links should define criteria for Alliance membership such as ensuring that members of the Alliance identify and implement at least one of the 28 targets of the SADC Gender Protocol as their core business.



Zambian journalist Arthur Mwansa with the SADC Gender Protocol pamphlet.
Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna

- *Create an additional four regional clusters to strengthen Alliance work:* Gender Links should create four new regional clusters on education, a men's network, care work, and faith-based work around the Protocol. There are examples of good work happening with men's networks in Malawi and South Africa, faith-based organisations in Zambia, and the care work campaign run by Voluntary Service Overseas Regional AIDS Initiative of Southern Africa (VSO-RAISA).

- *SADC Gender Protocol Index:* Moving close to the 2015 deadline, GL and its Alliance partners need to consider a SADC Gender Protocol Index (SGPI), based on empirical data in the Barometer that can be used to measure progress, possibly in combination with the citizen score card. This idea can be debated as part of the new initiative to align policies and action plans to the Protocol as well as to cost it.

- *Intensify advocacy efforts on women's constitutional and legal rights and affirmative action:* Gender Links, working through the Constitution and Legal Rights Cluster of the Alliance, should develop and implement advocacy strategies to address the dual legal system and contradictions between customary law and codified law currently undermining women's rights. Some constitutions have derogations and claw back clauses that should be repealed through sustained advocacy and follow-up by the alliance. The Gender and Governance cluster should also design advocacy strategies to lobby governments to implement affirmative action for achieving 50/50 political representations of women through constitutional and legislated quotas. The alliance should integrate constitutional rights awareness as integral to 50/50 campaigns and popularisation of the Protocol in order to continuously challenge gender stereotyping.

- *Develop a programme on economic empowerment of women:* Gender Links and the Zimbabwe Women Resource Centre Network (ZWRCN), as the leader of the Gender and Economic Justice cluster, should develop programmes on economic empowerment for women. There are several good practices in the region on economic empowerment of women, such as models implemented by the United Church of Zambia, which can be replicated. Gender Links should introduce economic justice programmes through its governance, justice, and care work sectors at the local government level to localise interventions. Lack of economic resources hinders women's participation in politics, as well as their access to justice.


SONY



Fauzia Yusuf of Africa Media Group *Channel 10*, one young woman excelling in an area dominated by men.
Photo by Arthur Okwemba

Chapter 6

The Lion's Den: Gender equality in and through the media

By Sikhonzile Ndlovu, Loga Virahsawmy and Hunadi Ralebipi

"GL is a systematic organisation with an effective strategic framework that uses the media effectively to reach the unreached and to bring policy change in their favour. Its publications are having a significant impact on young journalists and its link to training institutions is uniquely important for impacting society with gender-related issues."
- Mercedes Sayagues, International journalist and Knight Health Fellow, Mozambique, quoted in GL's organisational evaluation 2011

Fact box

- Over the last decade, GL has conducted ground-breaking research on gender in and through the media that has been used to inform a wide variety of advocacy, policy and training initiatives in SADC.
- There have been 9 887 beneficiaries in this programme: 38% men and 62% women.
- These women and men are part of a gender and media movement that has gained huge momentum over the past decade, significantly contributing to the signing of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development in August 2008.
- Over the next five years GL will roll out gender policies in more than 100 newsrooms in the SADC region with the aim of ensuring that they have at least 30% women sources in news content by 2015. This is in line with GL's long term vision to develop media Centres of Excellence (COEs).



Shirley Chamroo presenting a programme on the SADC Gender Protocol at MBC Radio.
Photo: Loga Virahsawmy

As Gender Links turns ten years old, so does the GL media programme, which has been a core pillar of its work from day one. Although GL's work expanded to encompass many larger areas of SADC gender work, GL's media work and activism has been its one constant. For this reason, it is a programme with many beneficiaries and much institutional history.

The title of this chapter, "The Lion's Den" is taken from a quote by the first chair of GL, Thenjiwe Mtintso, who famously declared that GL would "meet the lion in its den" in its endeavours to transform gender relations "in and through the media" - a phrase that she also coined.

When the first *Gender and Media Baseline Study* (GMBS) was conducted in 2003 it was an impressive, groundbreaking piece of research that helped put GL permanently on the map as well as cement its media research credentials. Such an intense and extensive regional study, monitoring 25 000 articles and news stories, had never been conducted anywhere. For this reason the troubling results were a wake-up call, both for GL and for media houses throughout the region. Women were barely seen or heard in the media, accessed as sources only 17% of the time.

The study has been the bedrock of GL's media work since 2003 and its follow-up in 2010 was even more extensive, asking more questions and probing deeper into areas such as media practice and reporting on gender-based violence. However, the results were almost as discouraging as in 2003. Regionally, women's voices in news stories had increased just two percentage points in seven years, to 19%.

Despite some disappointments, the GMPS also provided a glimmer of hope, highlighting specific media houses finally getting it right, improving reporting at the same time as creating systematic changes to bring about a gender balance in the newsroom. One such example is the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation (MBC), one of the first media houses to work with GL in developing a gender policy.

At that time, women comprised just 14% of news sources in its reporting. GL worked with the MBC to draft the first gender policy in 2003; approved in 2004. In 2006 GL held a three-day workshop with all MBC departments to advance the gender policy and develop a gender-aware HIV and AIDS policy. MBC approved both policies, printed and launched during the Sixteen Days campaign in 2006. In February 2010, MBC revisited the policy, expanded on it and drafted a new one during a two-day workshop.

In the 2010 GMPS, the proportion of women sources at the MBC had doubled to 28%, making MBC a success story and gender-reporting leader in Mauritius and the region, and a recipient of the Institutional award at the Gender and Media (GEM) Summit. What is significant is that the MBC not only acknowledges the improvement with regard to gender-responsive reporting but believes that this has improved its reporting generally.

Speaking at the GEM Summit, Deputy Director General Soondree Devi Soborun said that gender awareness had improved the responsiveness of the public broadcaster, which services women and men. GMPS research found that the MBC also displayed a high standard of reporting, with primary sources accounting for 94% of those sourced in its stories. The majority of sources were also identified, with anonymous sources constituting just 7% of those quoted.

A key ingredient in this success is buy-in from the highest levels of management. Dan Callikan, Director-General of the MBC, has assured GL that it will implement the Action Plan that accompanies the Gender Policy. In a letter addressed to the Director of GL (Mauritius and Francophone office) dated 10 November 2010, the Deputy Director General, writing on behalf of the Director General, stated:

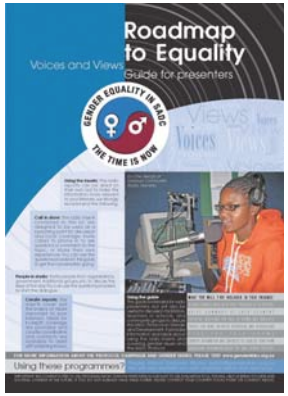
"The MBC has always been a close collaboration of GL and takes pride in its firm commitment towards gender equality at the Corporation. We assure you that the Corporation will continue to give its support in making gender justice a reality in Mauritius and we thank you for your collaboration and assure you of our commitment to the SADC Protocol and our Gender Policy."

The MBC has worked systematically to promote gender equality in its ranks; Although women are still under-represented in all areas of the MBC, the broadcaster also received the award for best practice on gender at the inaugural GL/Sol Plaatje Institute for Media Leadership-Media Action Plan (SPI-MAP) Institutional Excellence Media Awards in September 2007. The award recognised progress made in certain areas of the MBC, such as its radio section, which is headed by a woman, as well as the considerable progress made in diversifying editorial content.

On the face of it, progress has been slow. In 2003, women constituted 30% of the overall staff. The *Glass Ceilings* study (2009) showed that this has since only increased by three percentage points. However, the proportion of women in top and senior management has increased from 4% to 20%. Luximbye Samboo, Principal Officer in Charge of the Human Resources division noted that "the corporation is doing its level best to ensure that there is gender equality in its operations."

The GMPS showed that women constituted 51% of the reporters in the stories monitored. And, in 2009 the MBC appointed a woman Acting Director General for the first time.

Civil society gender and media watchdog, Mauritius MWO - GEMSA, has noted that the MBC consistently seeks the voices of women from different walks of life to comment on various issues. This includes the country's budget; HIV and AIDS; security and other topical issues. The MBC also has regular gender-specific programmes that empower women.



The MBC is the only institution in the region that is running a series of 12 call-in radio programmes on the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. This is a best practice that media houses in the region should replicate.

So as GL takes stock of its media programme at ten years, it is examples like MBC which can be celebrated. This chapter will look at several more such examples, noting that in many cases, the greatest achievements have come about where there have been the most sustained, coordinated interventions. Although there is a long way to go before gender equality is reached in and through the media, at ten years it is obvious that GL's work is helping ensure this eventually becomes a reality. The MBC is an example of what is possible with sustained training and policy work.

Background

Since GL's formation in 2001, a key area of focus has been the transformation of gender relations in and through the media. Whilst this vision has remained integral to GL's operations, the organisation has since expanded to other programming areas such as Gender and Governance, Gender Justice and more recently the SADC Protocol Alliance programme. The Media programme spreads across all SADC countries. However there have been challenges in Angola and as such GL has not been active there in the last couple of years. It is hoped that the newly

established Mozambique satellite office will bridge the gap going forward. The GL Francophone office has coordinated media programme activities in the DRC, Madagascar and Seychelles.

The media programme has remained GL's largest programme area with its four streams: research, training, advocacy and policy.



Over the last three years GL has used the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development to anchor its work, including the media programme. One of the SADC Protocol targets is to ensure that gender is mainstreamed in all information, communication and media policies, programmes, laws and training. Research has been used as a basis for all other media programme initiatives, providing the statistics to support advocacy and policy initiatives.

Media provisions in the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development

Ensure gender is mainstreamed in all information, communication and media policies, programmes, laws and training in accordance with the Protocol on Culture, Information and Sport.

Encourage the media and media-related bodies to mainstream gender in their codes of conduct, policies and procedures, and adopt and implement gender-aware ethical principles, codes of practice and policies in accordance with the Protocol on Culture, Information and Sport.

Take measures to promote the equal representation of women in the ownership and decision-making structures of the media, in accordance with Article 12.1 that urges equal representation of women in decision-making positions by 2015.

Take measures to discourage the media from:

- Promoting pornography and violence against all persons, especially women and children;
- Depicting women as helpless victims of violence and abuse;
- Degrading or exploiting women, especially in the area of entertainment and advertising, and undermining their role and position in society; and
- Reinforcing gender oppression and stereotypes.

Encourage the media to give equal voice to women and men in all areas of coverage, including increasing the number of programmes for, by and about women on gender-specific topics, and ones that challenge gender stereotypes.

Take appropriate measures to encourage the media to play a constructive role in the eradication of gender-based violence by adopting guidelines which ensure gender-sensitive coverage.

Research

Since 2003, GL and partner organisations have conducted ground-breaking media research in SADC, much of which came together in the 2010 GMPS. The GMPS looked at general media practice, gender in media content, gender in newsrooms as well

as the gendered dimensions of gender-based violence and HIV and AIDS coverage.

The study, which came seven years after the original GMBS, sought to compare and benchmark the performance of media in SADC countries. This was studied against their performance in the GMBS and two Media Action Plan (MAP) HIV and AIDS and Gender Baseline Studies. Where appropriate, parallels were also drawn with the *Glass Ceiling* study, which looked at gender in media houses in 14 countries.

The media research arm has served as a foundation for all advocacy, policy and media training initiatives. After every research project, GL has engaged with key stake holders to discuss the findings as well a chart a way forward in addressing some of the gaps identified. This is in the form of in-country workshops and briefings with individual media houses. These in-country workshops have been used to canvass for gender policies in newsrooms.

Advocacy

The Gender and Media (GEM) summits, held every two years, have served as a useful platform to deliberate and discuss emerging gender and media issues in the region. Since 2004, participants have gathered in Johannesburg to share best practices in this area of work. The 2004 Summit culminated in the formation of the Gender and Media Southern Africa (GEMSA) Network, which has served as GL's partner over the years.

Table 6.1 Summary of gender and media research by GL and partners

RESEARCH	YEAR	WHAT THIS COVERS	WHO
RESEARCH			
Laws and Policies			
Legally yours	2007	Audit of media policies, laws and regulations.	GEMSA
Gender in media education			
Gender in media education - Southern Africa	2010	Audit of gender in media training institutions.	GMDC, GL
Gender in media development NGOs	2006	Audit of gender in media development NGOs supported by SIDA globally, with several of these including MISA in Southern Africa.	GL, Swedish International Development Agency
Gender within the media			
Glass Ceilings: Gender in Southern African media houses	2009	Representation and participation of women and men within the media, its hierarchy, different beats and occupational areas.	GL
Gender in media content			
Gender and Media Baseline Study (GMBS)	2003	Gender disaggregated monitoring of 25 000 news items over one month to determine who speaks on what as well as how women and men are portrayed in the media.	GL, MISA, Media Monitoring Project (MMP)
Global Media Monitoring Project	2005	One day monitoring of Southern African media in thirteen countries as part of global monitoring, used to benchmark progress since GMBS.	GEMSA
Mirror on the Media: Who talks on Radio Talk Shows	2006	Gender disaggregated monitoring of hosts, guests, callers in Lesotho, Malawi, South Africa and Zimbabwe.	GL
HIV and AIDS, Gender and the Media	2006	Gender disaggregated data on coverage of HIV and AIDS including overall coverage; topics and sub topics; types of sources consulted.	GL, Southern African Editors Forum (SAEF) and MMP
Mirror on the Media: Gender and advertising	2007	Gender disaggregated monitoring of who is heard and depicted in advertising in Mauritius, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe, and how women are portrayed.	GL, GEMSA country chapters
Mirror on the Media: Gender and Tabloids	2008	Gender disaggregated monitoring of who speaks on what as well as how women and men are portrayed in tabloids.	GL, GEMSA country chapters
HIV and AIDS, Gender and the Media Francophone Study	2008	A combination of the GMBS and the HIV and AIDS, Gender and the Media Study, introducing new parameters, like media practice.	GL Francophone Office
Gender and Media Progress Study	2010	Gender disaggregated monitoring of over 30 000 news items over one month to measure progress since the GMBS, covering general practice; gender; HIV and AIDS and gender violence.	GL, GEMSA, MISA
Global Media Monitoring Project	2010	One day monitoring of Southern African media in fourteen countries as part of global monitoring, which will be used to benchmark progress in the region against global trends.	GEMSA
Gender and audiences			
My views on the News	2005	How women and men in Southern Africa engage with and respond to the news.	GL, MISA, GEMSA, MMP

Ammu Joseph, a gender and media activist from India says, "I have been privileged to attend all the GEM Summits organised by GL since 2004 and I have found the experience very inspiring. We have been sharing on work and drawing from each other's resources and experiences."



Ammu Joseph and Thabani Mpofu at the 2010 Gender and Media Summit. *Photo: Trevor Davies*

Policy work

Over the years, the advocacy work has flowed into the various policy initiatives done with media houses throughout the region. After in-country consultations with individual media houses, GL has assisted them to put in place mechanisms that create conducive media environments for women and men. So far GL has worked with media houses to develop HIV and AIDS and gender policies. In previous years, GL's policy work was part of the MAP on HIV and AIDS and gender, which started in 2005. MAP was generally weak on coordination and over time it became inefficient. However, GL had been the leading agency in the policy sub-sector and continued to build on achievements in this area.

Until 2009, most SADC media houses opted for HIV and AIDS policies instead of stand-alone gender policies. Later, spurred by the *Glass Ceilings* research, which found women were underrepresented in most media house occupational categories, many became more willing to adopt gender policies. This willingness was expressed during advocacy workshops around policy processes and GL began rolling out gender policies throughout the region. The facilitators' guide, developed for MAP facilitators, has been revised to strengthen monitoring and evaluation tools. GL aims to work with 100 newsrooms to develop gender policies by June 2011.

"I won the Gender and Media Award in women and politics. Since my involvement with GL, I am more and more gender-sensitive As a media practitioner, I get many highlights on how gender is meaningful. I would like to benefit from more training from GL for communication practitioners for example. Media practitioners need advocacy and policy learning to better enhance gender promotion".

- Fanjaniaina Saholiarisoa Alida - Madagascar

GL also works with media regulators on mainstreaming gender as an extension of its policy work with media houses. GL supports regulators in reviewing and strengthening their codes of practice and ethics. It has emerged that in some countries gender is not a key issue in media regulation. Regulators that have worked with GL include the Press Council of Botswana (PCB), DRC's High Authority of the Media (HAM), Media Council of Malawi (MCM) and the Independent Broadcasting Authority of Mauritius.

Training

Research and advocacy have provided GL with useful information on gender gaps which has been used to plan for capacity building. The training arm of the media department aims to empower journalists with gender analysis skills and to build citizen's capacity to hold media and governments accountable.

The ground-breaking Gender and Media Literacy work, first piloted in South Africa in 2006, has since been extended to different target groups in the region. The main objective of this project is to empower citizens to critically engage with the media. So far the course has included members of the public, learners, trainers, journalism and media students, women in politics and the media. Training has been conducted in Botswana, DRC, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

GL's work with the media has taken several dimensions including the development of a wide array of training materials; short courses on different themes like gender violence, HIV and AIDS, gender, elections and the media, gender and economic reporting as well newsroom training. GL also frequently produces conference newspapers as a

practical way of training journalists on gender aware reporting (see Chapter 11). All of this work is done in partnership with media training institutions.

The Gender, Elections and the Media project seeks to highlight the gendered dimensions of elections as well as to empower women politicians to engage with the media. Women politicians generally have a difficult relationship with the media. This project seeks to bridge this gap by bringing the media, women politicians and civil society together for frank and honest discussions on the gendered nature of elections. So far training has been conducted in Botswana, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia and Tanzania.

Following a region-wide workshop on women in politics at which GL presented its work on Gender, Elections and the Media in 2010, Joram Kumaaipurua Rukambe, UNDP Regional Electoral Advisor, wrote: "We look forward to further collaboration between the UNDP and GL, which is a key organisation for the UNDP to partner with in our quest to support democracy and good governance, including gender mainstreaming in Africa."



Gender benders: Photo of Masai men hairdressers in a Tanzania market taken during a Business Unusual workshop. *Photo: Gender Links*

The Business Unusual programme specifically targets journalists with the aim of raising awareness on and profiling women's contribution to the economy. Most women in the SADC region operate on the periphery of the mainstream economy and are usually not recognised for their contribution. With the signing of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, the project has sought to highlight the economic provisions of the Protocol. The Zimbabwe Women Resource Centre and Network (ZWRCN), the economic justice sector lead agency, has been the main implementing partner. So far training has been held in 11 countries namely, Botswana, DRC, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. There have also been two regional workshops with journalists from these countries.

Tanzania: Sustained media work pays off



Interviews during Business Unusual training in Tanzania. *Photo: Trevor Davies*

When Tanzania showed improvement in the GMPS, moving from 16 to 21% women sources, it demonstrated the importance of working comprehensively and extensively in all areas of media in a country. In this category, Tanzania achieved the fourth highest score in the region. Over the years, GL has undertaken media policy, advocacy, research and training work in Tanzania, working with media activists, practitioners and regulators. This is another reason why this country's media successes are worth celebrating. The following are excerpts of quotes received from Tanzanian partners during the beneficiary analysis.

Media activists
Marko Gideon, Information Officer, MISA-Tanzania Chapter
"I first came to know about Gender Links when I read a research called *Gender and Media Baseline Study* in 2004. The survey, which I was not involved in, looked at how both men and women are being covered by media. This was the first such unique research I had come across since I joined the journalism profession in 2002.

It was unique in many ways, but one important thing worthy to be mentioned in this writing is about its Keep It Short and Simple (KISS) style. It was kept short and simple, something that made it easy to be understood by an ordinary person.

The KISS style also made it appealing to me and hence I read it from the introduction to the last word. The numbers, especially percentages, were many but because of the style of writing, it was not boring at all. The small document was an example of a simple report that could attract not only readers but also journalists who in most cases are attracted by simple and clear text, easy to publish, and extract data.

KISS became Gender Links' style of publishing its reports. In 2005, I was involved in the research called *Gender and Media Audience Study* (GMAS)... In the research I acted as a Coordinator, helping the appointed Coordinator of the research. The same year I participated in an *HIV and AIDS & Media Baseline Survey* in Tanzania.

When both reports were published, I saw the excellent job done to make friendly reports. They used the KISS style again and were extremely appealing to readers. Until today I have developed an interest in reading Gender Links reports for various purposes, including learning and also as news sources for media articles publication.

I have always learned from Gender Links that good reports need to appeal to readers. And

keeping them short and simple is one way of making them attractive."

GL has worked extensively in Tanzania to ensure newsrooms adopt gender and HIV and AIDS workplace policies. Remembering some of the challenges it faced around this issue:

Dominica Haule, Tanzania Communications and Regulatory Authority:
"During gender policy formation in 2008, I was among the members working hand-in-hand to get the ball rolling. I remember Colleen Lowe Morna, who travelled all the way to Tanzania to assist in the formulation. She nearly collapsed after all journalists left the room simply because there was no payment... Bearing in mind that money is not the only way through, I volunteered the session as an expert in communication... Working with GL I have gained more courage as well as self-esteem as a result of following GL steps... As a grassroots communicator, these experiences with GL will add more and more courage to whatever I plan to undertake within my organisation and the public at large in Tanzania."

Another long-time Tanzanian partner, **Gladness Munuo**, remembers how being a part of the Media Action Plan process had an impact on her personal life:

"In 2006, it is not easy to forget... I got a free ticket to attend the 2006 GEM Summit in Johannesburg. This was my first time in South Africa, I was very much anxious to land in that country, the country which I used to learn and make a lot of reference about discrimination and race conflict, including heroes like Nelson Mandela... I believe that GL's spirit of work in the one channel which made me very efficient in my work today. Working with GL you need to be very smart and punctual. Just do all you know to show your capability."

Angel Navuri, the *Guardian* newspaper
"I joined the *Guardian* in 2006, and I didn't specialise in any field, meaning I report all issues. I joined GEMSA in 2007 during Business Unusual training for journalists and this is where I had an opportunity to meet Gender Links staff.


Photo: Gender Links
Angel Navuri.

I became interested in reporting for the organisation from my country. I have been part of several training sessions on gender in South Africa and Tanzania. They have really helped me in dealing with gender issues and I am happy about that and have since been reporting on gender. Gender Links has created many opportunities for me to be recognised by international organisations interested in working with me on gender issues, for example I was selected to be an associate of the Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press (WIFP) in Washington.

I am also a member of the Journalist Environmental Association of Tanzania (JET) and Association of Journalists against Aids in Tanzania (AJAAT). I also work with the International Food Policy Institute (IFPI) on gender issues that relate to nutrition, health and agriculture. I have my own blog where I describe the conditions of women and girls, as well as discuss other issues. I have investigated early pregnancy in Tanzania with the Women Dignity Organisation (WDO) and the culture that impedes the progress of family planning in Tanzania.

I have covered a wide range of issues related to politics, gender, democracy and human rights and some of the articles I have written in the past have led the government to take necessary action. For example in a rural area school girls at the age of 10 were forced by their parents to drop out of school because of forced marriages.

After reporting these cases persistently the government took legal action against the perpetrators, leading to the reinstatement of girls to schools. Also after I reported on the problem of forced Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) for girls, the issue subsided in the concerned community because there was fear of strong action by the authorities. It all started when I joined the GEMSA and because of training from Gender Links."

Institutional links

Over the decade, GL has formed a web of institutional links from media houses, to media regulators, to networks, to editor's forums and international media NGOs. Links made with media training institutions are described in Chapter Seven, under the Gender, Media and Diversity Centre.

Media regulators

GL has long recognised the strategic importance of working with media regulators - those established by statute, as well as self-regulators. Over the years, GL has worked with the Tanzania Media Regulatory Authority (TACRA), the Association of Advertising Agencies (AAA) in Mauritius, the Botswana Press Council and Malawi Media Council, to mention a few.

CASE STUDY

Rallying with regulators

The Haute Autorite des Media (HAM), DRC is a well known organisation in the Democratic Republic of Congo. HAM regulates the air waves and take complaints from members of the public on a wide range of issues. Sanctions can include cutting the signal of a radio station for as long as one month.



Tiefolo Banza being interviewed by Marie-Annick Savripène in DRC. *Photo: Loga Virahsawmy*

The collaboration between Gender Links and HAM dates as far back as July 2007 when the Director of the Francophone Office Loga Virahsawmy met with Tiefolo Banza, Director of HAM. During this first visit Banza requested media monitoring and the development of a Code of Ethics on gender. HAM does media monitoring but wanted to enhance its techniques on gender and media monitoring.

In October 2007 members of HAM participated in a three-day workshop on how to monitor the media on gender and HIV and AIDS, facilitated by Gender Links. This resulted in the DRC report on Gender, HIV and AIDS. On the last day of the workshop GL explained the importance of a Gender Code of Ethics for such an important organisation as HAM. The organisation agreed.



Gender Links facilitated a full day workshop for HAM in July 2008. During the workshop HAM pledged that through a Code of Ethics on Gender, the authority will strive for gender balance and to challenge gender stereotypes in and through the media; ensure that women and men have the right to communicate their views, interests and needs; and that "giving voice to the voiceless" is critical to citizenship, participation, and responsive governance. This led to the Code of Ethics.



In September 2009, HAM convened media managers and stakeholders to validate and approve the Code of Ethics. GL had the booklets printed in its Francophone office in Mauritius so that these could distributed to all media houses in the DRC. In 2010 HAM presented a best practice during the GEM Summit.

When in October 2007 Gender Links and Media Watch Organisation (Mauritius) held a one day workshop with members of the Association of Advertising Agencies (AAA) in Mauritius, we really entered the lions' den. Some of the members of AAA viewed us with great suspicion, especially in light of the *Mirror on the Media* research report that GL had just published showing the way that women are objectified and degraded supposedly to increase sales.

At the workshop we asked participants to work on an AAA Gender Code of Ethics, suggesting how that may be done. We had as an ally Pria Thakoor, Former Chair of AAA and Director General of P & P Link Satchi and Satchi who made a presentation on women and advertisement at the 2008 Gender and Media Summit. She said GL and MWO had opened their eyes. Since 2008 P & P Link Satchi and Satchi has given GL and MWO free advertisements during the Sixteen Days of Activism campaign.

In February 2011, the AAA invited GL and MWO to the launch of a revised Code of Ethics for the AAA. It is rewarding to see that views expressed by GL and MWO have been incorporated in the Code Ethics.

Article 21 stipulates: "Advertising must take in consideration the evolution of the respective roles of women and men in society, an evolution towards a growing mixity in the activities of either sex in the family, professional spheres, leisure and purchases. It must represent woman as equally capable, responsible and independent in the conduct of their activities. In addition, neither the picture of a caricature denigrating the role of any person in a couple, nor the representation of an excessive dependence of the character with respect to the products promoted must be displayed. Advertising must respect the dignity of women and men; their image must be used in a manner that doesn't hurt the sensitivity of the general public. The idea of woman's inferiority or the limitation of her role to matters pertaining to the household or strictly household chores, and this, in a uniquely exclusive manner, must not be put forward. Lastly, women must not be treated as an object in advertising especially when her image has no direct relation with the promoted product or service."

These words are exactly what GL submitted during the drafting process. The long wait has been worth it. Policy changes are not

an overnight miracle, but they are essential for grounding change. The two examples show why it is necessary to persist in working with media regulators.

Media houses

Through media research, advocacy, policy and training initiatives over time, GL has developed a special relationship with SADC media organisations, media houses and newsrooms. Some of these have experienced growth due to their links with GL. Between 2006 and 2009, GL has worked with media to develop HIV and AIDS and gender policies. Since the *Glass Ceilings* and GMPS reports, GL is working with newsrooms across the region to develop stand-along gender policies.

Table 6.2 shows that GL is currently working with 130 media houses across SADC on developing gender policies. This is a six stage process involving buy in from management; a situation analysis; inception workshop; drafting and adopting of the policy; monitoring and evaluation. GL intends to extend this process to include newsroom training and backstopping.

Table 6.2 Gender Links gender policy work in newsrooms

Country	Consultant/s	Media houses	News rooms	Stage one	Stage two	Stage three	Stage four	Complete	Stage six
Botswana	GL/Beata Kasale	7	8	6	4	-	-	-	-
DRC	Dorothee Swedi	21	21	21	21	19	18	9	-
Lesotho	Gender Links	6	5	3	-	-	-	-	-
Madagascar	Ialfine Tracoulat	9	15	6	6	6	6	3	
Malawi	Pushpa Jamieson	17	17	13	13	9	9	8	-
Mauritius	Loga Virahsawmy	2	21	2	2	2	2	2	1
Mozambique	Eduardo Namburete	5	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Namibia	Emily Brown	8	11	5	-	-	-	-	-
South Africa	Gender Links	16	16	16	16	16	16	-	-
Swaziland	Jacob Ntshangase	5	6	5	5	-	-	-	-
Tanzania	Arthur Okwemba	24	29	24	23	12	12	-	
Zambia	Perpetual Sichikwenkwe/ Thabani Mpofu	6	7	4	2	-	-	-	-
Zimbabwe	Thabani Mpofu	4	23	2	11	1	1	-	-
TOTAL		**130**	**184**	**107**	**103**	**65**	**64**	**22**	**1**

CASE STUDIES

Media for change

Two case studies - one from Malawi and the other from Lesotho - demonstrate the kind of institutional linkages that GL is developing with media houses on the ground.

One organisation GL has worked with over time to create gender and HIV and AIDS policies is Malawi's Capital FM, which was one of the first media houses in Malawi to develop a newsroom gender policy. The policy was launched in September 2010 at the Malawi GMPS consultative workshop.

The station developed its HIV and AIDS workplace policy during the MAP phase of the policy roll-out process. This was also partly a response to the effects of the pandemic that has claimed thousands of citizens' lives. This includes journalists. It was also a response from activists who work to ensure that employees that are affected and infected by the virus are still able to continue with their lives in a non-discriminatory media environment.

Capital FM's HIV and AIDS workplace policy, among other issues, addresses gender, human rights, discrimination and working conditions. The policy stresses that the company shall treat all employees equally including those that are HIV-positive. The policy discourages employees from discriminating against any staff member who is HIV-positive. Mainstreaming HIV and gender into the newsroom and news content is part of the policy. In line with the requirements of the gender and HIV and AIDS policies, Capital FM aims to ensure that women's voices are captured and heard. Research has shown that women are the most affected by HIV and AIDS. Addressing HIV and AIDS means addressing women's issues and Capital FM's programming reflects this.

One such programme is *Breaking the Silence*, a bilingual English and Chichewa programme targeting all citizens. It is aimed at changing people's behaviour and attitudes towards HIV and AIDS.

One of the most important things about Capital FM's policies on gender and HIV and AIDS is the strong support from the highest levels of the organisation. Al Osman, owner and Managing Director of Capital FM Radio, agreed that it was necessary for the station to develop a workplace policy. News Chief Tony Metha and Director Arlene Osman were also involved in the process. Managing Director Al and Director Arlene Osman champion and drive the policies in the newsroom. Although no employees have yet come out in the open to declare that they are HIV-positive, management makes sure that the medical needs of staff members are taken care of.

In spite of all the positive developments, Arlene Osman emphasises the need for better and ongoing monitoring and evaluation to ensure accountability. She says there could be more capacity-building for editors and journalists. Gloria Masanza, a journalist at Capital FM, says the station always endeavours to mainstream gender in its programming.

Lesotho's PC FM is another media house that has shown a commitment to gender equality. The GMPS monitored 89 news items broadcast on PC FM and found the station to have the most stories about HIV and AIDS in Lesotho (27%). PC FM is also a leader in Lesotho on reporting stories about gender-based violence: coming in third place with 11%.

With 38% of women sources in news, PC FM is closer to the 50% mark than many other radio stations in the region. However, when it comes to interviewing more than one source there is room for improvement as only 32% of PC FM stories accessed multiple sources. Despite this, the station is definitely a leader in the region when it comes to reporting HIV and AIDS.

Although PC FM has not achieved gender equality in reporting, Matlasi Majara, PC FM owner, says gender-specific issues are highlighted in specific programmes and not always in the news. This is largely due, he thinks, to the fact that democracy is still relatively new in Lesotho and there is a fascination with political stories involving government dealings, often at the expense of more diverse issues.

Networks

GL has played a pivotal role in establishing gender and media networks at country level as well as regionally. Following its first training workshops on covering gender violence, GL established gender and media networks in Zimbabwe, Zambia, Mauritius, Lesotho, Seychelles and Swaziland. These later affiliated with the Gender and Media Southern Africa (GEMSA) Network born at the first GEM Summit in 2004. GEMSA went on to form several more country networks, as well as affiliates in the Francophone countries, with support from GL. Media Watch Organisation (MWO) in Mauritius is an example of a network that GL helped to found that has become a formidable force on the island:

According to **Waheda Mungly**, a founding member of MWO-GEMSA: "GL has made a long and fruitful journey, inspiring many organisations to follow its footsteps. It has created a platform all around the region where women's voice can be heard. GL, which is the cornerstone to the various organisations, has thus become a model in the region."

She cites MWO-GEMSA as one such organisation noting that it "has somehow become a portrait of GL due to its eight-year successful struggle to promote gender equality through and in the media as well as combating sexist adverts and organising sensitising campaigns on gender-related issues."

Media NGOs

GL has worked with and signed several MOUs with media NGOs including the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) and Media Monitoring Africa (MMA). GL also went into a three year partnership with the Southern African Editor's Forum (SAEF) that led the Media Action Plan on HIV and AIDS and Gender from 2007. GL led the policy arm of this initiative (that also had a research, ethics, training and information component). This unparalleled initiative resulted in over three quarters of newsrooms in Southern Africa adopting gender aware HIV and AIDS policies. GL is building on this foundation to roll out Centres of Excellence in gender mainstreaming in 100 newsrooms in the region over the next three years.

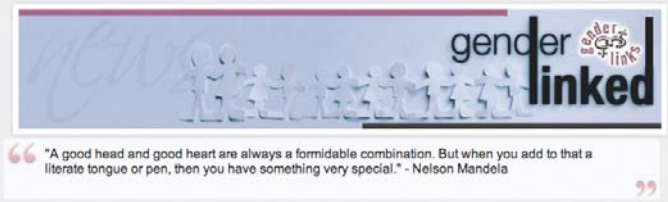
International links

GL's work and research on gender and the media is recognised globally. The organisation has worked closely with the World Association of Christian Communicators (WACC) on the global media monitoring project that takes place every five years; the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) on a code of ethics on gender and the media; the International Women's Media Foundation (IWMF) on the global *Glass Ceilings* in newsroom study. Among others these have drawn from GL research methodologies. In the excerpt below, Carolyn Byerly, chief consultant on the global *Glass Ceilings* study reflects on several years of working with GL.

Gender links across the oceans

The research and advocacy work of GL came to my attention about seven or eight years ago when the group published its early studies on women's employment in news companies in Southern Africa. What impressed me was the clear-headedness with which the work seemed to be carried out.

GL was clearly organised by those with a depth of knowledge about the news industry, and who possessed a strong sensibility of gender equality.



I was happy to see GL emerge for so many reasons. Data on women and media had not yet emerged to any degree from Africa. So, GL immediately increased what was known about women's relationship to media in 15 countries of that continent. The work I saw posted online was clear and professional. It was always contextualised within national cultures and traditions in reporting. The organisation of GL was multi-racial, multi-national, and involving both women and men. It was just wonderful to see this happening.

In 2005 when Karen Ross and I embarked on the international study of women's media activism, we pursued a number of women with GL affiliations to serve as informants.

That study, published in our book *Women and Media: A Critical Introduction* (Blackwell, 2006), included the work of GL in what we called the Third Path of our Model of Women's Media Action. Women who take the Third Path assume the role of advocate change agents who seek to open women's access to the media in one way or another.

By contrast, those whose media advocacy work fell into the First Path are feminist activists who learned to "use" some kind of media to tell women's stories or otherwise increase women's political voice. Women in the Second Path are women media professionals who use their insider status within the industry to increase content about women from a feminist perspective. Women in the Fourth path are media entrepreneurs - feminists who establish book publishing, newspapers, news organisations and other businesses to give women complete control over their own communications.

I wanted to bring GL's work to the attention of feminist media scholars in a more substantial way. In 2006, I invited Colleen Lowe Morna to be one of several keynoters at a daylong symposium on women's research on news in Dresden, Germany. The symposium, part of the International Communication Association conference, brought nearly 40 university-based feminist researchers from 16 countries together. A very tired Colleen came and pepped herself up with a workout in the hotel fitness centre. She then moved into action with all of her books, audio and video, and other materials to share with participants. Her presentation of the work of Gender Links inspired us all and built new alliances among this community-based advocacy group and academic feminists around the world.

More recently, I've been pleased to work with Colleen and other Gender Links members on other projects in which we shared an interest. I spoke at a Gender and Media Summit in Johannesburg in 2008 about IWMF plans to conduct a major international study of women's employment status in news companies. I served as the principal researcher for that study, and in that capacity, I worked with Gender Links' staff in developing a research instrument and, later, IWMF obtained data from Gender Links' *Glass Ceilings* study for inclusion in our report, the *Global Report on the Status of Women in News Media*. That report, which comes out in March 2011, cites Gender Links' work throughout.

A large, warm thanks to Gender Links for its many pursuits and for its willingness to collaborate with other like-minded souls around the world. May your next decade be as successful - *Carolyn Byerly, Professor, Department of Journalism, Howard University, Washington, DC, USA*

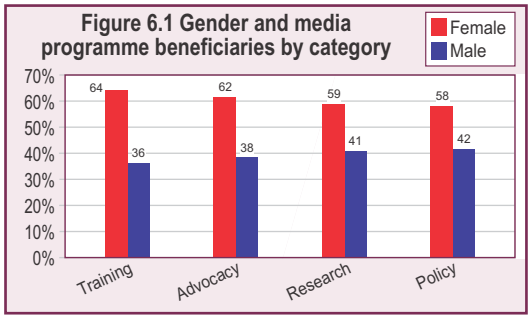
Beneficiaries

GL media programme beneficiaries have been disaggregated according to the different projects. Overall, the GL media programme has reached a total of 9887 beneficiaries.

Table 6.3 GL media programme beneficiaries

Programme area	Male	Female	Unknown	Total
Research	935	1 324	64	2 323
Advocacy	965	1 608	339	2 912
Policy	427	597	69	1 093
Training	1 247	2 232	103	3 609
Total	**3 601**	**5 761**	**525**	**9 887**

Table 6.3 gives a gender disaggregated breakdown of GL's media programme beneficiaries. Training has the highest proportion of beneficiaries with 3 609 people, followed by Advocacy with 2 912. The lowest number of beneficiaries has been in Policy at 1 093. This can partly be attributed to the fact media policy took off much later than the other programme areas. Research work has reached 2 323 people.



The majority of the known beneficiaries are female, constituting 62% of those who have been reached. Figure 6.1 showed that training (64%) registered the highest proportion of women beneficiaries. It is significant that men (42%) are highest in the policy category. That is because the work takes place in newsrooms, where men predominate in decision-making. This is also a vindication of the hands on policy approach, as it ensures GL "meets the lion in its den."

Key benefits

Pushpa Jamieson, Gender Policy Country Facilitator Malawi says: "Gender Links sees potential in a person; trains them and gives them backing to deliver. As a result the person becomes passionate and committed to Gender Links' work".

Figure 6.2 gives a breakdown of the rankings given by beneficiaries in different areas of learning. The strongest area has been around becoming an effective trainer: the media programme scored 82%. This was followed by lobbying, advocacy and awareness-raising (81%) Beneficiaries gave the lowest scores to the learning areas of designing training courses 71% and strategic planning/ developing policies and action plans (74%).

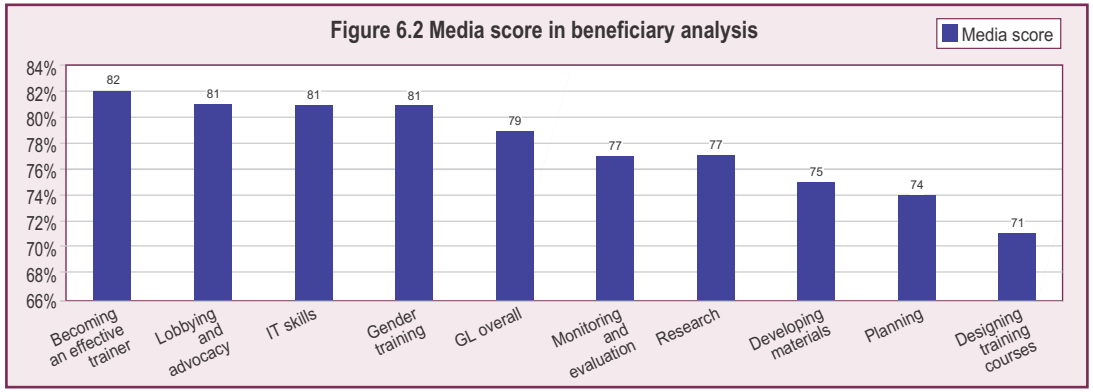
Becoming an effective trainer - 82%

GL has been coordinating training for many years and has become regionally-recognised for its training abilities and the professionalism of its training programmes. This is likely one reason why beneficiaries scored GL high in this category. GL has worked over the years with policy facilitators who have gained a range of skills that they reflected on as GL shifted from the Media Action Plan on HIV and AIDS and Gender to the current focus on stand alone gender policies.

Lobbying/advocacy and awareness raising - 81%

Jacob Ntshangase, a freelance trainer and former director of the Institute for the Advancement of Journalism (IAJ) has seen radio stations in South Africa mainstream gender as a result of GL's advocacy work. He says, "Radio stations have integrated gender in their programming." Ntshangase cites one example where he was called by a radio station to give guidance on main-streaming gender in programming.

In Lesotho, **Thabang Matjama** says people are now free to come out and express their views based on the inspiration from seasoned advocates of change like GL. He also points to the relationship between research and advocacy saying, "It takes a lot of research and consultation to lobby and advocate, for one has to know what they are talking about."





Making IT work for gender justice: Clementina Comate (centre) using Twitter at the 2010 Gender and Media Summit. *Photo: Trevor Davies*

IT skills - 81%

Information Technology (IT) plays a vital role in the 21st century. The ability to use IT to communicate with the masses means it is easier to disseminate information and get feedback. GL has managed to change the lives of men and women in marginalised communities. Rural communities have been introduced to GL's cyber dialogues and other forms of online media. This has helped bring communities on the periphery into gender discourse. **Clementina Comate** of GEMSA Mozambique has expressed her appreciation to GL for giving her the opportunity to train rural women, students and other individuals to come together in cyber space. Likewise, **Ncane Maziya** of the Gender and Media Swaziland (GEMSWA) network, now GL Gender Justice and Local Government Facilitator sees the impact of GL's IT advocacy work in her personal life. She says, "As a person I have gained more skills in IT, media monitoring and training." Thanks to her advanced IT skills, Maziya has successfully coordinated cyber dialogues around the 16 Days of Activism in Swaziland.

Gender training - 81%

"GL has ensured gender is visible not only in newsrooms, not only with journalists, but with people across Africa, ensuring that women are quoted at the forefront of our debates, at the same time raising the awareness of what needs to still be done. I think if we look around the region there's been very visible change and Gender Links has been critical to this change." *Francis Mdlongwa: Director of the Sol Platjie Institute at Rhodes University*

Melhia Bissiere of La Sentinelle Ltd in Mauritius noted: "Gender Links has created greater awareness on gender concepts. For a number of years, we have been hearing about the inequalities and gender gaps. Gender Links has given us the space and skills to reflect on our work. Gender Links has allowed me, as a young journalist, to realise the discrepancies and to see how, as a woman, I can help to fight back those discriminations. Through Gender Links, I have also acquired a lot of knowledge and also grew more innovative skills to find positive stories of men who have played a part in combating violence against women."

During the launch of GEMSA and the GMBS study in Swaziland in 2004, **Andrew Moyo** had been hired as a performer for the event. Little did he know that it was the beginning of a long relationship with GL. Thereafter, he participated in subsequent GEMSA and GL programmes in Swaziland. He even completed the media literacy training course in 2009. He has since written a number of opinion and commentary pieces for GL.

Through training and participation in GL programmes, Moyo has gained a better understanding of gender and the role of the media as a partner in the fight against gender inequality and awareness-raising in general. An unlikely participant has become a long-term GL partner.

In Zambia, **Peter Kaliyofa** from the Radio Maria programming department said: "We are grateful for the training on gender and the help to produce our own Gender Policy that Gender Links provided some months ago. Since the training incorporated both our station reporters, presenters and programme producers, today we are in a position to come up with programmes that are of a gender sensitive nature. It's our belief that with continuous provision of such trainings, our radio personnel will continue in spearheading these issues in the near future. Something is already happening on the

ground through various programmes that are aired; producers are making a special effort in giving equal opportunity to both men and women when recording their programmes. Presenters and reporters who also are making sure that their comments and reports respectively are gender sensitive. Personally this is a very liberating experience for me as a media person to see this change in my media house."



Nhlanhla Ngwenya (left), the director of MISA Zimbabwe takes GMPS monitors through the process in Harare, Zimbabwe in October 2009. *Photo: Gender Links*

Research - 77%

Zimbabwe GMPS team leader **Nhlanhla Ngwenya** describes the ripple effects of GL's work. He says as a result of the detailed training gained over the years, he has passed on the knowledge to his team of researchers in Zimbabwe. His ability to design research projects has also increased tremendously.

Susan Mogari of South Africa is now a seasoned media monitor as a result of the training and experience gained working with GL. Mogari took GL's media literacy course in 2006. She enjoyed the module on research and monitoring so much that for her final project she conducted a study on why youth in Johannesburg's Alexander Township read tabloids. She was assisted by GL in analysing the data collected. Following this she took part in training for the *Gender and Media Progress Study* (GMPS). Since then Susan has participated in a number of GL research projects, including elections monitoring in Namibia. She says, "I am a reputable media monitor today because of the training I got from media literacy course."

GL's expertise in managing large research projects and data has not only benefitted its researchers but has also extended to service providers. When asked to reflect on his relationship with GL, data analyst **Lukhanyo Nyati** expressed appreciation to GL for the growth and development he has gone through as a statistician. According to Nyati, when working for a research organisation like GL, data is one of the most valuable assets. "Churning out hundreds of statistics a year from data collected in remote sites in various countries; working with such an organisation is a wealth of opportunity and dream for any budding research data analyst. To ensure the integrity of such volumes of data requires the most alert mind and the most rigorous processes to ease the flow of data from collection to output."

Nyati confesses that, "having worked for a large research programme at Wits, I thought I knew all about data management until I came to GL. I was in for the shock of my life but also the most professionally enlightening journey of my career. Everything I've learnt about developing processes for managing large volumes of data from many different sites; I have learnt from the work I have been doing with GL. I am grateful for the opportunity to work with GL and being part of the most challenging experiences of my career. Having started with GL about seven years ago, at the infancy of my career and the organisation only a toddler in its existence, I believe we have been mutually developed and today I can say I know what I do."

Networking and building relationships with media and other stakeholders - 75%

As a journalist based in Swaziland, **Alec Lushaba**, Editor of the *Weekend Observer*, values the interactions he has had with other journalists as a result of GL's networking

forums. He confesses that his profile has gone beyond Swaziland and he has gained more respect and recognition across SADC. He says, "I have known people that I wouldn't have known before Gender Links came into the picture. I have kept contact with colleagues and exchanged stories through GL Opinion and Commentary Service."

Salome Nzuma, an upcoming female journalist from Namibia says she will live to cherish her participation at the fourth Gender and Media Summit because of the massive networking opportunity presented to her. She says, "the Summit gave me a new, better and stronger view of my career as journalist. I got a chance to work in a newsroom with journalists from the SADC region, which I will live to cherish. I drew my new energy and inspiration from the presentations made by the following women, Loga Virahsawmy "My Story as a Gender and Media Campaigner", Colleen Lowe Morna "Taking stock, Gender and Media Progress Study", Ammu Joseph "Missing Half the Story: Journalism as if Gender Matters", Emma Kaliya "Taking the protocol to the village" and Tanya Farber "Life lived in limbo" amongst others, phenomenal women indeed." Salome also participated in Namibia's Business Unusual workshop in August 2010.

Other forms of learning

Thinking out of the box: Many consultants and journalists have been touched by GL's work ethos saying through working with GL



Photo: Gender Links

Anushka Virahsawmy Coy.

they learnt that hard work pays off. They have also learnt to spread their wings and explore new possibilities. **Anushka Virahsawmy Coy** of Mauritius likens GL to a knowledge library. She says the organisation has a particular way of teaching individuals to think out of the box. The massive knowledge and skills she has gained cannot be quantified. She says with GL, the learning never stops and as such she is continuing to learn. "GL has a training curriculum that results in changed behaviours and attitudes."

Values: **Denisha Seedoyal** quotes the example of a Mauritian woman who owns an advertisement agency and used to use women's images for commercial gain. "She has stopped using these images for her advertisements, sacrificing income but dignifying women."

GL's spirit of hard work is one that has made Tanzania's **Gladness Munuo** more efficient in her work. She says, "Working with GL you need to be very smart and punctual. Just do all you know to show your capability, if you do not have an idea of using IT with GL count yourself out of the job." She also attributes her successes to the mentorship provided by GL during her days as the Tanzania MAP facilitator.

Growth and development

Credited in its first five year evaluation with sparking a gender and media movement in Southern Africa, GL can point to many examples of personal growth and development in this sector. Among the most poignant are the testimonies of the MAP HIV and AIDS and Gender policy facilitators, now working to develop stand alone gender policies in newsrooms. At a workshop to evaluate the first phase of the project, the facilitators had this to say:

Bheki Maseko, Swaziland: "When the project started in 2005 I had high expectations on the impact MAP was going to make in raising awareness on the role played by the media to sensitize the people on HIV and AIDS. When it was time to get started on the project a number challenges emanated and some proved to be strong enough to bring the whole exercise to a halt.

I had to exercise a high degree of professionalism when doing this work as a number of media houses and journalists were misinformed about the initiative. Focus, determination and integrity was the main

drive to see the project through and achieving its objectives.



Bheki Maseko and his son. *Photo: Gender Links*

Five media houses committed to the process that involved working closely with media managers and executives who had to give a buy-in as policy decisions are made at the highest level of any organisation and role down to other relevant departments and professionals who also have to engaged.

Management then identified focal persons in each media house who also acted as heads of committees set up to develop policies. In some media houses there were already Wellness Committees which made it easy to tap in them and get them on board as they would also make inputs based on existing programmes in the workplace to fit in the policy.

Some media houses did not have Wellness Committees, but committees were set up by management to see to it that work was done in a more organised fashion. These committees worked in collaboration with Human Resources Managers who were tasked to head them as they are people also part of the management of media houses.

It was humbling to note some Chief Executive Officers were displaying trust and confidence in staff members and giving them the independence to work on such a prominent document to influence the direction and operations of the institutions they head. It was also a fulfilling moment to see some policies implemented before they were even adopted by the board. This evidenced that media houses were hungry for policies to assist them conduct their business.

High staff turnover posed challenges. Many Wellness Committees had to be dispersed due to personal frustrations. But MAP has brought a lot of value in positioning the media to respond to the fight against HIV and AIDS. The media now realise that they have a collective responsibility to fight HIV and AIDS in the workplace and through editorial outputs.

At a personal level, the gender training I have received through GL has made me realise the value of understanding the needs of my own partner."

Pushpa Jamieson in Malawi: "I wonder how many facilitators have had the joy of holding a workshop in the open, under the trees in the sweltering heat? Well! We had a fantastic workshop in Monkey Bay when the accommodation that Dzimwe Community Radio Station has in the offices of the National Parks and Wild Life did not have enough space to sit all the staff and the board. We just moved the whole workshop outside and enjoyed the open air while we did the work. I had a personal lesson in innovation!

Policies in media houses is a new concept and it has been a learning curve for both the media houses and me as a facilitator. Reporting about other professions and their commitment to challenge the effects of HIV



Pushpa Jamieson works on a gender policy with the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation. *Photo: Gender Links*

has been the media's job in the past years. Developing a policy for their own media house means the media house has had to accept that they are not spared the effects of HIV and that there is still much need to continue to highlight the issues of the pandemic.

My journey with policy work in media houses has been both challenging and exciting. The media is a profession that is full of deadlines and breaking news that has to be reported on. This meant that on many occasions, meetings with members of media houses had to be cancelled at the last minute. Often, meetings were cancelled when I arrived at the media house after I had travelled over 400km to Blantyre.

Promises from the task teams were usually not met; that resulted in delays in completing of the policies. In an effort to overcome the challenges, telephone calls to confirm the meeting were made several times before the day. Days spent in Blantyre were often extended in order to accommodate the possibility of the meetings being held the following day. The important thing was to be flexible in all arrangements in order to accommodate the media house.

I was most concerned about approaching one of the religious media houses that has particular belief about the role of women in society. The challenges I expected to encounter at Radio Islam seemed almost impossible to overcome. I was elated when I was given an audience with their board that consisted of religious sheiks and senior members of the Islamic community. A real highlight was the completion and launch of the Radio Islam policy.

The official launch of the policies is a true highlight and the acknowledgement by organisations like the National AIDS Commission, John Hopkins University and government of a job well done has made all the effort and work involved in facilitating the development of the policies well worth it. The experience of training media houses to develop their policies has helped me to become more confident in dealing with people. My training skills have improved significantly since I started engaging with Gender Links in 2006."

Arthur Okwemba, Tanzania: "I have used the knowledge and gender tools developed by the organisation to train journalists and NGOs not only in Kenya, but also in Somalia, Uganda, and Ethiopia. This means the impact of GL work in the past 10 years is not only confined in the SADC region, but it is also being felt far beyond at country, organisational and individual levels.

One of the most fulfilling moments was when the management of nine media houses decided to adopt their policies that their employees had painstakingly put together. The other one is when I paid a visit to *Business Times Limited* and found they had put in place a structure for the implementation of the policy. They have six Peer Educators distributed in all departments and who report to the champion, updating her with the progress made with the implementation of the policy with their respective departments. The fact that the company had developed a budget on the implementation of the policy was equally refreshing."



Arthur Okwemba. *Photo: Gender Links*

Eduardo Namburete, Mozambique: "The in-house workshops were the most fulfilling moments to me, because that was the moment we all engaged in an open-hearted discussion and some intimate revelations were made. I remember the discussion at the *Weekly Zambeze* where journalists and administrative staff all pointed fingers to each other on how bad they behaved when they became aware that one of their colleagues was HIV-positive. They blamed themselves for not helping their colleague to cope with the situation. After this


Photo: Gender Links

Eduardo Namburete.

workshop all the participants acknowledged that there is a need to be supportive to each other on such situations and the management understood the need of a comprehensive mechanism to deal with HIV and AIDS in the workplace.

The MAP process proved to be an efficient way of engaging the media in the mitigation of HIV and AIDS and bringing the gender dimension to this pandemic. MAP has helped media houses understand their role in this national and worldwide agenda of fighting HIV and AIDS. This was the first ever effort to significantly engage the media as actors in the process of mitigating the impact of HIV and AIDS.

There is a need to evolve more actors in the MAP process; organisations that work with gender issues were not actively involved in the process which made the MAP process more of an HIV and AIDS initiative than anything else."


Photo: Gender Links

Emily Brown.

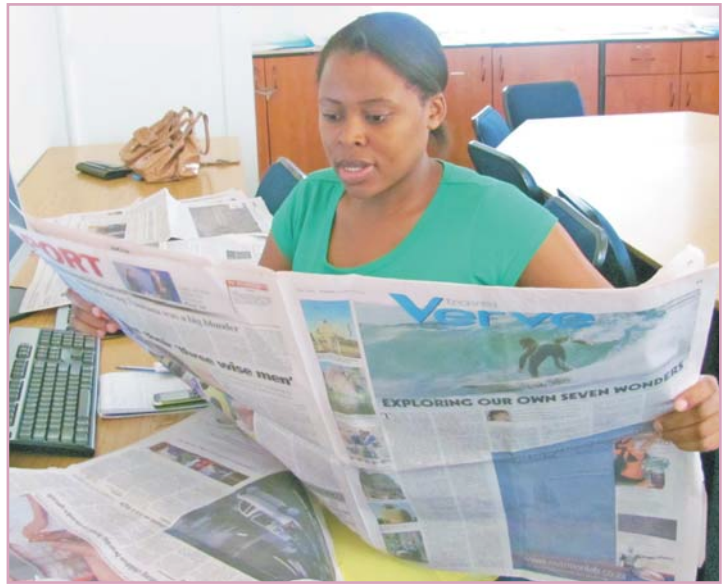
Emily Brown, Namibia: "For me the most fulfilling moments during the policy roll-out process were during the workshops. To see evidence of enlightenment on the part of participants especially during the spot monitoring exercise, made all the hard work worthwhile. One senior (woman) journalist's remark of "we are mostly women, but we still access only male sources" gave me a great deal of hope.

Another fulfilling moment was when the first policy to be rolled out - that of a tenacious community radio station - received the second prize at the GEM Summit. This policy was produced during the early days, but we believed that it was done well. The community radio station in question is Katutura Community Radio, now known as Base FM. Sarry and I together facilitated the workshop, and the interaction on the part of the participants was way above what we expected. It is such interaction which gave direction in terms of the resultant policy. But, we also spent much time explaining to the Manager what we hoped to achieve, and how the policy could become valuable in terms of securing significant donors."

GL staff grow on the job

The Learning Journeys of GL staff in media work attest to the personal growth that they have experienced. Some examples are cited below:

Tarisai Nyamweda, former intern: "The year 2010 put Africa on the global map with the Soccer World Cup coming to South Africa. It also made me travel a journey that continues and whose impact persists even today.



Tarisai Nyamweda, a GL intern from the Zimbabwe National University of Science and Technology (NUST), monitors the media for the GMPS. *Photo: Sikhonzile Ndlovu*

My Learning Journey at GL officially started in January of 2010 as a media intern from the National University of Science and Technology (NUST). But I had already been introduced to Colleen Lowe Morna's triangular test for news stories: depth, breadth and context in my second year class on "Gender, Race, Class and the Media." The course, drawing on GL publications, opened my eyes to gender gaps and stereotypes in the media.

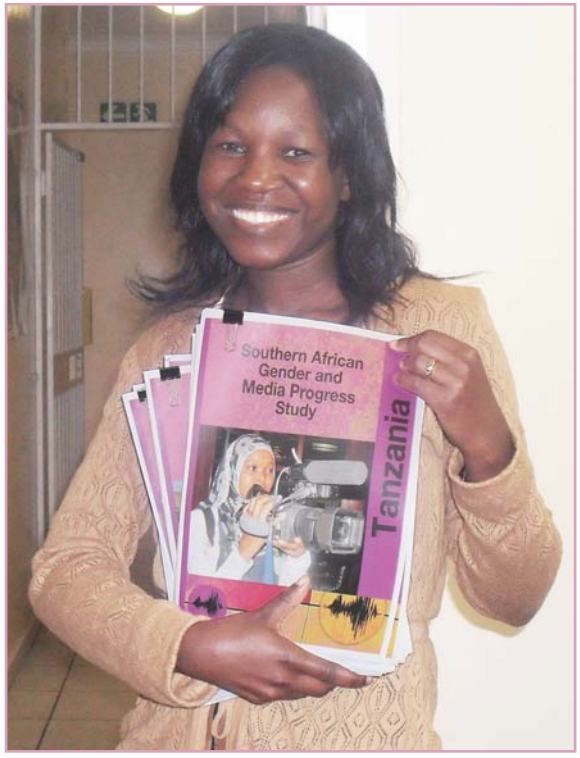
Being at GL was both a challenging and exhilarating experience in my personal capacity and also in terms of my career. It was a different scenario from the academic life that I had grown too comfortable living in. It gave me a feel of what the industry is like.

Reflecting on the GMPS a project I worked on throughout my internship what pops in mind first is the amazing team work and unending fortitude the media department displayed. It made it all exciting and worthwhile even in times when we thought GMPS was never going to end because of the countless newspapers to be monitored; the spreadsheets and the databases. It also helped me to sharpen my writing and analytical skills as I wrote a couple of stories and some case studies. It all seemed so complex at first but it became do-able. All this taught me to uphold the spirit of hard work so that you can achieve the best regardless of problems you may encounter along the line.

Everyday at GL you get to learn something new or get to do old things in a new way. You just have to have a passion for learning. I have learnt a great deal and I have grown. I don't take things at face value. I am more critical of the media texts produced and I see all these through a gender lens. I have also realised that even though I am a woman I have the same reasoning capacity as my fellow male colleagues and I don't take kindly to being told I can do this or say that because I am a woman.

Now some people in my class say every thing about me has to do with gender and that I shouldn't argue as an activist but well all the same I don't mind as long as they don't package my ideas in a box and forget about them. Gender Links is indeed a place where you can grow."

Sikhonzile Ndlovu, Media Programme Manager: As the programme manager I have grown with the department, coming in as an intern four years ago, and being part of



Sikhonzile Ndlovu. *Photo: Gender Links*

almost all GL's major research. My journey has been long and winding with many unanticipated stops and turns. I have learnt to take a number of career challenges head on without losing my sanity. One thing I am proud of, however, is that I have remained true to my choices both in my private and professional life.

As a young professional, I constantly reflect on the way we work and the numerous learning opportunities that Gender Links presents. Sometimes I cry silently as I do that and sometimes I smile when I realise that it has not been labour in vain. I have therefore chosen to focus on those most rewarding moments that remind me of how far I have come as a professional. I have also made a conscious decision to celebrate these bright moments and the small successes.

It has been like being in a training institution where you are constantly being grilled and presented with new challenges every day. When I worked on the *Glass Ceilings* in Southern African Media Project, I thought it would be the most challenging research project GL would ever undertake. Little did I know that 2010 would bring the GMPS which has been the most grueling of GL research projects. While we have missed a number of turns along the way, I can clearly retrace my steps to where we started. This presents me with the opportunity to reflect on the alternative routes we could have taken to reach the final destination. I have realised that most of the detours have been

as a result of the sins of omission, where certain processes have been skipped. The lessons that I have learnt here make me want to do things right the next time around although the thought of a next time makes me cringe.

This new portfolio presents me with numerous learning and growth opportunities especially in the area of media policy, a completely new field for me. I am embracing the learning that I am undergoing with open arms and I know that I will soon feel on top of all my work.

Marie-Annick Savripène, Francophone commentary editor, Mauritius: "Being a beneficiary of GL both as participant and as staff has helped me in my everyday work as a journalist. I have developed a more critical eye on issues. I have also become more assertive. Even though I still do not like to speak in public and in front of an audience, working with GL has made me more bold to do so. I have not developed policies or action plans yet but I can now see more clearly what would be expected from me if I had to so. GL has contributed to developing me in a wholesome way. And for that I will always be grateful."



Lessons learned

No growing organisation is without challenges and GL is no exception. Noting its success, that has been evident across the region and over ten years, its beneficiaries also gave recommendations on what should be improved and implemented so GL may continue to succeed. A strong point that came out of the evaluation is that GL needs to strengthen its monitoring and evaluation strategies so that progress can be tracked effectively and gaps addressed on time. The following is a summary of lessons learned in the media programme through this ten year evaluation and reflection:



Marie-Annick Savripène (right) and Loga Virahsawmy from Mauritius enjoy an outing at the Johannesburg Zoo.
Photo: Golleen Lowe Morna

- GL needs to scale up its work by training reporters on gender in all countries because there is still quite a lot of ignorance around gender issues. It should also diversify training offered to media as Millennium Development Goal and SADC Protocol on Gender and Development success depend on a strong, responsible media.

- There is a need to train editors when training reporters. Editors need to attend more training because there are gaps which need to be filled in newsrooms. "Photojournalism is one area where editors need to ensure greater sensitivity to gender. Photos too often portray explicit, gender insensitive and stereotyped images which give rise to gender stereotypes during reporting", says **Emmanuel Luciano**.

- There is a need for GL to continue providing training to young journalists as well as enter into partnerships with universities.

- "GL needs to make a better effort to use photos and information from all SADC countries", says **Gladness Munuo** of GEMSA Tanzania. GL needs to work more closely with country representatives to share information more regularly.

- "GL should develop more French materials to reach out to the wider audience in Francophone SADC", said **Rabaovololona Lucie**.

- GL should encourage more men to take part in its activities, helping them overcome their changing role and showing them how they can contribute to addressing gender inequality in society.

- "Education is one tool that can be used to raise gender awareness in different areas of the SADC region. GL needs to work with ministers of education to develop modules for use in schools with a view to 'catching them young'", comments **Moses Magadza**.

- "Individuals find it difficult to access GL on a personal capacity", says **Rehana Master**. Flexibility must be evident within the organisation so that those that want to personally be part of the organisation may have the ability to do so.

- Gender issues should be taken to broadcast media because it reaches people in rural areas. Not many people in these areas can afford newspapers which carry GL Opinion and Commentary Service articles.



Next steps

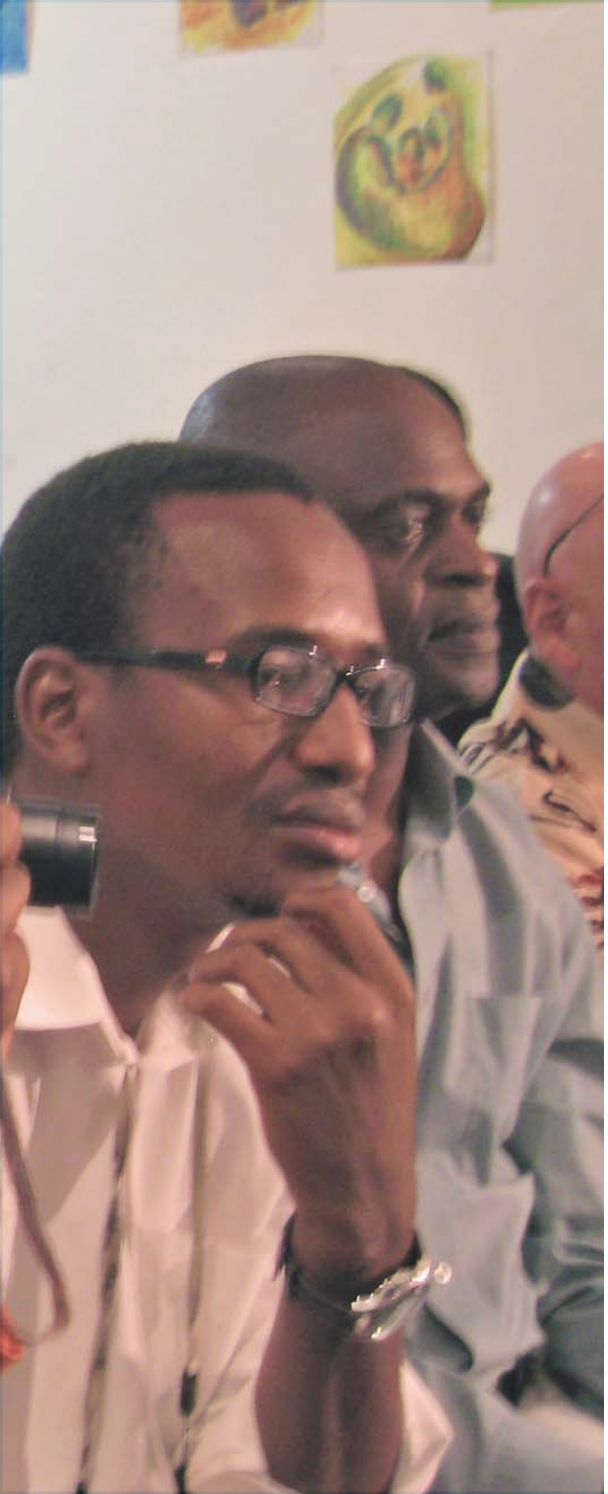
- Following the extensive broad brush research that has taken place, establish Media COEs in gender mainstreaming that goes beyond the current six stage process and ensures on-going backstopping and support. This will result in GL offering media houses a full gender mainstreaming package that draws on all research conducted to date and provides options for self monitoring tools. This model will allow GL to work effectively with media houses to incorporate monitoring and evaluation tools to follow the implementation of newsroom policies.



Gender lens: Mauritian journalist Kendy Mangra. *Photo: Mona Hakimi*

- Develop effective institution level Monitoring and Evaluation tools, especially for monitoring media content. Use the MBC example to work with media houses to achieve at least 30% women sources in media content by 2015.
- Fully mainstream gender in public-funded journalism and media training institutions in all SADC countries.
- Strengthen GL media interventions in the Lusophone countries, using the launch of the Mozambique office in March, and SADC Heads of State Summit in Angola in August. GL has had challenges conducting media work in Angola. Strategies have to be put in place to overcome this barrier to ensure the country is able to meet the SADC Protocol targets.
- Strengthen the media literacy project through the GMDC (see Chapter Seven). GL has been able to engage more with citizens in building accountability systems in SADC through the media literacy project. The impact of the interventions should not be underestimated and the power to change mindsets and contribute to greater gender equality in SADC should be harnessed.





"Is the personal political?" Mwenda Mkhize and Fortune Sibanda (foreground) follow debate proceedings.
Photo by Colleen Lowe Morna

Chapter 7

Collecting, connecting, collaborating: The Gender and Media and Diversity Centre

By Saeanna Chingamuka, Sikhonzile Ndlovu Daud Kayisi

"I'm most impressed with Issue 15 of the Diversity Exchange *newsletter. Diversity is now reflected in the types and styles of the articles, not just the content. Well done! I'm trying to carry the gender torch in the new department (ouch it's hot!). My students are preparing a play about homophobia in Botswana (the ultimate taboo topic here). They're also writing diaries about the creation of the play. After it's been performed I'll send one or two of the diaries or other material about the play and its reception."*
- Professor David Kerr, University of Botswana

Fact box

- The GMDC was officially launched in March 2008 and is managed by an advisory group that constitutes institutions that have officially signed MOUs with the Centre.
- In total, the GMDC has reached out to a total of 1 749 participants: 660 male and 1 089 female through seminars and GMDC advisory group meetings.
- The GMDC has formed a community of women and men who through the media hope to foster debate on issues of women's rights and gender to bring about change in the SADC region.
- In the next decade, the GMDC will strengthen partnerships with institutions in the North, market its resources and increase citizen participation and engagement.



Trevor Davies. *Photo: Gender Links*

"Middle aged, married, white men working in Africa on gender equality seem to be as rare as zebras with spots![1] But as a member of this endangered species maybe I can contribute something to how working with Gender Links for ten years has challenged me and revolutionised my own work with women and men.

I first met GL Executive Director Colleen Lowe Morna when Gender Links was little more than an office space cleared in her garage. I was running a photo agency at the time with a wide client base amongst development agencies and NGOs. Trying to find a woman photographer who could service our Women in Development (WID) and Gender and Development (GAD) clients was a nightmare.

[1] Trevor Davies is a media trainer who has worked with GL over several years.

Men dominated the field and I was a part of that domination of the "male gaze" on women's concerns around livelihoods and development. I had to make a personal commitment to change that but I needed a visionary partner organisation that was respected in the gender and media arena. GL more than met my hopes and aspirations.

Colleen saw immediately that images were vitally important in our media stereotyping. This was work that GL just had to do even though funds and capacities were very tight in those early years. The usual media and development agency image of Africa ten years ago was of a woman and child begging for food or sitting aimlessly around surrounded by despair. The message was that African women had no agency, were always "victims" and the only way to help them was to donate money.

Colleen and I knew that there were different African women out there - strong, visionary and resourceful - women in business, politics, education and communities who were changing this African continent in unimaginable ways. These were the "herstories" that were not being put before the world and this became our guiding principal in our training around gender and images.

We agreed a joint submission to the Netherlands Institute of Southern Africa (NiZA) to find and train at least 20 women photo-journalists across the region. Funding came quickly and we made a start. The workshop amazed us all. The photo-journalism talent uncovered and the power of an alternative "female gaze" on many stories was outstandingly apparent. The resultant training manual was an instant hit and I still see it in newsrooms all over the region, well thumbed and with pages torn out showing that it is a well used resource.

Even more important to me is that many of the women we trained in that workshop went on to great things. Maria became the chief photographer to Sam Nujoma, President of Namibia, accompanying him around the world and providing thousands of pictures to the archive of Namibia. Neo is now one of the most successful women photographers



The women photographers trained at an early GL workshop went on to do great things. *Photo: Trevor Davies*

in South Africa and has spent time in Bangladesh and other countries with her work used by *Newsweek* and *Time* magazine.

Since those early days GL has grown in strength and reach and I have been privileged through GL to train hundreds of women and male media students in visual storytelling through GL training programmes in universities, polytechnics, media houses and Community groups across the region - many of them (women and men) who have gone on to win awards for their gender-sensitive imagery.

Perhaps the work I've done for Gender Links with the Polytechnic of Namibia (PON) stands out. This has been no "hit and run" intervention by Gender Links. From the very start gender has been mainstreamed into all media training at the "Poly". I first flew in to Namibia a few years ago when GL and the Poly started a student news service producing a campus newspaper and supplying major newspapers with stories and pictures such as *The Namibian* and *New Era*.

Raymond Joseph, Pat Made and I from GL along with Paulina Shilongo and Emily Brown from the Poly set up that newsroom from scratch in a derelict building on campus. Unpacked and plugged in the computers, loaded the software, sorted out editorial policies on the fly: 4am finishes were the order of the day as students got up to speed on sourcing, writing, editing and layout and design. With the sun coming up we all waited for the first edition from the printers and some slept on the floor.

Not all the stories were exactly complimentary to the Poly administration - would we be banned was a quietly asked question amongst us all? Wow! Our first edition was a sensational hit and the tolerance of the administration to the stories brought a discussion about media freedoms and editorial independence in the Poly that has been resolutely supported ever since.

Poly students still correspond with me on Facebook, even more send me an occasional photograph they've taken. Many are now in leadership positions in *The Namibian* and



Gender benders in BU training: A Herero man in Namibia makes hats for women.
Photo: Trevor Davies

Southern African media industry. They've helped to facilitate new areas of GL work in newsrooms across this region.

The "Business Unusual" training programme - highlighting women and economics that I helped facilitate has opened up spaces for women entrepreneurs and helped journalists cover economics and finance through a gender lens. The Gender and Media Literacy courses for consumers and users of media have started to improve the supply side of gender and media coverage - the Mayor of Johannesburg attended one of the courses!

Helping women politicians to present themselves in election campaigning through creating powerful profiles of themselves and their work has been great fun and I can never forget the combs, mirrors and preening in Botswana as everyone had their official campaign portrait done as part of the training. News spread through the SADC Women's Parliamentary Caucus of the SADC Parliamentary Forum and by the time I got to Malawi to run the training the women were more than ready for their photo session!

My own personal development road with GL has often been a bumpy one. For me, all development proceeds from uncertainty, from breaking down the rigid thought processes and ways of doing things that hold us back - particularly in work on gender and development. Therefore I don't sit well in systems and my questioning of myself and organisations is deliberately uncomfortable.

Sometimes I took on challenges with GL and I didn't live up to expectations of me. Learning to celebrate my own competencies, build on them and stick with them has been an important learning experience.

I worked on the inception paper for and laid the foundations of the Gender and Media Diversity Centre (GMDC). I had my newly acquired Masters in Development Studies and I had built up my network through GL that I knew I could leverage to help the centre quickly get off the ground. Well, within six months we reached a mutual agreement that perhaps I was not the greatest manager in the world!



Trevor Davies' African Fathers Initiative is one of many men for change initiatives that GL has supported.

The good grace with which Colleen and Kubi Rama, GL Deputy Director, "got me out". They changed the focus of my work back onto my strengths in training, advocacy and motivation which was a real lesson in tolerance and help for me in re-focusing during a painful transition process.

One crucial thing came out of my inception period with the GMDC. Colleen, Kubi and the team helped me in my dream to start work on a major area of gender work that is very close to my heart. I now run the African Fathers Initiative (AFI) that tries to encourage committed, responsible fathering amongst men. Without GL this never would have got off the ground.

Gender Links has always involved men and women in all its work and I've learned a lot about the challenges of acting and working with sensitivity. We need more men on the front line of challenging gender inequality. Fathers can help bring the intergenerational changes we need in our boys and girls. Many women testify to the positive influence their fathers have had in their lives and the unfair burden of care that women suffer can only be changed for the better with men taking on more caring roles in raising our children. AFI is struggling, we have little funding, It will be a long haul before we see a buy in from donors and governments for our ideas. Innovation takes time to be entrenched and become part of the landscape."

Trevor Davies is one of GL's "inner circle" associates. His story is apt for many reasons. Although he did not quite fit the GL institutional mould, he remains a close "friend of Gender Links" and has contributed immeasurably to our thinking on, and actual visual resources. His conceptual work on the GMDC has given rise to this key "phase two" of our gender and media work: a knowledge centre for the exchange of ideas and learning. A gifted trainer, he exemplifies a core constituency of GL's work and long term partnerships: media training institutions and their staff. What is especially exciting about the GMDC and the work of trainers like Trevor is how we are reaching out to the young generation and asking them to "watch the watchdogs" through our gender and media literacy programme, in training institutions, schools, and with the general public.

This chapter concerns the establishment of the GMDC and how this GL unit went on to be responsible for fostering debate through knowledge-production that gives citizens a platform to engage with gender research. It will then go on to look at the GMDC's institutional linkages and its physical and

virtual resources and outputs, from website to seminars. The Centre has been growing since its establishment and the scope of its work continues to diversify. This chapter provides details of this work and how it has been reaching out to, and educating, its target beneficiaries.

Background

The GMDC is a physical and virtual resource centre that aims to disseminate and create knowledge on gender, media and diversity. The centre collects information, connects people with relevant information and promotes collaborative projects between partners who consist of media development NGOs, knowledge and training institutions.

Vision

A more representative, responsive, and professional media as well as citizens, women and men, who are empowered to engage critically with their media.

Mission

This will be achieved through facilitating the collection, connection and dissemination of existing knowledge and resources, as well as collaborating on new research and exchanges.

Formally launched in March 2008, the GMDC is a Southern African institutional base for the generation, collection, connection and dissemination of knowledge on issues concerning gender and diversity in the media. The Centre houses a wealth of knowledge resulting from institutional research agendas, codified best practices, and an analysis of news items from partner institutions. It builds on and develops existing strong collaborative relationships in Southern Africa and the global context in this field of gender and media research, lobbying and activism.

Objectives

The GMDC aims to:

- Promote more analytical, responsive and contextual journalism.
- Develop and share a body of knowledge on gender and diversity.
- Publicise the work of media scholars, students and practitioners.
- Provide resources that make the links between media theory and practice.
- Create a space for participatory discussion and debate on gender and media diversity.
- Develop north-south and institutional partnerships with strategic organisations.
- Become a centre of excellence on new approaches and fresh thinking.

Its target users include trainers and training institutions; media practitioners; academics and researchers; students; gender and media activists; and national, regional and international organisations.



Lets get talking: A GMDC debate on progressive leadership ahead of the April 2009 elections in South Africa. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

The GMDC is run by an advisory group that meets twice a year. The Centre collects information, connects people with relevant information and promotes collaborative projects between partners who consist of media development NGOs, knowledge and training institutions. The Centre publishes two journals in a year and a monthly electronic newsletter aimed at keeping partners informed of its work.

The Centre uploads new research from the South on an electronic database, collects newspaper clippings and analyses them to demonstrate good and bad journalism and manages an electronic help desk that

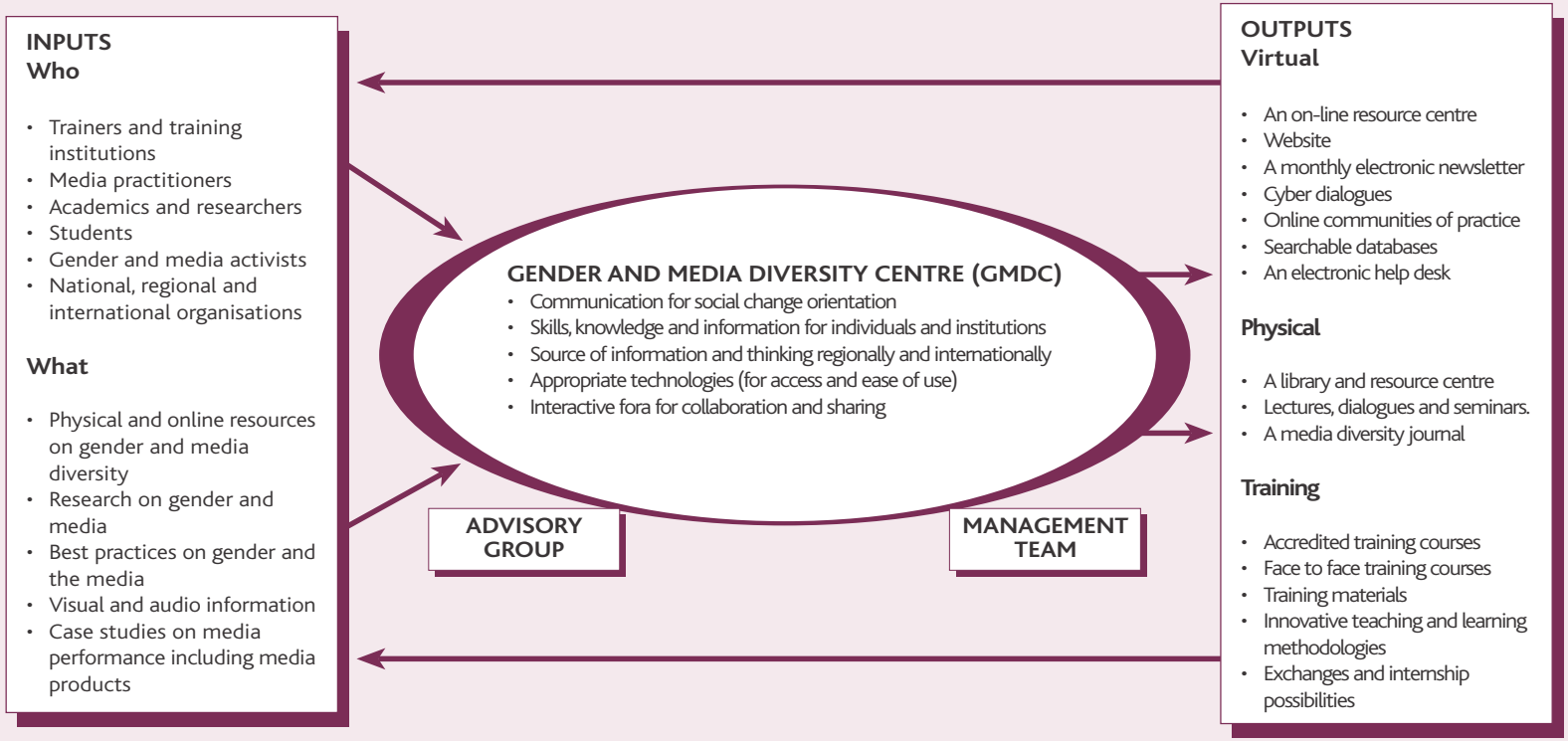
responds to queries. Through seminars, it also engages with different pertinent issues that arise at public forums and through cyber dialogues. According to a 2010/2011 external evaluation by one of GL's donors, "the programme impact is the extent to which gender and media knowledge is enhanced, exchanged, and engaged with through the GMDC."

Most importantly, the GMDC does outreach, advocacy and marketing to popularise key programmes at GL. In 2009, the Centre spearheaded an audit of GIME in 26 institutions in 13 countries. Through providing internships to students from partner academic institutions the GMDC continues to strengthen partnerships that have been established.

Figure 7.1 sets out the conceptual framework that guides the operations of the centre. Over the years, the scope has broadened and the core activities of the GMDC are:

- Governance
- Physical and electronic infrastructure
- Training and capacity-building
- Internships
- Seminars

Figure 7.1: Conceptual framework



CASE STUDY

How the GMDC works:
Caster Semenya



A good example to demonstrate the work of the GMDC is the debate and initiatives sparked by the Caster Semenya debacle. Between 15-23 August 2009 athletes from around the world converged in Berlin for the International Amateur Athletics Federation (IAFF) World Championships in Athletics. South Africa's talented Mokgadi Caster Semenya competed and won a gold medal embedded with fame and fortune in the 800m race. Her amazing performance also helped brew an international controversy that culminated in calls for sex verification tests. Semenya's appearance and ability left some wondering if she deserved the medal.

In simple language, international spectators and sports fans questioned whether Semenya was a man or a woman. The argument from one group was that if Semenya was a man, then she had a competitive advantage because men and woman have physical differences that provide functional advantages. Therefore Semenya would have won the 800m race based on unfair advantage and misrepresentation. Others expressed outrage arguing that Semenya was being unfairly treated.

The debate about whether the talented athlete was female or male became a scandal that was soon used by politicians and some citizens to push their own agendas. For instance, it cast a critical light on how South Africa is still divided along racial and political lines. Further conversations on the saga would be: is it a reflection of race or gender stereotypes, the inability of society to deal with gender benders, or simply the controversies that characterise competitive sport and the idea of fair play? If the tests proved that Semenya was not female, would she be stripped of the prestigious gold medal?

The Semenya controversy received a huge amount of media coverage. The day the story broke, GL, a respected authority on gender discourse, started receiving media requests for comments regarding the issue. GL's executive director was the first person to give a media interview to Cape Talk and she made the following points about the case:

- Sex is biological; gender is a social construct: expectations about how women and men should look/behave etc. There may be a case for subjecting an athlete to a sex, but not a gender test. She said it was shocking that the tests apparently went beyond the physical.

"One thing I find very intriguing is that when I went to the shop this morning, almost every single paper had Caster on the front page. We know that women's sport is so under-reported, what page would she be on if the whole gender controversy had not come up? Undoubtedly, it would be hidden in the middle of the sports pages somewhere."
- Deborah Walter, GL Consultant



- It was also shocking that the athletics body was announcing that the test was being conducted at all, considering this was breaching the athlete's confidentiality; when an athlete is tested for dope, announcements are only made after the fact.
- Even though this was not new to Semenya (or so said her coach) the psychological effects were likely to be devastating, especially the global media attention.
- How different in physique was Semenya to Maria Matola and other lean, muscular, women athletes?
- It raised much broader issues about how we expect women to look and behave; inability of society to deal with gender benders: reflection of gender stereo-types and race was also coming into the equation in some of the global reporting.
- She hoped South Africa took up the issue strongly as a point of principle, and because of its progressive constitution, not just because it won a gold medal.

These points were circulated to GL staff for guidance and consistency should the organisation receive more media requests. Following the internal alert, Colleen went on to write an opinion and commentary piece to state the facts about gender and sex. These concepts are also part of the ten module gender and media literacy course that GL undertakes with different stakeholders.

In the days that followed, the organisation received more media requests from newspapers, television and radio stations. Colleen and other staff members had to share the load and give interviews to the media. Responding to the media is one way the GMDC uses GL's profile to further the work of the organisation. For instance, GL received a request for an opinion piece on the media's coverage of the Semenya story from *The Media* magazine, the main magazine of South Africa's journalism community. Colleen happily obliged.

Dear Colleen
I received a call from the General Manager of Athletics South Africa (Mr Molatelo Mahehopo) and he has asked me to convey his gratitude for the show you put up this morning (SABC TV). He seemed to be out of words and after a bit of stammering said "She was good. Please let her know". He visited the Gender Links website and saw the opinion and commentary piece that you have written on the Semenya case. Their request is to link the article to the ASA website and to use the views in the article, which they concur with, for a Press Conference that they will address next week on Tuesday. They will acknowledge your views.

-E-mail from Saeanna Chingamuka, 21 August 2009

(ASA was given the go ahead to link the opinion and commentary piece to their website and also use the views for the Press Conference)

The numerous television appearances went unnoticed at first yet after one of Colleen's TV appearances, Atheletics South Africa (ASA), which seemed at that point to be confused about the issue, called the GL offices and spoke to Saeanna Chingamuka, GMDC Programme Officer at that time.

On 25 August Semenya returned from Berlin and GL staff joined the nation to welcome and celebrate the young woman's victory. Some GL staff went to the airport and Lucia Makamure (a GL intern at that time) described the scene "as one of the triumph of a dream so strong that even a 'gender testing' controversy could not break and a lesson to gender activists that the world is still ignorant about gender to the extent that society cannot distinguish between gender and sex."

On the same evening GL, in partnership with SABC News International, hosted a thought-provoking live television debate at the SABC studios in Auckland Park to discuss the issue. As the Semenya story unfolded, it prompted GL to look at the bigger picture around challenging stereotypes. Coincidentally, the GMDC was busy putting together a journal titled *Gender, Media and Sport*. An entire section was eventually dedicated to the Semenya case. One article written by a GL staff member compared the media images of other women icons, such as Madonna, to the Semenya controversy.

In addition, the saga provided GL an opportunity to better understand the gender debate. The organisation realised that as a

"One Zimbabwe-based GL donor watched the debate and sent an e-mail the following day: 'By the way, thanks for the wonderful discussion on SABC International yesterday- GL shines as always!!!'"

- Revai Makanje, HIVOS, 26 August 2009

gender institution, it is not sufficiently aware of all the nuances around gender and the different sexes. Doreen Gaura, one of GL's interns at the time, undertook some research and put together a list of terms on the different sexes that exist. The terms were circulated to staff and a lunch meeting was organised for an in-house discussion.

The GL Opinion and Commentary Service published several articles on the matter. Others appeared in the *Gender and Media Diversity Journal*.

Colleen also got in touch with the international advisory group of the GMDC, asking their views on international media coverage of the Semenya issue. The group had different views and many also contributed to the journal and started blogs to discuss the case. Colleen also brought up another topical gender bender, Michael Jackson, asking why society could accept Jackson and not Semenya?

Partner Margaret Gallagher said that the issue received little coverage in the UK. She shared that what she thought was one of the most "specious elements in the whole affair - in my view - is the talk about 'gender testing', and 'gender verification'. What nonsense. Anyway, as far as I have been able to understand, what the IAAF has done is a 'sex determination' test - though I have read that a 'gender expert' has been, or will be, involved. What would this expert be setting out to show, I wonder?"

"I, too, find your responses thoughtful. My sense from the short blurb on CNN was that Semenya is weird, she is a freak, she is something exotic and other. I wonder if this would've been reported differently about an American woman - whether black or white. We actually discussed this on Thursday morning at a workshop with colleagues to develop our course curriculum for our Global Women class this semester. One of our early lectures discuss the difference between sex and gender, and I used Semenya's case as an example. If that's ok, Colleen, I might want to include your column in our course readings."

-Margaretha Geertsema,
2009 Associate Professor,
Eugene S. Pulliam School of Journalism

The saga also became an issue of academic discussion. Mona Hakimi, then a student at the University of Cape Town (now GL communication officer) shared with GL that her class had discussed the Semenya issue during a Gender Studies lecture. "I had actually been hoping that you would be vocal in the media about it! I wrote about your [Lowe-Morna's] article in the blog we have to do for the class. A lot of what you said echoed with what most of the class are feeling but don't know how to articulate in the way that you did." This is an indication of the impact of GL messages on academic discourse.

There were also side debates on whether women should be called heroes. One deputy editor of a weekly South African paper asked, "We have received a few letters criticising us for the use of the word hero to describe Caster Semenya. We deliberately used this word, believing the separate hero and heroine to be unnecessary. Do you have a view on this?"

In her response, Colleen said that:

"I think in terms of dictionary definitions your readers are right, but in your shoes I would turn it around and give it a futuristic spin, as I am sure you had in mind when you used that headline, and say it's time we think of all winners whether heroes or heroines as being champions. I am sure you are familiar with the heated debates about chairman and chairperson; some feminists actually argue for the term chairman in reference to women in that position on the grounds that "man" in the Latin form means person. Language as you know is steeped in sex and gender assumptions; the romance languages being the classic case with even articles being masculine or feminine. Very interesting point is that none of the Bantu languages distinguish between he and she; only between older and younger; or have heroes and heroines! Might be a nice point to make in an editors note."

It was not just the media that sought GL expertise on the Semenya issue. Colleen was approached by a representative of the African National Congress (ANC) to be the spokesperson for Semenya. However, she expressed her discomfort in speaking for Semenya. The GL philosophy is: "who feels it knows it." Thus Semenya would be the

best person to speak for herself. It is one way of giving a voice to women whose voices are not often heard in the media.

YOU magazine also stoked the controversy when they "made over" Semenya into the "acceptable" woman that appeals to society (see clipping). This sparked another debate on how women should look and how those who do not look like women are perceived by society. The entire debate was evidence of a society in denial and one still far from accepting people who defy the norm, either willingly or unwillingly.

The GMDC collected a total of 71 articles on the Semenya issue. The materials were set aside for in-house gender training. One group analysed the newspaper clippings and looked at how Semenya was portrayed in the media as part of the training assignments. A hard copy file of the case study has since been put in the GMDC library and the analysis is available on the website as part of the GL Virtual Resource Centre, which can be used by trainers to demonstrate examples of good and not-so-good journalism.



NEWS

Caster gets made over

Wow, LOOK AT ME NOW!

'I'd like to dress up more often but I never get the chance'

Athlete says she enjoyed going girly, but others object to it

'She is not a liquid tights type of girl'

Semenya withdrew from international competition until 6 July 2010 when the IAAF cleared her. At the moment, she is back in competition and is also continuing her studies at a local university. Her case enriched GL's knowledge on sex and sexuality. Staff members, like South African society, came together to discuss an important and relevant gender issue that concerned them and in turn enriched their knowledge on the different sexes in society. It also led to a new process at GL, one of crafting GL's position on pertinent societal issues. So far, four position papers have been drafted under the GMDC, including briefs on sex work; sexuality; polygamy; and GL's position and take on advocacy work on gender equality.

The Semenya case is not only an intriguing look at the issues of sex and gender and how they still perplex politicians, media and society. It is also a telling case of how the GMDC works, pulling relevant issues from the pages and television screens of the media and using them to educated Southern Africans, in the classroom, the newsroom and those at home in front of their TV and computer screens.

Institutional linkages

The GMDC is guided by an advisory group initially made up of media activists, analysts and trainers from Southern Africa and the international community committed to a more balanced, diverse and responsive media. To date, the advisory group, which meets twice a year, has had seven meetings. However, commitment from individual members has not been consistent and one of the outcomes of the sixth advisory group meeting held in March 2010 is the suggestion to get buy-in from institutions. When buy-in has been secured, an MOU is crafted, agreed upon by the institution and the GMDC, and then signed. Institutions which sign MOU's automatically qualify to be part of the advisory group.

Table 7.1: GMDC Advisory group as of March 2011			
Academic institutions			
Country	**Institution**	**Contact person**	**Nature of partnership**
Botswana	University of Botswana	Professor Eno Akpabio	• Carried out media literacy training with students • Undertook the Business Unusual training with students which resulted in the production of a supplement on gender and the economy • Part of the Gender In Media Education (GIME) research • Internship extended at the Botswana Satellite office
Lesotho	National University of Lesotho	Sabie Ntoanyane	• Undertook media and literacy course with first year students • Part of the GIME research • One intern is currently attached at GL • GL has been able to follow up with UNESCO for discussions on the upgrade of their diploma programme into
Madagascar	University of Antananarivo	Hary Razafinmpiasa	• Part of the GIME research • Plans are underway to assist them in curriculum review in partnership with UNESCO
Namibia	Polytechnic of Namibia	Emily Brown	• Pioneers of gender in entry level journalism which led to the GIME research in 2009 • Part of the GIME research • Media literacy with learners • Curriculum review process • Beneficiaries of the internship programme • Gender, media and elections reporting
South Africa	University of Limpopo	Professor Sheila Mmusi	• Beneficiaries of the internship programme • Media literacy with lecturers • Part of the GIME research
Zimbabwe	National University of Science and Technology	Kathy Matsika	• Part of the GIME research • Media literacy with students • Current GMDC chairperson is based at NUST • Beneficiaries of the internship programme
Media NGOs			
Kenya	African Woman and Child Feature Service	Rosemary Okello-Orlale	• Partners at the CSW in New York • Produced the *Daily Links*
USA	International Women's Media Foundation	Liza Gross	• GL has shared the *Glass Ceilings* methodology with them which influenced global research on the same

Birthday message to GL

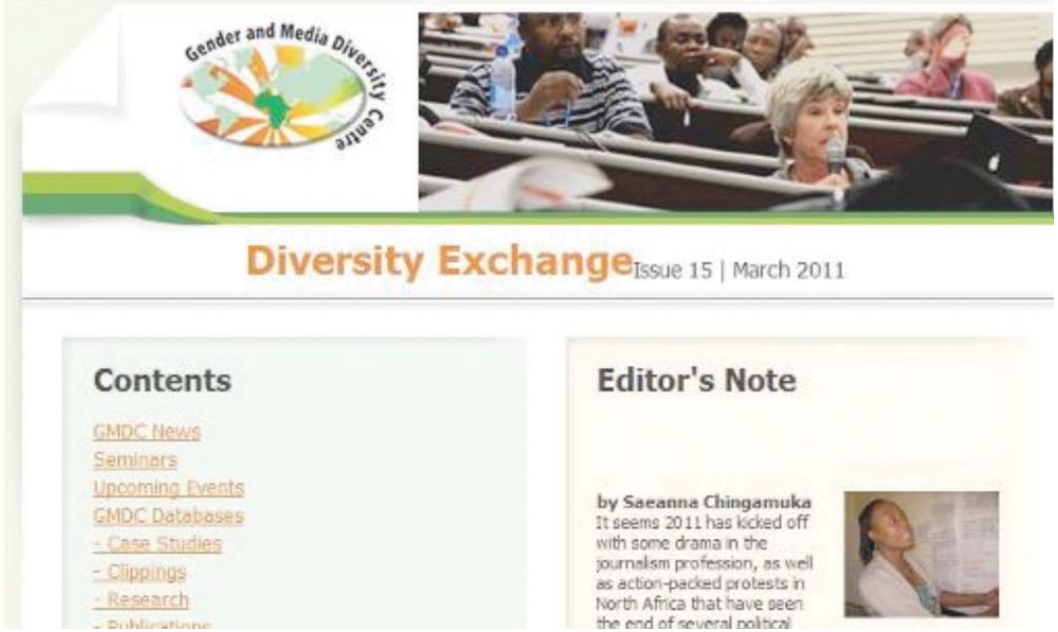
Professor **Eno Akpabio** of the University of Botswana is one of the pioneers of the GMDC Advisory Group. In a special message to GL and the GMDC, Akpabio said, "Permit me to put on record the value that Gender Links has added to our programme offerings [in the Department of Media Studies] as well as its positive impact on staff and students alike. The signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between our two institutions in 2010 has taken the relationship to a newer and better level and we look forward to working hand in hand with GL to make for, as well as bequeath a better world to the coming generation."

Three institutions: Malawi Polytechnic, Malawi Institute of Journalism; Eduardo Mondlane University (Mozambique) and the University of Zambia are reviewing their MOUs with the GMDC.

Pat Made, Pinkie Mekgwe and Jaco Du Toit are individual members of the advisory group. At meetings, the advisory group reviews the work of the Centre, assesses its growth and challenges and maps a work plan that guides annual operations. Recommendations from the advisory group are taken seriously and an external evaluation undertaken in the period 2010/2011 affirmed this position. It noted that partners influence programming at GL, for instance "the suggestion made at the GMDC advisory group meeting in February 2009 that GL conducts a Gender in Media Education (GIME) audit to identify strategic entry points in media training that have long term, multiplier effects. This research, canvassed at the World Conference of Journalism Educators and then the Gender and Media Summit has led to a new initiative, supported by UNESCO, to mainstream gender in media education through a Community of Practice that involves peer learning and support among media trainers."

The GMDC Manager is in constant touch with the advisory group through e-mail communication. An advisory group chairperson is also another notable recommendation from the sixth advisory group meeting. The current chair is Kathy Matsika, the Head Librarian at Zimbabwe's National University of Science and Technology.

Regular communication is also sent out via the *Diversity Exchange*, a monthly GMDC newsletter. The newsletter features media news from GL, partners' activities, upcoming events and is also used to publicise new information from GL's databases. In total, 14 issues have been sent out to a mailing list of 432 people. The newsletter is specialised in its content and appeals to those who are media savvy, including media students, activists, academics and researchers.



CASE STUDIES

Long standing links with the Polytechnic of Namibia and ZAMCOM

The **Polytechnic of Namibia (PON)** is one of two public tertiary institutions in Namibia which offers journalism training. GL has partnered with the Department of Media and Technology led by Emily Brown. The department was the first institution whose students underwent the media training course in which gender was systematically integrated into most aspects of their learning over three years from 2001. All this was made possible due to its partnership with GL. Consequently, the three-year (2001-2004) project between PON and GL provided valuable insights and steps on how gender can be mainstreamed into media education and journalism training at entry-level. It is also the work with PON that influenced the advisory group to recommend that this research be cascaded to those Southern Africa public institutions providing journalism and media training. GL has undertaken various training with PON students, for example gender and economic reporting, and gender, media and elections.

Former PON students who received their journalistic training during the period of the gender mainstreaming pilot project say they are able to use their gender and media knowledge and skills in the workplace. Nashilongo Gervasius, for example, who is now a Producer for TV Current Affairs at the Namibian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC), says the incorporation of gender into her media education and journalism training at PON "opened my eyes to balance the voices of women and men; and, to know that women are clever too."



Going for gender in journalism education
By Emily M. Brown



Emily Brown.
Photo: Trevor Davies

Anyone who has been through a curriculum development exercise - especially when the approach to this activity was done according to the book - experiences a kind of euphoria or relief once it's done. The Department of Media Technology at the Polytechnic of Namibia (PoN) conducted research amongst the institution's stakeholders and, in particular, the media houses in Windhoek, consulting them with regard to the draft curriculum, and made the necessary adjustments based on the comments received.

The year 2001 dawned and members of the media profession, together with development and funding agencies, as well as training institutions, were hard at work finalising arrangements for the *Windhoek +10* celebration at the time of World Press Freedom Day. Along with a former colleague, Pauliina Shilongo, we realised that this event could provide us with the ultimate opportunity - to consult media trainers and experts who would be heading for Windhoek from elsewhere on the continent, and even beyond. So, it was planned that these experts and trainers would arrive two days earlier in order to participate in a "Media Trainers' Consultative Meeting", which focused specifically on the Department of Media Technology's draft journalism curriculum. One such expert was Colleen Lowe Morna, Executive Director of Gender Links. The comments from this meeting undoubtedly contributed considerably to the decision of the Senate of the Polytechnic to grant approval for the implementation of the diploma curriculum, in October 2001.



At work in the PON pilot project to mainstream gender in media education.
Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna

The first students were admitted to this programme in January 2002. Having established a relationship during the previous year, it was not long after the commencement of the journalism programme that we started to liaise with Gender Links regarding gender-based training for the academic staff, as well as the need for a gender policy for the Department. Reflecting on this period - and recalling what we as academic staff discussed at the time - journalism training programmes and curricula either neglected or omitted the coverage of gender in relation to the media.

As one of the Department's main development partners at the time - and this continues to be the case today - work with Gender Links began in earnest, especially to apply the newly acquired gender concepts to the prescribed journalism curriculum content. Obviously, some academics were more convinced than others, and saw how gender mainstreaming enriched our teaching. Of importance is that training took on new dimensions - students (approximately equal numbers of male and female students) were able to relate so much more readily to the engendered scenarios outlined in assignments or projects. Suddenly, we realised the need for materials which illustrate such an engendered approach to journalistic activities and journalism training. It meant liaising with the Rectorate of the Polytechnic regarding new initiatives such as a campus media outlet and the appointment of a project officer.

With the support of the management of the institution, we were able to pilot the Echoes Newsroom, at the time of the 2004 presidential and national elections in Namibia. The pilot project necessitated a further partnership - with *The Namibian* newspaper - to ensure that the gender-aware, elections-related articles produced in the *Echoes* Newsroom, would be carried in such a mainstream medium. The fact that one of Namibia's respected daily newspapers saw it fit to carry the content produced in the *Echoes* Newsroom, spoke volumes in terms of the relevance of the articles, images accompanying the stories, and overall quality of the content. At this time we also got to know professionals such as Pat Made, especially with regard to editing of the work produced, photojournalist Trevor Davies, and Kubi Rama, who understood the significance of pitching curricula at a particular level.

The piloting of the *Echoes* newsroom heralded the period when the Media Technology Department came to be associated with production and publishing. It served to set us apart from other media programmes in the country, and students who graduated from our programme were sought-after. Together with Gender Links, the next milestone was to document the department's approach to mainstreaming gender into entry-level journalism programmes. This gave rise to the book *Gender in Entry-Level Journalism* (Edited by Colleen Lowe Morna and Pauliina Shilongo, 2004). Not only did this add to the visibility of the PoN's journalism students and trainers, it served to create opportunities for research and further partnerships.

Involvement in the *Gender and Media Audience Study*, the *HIV and AIDS and Gender Baseline Study*, the rollout of HIV and AIDS Policies and the *Gender and Media Progress Study* are examples of research opportunities which came about as a result of our partnership with Gender Links.

Successful partnerships attract more partners. In 2009 the Department of Media Technology recommended to the Communication Advisor at the UNESCO Cluster Office in Windhoek to utilise the services of Gender Links in a study to determine the extent to which gender is mainstreamed in the journalism/media studies curricula of the PoN and the University of Namibia (UNAM), respectively. This resulted in the Gender In

Media Education (GIME) Audit undertaken in Namibia. Subsequently, UNESCO has been a strong partner - also through the MDG Achievement Fund - in ensuring that gender is mainstreamed into journalism curricula.

With Gender Links as a development partner, we have the assurance that we'll keep abreast of new trends in gender studies, participate in gender-based research, and have access to locally produced publications relevant to the journalism profession. Who could ask for more from a partnership?

Since 2001, Brown has been the key driver of the PON Partnership. However, key members (lecturers) of the PON Media and Technology department continue to orient new staff members about mainstreaming gender into their courses and work. In 2010, PoN also signed an MOU with GL which formalised the relationship between the two organisations.

Outputs

- A book titled *Gender in Entry Level Journalism*
- Research titled, *Gender In Media Education Namibia*
- Newspaper supplement during the 2010 HOS meeting in Windhoek
- Articles on gender, media and elections in 2009 that were picked up by the mainstream media



Reflecting on the impact this training had on his work, Jonathan Beukes, now Supplements Editor at *The Namibian*, says "women's issues were de-mystified for me." Barely three years out of school and already an editor at a major newspaper in Namibia, Beukes realises that the seeds of change on how the media portray, represent and report on the gender-dimensions of many issues begin in the classroom. "The gender and media training helped us to understand the entire reporting process to make it more balance and fair; to help us produce credible publications. This is how I approach gender in my work," he said. "There are some people in the newsroom who have been there for decades and they don't know these things."

- One media literacy course undertaken with students
- An MOU between PON and the GMDC
- A PoN student did an internship at GL for six months

Outcomes

- Change in attitudes for students and trainers who have undergone gender and media training
- An example of how to partner with academic institutions
- Profiling of PON as a leading institution in gender and media education
- Publicity of GL resources
- Lessons on how to manage partnerships

The **Zambian Institute of Mass Communication (ZAMCOM)** is another among the institutions whose relationship with GL has yielded tremendous results. Following the development of a gender policy with ZAMCOM, the training institute developed the *Gender and Media Training Manual* and the *Gender and Media Handbook*. The two resource materials refer to the 2003 *Gender and Media Baseline Study*. In addition, GL provided technical advice and assistance during the in-house editing of ZAMCOM's *Gender and Media Training Manual*. The manual, according to the former and late Executive Director, Emmanuel Kasongo, changed the landscape of Zambian media. It resulted in more women being featured in the media and women's programmes were equally introduced for radio and television.



GL has convened a number of workshops and trainings with ZAMCOM and the Zambian media aimed at mainstreaming gender in media. Some of training and workshops and trainings include:

- From 27-31 January 2003, GL and ZAMCOM conducted training on *Gender, HIV/AIDS and Rights*.
- From 27-31 July 2009 GL and ZAMCOM organised media literacy training that attracted journalists and media practitioners, journalism students and members of the general public.

The institution has a specific *Radio and Gender Reporting* course. They also use the *Watching the Watchdogs* gender and media literacy manual to teach gender at the institution.

Physical resources and outputs

Reference library

Over the years, the GMDC has established a physical reference library with written, audio and visual materials. This includes books, various publications, news clips and highlights, analytical work and abridged versions of materials. At the time of writing, a February 2011 publications report showed that, in total, the GMDC has collected 1146 unique items on different gender and development themes. The collection is strong and unique as it includes publications based on theory and practice. These are acquired through exchange with other libraries, purchases made possible by donors, and through staff participation in workshops and conferences. The reference library also has a policy that guides acquisitions as well as rules on borrowing of books and library opening times.



Young girl engages with GL publications.
Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna

Dear Ms. Lowe Morna and the Gender Links Team
Thank you very much for your kind invitation to your meetings last week. It was a wonderful opportunity for me and I hope that we will really become partners. Our campus librarian, Janina van der Westhuizen, will put forward my request for you to become corporate members of our library to the other campus librarians at her next meeting towards the end of this month. Thank you too for your kind donation of books which we shall be using shortly in a display on gender. I truly enjoyed the two days with you and wish you well with your work.
- Email sent by Ronél Smit of the University of Johannesburg following the librarian's meeting

As part of its mandate, the GMDC has also begun working with libraries and resource centres throughout SADC. The GMDC donated a full set of GL publications to these libraries in order to promote and distribute GL's research and strengthen partnerships. In August 2009, the GMDC convened its first annual librarians meeting in Johannesburg. Following the meeting many libraries agreed to create GMDC corners where GL publications could be read and displayed. So far, two academic institutions have created such corners: National University of Lesotho and University of Dar Es Salaam in Tanzania.

Referencing GL on the World Wide Web
As society progresses, so too must the tools it utilises to maintain that progress. Gender Links has existed over the last decade, a time when the development of the internet in Southern Africa has been highly active. The internet provides an integration tool to the rest of the world, something no organisation should be without as it fully engages with the 21st century.

A short study over the six months looked at how GL is referenced online. Of course, the internet is a very broad forum for searching and so in order to save time, only the first three pages of searches were examined.

Google Scholar found:
- Citations of publications produced by GL over the years.
- Authors of GL publications.
- Citations were directly linked to the actual publication and not to other publications or theses by others.

For the names of publications, the most recent ten publications were typed into the search box one by one. All books were present on the first page of the search. The links did not lead only to the GL website directly, but also to other websites, for example www.awid.org, www.mmegi.bw, www.afrol.com, www.misa.org, www.gwsafrica.org, www.hivos.nl and www.ngopulse.org. This shows that not only does GL become known through its own efforts, but also through partners and other civil society organisations. A possible route for GL may be to make publications available online in pdf format so that more people can access the information, on a wider scale.

- Shaudzirai Mudekunye, M&E intern

Seminars

The GMDC aims to disseminate and create knowledge on gender, media and diversity. In addition, the Centre collects information, connects people with the relevant information and promotes collaboration that allows citizens from different walks of life to engage with the information. As part of realising this vision, the GMDC convenes periodic seminars which are aimed at:

- Creating a space for participatory discussion and debate on gender and media diversity;
- Offering new approaches and thinking to the gender discourse in Southern Africa;
- Developing and sharing a body of knowledge on gender and diversity.

Topics have included tabloid research; media activism; gender and xenophobia; the Take The Girl Child to School campaign; and the Caster Semenya issue. Initially, the Centre picked random topics for discussion. However, with time the GMDC began to convene thematic seminars which are accompanied by a series of discussions on topics related to the theme.

In 2009 the GMDC reached out to a total of 465 citizens through gender and **leadership seminars**. The seminars were held in Botswana, South Africa and Zambia.

The **"Score a Goal for Gender Equality"** aimed at advancing gender equality in the region through the FIFA soccer 2010 event. Topics discussed included sex work, informal traders, community broadcasters and youth's voices on using FIFA Soccer 2010 to advance gender equality. The campaign also created radio spots to educate citizens on human trafficking in 13 SADC languages. The radio spots were distributed to community broadcasters and other stakeholders. Due to the success of the campaign, the GMDC received a request to write about the campaign for the *Agenda* Journal.

The GMDC also convenes seminars to discuss research findings, for example the findings of the *Gender and Media Progress Study*, *Glass Ceilings*, gender and advertising and gender and tabloids.

The seminars assist the GMDC to popularise its work and forge partnerships with different and strategic stakeholders. These partners now include, SABC News International, *Mail and Guardian*, South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC), Commission for Gender Equality, the Red Light Campaign, Oxfam GB, National Community Radio Forum (NCRF), Community Media for Development, Ecumenical Service for Socio-Economic Transformation (ESSET), Media Development and Diversity Agency (MDDA).

Gender and Media Diversity Journal

The bi-annual *Southern Africa Gender and Media Diversity Journal* provides media practitioners and owners, researchers, lecturers,



Women traders with the Gender and Media Diversity Journal.
Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna

student journalists, gender activists and those individuals and organisations working towards media diversity with up-to-date and cutting edge case studies and best practices on media diversity in Southern Africa.

The journal, produced by the GMDC, provides content that reflects developments in the SADC region relating to media diversity. The journal also provides the space for the dissemination of research papers and the findings of research projects; case studies and reports on projects, campaigns; policies; profiles; reviews; opinion and debate. Through the journal the GMDC brings theory and practice together. It is not accredited and therefore allows academics and media practitioners to contribute. In total, nine issues of the journal have been published over the years, distributed in SADC, other parts of Africa and beyond.

Each issue has a theme:

- Issue 1, Gender and Media.
- Issue 2, Media Diversity and Sustainability: Good for Democracy, Good for Business.
- Issue 3, The Tabloid Explosion.
- Issue 4, Media Activism and Change.
- Issue 5, Critical Citizens, Responsive Media.
- Issue 6, Gender, Diversity, Elections and the Media
- Issue 7, Gender, Media and Sport
- Issue 8, Gender and Soccer 2010.
- Issue 9, Taking Stock: Gender, Media and Diversity.

Virtual resources and outputs website



The GMDC website has been designed and developed to include most of its major work and outputs. For instance, the website houses information and training resources in a database format which is searchable in various ways. Access to the GMDC website is via the GL webpage. As a result of this, the number of visits to GL's website has increased. In February 2011 alone, the number of GMDC website hits was 1 355 and the most popular page was the virtual resource centre case studies. The majority of hits are from within South Africa.

Community of practice

Following the findings of the *Gender In Media Education (GIME)* study, the GMDC is establishing a Community of Practice (COP) hosted on the GL website and linked to the UNESCO Journalism Centres of Excellence Community of Practice based on the GMDC themes:

- **Collect:** Information (including information gathered in GIME research), good practices, course outlines, curricula, assessments, research will be collected from institutions across Southern Africa. A call will be put out to all institutions offering journalism and media education and training to submit information according to certain thematic areas. These could include assessment, curriculum development and review, specific subject areas, teaching and learning. The information will be circulated to all the members of the COP with guiding questions for a discussion that will follow.
- **Connect:** After the information has been circulated there will be an online discussion using the GL online chat facility. The discussion will be facilitated by a moderator from GL, an expert in the field or a partner institution. The moderator will guide the discussion based on set questions. After the online chat, the discussion will be summarised and sent to the institution concerned and an expert.

- **Collaborate:** A final paper will be drawn up and uploaded onto a searchable GMDC database which will be housed on the GL website.

On-line resource centre

The online resource centre comprises the research database, clippings database and the virtual resource centre. The research database constitutes research that is undertaken by academics, journalism students, media activists and gender and development NGOs.

As at February 2011 the **research database** had 483 research pieces which are searchable on the GMDC website. This research also comes in the form of Masters and PhD theses undertaken in African academic institutions. The research database thus popularises the work by upcoming African scholars. Further, there has been huge dependence by journalism educators on resources from the North. The research database is one resource journalism educators in the region are being encouraged to use. Articles published in the *Gender and Media Diversity Journal* are also uploaded on this database. Initially research was put in the same database as publications but from October 2008, research database statistics stand independent of the publications database statistics.

The GMDC also collects newspaper **clippings** that can be used by journalism educators and trainers to demonstrate examples of good and problematic journalism. In February 2011 the clippings database had 3 328 clippings scanned, classified and uploaded on the website. They are searchable by theme, country and year. Articles can be classified in categories: gender aware, gender blind, subtle stereotypes and blatant stereotypes. Through this resource, the GMDC hopes to promote gender-sensitive reporting.

Linked to the clippings database is the **Virtual Resource Centre (VRC)**. In-depth analysis of clippings is undertaken to create case studies for use by trainers. Whereas analysis of clippings is a quantitative approach, the VRC provides a qualitative analysis.

Electronic help desk

The GMDC also operates an electronic help desk responsible for responding to queries. The desk responded to 53 queries in 2008/2009, while in 2010/2011, the GMDC responded to 76 queries. All queries are responded to within 48 hours.



EMPOWERING WOMEN: Noluthando Mayende-Sibiya

Unity is vital to uplift women

THE Ministry of Women, Children and Persons with Disability are calling on all South Africans to unite in the fight to alleviate gender inequality in the country.

The call comes as the country commemorates National Women's Day on August 9.

Noluthando Mayende-Sibiya, Minister of Women, Children and Persons with Disabilities, said while the country had made strides in the advancement of women, more had to be done to ensure that women had equal opportunities and that progress towards gender equality was hastened.

Under the theme Working together for equal opportunities and progress for all women the minister said this year's focus would be poverty reduction and improving the socioeconomic status of women.

"Our country has taken a number of steps to mainstream gender perspectives in poverty-reduction strategies. These have led to the implementation of various income support programmes including development initiatives for rural women," Mayende-Sibiya said.

She said the ministry would also be celebrating the commencement of the Decade of African Women (2010-2020), which was recently adopted by the African Union.

MUCH MORE NEEDS TO BE DONE TO STOP INEQUALITY

"The objectives are to preserve and build on African women's strength and to leverage on global and regional political goodwill for the advancement of African women with a focus on youth and grass-roots women," the minister said.

Mayende-Sibiya said there was an "improved representation of women in decision-making positions in government since the country's first democratic elections in 1994".

"South Africa proudly stands at number three in the world with the highest number of women in parliament. The number of women cabinet members increased from 18 percent in 1994 to 40 percent after the 2009 elections.

"There's also steady progress in the representation of women at senior levels of the public service," she said.

Mayende-Sibiya said the representation of women in the private sector still lagged behind.

"White men still hold 63 percent of top management positions in the private sector, while African women are at less than three percent and coloured and Indian women at one percent. Analysis of various studies shows that if we continue at this pace of transformation, it will take almost 40 years to attain 50-50 gender parity. We cannot allow that. Measures have to be taken to hasten gender and racial transformation," she said.

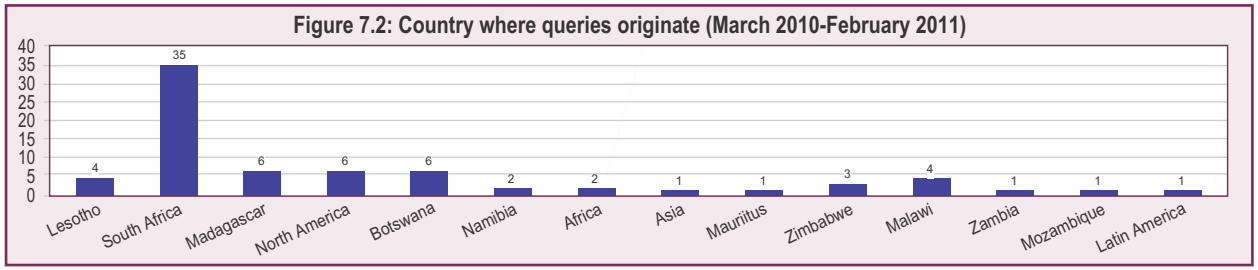
Mayende-Sibiya said the ministry was developing the Gender Equality Bill to enforce gender parity across all sectors of society.

To celebrate Women's Month, the ministry has lined up various activities aimed at empowering women and raising awareness on issues affecting them.

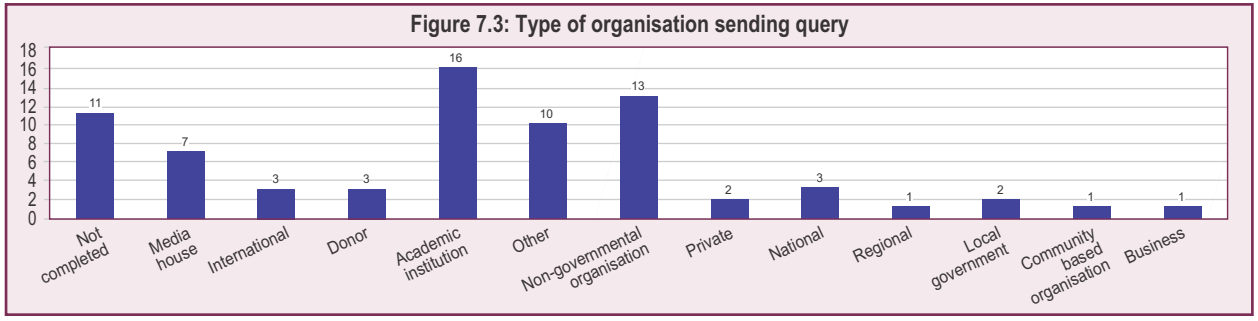
"The other area of focus will be the challenge of violence against women and children.

"The experience of the Soccer World Cup indicates that it is possible to minimise incidents of abuse through a combination of high community awareness, social cohesion and effective social and law enforcement services," Mayende-Sibiya said.

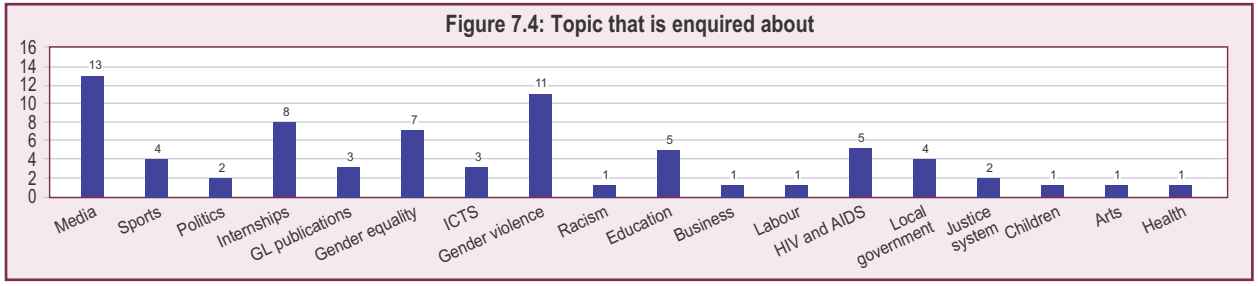
Figure 7.2 illustrates that the highest number of queries has come from South Africa. In addition, the Centre has received queries from North America, Latin America and Asia. The GMDC needs to popularise itself in other countries so that citizens of those countries know about the GMDC and its products.



The highest number of queries received in the period March 2010 and February 2011 came from academic institutions, which are the main target of the GMDC. NGOs and media houses also top the list.



As shown in Figure 7.4, the highest numbers of queries are about GL's media work, followed by gender violence and internships, which are popular with journalism and international relations students.



An example of a query

My name is Jade Witten and I am a post-graduate student currently doing my degree in journalism at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology. Basic Research is one of my subjects and I have to do a thesis on a topic of my choice. I am interested in tackling transformation in the media. More specifically looking at which gender and race predominantly still occupies managerial positions at three leading Cape Town publications. My study will focus on the *Cape Argus*, *Cape Times* and *Die Burger* newspapers. So if it makes it easier, please answer the following questions in relation to these publications. Thank you for answering the questions below as accurately and thoroughly as possible:

- Has the South African media transformed in terms of race and gender over the past 15 years? Explain. Sketch who occupied top jobs in the past and what it looks like now.
- What is the current percentage of women in the media industry generally and how many of these women occupy managerial positions at media organisations in and around Cape Town?
- How has this figure changed over the past 15 years?
- What are the reasons for these figures being either high or low?
- What could be done to address this phenomenon?
- What kind of jobs do women generally occupy in the media industry?
- Comment on media freedom and equality in the editorial process when men are in power and vice versa.
- Does the future look bleak or bright for female journalist to move up the ranks? Substantiate
- Comment on the importance of staff morale and a good working environment.
- If you have done similar studies before, please feel free to attach them. I will attribute the work accordingly. Thanking you in advance for getting back to me by no later than noon Friday, 4 September 2009. Jade Witten

The GMDC Officer responded by sending the full written report of GL's 2009 *Glass Ceilings South Africa* research.

Table 7.2: Number of photos on the photo library

Country	Number of photos
Burundi	1
Kyrgyzstan	1
Seychelles	7
DRC	11
USA	14
Thailand	16
Mozambique	33
Swaziland	35
Malawi	43
Zambia	63
Namibia	64
Madagascar	65
Tanzania	67
Unknown/Stock	84
Botswana	94
Lesotho	116
Mauritius	137
Zimbabwe	233
South Africa	912
TOTAL	1 996

Photo database

GL's many photographs are housed in its Photo Gallery and are representative of the footprints it has made across the SADC region and the world.

There are a total of almost 2000 photos in the GL photo library. Table 7.2 shows that the highest number of photos comes from South Africa and the SADC region.



Through the eyes of the cameraperson: Danny Glenwright taking photo's of Lesotho for the gallery. *Photo: Mona Hakimi*

Internships

The GMDC also manages the internship programme. Though students may be attached to different GL departments, coordination is managed through the GMDC. For more information on this component of GMDC's work, have a look at Chapter Four.

Gender in Media Education (GIME)

The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development includes the following provision: "to ensure that gender is mainstreamed in all information, communication, and media policies, programmes, laws and training."

A GMDC Advisory Group meeting held in February 2009 proposed an audit of Gender in Media Education (GIME). The research is the most comprehensive study yet undertaken of the gender dimensions of journalism and media education and training in tertiary institutions in Southern Africa. The GIME study took place in 26 institutions in 13 countries including Botswana, DRC, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe, between October 2009 and April 2010. The objectives of this study were:

- To establish whether or not gender is integrated in media education and training.
- To identify gaps in current media/ journalism education and training in Southern Africa with regard to mainstreaming gender in the curriculum.
- To determine whether or not Gender Links materials and electronic resources are being used in media education and training in the Southern Africa.
- To use the findings to develop strategic interventions to ensure sustained gender mainstreaming in media education and training.

GMDC advisory group members presented findings of the regional report at the World Journalism Educators Congress (WJEC) in South Africa in 2010 and launched the report at the Fourth Gender and Media Summit held in Johannesburg in October 2010. The research findings are being used for conducting gender and media literacy with media trainers, who in turn identify gender-entry points for the journalism curriculum they use. The Centre has crafted two gender-sensitive modules which have been mainstreamed in journalism training for the University of Namibia. GMDC and UNESCO are partners in mainstreaming gender in education curriculum through the UNESCO Centres of Excellence.



Debating GIME at the Gender and Media Summit. *Photo: Jennifer Elle Lewis*



Cheers! Jennifer Elle Lewis. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

Jennifer Elle Lewis, former manager of the GMDC reflects: "The *Gender in Media Education* Audit (GIME) was perhaps the most rewarding work conducted in 2010. It covered 25 institutions of higher learning in media and journalism training, in 13 countries. Organising and compiling research from this sample was no small feat. I was able to apply and enhance my skills on gathering data, managing consultants and editing content. There were certainly hiccups along the way, yet the end result was a successful piece of research.

The most eye opening experience was to see this research put into practice. It is not often that research does more than sit on a shelf, and it was fantastic to learn that actually research CAN be put into practice. To date the Polytechnic of Namibia and University of Namibia have implemented findings, and other universities are due to follow suit.

The GIME research is being launched with the *Gender and Media Progress Study* (GMPS) and the *Glass Ceilings* research providing a comprehensive picture of gender in media education, newsrooms and content. To create lasting change, simply looking at media education is not enough. It is essential to partner with media organisations and regulators. It was eye opening to see how our various initiatives could be combined and implemented."

Media Literacy

Part of the GMDC vision is to develop "citizens, women and men, who are empowered to engage critically with their media." As part of efforts to deepen democracy globally, media literacy is a growing area of interest with international organisations like UNESCO. GL's unique contribution has been to develop a gender and media literacy course that has been applied and tested with various audiences, in close collaboration with GMDC partners. First piloted in South Africa in 2006, GL's gender and media literacy course has since been replicated in nine SADC countries. The first Training of Trainers (TOT) took place at the Second Gender and Media Summit in 2006. Since that time GL has worked with different target groups including the general public; school going learners and local government.

Since 2009, GL has taken a slightly different approach, opting to work with media and journalism training institutions. This is part of a longer term objective to integrate gender and media literacy into training curricula. GL and the GMDC are now using the media literacy course to take forward GIME audit findings.

GL is currently working on getting the training courses and trainers accredited through the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA). This will make the media literacy course a credit-bearing offering which will be considered formal learning and counted towards the acquisition of a qualification.



Piloting media literacy: Susan Tolmay and Agnes Muriungi. *Photo: Rochelle Davidson*

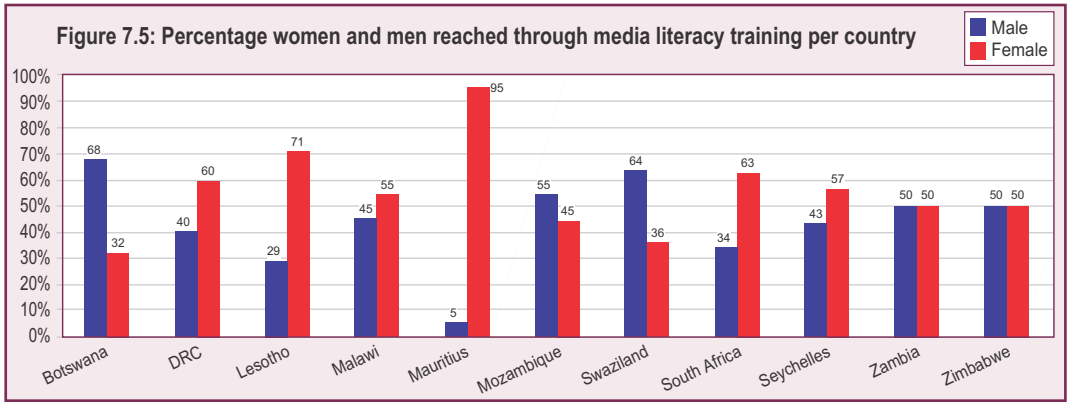
Table 7.3: Institutional linkages through media literacy					
Country	**Year**	**Target**	**No of participants**	**Format**	**Partner**
1.South Africa	2006	Trainers	23	Over two days	GEMSA
2. South Africa	2006	General public	25	Two hourly sessions over ten weeks	N/A
3. South Africa	2007	General public	14	Two hour sessions over ten weeks	N/A
4. South Africa	2008	General public	23	Two hour sessions over ten weeks	N/A
5. South Africa	2008	High school learners	19	Over one week	Africa Youth Leadership Initiative
6. South Africa	2008	North West high school learners	18	Four hour sessions over two weeks	North West University
7. Botswana	2008	General public	17	Two hour sessions over ten weeks	University of Botswana
8. Mauritius	2008	General Public	20	Two hour sessions over ten weeks	MWO-GEMSA
9. Namibia	2008	High School learners	19	Two hour sessions over ten weeks	GEMSA Namibia
10. South Africa	2009	Gauteng Department of Education Language facilitators	55	One day once a month	Gauteng Department of Education
11. South Africa	2009	Ekurhuleni municipality	19	Once a month over one year	City of Ekurhuleni
12. South Africa	2009	Community newspaper reporters	11	Over three days	University of Stellenbosch
13. Botswana	2009	Local government commissioners	19	Over one week	Botswana association of Local Authorities (BALA)
14. DRC	2009	General Public	20	Over ten weeks	UCOFEM
15. Lesotho	2009	General public	14	Over three days	Institute of Extra Mural Studies (IEMS) at National University of Lesotho and GEMSA Lesotho
16. Mauritius	2009	Women in politics, Labour party and MSM	27	Over three days	WIN
17. Mozambique	2009	General public	20	Over ten weeks	GEMSA Mozambique
18. Seychelles	2008	Civil society and media practitioners	18	Over one week	Gem Plus
19. Swaziland	2009	General public	14	Over one week	University of Swaziland and GEMSWA
20. Zambia	2009	General Public	20	Over one week	Zambia Institute of Mass Communication and GEMSA Zambia
21. Botswana	2010	Students from the Faculty of Humanities	16	One week	University of Botswana
22. Lesotho	2010	Journalism Students	22	One week	University of Lesotho
23. Malawi Polytechnic	2010	Trainers	20	Over three days	NGO Coordinating Network and University of Malawi
24. Tanzania	2010	Academic staff, administration staff, support services staff	25	Over one week	University of Dar es Salaam
25. South Africa	2010	Trainers and Community Radio journalists	39	Over one week	University of Limpopo
26. Zimbabwe	2010	Journalism students	30	Over one week	National University of Science and Technology (NUST)
TOTAL			**567**		

The data on media literacy beneficiaries is included in Chapter Six, on the media. Table 7.2 provides a more detailed breakdown. It shows that:

- GL has conducted a total of 25 media literacy training courses in 12 Southern African countries (Botswana, Lesotho, DRC, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Seychelles, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Zambia).
- Training has been conducted in partnership with the Gender and Media Southern Africa (GEMSA) Network and media training institutions.
- A total of 567 participants have been trained, 37% men and 63% women.

Figure 7.7 gives a gender disaggregated breakdown of beneficiaries by country. The majority of those reached by the training are women, although there are country variations. The statistics for the Tanzania workshop which was held in March 2011 have not been included in this graph. Mauritius had the highest proportion of women benefiting from the course. This is due to the fact that three training workshops were held for women in politics. These were drawn from Mauritius's three main political parties. Whilst training for women politicians was also held in Botswana, there were other two training workshops which combined women and men. In Zambia and Zimbabwe, there were equal proportions of women and men trained.

Figure 7.5: Percentage women and men reached through media literacy training per country



Examples of projects

Examples of some of the projects developed during training can be found on the Gender Links website on http://www.genderlinks.org.za/page/media-media-literacy.

The projects produced include:

- Newsletters.
- Magazines.
- Gender entry points.
- Radio programmes.
- Taking up media complaints.
- Posters.
- Pamphlets.
- Power point presentations.



For her project Cole Van Dais wrote and sang a song on gender equality
.
Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna



Girl children come to work at Gender Links. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

Reaching out to youth

Part of the GMDC mandate is to engage with youth on gender and diversity issues. In May 2008, the GMDC hosted learners as part of Cell C's "Take a girl child to work" initiative. Ten Grade seven learners from Cyrildene Primary school and ten Grade 11 learners from the Thamsanqa Secondary School in Orange Farm spent the morning learning about the media and how it works. This exciting programme provided the opportunity to hear what young women think about the media and they were hopefully encouraged to become involved with the media industry in future.

During Beijing Plus15 celebrations in 2010, three boys from Sacred Heart School volunteered at the GL head office and assisted in hosting the cyber dialogues. They actively participated in the dialogues and were fascinated by the topic on gender and soccer 2010. The students later noted how female sport is marginalised and how the girls' soccer team at their school was neglected. They wrote an article reflecting on the importance of female sport published in the *Daily Links* newspaper.

As part of Soccer 2010, the GMDC also hosted youth for a discussion about the opportunities the event posed for the realisation of women's rights. This event was part of the "Score a goal for gender equality campaign." Some local youths also went into their communities to find stories on gender and Soccer 2010: these included stories about sex work, trafficking and economic opportunities. GL's interns also participated in the project by documenting the event on video.

During the 2010 16 Days of Activism, the GMDC hosted youths to discuss gender and ICTs. The young women and men discussed the impact of mobile technology and internet on their personal human rights. It was an enlightening experience for the young people and one mother wrote after the discussion to formally thank GL. "I was privileged to be able to attend. I think it has been carefully crafted to suit the intended audience - mostly 'teenagers', but having said that, I personally enjoyed it... I have learned a few things from it as well. My daughter Frances thought it was great and says her friends too really thought - 'it hit the spot'. They all realise that the workshop addresses such an important topic... the security of our children in the age of 'Computer and Mobile technology'."

Namibian school children who participated in gender and media literacy training and cyber dialogues posted the following comments:

- I would like to thank Gender Links and GEMSA for empowering the youth and learners to learn how to analyse and critique media houses by monitoring them daily.
- The course opened my mind. I did not know that women are being discriminated in the media.
- I never knew one can start his/or her own media even at the level of schools. I will try one. Am wondering where I can get money to start my own newsletter?
- We need an advance course on this or a longer period of study.
- Can Gender Links and others advice the ministry of Education to include this course in the curriculum, e.g. at grade 11 & 12.
- The Sessions were informative and educational, learnt a lot about media literacy which I never knew.

Growth and development

Many partners have expressed appreciation for the training skills they learned through GL and the GMDC. Blessings Jona, a lecturer at Zimbabwe's NUST, Sabi Ntoanyane, from the National University of Lesotho, Eno Akpabio of the University of Botswana, Sheila Mmusi from the University of Limpopo, Adidi Uyo from the University of Swaziland and Francis Chikunkhuzeni of the Polytechnic of Malawi, said that through participating in the GIME conference, they learnt to mainstream gender in the courses they teach.

Jona added: "I have come to understand how trainers can effectively mainstream gender into university curricula, in order for students to become gender sensitive and critical thinkers in the journalism profession. GL's service and interventions have increased my appetite for research on trans-gender issues. I am now more gender-sensitive than before".

Academics such as Sister Rose Nyondo say they find GL resources useful in their courses. Nyondo said she uses the *Zambia Gender and Media Baseline Study* for research and teaching. She has also developed a keen interest in media monitoring and on certain days such as World Press Freedom Day she puts students into groups and asks them to monitor various media. One of her recommendations for the GMDC is that it should provide constant gender and media training to media practitioners and also trainers. Chikunkhuzeni has also used the 2003 *Malawi Gender and Media Baseline Study* to teach in his research methods module and for his PhD thesis. Derrick Sinjela of Zambia's *New Vision* newspaper participated in gender and media literacy training. He said he learned better gender-balanced reporting through his work with GL.

GL staff learn on- the-job

From media literacy participants to GL staff members



Susan Mogari. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

Susan Mogari and **Fanuel Hadzizi** are living testimony to the impact that the GL media literacy course has had on SADC citizens. Susan Mogari, who now works for GL as a programme officer, first came into contact with the organisation in 2007. Little did she know that it was the beginning of a long, life-changing relationship with the organisation. Over the years, she has learnt to view life from a different perspective. Fanuel Hadzizi, who started off as a GL intern with no gender background, has become a respected member of the GL team.

Susan Mogari writes: "I got to know Gender Links and media literacy through a colleague at an NGO I used to work with, he encouraged me as part of empowering me as I was new on that post. My responsibilities where to train youth at the township of Alexandra, and to publish the training course the organisation offered.

I can say I was ignorant when it came to gender issues. In the first media literacy class we were given newspapers and we did a quick counting of pictures on the newspaper and from that day on I did not read a newspaper the same way again. I used the training I got to impart knowledge to the youth and I think they were transformed from that training. I saw the same reaction from them that I think my facilitator saw from me.

For my final project I did research on why young people read tabloids. I worked with the young people and for the gender training there was so much interaction because of the little media literacy course I did with them. Using PowerPoint, I started working from the media literacy and I used to publish my course with the designs I did which is the skill I got from media literacy. I am a reputable media monitor today because of the training I got from media literacy course."

Fanuel Hadzizi, GL's Finance Officer, remembers his media literacy: "I also became knowledgeable about gender roles as a result of the training. I did not learn about gender roles from University. For example my little sister used to make my bed when I woke up and she would give me water to wash my hands before eating. I felt this was my right and had no idea I was oppressing my sister. Nowadays I do not allow my sister to kneel down before me or to do me these favours even though my mother gets upset at my refusal. My IT skills also developed culminating in a video production as my final project. I learnt how to capture, mixing and sound editing and many more little things I had not known before."



Walking the talk: Fanuel Hadzidzi and Susan Tolmay. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

GMDC Manager Saeanna Chingamuka says there is no stopping her now! "Yes, women are like tea bags, they only realise their true strength when they are put in hot water! A friend of mine reminded me early this year that this was part of my personal e-mail signature some time back. I stepped back for a moment and reflected on my life at Gender Links. All I could see is the strength that I currently exhibit in the work environment and my personal growth. Nothing can stop me now!

My positive growth in 2010 has restored my faith in my skills, my capabilities and that personal growth does not stop at anything for as long as one has a willing spirit. I can as well confess that I have become emotionally attached to my work and to the organisation as a whole. I get scared sometimes, because emotional attachment can bring heartbreaks.

Anyway, life doesn't simply end there. My biggest lesson for this period is that just having somebody who has faith in you and your capabilities can change your whole life. I have swiftly moved portfolios with confidence and remember that. However, I have embraced it and seized the opportunity to bring in new ideas to the media programme. This is what I would term growth and it can only happen in an environment where you are given the space to explore, Gender Links.

A few highlights about my work in the past year. In 2010, I successfully ran the Soccer 2010 campaign by convening seminars to discuss the opportunities and risks provided by the mega-event. I managed to organise three consecutive seminars which probed various issues such as human trafficking and

the plight of sex workers in the region. I ran GMPS and GIME consultative workshops with two new staff members and I had to be at my best so that the new staff members could learn the values of the organisation from me.

Another highlight is that we managed to complete the Gender in Media Education research and the regional book was launched at the Fourth Gender and Media Summit in October 2010. We have since put to bed 13 country reports which are now available on the website. This was a remarkable area of growth for me, where I was involved in the inception of the research project and saw it through to completion.

Media training has also been one of the most exciting part of my work at Gender Links. I recall two incidents this year when I called two media houses to enquire about newspaper subscription. At one, I had a woman who thought that gender and sex means one and the same thing. At another, I was put on hold only to hear a voice over which partly goes "Who guards, the guardians? Who watches the watchman"? So, I asked the marketing person who the "watchman" are? She explained to me that they are people such as ministers and parliamentarians. I then told them that this is unfair and for all the obvious reasons excluded women. However, the woman on the other side of the line just said to me, "maam, I think you are just reading too much into it." Not so much so because these are cases that I am going to personally take up. As a trainer, I need to walk the talk. Watch this space in 2012!

Being entrusted with the internship programme has allowed me to grow young people and make them understand the gender discourse. I have learnt to trust that they can do the work and in turn his has made me a great teacher. Growing young people has thus become a passion and it has also made me a patient person. I can confidently profile the work of the organisation in front of cameras."



GMDC Manager Saeanna Chingamuka during the launch of radio spots, "Together we can end human trafficking" at a seminar in Orange Farm, South Africa. *Photo: Albert Ngosa*



Lessons learned

- Negative cultural practices hinder achievement of gender equality.
- Programme implementation in the highly patriarchal societies in SADC countries is problematic because of the unfriendly political terrain for women due to stereotyping by both the media and society. However, the GMDC realises that it exhibits great strength in its advocacy work and can reach out to many. Thus it is important to popularise the GMDC beyond South Africa so that other countries can fully appreciate its work.
- Any attempt to mainstream gender in reporting must acknowledge that the media is traditionally conservative and as a result resists change.
- Because the media in Africa were born out of political experience, their coverage is essentially political so it is important to intervene in the political arena.
- Men who write about gender are treated with suspicion and often accused by other men of having "sold out" to the women movement. This attitude needs to be changed.
- Mainstreaming gender in editorial coverage must be a management decision that has the full-backing of the gatekeepers in the newsroom.



A jubilant informal trader receives her Gender and Media training certificate on International Women's Day. *Photo: Thato Phakela*



Next steps

In the next decade, the GMDC will set out to achieve strengthen its work of collection, connecting and collaboration. This will be achieved by:

- Strengthening relations with academic institutions in Southern Africa and other NGOs.
- Rekindling relations with Pan-African organisations.
- Strengthening North-South relations.
- Strengthening relations with librarians.
- Decentralising GMDC seminars.
- Marketing the resource centre so that the GMDC target group can benefit from the unique collection that is being built up.
- Providing media training institutions with gender and media literacy training skills that can assist them to reach out to their communities.
- Exploring the possibility of reviving the Southern African Media Training Network or for the GMDC to become a body that partners with UNESCO in order to source equipment for training institutions.

- Convening a conference for female journalism students so that they meet women who have made it in the profession.
- Making use of the CoP and ensuring that trainers fully benefit from the establishment of this platform.
- Providing expertise to academic institutions that are crafting institutional gender policies.
- Developing a bibliography or reference guide of the plethora of international and regional teaching materials, texts and research in all areas of media specialisation to guide lecturers when choosing reading materials.
- Training and development programmes to build the capacity of full- and part-time staff in academic institutions to mainstream gender into the development of course content, teaching, assessment and how to use GMDC electronic resources.
- Providing resources to students carrying out gender and media research.

"When the dark clouds gather I only have to think of what a marvellous innovation Gender Links has been. From a garage space to the present sophisticated and multi-faceted organisation it is today. That is a real inspiration to stay the course. We will make fathers a strategic group for gender equality.

In the next ten years of my work and life I am sure I will be less astounded to see more 'Zebra's with spots', and even more diverse and rich landscapes around gender and development. I will smile, point out the wonders of a new and vibrantly gendered landscape to my daughters. They will grow up to be such strong young women and I will know that it is Gender Links that has contributed to their personal freedoms and the biodiversity of the gendered landscape they will enjoy!"

- Trevor Davies


adidas
SAMSUNG



Picture our lives: GL Local Government Country Facilitator Priscilla Maphosa at a council timber worksite in Chimanimani, Zimbabwe.

Photo by Colleen Lowe Morna

Chapter 8

50/50 by 2015: Gender and governance

By Abigail Jacobs-Williams and Ntombentsha Mbadlanyana

"There is a democracy that does not include every voice in decision-making yet women constitute over 50% of the total population. They deserve to contribute and to be heard. The men say women do not know what they want and are always pulling each other down. The local councils said nothing about gender-based violence before the training. Passion killing is second to HIV and AIDS in our communities. But the councillors could not talk about what they did not know. The training by Gender Links was an eye opener and the very first exposure of councillors to gender issues. But things are beginning to change slowly. For example, Kgathen District Council started a gender-based violence committee when one council employee was murdered by her boyfriend..."

- Ludo Matshameko, Project Manager Botswana Association of Local Authorities (BALA) quoted in the GL DFID evaluation report.

Fact box

- GL has conducted ground-breaking research on gender and local government in ten countries (Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zimbabwe) and has planned it for in Malawi in April 2011.
- Between 2002 and 2010 there have been 8 468 beneficiaries in this programme: 41% men and 59% women.
- These women and men are part of a movement for gender mainstreaming at local level. They have committed themselves to ensuring that this happens in all the councils where they work and the communities they service.
- Over the next five years GL will roll out the Centres of Excellence (COE) for Gender Mainstreaming in Local Government initiative in 300 local councils across the SADC region with the aim of ensuring that by 2015 the SADC Protocol target of 50/50 representation and participation of women in decision-making is reached.



Mary Coopan and Abigail Jacobs-Williams. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

When I[1] first started at GL in July 2009 I had the privilege of being inducted into the GL workforce with eight other very strong women. They are currently known as the Gender Links Gender Justice and Local Government Country Facilitators and they hail from Botswana, Lesotho, Mauritius, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe. All of us were tasked with taking gender mainstreaming to the coalface; to the people working on the ground.

As excited and eager as we all were to take on this new task, we also realised during that first induction week that it wouldn't be easy. However, we were all people who believed it is at the coalface where we can really make the difference and reach the masses; we just knew it would require a lot of hard work, innovation and perseverance. All of these were critical ingredients if we were to ensure we reached our ultimate goal: gender equality at the local level, at the level closest to the people.

As the programme manager I have had the opportunity to travel to most of the countries we work in to give on-the-job support to country facilitators and also see how they engage at the local government level. Although these visits were often short they were usually very interesting and humbling experiences.

While working with Mpho Mankimane in Lesotho we had to take a five hour drive across very mountainous areas to get to the village where she was working. When we got there we discovered that many of the councillors (mostly women) attending our workshops had walked for five hours - some had also slept over at strangers' homes just to attend our workshops. Yet not once did they complain because they were eager to equip themselves with the necessary skills to address issues of gender in their respective villages. And as for me, a girl from the city, often after such five hour drives the first thing I wanted to do when the 4X4 stopped was use the toilet. But even that was a mission in this case and I was told that it was a five minute very steep walk to an outside toilet! So I decided to drink much less water when on workshops in Lesotho.

While working with Sarry Xoagus-Eises in Namibia I realised that although we work in a very challenging sphere of government, there are small victories which make our jobs easier. When we reached the town of Gobabis in Namibia, our first stop was the local municipality. It was here I also learnt how highly connected many of our country facilitators are. When we got to the municipality we were welcomed by both the mayor and the town manager. For the full three days of the GBV action plan workshop in Gobabis, both the mayor and deputy mayor, town manager and all senior management attended the three-day GBV action plan workshop. The mayor also does a status update on what they municipality has been doing to ensure that it meets targets set in its gender action plans as well as share some of the challenges in implementing other activities. This kind of buy-in from senior officials is vital to ensuring action plans are implemented and that councils are held accountable. It was a small victory in a small community, but this is how plans are realised, one place at a time.

While working with Priscilla Maposa in Zimbabwe I was hit hard in the face with the precedent set by many organisations

[1] Abigail Jacobs-Williams is the Gender and Governance Programme Manager

working in Zimbabwe that pay councillors to attend workshops. Late in the afternoon on the first day of the workshop we could see that the councillors had a burning issue they wanted to discuss. After some investigation from our side, we picked up that councillors did not want the workshop to take place so close to their offices. Why? They had missed out on travel per diems they would have received if they had to travel a longer distances to the workshop. They also wanted to know why they were not getting an allowance for attending our workshop because they are usually paid by other organisations which hold workshops.

At GL we had thought that by going to councils directly it would show that we want to work with them more closely and support them and provide them with capacity within their work environments and communities, so they could then practically apply the skills they learn through our workshops. Thanks to the good relationship GL has with the Zimbabwe Local Government Association (ZILGA), the umbrella local government association for the urban and rural councils of Zimbabwe, the matter was resolved quickly and easily and GL did not have to pay the councillors for attending the workshops.



Cyber dialogue participants and Faides Nsofu (center) in Kapiri Mposhi, Zambia.
Photo: Albert Ngosa

Working with Faides Nsofu in Zambia re-emphasised the importance of strategic partnerships with local government associations. On arrival in Zambia, my first visit was a staff meeting with the Local Government Association of Zambia (LGAZ), where Faides has been fully incorporated, almost as a staff member. The Gender and Governance programme's work, specifically the Centres of Excellence (COE) processes, is a standing item on their staff meeting agenda: the local association co-facilitates all COE workshops. Faides regularly has to report on challenges, victories, gaps, and other matters to ensure the process is on track and so the association can ensure councils approve all COE activities. This type of support from partners such as local associations makes our work so much easier. They do not just sign MOUs but actually implement their part of the deal.

Over the months I have often compared these productive and colourful visits, as well as our varied work, to Newton's third law: "For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction". This accurately describes the Gender and Governance programme work. We face many challenges given the diverse contexts we work in, yet we also celebrate many equal and positive victories. It is these victories which continually inspire us to keep working at the coalface, with the people on the ground who need these skills the most.

This chapter concerns GL's Gender and Governance programme, that is guided by provisions in the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development which call for equal representation and participation of women and men in all areas of decision-making by 2015. The chapter provides an overview to the programme; the institutional linkages that have been forged; an analysis of the individual beneficiaries, what they have learned, how they have grown, what Gender Links has learned and how we propose to take this programme forward.

Background

The Gender and Governance programme has grown out of various research and advocacy projects which aim to promote equal representation and effective participation of

women in decision-making. The programme stems from an under-researched niche which was identified. Local government is the level closest to the people, yet little research had been conducted around gender and local government.



GL receives Investing in the Future Award in October 2011. *Photo: Gender Links*

The programme has grown to be regionally-recognised: it recently won the *Mail and Guardian* "Investing in the Future" award in the non-profit category. The award praised the programme for recognising the importance of working with local government to bring about social change in Southern Africa. This brings together GL's core programme work in very holistic way, which can be seen through the current Centres of Excellence for Gender Mainstreaming in Local Government process. The programme functions across GL's four main programme categories, i.e. research, policies and action plans, advocacy and training.

Research

In 2002/2003 GL conducted the seminal study *Ringing up the Changes: Gender in Southern African Politics*, which was the first of its kind in the region. It examined the impact of women in politics in SADC. Among other findings, it identified local government as a weak area as far as gender equality work: almost all empowerment strategies undertaken to that point had focused on parliamentarians. As a result, in 2006 Gender Links extended the research to women's participation in local government in four SADC countries: Lesotho, Mauritius, Namibia and South Africa. This was then published in the book *At the Coalface: Gender and Local Government*. The study found that very little was being done at the local level to involve or empower women, both within institutions and as part of their service delivery mandates. The research has since been extended to Botswana, Madagascar, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zimbabwe and Zambia.

Policy and action plans

Armed with the findings of this research, GL works with partner organisations in each country to launch the findings and then try to bring about change. This is done by coordinating strategy development workshops with key policy-makers and representatives of district councils around mainstreaming gender in local government. Following strategy workshops, representatives are brought together for a four-day training of trainers workshop to develop locally-adapted materials to assist local councils in formulating gender action plans. The final phase involves conducting training at the local council level, as well as assisting councillors and officials to develop gender action plans for each council. The policy and action plan workshops have now been incorporated into the new Centres of Excellence for Gender Mainstreaming in Local Government process.

Advocacy

> *"...In March 2010 I also attended the Gender Justice and Local Government Summit held in Johannesburg. That was a great learning opportunity for me and an eye opener. I managed to mix and mingle with other fellow councillors and local government people from across the region. I learnt a lot from the case studies. As a council we did not showcase a best practice but come 2011, count us in."*
>
> - Councillor Patricia Ndhlovu - Beitbridge Town Council -Zimbabwe

At the Coalface: Gender and Local Government research has been distilled into

fact sheets which are distributed to the media and also at training workshops. GL has also produced a DVD which draws on examples and cases studies from Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland to demonstrate the impact of different electoral systems and the use of quotas to increase women's representation in decision-making positions. A key advocacy tool which GL has now instituted is the annual Gender Justice and Local Government Summit and Awards. The first Summit and awards were held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 22-24 March 2010. Awards were presented to five women and four men whose work on the ground in their respective countries won the highest accolades from judges and participants during Summit presentations. The second Gender Justice and Local Government Summit and Awards are scheduled to take place from 28-30 March 2011.

Training

The concept and idea behind the Centres of Excellence for Gender Mainstreaming in Local Government came out of the first Summit in 2010. The concept is a follow-up to the gender and local government research, strategies and Gender and GBV action plans roll-out that took place from 2007 - 2010. These were introduced across those SADC municipalities that work with Gender Links. Currently GL is working on the COE initiative with 100 councils from 10 countries. From May 2010 until April 2011, GL worked with 71 councils and will have reached 100 by April 2011. This has understandably been a full and demanding load for GL's Gender Justice and Local Governance's facilitators, as reflected in this excerpt from the Namibian facilitator's staff *Learning Journey:*

> *"The gender training by Gender Links was very important and very interesting. We understood for the first time what gender meant. We went to find out what the problem is. This training should be extended to the remotest areas of our country and should include chiefs. This is because culturally a woman should not reveal when beaten by her husband or she will be divorced. Chiefs are central to GBV work because a chief commands a lot of power and controls many things. The traditional leaders can easily disseminate new ideas because they command respect"*
>
> - Sangulukani Isaac Zulu,
> *Area Councillor Chongwe Ward, Zambia*

TABLE 8.1: SUMMARY OF GENDER AND GOVERNANCE PROGRAMME WORK (RESEARCH, POLICY AND ACTION PLANS, ADVOCACY AND TRAINING)

	COUNTRY FACILITATOR	RESEARCH	LAUNCH AND STRATEGY	TOT	DISTRICT LEVEL ROLL OUT	COE PROCESS (number of councils since Apr 2010 - Jan 2011)	GENDER JUSTICE AND LOCAL GOVT SUMMIT
PHASE ONE							
1. South Africa	Ntombi Mbadlanyana	Done	Done	Done	Done	7	March 2010
2. Lesotho	Mpho Mankimane	Done	Done	Done	Done	10	March 2011
3. Mauritius	Mary Coopan	Done	Done	Done	Done	9	
4. Namibia	Sarry Xoagus -Eises	Done	Done	Done	Done	10	
PHASE TWO							
5. Swaziland	Ncane Maziya	Done	Done	Done	Done	4	
6. Botswana	Keabonye Ntsabane	Done	Done	Done	Done	3	
7. Zambia	Faides Nsofu	Done	Done	Done	Done	10	
PHASE THREE							
8. Zimbabwe	Priscilla Maposa	Done	Done	Done	COE process	9	
9. Madagascar	Ialfine Tracoulat	Done	Done	Done	COE process	9	
10. Mozambique	Mevasse Sibia	Done	March 2011	March 2011	COE process	10 councils identified to start April 2011	

2010: A GL field worker's diary
By Sarry Xoagus- Eisis, Namibia

The year 2010 was a year of challenges. I visited headquarters in the year about four times. Calls here; calls there; Gender Action Plans; Local Government Summit; workshops; quarterly planning meetings; Alliance liaising and Performance Agreements (PAs). Not to talk about monthly reports, stock taking every month ends, Skype teleconferences, online monitoring and evaluation forms, cyber dialogues and more.

I must be well understood. I am not complaining about too much work. These are tools in place to monitor and evaluate progress we all make in our daily work every day. Without these measurables, GL will not achieve its goals, vision and mission statement. I am one of those cadres that want to be associated with Gender link's ideals of a Southern Africa in which women and men are able to realise their full potential in their private and public lives as set out in the 28 targets of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development to be achieved by 2015.

The Centre of Excellence for Mainstreaming Gender in Local Authorities (COEs) marked a milestone for me. It started with the identification of, and mapping of some Councils we want to work with during the implementation of seven stages leading to the Summit 2010. Not that easy. Politics play a major role in all council meetings, even during the roll out of the COEs in local authorities. But GL has made inroads in the implementation of the COE in all Councils earmarked.

Some of the work has been eased by the appointment of interns. They are there to put all forms on-line after workshops. I am happy with my intern as all forms are captured on line immediately after each workshop. My learning journey at Gender Links has been full of challenges but sometimes joy, and happiness, when the job is done.

This time around, the demands on the ground are workshop reports, from stages one to six, beneficiaries analyses for partners and interviews, Sixteen day workshops, Sixteen day GBV campaigns, cyber dialogues, reports and stocks, my own beneficiaries, my POEs, quotes for video footage during 16 Days, budgets, Portfolio of Evidence on Gender Training (POEs) and many other requests from HQ.



Photo: Gender Links

Sarry Xoagus Eisis (left) at the SADC Heads of State Summit in Namibia, August 2010.

As the saying goes: "so much to do, so little time!" Thanks to the Director of Gender Links, Colleen Lowe Morna, Deputy Director, Kubi Rama and Manager Abigail Jacobs-Williams, staff and of course the Board for guidance and constructive criticism I can say: "You made my day, I made your night."

Institutional links

Table 8.2: Institutional linkages in the Gender and Governance programme

Country	Partner
Lesotho	Ministry of Gender and Youth, Sports and Recreation (MGYSR)
Madagascar	Ialananindro Council
	Andoharanomaitso Council
	Antanamitarana Council
	Anjinjaomby Council
	Toamasina Council
	Ambatondrazaka Council
	Mahavelona Foulpointe Council
Namibia	Association of Local Authorities Namibia (ALAN)
	Namibia Association of Local Authority Officers (NALAO)
South Africa	South Africa Local Government Association (SALGA)
Swaziland	Swaziland Local Government Association (SWALGA)
Zambia	Kapiri Council
	Chingola Council
	Local Government Association of Zambia (LGAZ)
Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe Local Government Association (ZILGA)

Key institutional linkages have been created through the Gender and Governance programme. As illustrated in Table 8.2, the programme has 16 MOUs with the partners local government associations and individual councils.

CASE STUDIES OF INSTITUTIONAL LINKAGES

Linking with local government associations in Zimbabwe

"In just one year, GL has made inroads into the Zimbabwe Local Government Sector in a phenomenal way. The achievements so far made within such a short space of time make the job seem very simple. Yet it is all due to GL's commitment and dedication to its vision and mission in Zimbabwe and the region"

- Francis Duri, Secretary General of the Urban Council's Association of Zimbabwe (UCAZ) and Local Government of Africa-Southern Africa Regional Office (UCLGA-SARO).

"Gender Links has reflected its muscle and commitment in developing gender in Zimbabwe with a family spirit which has resulted in the success story of the gender programme"

- Rodger Mozhenty, Association of Rural Development Council's (ARDC) Zimbabwe.

In 2009 when GL sought to begin local government work in Zimbabwe, the task seemed like an impossible mission. Fresh from divisive elections, urban and rural councils stood largely divided; the latter associated with the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) and the latter the Zimbabwe African National Union/Patriotic Front (ZANU/PF). Following several visits by the Executive Director, and as a result of the persistence of GL's country co-ordinator, we were able to forge a unique partnership with both sides. Indeed, the leaders of the two associations sat around a lunch table together for the first time under GL's facilitation and have worked closely on gender issues over the past two years.

The Urban Councils Association of Zimbabwe (UCAZ) is the umbrella organisation of all of Zimbabwe's 31 urban councils. UCAZ represents the interests of its members through lobbying and advocacy for amendments and improvement of policies and legislation that affect the day-to-day running of urban councils and service delivery. The Association of Rural Development Councils (ARDC)of Zimbabwe aims to advance and safeguard the rights, powers and duties enjoyed by the rural district councils and to promote local government and its role in development and service provision.The two now come together under the umbrella of the Zimbabwe Local Government Association (ZILGA) that GL also works closely with.

The partnership between GL and the local government associations in Zimbabwe has leveraged many other key partners and gender champions. At the national level, the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development and the Ministry of Local Government have been very supportive. There is a harmonious relationship between GL's Gender Justice and Local Government Facilitator for Zimbabwe, Priscilla Maposa, and UCAZ's/ARDC programmes departments. GL provided technical assistance and capacity-building to the Women in Local Government Forum (WLGF) Executive Committee in developing a strategic plan.



Councillor Bernadette Chipembere of Chiredzi and Councillor Patricia Muchekesi of Victoria Falls stand out as champions in promoting the rights of women in their respective towns.

Councillor Chipembere has been fighting for the rights of women in Chiredzi town and the surrounding areas. She also scooped an award during the Gender Justice and Local Government summit in March 2010 for her outstanding work in championing the rights of women in Chiredzi. She has been consistent in her work with women and widows in fighting against domestic violence and discrimination. For her efforts she won a laptop computer which she uses to receive communication through the internet. She also hosted the 2010 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence cyber dialogues.

Councillor Patricia Muchekesi is the Deputy Mayor of Victoria Falls Municipality. She works with the Rose of Charity orphanage in Chinotimba, a high density suburb. It provides accommodation and feeding to more than 120 orphans. Both councillors are actively involved with GL, participating in GL activities in Zimbabwe and South Africa.

Key outputs of the GL, UCAZ and ARDC partnerships:

- Development of the Zimbabwe COE manual;
- Research in participation and representation of women in local government in Zimbabwe resulting in a report entitled *At The Coalface*;
- ZILGA Gender Policy;
- WLGF Action Plan;
- Centres of Excellence roll-out in 10 councils;
- Capacity-building training workshops for the Women in Local Government Forum (WLGF) of UCAZ;
- Adoption of the ZILGA Gender Policy by UCAZ's 69th Annual Conference and General Meeting in December 2010;
- Collaboratively applying for funding to cascade the COE process to other Zimbabwean local councils.



Women in Local Government Forum with GL Executive Director Colleen Lowe Morna and Zimbabwe Local Government Facilitator Priscilla Maposa. *Photo: Gender Links*

GL 10-year anniversary message



Colleen Lowe Morna and Francis Duri during a partnership meeting. *Photo: Gender Links*

On behalf of UCAZ and the United Cities and Local Governments of Africa-Southern Africa Regional Office (UCLGA-SARO) it is our great pleasure to convey our congratulatory message on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of Gender Links.

Over the ten years Gender Links has played a fundamental role in integrating and institutionalising gender issues in local government in the SADC region. In doing so it has contributed immensely to the attainment of the goals set out in the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development and other international declarations. Your work on gender justice and equality, particularly the Centres of Excellence programme, in which our towns and cities are participating, has made a huge impact in sensitising local authorities on gender-based violence and other forms of discrimination. It has greatly transformed perceptions in local authorities

and their communities. They are now more knowledgeable about gender and the need for gender-sensitive systems of governance than before.

It is our desire to see Gender Links strengthening its resolve to tackle impediments to gender equality and strengthen the institutional capacity of local government associations in the region to enable them to tackle issues on gender justice effectively. We look forward to a long lasting, mutually beneficial and fruitful collaboration between our organisations.

We wish you every success in your endeavours to ensure gender justice.

- Francis Duri.

Cascading the COE's with government help in Lesotho

The Ministry of Gender and Youth, Sports and Recreation (MGYSR) in Lesotho is the national gender machinery that coordinates and mainstreams gender issues in national policies and implementation programmes in an effort to achieve gender equality. Making use of the National Gender Policy as one of the guiding tools, MGYSR is able to provide technical support and expertise to implementing partners, advocate for review of discriminatory laws, as well as monitor all women's empowerment and gender orientated initiatives in the country.

Collaboration between MGYSR and GL started in 2010 around the 'Centres of Excellence for Gender Mainstreaming in Local Government' (COE) project and the main result of this co-operation is a signed MOU between these two organisations.

This engagement was prompted by the launch of the 2007 pilot study *'At the Coalface: Gender and Local Government in Southern Africa'*, Gender Strategy for local Government workshop and the gender action plan workshops at the district level. Offices of both District Administrators and District Council Secretaries have played an integral part in supporting the COE project, thus making it easy to work with councils within respective districts. The Principal District Gender Officers are part of the driving force in ensuring successful implementation of this project. The signed MOU enables their full support and technical assistance throughout the six-stage COE process. For instance, by co-facilitating management meetings, gender and GBV action plan workshops for local councils and village level workshops. Key participants in this are local councillors and officials as well as communities who are normally engaged around the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development.

Key activities and milestones

- A gender Training of Trainers' workshop (TOT) for the Principal District Gender Officers was jointly held by MGYSR and GL in 2010. The objectives of the TOT was to enhance knowledge and gender training skills of the gender officers on issues around gender and local government in preparation for context-specific interventions, community mobilisation and capacity-building workshops for 10 identified community councils. Secondly, to engage and familiarise them with training materials to be used for COE process per depicted stages. Thirdly, to provide a common platform for peer learning where new and long-standing officers would be learning from one another.



Lesotho Councillor Matau Moreki, featured on the cover of *At the Coalface*. *Photo: Gender Links*

- Working through the Principal District Gender Officers, MGYSR in partnership with GL has been able to hold meetings with council management and carry out gender situational analysis in 10 community councils. It has also managed to conduct gender and GBV action plan workshops and village level workshops in three community councils. Awareness-raising on the SADC Protocol was also done at village level.

Outputs

- Development of gender and GBV action plans for three councils is a key output.
- It is envisaged that seven remaining councils will be assisted in developing their specific action plans.

Outcomes

Both organisations have benefited in that the partnership between the two organisations has been strengthened. Secondly, their institutional profile and that of gender work across the country has been elevated. There is consistent support by MGYSR to GL programmes other than COE work. The official launch of the 2010 SADC Barometer study is an example.

Through the Centres of Excellence for Gender Mainstreaming in Local Government process, GL currently works closely with 72 local councils in ten Southern African countries on a six stage process that involves political buy-in; a situation analysis; inception workshop; community mobilisation; applied learning and backstopping. The stages reached by councils in each of the countries are outlined below (May 2010-February 2011):

Table 8.3: COEs across Southern Africa

Country	Stage one	Stage two	Stage three	Stage four	Stage five	Stage six
Botswana	6	5	0	0	0	0
Lesotho	10	10	3	3	0	0
Madagascar	9	9	6	2	0	0
Mauritius	9	4	3	3	0	3
Mozambique	0	0	0	0	0	0
Namibia	9	9	5	5	3	6
South Africa	7	7	7	3	0	1
Swaziland	4	2	1	0	0	0
Zambia	9	9	7	5	0	4
Zimbabwe	9	6	6	3	2	4
TOTAL	**72**	**61**	**38**	**24**	**5**	**18**

Beneficiaries

Between 2002 and 2010 the Gender and Governance programme has reached at total of 8 468 individuals; 41% women and 59% men.

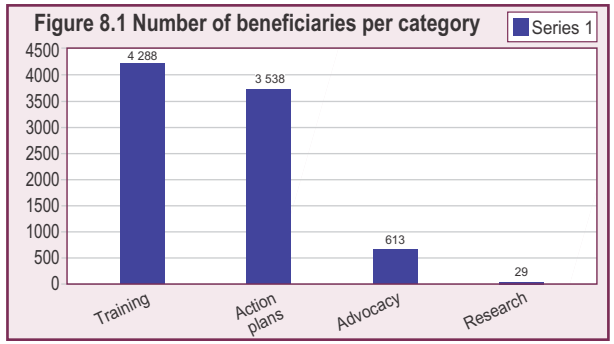


Figure 8.1 illustrates that the majority of beneficiaries have been in the training and action plan process categories. These are the two main in-country activities of the GL Governance programme.

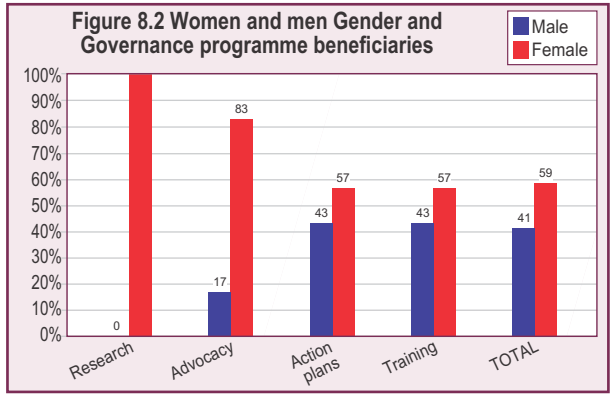


Figure 8.2 illustrates that the majority of beneficiaries in the categories of research and advocacy have been women. However men account for 43% of beneficiaries in the action plan and training categories. Some pertinent observations include:

- *Research* - the programme has benefitted mostly women mainly due to the fact that the overall focus of research is on the role and voices of women at local level.
- *Advocacy* - the programme's advocacy projects have benefited more women as our overall target is to increase the numbers of women at these activities. Women are most often those who do not have access to information.
- *Action plans and training* - women have mostly benefitted from the action planning and training processes as these are held together and targets for action planning workshops are to include more women than men.
- *Overall* - our programme has benefitted more women than men. But considering how conservative this sector is, the fact that men have participated in such high numbers in action planning and training (and 41% overall) is highly commendable.

Key benefits

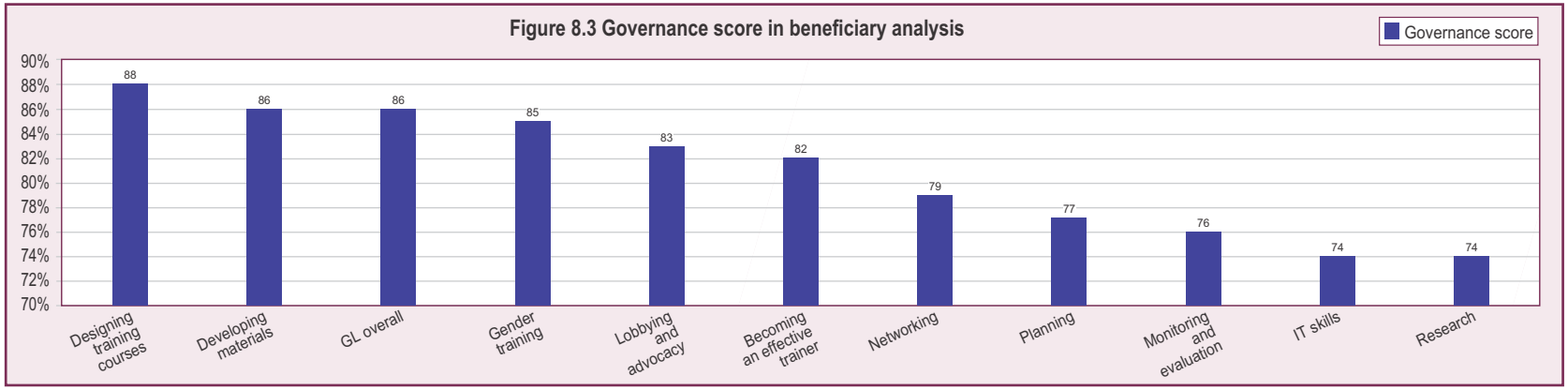


Figure 8.3 is a breakdown of scores from the Gender Links Beneficiary Analysis (BA) for this programme area. Key findings are that:

- Overall, the Governance programme areas of learning had a strong score of 86%.
- The graph shows that the strongest area is designing training courses at 88% and the weakest areas are IT skills and research, both at 74%.
- Other strong programme areas are developing materials and conducting gender training.

Designing training courses - 88%

This is one of our strongest areas mainly due to how we work in each individual country. Research is followed by a launch and strategy workshop. During this strategy workshop we test the training manual and do a training of trainers, so participants are equally involved in both how we design the training and in the materials we use.

Comment from the BA:
"The knowledge gained through needs assessment tools has been beneficial"

The new COE process has also contributed to this as we no longer do once-off training with councils, but provide continuous support, capacity-building and mentoring. In this way the training courses are continuous and specific to the needs of the councils.

Developing materials - 86%

Comment from the BA: *"I learned how to design a training manual for gender mainstreaming in local government"*

This is another strong area for our programme because gender and local government research is country-specific and ensures a lot of interest and buy-in for gender mainstreaming needs identified. Stakeholders want to be presented with research which is most relevant to their context; therefore our research makes a lot of impact. Our training manuals are produced in the local languages of the countries we work in so participants are able to engage with the manuals in their own language.

The training manuals also use practical country-specific case studies and examples that participants can relate to.

Gender training - 85%

This is another strong area because our training begins with the basics of understanding key gender concepts. This usually sets the stage for the workshops so participants are able to engage freely and openly. Where necessary, training is also conducted in local languages so participants are comfortable vocalising their opinions. Trainers and facilitators are constantly updated and trained to ensure they are confident in their field and are aware of topical gender issues. The impact is reflected in the comments below by the Deputy Mayor of Lobastse, Malebogo Kruger.

"I have learned about building my self-confidence and being able to speak without fear around gender issues, and that has made me feel like a different person"
- Councillor Annah Murigwa - Makoni Rural District Council Zimbabwe

"Before I had contact with Gender Links, like most people I used to associate gender with women's issues only. Now I can say that in whatever I undertake in my work, I look at it with a gender perspective."
- Principal Assistant Secretary S. Purmessur: Ministry of Local Government and Outer Islands, Mauritius

Birthday wish for Gender Links

Gender Links, through the Gender and Local Government training that I attended in Johannesburg, has equipped me with skills to advocate for gender equality.

As a politician and a trainer, the training has changed my attitude towards my role in addressing gender based violence. It was a challenge before to address men in the political arena, but through the training, the Gender and Local Government Manual, I am a star and a confident facilitator. I did not benefit alone, but as the Chairperson of the BALA Women's Commission, I mobilised other commissioners to take part in the media literacy training, in order to enhance their IT, media and campaigning skills, from which they benefited for the 2009 elections.

This alone marketed me and I was proud to be invited by Women against Rape during the 16 Days commemoration to be a specialist on GBV-related issues. Gender Links has literally made me; I am now a confident, competent woman politician of a high integrity through its training and empowerment, "Yes we can"!

On behalf of myself and the all the BALA women's commissioners I would like to wish Gender Links a happy birthday and to encourage them to continue the fight for gender equality.

- Malebogo Kruger, Deputy Mayor of Lobatse and Chairperson of BALA Women's Commission.



Malebogo Kruger at a press briefing on Gender Justice & Local Goverment Summit. *Photo: Roos van Dorp*

Lobbying and advocacy - 83%

The annual Gender Justice and Local Government Summit and Awards, which GL has now institutionalised, has contributed greatly to the programme's advocacy component. The fact that local level councillors and officials were given the opportunity to showcase their good practices at a regional platform encourages councils to constantly lobby and advocate around core gender mainstreaming issues.

Comment from the BA:
"Developed an understanding of how strategies can be used and how to raise awareness with regard to lobbying and advocacy"

Planning - 77%

This is a weaker area for the programme as councils often do action planning in the workshops but it is later discovered that plans are packed away in councils collecting dust. Often we are informed that action plans are created but not implemented. Usually no one in the council is held accountable for this. Sometimes councils do not send the appropriate participants to action plan workshops, because of this plans are often not taken forward or championed. The action planning framework is sometimes overwhelming for some councils that feel it is too much to cover in three days. But as the profile of councillor Peggy Nyirende Mwape shows, councillors that have been part of the process from the start have grasped the concept of gender mainstreaming and become champions within their councils.

Comments from the BAs:
- *"Learned how to develop a gender action plan"*
- *"Developing a gender strategy for local government"*
- *"Learned to coordinate plans with activities with other partners"*
- *"Improved sustainability need to prioritise activities for proposed planning"*

Champion for change

Councillor **Peggy Nyirenda Mwape** is a councillor for Luanshya Municipal Council Fisenge Ward 11. She first encountered GL during the research in Zambia in 2008. She then attended the strategy workshop in February 2009 and the provincial Gender Action Plan workshop in November 2009. Now she is actively involved in the COE process. She described her experience as follows:

"In Luanshya district there are only four female councillors against 26 male councillors and in the past it has been quite difficult to really express myself fully as a woman in the midst of men. Also looking at the traditions and the myths that surround women representation in politics I used to find it quite difficult to articulate and convince the men on developmental issues that concern women. But through my association with GL, I have gained a lot of knowledge on how I can assertively and confidently articulate gender issues in my ward, during council meetings and in different forums that I have represented the council.

I have also learnt how to mainstream gender in my planning at ward level. I can now confidently address GBV and gender issues at my council and ward, the training has also capacitated me with knowledge on gender issues and how to mount up campaigns at



Peggy Nyirenda Mwape. *Photo: Gender Links*

community level using different communication strategies.

I have also used the knowledge I gained at my workplace - the council - by encouraging the council to establish gender committees at ward level. I now understand the need for such a committee and at least is one way we can achieve the 50/50 campaign.

GL should continue with research work and disseminate findings to all political stakeholders. You also need to educate the decision makers and policy makers on gender issues so that they begin to incorporate women at all levels of decision-making.

GL should also continue to take stock of government's commitment in implementing the targets of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. Include especially district councils in remote areas in the COE process. The councils should also be helped to mobilise resources for efficient and effective implementation of the gender and GBV action plans at local level."

Monitoring and evaluation - 76%
This area is weak due to the fact our M and E processes and tools are still evolving. Our forms, score cards and other tools are often updated or amended and participants do not like to re-do forms they had completed previously.

Participants also sometimes find our M and E tools overwhelming. We have a range of forms which need to be administered at the start and the end of workshops. Participants often complain that there are too many forms.

IT skills - 74%
This is likely our weakest area because the COE process only introduces IT skills during stage five. This is institutionalised based on requests from the councils.

However, if the council identifies that it needs capacity-building around IT, country facilitators will help provide that type of support. IT skills and capacity-building are also the focus of our Media programme, so many of the councillors and officials are trained on IT skills through this programme and not Governance. While we still need to work on this area, emerging examples of the sea change that IT can make to women on the ground is cause for celebration:



Councillor Bernadette Chipembere (left) receiving her award. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

Connected! Women councillors @ work

When Councillor Bernadette Chipembere won a laptop at the Gender Links (GL) Gender Justice and Local Government Summit in March 2010 for her outstanding work to promote women's rights, a whole new world opened up for her and those around her.

She got an E Mail address and has become the main source of information for the council in the remote southeast of Zimbabwe. She joined Facebook and has 200 friends in the gender equality movement. She receives and distributes the GL list serve that includes Opinion and Commentary Service articles. She also coordinated the 2010 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence cyber dialogues in Chiredzi, exposing local women to the wonders of the internet.

Most important, the work on the ground is steaming ahead. Following the publicity she received for the award, she received a visit from the Minister of Lands. The 72 cases of widows dispossessed of their land which she took up, and which won her recognition, have been resolved. The district now has a woman District Administrator, appointed, Chipembere suspects, as a result of "all the noise we make here. If you talk about gender in Chiredzi, yes we do make a noise." Laughing that she is the unpaid legal advice centre for women, Chipembere reels off a number of domestic violence cases in which police have lost the files of women or otherwise frustrated the prosecution of cases. "I am telling the police they must get on top of their game," she says. "I will not allow the police and perpetrators to win when they should not."

When cholera broke out in Chiredzi and council officials pounced on women selling food at local markets, Chipembere intervened to find solutions short of evicting the women from their stalls. "When council officials look at women vending food, they see cholera," Chipembere observed. "I see women working to send their children to school."



Cllr Evelyn Kgodungwe. *Photo: Roos van Dorp*

In Botswana, after Gender Links conducted a three day media literacy training course from 14 to16 September 2009, Botswana Congress Party Councillor (Selibe Phikwe) Evelyn Kgodungwe got connected to the internet and email.

"I have connected email in my house and it is now easy to communicate and get invitation from outside," she said. "With this email I receive invitations in time and I am able to chat with my family every time I want, email is cost effective with it you can reach the out to the world". Her email address is ekgodungwe@gmail.com

Growth and development

Through the Gender and Governance Programme work many local government councillors and officials' lives have changed as evidenced in the excerpts from interviews below:



Centres of Excellence strategy planning. *Photo: Gender Links*

South Africa: "The district was assisted with the development of the action plan and the situational analysis conducted by Gender Links also assisted the council, as we now know the gaps identified and have formulated strategies in place to address these issues." *Naledi Frida Masipa, Gender Coordinator, Capricorn District Municipality.*

Zambia: "The councillors began appreciating the role of women councillors especially after attending the local government workshops. They have recommended immediate actions to address the glaring gaps identified in the situation analysis. The male councillors have started supporting female councillors to contest for key decision-making positions such as being mayors. This was the case after the provincial workshop in Kabwe in Zambia. A woman councillor named Christabel Mwenda had just been sworn in as the deputy mayor after passing through a very difficult political environment after serving as a councillor for eight years. She was vehemently opposed by both men and women in the communities and she was called names for daring to challenge men. The male councillors realised their wrongdoing in undermining women because of their gender after the Gender Links training. They encouraged her to stand for a second term and she was elected almost unopposed as

deputy mayor." - *Male councillor in Zambia (GL evaluation 2010)*

Lesotho: "Being exposed to informative forums where important issues concerning men and women are discussed. This has been an opportunity for me to learn and apply what I have learned in my life and the lives of others around me" *Councillor Malijane Morahanye, Maseru City Council*.

GL staff learn-on-the-job

GL staff have also grown immensely through their work at the local level, as evidenced in these excerpts from the staff Learning Journey for 2010/2011:

Lesotho: "Knowledge and skills acquisition on gender issues significantly took place from August 2008, when I formally joined Gender Links working in the Gender and Governance programme. With a series of launches of *At the Coalface: Gender and Local Government in Southern Africa* report, gender strategies for local government workshops and localised gender and GBV action plan workshops, participation at these events has been an eye-opener to myself and the ordinary women and men that I have interacted with. As a field worker, there is nothing more fulfilling than seeing people's faces frown and smile at the same time as hot-heated debates are carried on regarding gender in the context of African culture."
Mpho Mankimane


Mpho Mankimane. *Photo: Gender Links*

Madagascar: "Today I can say that GL changed my life, professionally and in my private life too. On a professional level, because now I can work at ease in the English language, both written and spoken. I also developed new skills in 'gender' concepts, gender and local government, gender and education, and gender and the media. In terms of personal development, today I am able to work on different subjects and under pressure, as with GL everything is urgent and we must adapt to the context. In my private life, for I divorced in 2007, and during my work with Gender Links, I finally found the right man. Today I am the happy Mum of a five month old son. Thanks to Gender Links, two hearts have been linked!"
Ialfine Papisy


Ialfine Papisy. *Photo: Gender Links*

Mauritius: "The average number of participants in workshops was low; councillors almost inexistent and cadres, if present, would come and go due to exigencies of service. At the same time local elections were in the pipeline and priorities were elsewhere and they still are. It is a "wait and see" situation. But I did my workshops where I



Mary Coopan (left). *Photo: Gender Links*

was welcomed and those who came did actively participate; I had to adjust but the satisfaction shown and expressed by the participants was my joy especially the SADC Protocol workshops with the grassroot level people. Village people in the community or associations are more eager to learn and I have gone many requests to go back next year in the regions." ***Mary Coopan***

South Africa: "As a country facilitator I have had the opportunity to meet people from different backgrounds and I have often been very humbled by the people I have met while conducting my gender mainstreaming workshops. One also forms a bond with the participants and it also brings such a great sense of positive reception when the participants leave the workshop feeling empowered and acknowledged. My own knowledge base has been increased and very often I have found myself feeling rather challenged, in terms of taking a stance with some of the issues that are dealt with on a daily basis at Gender Links." ***Ntombi Mbadlanyana***



Ntombi Mbadlanyana (centre). *Photo: Gender Links*



Faides Nsofu. *Photo: Gender Links*

Zambia: "The staff award for the best community mobilisation for the Gender Justice and Local Government Summit in March 2010 made a difference in my working career as a Local Government Facilitator. The award gave me an opportunity to believe more in myself, it also gave me an opportunity to learn and have social interaction with my partners and stakeholders." ***Faides Nsofu***



Priscilla Maposa (left). *Photo: Gender Links*

Zimbabwe: "Working for GL on the Local Government programme in Zimbabwe has impacted immensely in my personal growth. My research, facilitation, computer, communication, time management and financial management skills just to name a few have greatly been sharpened. As I conducted and coordinated the Local Government research in Zimbabwe whilst Susan Tolmay (former Governance Manager) coordinated and managed the research from the head office, I learned quite a lot. I very much appreciate the team spirit that prevailed between the GL team and all our partners. The greatest achievement came with the successful completion and launch of the research at the UCAZ AGM held in Victoria Falls in December 2010" ***Priscilla Maposa***

Lessons learned

- Partnerships are important to ensure buy-in of gender strategies and action plans at the local level. This not only facilitates implementation of action plans, but also sustainability of initiatives. Building the capacity of partners and meeting with them regularly is crucial as it strengthens the partners' knowledge around gender mainstreaming and also demonstrates seriousness around sustaining networks.
- MOUs with partners are important to ensure they deliver on commitments and can be held accountable. This also ensures that we yield results through collaboration and save resources.
- Local presence is crucial to make certain we understand the local context. It is particularly beneficial having country facilitators in those countries GL works in; they know the languages, understand the context and are able to navigate sometimes difficult terrain.
- Programme follow-up is important. Even as we progress with new research, countries and action plans, we are conscious of the need to cascade from district to local level and to provide backstopping support to the work already begun. Through the COE process we are able to follow-up regularly and also provide necessary support we may not have given the first time. The COE process allows for building strong relationships with councils.
- Sustaining the COE process is crucial because there is now more buy-in from councils who want to work with us and ensure gender mainstreaming is institutionalised and that workshops are continuous.
- Identifying new local government opportunities and areas to work in is important to show that the COE process and the Gender and Governance programme are constantly evolving. Local government has many exciting and innovative avenues for growth which can benefit those at the coalface.
- The annual Gender Justice and Local Government Summit and Awards are mutually-beneficial advocacy initiatives that have opened many doors, not only



Saskia Naidoo (right) from Mauritius receiving an award at the Gender Justice and Local Government Summit. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

for GL, but also for participants who are able to discuss their work at a regional platform.

- Registering local offices in the countries in which we work is useful because we are then able to access in-country funds that can allow us to not only sustain our work, but also cascade programme activities at local level. Working with both councils and communities during the 16 Days of Activism is important, ensuring that campaigns are bigger and have greater impact on communities.
- In countries where there are local offices, more staff need to be employed to ensure that programmes are sustainable and consistent.
- There is a need to train more women community leaders so they can see the importance in standing for local level leadership.



Next steps

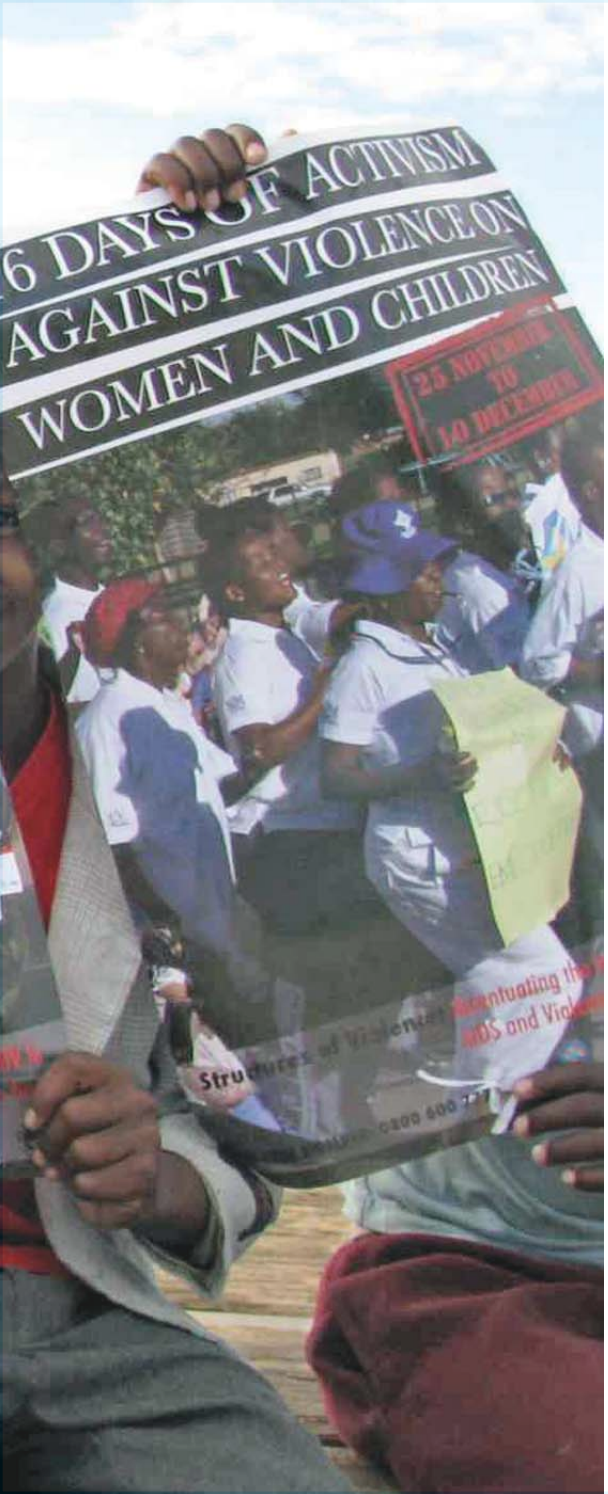
- Ensure that gender is mainstreamed in local councils, with flagship programmes on gender violence, HIV and AIDS, care work, economic justice and climate change.
- Cascading the COE process to another 200 councils over the next three years. Ensuring ownership and sustainability of the process through local associations and key partners so that even after GL leaves, the process will continue.
- Implementing a unique, on-the-job capacity-building model that includes peer learning through the COE process. Since the start of 2011 we are able to offer local government COE training as an accredited course: this will also assist us in the new "each one teach one" campaign that we hope to start in 2011 through a councillor training of trainers and peer training programmes.
- The addition of two new stages for the current 100 COE's: economic empowerment and gender and climate change to be canvassed with local associations at the Gender Justice and Local Government Summit.
- Further strengthening partnerships with local associations, ministries and other key local government stakeholders that will ensure ownership of the COE processes in each of the countries that GL works.
- Developing and maintaining local level Monitoring and Evaluation tools used to measure change.
- Gathering and sharing good practices on an annual basis through the Gender and Local Government Summits.


Sixteen Days of Activism
United against gender violence and HIV/AIDS
16 days for life
HALVE GENDER VIOLENCE BY 201
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A GO INAAKANYA LE TWANTSHO YA
KGOKGONTSHO YA BOMME LE BANA
25 NGWANATSELE
- 10 MORULE
STOP THE ABUSE!!
Do not tolerate VIOLENCE
against women and children,
Say NO to violence

Chapter 9

Sixteen days for life: Gender Links for Equality and Justice

By Kubi Rama, Mercy Machisa and Kellelo Tekateka



Taking Back the Night during the 2010 16 Days of Activism in Botswana.
Photo: Vincent Galatlhwe

"Today I have found myself, after a long journey of looking for me. I have finally found myself and I now know I do not need a man to define who I am. I love my daughter, I know now that God brought her into my life for a reason and only I can make myself happy and no one else. Rape will not be my daughter's legacy!".

- Thandeka (not her real name) speaking at the "I" Stories follow up workshop in Johannesburg in November 2009

Fact box

- There have been17 024 beneficiaries in the GL Gender Justice programme, 63% women and 37% men. This represents the largest proportion of beneficiaries.
- GL has put the Sixteen Days of Activism campaign on the map through well articulated regional campaigns and cyber dialogues that have included extensive training of journalists in covering gender violence and of activists in strategic communications.
- An important part of the Sixteen Days campaigns are the "I" stories or personal accounts of experiences of GBV.
- GL worked with governments in ten countries to develop integrated, multi stakeholder National Action Plans to end GBV.
- In 2010 GL started a pilot project in the Gauteng province of South Africa to measure the extent, effects and prevention of GBV.
- The Gender Justice programme will expand its scope to include Economic Development.



Kubi Rama and Grace Dimakatso Maleka, an "I" Stories particpant.
Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna

I[1] am sitting at my computer with about 27 urgent deadlines and a woman walks past my window. She is one of a group of women that we are training to be an effective leader and participate in public office. She is on the phone and I hear: *"I need to recharge my heart …"* That is all I hear but it triggers something inside me. What or who recharges my heart? My exceptional husband; quirky children; a family that dreams are made of or my work?

I am sleep-deprived and leading by exhaustion rather than by example right now. But I am still here at Gender Links after eight years. A fair question would be why? GL is a tough place to work. It has exacting standards, deadlines and a deliverables. But one thing that gives me inspiration is the incredible women we have worked with through the GL "I" Stories project, or first hand accounts, over the last six years.

Maleshoane Motsiri is writing the foreword to the Gauteng GBV Indicators report. Our first experience with Maleshoane was in 2006 when she wrote her "I" Story. She wrote about her experiences of abuse at the hands of her then husband. Now she is the voice of authority on gender-based violence and that in my view is how it should be. She who has lived it can speak with the most authority.

This is what Maleshoane says in the 2010 GL book *The South African "I" Stories experience: Speaking out can set you free*: "Writing the story was like a gift to me, because I knew people are going to read my story. I didn't do it anonymously because I wanted people to see me, to relate to me, for my community to see how tall and proud I am walking even though I wrote about my abuse and to see that even though it happens you will heal and can start all over again and be something in life."

I learned with sadness that one of the women we had worked with, **Praudia Mosupi**, had died. Praudia was only 22 years old when she wrote her "I" Story in 2006. She died in 2008 aged 24. The last few lines of her story read as follows: "I live in the hope that my case will be resolved and that I will pick up my life again... I am finding the courage to make another go of my life."

Another amazing set of stories that always makes me smile is three generations of courage. **Rose Thamae** (or Mum Rose); her daughter Mpho Thamae and her granddaughter Kgomotso Thamae wrote their stories. An incredible account of how Mum Rose survived being gang rape twice and contracting HIV to founding a community home-based care organisation called Let us Grow in Orange Farm. Mpho has joined her mother in Let us Grow and


Maleshoane Motsiri. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

[1] Kubi Rama is Deputy Director and Director of Programmes of GL

facilitates a group of care givers. The truly amazing part of this story is about the then 13 year old Kgomotso who has mobilised the youth in Orange Farm to assist with the care of orphans.

Maleshoane, Praudia, Mum Rose, Mpho, Kgomotso and all the women we have worked in the "I" Stories over the years have taught me about indomitable human spirit, courage and perseverance. These women provide me with the motivation I need to do this work. I am in the privileged provision of working in a space where my personal vision and mission is the same as my place of work.



Mpho, Rose and Kgomotso Thamae. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

So every day when I come to work feeling quite daunted by my long to do list I think of all the women that we have worked with and recharge my heart. It is beyond comprehension that a pandemic as widespread as GBV is not treated with the same degree of seriousness as HIV and AIDS. The women who write their stories tell of inadequate service; maladministration within the judicial system; lack of sensitivity from the police and lack of services generally. By telling their stories they are adding their voices to lobbying and advocating to end GBV.

In a key Monitoring and Evaluation exercise in December 2009, GL convened a follow up workshop with "I" Story participants that is drawn on extensively in this chapter. When she first came to GL in 2007, **Etty Khoza** spoke of how an abusive neighbour chased from her home in 2001 because she is disabled.

"He came to me and kicked me. I fell on the ground, he took my walking stick and hit me with it twice on my head. During this time, he was verbally abusing me and there was blood all over. I could not see where my walking stick was. I could not move and I needed someone to help me up. At that moment a man came and helped me to get up. My mother said I should come home and my younger sister should go and stay in my home."

In the 2009 Etty shared good news with the participants:

"At the GL workshop, I met lots of women who had also been abused. Meeting with them made a big change in my life. Meeting with different people who speak different languages really motivated me. I asked myself, why am I doing this person who hurt me a favour and leaving my own house. I said to myself, let me prove to myself that I am a human being, my life is mine. No matter what he can do or say, to hell with him - this house belongs to me.

I went back to my house that I had left for so long. Since September 2008 until now I do as I please, so he can see I do not care about him and I am not scared of him. The man who abused me sent a neighbour to come ask for forgiveness and I asked the neighbour 'What forgiveness? Why can't he come straight to me like he did last time when he came and hit me, insulted me saying I am a cripple?'"

What Etty taught us is the difference between a victim and a survivor. Behind every strategy, national action plan and campaign there is a real woman who has experienced the most unimaginable violations of her human rights. These women are not numbers but important drivers in

any strategy to address GBV. This chapter is entitled 16 Days for Life: Gender Links for equality and Justice. The concept of 16 Days for Life came from GEMSA Namibia during the Sixteen Days campaign. They also brought an important element to the campaign by adding *Equality is key* as a strap line. This too has been a key tenet of the Justice programme.

The chapter covers the evolution of this programme from campaigns, to action plans, to developing a comprehensive approach for measuring gender violence. It tracks the beneficiaries of this programme - the largest in terms of beneficiaries in the GBV portfolio. The chapter covers the vast network of institutional linkages that have been created, especially through the Sixteen Days of Activism campaign. It questions what difference, if any GL has made to the lives of beneficiaries, finding heartening news in the follow up that we have done to the "I" Stories. Finally, the chapter provides evidence of how we as GL have grown in this process; what we have learned; and how we intend to move forward in this work.

Background

The GL Gender Justice programme started in 2002 and focused primarily on Gender-Based Violence (GBV). It evolved a little differently from other programmes in GL. Most of the GL programmes are based on strategies that emerge from baseline or follow up research. The Justice programme grew organically. There are several assumptions that guide GBV work in GL, these are:

- There are high levels of GBV across the region.
- GBV is fuelled in large degrees by gender inequality.
- There is substantial under-reporting of GBV to the police and other services.
- There is little data available on the extent, effects and prevention of GBV
- There are insufficient services and support available to women who are experiencing violence.
- While legislation and policy to address GBV exists it is not effectively implemented and often does not come with a budget.



Etty Khoza reclaims her home. *Photo: Gender Links*

Addressing GBV is pivotal to achieving gender equality and achieving gender equality is key to ending GBV. The Justice programme frames its work within a rights based approach and starts from the premise that GBV is a fundamental violation women's human rights.

In August 2010, Gender Links launched the *Gender and Media Progress Study* (GMPS). The findings are disappointing, indicating that media still overwhelmingly reflect the views and voices of men. Even in areas that overwhelmingly affect women, for example gender equality and gender violence, women still only comprise 42% of sources.

Similarly, only 27% of images found in the print media are women. Stereotypes still abound, women still very often appear as beauty contestants, homemakers or sex workers.

Media not only reflects and reports on society, but also shapes public opinions and perceptions. Media calls attention to social issues and problems, and can serve to hold leaders accountable to citizens, reminding them of promises and taking them to task when they fail to deliver. Exclusion from media takes on many forms - neglect from mainstream media as well as lack of skills and capacity for individuals, non-journalists from these communities, to engage with media. In the context of GBV, this exclusion means that the voices of those most affected women, and especially survivors of GBV, are

rarely heard. As such, this important group loses their ability to influence and shape policies related to GBV, or hold their leaders accountable for their many promises related to preventing and responding to violence.

Perhaps the most relevant statistic from the GMPS for this report on the power of personal narrative is the disproportionate opportunities men seem to have to air their personal experiences, and for others to read them. When it comes to media covering the personal experiences, only 28% of these originate from women. Considering this, it is clear that initiatives such as the "I" Stories, which facilitate these unheard views and voices to occupy places in mainstream media, can be a powerful strategy to tackle social exclusion.

Figure 9.1 illustrates the evolution of the GL Justice programme. Each box shows what the key activities were in the different phases of the programme. In 2002 GL worked with 40 NGOs in the Eastern Cape, Gauteng and Western Cape provinces of South Africa to develop effective GBV campaigns. The campaigns had a strong communication thrust and started a GL standard. Every Sixteen Days since has had one overarching theme and several sub themes.

But increasingly, both within GL and from a sceptical public, the question asked is: why do levels of violence remain so high? This led from campaigns to National Action Plans. Once the NAPs were in place it became clear

Figure 9.1: Evolution of the GL Gender Justice programme

From 2002 - 2003 GL popularised the Sixteen Days of No Violence Against Women in South Africa
- 2002: GL worked with 40 African NGOs to develop effective campaigns for ending Gender Violence
- 2003: GL coordinated a campaign with 25 NGOS to determin the extent to which Post Exposure Prohylaxis (PEP) was available to survivors of sexual violence.

GL expand its regional presence through the GMBS and the country networks that are formed to implement the findings of the research.

As GL's regional presence grows the IT is becomes an important tool to keep the network connected and leads to the development of the cyber dialogues.

From 2004 - 2005 GL cascades the Sixteen Days campaign regionally
- GL worked with Gender and Media Networks and other NGOS in SADC conduct campaigns and raise awareness on the different aspects of GBV.
- Gender and media activists are trained to use and participate in the cyber dialogues or online chats.
- The proportion of survivors speaking the media is very low in the GMBS, GL starts working with women to tell their stories (2004).

Advocacy initiatives are important but need to be accompanied by strategic interventions that will move the agenda to implementation.

The UN secretary General launches the UNiTE campaign calling for integrated multi stakeholder National Action Plans.

From 2006 - 2008 GL moves from a campaign to an action plan
- GL continues with its region wide advocacy.
- GL works in partnership with nine SADC countries and develops National Action Plans (NAPs) to end GBV.
- GL works with the countries with NAPs to develop strategic communications plans to popularise the NAPs.

From 2009-2010 GL recognises to measure GBV
- GL continues with its region wide advocacy.
- The Justice programme tracks and supports the implementation of the NAPs.
- GL aligns its programmes with the 28 targets of the Protocol.
- GL works with experts from across Africa to develop indicators to measure GBV.
- A pilot project to measure the prevalence, attitudes, extent, effects and prevention of GBV is implemented in the Gauteng province of South Africa.

The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development is signed in August 2008. The GBV target is: Halve gender-based violence by 2015.

How will we know if we have halved the levels of violence if we do not have a baseline to work from?

they needed to be popularised. This led to strategic communications workshops were held in five countries including Botswana, Mauritius, Namibia, Swaziland and South Africa.

The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, signed in August 2008, added impetus to the organisation's growing concern that it needed to measure the levels of GBV. The Protocol sets a target of halving GBV by 2015. But the question that arises is how this will be measured, if we do not know the starting point. In 2009 GL started the process of developing GBV indicators with a group of African experts and in partnership with the United Nations Economic Commission on Africa (UNECA) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Gender Unit. The different functional areas of the programme may be summarised as:

Advocacy

Sixteen Days of Peace

Since 2002 GL held a total of 136 events linked to the campaign in 15 countries. The Sixteen Days Campaigns provides a touch point for measuring progress on commitments made by decision makers the previous year. The campaign has contributed to the growing cadre of gender and media activists in each country. The campaign has grown in reach and scope in the last nine years. The logo and slogans for the Sixteen days reflects the development of the campaign over the last nine years.

The growth of the Justice programme is due to the partnerships and activities during the Sixteen Days. Each year has offered something new and innovative: starting with the messaging in 2002 to the cyber dialogues in 2004 and the Taking Stock video conferencing and Take Back The Night march in 2006 to the SMS technology in 2009 and 2010. There has been a concerted effort to ensure that the campaign takes into account the new issues in the context. Examples include the SADC target of halving GBV by 2015 and Soccer 2010.



Members of the One in Nine campaign protesting during the rape trial of South African President.
Photo: Judith Mtsewu

Table 9.1: Evolution of the Sixteen Days of Activism campaign				
YEAR	LOGO	SLOGAN	RATIONALE	KEY OUTCOMES
2002		Imagine if for Sixteen Days there was NO rape, child abuse, sexual harassment, property grabbing, emotional abuse, battery and femicide.	The campaign was called the Sixteen Days of Peace. In line with this the slogan expanded on what 16 Days of Peace would mean.	• The campaign raised a higher level of awareness in South Africa than in previous years. • A higher proportion of men were visible in the campaign. • Police and correctional services personnel came out in large numbers during the campaign.
2003		Imagine a world free of gender violence and HIV and AIDS.	The branding from the previous year continued in simplified form. The peace message was retained. The link between GBV and HIV was highlighted in 2003.	• To reinstate the PEP clause in the Sexual Offences Bill. • Raise awareness on PEP. • PEP must be available at all public health facilities. • There should be effective follow up of people who receive PEP.
2004		Peace begins at home. Making IT work for gender justice.	The peace theme continued with specific reference to the home. The home is where most GBV happens. The cyber dialogues were introduced and the new slogan promoted the use of information technology for advocacy.	• During every cyber dialogue at least one person came online and spoke of their experience. Lalu said: "I was brutally raped by my employer... Because I earn R900 I could not get a lawyer." • The cyber dialogues opened a space for those directly affected to speak out.
2005		Peace begins at home.	It became increasingly obvious that the strategic thrust of the campaign needed to shift to homes and communities.	• IT skills were transferred to 563 people across the region. • Using IT to create safe spaces to speak out and to advocate for change. • Commitments from decision makers to make changes in policy, legislation and service for GBV.
2006/7/8		16 days for life, 365 Days of Action against gender violence	The new slogan represented the shift from a campaign to an action plan. It also brought in the two elements of the 365 Days of Action and the Equality is key.	• Inception of the Taking Stock of achievements linking via video conferencing. • Start of the Take Back The Night march, marching down unsafe streets reclaiming the right to safety and security. • Working with local government to include local actions to end GBV.
2009/2010		Soccer 2010, Score a goal for gender equality Score a goal for gender equality, Halve gender violence by 2015	The campaign responded to Soccer 2010 due to take place in June 2010. The campaign highlighted issues such as sex work and human trafficking.	• The Sixteen Days campaign is firmly placed under the umbrella of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. • Broadening the partnerships in the campaign to include for example faith based organisations is important. • Need to review NAPs and reprioritize • Need to fully utilise SMS technology in the campaign. • The focus needs to shift to prevention. • Need to measure the extent, effect and prevention of GBV.

Speaking out can set you free



The "I" stories has remained one of the strongest elements of the campaign. The methodology started with documenting firsthand accounts of women experiencing GBV but has extended to other programme areas. To date GL has worked with 133 women across eight countries. Since 2004 GL has produced nine "I" Stories books including:

- The "I" Stories: Polygamy - the heart of the matter 2009.
- The "I" Stories: Speaking out on gender violence in Southern Africa, Volume 4, 2009.
- The "I" Stories: Speaking out on gender violence, South Africa 2008.
- The "I" Stories: Speaking out on gender violence, Namibia 2008.
- The "I" Stories: Speaking out on gender violence, Swaziland 2008.
- The "I" Stories: Speaking out on gender violence in Southern Africa, Volume 3, 2007.
- The "I" Stories: City of Johannesburg Councillors Speak Out.
- The "I" Stories: Speaking out on gender violence in Southern Africa, Volume 2, 2006.
- The "I" Stories: Speaking out on gender violence in Southern Africa, Volume 1, 2004.

These books resulted in 169 writers sharing their stories (21 shared the stories of local councilors perspectives on gender, and 21 shared the experiences of living in polygamous families, all the rest spoke specifically of how GBV had affected their lives). An overwhelming number of writers (90%) were women.

Many survivors of violence feel that they are unable to speak about their experiences for negative consequences. This includes the fear of being ostracised and judged by their families and communities; the fear of retaliation through more violence; of not being believed; or of having to relive their trauma. Despite progressive legislation and law reform, women's experience of the criminal justice system and the response by society as a result of cultural and social norms do not create the conditions in which survivors of violence feel safe enough to speak out about their experiences.

The launch of the Gender Links "I" Stories series in 2004 and subsequent editions every year since then has provided a positive outlet for first hand accounts and an alternative source of information and reporting on this issue that affects our entire community.

From a campaign to a 365 Day National Action Plan to end GBV

GL began developing NAPs in June 2006. Later that same year UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-Moon, launched the UNiTE: Say no to violence campaign. He encouraged all nations to develop multi sector National Action Plans to end GBV.

In February 2011 GL held a workshop to assess the progress of NAPs across the region. The NAP evaluative meeting is an important benchmark as the organisation looks ahead to the halving GBV by 2015.



Hard at work at the Lesotho NAP. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

The meeting established that all 15 SADC countries have some form of national strategic plan to address GBV. The meeting provided an opportunity for all countries to take stock of where they are now, what the gaps are and how to move forward. The information gathered will be used to update the GBV chapter of the SADC Gender Protocol 2011 Barometer.

Achievements

- All the countries reported that there are comprehensive legislation and policy in place to address GBV.

- The continued dissemination of information regarding legislation to address GBV, as well as increased sensitisation through campaigns such as the 16 Days campaign, in local languages, was also identified as a cross cutting achievement.
- All countries made mention of the improvement of support services available for survivors of GBV and access to those services, but noted that a great deal more needed to be achieved if services were to meet demand. A notable achievement is that many of these support services include legal and psycho-social support services for survivors.

Gaps

Each country experienced very similar challenges and gaps. These were:

- All countries noted a lack of financial and human resources in addressing GBV. Insufficient resources had a direct impact on the success of implementation of laws and policies as well as on the quality of the various structures.
- Existing support services for survivors were insufficient to meet the demand.
- Lack of costing around GBV and on the NAPs.
- Seychelles and Lesotho are the only countries where NAPs have been costed.
- Implementation has been slow. Seychelles serves as a good practice, linked to UNiTE campaign.
- Although there is some capacity building happening in all represented countries, there is a need for more.
- Inadequate monitoring and evaluation tools.
- The prevalence of dual legal system in the region; reducing the legitimacy of legislation that prohibits GBV. An example of this was the complex issue of marital rape.
- The need for a regional approach to human trafficking was emphasised.

Training

After the roll-out of NAPs in 10 countries GL began a process of supporting the NAPs. GL worked with five countries - Botswana, Mauritius, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland to develop strategic communication strategies. The programme started with the presentation of examples of successful strategic communication plans from the relevant country. Participants would go back to the NAP and develop an overall communication strategy based on the principles of social change. In addition they would develop a matrix of key message and slogans and a calendar which highlighted significant dates and identify how they would use these dates for advocacy.



Developing messages during the workshop in Botswana.
Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna

Research



Photo: Gender Links

Researcher being trained on the PDA.

The GBV Indicators Project is a regional research study aimed at developing tools to measure and monitor the extent, effect, cost of and efforts to end violence against women using the tools. The project is inspired by the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development's target to halve levels of gender based violence by 2015.

The main tool is a household prevalence/attitude/costing survey covering a representative sample of women and men making use of electronic questionnaires loaded onto Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs). Women are asked about their experiences of GBV while men are asked about their perpetration of GBV. The other components are:

- Analysis of administrative data for the past financial year from police, health, shelters, courts and other CSOs or government departments dealing with abused women.
- Micro and macro level costing of GBV.

- Analysis of the "I" stories to qualitatively explore GBV causes, extent, effects, response and support.
- Analysis of the GBV content in the media over a period of one month to determine the extent and manner of GBV coverage in the news.
- Analysis of all available official written speeches or records of Parliament debates made in the previous financial year by political figures.

The study has been piloted in the Gauteng province of South Africa and will be completed in Botswana, Mauritius and the KwaZulu Natal, Limpopo and Western Cape provinces of South Africa by December 2011.

The war@home in Gauteng

Results from the study show that 51.3 % of 511 interviewed women have experienced some form of GBV (psychological, emotional, economic, physical or sexual) in their lifetime while 75.5% of 487 men interviewed in the province admit to perpetrating some form of violence against women at some point in their lifetime.

GBV is enforced through social norms and attitude which accepts equality in the public domain but maintain traditional patriarchal values in the home. GBV still does not feature in most of the official speeches by government and political leaders. Only a marginal 4.8% made passing reference to GBV. Poor data management systems make it difficult to monitor and evaluate programmes and services. Available GBV services are disproportionate to the high prevalence of GBV reported in this study.

More men in the sample admitted to perpetration than women who experienced violence. For GL this was an important indicator for future GBV work. There could several reasons for the findings, perhaps women were afraid to speak but it is also likely that women do not know what constitutes GBV. Over the last few years there have many programmes to bring men on board: this is still an important priority. What the research is telling us though is that it is equally important to educate women and to change women's attitudes. What is evident from the Gauteng findings is that the study should be replicated in all SADC countries. The data is invaluable in shaping NAPs and other strategic interventions.



The war @ home

Preliminary findings of the Gauteng Gender Violence Prevalence Study by Gender Links and the Medical Research Council

Over half the women of Gauteng (51.2%) have experienced some form of violence (emotional, economic, physical or sexual) in their lifetime and 78.3% of men in the province admit to perpetrating some form of violence against women.

Emotional violence - a form of violence not well defined in domestic violence legislation and thus not well reflected in police data - is the most commonly reported form of violence with 43.7% women experiencing and 65.2% men admitting to its perpetration. One in four women in the province has experienced sexual violence in their lifetime. An even greater proportion of men (37.4%) disclosed perpetrating sexual violence.

Yet violence against women is still regarded as a private affair with only 3.9% of women interviewed reporting this crime to the police. One in 13 women reported non-partner rape and overall only one in 25 rapes had been reported to the police.

These are some of the stark findings of the **Gauteng Gender Violence Indicators Pilot Project** conducted by Gender Links (GL) and the Medical Research Council (MRC) released on the eve of the 2010 Sixteen Days of Activism. The international theme for this year highlights the link between militarism and gender violence. The survey in South Africa's most densely populated and cosmopolitan province shows that while political conflict in the country has subsided, homes and communities are still far from safe, especially for women.

Inspired by the Southern African Development Community Protocol on Gender and Development that aims to halve gender violence by 2015, the study is the first comprehensive community-based research study of the prevalence of gender violence in the province.

Unlike police data that relies on reported cases, the study involved self-reported behaviour and experiences obtained through in-depth interviews with a representative sample of 511 women and 487 men: 90% black and 10% white, reflecting the demographics of the province. Eight percent women and 5% of the men interviewed were foreigners. This is also in keeping with the make up of the province.

The study made use of two separate questionnaires for women (focusing on their experiences) and men

Table 9.2: Institutional linkages forged through the Sixteen Days of Activism campaign in 2010						
Country	Government/local gvt (LG)	UN	Civil society/media/academic institutions	Number of partners		
				Gvt/LG	UN	NGO
Botswana	Women's Affairs Department (WAD)		Botswana Association of Local Authorities (BALA); Botswana Christian Council (BCC); Nkaikela Project; MISA Botswana; Botswana Council for the Disabled (BCD); Inter Faith Action for Africa (IFAPA); Botswana Football Association (BFA); Mothers of Young Children (MoYC); Organisation of African Instituted Churches (OAIC); Evangelical Fellowship Botswana (EFB) Botswana Media Women's; Association (BOMWA); Botswana Council of Non Governmental Organisations (BOCONGO)	1		12
DRC			Congolese Media Women's Union - GEMSA (UCOFEM-GEMSA); Women's Action Network; Youth Awareness; Radio Okapa; RTGA FM; Numerica TV			6
Lesotho			Lesotho Council of Non-Governmental Organisations (LCN); Christian Council of Lesotho (CCL); Women and Law Southern Africa - Lesotho (WLSA); IFO Lapeng; Lesotho Planned Parenthood Association (LPPA); Phela			6
Madagascar	Ministry of Population	United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)	Counseling Centre in Madagascar; Women's Movement in Politics for the Development of Madagascar	1	1	2
Malawi			NGO Gender Coordination Network; Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) Malawi; Blantyre Press Club Women and Law Southern Africa (WLSA) Malawi; CAVOWC; SAW; COWAA; JOAIDS; Pakachere; Men for Gender Equality Now (MEGEN); Federation of Disability Organisations in Malawi (FEDOMA); DEWODE; HRCC MHRC			17
Mauritius	Ministry of Women's Rights Ministry of Social Security Police Municipality of Beau Bassin Municipality of Rose Hill Ministry of Local Government		Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation (MBC); University of Technology; University of Mauritius; Amnesty International; PILS; National AIDS Secretariat; Idriss Goomany Centre; Chrysallide Rehabilitation; Council of Religion; Bible Society; Mauritius Council of Social Service (MACOSS)	4		10
Mozambique	Ministry of Health UNIAO UNDP		Forum Mulher; Women and Law Southern Africa Mozambique; Focus Group for the 16 Days; FNUAP; CARE; LDH; EUROPEIA	1	2	7
Namibia	City of Windhoek Ministry of Health Parliamentary Women's Caucus Ministry of Gender		Women's Leadership Centre (WLC); Association of Local Authorities in Namibia (ALAN) Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) Namibia; NANGOF; Sister Namibia; LAC Council of Churches; TRP; ICW; National Soccer Authorities in Namibia; Men for Change; White Ribbon Group			11

Country	Government/local gvt (LG)	UN	Civil society/media/academic institutions	Number of partners		
				Gvt/LG	UN	NGO
Seychelles	Gender Secretariat Gender Management Team		Seychelles Media Association; Anglican Church; Seventh Day Adventists; Baha'i Faith of Seychelles; Department of ICTs; National Council for Children	1		6
South Africa	Ministry of Women, Children and People with Disabilities Department of Arts and Culture South African Police Services (SAPS) City of Joburg Sedibeng Council Thusong Centres Government Communication Information Services (GCIS)		Sexual Harassment Education Project (SHEP); Sonke Gender Justice Network; NISAA; Let Us Grow South African Council of Churches (SACC); Media Institute of South Africa (MISA); People Opposing Women Abuse (POWA); CDP; Soul City; Men as Partners; Constitution Hill; South Women's Football Association (SAWFA) Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR)	7		13
Swaziland	Gender Consortium Gender Unit Ministry of ICTs Ministry of Arts and Culture Ministry of Local Government and Urban Development		University of Swaziland (UNISWA); Church Forum; SWAGAA; Acts of Faith; Swaziland Hospice; Hope House Swaziland Council of Churches Swaziland Conference of Churches; Bible Society; Traditional Healers Association; SWANNEPHA; SWAPOL AMICAALL	5		10
Zambia	Gender in Development Division (GIDD) Police Victims Support Units LGAZ		Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) Zambia; CCZ; NGOCC; Women and Law Southern Africa (WLSA) Zambia; NAC; SWAAZ; Rapids; Tasintha; ASAZA	3		10
Zimbabwe	Ministry of Women's Affairs, Gender and Community Development	International Organisation for Migration (IOM)	EKOWISA; Musasa Project; WCoZ; Women and Law Southern Africa (WLSA) Zimbabwe; Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre Network (ZWRCN); Women's Action Group (WAG); FAMWZ; Southern Africa Dialogue Ptsime Theatre Group; SAFAIDS; WASN ; Ecumenical Services; NANGO; WUA; LEDRIZ; ZGBN	1	1	16
TOTAL				**24**	**4**	**126**

Institutional links

Through the Justice programme GL has worked in all 15 countries of SADC and many of these partnerships go back a long way. Table 9.2 shows that during the last Sixteen Days of Activism campaign, GL worked with 24 government and local government; four UN and 126 NGO partners. One such partner is the Gender and Media Association (GEMPLUS) in the Seychelles. The Seychelles is one of two countries in the SADC region, Lesotho being the other that has costed its NAP. They have also raised funds through the UNiTE campaign to implement their NAP. What is interesting about this case study is the consistency of the linkages over time; this makes it possible to begin to measure the impact of the association at institutional level.

CASE STUDY

Where it all began, the Seychelles story

By Sharon Thelemaque, Chairperson of GEMPLUS

The Gender and Media Association of Seychelles, GEMPLUS, is an NGO promoting gender equality in and through the media. In Chapter One, GL Executive Director Colleen Lowe Morna and Francophone Director Loga Virahsawmy share fond memories of coming to Seychelles in 2002 and conducting a workshop on how to report GBV. After this workshop a group of journalists came together in March 2003 and decided to form an association. GEMPLUS was officially launched in November 2003.

The membership includes media practitioners, gender activists and other individuals interested in the issues of gender and the media as well as GBV. GEMPLUS sits on the National Management Team of the Seychelles Gender Secretariat.

GEMPLUS has assisted in the drafting of the CEDAW report, using GL publications as the main source of information. The Gender Secretariat said that the data in the report was thorough, very good. The standard of work that comes out of GL is very good for us as an organisation.



Sharon Thelemaque speaking at a GEM Plus workshop.
Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna

Seychelles has an action plan linked to its Domestic Violence Act. But we worked with Gender Links to develop a strategic communications strategy around this little known plan. We just had our NAP costed. Some publications, notable the SADC Gender Protocol Barometer, were consulted during the process, as reflected in the excerpt below:

"Seychelles signed the **SADC Declaration** on Gender and Development on 8th September 1997 and signed the **SADC Addendum** on the Prevention and Eradication of Violence against Children and Women on 14 September 1998. To date both instruments have not been ratified. Upon returning to the SADC community in 2008, President Michel signed the **SADC Gender and Development Protocol**; currently the Protocol is in the process of ratification. A Gender Links commissioned study was published in July 2009, mapping out the national situation in regards to the achievement of targets set out in the Protocol." *Excerpt from the costed Seychelles National Action Plan to End Gender Violence.*

We have benefitted from the networking. Through GL, GEMPLUS has published articles, as well as contributed to publications. Hopefully one day we can open an office in Seychelles like they are doing all in other countries. Hopefully next year we can have a big celebration in November as this will be the month that we opened GEMPLUS 10 years ago - without GL there would be no GEMPLUS.

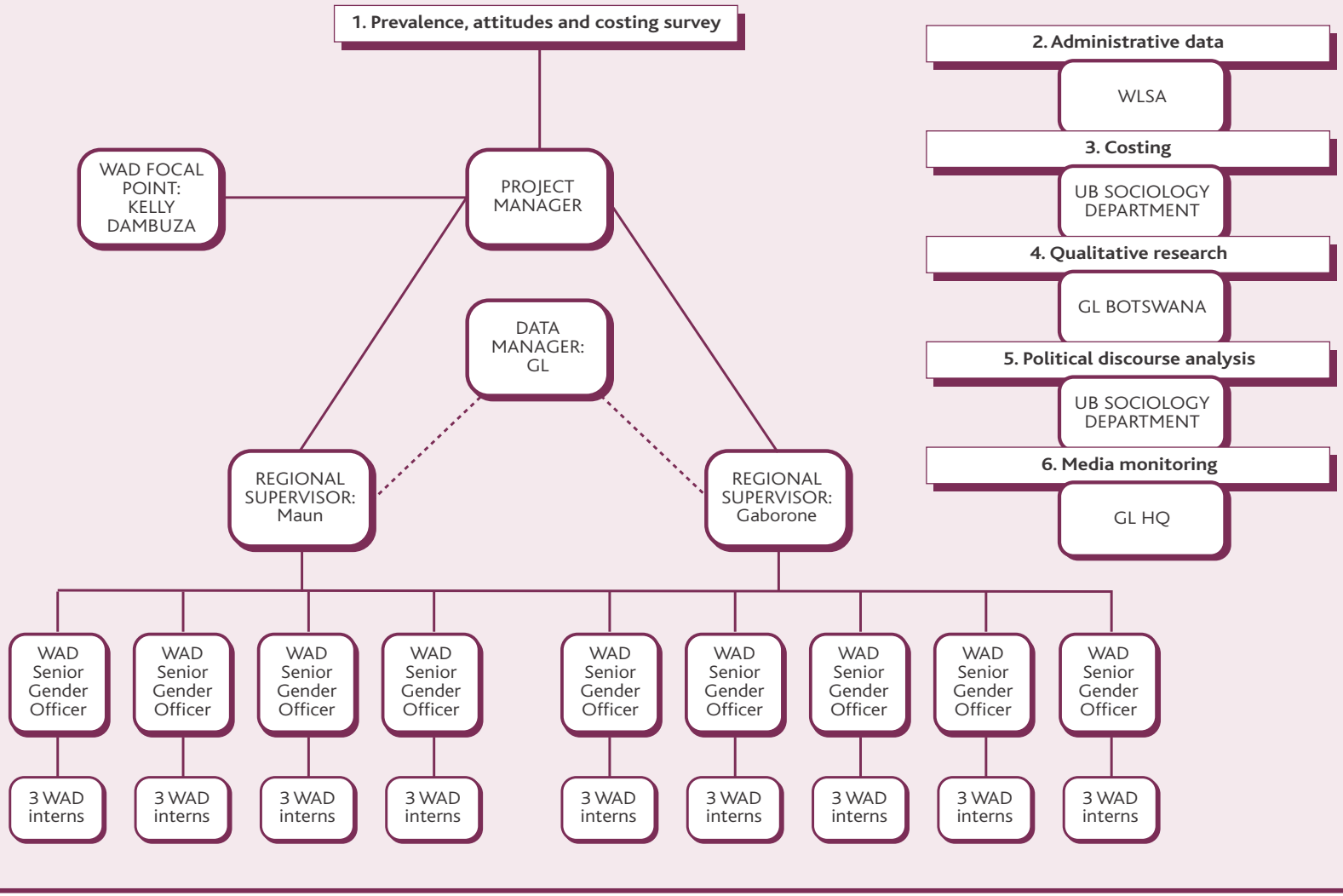
GL has signed MOUs with the Mauritius Research Council (MRC); the Medical Research Council (MRC) of South Africa and Women's Affairs Division (WAD) of the Botswana Government to conduct the GBV Indicators research. Figure 9.3 reflecting the organisational structure of the research in Botswana is a good example of how GL institutional linkages work in any given project.

In essence WAD is providing the hardware - offices, personnel and logistic support - while GL provides the software for the flagship prevalence survey. The latter consists of the methodology, technology, project oversight and data analysis. Other aspects of the research such as the political discourse analysis and administrative data are being outsourced to the university and Women in Law Southern Africa in Botswana. GL is undertaking the qualitative research ("I" Stories) and media monitoring (niche areas for the organisation). The model shows how through the web of institutional linkages buy-in and ownership at the national level are advanced.



Valencia Mogegeh, Director of the Women's Affairs Division, and Deputy Permanent Secretary Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs Lucky Moahi at the launch of the GL office in Botswana.
Photo: Collen Lowe Morna

Figure 9.2: Botswana GBV Indicators project organisational chart



Beneficiaries

The GL Justice programme has reached a total of 17 024 beneficiaries since 2002. The beneficiaries have been divided into the following different areas of work:

Table 9.3: GL Justice programme beneficiaries

Programme area	Female	Male	Unknown	Total
Research	160	47		207
Advocacy	6 585	4 062	4 367	15 014
Action plans	831	315	501	1647
Training	83	33	40	156
Total	**7 659**	**4 457**	**4 908**	**17 024**

Advocacy has the highest proportion of beneficiaries with a total of 15 014 people, 6 585 females, 4 062 males and 4 367 whose sex is unknown. These figures may be attributed to the cyber dialogues. GL has reached 1 647 people through the NAP process. The lowest number of beneficiaries has been training. The strategic communication training has only taken place in five countries. It should also be noted that much of the training in the Justice programme, such as running the Sixteen Days of Activism campaign, happens on the job and is recorded under advocacy.

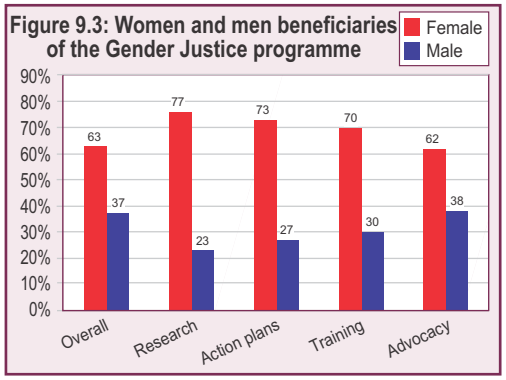
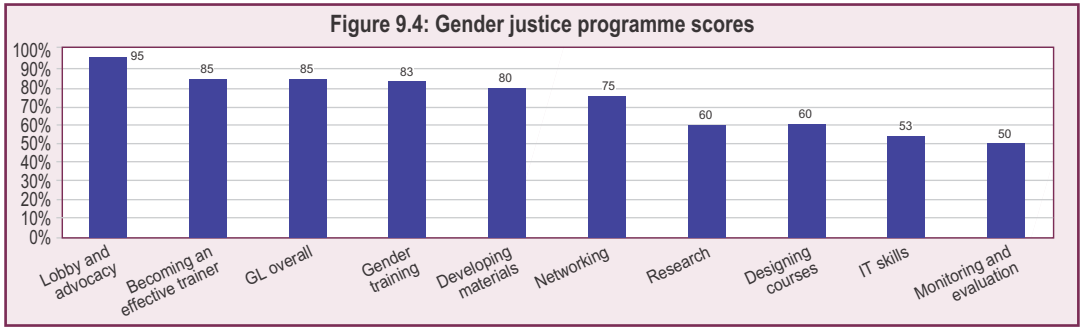


Figure 9.4 shows that women constituted 63% and men 37% of the beneficiaries. The highest proportion of women beneficiaries were in research and the lowest in advocacy. The cyber dialogues have always attracted higher proportions of men than in other areas. This is both an encouraging as well a disappointing indicator. GL is very pleased that men are joining the dialogue on gender justice however the lower of proportion of women is showing that GL needs to do more to get women invloved in the cyber dialogues. This will be addressed in the next phase of the programme through targeted training for women on IT.

Key benefits

Figure 9.5 provides a breakdown of how GL's beneficiaries rank the programme based on different criteria. Overall, beneficiaries score the programme at a high of 85%. Lobbying and advocacy come in highest at 95%. What is gratifying for the programme is that the large scale advocacy work is impacting on the people that it targets. The areas scored lowest, and that will need attention, are research, designing courses, IT skills, monitoring and evaluation.





Libakiso Mathlo being interviewed by Lesotho TV.
Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna

Lobbying and advocacy - 95%

Libakiso Mathlo, National Coordinator, Women and Law Southern Africa (Lesotho) has been GL's partner in lobbying and advocating for the NAP in Lesotho. She says: "I learnt how use strategies which are simple and sharp. This resulted in the passing of the Legal Capacity of Married Persons Act. I am using what I learnt to build the capacity of vulnerable groups of women to participate in processes such as these."

Celine Marie Yolande is a magistrate at the Court of Appeal in Tamatave, Madagascar. She says: "GL is very professional in the way they conduct projects. It has given me ways to find solutions for many GBV cases from work carried out. I have become more self confident after attending various sessions."

Behind good lobbying and advocacy

"GL has largely achieved this result through training of its staff in field offices to provided backstopping, development of communication strategies, use of Sixteen Days campaigns, and training of journalists in covering GBV and HIV and AIDS related issues. The staff provided backstopping to the national task teams in Botswana, Mauritius, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania and Zambia to design audits on status of NAPs. The audits were aligned to the GBV targets of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. GL also held six communications strategy and IT workshops in South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Swaziland, Seychelles, and Mauritius between October and 20 November 2008. The participants acquired skills in strategic communications based on the 16 Days of Activism, development of 365 Day Calendar to raise awareness on GBV, and use of Information Technology (IT) like cyber dialogues, emails, etc for advocacy.

Some the media strategies developed by GL during 16 Days of Activism include: the media kits which has thematic fact sheets produced to help media in their coverage of GBV during that period; the GL Opinion and Commentary Service; cyber dialogues; and "I" Stories as part of the aim to make every voice count. The "I" Stories series provide the space for those whose authentic voices are marginalised to be heard. By writing and publishing these firsthand accounts or testimonies, GL allows for a public discus-sion on the lived experiences of ordinary men and women using both electronic and print media." - *GL External Evaluation 2010/ 2011*

Becoming an effective trainer - 85%; Gender training - 83%; developing materials (80%)

The score for becoming an effective trainer is 85%, this is very important for a programme that leverages its work through partners. Training trainers is the most effective way the Justice programme can manage its work because of its extensive reach. Perpetual Sichikwenkwe from GEMSA Zambia has a long history with GL.



Perpetual Sichikwenkwe.
Photo: Trevor Davies

She explains how the training she received through the justice programme has grown her training skills: "I learnt how to train people to use the cyber dialogues. I have trained 50 people. I train members of the public and continue training myself too!"

CASE STUDY

Getting smart: Strategic communications

Strategic communications training brings together training; gender training and developing of materials: three areas in which beneficiaries scored GL between 80% and 85%. It is therefore appropriate to examine this area of GL's work more closely.

Gender Links developed a generic manual and then customised it for each of the training workshops held in five countries (Botswana, Mauritius, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland). Beneficiaries were trained on how to develop communication strategies to popularise National Action Plans to End Gender-Based Violence based on communications for social change theory. The Sixteen Days of Activism to End Violence against Women Campaign was used as an opportune time to leverage year-long gender violence campaigns.

The project aimed to foreground primary prevention and cultivate a zero tolerance for gender-based violence in communities using Gender Links' prevention model. See Annex A for model. The model identifies various points of entry when addressing gender violence from the individual, family, community and society. While the principles were applied to action plans on gender based violence, these could be used for any other campaigns that you wish to achieve social change.

The primary beneficiaries were representatives from the following sectors:

- NGOs working in the gender violence sector and media NGOs (e.g. GEMSA); especially those involved in the multi-sector national action plan.
- Government, especially departments directly responsible for the delivery of services to survivors of gender violence e.g. gender, police, justice, health, education.
- Media practitioners.

Gender NGOs and representatives of government were trained on developing relevant advocacy and communication materials for different audiences as well as how to engage effectively with the media. Participants also learnt how to use Information Technology to reduce costs when developing advocacy materials and engage in how IT can advance gender justice.

On the other hand journalists were trained on upholding ethical standards when reporting gender-based violence and how to bring fresh views to everyday news to remain relevant and keep audiences captivated.

It is a promising practice in that it equips citizens with knowledge and skills on developing campaigns for social change using relevant tools. It is possible to identify results, fosters collaboration and is sustainable in that there are multiplier effects and documentation of
tools used that can be used over.

Against a background that communication skills are critical to the success of any advocacy campaign, this training provided hard skills as well as a framework for collaborative action that would ensure that these skills are applied and can be used for any future campaigns. Emphasis was placed on the area of education, training and awareness building outlined in the national action plans to end gender violence.

This focused on how to translate an action plan into tangible activities and develop



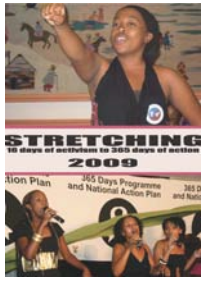
Strategic communications training in Namibia. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

communication materials that are relevant for targeted audiences using suitable media and appropriate messaging. The tools used are articulated in the manual attached at Annex B.

Participants gained knowledge and skills on how to use Information Technology (IT) for advocacy. By the end of the training they could make their own calendar, newsletters, flyers and other materials. They also learnt how to access different websites to obtain information and how to use IT for online petitions and alerts. They all took part in a mock cyber dialogue. Cyber dialogues are real time on-line moderated chats on social issues that link experts, citizens and decision makers across geographical boundaries on thematic areas hosted on the Gender Links website. Gender Links runs the project under the banner "Making IT work for gender justice".

Innovative products

An innovative idea has been muted to develop a regional 365 Day calendar that can be distributed widely and customised in each country as a communication tool to encourage action against gender violence every day. It was also found to be a practical way to reach people's private homes bearing in mind the prevention model that identifies different entry points for addressing gender violence. The messages for the different countries are in the reports that can be accessed by visiting: http://www.genderlinks.org.za/page/gender-justice-campaigns.



The regional calendar developed after consolidating messages sought to spread anti-violence messages using key dates in the calendar (e.g. February there is Valentine's Day - Spread love, not violence; June there is Father's Day - Raise a child, not a fist). The calendar also encourages everyone to individually and collectively take stock of progress to address gender based violence on the 16th of every month. The calendar was printed and also distributed electronically for customising and printing by partners in Southern Africa.

Journalists engaged with gender activists to reflect on how gender violence is covered in the media. Based on communications and 16 Days plans they produced story ideas for mainstream media that they can take up during 16 days and throughout the year.

Networking - 75%

The score for networking (75%) is slightly worrying. The programme is dependent on a substantial number of partners in country to leverage its work. This is something the programme needs to study to understand how the score can be made higher. But there are some heart warming examples of networking in this programme, that have changed lives and perspectives. One such example is given:

CASE STUDY

From the Namib desert to Egoli: Children find new meaning



Ama Buruxa performing in Maltahohe. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

If you are contemplating a trip to the Namib desert, the chances are that you will pass through the 4000-strong village of Maltahöhe in the dry and desolate Hardap region of southern Namibia. If you stop long enough in this village, you will most definitely be accosted by the *Ama Buruxa* (meaning "*Simply Amazing*") culture group comprising abandoned children whose beautiful moves are choreographed by their champion, the soft spoken former chair of the village council, Karolina Pieters.

Like the proverbial oasis in the desert, the children spring out of the dusty planes in their colourful traditional patchwork outfits, their melodious voices rising above the scorching heat as their bodies sway back and

forth to the clicks and rhythms of the desert tunes. The only instrument used is the traditional drum. The traditional dance is called the *Namastap*.

Pieters has some 382 OVCs (Orphans and Vulnerable Children) under her care; nearly 10% of the village population. Most have lost one or both parents to HIV and AIDS or gender violence. Cultural activities, Pieters explains, help to make sure the children never forget their roots and remain firmly grounded. They are also a form of healing. She supplements meager social security grants with paid performances for the desert adventure tourists who stream through the village in their four by four vehicles.

In 2007, as part of the Sixteen Days of Activism on Gender Violence, the group visited Johannesburg to perform around the city with similar groups. The visit was sponsored by a South African moved by hearing the children's singing on a CD ROM that they have produced.

Established in 2001, the group consists of 32 learners, of whom 14 were chosen to come to Johannesburg. At the end of the trip Pieters wrote this commentary for GL:



Karolina Pieters with triplets in her care. *Photo: Gender Links*

"Lying in my bed on the first night of our visit to Johannesburg I said to myself: is this true? Can we really be here? Is this a dream come true?

I am a teacher and the (former) chair of the village council in Maltahohe in the dry Hardap region of Southern Namibia at the entrance to the Namib desert. Long before I became a councillor I started a home for abandoned children. There is a high rate of alcoholism and gender violence where I came from. This is worsened by a high rate of HIV and AIDS.

In 2005, I met the director of Gender Links, Colleen Lowe Morna when she came to Maltahohe to conduct research on gender and local government. She asked me what I would most want for my children. I said: "I would like them to perform in Johannesburg!"

So here we are, and I can only say that this is a dream come true. While we have been here, the children have performed with several other groups from around Johannesburg, including at Museum Africa and at the Constitutional Court. We got a tour of the court and a history of South Africa from apartheid to the present. The children from South Africa and Namibia did an exercise on past, present and future. Then they wrote and performed a song together.

We got to go and see *Umoja* (the South African musical that took London by storm). What an experience for the children of *Ama Buruxa* to watch those South African dancers who "dance like demons"! I believe in dance and song as a form of healing. What a healing experience this has been!

In the evenings, we sat in a circle and talked about our experiences, here and in Namibia. For the first time, I got to say "I am sorry" to Johannes* about something that has been paining me these few months. In October, we were performing at an old age home in Maltahohe. Suddenly I noticed tears flowing down Johannes' cheeks. His voice was quivering. Johannes' brother Peter is the drummer of *Ama Bruxa*. Later that day I

learned that the boys' mother had just died of AIDS-related causes.

I could not forgive myself for having allowed them to perform that day. But they told me that they wanted to; that performing is what gives them strength. Their mother was a domestic worker whom both boys cared for lovingly before she died. They do not know their father. Peter is now doing the last two years of his secondary school in Rehoboth. He needs just over R2 000 per year to finish his school. Where can I get bursaries from to help the children?



Ama Bruxa performing at Museum Africa in Johannesburg. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

Then there is Rachel*, whose step mother died a year ago, also of AIDS-related causes, leaving behind a two month old baby. She has six brothers and sisters. Her father is disabled as a result of an accident while he was a construction worker. We are not sure if he and the baby are HIV positive as they have not gone for tests. I had to tell Rachel that I could not take care of the baby; I just do not have the capacity to take care of the really small ones.

These things are so painful. But here in Johannesburg we have been able to talk. At one stage Rachel's father wanted me to adopt her. But I said that is not the right thing to do. She must never be disconnected from her family. My duty is to make sure that she gets an education, so that she can uplift the rest of the family.

Aletta* also lost her parents to HIV and AIDS. After caring for both of them, she wants to be a doctor. There is Ruth*, who narrowly escaped being raped twice. I had to send her to live with my older daughter in Windhoek, to get away from it all.

Yes, my work can be very depressing, but it can also be so rewarding. I have trained as a counsellor, to help the children, and to help myself. I have learned that when children lose their parents, they become introverted and withdraw. Ours is to inspire them, fill them with hope, make them realise what they are capable of, make them know that they are, after all, "simply amazing."

I lie awake at night in Johannesburg, and the sounds of *Umoja*, the spirit of togetherness, run through my mind. I am thinking of new dance routines for *Ama Buruxa*. I am thinking of how to raise money for school fees so that every one of my children can finish their education. I am inspired. I am ready to soldier on."

(Names of the children have been changed to protect their identity. This story first ran in the Gender Links Opinion and Commentary Service)*

Research and developing courses - 60%
The research scores will change as the GBV Indicators project is rolled out. Designing courses has not been a key element of the programme. This will change as the programme moves forward with the introduction of economic development and climate change within the programme.

IT skills - 53%



Sarry Xoagus Eises, GL Namibia Country Facilitator, training people tp use the cyber dialogues. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

Comments from participants in the cyber dialogues that run during the Sixteen Days (see also Chapter ten) attest to the skills acquired through this training. These are some of the comments made in evaluations:

- I thought I would be communicating to one person but it was very amazing to be chatting with everyone at one time.
- Able to access the internet. I am able to find information I need.
- Designing an e-newsletter.
- When we were doing a pamphlet and charts, it bought practicality to the programme.
- I liked presentation work with powerpoint. It was excellent and enjoyable. I think I will also be able to apply this knowledge at my work place like producing newsletters.

However, the Justice programme needs to look at a sustainable solution for IT skills training. The empowerment component of Sixteen Day campaigns needs to be reviewed and strengthened.

Monitoring and evaluation (50%)
This score is a cause for concern. The Gender Justice programme administers a score card and several other M and E tools. What is clear is that we are not doing sufficient training around these tools.

Healing through writing

As part of qualitative work related to a GL project to develop indicators to measure GBV, GL analysed the stories of 55 survivors who GL has worked with in South Africa, chronicled in four "butterfly" books, that include stories from other Southern African countries, and cover every race and age group. Insight from this analysis is also included in this reflection of the on-going "I" Stories project.

"These stories are not for your comfort, but are told with the rawness and pain with which they have been experienced. They will shock and upset you... But they will also give you hope. Hope that women in our region are speaking out. Hope that many years too late politicians have recognised that women's rights are human rights. Hope that our best bet in getting action taken is by breaking the silence."

- excerpted from the forward, "I" Stories 2006

The report draws on a preliminary review exercise conducted by an intern with GL in 2008, published in the *Gender and Media Diversity Journal* on media activism.

The analysis is based on the ongoing chronicling of the stories and insights survivors have shared with us through the years, as well as our own observations. More of the most profound changes are the ones that are difficult to capture on paper. As editors, writing assistants, and facilitators, we see the change from the first day that we meet the women and explain about the process, to the day their faces beam with pride when they see their story acknowledged and printed in a booklet.

Although Gender Links has commissioned and distributed "I" Stories across the region since 2004, and in 2008 held country-based workshops, this report focuses on the South African experience, since this is where the majority of our workshops sessions have been held. However, recognising the diversity of the country, it also includes insights from non-nationals who participated in the South Africa workshops. It includes both stories gathered at the workshops or from writers who drafted their stories on their own and worked virtually with the editor.

Don't be a victim!
Most of the women were motivated to speak out in order to help other women. One of them said that she decided to speak out because she felt that "most women do not seek help in time and harbour in their hearts the dreadful experiences." She was one of those women. Others reflected:

"I now advise survivors of domestic and others forms of violence in my community, It is because what I would like most is to have a good normal life like anyone. I am telling a painful story that has shaped my life, helped me to heal and most importantly to move on". - *When abuse can lead to disability,* **Germina Setshedi**

"I have dedicated my life to this work based on my principle of honouring my mother's experience, my sister's and myself, and as a man I will use my voice to bring change." - *Honouring my mother and sister,* **Pascal Akimana**

"I decided to speak out about my story to help other women to know their rights and if there is an abuse problem to ask for help from organisations working with abused women and they will get help." - *Demanding change,* **Grace Ayanda***

"All these years I have carried this secret with me, until recently I spoke to a very good friend of mine about what happened to me years back. He said that it was not my fault and he made me realise that I have to let go of the whole situation and move on with my life. One day he phoned me when I was at work and he asked me if I was ready to speak out and let other women know about my story. I agreed because I needed to move on and I was tired of living with that anger and hatred. He took me to the "I" Stories workshop speaking out on Gender Violence in Southern Africa. There I met great women and men, some who lived in abusive relationships and some are still living in abuse." - *When a child is raped,* **Natasha Kangele**

The power of telling your story
at the 2009 weekend said that the workshop and experience of participating in the project is very empowering. For some who tell their story, their immediate and profound relief comes from having just voiced what happened to them in a supportive environment, among people who understand.

"Today, I have found my self after a long journey of looking for me. I have finally found me and I now know that I do not need a man to define who I am. I love my daughter. I know now that God brought her in my life for a reason, and only I can make myself happy and no one else." - *Rape will not be my daughter's legacy!,* **Thandeka***

"GL helped me because before I was afraid to speak public about my situation (abuse). The moment I wrote my story, and heard other people's story, I felt healed." - *Learning to forgive,* **Grace Maleka**


Natasha Kangale, healing anger. *Photo: Tonya Graham*

Sweetness Gwabe, one of the participants in the 2007 "I" Stories workshop says: "When I was participating in the workshops at GL and told my story for the first time to others it was then that I realised how much I was hurt. I started breaking and crying in front of others, what I had never done before. It all came out. The interesting part of it was that when I read my own story, I asked myself 'how did I manage to stand all this nonsense for so long.' It shocked me to read my own story, especially because I started feeling guilty towards my children. That I have allowed

them to undergo all of this and didn't pull out of it long ago. At the time I stayed because I wanted my children to have a father, because I had never known mine, but after reading my own story I felt responsible for their suffering."

While Gwabe grew up in a well-off, loving family, her self-esteem was gone by the time she finally, years later, left her abusive husband after another violent incident.

Gwabe recalls, "While I was at the shelter I wrote a poem for a POWA (People Opposing Women Abuse) competition, and afterwards they asked me to participate in the "I" Stories. They explained me what it was about and that the stories would be published. That time I was really afraid to be published and therefore I did not use my own name. When someone constantly tells you that you are worth nothing, you believe it and you just want to hide away. I also feared that my husband would hit back and publish against me and spread lies about me, because I know how he is."

Participating in the "I" Stories project had a profound impact on her life.

"It has changed me tremendously. I realise who I am, a woman of multiple talents. I became myself and not what I have been told I am: useless. I am now a role model to my children. I walk in front of them and am confident, because I know that children who grow up in an abusive home often lack confidence. The way I feel now, I wish I had not hidden my name."

Although Sweetness did not tell anyone of her "I" Story at the time of publication, she later bought copies of the book to give to friends and relatives, including her children.

My relationship with Gender Links is so intimate because that is where my eyes and mind was opened. I sometimes think of asking them how they managed to think of this mysterious secret of taking pain and anger through putting it down on paper in writing.

- "I" Story participant

"I want my friends and family to read my story and explanation. When I distribute the "I" Stories book to them, it is not necessarily about my story, because all stories are effective. I am empowering my daughter and other women not to repeat my mistakes. When you are with your spouse and you read these stories you will be able to pinpoint some mistakes to your spouse.

It is vital that your spouse must know your likes and dislikes. You mustn't compromise. A yes must be a yes and no must be a no. That is another thing that kills us women, we keep on compromising. When they read these stories, women will be empowered. When I read other stories, I compare them and think my story wasn't as worse as theirs. I cried reading the other stories, they are too brutal, and thought I would not have allowed that to happen to me. But I realise if others read mine they might say the same. I keep on reading them, they never bore me."

Confidence and support

As mentioned previously, abuse has profound and long-lasting emotional and psychological affects on women. Survivors of abuse often lack confidence and self-esteem resulting from the abuse. For many women, the "I" Stories gives them new found confidence as they find a safe space to tell their stories.

"I was scared to talk about my story, but now I can."

"It gave me the courage to face my fears."

"Being acknowledged by Gender Links has built my ego and self-esteem."

"It was my first time writing about my life besides in my diary. But damn I was good."

"I was able to tell my story, which I could not tell, because it is embarrassing."

"I am not holding back anymore."

"I felt freedom, I am not scared anymore."

"That was a story I could hardly speak about without tearing, but now I just talk about it as if a history that does not hurt so much anymore."

When asked if the "I" Story process helped them to move on:

"I forgave myself first, my in-laws after."

"Since I participated in the "I" Story, I am more open and I can feel other people's story...but it also helped to move forward with my life and not let abuse for anything control me."

"Nothing is an obstacle to my progress anymore, I am marching on despite my age."

Many said they gained unexpected support from family and friends:

"They appreciated that I can even write about my abuse."

"The see the matured change in me, integrity, and dignity."

"I am so proud that I am now a role model to my family, children, and community."

"They look up to me as their main strength."

At an initial "I" Story session in 2007, one of the women participants wore a long-sleeved jacket over a sleeveless blouse, despite the rising heat in the workshop room. When a facilitator commented, it came out that the scars on her arms embarrassed her, and so for many years she had become used to wearing long sleeves all of the time. With encouragements from her peers, who told her she had nothing to be ashamed about, by the second workshop she was no longer so worried about the scars.

A similar scene repeated itself in 2008, when one of the participants said that the scars on her face were a constant reminder and a great source of her emotional trauma resulting form violence that happened years before. Again, by talking about this, and by listening to fellow participants words of wisdom, by the end of the workshop the women felt much better.

Living positively

During the first 2008 "I" Story session, **Blessing**,* tearfully told how she survived an abusive husband, but was now living with HIV and did not know how to tell her adult children. Returning two weeks later to share her written draft, she was ecstatic. Gaining courage from speaking out during the workshop, she went home and disclosed her status. They hugged her and gave her their loving support.



Grace Maleka standing her ground. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

"After the first "I" Story session, I felt a sense of release after speaking out for the first time about my status, and immediately began my process of healing. I got the courage to tell my children. I thank God for my children because when I told them, they did not cry. Instead, they said, "You will make it, it's not a death sentence all we have to do is change our life style and be positive. Together as a family there's nothing we can't beat not even HIV can put us down." As I write my story, I feel good that my children have accepted my status. We eat healthy, exercise daily, think positive thoughts and give all glory to the Almighty." - *Living positively with my children beside me, Blessing*

Rose Thamae's three-generation story of enlisting her daughter and granddaughter to the cause after a gang rape that left her HIV positive has inspired hundreds here and abroad. She credits the "I" Story she wrote with helping to increase exposure and opportunities for Let Us Grow, the vibrant community-based HIV and AIDS care network she leads in Orange Farm with

branches in Lesotho. Thamae has spoken on global stages from India to the UN in New York. Three years after writing her original story, her now 16-year old granddaughter Kgomotso says:

"Even though I am sometimes stigmatised because of my grandmother's experiences, I would much rather have them out in the open than the subject of rumours and gossip. Mothers should be honest with their daughters. The truth will set you free."



Rose Thamae being interviewed at the "Soccer 2010: Voices of Youth" event at Let Us Grow.
Photo: Gender Links

Challenges

However, this is not to say that the workshop changes participants life magically, There are still individual challenges to deal with. However, another positive point is that women make connections with each other that can support them through difficult times. A year after writing her story and disclosing her status to her family, **Blessing** updated her fellow "I" Story writers as part of the follow-up workshops.

"After sharing my story with all of you for the 2009 catalogue, I truly believed I could take on the world. I soon discovered that I was very wrong. I quickly understood the meaning of depression. I went for one of my check ups and realised my CD4 counts had dropped. I was sure it was the end of my road I stopped looking after myself. I was not eating or talking to my family."

"My daughter noticed and she took my phone and went through it until she found one of the ladies I had spoken to about my status. She called her and told her what was going on with me and asked her for help. She gave her MaRose's number. Ma Rose is HIV positive and has known for many years. My daughter phoned MaRose and got us in contact; she helped me understand my new life, the meaning of healthy living. She told me what I should eat and how I should make it." - *Not easy but living positive, Blessing*

Gender Links is also aware that those who choose to continue their engagement with the organisation are likely those who experienced a positive affect on their lives. In at least one case, during the polygamy focused "I" Stories a woman experienced violence directly resulting from her story being read by family members. This prompted reflection on the possible harm that can result from speaking out.

Communicating for social change?

The Rockefeller Foundation's Communication and Social Change Network defines Communication for Social Change (CFSC) as a process of public and private dialogue and linkages through which people define who they are, what they want and how they can get it. Social change is positive change in people's lives - as they themselves define such change. It is a movement away from designing, testing and delivering messages to supporting dialogue and debate on the key issues of concern. It is about placing

accurate information into dialogue and debate, focusing not on individual behaviours, but on social norms, policies, culture and a supportive environment. Perhaps most importantly, CFSC moves away from technical experts in "outside" agencies dominating and guiding the process, and sees the people most affected by the issues of concern playing a central role.

Organisations using communication as part of strategies for social change constantly struggle with how to measure their impact. While it is somewhat easy to monitor and evaluate the impact on individuals and media, as it is possible to access individuals and track, at least to a certain extent, media coverage, assessing impact on the wider society is difficult. For example, if an "I" Story is published in a newspaper such as the *Mail & Guardian* with a weekly readership of over 230,000 or *The Sowetan* with a daily readership of 1.54-million, how do we know how many readers have read the story, and if any of them change or took action as a result?

In order to help asses the impact of communication on social changes, The Rockefeller Foundation's Communication and Social Change Network created a set of indicators, or guiding principles. An analysis of the initiatives process against these indicators can help suggest how far a given activity my be affecting change. As it is in many ways very early to determine the extent to which the project will influence social norms, we can analyse the process against these principles. The following table reflects on what has been contained in this report, against these principles.

(excerpted from Evaluating Communication, Development and Change Programmes - What's Up?: Exploring the development of indicators derived from a social change and social movement perspective, From the work by The Rockefeller Foundation's Communication and Social Change Network)

CFSC Indicator	
CFSC Indicator 1 *Expanded public and private dialogue and debate*	We can see from the reaction to the stories on online news sites and the feedback from editors that the *"I" Stories* inspire dialogue and debate in the public sphere. We have also heard from *"I" Story* participants that their participation has catalysed debate in their homes and communities, with family and community members very often discussing the story, and their own experiences, with the writers.
CFSC Indicator 2 *Increased accuracy of the information that people share in the dialogue/debate*	There are a lot of misconceptions related to GBV, and the *"I" Stories* help to dispel these. They demonstrate the realities and complexities of such relationships, as well as challenges women face in accessing justice and services. They also help dispel traditionally held beliefs, such as that rape survivors are at fault, or that domestic violence is a private issue. By doing this, there is more accurate information available for discussions.
CFSC Indicator 3 *Supported the people centrally affected by an issue[s] voicing their perspective in the debate and dialogue*	Women and men affected by GBV are at the heart of the *"I" Stories* project, and it is their stories, in their words, that are the entire basis of the project. They are fully supported through the process by their peers and counsellors, and the editing team supports their writing process - however, it is they themselves that are the driving force behind the stories.
CFSC Indicator 4 *Increased leadership role by people disadvantaged by the issues of concern*	It is clear from participants' feedback that in many cases they become leaders in their communities. Several have gone on to become counsellors. Many have given media interviews for the first time. People in their community approach them for help, advice, and referrals. Many also become activists both during Sixteen Days and beyond.
CFSC Indicator 5 *Resonates with the major issues of interest to people's everyday interests*	It is clear form the pick-up by media and responses to the stories that they resonate with many people. For example, stories often prompt others to write in about their own experiences.
CFSC Indicator 6 *Linked people and groups with similar interests who might otherwise not be in contact*	This has happened in many ways. First of all, the need to support survivors with counselling during the process means that GL links up with other organisations. The process also links survivors of GBV with media, as well as to other NGOs who often request their presence at events.

This analysis would seem to suggest that the "I" Stories have a significant potential to contribute to positive social change, especially at the grassroots and in the media. By fostering dialogue and debate and working with those most affected to secure their position in this debate the stories can influence norms that perpetuate gender inequality and violence, while also resulting in those most affected taking a leadership role in their communities, whereas before they largely were, or felt, excluded. The stories can also empower people through information, and challenge stereotypes. We have heard that these personal stories speak to wider issues in a unique way, and that communities and organisations have gained from each other through this process. All of this combines to challenge society's acceptance of GBV, and empower both writers and readers. In doing so, the stories are forces for change.

This report began with a discussion on exclusion and participation, and positioned the stories as a strategy for people affected by GBV to occupy spaces to speak out. It is clear that the "I" Stories provide a powerful approach to include those most affected by GBV to use their voices to inform and educate others, provoke discussion, and influence media. This is on top of the therapeutic benefits that self-expression can have for many people individually. While there are lessons to be learned and opportunities to strengthen the strategy, the current experience suggests that there is a need to both continue and expand opportunities for people to speak out, both through "I" Stories and other forms of personal narrative.

Changing lives - view from the outside

The evaluator used the oral testimonies and written "I" Stories to assess project impact on the lives of the target group. The impact of project on the lives of the survivors of GBV includes healing, relief, renewed self-esteem, confidence, and reconciliation between survivors and perpetrators' families as a result of speaking out. Survivors became role models in their communities and some are taking action against GBV through counseling other women experiencing GBV. Some survivors of GBV are living positively with HIV and AIDS which they contracted as a result of rape.

The "I" Stories have helped to fill gaps in existing coverage and also to showcase to media how personal accounts written by survivors themselves can be powerful for the media. Journalists are influenced to get stories from survivors as opposed to official sources. The regional GMPS shows that victims and survivors (19%) now speak more than alleged perpetrators (11%) thus indicating that the work of GL and others on advocacy and training is beginning to bear fruit. Some media houses have started to look for their own stories not always relying on the GL "I" Stories.

Finally, the "I" Stories are also contributing to positive social change in society through dialogue and debate in the public sphere such as in homes and communities, radio and television, internet, etc. to challenge stereotypes and norms that perpetuate gender inequality and GBV. This has contributed to getting men's networks involve in challenging culture and gender inequality, like the work of the Men for Gender Equality Now (MEGEN) in Malawi and Sonke in South Africa. - *GL External evaluation 2010/ 2011*

Growth and development

What do you think of when you see a butterfly? Beautiful colours! Freedom after the struggle to break out of a cocoon! The sky is the limit! Reaching up; reaching out! These were just a few of the answers given by survivors of gender violence who over the last five years have come out to tell their stories.

The butterfly is the symbol of the "I" Stories brand that these women have created as well as a profound metaphor for their lives. As facilitator Mmatshilo Motsei (herself a survivor of gender violence) sketched out the life cycle of a butterfly lights went on in the eyes of the 25 women gathered at a location near Johannesburg to take stock of their journey.

"The caterpillar is a victim whose hopelessness is compounded when it closes

up in a cocoon," Motsei said. "The butterfly that emerges is a survivor with new found freedom and possibilities. That does not mean your flight will always be a smooth one. Sometimes the most profound lessons are learned from taking the wrong turn. We think of healing as a destination but it is a journey, with several land marks along the way. Talking is the beginning of that journey."

This year, even as equally gruesome "I" Stories started to pour in ahead of the Sixteen Days, we decided to follow up on past participants to get some idea of what effect speaking out has had on their lives. Some could not be traced. At least one had died. Others preferred not to continue to be associated with gender violence related work.

But the half who responded to the alumni call and spent a weekend writing follow up "I" Stories shared uplifting stories of what breaking out of the cocoon has meant for them. At least three have become counsellors at the shelters where they once took refuge. Rehana, an HIV positive Muslim woman, and participant in the very first "I" Story workshop, is now a well known advocate of disclosing one's HIV status.

Marco Ndlovu, a lesbian who has suffered untold pain at the hands of her family and a community determined to "fix her" has written Zulu poems and become a gay rights activist, marching recently to the Uganda embassy to demand the repealing of a bill to stamp out homesexuality in the East African nation.

Participants at the weekend workshop pointed out that putting painful experiences to paper helps you to think through, understand, and come to terms with what has happened. Noting that "a story told is a burden shared" one participant said that reading other stories helped her realise that things could have been worse. Two participants said that documenting their experiences helped their perpetrators to see the light. In one case, in-laws, previously unaware of their son's conduct, came to apologise.

Grace Maleka who became disabled as a result of the violence she experienced recounts how after her story aired on ETV she received several calls from community members saying she had lied. Written story in hand, she stood her ground and has gone on to give dozens of media interviews, especially with local community radio stations. The experience of participating in cyber dialogues, and having her story posted on Women 24 where it received many comments has opened her eyes to the potential power of IT in the campaign for women's rights.

Maleka compares herself to a driver who looks in the right mirror, the left mirror, and the rear view mirror before overtaking a car on the highway. "When you have done all that, there is only one way to go and that is forward," she said. "For me, there is no turning back."

When **Sweetness Gwebu** first participated in the "I" Story project in 2007 after 37 years of living in an abusive relationship she did not want her name used. The following year, she wrote the foreword to the "I" Stories book. Now she is writing a book that probes deeper into the causes of gender violence. "What I have found not even a psychiatrist would know," she said, adding: "The way I feel now, I wish I had not hidden my name. The thing with abuse is that you get used



Sweetness Gwebu. *Photo: Gender Links*

to it and think everything is right. Even when others criticised my husband, I would still defend him and say he is like this, you will get used to him. I saw nothing wrong. Later he isolated me from my friends and family and locked me and the children in the house. My house became a prison.

I did not know that by writing your story it can rehabilitate you. It is a therapy and it has made me to heal and to counsel others who are weak. I felt guilty that I let my children stay in an abusive relationship for a long time. But now I don't regret because I am able to sooth their hearts through the information I got through reading other "I" Stories. I am now a survivor of abuse in every area and I discovered that abuse starts from the background of either the man or the woman because there is nothing good they learnt from their parents except swearing and beating up. I encourage people not to copy what they saw from their parents."

GL staff grow on-the-job

The work of the gender justice portfolio is demanding, but each staff member learnt a great deal in the head office, region or further afield.

Loveness Jambaya Nyakujarah, Gender Justice Programme Manager: " The one thing I take away in 2010 from my Executive Director, Colleen Lowe Morna is that she instilled in me the confidence to believe I can fly! This has given me strength to go on even when the going gets tough in the course of performing my duties at Gender Links where the standards are exceptionally high. I have experienced professional growth in leaps and bounds since joining Gender Links in October 2006. (For Loveness' growth on planning and time management skills; organisational systems and procedures; presentational skills; monitoring and evaluation please see Chapter Three on GL staff).



Loveness Jambaya Nyakujarah, GL Gender Justice Manager. *Photo: Gender Links*

My writing skills have continued to sharpen in the last five years and to borrow from Lowe Morna - I can see the movement from "chalk to cheese". While timelines continue to work against me I have learnt to write under pressure and do some level of self-editing. I have also learnt different styles of writing from speeches, press statements, reports and winning donor proposals among others. I still need to learn to spend more time self editing to ensure there are no avoidable errors to enhance the quality of the product.

The Deputy Director, Kubi Rama has also taught me to move from dwelling on any problem that arises and instead focus on finding a solution especially when under pressure. I am still learning to apply this. I am still learning to balance work and my personal life even though through the GL wellness programme we have been given tips on managing time to keep the body, mind and spirit in check."

Mercy Machisa, GBV Indicators Manager: "Joining the Gender Based Violence Indicators project was an opportunity to grow my research skills. Little did I imagine that it I would do so in so many ways.

I have been afforded the opportunity to enhance my writing skills, something I have not pursued in the past 10 years. The last time I had to write well was to get good English grades and escape a stern discussion with my parents at the end of the term.



Mercy Machisa, GBV Indicators Manager. *Photo: Gender Links*

Joining GL from an academic research programme with a different style of writing was a challenge. My writing had to be "simplified" to be readable to the public. "Put away everything and start from a clean slate". "What are the key issues?" I recall these instructions as I write and it has helped to improve my work.

Gender was a subject that I had not engaged in mainly because of my academic orientation. Being at GL has changed this. I have had to brush up on my knowledge of the issues and part of this has also been through gender training. One impact of this exposure has been the way I see things.

I have acquired a "gender lens". When in a meeting, on a shuttle or in public spaces I am quick to check how many women there are as compared to men. Another change is that I have become more aware and vocal about issues that occur on a daily basis but are a violation of human and more so women's rights. I see myself as slowly converting from a researcher to an activist.

Being at GL has been an opportunity to work on and improve on my people skills. Through the research work I have engaged with many diverse cultures. I was made aware of different contexts and learnt to embrace all. Often there were misunderstandings of the way the work had to be done so I learnt how to deal with conflict in a way that did not deter the work or undermine or de-motivate the researchers.

When the access issues became a concern I learnt how to increase morale and encourage the team. Working within a group allowed me to become a better team player. This is also true on a day to day basis as a member of the justice team and the greater GL team. "One cannot work in isolation" has been one of my major lessons."



Kellelo Tekateka. *Photo: Gender Links*

Kelello Tekateka, GL Gender Justice Programme Officer. "I am a Mosotho/South African, born and raised in Germany. Growing up I remember trips 'home' to Lesotho from Germany to visit extended family I remember loving these trips while always being fascinated at the stark difference between the two worlds I inhabited.

From a very early age I knew that I wanted to do something that would work towards bridging that socio-economic divide. It was my passion for development, specifically development in Southern Africa that led me to Gender Links.

When I joined the GL justice team I had no experience working in gender based violence. I don't even think I fully comprehended the impact gender-based violence can have on socio-economic development. Not really knowing what to expect, the emotional learning journey that ensued was surprising. Gender Links has opened my eyes to the many aspects of development that many development practitioners forget.

I am constantly reminded of the importance of critical analysis, awareness and how necessary it is to consider my own role in perpetuating the gender stereotypes that feed the subordination of over half of the world's population. It is very easy, when you hear shocking statistics of rape and violence against women, to forget that for each number there is a story and an individual journey of healing and strength. Gender Links has ensured that I never forget this. I believe that I am a better person for working at Gender Links, and I will always be grateful to GL for nurturing the gender activist in me."



Time to campaign for the implementation of NAPs. *Photo: Gender Links*



Lessons learned

Over the last ten years GL has done a phenomenal amount of work in the gender justice arena. The Sixteen Days of No Violence campaign is firmly entrenched as an important lobbying point for GBV across the region. Ground breaking GBV Indicators research has started and is already providing data that will fundamentally change the GBV strategies.

After ten years it was important to stop, take a breath and regroup. This is what the Justice programme learnt by listening to its beneficiaries:

- The Justice programme needs to prioritise monitoring and evaluation. Currently, partners are uncertain of how to track progress on projects in country and who to liaise with at GL.
- The Gender Justice programme is currently only focusing on GBV and it needs expand its focus to address other gender justice issues.
- Some have suggested that GL provides shelters, this however is not viable. The programme works with women who have experienced violence, lobbies and advocates for more effective response to GBV but has not actively engaged with the organisations providing direct services to people experiencing violence.
- The focus of the lobbying and advocacy thus far has been to put in place national strategies to end GBV, the lobbying and advocacy efforts need to shift to resource mobilisation and implementation.
- Training on IT and other topics needs to be sustained.
- The strategic communications workshops are an important follow up process to the NAPs, but it has to include effective monitoring and evaluation tools.
- SADC states will not be able to measure progress towards halving GBV by 2015 without baseline data on the extent, effects and prevention of GBV.



Next steps

Economic Development

- The annual GL board meeting in March 2010 acknowledged that the GL Gender Justice programme was a bit of a misnomer. The programme focused only on GBV. The choice was to maintain the GBV focus and call the programme the GL GBV programme or expand the programme based on the shifting context.
- Economic development is at the centre of gender equality. As long as women remain outside the mainstream of the economy and relegated to "informal sector" or care economy they will remain unequal. There several important steps that GL will be engaged in.
- There needs to be an advocacy campaign that argues that the "informal sector" and care economy is part of the mainstream economy.
- GL will train women through its local government work on how to become part of local economic development. The module on economic development will include content on the impact of climate change on local environments.

"What was useful was working with Gender Links. Each time VSO raised the care work issue at any SADC forum we were asked if we worked with Gender Links. VSO had to look for Gender Links. Colleen introduced us to the Head of the Gender Unit at SADC. The Heads of State are impressed with the work of Gender Links. Gender Links has a high profile on issues of gender and media. In fact Colleen did a lot of work to package the care work policy development handbook. Gender Links gave a lot of technical support and they did press release for the media,".

Bongai Mundeta,
Director VSO/RAISA, South Africa

Implementing NAPs

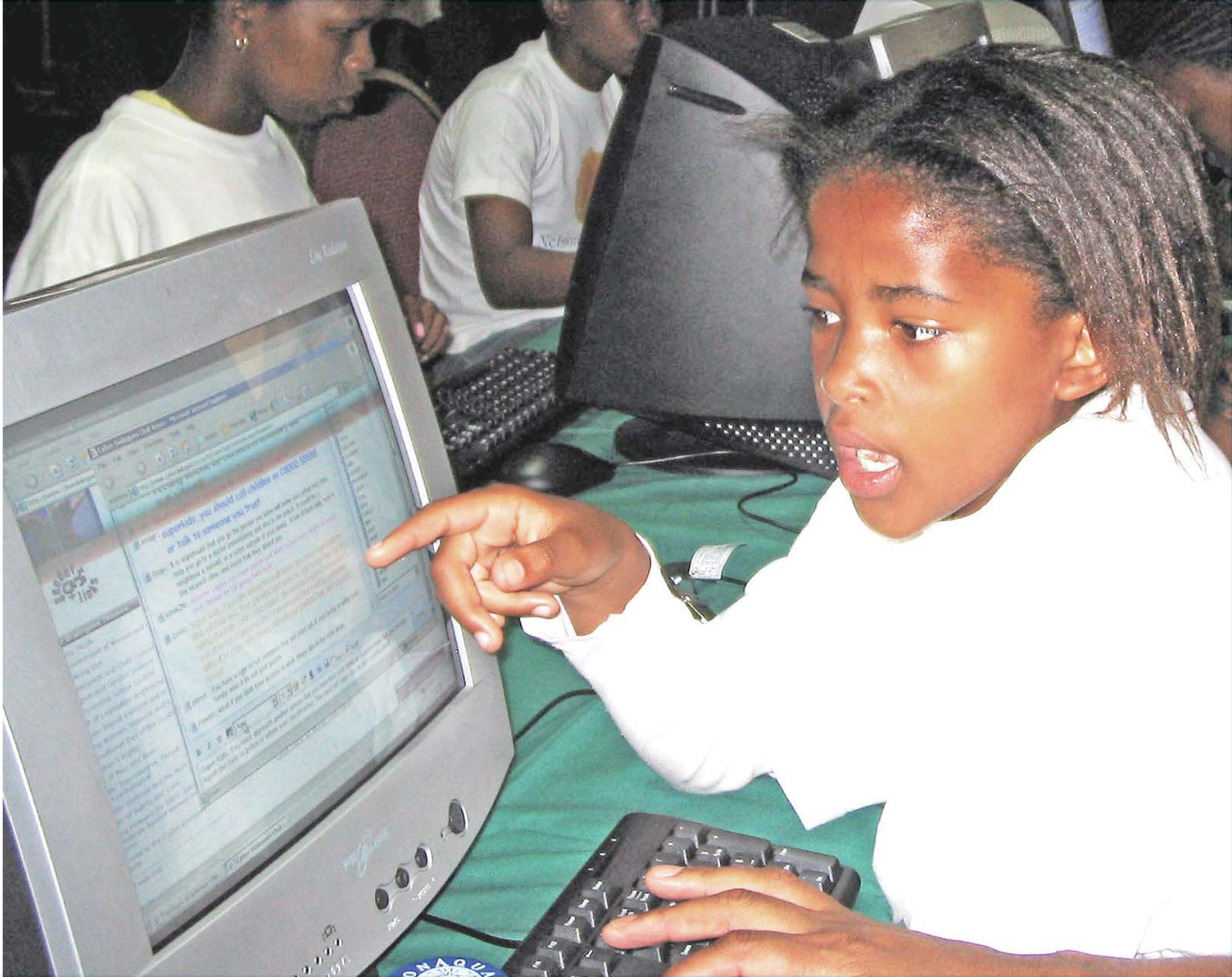
- Increasing collaboration between civil society and government as well as regional collaboration in addressing human trafficking.
- Costing and budgeting of National Action Plans is necessary to implement the NAPs.
- Increase male participation in GBV strategies.
- Increase awareness raising and education workshops on GBV for women.
- Develop tools and implementation plans to ensure that effective monitoring and evaluation to track the progress of the NAPs and to measure change.

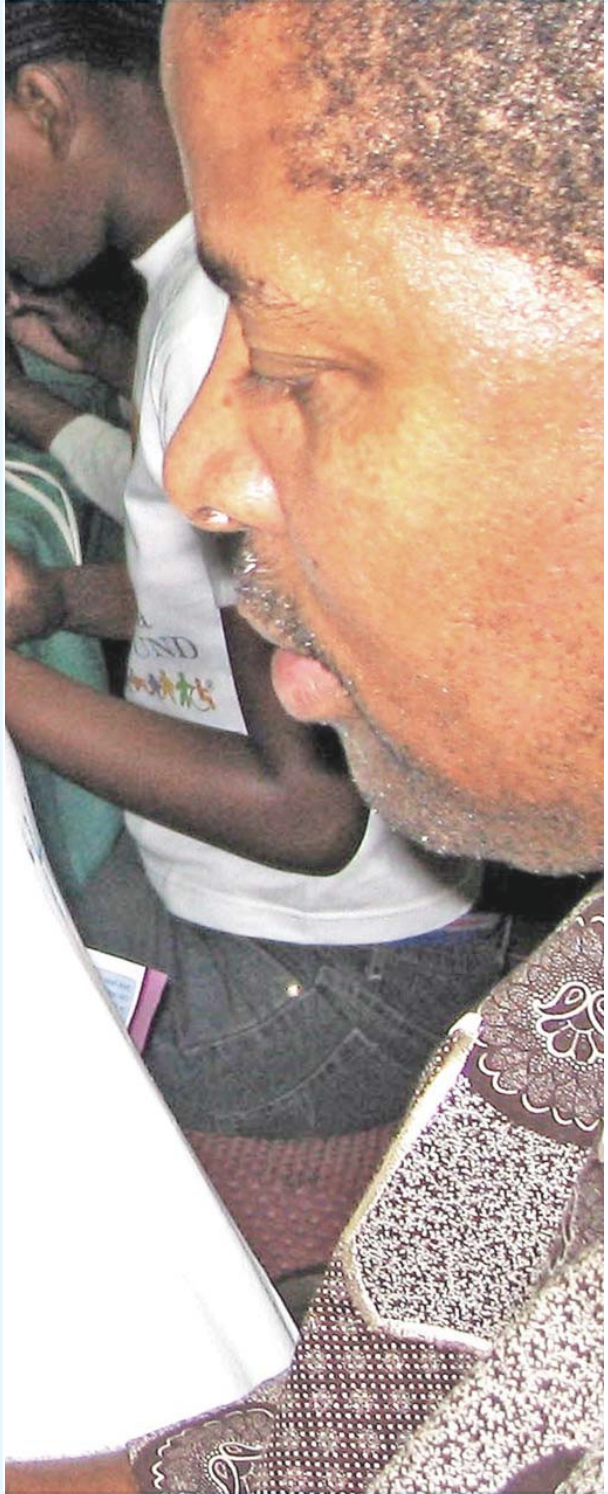
Measuring GBV

- Lobby SADC governments to conduct GBV baseline studies.
- Use the findings of the Gauteng GBV Indicators study to reshape strategies to address GBV.



Drums heralding the new path. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*





Chapter 10

Making IT work for gender justice

By Mona Hakimi, Danny Glenwright and Kubi Rama

"Working at Gender Links has provided me with the opportunity to learn a lot about my rights as a woman. I've also become more computer literate: updating the publications stock sheet, uploading clippings, analysing articles for the Virtual Resource Centre and updating the photo gallery. I also got acquainted with elementary skills that are of utmost importance in today's world where technology is evolving at a very high pace. These include sending faxes, emails and using Word and Excel. Lately I was trained in how to take good photos and in film shooting, which was a very enriching experience. To conclude I can say that I am now a more open-minded person, confident and proud of being a woman."

By Mary-Jane Piang-Nee, Gender Links intern at the Mauritius field office.

Family affair: Father and daughter at a cyber dialogue hosted by the City of Johannesburg. *Photo by Colleen Lowe Morna*

Fact box

- Between 2004 and 2010, GL has facilitated 105 cyber dialogues in 15 countries in nine different languages. A further 730 people have been trained in using ICTs for advocacy.
- There have been a total of 12 068 participants in GL's cyber dialogues: 38% male, 62% female.
- Behind these statistics are 12 068 people who have debated and discussed controversial topics such as the gendered dimension of taxi violence, xenophobia, gender-based violence and sexual orientation. Some people who have been affected by gender violence have reached out in these forums for help and been provided with assistance.
- Over the next five years, GL will continue to train activists on how to utilise ICTs to promote gender justice. Cyber Dialogues will promote debate on key issues during the 16 Days of Activism. GL aims to broaden its advocacy by consolidating its presence on social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter. GL also hopes to promote gender justice on the internet by starting a Gender Links channel on YouTube.

Mahuna: My husband says if one of our kids becomes gay he will beat that out of them.

Kayvee: Allow me to be very frank… homosexuality is not a secret anymore and so deal with it. We have people that have taken the first steps upon themselves to come out and proudly declared their sexuality so the least we can do is try to accommodate, understand, engage and learn from them.

Would "Mahuna" and "Kayvee" be able to make these statements freely and fearlessly anywhere except cyber space? Their quotes are extracts from a GL cyber dialogue - an online chat initiative - that took place on World AIDS Day in Johannesburg during the 2010 16 Days of Activism. This cyber dialogue in particular was preceded by a seminar on the link between sexual orientation and gender-based violence (GBV). During the face-to-face session, one or two of the 50 people present dominated the debate, while the rest remained silent, yet attentive. When the participants took their places behind laptops and logged into the dialogue under a username of their choice, the dynamics of the debate were overturned. Once everyone was unidentified, the variety of views (and homophobic opinions) that had been absent in the verbal group discussion were on full display on the computer screens.

The cyber dialogue participants in South Africa were also joined by people from elsewhere in the region, including Botswana, Mauritius, Namibia, Tanzania and Zimbabwe. Where the verbal discussion had been dominated by one or two voices and views, the online discussion came alive and percolated into a very real debate on the issues. Where participants had tiptoed around potentially embarrassing or controversial subjects in the face-to-face group, there were no holds barred in the online chat, which featured heated debates on everything from anal sex to the Bible to paedophilia. Although the cyber dialogue revealed much more homophobia than the verbal discussion had, it also opened a space for some of the substantive issues to be addressed and discussed, honestly and without hesitation or fear. It was an organic, meaningful and sincere dialogue about the issue of sexual orientation that brought in all participants, compared to the verbal discussion where the opinions of one or two were dominant.

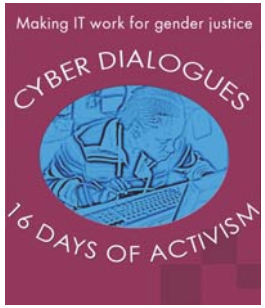


Participating in the City of Johannesburg cyber dialogues during the 16 Days of Activism. *Photo: Gender Links*

This dynamic resonates with a statement released by one of GL's partner organisations in 2004, the first year of the cyber dialogues. The dialogues were described as having "opened an unprecedented space for those most directly affected to speak out." Six years later, an online participant confirmed that cyber space is safe because "No-one is here to hurt anyone, it's a platform for voicing out…" This underscores the power of social media as a tool for inter-generational and cross-continental debate and discussion. By providing opportunities for people to share ideas and build awareness about key issues such as human trafficking and HIV and AIDS, the cyber dialogues are one of the ways that Gender Links makes IT work for gender justice. In a 2004 speech, GL Executive Director Colleen Lowe Morna noted that "technology does not exist in a vacuum. On its own it will not empower women…ICTs must be part of a much broader programme for the empowerment of women." IT is therefore used in tandem with GL's other gender justice programmes in the hope that the safety of cyber space may be replicated in daily interactions of people on the ground.

This chapter reflects on more than six years of making IT work for gender justice. As a cross-cutting part of GL's work, this book is rich with references to the power of IT and its ability to empower. For example, Chapter Eight on local government carries examples

of local councilors who have become IT literate through their engagement with GL. This chapter is devoted exclusively to GL's history with IT and the internet and will discuss in detail how one small organisation has been able to harness the power of the platform, making IT work for gender justice.



The chapter begins by taking a look at GL's "herstory" with IT, the challenges, achievements and importance of keeping up with an ever-changing technological environment. It then goes on to look at how GL has reached out to empower other people who are striving for equality and justice with the technical tools to realise their cause, both through its extensive list serve and through other tools linked to the GL website.

GL has also used IT to bring together people from different countries and backgrounds to speak about issues that are integral to attaining gender equality by 2015. Through GL's cyber dialogues, journalists, government officials, activists and ordinary citizens have spent many cyber hours together during each day of the Sixteen Days of Activism and beyond. The chapter ends with GL's most recent foray into the world of social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter, now being used to promote gender justice to an even larger audience. What this chapter shows is that GL has used IT as a means to an end - as a way of promting discussion, heightening awareness and sharing ideas in the ongoing journey to achieve an equitable society by 2015 and beyond.

Background

GL's focus on information and communication technology stems from the idea that our human lives revolve around communication. Whether as activists, local councillors or survivors of gender violence, the need to communicate a message is an integral aspect of our daily lives.

Yet, the complexity of communication is often under-estimated. Over the years GL has attempted to empower women and men to use and claim cyber space. Although these online spaces can, and have, been used for harmful purposes, from trafficking to exploitation, it is nevertheless vital to persist in the attempt to use them for good. The internet can be a free, empowering space. It is also a space that is growing in importance, something GL has been highlighting for many years, since its first foray into cyber space early in the last decade. GL's philosophy of using E-talk even when few knew or understood the internet was at times controversial. Perseverance has paid off and now, in the age of cyber dominance, GL can claim a small corner of online space as its own, a space it occupied before others realised the magnitude of this emerging communication platform.



Using cyber dialogues to empower Namibian youth during 2007 16 Days of Activism. *Photo: Gender Links*

Figure 10.1: GL's IT infrastructure

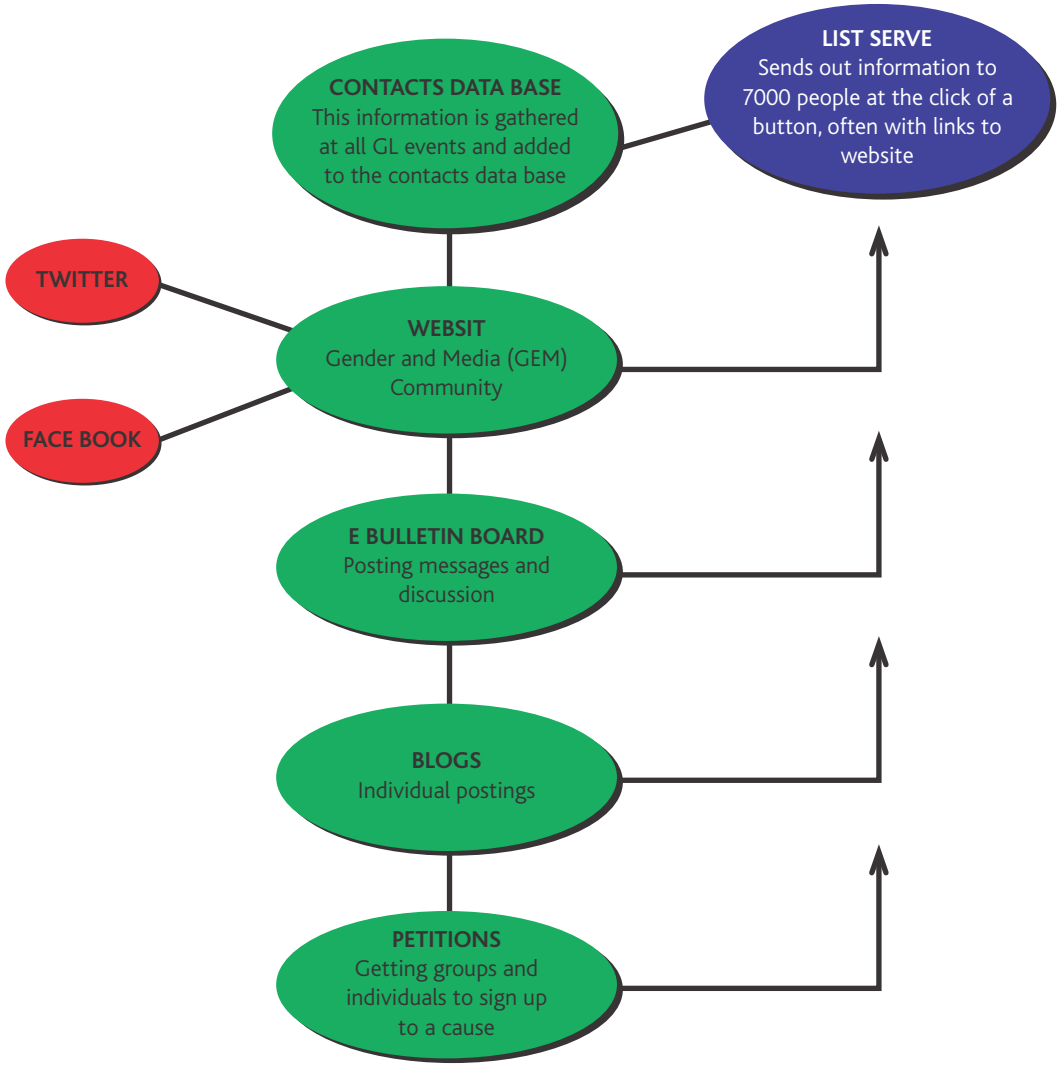


Figure 10.1 shows that at the centre of GL's IT infrastructure is the website, the main repository of all GL knowledge and the nucleus for all its online work. GL also has an extensive contacts database through which is it able to reach thousands of partners and beneficiaries using various list serves. This is connected to the website in that all information uploaded to the website is then shared with the list serves, ensuring strategic connections and laying the ground for incredible activism possibilities.

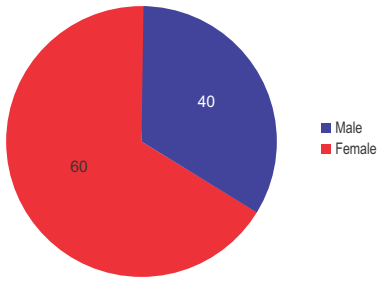
Through the years this has meant GL has harnessed the potential of online petitions and communication through its E-bulletin board and cyber dialogues. More recently it has allowed GL to plug in to the emerging world of social media through online networking tools. No stranger to social media because of its ground breaking cyber dialogues, GL has been able to increase the traffic to its website by realising the potential of Facebook and Twitter. Through it all, GL's website remains vital to its work in this area; the place where all these important communication methods intersect.

Who does GL reach out to?

The Gender Links contacts database gives an indication as to who GL speaks to on a regular basis. Regular emails are sent to 7330 people across the world with links to the latest Opinion and Commentary Service articles, e-announcements of the latest publications and

administrative matters, such as tenders and job vacancies.

Figure 10.2: Breakdown of GL contacts by sex



As Figure 10.2 shows, Gender Links regularly sends emails and E-messages to 4 398 females (60%) and 2 932 males (40%). It is also interesting to note the diverse background and local contexts of the people in GL's contacts database.

Figure 10.3: Breakdown of GL contacts by region

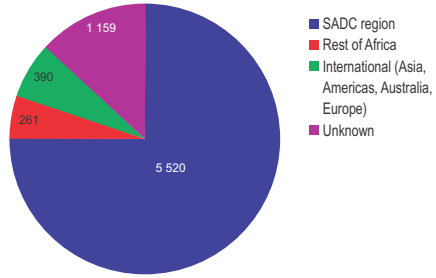


Figure 10.3 shows that the majority of those GL communicates with are within the SADC region (5 520 contacts). There is a significant number of "unknown" geographical contexts but the remainder come from the rest of Africa (261) and international areas such as Asia, the Americas, Australia and Europe (390).

Figure 10.4: Breakdown of contacts within the SADC region

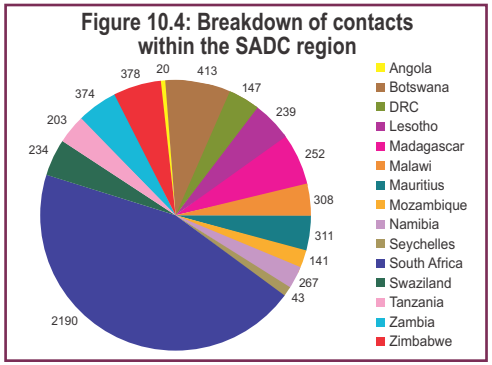


Figure 10.4 shows the people GL speaks to within the SADC region. At 2 190 people, South Africa dominates the contact list. This is understandable given GL's South Africa base and the fact that its headquarters have been in Johannesburg for the past ten years. The countries in which GL has field offices also feature quite high. GL has a large number of contacts from Botswana (413), Lesotho (239), Madagascar (252), Mauritius (311), Namibia (267), Swaziland (234), Zambia (374) and Zimbabwe (378) and this is indicative of GL's presence and activities in these countries. The field office in Mozambique was officially launched in March 2011 and it is expected that the contacts database will grow as a result.

The contacts accessed through GL's database are kept informed of recent GL work and events. They also form an online community of activists, engaging in regular discussions around GL's Opinion and Commentary Service articles and other publications. This has often been done in tandem with GL's work to empower activists to also use IT for gender justice. Over the years GL has tapped this community for its potential to advocate for change, sometimes in unconventional ways. The campaign to "Strip the back page" is one such example.

CASE STUDY

Strip the Back page petition

The "babe" pages of newspapers contribute to a stereotypical view of women as sex objects. Throughout the region and the world women, clad in bikinis or less, are splattered across the pages (typically the back page) of newspapers. They rarely represent the typical Southern African woman; worse, they feed into the idea that women are little more than sex objects.

In 2004, GL decided to challenge this stereotype in order to promote gender justice. It is important to note that gender justice is not placed above media freedom. GL argued that it should be a practice that needs


UNWAY APPEAL

PETER MOREY

nged contest .... Zwartkops airbase near Pretoria will be the venue for the world championships pilots of radio-controlled model jets from April 26 to May 4. Other attractions will include the portunity for a member of the public to have a flip in a full-sized Harvard, seen behind model genta Smythe, from 7 to 9am every morning.

to develop alongside media freedom for the development of a free and fair society. Gender justice adds to the substance of media freedom and articulates the fundamental values that we claim to hold dear in a democracy, the right of all the people to equality and dignity.

The campaign went online on 1 February 2004 with the circulation of an online petition. The idea was to get people to sign the petition and then present this to the South African National Editors Forum (SANEF) as part of a broader awareness strategy around gender and media leading up to 8 March 2004, International Women's Day. Globally, there is always a campaign on this day to get women to make the news - take over newsrooms and create the news themselves. GL challenged editors to replace content on back pages and the "page three girl" with content that celebrates women in all their diversity.

The campaign had an unprecedented response from both the media and the public. Working with the South African Gender and Media Network (SAGEM) the campaign garnered 218 signatures collected from 1 February to 1 March 2004.

The campaign created awareness around the representation of women in the media and led to a spirited debate on gender and media transformation. The campaign created a space for people to make their voices count. Many had very strong comments to make as they signed up. Some of these were:

"I support this campaign, hoping to get all those chauvinistic editors and reporters to mend their ways. It is time this important lesson is learnt. Especially now that we have entered the 21st century, such presentation of women in the media is absolutely unacceptable!" - **Veronica Mohapeloa**, South Africa.

"As a journalist, I know we can do better than what is the media today. We are the only ones who change the things the way they are now by being gender-sensitive in our reporting. We are the creators of stories in the media and I am sure an alternative media is the answer. Amplifying the unheard voices can surely change the present status of the media in Africa. My appeal to fellow journalists is to be gender-sensitive in reporting." - **Brenda Zulu**, Zambia.

"I support Stripping the Back Page and Dressing it with Real News!"- **Edward Cottle**, South Africa.

"No meaning development will ever take place if we continue to ignore the gender gaps in societies. This is a big step in the right direction."- **Kelvin Hazangwi**, Zimbabwe

"Have we forgotten that, among other things, women make up over half of the world's population, are responsible for most of the world's food production, collective education, child rearing, etc? Have we also forgotten that we do have voices, purchasing power and the ability to read? It's crucial that both women and men work towards holding the media responsible to their roles as the watchdogs of society. If they fail to have integrity, if they fail to present women in a fair and diversified manner as they do with men, if they fail to denounce, and not publish, sexist or biased material and if they fail to acknowledge their role in perpetrating an archaic stereotype of women as powerless, silent and media-illiterate...then they should step down or at bare minimum, stop pretending to be objective media practitioners and supporters. This awareness raising and information sharing campaign is long overdue - thank you." - **Elizabeth Araujo**, South Africa.

Responses to the campaign underline the real challenges involved in transforming newsrooms into gender conscious and sensitive entities, the responses vacillated between personal attacks on the people running the campaign and the expression of support from people in communities throughout SADC. Gender Links' staff and the convener of SAGEM were accused of being "sex starved lesbians", "green faced" with jealousy at their well-attributed sisters on the back pages. More important, however, were the calls received from many saying they supported the campaign and asking how they could help.

Comments from participants of IT for Advocacy training:

"Training like this is very essential. Three days is not enough... If we really need change, we need to work in concert. That is easily attained when member countries are on the same... The IT training was a brilliant idea."

"It was an eye-opener for me specifically, and I have had the opportunity to learn to use computers in such a short time. I am already feeling confident."

Equipping activists to use IT

GL had been actively involved in building the capacity of gender advocacy groups for running campaigns across Southern Africa since 2002. It wasn't long in GL's herstory before it was realised that many gender and media activists have access to computers, modems and the internet, but how do they use these tools? GL aimed to address this question by instigating a series of workshops to assist gender activists to put their messages across more effectively.

In 2005, IT for Advocacy workshops were held in Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. This programme aimed to build the capacity of gender and media networks by applying this to developing more effective gender justice campaigns. The campaign exposed communities in far-flung locations, and especially women, to new information and communications technologies for the first time.



Learning to 'chat' in Ramotswa, Botswana. *Photo: Vincent Galatlhwe*

194 people were trained in ten Southern African countries to use IT for advocacy. Women constituted 68% of the total number trained, while men made up 32%. A further 369 people were trained across the nine provinces of South Africa. 71% of the participants were women and 29% were men. In collaboration with Gender and Media Southern Africa Network (GEMSA), GL produced *IT for Advocacy*, a training manual to ensure that the empowerment of activists has a measure of sustainability beyond GL's workshops.

In 2006, the IT for Advocacy training was extended to Angola. A total of 17 participants were trained in IT skills: 12 females and five males. During the workshop, participants learned how to use web-based applications such as email, chat rooms (cyber dialogues) and how to search for information on the internet. The participants learned how to use MS Publisher to produce their own media in the form of pamphlets or newsletters. They also mastered other MS applications such as Word and Excel in order to draw together a 16 Days of Activism campaign plan.



Taking Back the Night during the 2010 16 Days of Activism in Botswana. *Photo: Vincent Galatlhwe*

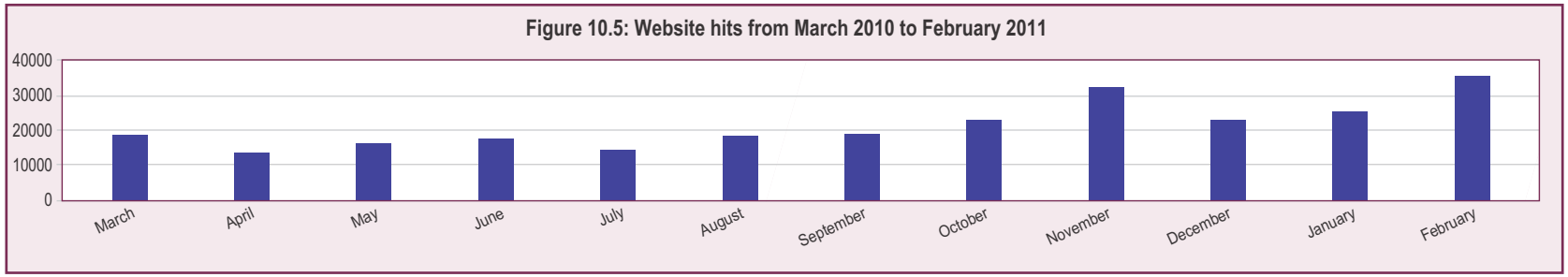


Figure 10.5 illustrates that there is a markedly higher number of website hits in the latter months of 2010, since Gender Links launched its social media sites. In September, the month before GL's social media sites were activated, the website received a total of 19 796 hits. The month of October saw this increase by 3 817 hits to reach 23 613 hits. This shows that in a matter of months, the number of website hits is growing incrementally. The rise in numbers may be attributed to the number of people that are being directed to GL's website from social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter.

The GL website also historically experiences an increase in traffic around key regional gender events, especially the annual Sixteen Days of Activism which runs over three weeks in November and December. Closely linked to 16 Days are GL's cyber dialogues, which form part of the greater outreach through the website. Every year, GL has a dedicated 16 Days page. The page includes information on the cyber dialogues, fact sheets, commentaries and other useful links. In 2003 Gender Links had a total of 210 visits to its 16 Days homepage between November 18 and December 10. This number in 2010 was 4017. An increasing number of people from across SADC and the world are reading and interacting with GL's online content that is directed towards ending gender violence.

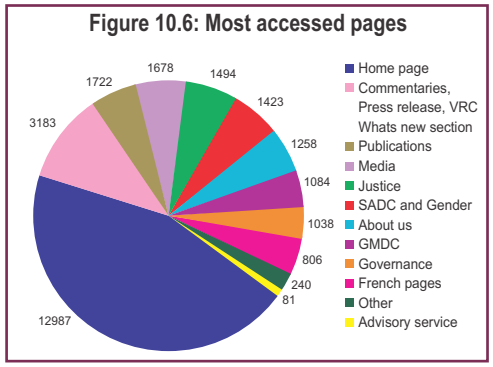


Figure 10.6 for February 2011 shows that the most accessed pages of the GL website are the homes page; press releases, commentaries and publications.

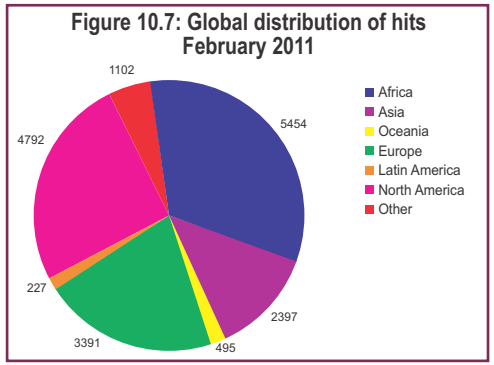


Figure 10.7 showing the global distribution of hits on the GL website in February 2011. Africa accounted for the highest number, followed by North America, Europe and Latin America.

Chatting for justice: the cyber dialogues

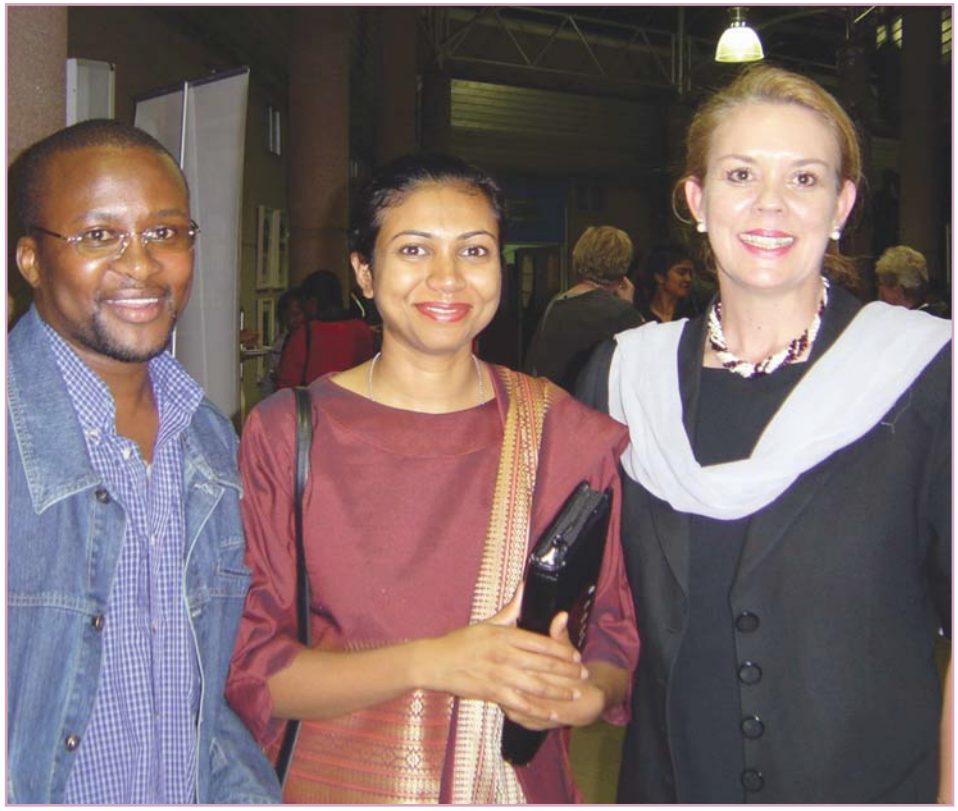
Gender Links' original foray into social media came with its successful cyber dialogues, which were first spearheaded in 2004 during the 16 Days Campaign.

The cyber dialogues began at a brainstorming meeting between GL Executive Director Colleen Lowe Morna, justice officer Mothibi Mohomane and the former deputy minister of justice Cheryl Gilwald.

Gilwald, who lost her fight to cancer in 2010, lifted the Sixteen Days of Activism to new heights in South Africa with her personal dedication and inspirational ideas. Back in 2003, she called the GL team in to talk about how to get South Africa talking on gender violence. A modern minister who sat through meetings with her laptop and made tea for visitors, she asked how we might use cyber space to greater effect. Chats! Came back the idea. *"Let's call them cyber dialogues!"* Colleen said.

Back at the office Colleen and Mothibi shared the idea with the small staff team. Deputy Director Kubi Rama, GL's IT guru, took to the idea like a duck to water. In no time she had contacted a friend at Microsoft to custom build the technology for the GL website (it has since evolved quite a bit, but the concept remains the same). Kubeshni Govender, then a Board member, and still a close associate of GL, offered many ideas for making it all user friendly. Then managing the City of Johannesburg corporate communications, Kubeshni provided a vital link to the City, which over the years has hosted several dialogues.

Since then, the dialogues have grown to become a major part of Gender Links' work in the region, both during Sixteen Days and also at other times of the year. The dialogues bring activists together online in a cyber chat, making discussion possible where being physically together is not an option. What is unique about this strategy is that it is being driven by women in Africa, the continent most afflicted by the gender and digital divide, as part of the broader campaign to *make IT work for gender justice*. The cyber dialogues have proven that working with IT to empower women, despite challenges around resources and access, has far-reaching and long term development benefits. Topics discussed throughout the years include taxi violence, polygamy, homosexuality, the role of local government in ending gender violence and unpaid care work.



Mothibi Mohomane, Kubeshni Govender and the late Cheryl Gilwald at the launch of GL's first video, "Making Every Voice Count." *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

A 2004 Gender Links report notes the rationale for the dialogues:

"The idea behind the cyber dialogues is to harness an increasingly important mode of communication that is relatively cheap and has tremendous reach in the campaign against gender violence. Such a campaign, if well planned and accompanied by the necessary capacity building strategies has the potential to:



Mothibi Mohomane sets up a cyber dialogue in one of the regional offices of the City of Johannesburg.

Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna

- Empower citizens, and especially women, in the use of new technologies.
- Encourage all citizens to air their views and speak out against violence and abuse.
- Claim the freedom that can be found in cyberspace and demand that the same apply at home.
- Serve as an accountability forum, by providing direct access by citizens to decision-makers.
- Link people across provinces and across borders in a common cause and in sharing ideas about what works in the fight against gender violence."

The cyber dialogues have grown incrementally, bringing key stakeholders and government figures into the discussion. From around 200 participants in 2004 to thousands of participants in subsequent years, the cyber dialogues have become one of the most successful ways of simultaneously empowering Southern African women in computer skills and basic human rights.

Table 10.1: Number of participants in cyber dialogues (2004-2010)

	Participants			
Year	Male	Female	Unknown	Total
2004	53	122	47	222
2005	0	0	320	320
2006	98	79	12	189
2007	110	145	0	255
2008	443	851	2731	4025
2009	1566	2640	637	4843
2010	539	686	989	2214
Total	**2809**	**4523**	**4736**	**12068**
%	**38.3**	**61.6**		

Table 10.1 illustrates the number of participants in GL cyber dialogues since 2004. Percentages of male and female participants have been calculated based on the known sex of participants, leaving out the unknown category. 61.6% of known cyber dialogue participants have been women.

The scope of cyber dialogues has increased dramatically since inception: from 300 or less participants in the early years to thousands in the most recent sessions. The earlier system of monitoring and evaluating did not allow for gender disaggregation but it is evident that a significantly higher proportion of women across the region have benefitted from the cyber dialogues.

Over the years as cyber dialogues have become more successful and widespread they have also reached more citizens in more remote parts of Southern Africa. The cyber

dialogues have opened Southern African women to the internet and new technologies, and cyber dialogue facilitators note that it has allowed women to better understand their basic human rights and to share this knowledge with others in their community. Not only have cyber dialogues been used to empower women on their rights, but also as a platform to catapult taboo or controversial topics into the discussion. In a region where conservative, traditional attitudes still hamper development, it is important for such discussions to take place in such organic, local, accessible ways.

"My most compelling cyber dialogue was when I organised a group of former sex workers to chat with the region. Their experiences were heartbreaking. They spoke of the violence they went through with clients; they started doing sex work because they had to get money so that their partners could buy drugs and they themselves became injecting drug users. They could not type and did not understand a word of English. I translated the questions for them and got three volunteers to type what they had to say." - Loga Virahsawmy (Mauritius)

CASE STUDY

Using cyber dialogues for international activism

From 2004, when GL first piloted cyber dialogues until the present day, the online chats have been used to break down barriers and cross borders. All it required was a keyboard and the internet, no planes, trains or automobiles required. Using online chat in this way means Southern African women and men have been able to share their experiences and their stories with other activists from around the world. Below are two examples of how the voices of Southern Africans have been transmitted to the world in an attempt to bolster gender activism.

16 Days of Activism in SADC: Taking to the web and spreading the word

The first cyber dialogues took place during 16 Days in 2004. On every day of the dialogues, held under the banner of "Making IT work for gender justice", at least one person came online to say they had been raped. "Lalu" sent this message on 8 December: "I was brutally raped by my employer ... Because I earn R900 I could not afford to get a lawyer. I am now unemployed, where and what help can I get help?" Lalu received several messages back with the contact information for organisations that could help her.

In the live discussion in Alexandra on the same day, Nellie Baloi said that in the ten years of South Africa's freedom, her testimony before the group had been the first time that she had experienced personal freedom. She recounted how earlier in the year her partner sought her out at her mother's



Margaret Zunguze, a cyber dialogue participant, takes photos during a session in Zimbabwe.
Photo: Priscilla Maposa

house where she had taken refuge; burnt her house and doused her with petrol, ready to burn her alive. He committed suicide after neighbours came to the rescue.

Organisers of the 2004 cyber dialogues saluted "the courage of those who have taken the space provided by the 16 Days of Activism on Gender Violence to speak out. We must not let them down. It is now up to all of us as a nation to secure that space with concrete action."

The cyber dialogues seek to maximise the exchange of information, bringing together politicians and decision-makers with average citizens, all online. The dialogues involve facilitated, interactive online chatting with central hubs at national level where experts can answer questions from users throughout the region. The model also involves a bulletin board, where users can post questions, messages and daily exchanges, sometimes using video links.

According to the 2009 Sixteen Days Report, the cyber dialogues are a central pillar of the 16 Days campaign. So far, 2009 was the most successful year for the dialogues, bringing in more voices to the conversation than ever before.

Table 10.3 shows that a total of 4 843 people participated in the 2009 cyber dialogues. Of those 2 640 were female; 1566 were male and 637 were unknown. Cyber dialogues provide an opportunity for the people who are not able to attend the face-to-face discussions to air their views on the topics discussed. As a result of the cyber dialogues, 2 938 more people were able to participate in discussions on gender-based violence in 2009. Women throughout the SADC region and beyond have become empowered on issues where they may have previously been kept in the dark. **Perpetual Sichikwenkwe**, a cyber dialogues facilitator in Zambia says:

"Cyber dialogues have empowered more than 100 women in Zambia since I got involved. The women have been empowered in many ways such as being able to use internet to express themselves on issues that affect them. The women are also educated on several topics that they did not understand... Furthermore, some women before the cyber dialogues have no courage to speak out on their experiences with other people, but after they are even able to speak to the media."

Table 10.2: Breakdown of cyber dialogues participants

	Female	Male	Unknown	Total
Online chats	2 640	1 566	637	**4 843**
Face-to-face discussions	1 241	655		**1 896**
Total				**6 739**

Cyber dialogues go global

Through GL's cyber dialogues, women have the ability to connect across borders and countries on the internet. The cyber dialogues have gained international status, having been used as a discussion tool at the 2009 Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) as well as the Beijing Plus Ten and Fifteen Reviews.

The Beijing Plus Ten Review was the first time cyber dialogues went global. The Beijing



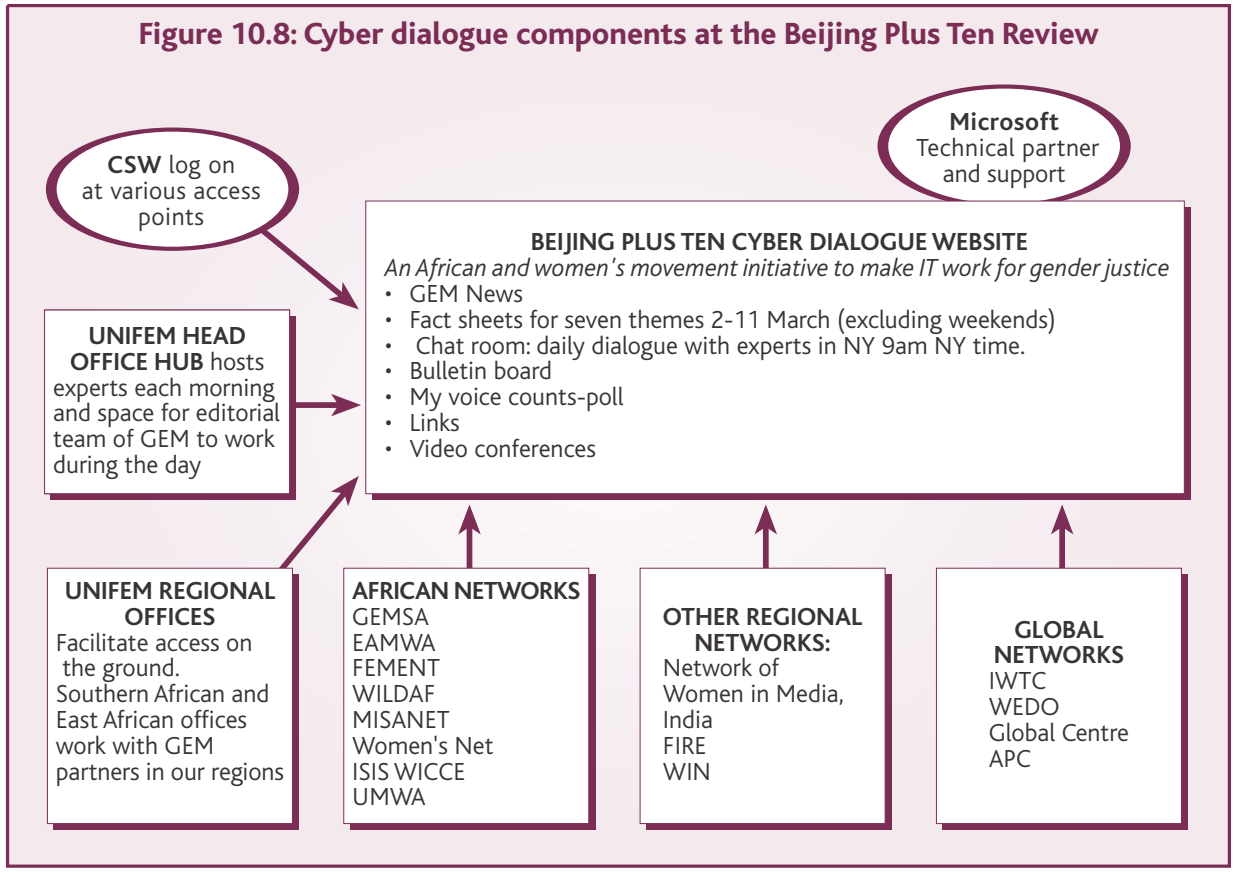
Maria Saurez of FIRE, Costa Rica, chatting at the Beijing Plus Ten in New York.
Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna

Plus Ten cyber dialogues comprised a series of seven online chats during the review of the Fourth World Conference on Women that took place from 28 February to 11 March 2005 in New York. These chats brought the voices of women not able to attend the CSW, especially in Africa and in the South, to the conference. The debates also allowed those not there to engage with news and debates from the review.

These international cyber dialogues were based on a model developed by GL during the 16 Days of Activism on Gender Violence that UNIFEM Executive Director, Noelene Heyzer, participated in during her visit to South Africa in November. The core partners in the project were UNIFEM, GL, the Gender and Media Southern Africa (GEMSA) Network, African Women and Child Feature Service Microsoft and Internet Solutions. These partnerships were part of a multi-media and IT strategy to ensure that discussions and debates from the CSW Beijing Plus Ten were taken outside the conference halls to people all over the world. The three-pronged approach included the online chats; the production of a daily conference newspaper in hard copy and an on-line version and three video conferences.

The structure of the Beijing Plus Ten cyber dialogues is illustrated in Figure 10.7.

Figure 10.8: Cyber dialogue components at the Beijing Plus Ten Review



GL hosts the cyber dialogues on its website. A series of web pages were created that provided facts sheets, background information, linked GL commentaries related to the day's theme, and the daily issue of the *GEM News@B+10* newspaper. Participants were encouraged to review these documents and then follow the link to the cyber dialogue page. Anyone with a laptop or Internet connection could join the cyber dialogues. However, to facilitate participation, GEMSA country facilitators helped to mobilise participation.

The on-line discussions ran from 9am to 10am New York time each day, with an hour-long face-to-face discussion following in New York and the other centres. This meant people were able to discuss fresh news found in the conference paper, before the formal meetings begin at 10 am. It was morning in the Americas and Caribbean; early afternoon in Africa and early evening in Asia and the Pacific. Several networks and institutions around the globe participated in the cyber dialogues. These moderated chats brought the voices of women around the world, especially from GL's home-base Africa, to be part of review and to make their voices heard at the conference.

Beijing Plus Ten quick facts

- 333 users logged into the chat room during the seven cyber dialogues.
- 28 expert panellists from 18 countries participated in the dialogues.
- 262 respondents from 26 countries responded to the poll questions.
- Seven editions of the newspaper were published.
- 1500 hard copies of each edition were distributed.
- 1500 people across the globe received each online edition of the newspaper via list serves.

During the Beijing Plus Ten Review, face-to-face discussions held in New York and Johannesburg complemented each of the cyber dialogues. The discussions were an opportunity for those in New York and people in Africa to interact with each other, while sharing information with colleagues in other locations. Delegates in New York also found that the discussions provided an opportunity to engage with each other in a semi-structured way, which was sometimes more conducive to learning and sharing than the very large conference venues



Marching for gender justice in Arandis, Namibia. *Photo: MDX*

The main aim of the cyber dialogues was to ensure interaction with the news coming out of New York, especially among African women. This was greatly enhanced through forging partnerships with networks in our region as well as around the globe. The partnership with the World Bank ensured that all the Public Information Centres (PICs) of the World Bank became access points.

GL also managed cyber dialogues during Beijing Plus Fifteen, based on a similar model, in 2010. Accounts of these dialogues and

the daily newspapers produced can be found on the GL website.



GL on Facebook and Twitter

Although Gender Links still continues to intervene in traditional ways: research, publications, workshops and training, it is apparent that social media is playing an increasingly important role in publicising this work. In an effort to reach a wider and more diverse audience, GL has branched out into the world of social media. The hope is that by harnessing the power of the digital age and its growing influence in Southern Africa, an organic, online, grassroots movement can begin to challenge the often repressive structures that are preventing the attainment of equality and justice.

In July 2010, Gender Links began a process of implementing and incorporating social media platforms into its everyday work. Gender Links approached Creative Spark, a Cape Town-based web, mobile and application development company, to help make the organisation more social media-friendly in order to reach a new and larger audience. Creative Spark's proposal for Gender Links involved redesigning the Gender Links website to implement social media links to both Facebook and Twitter. During the GEM Summit in October 2010, Creative Spark was officially hired to incorporate social media into all of Gender Links' work, including in its field and satellite offices. The impact was felt almost immediately, with website hits and unique visits higher than ever before.

The digital conversation has already reached thousands, including those at the highest levels of power, sparking debate online where it is not always allowed in the pages of the region's newspapers. Following the recent publication of a GL commentary about political repression and the silencing of female politicians in Malawi, the country's Vice President, Joyce Banda, called the author to say she was actively following the discussion on GL's website and social media. This, she noted, was a discussion currently not being permitted in Malawi's press due to a media crackdown by some members of government. Regardless, thanks to GL's active social media and website, the information was getting out.

Live on new media platforms

By Alec Lushaba and Mona Hakimi

Gender Links Deputy Director Kubi Ruma announced during the 2010 Gender and Media Summit that the organisation's new social media platforms are officially live. In an interactive session entitled "Entering the E-zone", Rama put Gender Links' social media platforms into practice with GEM Summit participants.

"We are very happy to share this space with everyone," said Rama. "We set it up to create a community, a gender and media community. It's collaborative, it's a community, and we would love for people to use it."

The latest addition to this online community is the Gender Links Facebook page and Twitter discussions about the GEM Summit. Any comments and "tweets" relating to Gender Links will be fed directly into their website.

However, Gender Links Executive Director Colleen Lowe Morna warned that although social media tools are a good way of getting gender messages out, they are no excuse for poor journalism practice.

"We will never find the views and voices of women if we sit in our armchairs and get quotes from the internet," she said.

Yet in a presentation at the summit, Gertrude Pswarayi, a feminist and freelance journalist

said that "ICTs are to development as taps are to water". This is telling of her passionate belief in the advocacy potentials of online media.

She mentioned her excitement about the Twittering session because "this is power and power is in your hands". Pswarayi also included the caveat that young girls who use social media must be adequately trained to protect themselves from online stalkers.

The perils and possibilities of ICTs in gender activism have been widely discussed this week, particularly in the "Community and social media" sessions. In one of these sessions, Tonya Graham, a Canadian delegate commented, "Social networking is something that is currently under-utilised."

Journalism trainers Friday also resolved to mainstream gender into 14 courses that were analysed, noting that new media is one area where there is room for growth.

University of Swaziland head of department of Journalism and Mass Communication Adidi Uyo hailed the Fourth GEM Summit as having been an eye-opener as far as main-streaming gender into his courses.

"Gender was not part of our menu. Now I will bring it into my courses be it research, theory or even news writing," Uyo said.

In her study on gender in media curriculum, Pat Made revealed that very few institutions in the region offer core courses on gender, or gender and the media.



GL's social network officially launched: participants at the GEM Summit 'Like' and 'Tweet' for equality and justice. *Photo: Trevor Davies*

Uyo said the three-day meeting has created awareness on gender issues and gave him ideas about how to incorporate gender into courses so students can bring in a gender perspective to all issues.

The Polytechnic of Namibia's Head Emily Brown also noted that using social media tools is a great way to incorporate gender discussions into high school curriculum.

GEM Summit e-Newsletter, 15 October 2010

There has been significant growth in the popularity and use of GL's social media outlets since the platforms were launched in October.

Table 10.3: GL Facebook users and Likes (October 2010 - March 2011)

Month	Likes	Active users
October - November	68	90
December - January	285	323
February - March	838	1 307

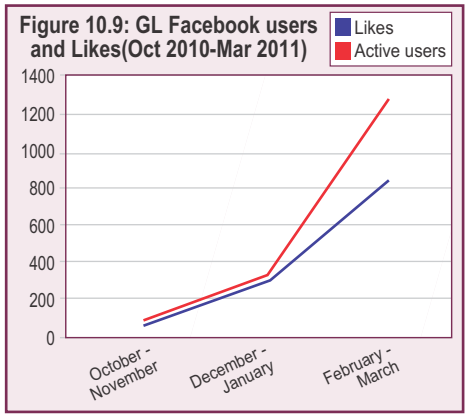
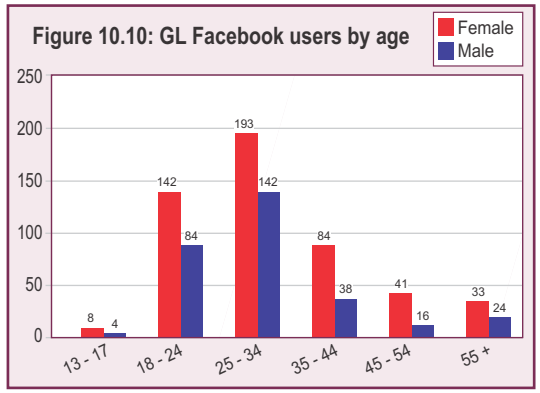


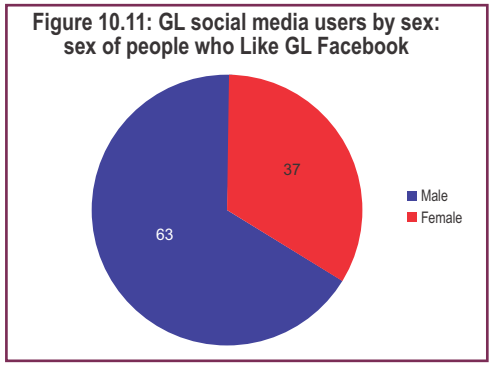
Figure 10.9 shows the number of active users and "Likes" on the Facebook page between October 2010 and March 2011. The number of active users takes into account who has opened the GL Facebook page and spent time engaging with its content. The number of "Likes" shows those users who have actually "Liked" the Facebook page, thereby allowing themselves to be permanently linked to it and continue to receive GL content.

Figure 10.4: GL Facebook users by age

Age	Users		%	
	M	F	M	F
13 - 17	4	8	0.49	0.97
18 - 24	84	142	10	17
25 -34	142	193	17	23
35 - 44	38	84	4.5	10
45 - 54	16	41	1.9	4.9
55 +	24	33	2.9	3.9



The highest number of people who frequent the Page are found in the 25-34 age bracket (17% male, 23% female). This shows that GL's interventions are reaching a younger demographic that is typically not easily reached through traditional media.



There is an increasing diversity of people who are active on Gender Links' Facebook Page. The proportion of male and female users has remained steady since the Page started: the GL Page attracts significantly more women (63%) than men (37%) as the latest numbers in Figure 10.11 show.

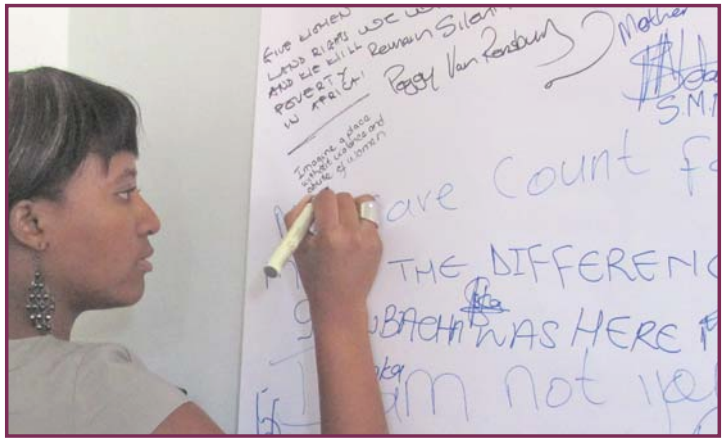
The majority of people who read links and interact with GL's posts are from South Africa, with Mauritius as a close second. The statistics point to a need to target more people from the SADC region, where GL works, in order to be more effective in advocacy. This has begun to happen, with field offices such as Botswana and Lesotho creating profiles on Facebook to increase online activity within their own countries.

At the time of writing, 838 people had "Liked" the GL Page in order to keep updated with GL's activities and to read and interact with GL's links and posts. Thousands more have viewed the page over the past six months.



Activity on the GL Page increased substantially during and after the "Enough is Enough" campaign against gender violence that was initiated on International Women's Day in 2011. The campaign began with a call to be part of the movement for change, starting by changing Facebook users' profile pictures to a logo that said: *"Bua! Khuluma! Speak Out!"*

The "Enough is Enough" campaign was officially launched at the GL event for International Women's Day, and participants were invited to write their comments about the state of gender violence on the GL Facebook Wall. This instigated a flurry of activity on the Facebook Page, from ordinary citizens demanding that the rights in the Constitution be upheld to political parties such as COPE showing their support of the campaign.



Thato Phakela, intern at GL, writing on the "Enough is Enough" wall on International Women's Day, 2011. *Photo: Gender Links*

While the GL Facebook Page is reaching thousands of people, Gender Links has a small yet significant presence on Twitter and is aiming to make giant footprints in cyber space. At the time of writing, GL had 390 followers that re-tweet, mention and interact with GL's daily tweets.

Southern Africa: What about tweeting for gender justice?

By Saeanna Chingamuka


Photo: Trevor Davies

Seaanna Chingamuka, GMDC Manager at Gender Links.

A few weeks ago there was a revolution in Tunisia. Some sources say the revolution was not televised, but rather twitterised. On 14 January, Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali dissolved his government, called for legislative elections in six months and promised not to run in 2014. But this late decision did not quiet public anger on social media platforms, in particular Facebook and Twitter. Later that evening, the president fled Tunis.

Over the past several weeks we've seen the power of social media as it helped facilitate the organisation of protests so Egyptians, Yemenis, Serbians, Algerians and others could take to the streets in their numbers and demand political change.

Closer to home, in September 2010, there was unrest and deadly riots in Mozambique after the release of a simple anonymous text message: "Mozambicans, prepare yourself to enjoy the great day of the strike. Let's protest the increase in energy, water, mini-bus taxi and bread prices. Send to other Mozambicans."

The power of new technology should not be underestimated. The *Mail and Guardian*'s Chris Roper recently said the internet will be Africa's next battleground.

"The true worth of social media lies not in its ability to make time pass in a blur, but in its disruptive potential politically," he noted. "All over the world, social media practitioners are using the power of the internet to fight despots, dictators, corrupt politicians, evil regimes and cellphone companies."

So why don't we add patriarchal structures, violence against women and gender disparity to that list?

Social media is on the verge of taking over in the absence of traditional media, especially in African countries where governments have created repressive media laws, and where the imprisonment of journalists is the order of the day.

It is important to note that 2011 marks the 20th anniversary of the Windhoek Declaration, a statement for press freedom principles signed by African journalists at a UNESCO seminar in Windhoek in 1991.

Considering press freedom has yet to be realised in many African countries, citizens are turning to cell phones and social media to protest societal injustices. These tools become an instrument of empowerment which can also motivate marginalised citizens and communities to voice their concerns.

In 2010 I attended the World Journalism Educators Congress (WJEC) in Grahamstown, South Africa. I remember my surprise when a young man walked up to me, introduced himself and said he was working for a Grahamstown youth newspaper called *Upstart*. He requested an interview and I remember thinking he didn't look like a journalist. He wasn't even carrying a notebook - and what is a journalist without a notebook?

But he then removed an ordinary cell phone from his pocket and began to ask me questions. Just as I was trying to figure out what was happening, he clicked a key on his phone and said "we start". He was recording me on his phone. In a minute and a half we were done and seconds later the clip was posted to his website.



Tweeting for gender justice: responses to GL's UN Women awareness campaign.

As I recalled this incident, I realised how empowering it was for me to be interviewed at this conference, attended by more than 700 participants.

In 2010 Gender Links released the Gender and Media Progress Study (GMPS), which found that women sources constitute just 19% of the total number of sources in Southern African media, a very slight increase from 17% in 2003.

But although women's voices only increased two percentage points in seven years, maybe things are only changing now. If my voice could be heard at this conference, in a non-traditional format, it was a score for women.

And social media in Africa is on the rise. Writing in Africa Renewal Magazine last year, André-Michel Essoungou found that Facebook has seen incredible growth on the continent, with more than 17 million users, an increase of seven million from 2009.

"More than 15% of people online in Africa are currently using the platform, compared to 11% in Asia," he wrote. "Two other social networking websites, Twitter and YouTube, rank among the most visited websites in most African countries."

Just as social media is reshaping politics in Africa and beyond, it holds the same potential to challenge gender inequalities in society. From preventing violence against women to profiling the successes of ordinary women, cell phones and social media can enhance women's empowerment in Africa's communities.

Maybe rather than using cell phones for "sexting", we should begin to cultivate a culture of employing technology for social

change. What about cell phone messages or "tweets" that castigate rape and sexual harassment in educational institutions? Or why don't we use technology to hold leaders accountable when it comes to changing the lives of women for the better?

The lesson here is that technology can be controlled by us, the users, and women can produce their own content to assist in the fight for gender equality. How we choose to use this technology and the social media tools available to challenge patriarchy and unequal power relations will definitely be something to watch in the months ahead.

Growth and development

By incorporating social media into its work through a partnership with Creative Spark, Gender Links has been able to reach new audiences, deliver new messages while continuing to educate and empower its traditional audience. Its website hits have increased every month since the partnership was created, which means the social media is also acting as a link to the Gender Links website, bringing new people who will hopefully take away the vast amounts of research and information housed there. Links to Facebook and Twitter also mean commentaries and other media outputs are being shared more widely and the Comments section on the Gender Links website is more active than ever before, with ongoing discussions and fluid, organic cyber dialogues happening all the time rather than at set times.

Through its forward-thinking approach to IT and social media over the years, GL has been able to stay at the front of the pack, helping Southern African women and men access new tools for empowerment at the same time as employing traditional methods of activism.

While an outward-looking glance demonstrates that there are host of people being empowered in IT skills as a result of GL workshops, an inward glance shows that there has also been significant IT training and empowerment within GL's own staff. The learning journey of Gladys Muzirwa, who is currently the Executive Assistant at GL, is a testament to this process of learning to use IT tools to promote gender justice.

"The little hand would not allow me": learning to handle IT

Gladys Muzirwa

I joined Gender Links in June 2009 as an intern. At that time I knew little about the work environment, I had to stand in for somebody who had gone for maternity leave. Hopes were so high that it disappointed many that I was laid-back and seemingly lacked energy. I was timid during that time - I would sit at my computer, I didn't even know that I had to open my Outlook to see emails. Fortune, the network manager who had lots of work on his hands, had to sit with me several times and demonstrate how to do even the simplest of things.

I remember on my third day after I started the job, he came to my computer and asked me to open my Outlook to check emails. I told him I didn't know where Outlook was and oh my, he was more shocked than disappointed at my response. Shame, I feel so bad for him because I wasted so much



Gladys Muzirwa. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

of his precious time asking for help at every turn. In most cases he would ask me to do something, show me how he expects it to be done. I, wanting to be the smart person and desperate to please my boss, would assure him that I have completely understood and would go back to my desk and start struggling to make sense and find my around doing it.

A task that takes me thirty minutes to do now would take me a whole day to do back then. Right now I can only imagine how he used to feel about all this, especially when he would come to check on progress only to find out I'm still on square one. I remember one Friday, he asked me to do a quote comparison for a server because we were going to move office. I was provided with the template, the three quotes and one can imagine how simple and straight forward the task was going to be. All of the quotes were in electronic version and so upon demonstration I had been told I would just copy and paste figures from the quotes to the comparison sheet. It worked out with the two quotes and the other was locked so could not copy anything, all I could see was this little thing that appeared like a hand as I scrolled up and down the document trying to find my way to copying the figures.

An hour later my boss came to check on progress only to learn that I had made two entries only and I told him that I could not copy the third one, "The little hand would not allow me," I said to him. He asked if I hadn't thought of just putting the number into the sheet without necessarily copying and pasting. I had never felt so daft and useless. I was so determined to get it right for once, but I guess that was wishful thinking. Clearly, the task looked simple enough to me and I had said to myself, I will not spoil this one chance to prove myself, I am going to religiously follow the instructions he gave to me and come up with some good work. I never stopped to think that I could just enter these figures without necessarily copying and pasting from this stubborn quotation. I had to do as I had been told, goodness! One can imagine how low that level of initiative was.

At one time I was asked to write a short biography about myself to put out on the website, I quickly scribbled one on my notebook and went to the boss and presented it confidently as this was one thing that I was ever asked to do and I did so fast. Little did I know, I had to type it up and send to him via e-mail. I look back at all this and laugh because I have grown so much out of all this. I learnt how things are done each day with the acknowledgement that I was also sitting on my laurels at times. I would take all as constructive advice as opposed to sulking and blaming other people for my mistakes.

I moved to working as the research intern with the GBV Indicators project. This is where my journey to discovering myself began. I learnt a lot about gender-based violence, its impact on the victims, but also how speaking out helps survivors to heal and be set free from their past. I came to the realisation that many are abused by their known partners, but they refuse to see it as abuse and many a time they blame themselves for what is happening to them. There is a tendency to think that they are not good enough, which is complete fallacy.

For three months I worked with the Deputy Director, Kubi Rama, as a Programme Assistant. In this position, one of my major tasks was to consolidate the Programmes Planner. Kubi explained to me how this is done but I didn't quite get it and so went back to my office, tried to get my head around it but I just could not do it. I called Bridget and asked her to explain all this in Shona and there I was in her office. Bridget explained it to me and I eventually got a grip on it. I remember Kubi was so pleased at my first attempt, I assumed I had done much better than she had anticipated.

Moving to Monitoring and Evaluation meant a whole lot of new things to learn, but it was all exciting. The first time I consolidated the report, I was so terrified when the formats were vexing me and changing at every turn. I would gnash my teeth but through all of this I learnt something new every time. As I write, I have been taught how to generate a lot of monthly systems

reports, which I feel very excited about because I now have a sense of fulfillment. I feel valuable and powerful as I have knowledge of my work and can make sense of what is going on in other programmes as well.

Gender training was an intense but exciting learning experience. I work for a gender organisation and I got used to terminology around gender and sex every day, but it dawned on me that I did not really know what these meant and how they apply in everyday life. From this training course, I have leant to always have my gender lens in my pocket and use them when confronted with a scenario and analyse it.

Our group analysed clippings around the Caster Semenya saga. Through this exercise I learnt how to analyse newspaper stories with a gender lens, how women and man are viewed in news, how women and man are used as sources, how sex and gender was used interchangeably in the stories, how pictures are captioned in a wrong way to the media's advantage, how women are seen as minor and are only asked for views as victims while men as experts. I learnt how culture and tradition contribute a great deal to gender stereotypes and how women who challenge these are given names by the media and people surrounding them.

Sometimes the key to communicating effectively is in the simplest, most under-estimated details. Kubi Rama, Deputy Director of Programmes at Gender Links tells a story that testifies to the importance of bearing these details in mind as GL reaches out to people and organisations across the region and the world.

Overcoming "klinks" at Gender Links

Kubi Rama

You are probably wondering what the "klink" means. As I move on in my 40's I start to become more like my parents so I will tell a little story to make my point rather than just make the point.

Last year we were frantically working to get the first Gender Justice and Local Government Summit together. Bonnie Visage, ace administrator, joined us to assist in the last part of January. From the time she joined she has been having major email problems. People experiencing bounced mails when they respond to her. I am getting to the point.

Three technicians checked, changed, tested and deliberated over this email disaster. Eventually I looked at a mail that Bonnie had sent to me and saw that her email address was coming up as rsalocalgvt2@gender**k**links.org.za. I then realise that a mistake was made when the email address was typed into Bonnie's Outlook account. Hence, when anyone replied to her mail it bounced back.

Thirty seconds later Bonnie's email hassles were solved and the world was a better place!



Kubi Rama makes a point. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

My year before the summit was filled with "klinks". I can say with certainty that I worked in all four of GL's programme areas during the year. It certainly made for variety and excitement. With Loveness Jambaya-Nyakujarah taking a much deserved break to have her daughter, Mwaita and a burgeoning governance programme it has been quite a year.

Most of what I learnt this year I learnt from the young soldiers. I had to work with two amazing young women in both the Justice and Alliance programmes. We had many "klinks" when for example Naomi Blight, justice intern, wrote to Councillor Barbara Walters rather Councillor Christine Walters. Or when Lucia Makamure, alliance intern, informed me ever so calmly that we were running out the SADC Handbook, *Roadmap to Equality*, three months after publication.



Mwaita Nyakujarah with her grandmother. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

While there were times when we were all frustrated with each other, I would always look at the two young women and feel inspired. While very different on the surface they shared many remarkable qualities. Both were tenacious, hard working and passionate.

It was wonderful to work with the young energy and questioning minds. They made me explain what we do and why we do it. Something that I didn't always appreciate, but was ultimately a really good thing. We start to take a lot for granted after many years in the same place.

Now back to my "klinks". As you can imagine two interns and I running two major programmes led to a few "crises". There were moments when it would have been so easy to give into the panic and become disabled.

I don't think I have ever said the words "calm down" as much as I did in the last year, including to myself. A lesson I hold onto is to stay calm, focus on the problem and more importantly, the solution.

Problems are not always complex and difficult. Start with the simple, sometimes it's just a little "klink".



Lessons learned

- The power of partnerships: it pays to expand and strengthen GL's network of partners with civil society organisations and local government authorities. Utilising GL's existing partnerships over the years has allowed activities such as IT training and cyber dialogues to flourish despite limited resources.
- It is valuable to partner with social media experts such as Creative Spark in order to strengthen the impact of the cyber dialogues during the 16 Days and continue discussing and debating key issues online throughout the year. In this way, GL has more of an impact and reaches more people.
- Cyber dialogues should be moderated and well coordinated to ensure the best outcome. Engaging large groups of people online for an hour or less requires advance planning.
- IT and social media training are new areas for many in the region and training should be sustained and repeated. Once-off

training in social media is not enough and often leads to frustration on the part of trainees. Capacity-building over time is more effective.

- Training people in their context provides the best possible learning environment for the facilitators and participants of the IT for Advocacy workshops. The technology can then be tailored to suit the conditions in each particular local setting.
- Technology is best applied when there is a purpose behind it. IT skills are necessary and indeed particularly important for women. Teaching people about IT and its uses in the context of a campaign and using it as a tool to advocate for change makes the process of knowledge transfer much easier. GL's focus has not been on IT skills per se but on how these can be used as advocacy tools.
- Communicating in local languages is the ideal way to reach people on the ground. Technologies such as cyber dialogue chat rooms provide the mechanisms to run concurrent discussions in different languages. This results in people taking ownership of the process and the content of the discussions.



Next steps

- Continue to work with consultants and IT experts to expand GL's social media footprint.
- Create Facebook and Twitter pages for all GL field and satellite offices, including in French, Portuguese and other indigenous languages.
- Promote all GL's work on Facebook, Twitter and using other online tools.
- Create a GL YouTube account that can be used to showcase all GL video productions and reach new audiences.
- Run regular cyber dialogues throughout the SADC region and beyond, ensuring momentum for change between conversations remains high. Use the cyber dialogues for continued advocacy in order to identify key issues and processes during the year.
- Initiate online petitions to protest against unfair laws or policies or to lobby for change in policies and laws.
- Expand the network GL works with by maintaining the links with partners that joined the chats and extending awareness and access to the cyber dialogues concept and website.
- Collaborate with media practitioners in order to influence behaviour change.


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Chapter 11

Ripple effects: Media and communications

By Danny Glenwright and Mona Hakimi

"I think opinions of all women should be considered, not only opinions of educated and businesswomen. Women should also criticise themselves where they have shortcomings and recognise efforts by men who believe in the power of women. Men and women have their strengths and weaknesses. The issue is to focus on how to convert the weaknesses of both men and women into strengths"

- Moses Mlangeni, SABC Radio

Mukayi Makaya marketing Gender Links publications at the UN Beijing Plus Fifteen meeting in February 2010.
Photo by Colleen Lowe Morna

Fact box

- GL has produced 720 opinion and commentary articles, 119 research publications, 23 training manuals, 18 periodicals, 12 conference newspapers, 183 fact sheets, eight radio programmes and eight institutional videos. Gender Links articles have appeared in the opinion pages of SADC media at least 2 517 times. Since GL started keeping media statistics in 2005, it has been mentioned in the news 1 308 times.
- Hundreds of thousands of beneficiaries have been reached through various GL publications and productions in Africa and beyond.
- These women and men have been introduced to ideas and discussions they would not have otherwise had access to, including on sensitive subjects such as HIV and AIDS, gender-based violence, sexual orientation, incest and abortion.
- Over the next five years GL will continue to produce articles and publications in English, French, Portuguese and indigenous languages, ensuring that women's voices increase to at least 30% in all SADC media and in all SADC countries.



Danny Glenwright in Kono, Sierra Leone in 2008.
Photo: Kim Brunhuber

When I[1] first met Mariama Kandeh she was a novice reporter in her early 20s. One of two female journalists in a newsroom dominated by men, Mariama somehow managed to stand out despite this position, mostly because she was a great writer. It was 2007 in Freetown, Sierra Leone and the country was just about to hold its first elections since coming out of 12 years of one of West Africa's longest and bloodiest civil wars.

The *Concord Times* news team was made up of about 12 reporters who all shared two computers. The generator was only active for one or two hours each day, so there was always a queue to get on before the power went out. There was no internet. We chatted while waiting to type our stories, mostly about the news of the day, political intrigues and typical newsroom gossip.

I was in Freetown to train journalists how to report on human rights issues during an election. Most journalists in the country had never had formal training in a country which had been dysfunctional for more than a decade. Many of my trainees had barely been to school.

Mariama and I became fast friends because she was passionate about human rights issues, especially women's rights. She had lived through the war and seen firsthand some of the most horrible crimes carried out on her country's women: rape, amputation of limbs and sexual slavery were all common. She was also interested in writing about some of the traditional and cultural wrongs committed against women, war or no war. Working together we wrote stories about maternal and reproductive health, female genital mutilation and the scourge of rape and gender-based violence. I watched both her writing and her confidence improve over the eight months I worked at *Concord Times* and when I left I felt secure I'd had an impact and made some difference: something those of us who work in international development strive hard for but so often find elusive.

Just before I left *Concord Times* the newsroom got hooked up to the internet for the first time. I remember showing Mariama the Gender Links website and telling her it would help with research for future stories about gender issues. It did. She emailed me a year later and said she had used the site extensively, including in her university application, which was successful. She was moving to London to study and was elated.

When I got the job of editor at Gender Links in 2010, Mariama was one of the first people I emailed. She jumped at the chance to write for the Opinion and Commentary Service and her story about Naomi Campbell's testimony at Charles Taylor's trial in The Hague was one of the first I published as editor.

"As a young girl growing up during the gruesome civil war, the fear of being raped by a group of armed men was far greater than the fear of death," wrote Mariama. "Had Campbell, a black super model who is apparently a role model for many women thought of this, I wonder if she would have minded the people she had dealings with." Mariama's commentary was popular and poignant. It was picked up by South Africa's *City Press* and also widely published throughout the region. It was a fresh perspective on an issue which was dominating the news. This is also the tagline of the Gender Links Opinion and Commentary Service: *Fresh views on everyday news*.

I think Mariama's story helped me start off on the right foot at Gender Links and for

[1] Danny Glenwright is Editor and Communications Manager at Gender Links

her, I think it was the opportunity she needed to move beyond a *Concord Times* star reporter to become an international journalist. She could now look to Gender Links not only as a place to find research but also as a platform where she could express her opinions to a wider audience. Since that first article in July 2010, Mariama has written several pieces for the commentary service, ensuring a wider variety of articles and increasing the reach of Gender Links to incorporate a new writer, and new stories, from West Africa.

This chapter is called ripple effects because of stories like this. One person has an idea and it spreads and ripples, washing over new people and places and bringing new voices into the conversation. For if communications and media are about anything, they are about starting conversations and growing them to encompass as many voices and views as possible. The chapter covers the many ways Gender Links works to make bigger ripples in Southern Africa and beyond, leveraging its programme work through the media and publications.

As an organisation rooted in media, GL sees the media as both a tool and a site for transformation. While we work to transform gender relations in and through the media, we also see the media as a means for getting our message out. This is done through the Opinion and Commentary Service, as well as being accessible to the media, ensuring that media come to and cover all key GL events, producing daily newspapers at major conferences and leveraging all our work through new media (see Chapter Ten).

In February 2011 alone more than 20 000 people opened an opinion and commentary story on the GL website. If even half those readers took something away from those articles, there has been a huge impact. The Service has often sparked intense debate, propelling Gender Links onto the pages and television screens of the region's media and into the airwaves. This chapter will also look at how Gender Links has featured in the media over the years and how this has been used to leverage the organisational brand and raise awareness about the work we do.

This will be followed by a glance at some of the many publications Gender Links has produced in the past decade. If there is one thing which underscores the depth and seriousness of GL's outreach work, it is the organisation's ability to produce informative, educational, groundbreaking publications. Just as one commentary can have an impact on a personal level, GL's publications have made an impact at even higher levels,

What Gender Links means for me as a writer



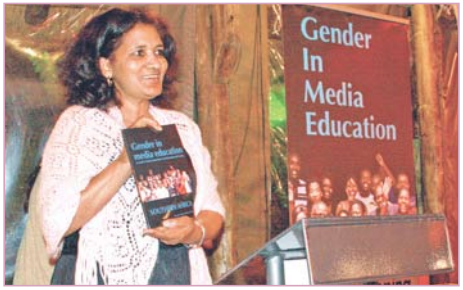
"I first came to know about Gender Links through Danny Glenwright. One day he gave me a list of websites where I could get story and commentary ideas as well as other necessary information. GL was on the list. I was specifically interested in GL as I believed it was going to strengthen my commentaries on gender issues in my column "Gender Watch". Since that day I became a constant visitor to the website.

Sometime in 2010 I received an email message from Danny stating that he had got a new job with GL and welcomed anyone who'd like to contribute to GL's commentary service. I was so excited as I've always admired and been inspired by GL's commentaries and with Danny steering the ship; it was a fantastic opportunity that I was to grab with every effort.

It is an amazing opportunity for me to get a wider readership of my articles through GL. That thought alone has been an inspiration. It's been an honour to have people making reference to my articles from different parts of the world. The feeling I have knowing my writings are being appreciated is amazing and I owe it to GL for the opportunity. Growing up in a society where women were to be seen and not heard, I had a burning desire to help in killing that myth. I don't think there could be any better way of doing so than my writings at GL. Its like a dream-come-true".

- Mariama Kandeh

influencing policies, academic research and even international protocols.



Polytechnic of Namibia's Emily Brown launches a Gender Links publication at the 2010 Gender and Media Summit.
Photo: Jennifer Elle Lewis

The Gender Links Opinion and Commentary Service

Gender Links decided to start a new conversation in 2004 after the findings of one of its most important and substantial research reports: The *Gender and Media Baseline Study* (GMBS). The study found that the voices of women were missing from much of the region's media, especially when it came to speaking on issues of substance. The idea was to intervene in the region's opinion pages. If Gender Links could not create news or change the way all journalists reported (at least right away), it could certainly express opinions. Thus began the Opinion and Commentary Service.

Table 11.1 shows that since its inception in 2004, the Opinion and Commentary Service has produced at least 10 articles every month and a total of 720 articles over the period.

Table 11.1 Opinion and commentary articles and usage (2005-2011)

	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	Total
No of stories	126	103	128	104	116	143	720
No of times used	328	309	525	364	348	644	2517
Average usage	2.6	3	4.1	3.5	3	4.5	3.5

These stories have been re-published in the region's media an average of 3.5 times per story. This means Gender Links articles have appeared in the opinion pages of SADC media at least 2 517 times. As these statistics are based on the number of times articles are republished *that we are aware of*, the number could be considerably higher. For example, with the advent of new media and through our improved tracking, we found that stories in February 2011 had been used an average of 19 times! In short, the ripple effects of these stories are incalculable.

Regional diversity

Figure 11.1: GL Opinion and Commentary Service by country

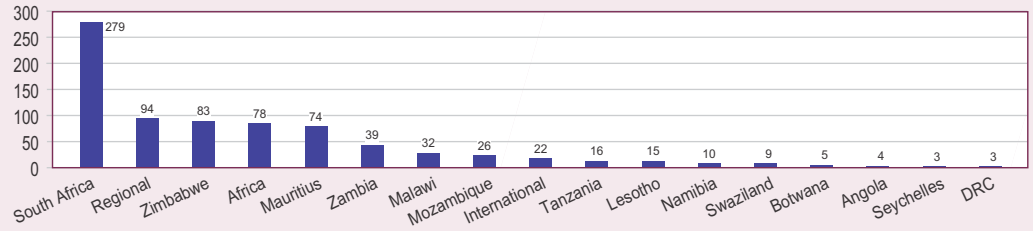


Figure 11.1 shows that approximately one third of the stories generated have originated from South Africa with regional stories about Africa or the SADC region close behind. Stories from Zimbabwe and Mauritius have also increased in number over the years.

The Francophone service

One of the ways Gender Links was able to highlight the region's diversity to a wider audience was in creating the Francophone Opinion and Commentary Service in 2009 to cover DRC, Madagascar, Mauritius and Seychelles from GL's Francophone base in Mauritius.

The Gender Links French Commentary Service: a jagged route

By Marie-Annick Savripène (Francophone editor)

The Gender Links Francophone Commentary Service began after a training session at the Gender Links Head Office in Johannesburg in mid-February 2009. A group of journalists from DRC, Mauritius and Madagascar had been invited to attend but due to a misunderstanding between the administration and the journalists from Malagasy, the latter could not attend. Nevertheless, the training went on with a couple of journalists from Mauritius and from DRC.

Fifteen days later we attended the Commission on the Status of Women conference in New York and managed to publish some pre-commissioned stories in the newspaper Gender Links was publishing during that week. Since then and up till now, the service, which has produced more than 250 commentaries, has followed a jagged route.

The average publication usage for each story ranges from two to three: the most faithful newspapers publishing all of GL's stories are *La Voix Kreo*l and *Le Quotidien* in Mauritius and *L'Observateur* in DRC.

We have tried sending stories to all newspapers in Mauritius and to those with whom we had worked in DRC and Madagascar. But in Mauritius, most newspapers will only publish stories written by their journalists.

We do have some best-seller writers, like Jimmy Jean-Louis, who managed to publish his article on bird flu in four newspapers in August 2009, namely in *La Voix Kreol, Le Quotidien, IPS*, and the Swiss agency *Médiatropiques*. His article on the feminisation of drug trafficking encountered the same success, being published in the same four publications.

Colleen Lowe-Morna's translated article about Caster Semenya was published in *Samedi Plus, Le Mauricien* and *La Voix Kreol* in August 2009. Her article on the impact of "I" Stories in December 2009 and another about polygamy, promiscuity and leadership were also very popular.

But our top best-seller remains Loga Virahsawmy, Director of GL's Francophone office. The average usage of her articles is three but some of her stories have been published up to five times.

In DRC, even though Gender Links has facilitated training on the commentary service, it is usually the same writers who work with us. We have encountered some bad luck there too. One of our most regular writers, Urbain Saka-Saka Sakwe, whose articles were appreciated by newspapers in Mauritius, by IPS and in DRC, died in August 2010.



Marie-Annick Savripène at the 2010 GEM Summit. *Photo: Gender Links*

We did get some new authors after Loga conducted training in August 2010: Sylvestre Nyota from the newspaper *Le Phare* is one of them.

I believe there is a special issue in this country and it is related to poverty. During training, journalists from DRC have informed us that

even to write articles and get them published in their own newspapers, their bosses encourage them to ask for money. It is different at *L'Observateur* because Blandine Lusimana, the editor, who is also an author for the service, keeps on pushing her own way.

In Madagascar it is yet another story. The *Madagascar Tribune* publishes the stories it receives but it is not often that it sends the scanned articles, even though we do send reminders. This makes tracking difficult.

We have sent articles to *l'express de Madagascar*, with whom Gender Links has close contact, but it has never published our stories. The consultant there recently told me that the newspaper does not publish these kinds of stories.



Journalists in Madagascar. *Photo: Gender Links*

We did try to attract authors other than journalists and even had a training workshop with women politicians and professionals in Mauritius. Just after the training in 2009 these women were all very enthusiastic to write. However, we never received a commentary from any of them. This can be attributed to lack of time but I personally think that gender not being on the political agenda means they might have to be critical towards the authorities and there is a fear to displease these authorities.

I have also tried sending French commentaries to French newspapers like *Libération, Le Monde, Le Parisien* and the on-line *Rue89* but only the latter responded. And this was because the editor was looking for contacts as he wanted African writers. But he never published the articles sent to him.

Is it a question of poor quality writing? I do not think so. I think that each newspaper or media has its own rules. Most of them are looking for very newsy stories and they feel that gender is not newsy.

I believe, for instance, that when Fanja Razafimahatratra wrote about Mauritian domestic workers being abused and killed in Lebanon, her commentary was published widely because the story was at the top of the news at the time.

And then, as we all know in journalism training, there is that thing called "the kilometre law", meaning that newspapers publish stories mostly about those occurrences which happen nearby. The farther you go, the less interesting stories will be.

The good news is that with the help of English editor Danny Glenwright, all of the French service stories are now being published on allafrica.com. The IPS French editor also regularly publishes our stories.

The bad news is that our most regular publisher in Mauritius, *La Voix Kreol*, has lost its owner and the newspaper has recently closed down. I do hope that we shall find other outlets.

On a personal note, I love interacting with authors and animating the service. It is very interesting to know what is going on in terms of gender in all of these countries and liaise with the authors. Apart from the friendship we have developed, I have seen them grow in terms of their writing skills and it is a real pleasure for me when IPS, allafrica.com or any mainstream newspaper publishes their commentaries.

Despite the challenges and setbacks of this jagged journey, it is a very gratifying experience for me to be editor for the French commentary service of Gender Links.

Jimmy Jean-Louis, one of the Francophone Service's most prolific writers, has said the French articles have been a great addition to the opinion pages of his Mauritian newspaper. "Besides contributing to the Opinion and Commentary Service, I see to it that *La Voix Kreol* publishes the views of francophone and recently English writers in every weekly addition," he said. "These pages are kept alive, even in times of economic turmoil."



Mercedes Sayagues (left) and Magda Burity at an opinion and commentary workshop in Maputo. *Photo: Danny Glenwright*

The Lusophone service

The 2010 *Gender and Media Progress Study* (GMPS) found that women sources in the news in Mozambique regressed from 15% to 14% over seven years. Because of this, Gender Links decided to launch yet another Opinion and Commentary Service, but this time in Portuguese.

Mercedes Sayagues, a Knight Fellow based in Maputo, and GL Board Member Eduardo Namburete helped to launch the Lusophone Opinion and Commentary Service in March 2011. The first commentary published by Mozambican writer Gilberto Macuacua concerned the "corrective" rape of lesbians in Southern Africa. A series of articles on reproductive health issues followed. The hope is that the Lusophone Service will grow and expand to cover both Mozambique and Angola, publishing stories relevant to Africa's Portuguese-speaking countries.

Institutional links

Through the Opinion and Commentary Service GL has been able to establish long-running and collaborative relationships with media houses and editors throughout the region. In 2010, the commentary service began exclusively selling articles to select South African media houses in an effort to recover some costs and ensure long-term sustainability. Over a short time many editors and media professionals have come to see the Service as a place they could come for quality content.

One such relationship has grown with South Africa's *Cape Times*, one of the leading English language dailies in the country for most of its 135-year history. The paper is what Assistant Editor Tony Weaver calls the "standard bearer of liberal and progressive thinking, whether in opposing direct colonial rule of the Cape from London in the 19th and early 20th century, or being a fierce opponent to the apartheid regime."

Weaver, who regularly publishes Gender Links articles on his opinion pages, notes that GL stories are especially appreciated by his paper's readers. "The commentary service provided by Gender Links is invaluable to the *Cape Times*, and is a perfect fit with our editorial outlook."

In late 2010 GL created a partnership with allafrica.com, and all French and English GL commentaries are now published on the popular site. Managing editor John Allen has said "we're very pleased to have Gender Links material on our website." Other regular users of GL commentaries include Pambazuka, Women 24 online, South Africa's *Mail and Guardian*, IQ4News online and many others. Gender Links commentaries are also used by a much more diverse cross-section of people, from academics to activists. Zoe Titus, Regional Programme Manager at the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) Regional Secretariat in Namibia, noted: "The commentary Service is informative and particularly useful as a tool for discussions and training."

> *"I was just preparing a presentation for Thursday focusing on Danish Development Assistance, Zambia and gender, and at more or less the same time, I received this mail from GL - I have already copied the article "Forced to farm for free", which I will distribute. Perfect timing!"*
> - E Mail from Toni Solveig Michelsen, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark

Multiplier effects



Maabia Pea and Lineo Makhaola(front) at a 2011 opinion and commentary workshop in Maseru. *Photo: Danny Glenwright*

Through GL's online tracking system, we are able to get an idea of the multiple ways in which the service is used (readers are asked to fill in a simple form; they are also invited to post comments). The following is a selection of such comments, categorised into different kinds of use:

Multimedia uses and republishing

- Stories read aloud on Malawi's MIJ FM (Malawi) live broadcast programmes.
- Republishing e.g. Network of Women in Media (India).

Research

- Research on topics where there is often no other readily-available data (e.g. LGBTI issues in the Northern Cape).
- Used in global online portals for gender resources (e.g. www.engagingmen.net).
- Background research for theatre productions about social issues (e.g. LGBTI play in Botswana, Theatre for Change in Malawi, devising a play on human trafficking as part of a course in London).
- International freelance journalists get opinions from GL authors.
- Somebody writing a section about gender-based violence in a school textbook.
- Research for Department of Justice and Constitutional Development and Commission for Gender Equality.
- Information will be used in compilation of speeches, to be delivered by ANC MPL's, in a House Debate, in the Western Cape Provincial Parliament."

Training

- Teacher training material e.g. a journalism lecturer in Beijing wanted to teach students about gender issues.
- Volunteer from the Women's Shelter in Gaborone wanted help with counselling she does at work.

Personal empowerment

- Personal change e.g. "I have a family member in South Africa I believe is in an abusive marriage. I am looking for information to try and assist her in breaking free from the marriage."
- An 11-year-old read an article for inspiration because she wants to start her own NGO for women.
- University assignments/thesis citation for students in diverse disciplines.
- A group of sex workers in Botswana read an article to learn how to form their own support group.

Beneficiaries

The beneficiaries of the Opinion and Commentary Service can be divided into the general public reached directly and indirectly through the service, as well as those who create the service - the writers and the editors. The benefits include the engagement, debate and movement for social change that is created through a service such as this, as well as the personal growth and development of those involved.

General public - information and engagement

Figure 11.2: Unique visits to Commentary Service Feb 2010 vs Feb 2011

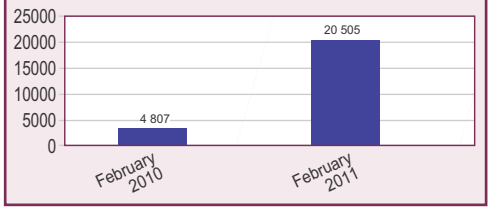
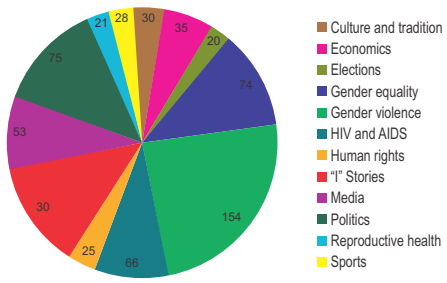


Figure 11.2 above illustrates the huge growth in commentary website hits over just one year. In February 2010, there were 3 807 website visits to GL commentaries. One year later, in February 2011, more than 20 000 visited the site.

Sparking debate on difficult issues, the Service has opened much-needed space to discuss topics which were once taboo, ensuring that the real and uncensored voices and stories of women and men are never far from the eyes and ears of SADC media consumers.

Figure 11.3: Most popular commentary themes (2005-2011)



Readers respond

The GL website is interactive and invites comments. Below are some examples of readers comments, reflecting the many ways in which readers engage, debate, change their minds, and make use of the service:

***Women's lives to tell, not to exploit,* 19 October 2010**
"My main purpose for viewing this article is to share it with the women and girls (especially those of colour) and educate them on issues of gender and the media affecting women and girls around the globe. This will mainly be used as an 'educational tool'".

***Mothers in-law out of order,* 15 April 2010**
"I am the Chairperson of Centre des Dames Mourides which is affiliated to Media Watch Organisation. We have a counselling unit within our organisation. Very often, we receive women whose marriages are nightmares because of interference of in-laws. We shall use this article to share with others in the organisation and see ways and means to sensitise mother-in-laws on how they are creating havoc in their sons' marriage. We can use the article to show to the women who come to us that in other parts of the world, mother-in-laws are doing the same thing. The issue is how to cope with this situation."

***Presidential soap opera and Soccer 2010: more than just a game!,* 9 June 2010**
"Your articles are quite informative, I like reading them, they enrich me personally. Another reason is that I sometimes do not get South African paper to read, with your online postings it keeps me abreast with all Gender issues."

***Southern Africa taking MDG-3 by the horns,* 27 September 2010**
"I have always found the information I receive from Gender Links very informative, analytical, and evidence-based as information come with statistics/figures, sharing experiences of cases of African women, and animating as it is information is presented in a style that attracts readership. As a gender and human rights activist, I am using the information to update myself in the area of gender, feminism, human rights and general development and by so doing enhance my capacity to engage in development discussions, debates and general discourses. The information and data serve as my training material where applicable. And as the current Head of the Gender Training Institute, I am learning from Gender Links data presentation style for marketing and for publicising our institute. Lastly it is fun and refreshing to read your articles."

Figure 11.3 provides a breakdown of themes covered by the service. Stories on gender violence (154) top the list followed by "I" Stories (86); gender equality (74); HIV and AIDS (66) and media (53).

"I" Stories or personal testimonies bring a unique voice to issues which are often difficult or sensitive. No recent "I" Story has garnered a bigger response than the tale of a woman who went by the pseudonym Bridget and wrote about having sex with her father. It ran during the 2010 16 Days Campaign. Bridget's tale of incest elicited hundreds of views and many comments.

The following comments have been copied from the website:

- "First I want to congratulate the writer for sharing her story this is an indication that she sees that what her father did to her was wrong and it is not her fault. Her father knew how to how to make vulnerable, he knew she loved him as daddy and how much she wanted to have a relationship with him he choose to make her believe that's how father and daughter related. There are many young girls out there who are being lied to and can fall in the hands of their father who can end up raping them because they feel they are loved. So your story will help them to understand that they can talk to someone about their fears and for the writer to know it was never her fault that this had happened to her. Let's protect our children, sisters and all children by taking a stand and report these cases even if perpetrators are not arrested but people will know what evil they have done" - Jabulile Mokale on 26 November, 2010.

- "I do hope that in real life the writer did not have sex with her father for the first time at 20 years. If so, are you mad?" - Jan on 26 November, 2010.

- "This is truly 'comical' and I am not sure what we are to believe as Bridget* did say that she liked it at some point and needed a father. The victim and abuser relations, where the victim falls in love with abuser. But here really! Women, can we be that much of a dog world and have self pity for this behaviour and actions-Please! Jan has a point" - Glenda Muzenda on 26 November, 2010.

- "I wonder just how many of us seek to find that love and acceptance from a distant/ disapproving/disengaged parent of either sex. Bridget's story must be familiar to many of us, at least implicitly. We all are neurologically wired to bond and connect deeply with our primary caretakers, our parents. When this intimate bond is disrupted by the human weaknesses (selfishness, incapacity for love, narcissism, etc), the inner child will CRAVE this ~ and all cravings are powerful and often addictive. And, ultimately, destructive. The father in this story has two amazing daughters, both strong enough to confront their own cravings and those of their father. It is a story of hope, ultimately, that this pain will not be passed on to the next generation of their families. It would be better if the world spent more $$$ teaching how to love well than on competition or war" - Patty on 07 January, 2011.

- "This story is amazing I'm now 20 and I went through the same thing just after my 15th birthday and I only met my father for the first time about 3 months before, I have only ever told my best friend what really happened and I'm trying to decide if I should tell the police or not because the situation is so different and I'm not sure many people would understand and the ignorance of Glenda and Jan just make me not want to tell the police what my father did" - Jean on 18 February, 2011.

Other articles have been popular because they highlighted issues at the same time as Gender Links' research was catapulting them onto the front pages. Sometimes the most powerful stories are those which are critical of the very media in which they are published.

When Gender Links recently released research noting that more than three quarters of South African men admitted to perpetrating violence against women, the Service ran a commentary about the problem of marital rape. Long-time writer Arthur Okwemba wrote that it was a divisive issue and a concept many were not willing to acknowledge, especially the media. "Objectivity, significance and impact are no longer values guiding decisions on what to publish. This is why many gender-based

violence stories fail to see the light of the day," he wrote. "When male reporters and editors feel GBV stories touch on, or call into question, their personal behaviours and opinions, they become hostile to these stories."

Okwemba's article about marital rape also saw plenty of website comments, with many praising him for taking up the issue.

- "I am so grateful to you Arthur. In most cases marital rape is not taken seriously sometimes by both the victim/survivor as well as the perpetrator. This is still a big challenge to gender activists. We need to pull up our socks!" Mackrine Shao-Rumanyika on 20 January 2011

- "Grassroots training of journalists, while they are still in college, should be intensified and incorporated in their curriculum on how to respond to such issues. This is a serious matter for media in educating society. Thanks Arthur for such a reminder and an enlightening article."

Social movements

The quest for gender equality is a movement for social change. Articles distributed through the commentary service can have consequences way beyond the obvious, as illustrated in the example below of an article that promoted a Sunday sermon by an Anglican bishop:

Preaching the gospel?



Mail&Guardian May 8 to 14 2009 17

Comment & Analysis

A women's rights activist is ambivalent about attending Jacob Zuma's inauguration. She writes him an open letter

Are you 'big' enough, Mr President?

Comment

Colleen Lowe Morna

Dear President elect Jacob Zuma

As I write this letter to you, I am looking at the invitation to your inauguration on Saturday May 9. I must say that I have never felt so ambivalent before about being invited to an event at the Union Buildings. Maybe I am just shocked that I even made it on to the guest list. I would not rank up there with Zapiro among your detractors (I see the shower head is to remain in his progressive stance on women. It was Mbeki, you will remember, who appointed 42% women to his Cabinet and who, in the words of former deputy president Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, could be counted on "to be on the right side of the argument where women's rights were concerned".

You, on the other hand, start with the cards stacked against you: a rape case in which the judge did not find sufficient evidence to convict you, but in which you famously inferred that an HIV-positive woman who regarded you as a father, dressed in a traditional wrap-around skirt was asking for sex; in which you said you took a shower to prevent yourself getting infected.

When there were crowds outside the court having for this woman's tin" over her disgust at spending on arms while millions died of HIV/Aids is back in public life as a commissioner in the Human Rights Commission. And, under the interim administration of Kgalema Motlanthe, Barbara Hogan replaced Manto Tshabalala-Msimang as minister of health, giving a breath of fresh air to an era of disastrous policies on HIV/Aids.

On the numbers front you have, so far, upheld openly against barring the Dalai Lama from visiting South Africa, or will you celebrate and welcome principled, independent thought?

When ANC Youth League leader Julius Malema calls DA leader Helen Zille a "racist little girl" will you reprimand him for sexism and racism, mindful that it is highly unlikely that a male politician in this country would ever be called a "racist little boy"? Or will you just let that pass, as you did the witch hunt outside the court room?

Will you seek to strengthen the National Gender Machinery or will you allow it to continue in disarray? Will you ensure that the credibility of the Commission on Gender Equality is restored or replaced by a viable alternative?

Will you open a national debate on the idea that there should be a ministry of gender equality and women's empowerment where such structures have failed dismally in every other country and seek the best possible option before this is implemented?

On the eve of President Jacob Zuma assuming office in South Africa, GL Executive Director Colleen Lowe Morna wrote an open letter to the president published prominently in the *Mail and Guardian*. It read in part:

"Dear President-elect Jacob Zuma: You start with the cards stacked against you: A rape case in which the judge failed to find sufficient evidence to convict you but in which you famously inferred that an HIV positive woman who regarded you as a father, dressed in a traditional wrap around skirt was asking for sex; in which you said you took a shower to prevent yourself getting infected and a case in which you did nothing to stop those baying for her blood outside the court house to stop. As you prepare to take office, she lives in exile, unsafe in the land of her birth because she dared to take up a case against the "Big Man."

You are openly defensive about having several wives (though I doubt you would counte-nance any one of them having several husbands) and have not espoused any coherent policy on women's rights (or on many other issues for that matter).

When ANC Youth League leader Julius Malema calls Democratic Alliance (DA) leader Helen Zille a "racist little girl" will you reprimand him for sexism and racism, mindful that it is highly unlikely that a male politician in this country would ever be called a "racist little boy"? Or will you just let that pass, as you did the witch hunt outside the court room?

Will you openly invite your rape accuser back to reclaim her citizenship and offer her the protection to which she is entitled? Will you encourage the debate that has started since your rise to power on whether polygamy is a violation of a Constitution that has gender equality as one of its cornerstones, regardless of your personal position on the issue?

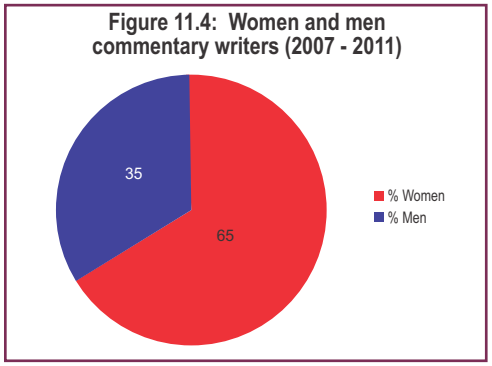
If you are big enough to do all this, Mr President, I am happy to take a seat at your inauguration. For leadership is ultimately a lot more than narrowly escaping this or that court conviction. It is about how bigness is used."

The article elicited a wide range of on-line response, positive and negative. One of the most interesting responses came in the form of a letter from Anglican Bishop Peter Lee to GL say that the commentary had inspired a Sunday sermon.

The following is an excerpt from the sermon:

"The ruling party has a very long and honourable record for defending the dignity of women and promoting the rights and the role of women in our democracy. For that reason we are about to get a woman premier in Gauteng. But it is not about how many women get to be premiers; it is about continuing to foster a culture of respect for women and driving back the tide of abuse. We will never get a grip on HIV and AIDS in this country until we stop the sexual abuse of women by their husbands and boyfriends. We talk about abstaining and being faithful but that presupposes that women are free to choose their own sexual partners and activities; that is simply not the case. We need to re-translate the ABC as 'abstain, be faithful and cut out abuse'. As long as men abuse their power to force women into sexual activity, debating condoms is a waste of time."

Writers and editors

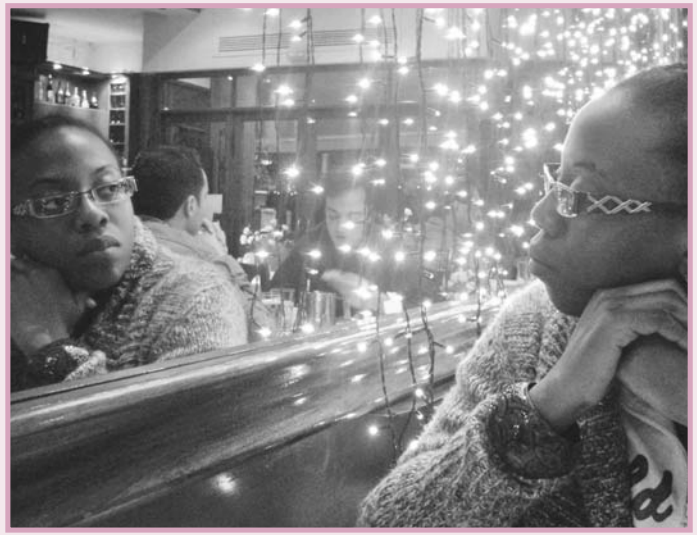


Over 150 women and men have contributed to the service (65% women and 35% men). They receive a small honourarium for their contribution. More important, they receive on-line coaching and feedback from the editor. Their stories get published in a wide range of outlets and the feedback is shared with them. The Opinion and Commentary Service is one of GL's best examples of on-the-job mentorship and training. The benefits to those involved are best described in their own words.

Key benefits

A winning formula - what GL means to me

By Fungai Machirori



The first article I wrote for the Gender Links Opinion and Commentary Service was as a wide-eyed 22-year-old university student doing a year-long internship with a Zimbabwean AIDS service organisation.

I was raw, eager and energetic in a way that only youth or passion - or both - allow for. And I definitely had both! My first article was about bringing men on board HIV prevention efforts and entailed me conducting thought-provoking interviews with some extraordinary Zimbabweans; a

process that helped to nurture and expand my gender consciousness.

When I started my internship, I was commonly referred to as "Little Girl" or "Miss Fu" by my workmates because of my shy and soft-spoken demeanour. I definitely admit to having been a naïve young woman who only understood certain concepts around femininity, masculinity and culture from a theoretical perspective.

Therefore, having the chance to write and make sense of things for others helped me also make sense of things for myself. And having a platform such as the Opinion and Commentary Service was completely vital towards this process of enlightenment.

Firstly, I always had the support of a great editor, Deborah Walter, who helped me fine-tune ideas, threshing them out to get to the heart of issues. When I began to take a keen interest in reporting about Zimbabwe's Domestic Violence Bill (enacted into law in 2006), I knew I always had the support of Gender Links in helping me to give voice to emerging challenges and opportunities.

When I wrote about taboo topics like virginity testing, abortion or sex work, I wrote with the confidence and assurance that I had a forum that appreciated alternative, critical and constructive thought. I could therefore be myself in my writing and advocate to the loudest decibel my voice could be propelled to.

It was this loudness that made Deborah Walter (the previous editor), or Deb as I know her, encourage me to consider applying for an Africa-wide award for excellence in HIV and AIDS communication back in 2007. Just turned 23 and still an intern, I remember asking her how she thought I ever stood a chance of winning as I had been writing for less than a year and was, in many ways, still forming my journalistic voice.

A few minutes later, an email appeared in my inbox. Her response said words to the effect, "That doesn't matter. You write with conviction about the things you see and you write them so well."

I applied for that award. And I won it! That award introduced me to the extraordinary organisation, the African Network for Strategic Communication in Health and Development (AfriComNet) which coordinates it annually. And through this introduction, I have been privileged to work on many exciting HIV and communication projects, as well as sit on AfriComNet's Board of Directors since 2009.

I turn 27 this year. And I often wonder how different things could have been for me if I did not have such support around me to nurture my writing and the expansion of my world view.

There's nothing I am more passionate about than gender issues and there is nothing I am more certain that I want to commit my life's work towards. As a woman who bears testimony to the simple truth that access to education and other enabling social structures (supportive family and professional units, for instance) encourages growth beyond imagination, I want to thank Gender Links for helping me bloom over the last five years.

Today, I have at GL the constant support and encouragement of their new editor, Danny Glenwright, who always urges me to interrogate my world anew and speak of what I see and hear. That is me in a nutshell - the little girl who grew because someone believed that she could.

My hope is that Gender Links continues to make other young women exceed their wildest expectations and add their important voices and insights to global discourse around gendered hegemony and inequality. I am the change and the voice of that change. And so are you!

While 65% of commentary writers have been women, the Service has also ensured that the voices of men are heard. Arthur Mwansa of Zambia's *Daily Mail*, a regular contributor to the Opinion and Commentary Service said: "My reporting has not only improved but has contributed to how best the media can report."

Mozambican freelance journalist Fred Katerere is a seasoned journalist who has been writing for the service for several years:

My journey with Gender Links

By Fred Katerere



Fred Katerere. *Photo: Trevor Davies*

"I'm a Mozambican freelance journalist based in the capital, Maputo. I have been a journalist since 1990 and I have worked in four countries of the SADC region.

I have covered politics, business and social and scientific issues affecting some of the region's countries. I decided to go freelance in 2007 and have since been a correspondent for international organisations, including Agence France Presse (AFP) and Bloomberg News.

I have also written for Pan-African media such as the France-based Africa Report, Africa Confidential, Al Jazeera's English service and Panos London, among others. I started writing for the Gender Links Opinion and Commentary Service in 2007. Since then, apart from contributing to the service, I have also contributed to the 16 Days of Activism, as well as the "I" Stories publications.

After getting involved with Gender Links, I got the urge to balance my sourcing on grounds of gender. In the same way I learnt to avoid sexist titles in my stories: such as using spokesperson rather than spokesman or spokeswoman; chairperson rather than chairman or chairwoman.

Although this remains a tall order with most of the organisations I freelance for, I have managed to make some understand how to use gender-friendly titles. In this way I have also managed to balance my sourcing.

Even when I am doing a story for an economic, political or entertainment publication, I have learnt to spread out my interviews equally among the sexes. Although at times it's not as easy as it should be I have tried to take an extra mile and make my women sources comfortable so that they could be able to speak on issues they might think are for men only.

This has also happened to some men who shy away from speaking on issues they would say are for women. Working with Gender Links has helped in broadening my horizon as a journalist to see how other media workers across the SADC region treat issues of women sourcing or report on issues such as gender-based violence.

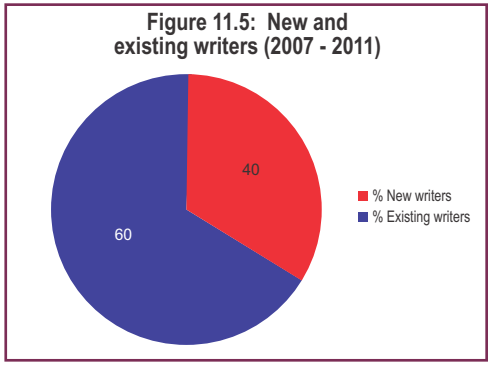
Through the reports posted on the Gender Links website and stories from writers from other countries I have learnt to understand how gender issues are tackled throughout the region.

Gender Links has been a wall-less classroom which has equipped me with vast knowledge on issues most people take for granted.

I think that as Gender Links celebrates its 10 years there is not only need for looking at successes or failures but also at improving the service to be more user-friendly and incorporating as many people as possible.

Statistics on literacy rates from most countries of the region indicate that more than half of the population are not conversant in the official languages of SADC; Gender Links need to find a way to get its messages through.

There is need to introduce services or publications in indigenous languages in order to widen the net of beneficiaries.



Since 2007, 40% of the Service's writers have been new and many had never written before on gender issues.

Dingaan Mithi, a Malawian HIV and AIDS activist, contacted former editor Deborah Walter in 2008 after reading a Gender Links commentary in the Malawi *Sunday Times*. "I was interested in the articles because they were unique," he said. "The gender analysis was clear. Most of the articles in our newspapers lacked analysis and mainly reinforced gender stereotypes. I wanted to contribute." Mithi wrote his first article on maternal health in Malawi and continues to be a regular contributor to the Service. "My life would not have been the same if Gender Links did not exist. I would not be in a position to analyse and relate gender and development issues," he said.

Alec Lushaba, editor of the Weekend Observer in Swaziland commented: "I have grown from being a mere reporter to be head of the *Weekend Observer* editorial team. I am happy to say that I have continued to benefit from Gender Links activities."

Gender Links in the media

Gender Links produces media and it is also often featured in regional media simply because of the groundbreaking work it does. Since 2005 Gender Links has been keeping statistics of where and when staff members are interviewed by the media.

Table 11.2: GL in the News

Year	Print	Radio	TV	Total
2005/2006	118	41	13	172
2006/2007	83	50	8	141
2007/2008	80	35	17	132
2008/2009	135	46	60	241
2009/2010	213	60	55	328
2010/2011	181	75	38	294
TOTAL	**810**	**307**	**191**	**1308**

Table 11.2 shows that GL over the last six years GL has featured in the media 1 308 times; 810 times in the print media; 307 in radio and 191 in TV. The numbers have steadily gone up over the years and in 2010 Gender Links was featured in more radio stories than ever.

"One thing I can always count on is that if I need a quote or information about an issue related to gender or women's rights and the media, I can call Gender Links," said Mahlatse Gallens, a reporter with SABC. "I've been working closely with Gender Links for many years and they have often featured in my stories. But beyond that, they also alert us to issues that we as journalists are not always aware of but should be covering."

Some of the news media where GL has been featured:

- Sweden: Goteborgs-Posten, Dagens Nyheter, Umea, University of Gottenburg
- BBC News
- USA Today
- The Guardian, UK
- The Australian
- UN Radio
- Voice of America Radio
- CNN
- Agence France Presse (AFP)

Conference newspapers

GL staff members have produced daily newspapers at several major events, including SADC Heads of State Summits and annual Commission on the Status of Women events in New York. These newspapers are circulated widely and contribute to taking GL's giant footprints to new and diverse audiences.

In 2010 Gender Links produced a supplement for *The Namibian* newspaper which ran during the Heads of State Summit in Windhoek. The paper, *Lentsoe la Basalie*, has become a regular addition to HOS Summits and was

this year also distributed to key political figures during the event. It highlights key achievements in SADC and also addresses regional problems, from poverty to inequality.



Pon student, Salome Nzuma. *Photo: Trevor Davies*

The most recent edition was produced with the help of Polytechnic of Namibia journalism students. "What a learning experience it was," said PON student Salome Nzuma, who later attended the 2010 Gender and Media Summit in Johannesburg. "Playing the part in showing the world the truth and representing women in the media is my fight... becoming a journalist is hard enough but becoming a female journalist is ten times harder."

Through working with student journalists like Nzuma, GL's media and communications departments are able to intervene when future journalists are still learning the skills they will eventually take to newsrooms. Working with students to impart media and gender skills is not just rewarding but also vital to the future of media in SADC.

The pen is mightier than the sword

By Arthur Okwemba

In 2002 as multi-national and national private companies descended in South Africa to attend the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) and share their experiences and practices in the global economy, one small organization was there to take them on, on other fronts. This NGO was Gender Links, which was at the forum to provide gender perspectives to the many gender blind development issues that were on the Summit's agenda.

Before the conference started, I was privileged to be among a group of journalists from Southern and Eastern Africa who had been selected to go through a gender training course before covering the event. "Good people, lets get down to work, and we have to be at our best," said Colleen, the founder and Executive Director of Gender Links as she welcomed us to the forum.

This was the first time I met Colleen and Gender Links in action. Producing the Summit newspaper was the most draining event I had ever participated in since I started practicing journalism in 1999. I used to sleep at midnight and be awake at 6.00 am. I remember a roommate from Namibia telling me he wanted to change his flight because he could not stand the pressure.

But the work we were doing was too important that it was not easy to wriggle out as easily as he thought. For me, this interaction started to ground me in understanding gender issues and how to question



Arthur Okweba (left) and the Director of the African Women and Child Feature Service Rosemary Okello producing a daily newspaper with GL during Beijing Plus 15. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

government, private institutions, including media, how gender mainstreamed they were.

Since then, I have been privileged to be part of the many major steps and turns Gender Links has made on its growth trajectory. By this I mean, Gender Links has not only helped me grow as a person, but I have come to understand some of the values of the organisation as well.

There is one thing that Gender Links excels in: working hard and playing hard. I remember when were producing a newspaper during the international Aids Conference in Bankgok in 2006, our designer was from Kenya. I decided to prepare him psychologically by telling he is likely to work past midnight for the next one week. He was petrified.



News team works hard and playing hard at Beijing Plus Fifteen . *Photo: Gender Links*

When the conference was over, he came back to me said, if I have made it with Gender Links, I can work in any newsroom. I believe this is the organisational culture that has made GL to establish itself and have a strong presence in the SADC region in less than a decade.

But at Gender Links is not only about work only. There is also partying time. After every workshop, conference, or any draining forums, there is always a party. When you see some people like Colleen on the dance floor, it is difficult to reconcile with the person(s) you saw minutes ago busy at her desk.

At individual level, this theory has also been of great benefit. Every Gender Links conference and every meeting attended, I have come out a better person.

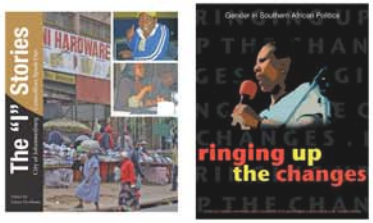
I have used the knowledge and gender tools developed by the organization to train journalists and NGOs not only in Kenya, but also in Somalia, Uganda, and Ethiopia. This means the impact of Gender Links work in the past 10 years is not only confined in the SADC region, but it is also being felt far beyond at country, organisational and individual levels.

2001

Gender Justice

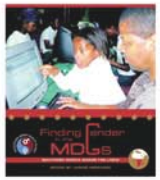


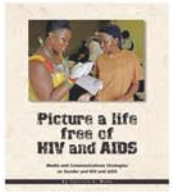
Gender and Governance





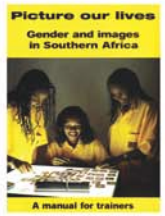
Gender and Media

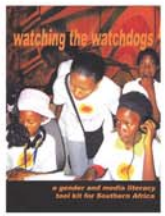




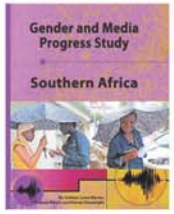


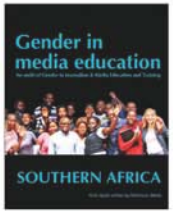




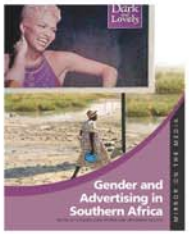


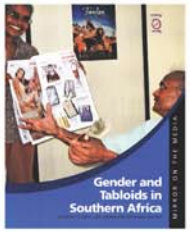








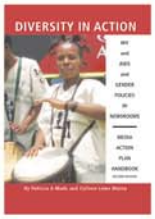


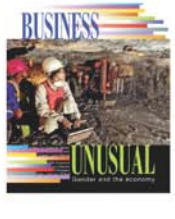


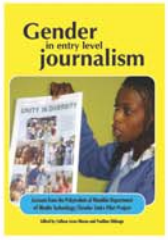








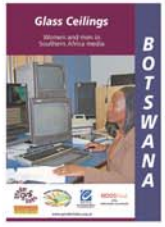






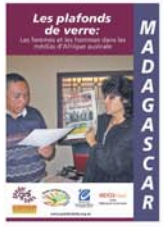








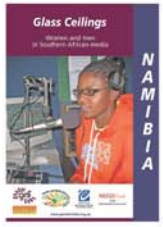


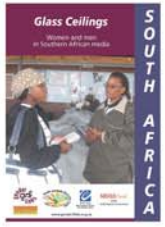


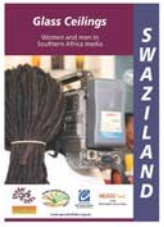


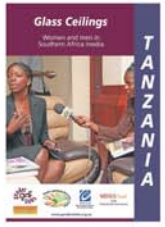


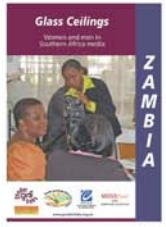


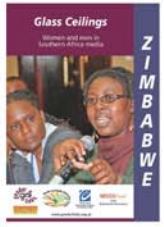






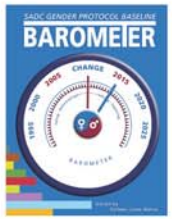


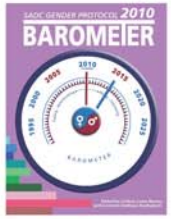




Gender Protocol Alliance







2011

Publications and productions

"I spent time in the Rhodes and UWC libraries and online, and found numerous Gender Links publications to be invaluable in this research. I am therefore writing to thank you for these publications, and their accessibility. Thank you again for these excellent GL publications."
- Rebecca Hodes, 22 January 2010

"We received publications from GL which we deposited with the library and we have some in the department exclusively for mass communication students. One of our colleagues has run media literacy courses/training for local journalists. Through collaboration and networking we were able to get and share ideas with colleagues from other institutions in the region."
- Sabi Ntonyane, Institute of Extra-Mural studies (National University of Lesotho).

With the launch of several major research projects in 2010, Gender Links realised it was time to create a dedicated department to handle its massive communications, publications and productions workload. After several naming attempts, including PEP (Publications, Editorial and Productions) and EPP (same words, different order), it was christened the Communications Department in December 2010.

The department is currently managed by Danny Glenwright and a Communications Officer, Mona Hakimi, who joined him in late 2010. Their first priority has been sorting through and cataloguing the various publications produced by Gender Links over the past ten years. For if there has been one constant ripple effect coming from this tiny organisation with giant footprints, it is the constant and impressive wealth of research and knowledge it has produced over the years.

"[GL's] publications are high quality and are used by many organisations and individuals across the board," notes Ammu Joseph, author, journalist and member of Network of Women in Media, India. Joseph has attended all four Gender and Media Summits and even launched one of her own books at the 2010 Summit.

119 Books
+ 20,000 pages
+ 20 languages
+ 8 DVDs
+ 8 radio programmes
+ 183 facts sheets
= Ripple effect for thousands of people

Over the past ten years, Gender Links has produced 119 research publications, 23 training manuals, 18 periodicals,12 conference newspapers, 183 fact sheets, eight radio programmes and eight institutional videos. This is estimated at more than 20 000 pages of work in more than 20 different languages. These resources have been sent to libraries, NGOs, training institutions, universities and bookstores throughout the region and the world.



GL intern Vincent Galatlhwe selling publications in Botswana.
Photo: Roos van Dorp

Book fairs

Gender Links has often taken its publications on the road, participating in many international events, from book fairs to conferences and international summits. GL has participated in the Zimbabwe International Book Fair, Gothenburg Book Fair, and the City of Johannesburg book fair, among others. In March 2011 the SADC Secretariat invited GL to participate in an International Women's Day (IWD) Book Fair at SADC headquarters in Gaborone. GL will be participating in the London Book Fair in April 2011.

E book shop and sales

With the growth of its communications programmes, in 2010 Gender Links also launched its online E-shop. GL publications and photography can now be purchased online from the website, where anyone can access thousands of GL photographs as well as other products. GL Francophone Director Loga Virahsawmy tells the story below of how she succeeded in getting none less than the Prime Minister to ensure a bulk order of "I" Stories for Mauritian schools.

The story behind the story: How to make a best seller in four months

By Loga Virahsawmy



Taking up challenges can indeed be very rewarding. Instead of being part of the regional "I" Stories around the theme *Speaking out on HIV and AIDS* in 2008, I asked head office for permission to do a Mauritian version and they trusted me immediately and agreed, giving me the budget.

The workshop with those infected and affected by HIV and AIDS, writers and gender activists was the first of its kind in Mauritius and knew a real success. Those affected and infected by HIV and AIDS agreed to tell their stories to the writers of their choice.

The stories were written in English, French and Creole. My husband did the English and Creole editing for free.

In early November 2008, I was face-to-face with the Prime Minister of Mauritius, Dr Navin Ramgoolam, after he delivered the keynote address at an international conference on HIV and AIDS. I put on my best smile and congratulated him and said how wonderful it was for the Prime Minister to be involved in such a great cause. I went on to say: "We have a book coming out giving voice to those infected and affected by HIV and AIDS. It will be great if you can launch the book." He was, of course, taken aback by this mad woman addressing him at such an official occasion. He said "Telephone my secretary!"

By the time I arrived home the secretary had already called. She said "The Prime Minister will be happy to launch your book but you must send a copy of the book with all details on the venue, the date and the time."

I had not even thought of an official launch, let alone a venue. I got the neurons in my brain working and decided that the launch should be held at the Chrysalide Residential Centre, the only rehabilitation centre for former sex workers and women drug users. Nearly all of them are HIV positive.



Loga Virahsawmy welcomes Dr Navin Ramgoolam, Prime Minister of Mauritius. *Photo: Danny Phillipe*

I telephoned the Director who immediately agreed. She said: "The Prime Minister has never visited our centre and our residents will love to see him in person!" The date and time was fixed but the book was not yet ready and I was getting pressure from the Prime Minister's Office for a couple of books so his speech could be written.

I was really tense and even worried that I had taken the wrong decision. Nobody believed me when I told them the Prime Minister would launch the book and they believed me even less when I told them about the venue, which had very basic facilities: a few chairs and a table which had been given as a donation.



Copies of "I" Stories on HIV and AIDS were presented to Dr Navin Ramgoolam, Prime Minister of Mauritius. *Photo: Danny Phillipe*

Fortunately, I could send two books ahead of the function. But I did not even think of inviting all the ministers of Mauritius.

On that memorable day of 3 December 2008, I really had butterflies in my stomach having to talk with all the security people, the advisers and the officials who arrived before the Prime Minister. The former Minister of Women's Rights and Child Development and Family Welfare (now Ministry of Gender Equality) and the former Minister of Health arrived well before the Prime Minister. When the Prime Minister and Veena Ramgoolam arrived I did not even know I had to welcome them and it was the Chief of Security who told me that it was my duty to welcome them. This was a task that I did then for the first time in my life.

In his keynote address the Prime Minister said that he was really moved by the stories and had learnt a lot. "I have prepared a speech but I am not going to read it as I want to talk from the heart. I believe in this fight, this is why I chair the HIV and AIDS Committee," he said. He went on to praise Gender Links and Media Watch Organisation for their fantastic work. He ended his speech by saying "I am going to ask all ministries to buy the book and I hope all NGOs will do the same." As soon as he uttered these words, my heart was pounding and somebody inside me was saying "bingo".

The Prime Minister and his wife had tea with the residents and the children. The children enjoyed the hugs and the kisses of these two distinguished visitors and said how happy they were to see the Prime Minister for the first time.

The next day I got a call from the Prime Minister's Office saying they hoped I had sufficient copies of the book as the Prime Minister has asked his staff to make sure that all ministries buy the books.

I believe this is the first time in the history of Mauritius that a locally-published book became a best seller in less than four months. I sold more than 1 000 copies and did a reprint of another 1 000 copies (which I am now selling at a cheaper rate and giving for free at Gender Links Workshops to encourage participants to write their own stories).

My biggest joy was when my two grandchildren, Anastasia and Yann, told me that their teachers talked about the book at school. Anastasia very proudly said "My school has bought a few copies of your book!"



Lessons learned

- Proper cataloguing and organising of publications and productions is essential to ensure the full benefit of GL outreach materials is realised. This includes keeping an up-to-date, searchable photo library and resource centre.
- Regular tracking and monitoring of news articles featuring GL staff is important in order to measure GL's media presence in the region and beyond.
- It is vital to access a diversity of views and opinions from women and men throughout the SADC region in all GL publications. Commentaries and other publications should be fully representative of the great variety in the region.
- Social media and ICTs should be harnessed in order to reach the largest number of people. Networking sites like Facebook and Twitter can be a powerful tool for advocacy and outreach.
- More work needs to be done with journalists and editors in Lusophone countries, especially Mozambique in order to bring about an increase in women's representation in the media. This can be done by putting resources into the new Lusophone Opinion and Commentary Service.
- It is important to follow-up on training and capacity-building. Although the GL communications department has worked with journalists and staff in the field offices around social media, photography and film, it is necessary to provide regular workshops to update skills.
- GL staff and consultants must be properly briefed and trained on GL writing, editing and communications style to ensure standardised and professional production of GL publications and other communication products.
- Editors are willing to work with GL if there is an incentive. It is important to provide them with fresh, relevant, timely and diverse news and opinion copy so they can see the benefit of working with GL.
- Students and young writers should be tapped so as to have an impact with the leaders of tomorrow and provide them a platform to speak out and share their views. GL may eventually benefit from these views, as it did when Communications Officer Mona Hakimi joined the staff in 2010. Hakimi originally worked with GL while she was a student in Cape Town.

My learning journey in 2011

By Mona Hakimi - Communications Officer

My time at Gender Links is quick to calculate: it has been a little over two months since I moved to Johannesburg to be part of the GL team. My personal journey with GL and the lessons I have learnt as a result takes a little more time to evaluate. The lessons I have learnt over the years are key turning points in my life as an aspirant gender activist.

May 2009

Lesson One: fighting for the "f" word

In my second year of study at the African Gender Institute, I wrote a paper entitled "The 'F' Word". It was based on my gradual realisation that "feminism" has become a "nasty" word in popular discourse. I struggled accepting the fact that my identity as a feminist would entail a constant battle to assert the legitimacy of gender equality. In my research on the multiple meanings of feminism, I came across the GL Strip the



Communications Officer Mona Hakimi trains Lesotho Intern Ntolo Lekau how to use a video camera. *Photo: Danny Glenwright*

Back Page! Campaign and the varied responses it received in the media. The hostility from the majority of South African print media outlets resonated with a personal experience I had had when I expressed feminist sentiments at a male-dominated Student Societies Workshop at the University of Cape Town. Reading and writing about the GL campaign, I learnt a valuable lesson: to remain grounded in my beliefs and to relentlessly strive for gender equality. I learnt that it is important to pursue the cause of gender justice despite (and perhaps in spite of) attempts to undermine the activism that a feminist ideology entails.

November 2009
Lesson Two: "Yes We Can"
My final undergraduate research project was based on the daily experiences of a resilient woman trader at Cape Town Train Station. I spent approximately six months visiting Mama Ice at her stall: listening to her life story, meeting her dependents, witnessing the police brutality that comes with informality and writing about the unseen effects of the 2010 World Cup. I poured my heart into my research but my activist spirit was dampened by a feeling of utter hopelessness - so what if I was writing about Mama Ice's experiences? Who would ever read it? Who would care? In the midst of this, I saw a GL call for papers for the *Gender Media Diversity Journal* (GMDJ) on the Pambazuka website. I jumped at the chance to take Mama Ice's story off academic shelves and a month later, we were on a flight to Johannesburg together. Mama and I attended the Soccer 2010 Colloquium - she spoke about her struggles, I presented my research findings and we both left inspired by the powerful force that NGOs can be in promoting human rights.

October 2010
Lesson Three: "You will learn"
Being part of the media team at the GEM Summit was my first "real" encounter with daily life at GL. Needless to say, it was an overwhelming week. Early mornings, non-stop multi-tasking and late nights meant that by 11pm, I cared more ardently about meeting my pillow than taking stock of gender, media, diversity and change. This lack of midnight inspiration would be completely overturned in the mornings when I saw the daily newsletter of the GEM Summit and the coverage that many of the articles received. It was fulfilling to feed into a bigger picture and at the end of the Summit, I left rather reluctantly to UCT to complete my degree. Now that I am part of the GL team, I know to expect the best with the worst: times get tough, it can be hard to keep up, but at the end of the day, it's worth the struggle. On one of my first days of work at GL, a former staff member wisely said, "No matter what happens, you will learn."

And so, my learning journey begins...



Mona Hakimi interviewing Mama Ice *Photo: Thaheer Mullins*



Next steps

- Increase GL's social media outreach and audience by maintaining a strong and professional online presence.
- Increase capacity-building and training efforts in all SADC countries. Make regular and targeted visits to field staff and media houses in order to provide on-site training.
- Ensure better documenting of the work going on in the 15 countries of SADC. This can be done by harnessing the skills of interns and field staff.
- Launch the Lusophone Commentary Service and pave the way for new work in Angola using this outreach tool as one way to meet editors and new partners in the country.
- Meet with editors throughout the region to increase the usage of GL opinion and commentary articles.
- Create a filing system for all audio visual materials and other GL publications.
- Ensure the photo library remains up-to-date and organised and create a marketing strategy for selling GL products and photos.
- Devise a marketing strategy for GL publications which will ensure all new books are accessible in libraries and bookstores throughout the SADC region.
- Create better monitoring and evaluation tools for the Francophone and Lusophone commentary services and also for the communications department.
- Work more closely with university campus newspapers in order to get commentaries to a wider audience and help train the next generation of journalists.



Mozambican journalists attending an opinion and commentary workshop in Maputo.
Photo: Danny Glenwright


NO TO
CHILD
ABUSE
OWLS



Young women at the Emfuleni, Gauteng Take Back the Night March.
Photo by Colleen Lowe Morna

Chapter 12

2015 - Yes we can!

Colleen Lowe Morna and Kubi Rama

"Gender Links has taught me that the battle we fight as women or as development practitioners is never done. There is no time to breathe because there is always something that can be done, improved or reconsidered. I have learnt that to endure this battle we fight you need to have stamina and a love for what you do. This type of work is not going to get any of us on any of the Forbes' rich list. But it may just help us sleep a little better at night knowing that every day was a day well spent."

- Kelello Tekateka

Fact box

- GL believes in learning by doing. We monitor and evaluate to ensure that we stay on track and deliver quality outputs and outcomes. We pause to reflect because experience is the best teacher.
- An external evaluation in 2010/2011 found that GL has built a solid institutional foundation for a well integrated and strategic package of programmes that is making a difference.
- The several recommendations in this evaluation will inform the 2010-2015 strategy.
- At ten, we realise that we have made tremendous strides but that there is still a long way to go in the fight for gender equality. Fragile gains must be guarded and the door prized open much wider in the run up to the all important 2015 deadline for the attainment of the 28 targets in the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development.

As I[1] sit down to reflect on what I have learnt in recent years, what comes to mind most immediately are the massive strides we have taken in our understanding and design of Monitoring and Evaluation tools. Technically, maybe, that is where my greatest learning has been. But M and E has not been my most memorable or enjoyable learning. For that, I turn to my three days at Kadoma Ranch Hotel with 75 women councilors from different parts of Zimbabwe gathered for GL's Training of Trainer's workshop in February 2010.


Colleen Lowe Morna.

As you climb up the work ladder, you get more and more removed from work on the ground. Now I spend most of my time writing funding proposals, reports, and conducting dozens of job interviews and figuring out how to do M and E. The somewhat precarious political situation in Zimbabwe called for more direct intervention than usual, down to being at this workshop in a location where the tyranny of cell phones and E Mails could not find me.

I had tried to take a back seat by involving partners in all the different sessions. But when one of our partners could not make it, I had to conduct a half day training workshop on key gender concepts in my rusty Shona. As I walked to the front of the room, I suggested we begin with a rousing rendition of a song for a female struggle icon. *Mbuya Nehanda kufa vachi shereketa* got us all up and dancing.

I joked that one of the stereotypes in the room was that white people could not speak Shona to which we roared with laughter. The glamorous Pat Ndlovu from Beit Bridge ran with the theme, sharing examples of how people often described her as a sex worker because of her blond curls and glamorous looks. In addition to that, she happens to be one of the hardest working councilors in the border town. Pretty soon we had crafted a new song: *"Ndokunaka"* (this is what it means to be beautiful!) Women councilors in all shapes and forms showed off their figures and pronounced themselves beautiful.

During the group work on gender mainstreaming, we dissected the case of Loveness Ndoendepi (where shall I go?). The participants picked up on the double meaning of the name as they named one after the other government ministry that needed to make a difference to the life of a young woman who became pregnant and HIV positive following sexual assault.

During the break, two women from Chipinge, my place of birth, came and asked for advice about a water problem. I linked them up to the Secretary General of the Urban Council Association of Zimbabwe Francis Duri who put his cell phone on speaker phone in a call to UNICEF that provided up to date information on when they might expect water.


Pat Ndlovu. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

As I opened the text to Carolyn Moser's definition of practical and strategic gender needs the words on the page took on a new meaning. The hard line between the two faded into grey as story upon story wove between every day needs and the yearning for self-realisation.

On a practical note, and in a rather memorable example of gender budgeting, one participant suggested that we forgo our tea and put the money towards a party on

[1] Colleen Lowe Morna is Executive Director of Gender Links

the final day when we strategically took over the hotel disco and danced the night away. But as part of a negotiated deal during the workshop - and in a show of commitment that would put our more literate workshop participants to shame - every participant at this workshop turned in GL's fat pack of M and E forms (data base details, score cards and quizzes) before they left.

In my parting comments I urged the women to go and *"paradza"* (destroy) instead of *"paradzira"* (spread) the word. Talk about learning from mistakes! I was corrected with such good humour that this is one mistake I will never make again!



Spreading the word: Councilors at the Kadoma workshop prepare to take the SADC Gender Protocol to their constituencies. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

GL's ten year reflection is full of learning that comes from the direct experience of working on the ground, with our valued partners. It is not academic or theoretical, but informed by research that leads to advocacy, capacity building and action planning. Each of the preceding chapters has ended with reflections on lessons learned and next steps for that particular area of work. These will be incorporated into GL's five year strategy 2010-2015.

Equally important is to ask how GL is viewed from the outside, and what lessons our partners feel we should learn. With this in mind, we commissioned a second organisational evaluation in 2010/2011, undertaken by Alemu Mammo and Sandra Ayoo. This evaluation can be accessed at http://www.genderlinks.org.za/page/monitoring-and-evaluation. Table 12.1 shows that altogether our evaluators interviewed 124 people - 20 of these Board and staff; the other 104 partners and beneficiaries. The partners and beneficiaries came from 11 SADC countries. The evaluators also interviewed two regional; two international and two donor representatives.

In this final chapter we share the observations of the external evaluators and their key recommendations. We also share excerpts from GL's 2010-2015 Strategy on key new thrusts and areas of work as we look to the 2015 deadline for the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals and of the 28 targets set in Southern African Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Gender and Development.

Table 12.1: Summary of interviews by external evaluators

Board	4
Staff	16
Botswana	24
Madagascar	1
Malawi	4
Mauritius	11
Mozambique	2
Namibia	2
South Africa	11
Swaziland	1
Tanzania	2
Zambia	12
Zimbabwe	28
Regional	2
International	2
Donor	2
Total	**124**

GL as seen from the outside

"GL is not afraid to change and is always trying new things to improve its service and to reach those who need its service directly and indirectly." - Evaluation finding

The following are the key conclusions made in GL's 2010/2011 organisational evaluation:

Punching above its weight

This organisational evaluation shows that it is not the size of its budget and staff alone that earns an organisation a reputation among its peer groups, but also its approach, consistency of purpose and relevance of vision, mission and strategic positioning. In a span of ten years, the organisation acknowledges having made contacts with at least 49,000 participants and with its ripple effect the total number is far more than what is indicated.

Action-research is Gender Link's flagship

Gender Links' comparative advantage is in evidence-based research that adds value to society and creates impact. Research has

given GL advantage in addressing the root causes of gender inequalities and to design cutting edge interventions that focus attention on neglected areas, such as mainstreaming gender in local government. The approach of many NGOs is to design interventions that address gaps or putting off the fire without finding out the cause. Gender Link's approach is to understand the cause of the fire and develop policies that make governments and media houses own up to their actions or make them accountable. One former intern of Gender Links commented that:

"It is amazing to see how a very small organisation has managed to gather so much information from the SADC region and how it is using it to coordinate with governments and other organisations in the region to bring about tangible change in society and the lives of ordinary people." - Albert Ngosa, GL Office in Zambia.

Strategic interventions

Gender Links work with local government fits well with the recently launched African Women's Decade (AWD - 2010-2020) of "Grassroots Approach to Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment". The Decade hopes to effectively combine a top-down and a bottom-up approach with the aim to advance gender equality through the acceleration of the implementation of global and regional decisions and commitments on gender equality and women's empowerment. Unlike most gender NGOs in the governance sector whose focus is on national parliament, GL's focus is strengthening women's representation at the local government level. All themes and provisions of the SADC Gender and Development Protocol fit well with all ten thematic focus of the AWD. This situates the work of the Alliance strategically on the continental map to inform learning and implementation of the AWD as well as access additional resources from the AU's Fund for Women.

Media as a target and a tool

The effective use of media to promote social justice within the African social justice context and mobilising a male-dominated system to advocate and support gender equality is a key strength. The ability to work with government systems in the region to make the SADC Gender Protocol the most referred to and functional instrument is another.

Unique package of programmes

Gender and media is not a common approach to address gender inequalities. Gender Links is interested in shaping people's attitudes and beliefs through media because popular media has a way of shaping values and beliefs. Values, attitudes, and beliefs are the core obstacles to gender inequality in the SADC region. GL has developed gender and media related policies as a sustainable approach to addressing gaps identified through research. Engaging the media in all of Gender Links work ensures great outreach and profiling of the organisation. Communi-cation is an underlying strategic component of Gender Link's work. Gender Links' work is underpinned by understanding gender roles, access to services, media, and capacity building to institutionalise gender. Gender Links' work with local governments is groundbreaking and can be replicated by many gender organisations. Local government is important because delivery of services happen at the local government



Media is a tool and a target: Botswana television conducting an interview at a GL local government workshop in Selibe Pikwe. *Photo: Roos van Dorp*

level. Many policy and advocacy organisations focus on national level policy processes without linkage to the communities.

Utilisation of technology to advance advocacy

The latest accessible information technology including online chats in the form of cyber dialogues, Facebook, Twitter, and SMS are used to ensure that all stakeholders remain linked up across geographical boundaries especially throughout the 16 Days Campaign of No Violence against Women. Gender Links has also used IT to engage women from all over the world daily during the post-Beijing review meetings in New York in 2005 and 2010 on the outcomes of parallel sessions through the use of forum newspapers dialogued through the cyber dialogues. This ensured that inputs from women from all over the world was included in the final document handed over to the UN. Gender Links is also using cyber dialogues for the 16 Days of Activism every year to make technology work for women.

Partnerships, including with governments

The organisation has the capacity to mobilise like-minded partners to speak with a united voice for the causes of women and gender and human rights. The ability to mobilise mutual partners to work together to advance the causes of woman in collaboration with men and as a result, a joint voice with a distinct leadership image. GL is perceived as an open minded organisation and likes to share, learn and transform. A civil society organisation can work with governments across the Board to bring about sustainable gender rights with the government's support and collaboration.



GL Board Member Pat Made (left) presents an award to Hon.Michael Yeung, Minister of Business, Cooperative and Consumer Protection and a former mayor during the first Gender Justice and Local Government Summit. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

Self reflection

Another best practice about GL's work are the built-in, ongoing self-evaluation approaches that enable the organisation to update itself and amend its plan through an effective planning, monitoring and evaluation process monthly, quarterly and annually.

Documentation

Publications are the exceptional contributions of the organisation to society at large. The training curriculum, which is being accredited, is an important attribute of the organisation which has a significant impact on trainees.

Capacity building

According to the evaluators' observations, the most important intervention of GL is its training intervention. There are at least 49 000 individuals that have been reached to date. GL's quality and targeted publications are among its best practices, because through its web site, hard copies, workshops, summits and other means, GL's publications could be reaching far more people than being accounted for. GL is keenly aware of human development as an integral part of the organisational endeavor, linking with higher education institutes in the region and encouraging young s intern to come and gain experience.

Recognition of talent and outstanding achievements

Gender Links has provided awards to recognise outstanding achievements by journalists, local government councils, and its own staff. This innovative approach has recently been recognised by the *Mail and Guardian* that led to GL's winning the *Mail and Guardian* prestigious *"Investing in the Future"* award in the non-profit category for recognising the importance of working with

local government to bring about social change in Southern Africa. GL's work approach of giving awards for outstanding work is also applied internally to its staff.

Maintaining a small organisation with large footprints



Balancing a small organisational structure with growth of programmes and budget is a great strength of Gender Links. GL has not become a huge monolithic structure but has remained small and focused in spite of the scope and intensity of work in the region. The organisation has coped by moving away from projects to programmes and through leveraging its work in order to reach a wider audience. Working through country facilitators to implement GL programmes is also consistent with managing growth and cost-effectiveness.

Key recommendations

The following are the key recommendations in the 2010/2011 external evaluation:

Strategic positioning

- Upgrade field offices to satellite offices through registering subsidiaries of GL, expanding the infrastructure and capacity of these offices. This will assist in fund raising efforts at country level.
- Strengthen the Lusophone base and establish a meaningful presence in Angola.
- Maintain the Southern Africa focus but decentralise management into five sub regional clusters: Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland; DRC, Mauritius, Seychelles and Madagascar; Namibia and South Africa; Angola and Mozambique; Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Governance

- Introduce two consecutive terms of two or three years for Board service time and, after a break, if a Board member's service is sought, he/she can be re-nominated.
- Narrow the current female to male gender gap in the Board composition to at least two to one, since this organisation is committed to gender equality.
- Rotate every other Board meeting to ensure a regional identity. This is integral to growth.

Programme of action

- Intensify advocacy work on women's constitutional and legal rights.
- Lobby governments to ratify and implement the Protocol.
- Create an additional four regional clusters to strengthen Alliance work.
- Develop strategies to mitigate the losses in upcoming elections in SADC Countries.
- Scale up work with community media.
- Strengthen backstopping and develop monitoring tools for tracking implementation of gender and HIV/AIDS aware policies in newsrooms.
- Develop programme on the economic empowerment of women.
- Lobby school of governments and universities to mainstream gender in the curriculum.

Partnerships

- GL should contract directly with GEMSA chapters that have a delivery track record rather than through the GEMSA regional secretariat.
- GL should support lobbying and advocacy on care work being conducted by VSO - RAISA and facilitate the formation of a cluster within the Alliance on care work.
- GL should continue to provide regular forums for partnership engagement and feedback, and free more time for the Executive Director to be involved in networking and management of partner relations which are at the core of GL's work and success.

Institutional strengthening

- The Board should ensure that the ED has an Executive Assistant in order to relieve her from managing details to managing and mentoring the managers and leading the organisation, because the organisation is entering a different phase in its development.
- The organisation also needs to draft a human resource development and retention strategy, envisioning organisational growth within the next five

years and beyond. The proposed human resource strategy is based on GL's experience and in anticipation of the growing organisational profile. Someone with human resource management expertise should facilitate the exercise to add external inputs and innovation to the existing experience and expertise. This recommendation is made in accordance with GL's proactive repositioning and management culture.

- GL needs to narrow the gender gap in its staff composition, intentionally by recruiting qualified male candidates to currently open and future positions.



Bridget Marango and Colleen Lowe Morna celebrate news of additional funding from UKaid.

Photo: Gender Links

- GL needs a logistician for logistic support of its work, such as workshops.

Succession

- Use the Human Resource Strategy (HRS) development exercise to discuss the four core groups and work with each group mentoring them in the areas of their assignments.
- Use outside facilitation once a year for at least two days to review the progress in this area and to strengthen the process.
- Assign individuals to various short term leadership and management opportunities within the organisation. For example, when both the ED and DD are out of the office or country, someone else should have the opportunity to manage the office for a few days. Rotate such opportunities among the key management staff members.

Sustainability

- Although GL as an organisation has done well in its fundraising and diversification efforts, it needs to expand its donor base to include foundations that are not currently included in its existing donor contact list. These foundations and organisations may be approached as a courtesy call or information sharing, to explore a partnership and their interest in GL's work in the region. These include the World Bank, other UN agencies, and other foundations in Europe and the US.
- There is need to draft a fundraising strategy, with facilitation by an individual or organisation with fund raising expertise to ensure that the strategy envisions the next ten years including the satellite offices as an integral part of regional and national resource mobilisation. This recommendation is made to reinforce what GL is already doing well in anticipation of additional projected growth and complete country office establishment. External expertise may bring some additional insight to what is already in the house.
- As the organisation completes its establishment of offices in countries of the region, it should explore in-country fundraising opportunities from bilateral and multilateral agencies, and some NGOs, depending on each country context.
- GL should continue to explore local strategic investment opportunities.

Monitoring and evaluation

- Invest more in analysis of results of higher level M and E such as the attitude quiz; knowledge of the Protocol etc.
- Invest in online data bases for making information more readily available, in formats that can be easily updated.

Areas of work that will be scaled up

"Gender Links is not yet strong enough in languages to serve its constituency in SADC. The staff at the Secretariat trained in French but Portuguese is still lagging. The languages in SADC are English, French and Portuguese. It is necessary for Gender Links to be strong in all three languages because Gender Links works primarily in knowledge creation. The knowledge has to be made accessible to a wider audience." - Board Member of Gender Links, quoted in the external evaluation.

As GL extends its current 2010-2013 three year strategy into a five year strategy (2010-2015) at the 2011 Board meeting, the following are some of the key issues being considered in response to the external evaluation:

Lusophone office and base

Although we have cascaded programme work to Mozambique from Johannesburg since GL's inception in 2001, we officially opened an office in Maputo on 17 March (GL's 10th anniversary) and launching a series of integrated programmes aimed at enhancing the attainment of the SADC Gender Protocol targets. Just as Mauritius serves as our Francophone base the Mozambique office will serve as our Lusophone base, enabling us to begin meaningful work in Angola, a country that several Southern African NGOs including our own have struggled to reach out to. The establishment of a Lusophone office early in 2011 is strategic because the SADC Heads of State (HOS) Summit in August takes place this year in Luanda, Angola. As the official representative of the gender sector in the SADC Council of NGOS (which runs a parallel forum to the HOS) the Southern Africa Gender Protocol Alliance will be able to identify a national focal point network to work with in Angola. GL will take the opportunity to cascade key strategic programmes to Angola, notably the GL Opinion and Commentary Service.



Photo: Gender Links

Eduardo Namburete and Colleen Lowe Morna at the opening of the Mozambique Lusophone office on GL's 10th birthday.

Implementation of the SADC Gender Protocol

To date GL and the Alliance that we coordinate have campaigned for the adoption and ratification of the Protocol by two thirds of those who have signed in order to go into force (at the time of writing the Gender Protocol awaited one more country's ratification, with strong signs that either South Africa or Zambia would do so by March). In anticipation of this, and with funding from UN Women, we held an expert group meeting on costing the Protocol in mid February and presented this to senior government officials here for a GL audit of National Action Plans to End Gender Violence. GL working with Alliance partners will seek to hold in-country consultations for updating gender policies and action plans to include the specific targets of the Protocol; identifying key gaps around country barometers, planning and costing next steps.

Strengthening the women's movement and networks at country level

Over the past year the Alliance has strengthened its institutional clusters through the formation of cluster groups led by regional NGOs with expertise in different areas (e.g. governance, constitutional and legal as well as gender violence) and identified credible national gender networks that can serve as focal points for work in each country. The in-country workshops will play a key role in galvanising national networks. The review and updating of country barometers linked to strategy and costing workshops in each country over the next year will shift the alliance from campaign to implementation mode as well as scale up country-level networks and collaboration for the achievement of these targets.



Women claim their space in the media. *Photo: Loveness Jambaya*

Extending and deepening work at institutional level on gender and the media

GL's work is historically rooted in our campaign to "promote gender equality in and through the media." We were credited in an external evaluation in 2005 with starting a gender and media movement in Southern Africa, through the evidence gathered in the *Gender and Media Baseline Study* (2003), followed up in the *Gender and Media Progress Study* (2010). These studies have led to a wide range of policy, training and advocacy initiatives, most recently concentrated at institutional level with work underway to support 100 media houses around the region to develop gender policies.

This has come about as a result of research, monitoring and evaluation showing that the best way to achieve results is through sustained work at institutional level (for example in Mauritius, where we piloted a gender policy with the public broadcaster in 2003, the proportion of women sources increased from 14% in the GMBS to 30% in the GMPS). So far the policy process involves six stages: buy-in from management; a situation analysis, inception workshop, drafting of a policy and action plan, adoption and monitoring and evaluation six months later to determine what progress has been made. PPA funds will make it possible to extend the backstopping beyond this stage and augment it with newsroom training, made dynamic through links with the Opinion and Commentary Service that will offer on-the-job training, regional outlets for innovative and thought-provoking content as well as content that can be used by the media houses themselves.

Extending and deepening work at institutional level in local government on gender and the media

In a process similar to that with our media work, we have identified through evidence-based research *(At the Coalface: Gender and Local Government)* the need to work directly with Councils on mainstreaming gender in their work. The Centres of Excellence for Gender Mainstreaming in Local Government concept seeks to ensure that gender is mainstreamed in the work of all Councils and that there is continuous support and backstopping for this process.

At the Gender Justice and Local Government Summit and Awards in March 2011, the first 100 Councils that have completed this process will receive certificates and share good practices. A strategy meeting to be held with local government associations will chart a way forward for replicating the COEs through building the capacity of staff within the associations as well as an innovative peer support and learning model (see innovation below). PPA funding will enable GL to a) replicate the COEs three fold, with a target of 300 by the end of the programme period and b) augment the existing six stages that involve on-the-job support for policy, action planning and implementation of a pilot project on GBV to include other core provisions of the SADC Protocol namely: local economic development; the recognition of the unwaged work of women especially care of those living with HIV and AIDS, environment and climate change.

Extending the Gender Violence Indicators project to at least three more countries

Inspired by the SADC Gender Protocol target of halving gender violence by 2015, GL has been at the forefront of devising a comprehensive set of indicators for

measuring gender violence which is inadequately and grossly under-reported in available administrative data (police, hospital and court records). Following a successful pilot project in the Gauteng province of South Africa the research is being rolled out to three more provinces of South Africa as well as to Botswana and Mauritius. PPA funds will take GL a step closer to our vision of completing this key human rights measurement exercise to three more SADC countries and turning the research findings into multi-media formats that will be used for advocacy and strengthening National Action Plans to End Gender Violence. In line with our Value-for-Money (VFM) policy, and using the Botswana model in which where the government is contributing to the project on an 80:20 basis, GL will seek to get the buy-in of other SADC governments to take up the GBV indicators project in their countries by providing the "hardware" (staff, logistics etc) while GL provides the software (methodology, training, analysis etc).



GL's graphic designer Debi Lucas has been integral to documenting GL's learning journey. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

Documenting results and lessons learned

With its media roots and affiliations GL is well known for the extensive documentation and dissemination of its work in multimedia formats through a list serve, website, audio and audio visual products, books, reports and pamphlets. We regularly host seminars, launches and cyber dialogues, and have recently invested in social media (for example Twitter and Facebook) to extend our reach and appeal, especially to young people. GL has established and will grow a fully-fledged communication unit with a dedicated budget and staff to ensure that results are routinely documented; engaged with and disseminated. This unit will work closely with media interns at head office and in our satellite and field offices. It will also seek to share knowledge more widely (for example GL is in active discussion with Zed Books in London about two joint venture books on gender violence and gender equality) and GL will have a stand at the London Book Fair in April.

Strengthening institutional systems and practices

GL will seek to strengthen the institutional base of the organisation through better financial and procurement (VFM), IT, human resource, monitoring and evaluation systems and practices. In particular the organisation is putting in place a comprehensive human resource plan that includes succession, capacity building, coaching and mentoring.

The Gender Links Training Institute and GL Services

As part of its sustainability efforts Gender Links has established the not-for-profit Gender Links Training Institution (GTI) in response to several requests for training by community based organisations and local government functionaries. The South African Institute of Learning (SAIL) assisted GL in meeting the Sector Education & Training Authority (SETA) requirements towards becoming a SAQA accredited training provider. Three courses have been registered: Gender and Media Literacy, Gender Awareness and Gender Analysis for managers. A further course on strengthening institutional practice (planning, monitoring, evaluation, IT, finance, writing and editing) is being developed. As GL expands its work at the local level into economic justice, it plans to add a course component on enterprise, small enterprise and business management. GL's recognised strength as a trainer is the unique, hands on approach that involves learning-on-the job, that is applied

learning that always has tangible outputs and outcomes.

GL offers two conferencing facilities next to each other, situated at 9 Derrick Avenue and 28 Marcia Street, Cyrildene in Johannesburg. Both conferencing facilities accommodate from twenty five up to a maximum of thirty participants. The conference package includes meeting room (with wireless internet connectivity), morning and afternoon teas, cordials and lunch. Data projector and stationery is also available at a nominal fee. GL has close links with accommodation facilities within walking distance of its training facilities and can offer a full package for off-site participants. In addition, GL has acquired an ideally located conferencing and training facility called the Cottages in Observatory, Johannesburg, a short drive from its current offices. These will be used for GL and GTI meetings, workshops and training, and marketed to fraternal organisations as part of a new social entrepreneurship initiative.

As part of its efforts to promote sustainability, GL runs an advisory services unit that periodically undertakes consultancy work and special projects in the following areas:

- Conference newspapers
- Facilities and events
- Gender and local government
- Gender audits and mainstreaming
- Institutional support
- Research and policy
- Strategic communications

Aluta continua: the struggle continues

As a team of GL staff led by the Executive Director of GL Colleen Lowe Morna returned from opening the Maputo office on 17 March 2011, GL Deputy Director Kubi Rama was coordinating the Gauteng Gender Based Violence research report to be launched at the second Gender Justice and Local Government summit from 28 to 30 March. GL will officially celebrate its tenth birthday at the awards on 30 March and the office is a hive of activity, preparing to host 200 guests, and to launch this book.

21 March, Human Rights Day in South Africa is a public holiday, but at GL it is also a moment to question how far we have come in the struggle for the emancipation of women. In between editing this book and setting up a Lusophone service for the Opinion and Commentary Service in Maputo GL Communications Manager Danny Glenwright is putting out a commentary by Deputy Director Kubi Rama with her thoughts on the matter and the closing words for this book:



Institutional support: GL Deputy Director Kubi Rama. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

So many miles walked, so many more to go

By Kubi Rama



Flash back: Inika McKay (right), Kubi Rama's daughter, at a GL cyber dialogue. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

"Mummy I am so mad!" These were recently the words of my almost 15-year-old daughter (out of respect for her assertion that she is not 14 based on the scientific deduction that she is closer to 15). She had called to tell me that her dad's female friend had told her she would have difficulty finding a husband.

The female friend thought my daughter would encounter this problem because she thinks women and men are equal. Very few men in the world would want a wife who wanted to be independent and could change a tyre. My daughter pointed out that she was brought up to do things for herself, and to be independent.

Said female friend posited the view that men who sew and want to be with babies were "moffies". My daughter noted that her male cousins loved her two-year-old baby brother and that was good because it meant they were caring people. Anyway, she continued, she wanted to support herself.

I wanted to pop champagne, dance around the room and toast my strong, opinionated girl. This mother had reason to celebrate! It starting me thinking, though, as we have just celebrated the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day and are about to observe South Africa's Human Rights Day on 21 March: what do I, female citizen X, have to celebrate in 2011?

There are two key events in February that set the tone for the politics of the upcoming year. The President traditionally makes a State of the Nation Address and the Minister of Finance makes the budget speech. These two speeches identify government's priorities for the year ahead and the money that will be allocated to these areas.

As I recently reviewed the State of the Nation Address and the Budget speech I as struck by a sense of unease. There was distinct gender blindness evident in both. In the State of the Nation Address, issues relating to women were mentioned twice.

The two references were: (1) "We will continue to prioritise crimes against women and children and to provide support through the provision of Thuthuzela Care Centres." (2) "Given our emphasis on women's health, we will broaden the scope of the reproductive health and provide services related to amongst others, contraception, sexually transmitted infections, teenage pregnancy and sanitary towels for the indigent."



Kubi Rama with Inika's baby brother, Keshav Naidoo. *Photo: Colleen Lowe Morna*

There are 25 Thuthuzela Care Centres in South Africa set up to respond to the needs of women and children who have experienced sexual violence. In the recent Gender Links Gauteng Gender Based Violence (GBV) study we found that 51.3% of women in the sample had experienced GBV at least once in their lifetime. An astonishing 75.5% of the men in the sample said they had perpetrated GBV at least once in their lifetime.

Later in the Address the President makes reference to crime statistics and the decrease in certain crimes, including armed robberies, housebreakings, business robberies and contact crimes such as murder. No mention is made of the crime of GBV.

While the reference to women's health is commendable it reduces women to their biological functions. Providing sanitary towels to the indigent does not change their condition.

As a nation we need to address the conditions that feed into gender inequality. One of the main drivers of gender inequality is women's and men's disparate access to the mainstream economy and the lack of recognition of women's work in the informal sector, community and domestic arenas.

Unfortunately this is not something that Pravin Gordhan, Minister of Finance, addressed in his 2011 Budget speech. The only reference to women is in reference to unemployed youth. Gordhan states: "Young men and women in cities, informal settlements, towns and villages may not have jobs, but they have skills in life."



Emsie Erastus and Jennifer Lewis march with informal traders as part of the "Scoring a goal for gender equality" campaign. *Photo:Gender Links*

The speech is gender blind in its entirety. The Minister uses three examples of successful small businesses in his speech, all of whom are men. Mlondololozi Kosi has set up a small ICT Training Centre in Willowvale; Norman Pedi who has a thriving juice making business and Antonio Pooe who runs a fraud solutions company. Are there no successful small business women? The use of these examples by a voice of authority perpetuates the stereotype that women have little to contribute to the economy.

There is no reference to the informal sector. Gender Links, in partnership with Ecumenical Service for Socio Economic Transformation (ESSET), has been training women traders over the last six months on gender, media and ICTs.

As part of the training the women traders wrote their stories. Nomathemba Linda Nxusani wrote: "I started trading on the

street where I gained a lot of experience in cooking as I was selling food. Even though it was difficult to start my business because traders do not have access to loans, I started. In 2006 I went to trade at Soccer City as it was being rebuilt. Business was good until 2010 World Cup. The metro police closed my business and took everything I owned." Women traders and others in the informal sector need to be an integral part of South Africa's economic growth. Strategies to build a sustainable economy will not be successful if the informal sector is not supported.

Perhaps the most shocking omission in both the State of the Nation Address and the Budget speech was HIV and AIDS. I spent a while ruminating on why this was the case. As a nation are we comfortable that HIV and AIDS is being effectively managed?

Could it be because the HIV and AIDS discourse has shifted and the emerging issue is the burden of care placed on women and girls in homes and communities looking after those affected and infected by HIV and AIDS? The absence of any engagement both at a strategic and budget level on women's burden of care particularly relating to HIV and AIDS is cause for concern. Like GBV, it severely compromises women's ability to live their right to equality.

As female citizen X my uneasiness about how issues of gender and women's rights are prioritised within the South African government is growing. The lack of specific initiatives and budgetary allocations to advance women and gender is concerning. How are my human rights as a woman being advanced?

So as I prepare to exercise my vote in the upcoming local government elections I will ask myself: *What do the different political parties have to offer me as a woman and what is their track record on delivering on women's rights and gender?* A question all women voters, 54.9% of the voters roll, should ask.

I am also telling myself that when I look at myself and my daughter, I know that change is possible, but that every gain we make has to be defended and the envelope prized open even further.

2015! Yes, we can!
Yes we can!
The time is now!



GL acknowledges with deep appreciation the support we have received from our sponsors over the ten years. These include:

Australian Aid (AusAid)
Conflict and Governance Facility (CAGE)
Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA)
Diakonia
European Union
Ford Foundation
Foundation for Human Rights
Friedrech Ebert Stiftung (FES)
Hivos Stiching (HIVOS)
Irish Aid
MDG3 Fund (Netherlands)
MOTT Foundation
Nederland Institute vor SA (NIZA)
Nowergian Church Aid
Nowergian Council for Africa (NCA)
Open Society Foundation for South AfricaA (OSFSA)
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Oxfam
Southern Africa Trust (SAT)
Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA)
UKaid from the Department for International Development
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
UNIFEM (UN Women)



"Sometimes change comes through bloodshed; other times through dialogue, debate, persuasion and joint efforts. This is the kind of change that Gender Links and its partners seek to bring about. Not always easy to quantify, sometimes painstakingly slow, ten years is not a long enough time to measure the social change taking place in an entire region. But anecdotal evidence such as this suggests that slowly but surely change is happening: there can be no stopping the march to gender equality!"

- External evaluation of Gender Links, 2010/2011